

Firepool Masterplan, Taunton, Somerset

Townscape and Visual Impact Assessment

October 2022



LEPUS CONSULTING
LANDSCAPE, ECOLOGY, PLANNING & URBAN SUSTAINABILITY

Somerset West and Taunton Council

Firepool Masterplan, Taunton, Somerset

Townscape and Visual Impact Assessment

LC-842	Document Control Box
Client	Somerset West and Taunton Council
Report Title	Townscape and Visual Impact Assessment
Status	Final
Filename	LC-842_Firepool_TVIA_9_201022RG.docx
Date	20 th October 2022
Author	RG
Reviewed	ND
Approved	ND

About this report & notes for readers

Lepus Consulting Ltd (Lepus) has prepared this report on behalf of Somerset West and Taunton Council. There are a number of limitations that should be borne in mind when considering the conclusions of this report. No party should alter or change this report without written permission from Lepus.

© Lepus Consulting Ltd

This Townscape and Visual Impact Assessment is based on the best available published information at the time of writing. No attempt to verify secondary data sources has been made and they have been assumed to be accurate as published. This report was prepared in September 2022 and is subject to and limited by the information available during this time. This report has been prepared to provide an assessment of the Townscape and Visual impacts of the

Masterplan proposals for the site at Firepool, Taunton, Somerset.

Client comments can be sent to Lepus using the following contact details.

Eagle Tower,

Montpellier Drive

Cheltenham

Gloucestershire

GL50 1TA

Telephone: 01242 525222

E-mail: enquiries@lepusconsulting.com

www.lepusconsulting.com

Contents

1	Introduction.....	1
1.1	Appointment and scope of work.....	1
1.1	Description of development	1
2	Planning policy context.....	2
2.1	Introduction.....	2
2.2	National Planning Policy Framework	2
2.3	Taunton Deane Adopted Core Strategy 2011-2028.....	3
2.4	Taunton Dean Site Allocations and Development Management Plan (SAADMP) 2016	4
2.5	Taunton Town Centre Area Action Plan (AAP) 2008.....	6
2.6	Taunton Town Centre Design Code SPD	7
2.7	Taunton Garden Town	7
2.8	Taunton The Vision for our Garden Town.....	7
2.9	Taunton Garden Town 2040 Town Centre Prospectus.....	8
2.10	Landscape Designations.....	8
2.11	Historic environment.....	10
2.12	Recreational routes.....	10
3	Assessment methodology.....	12
3.1	TVIA process.....	12
3.2	The study area.....	12
3.3	Townscape and landscape effects.....	13
3.4	Visual effects.....	13
3.5	The nature of the effect.....	14
3.6	Level of effects.....	14
3.7	Sensitivity, susceptibility and value.....	14
3.8	Magnitude.....	17
3.9	Duration of effects	17
3.10	Reversibility.....	17
3.11	Residual effects.....	19
3.12	Level of effect.....	19
4	Baseline: Townscape character.....	22
4.1	Townscape character assessment.....	22
4.2	Published landscape and townscape character assessments	22
4.3	Local Townscape Character Assessment.....	24
4.4	Firepool North and Firepool Lock TCA.....	26
4.5	Value, susceptibility and sensitivity	28
4.6	Firepool South.....	29
4.7	Value, susceptibility and sensitivity	30
4.8	River Tone and canal corridor	30
4.9	Value, susceptibility and sensitivity.....	32
4.10	Morrisons and Priory Bridge Road.....	33
4.11	Value, susceptibility and sensitivity.....	34
4.12	Station Road	34
4.13	Value, susceptibility and sensitivity.....	35
4.14	Railway Station and surrounds TCA.....	35
4.15	Value, susceptibility and sensitivity.....	37
4.16	Cricket Ground.....	37
4.17	Value, susceptibility and sensitivity.....	38
4.18	Adjacent Residential Areas	39
4.19	Value, susceptibility and sensitivity.....	40
4.20	Potential effects on the town centre.....	40
5	Baseline: Visual receptors and viewpoints.....	41
5.1	Visibility of the site	41
5.2	Zone of Theoretical Visibility.....	41
5.3	Visualisation materials	41

5.4	Viewpoint selection	42
6	The proposed scheme	48
6.1	Summary of the proposals	48
6.2	Design principles	48
6.3	Summary description of the development blocks	48
6.4	Planning applications and consented schemes within the masterplan	49
6.5	Townscape change	50
7	Townscape character effects.....	51
7.1	Introduction.....	51
7.2	Note on construction effects	51
7.3	Operational effects	51
8	Visual effects.....	58
8.1	Introduction.....	58
9	Residual effects	81
9.1	Note on residual effects	81
9.2	Summary of townscape effects	81
9.3	Summary of visual effects	82
9.4	Views from public routes within the urban area.....	82
9.5	Views from the corridor of the River Tone.....	83
9.6	Views of Taunton in its landscape setting	84
9.7	Visual effects and heritage assets	85
9.8	Note on residential visual receptors.....	86
10	Cumulative effects	88
10.1	Definition of cumulative effects	88
10.2	Identifying projects to be considered in the cumulative effects assessment.....	88
10.3	Summary of the cumulative visual assessment	93

Appendices

- Appendix A: Zone of Theoretical Visibility
- Appendix B: Viewpoint Panoramas
- Appendix C: Viewpoints image at A3
- Appendix D: Verified View Montages

Figures

Figure 2.1: Landscape designations.....	9
Figure 2.2: Designations and Public Rights of Way	11
Figure 4.1: Local Townscape character areas.....	25
Figure 4.2: Photograph of Firepool north TCA.....	27
Figure 4.3: Photograph of Firepool north TCA.....	27
Figure 4.4: Photograph of Firepool South TCA.....	29
Figure 4.5: Photograph of River Tone and canal corridor TCA	31
Figure 4.6: Photograph of River Tone TCA.....	32
Figure 4.7: Photograph of Morrisons and Priory Bridge Road TCA	33
Figure 4.8: Photograph of Station Road TCA	34
Figure 4.9: Photograph of Railway Station and Surrounds TCA.....	36
Figure 4.10: Photograph of Railway Station and Surrounds TCA	36
Figure 4.11: Photograph of Cricket Ground TCA.....	38
Figure 4.12: Photograph of Adjacent residential area TCA	39
Figure 5.1: Viewpoint locations in the town centre.....	43
Figure 5.2: Viewpoint locations in the wider landscape	44
Figure 10.1: Cumulative assessment schemes	89

Tables

Table 3.1: Townscape character sensitivity criteria	15
Table 3.2: Visual receptor sensitivity criteria.....	16
Table 3.3: Magnitude of change criteria for landscape character and visual receptors.....	18
Table 3.4: Word scales describing the level of effects on landscape character and visual receptors	19
Table 5.1: Representative viewpoints.....	45
Table 7.1: Townscape character assessment	52
Table 8.1: Viewpoint assessment.....	59
Table 10.1: Cumulative townscape effects.....	90
Table 10.2: Cumulative visual effects.....	94

Abbreviations

AOD	Above Ordnance Datum
AONB	Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty
DSM	Digital Surface Model
DTM	Digital Terrain Model
GLVIA	Guidelines for Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment
ha	Hectares
LCA	Landscape Character Area
LNR	Local Nature Reserve
LVA	Landscape and Visual Appraisal
LVIA	Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment
m	Metres
NCA	National Character Area
NPPF	National Planning Policy Framework
PPG	Planning Practice Guidance
PRoW	Public Rights of Way
TVIA	Townscape and Visual Impact Assessment
VP	Viewpoint
VVM	Verified View Montage

Executive Summary

Introduction and purpose

- E1. Lepus Consulting Ltd has been appointed by Somerset West and Taunton Council to carry out a Townscape and Visual Impact Assessment (TVIA) of the masterplan proposals for the site at Firepool, Taunton, Somerset (hereafter, referred to as the 'site').
- E2. Lepus Consulting Ltd is an environmental assessment practice, based in Cheltenham, Gloucestershire, specialising in landscape, townscape and ecological impact assessment, Sustainability Appraisal and Habitats Regulations Assessment.
- E3. Townscape assessment is a form of landscape assessment. The townscape can be defined as:
- “The landscape within the built-up area, including the buildings, the relationship between them, the different types of urban open spaces, including green spaces and the relationship between buildings and open spaces.”¹*
- E4. The purpose of the TVIA is to determine the likely significant effects of development proposals. Not all townscape and visual effects arising as a result of a particular proposal will be significant. Furthermore, where likely significant effects are predicted, this does not necessarily mean that such effects are unacceptable. The acceptability of townscape and visual effects is a matter to be considered by the decision-making authority, weighed in the planning balance alongside other factors.

Description of development

- E5. The Firepool site has been recognised by the Council as a key regeneration area for Taunton over a number of years and the site is identified in the Taunton Town Centre Area Action Plan (2008), further details of which are provided in **Section 2**.
- E6. The masterplan proposals for the site have subsequently been updated to focus on a residential-led, mixed use development. A more detailed description of development is provided in **Section 6**. The Firepool Masterplan proposes six key development areas, which comprise a variety of uses including:
- Residential development including apartment blocks and terraces houses;
 - Leisure and entertainment (a venue, cinema, hotel and restaurants);
 - The Innovation Centre and small offices;
 - The retained Great Western Railway Building;
 - Pedestrianised Boulevard linking the station and river as well as an east-west Greenway.

¹ Guidelines for Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment' Third Edition (2013) (GLVIA3) Landscape Institute and the Institute of Environmental Management and Assessment

- E7. The development of the Firepool Masterplan has incorporated townscape and visual matters into the proposed layout, landscape approach and use of materials.

Summary of townscape effects

- E8. The two TCAs identified within the site are (1) Firepool North and Firepool Lock TCA, and (2) Firepool South TCA. Both currently lack positive townscape characteristics. Substantial parts of the site are used for temporary car parking, surrounded by Heras fencing with some security fencing. Much of the landscape is in poor condition creating a degraded sense of townscape character.
- E9. The regeneration proposals for the Firepool site would lead to the substantial intensification of built form in this location. The proposals will create opportunities for a much greater range of positive uses in this urban location than is currently the case, bringing purpose and activity to the site.
- E10. The proposals would be seen in the context of other recent development in the local context such as Lock House, Canal Court, Waterside House, Water's Edge and the Viridor building, which share similar architectural characteristics and mass for example being largely rectilinear. These developments are influencing and changing the townscape character in areas proximate to the train station, following Trenchards Way and in some locations addressing the river corridor.
- E11. The redevelopment of the site would enhance the quality of the townscape fabric. Materials proposed include red or buff brick as well as timber effect cladding and rolled zinc roofing materials. The use of red and buff brick reflects the industrial heritage features in the local area, such as the GWR building and the Pumping Station.
- E12. The proposals would lead to the substantial enhancement of the public realm, primarily through the creation and enhancement of green corridors through the site creating opportunities for soft landscape planting and amenity spaces for social interaction.
- E13. A small number of trees that presently grow on site are likely to be mostly removed. This can be mitigated by new tree and landscape planting which would also deliver biodiversity net gain.
- E14. There would be an increase in noise, movement and lighting as a result of the operation of the proposed scheme and therefore levels of tranquillity would be adversely affected. However, the scheme seeks to prioritise pedestrians and cycling and reduce car usage where practical.
- E15. The effects on the townscape character of the Firepool North and Firepool Lock TCA would be **moderate** and **beneficial** and **minor beneficial** effects on the Firepool South TCA.
- E16. In the surrounding area, many of the key characteristics of the TCAs identified as medium sensitivity are retained. The River Tone and Corridor TCA would benefit from the proposed enhancements to the public realm, including improved quality of pedestrian and cycling routes and increased landscape planting to enhance the visual quality and ecological diversity of the river corridor, leading to a **moderate beneficial** effect. **Minor beneficial** effects can be expected on the Morrisons and Priory Bridge Road TCA. In the remaining TCAs assessed in this TVIA, the proposed masterplan for the Firepool site would lead to a

greater scale and height of built form visible from within those TCAs, leading to urbanising influences on townscape character and **minor adverse** effects on these TCAs.

- E17. The assessment has identified potential impacts on townscape legibility as a result of the reduced opportunities for views towards the church towers (St James' and St Mary's (Taunton Minster) from Taunton Station. However, the proposed scheme seeks to address this loss through the creation of the central boulevard, directing pedestrians and cyclists from the train station through the site. There will be opportunities to view the church towers from the newly created boulevard within the context of an enhanced public realm including paved surfaces, opportunities for seating, tree planting and other soft landscape planting. Opportunities for views towards the Pumping Station and Firepool Lock have been created along the Greenway, aligned east-west. The overall impact on townscape legibility is **negligible**.

Summary of visual effects

- E18. Potential visual effects of the proposed scheme are described in detail in **Section 8**.
- E19. Many views from publicly accessible locations within the urban area are assessed as being of **medium** sensitivity to change as visual receptors (people) are likely to be in these locations to undertake day-to-day activities. In locations along the River Tone, people may be at the location in order to undertake day-to-day activities or for recreational reasons and may be of **medium** or **high** sensitivity to change. Receptors are likely to be aware of being in an urban environment and would be expecting to experience some built form as part of a typical visual envelope in and around this part of central Taunton at Firepool. The proposals would introduce additional built form into the views from these locations.
- E20. The proposals have been designed to follow good urban design principles in the layout of the proposed development blocks, references to local architectural precedents in relation to scale, footprint and finishing materials and the quality of the proposed public realm. The effects are assessed as **moderate** and **beneficial**.
- E21. In **Viewpoints 1, 12** and **16** there are limited views of the site itself and its associated townscape detractors in the baseline view. The proposals would introduce views of additional built form into the view, namely the rooftops of the proposed development blocks which create a new, more urbanised, skyline, assessed as a **minor adverse** impact.
- E22. **Viewpoint 2b** represents views towards the site from Taunton Railway Station. The proposals would substantially reduce opportunities to see the church towers and the Blackdown Hills from this location. This is considered to be **moderate adverse** effect on the view. The proposals would retain opportunities to see the church towers from within the site along the proposed boulevard and enhance the surrounding setting of the view, maintaining townscape legibility. The proposals would introduce a new, high quality scheme with a contemporary aesthetic enhancing the character of the view leading to **moderate beneficial** effects. Overall, there would be **mixed** (beneficial and adverse) effects on views from the Taunton Railway Station.
- E23. In **Viewpoints 10a, 10b, 11** and **17** existing built form and vegetation serve to obscure or filter many views of the proposals. The proposals would be seen in the context of other development of a similar scale and design and would not alter the key positive characteristics of the view; the effects on the views have been assessed as **negligible**.

Views of Taunton in its landscape setting

- E24. **Viewpoints 18, 19, 20 and 21** represent longer distance views towards Taunton and the site from more elevated locations in the surrounding countryside. Taunton occupies a valley location and buildings in the town centre are often seen against a backdrop of existing built form.
- E25. It is likely that the proposed built form will be perceptible within the context of other development of a similar height and scale meaning that it is considered to have a negligible effect on views. The proposals would not alter the skyline or the perceived extents of built form/the urban area in the view. The proposed finishing materials are generally of natural tones of red or buff brick and are likely to appear more recessive in the view than lighter colours, when seen in the context of other buildings of similar tones. Lighting within the proposed scheme would be seen in the context of existing urban lighting. The effects on Viewpoints 18, 19, 20 and 21 are assessed as negligible.

Visual effects and heritage assets

- E26. Opportunities for views of the church towers in Taunton has been identified as one of the key townscape characteristics, as described in **Section 2**, Planning Policy. This visual assessment considers the nature of the changes to opportunities to view the church towers and other heritage assets as a consequence of the proposals for the Firepool site.
- E27. St James', St Mary's (Taunton Minster) and St George's Churches are the most frequently seen church towers in the assessed views. These church towers are visible in **Viewpoints 1, 2b, 9, 10b, 11 and 12** as well as in the long distance views, **Viewpoints 18, 19, 20 and 21**.
- E28. In many of these views, opportunities to view the church towers would remain substantially unaffected by the proposed development. In **Viewpoint 2b**, views towards the church towers would be substantially obscured by the development proposed. The Firepool masterplan proposes a wide central boulevard with views towards the church towers of St Mary's and St James' in order to aid legibility. This layout seeks to replace the potential loss of townscape legibility as a result of reduced opportunities for views towards the church towers from the train station.
- E29. In long distance views (**Viewpoints 18, 19, 20 and 21**) the proposed built forms would not affect opportunities to see the church towers. Where the site lies within the same part of the view as the church towers, the height of the proposals would not affect the prominence of the church towers in these views. In **Viewpoint 21**, the church towers and the site are seen in separate parts of the view.
- E30. There are some opportunities to view the Grade II Listed Pumping Station from locations in proximity to the site. In **Viewpoints 6 and 7** the proposed development would be likely to obscure views of the Pumping Station. The proposed scheme has created opportunities for users of the site to enjoy views along the eastern section of the proposed Greenway, providing new opportunities to view the Pumping Station in an enhanced townscape setting.

Cumulative effects

- E31. The assessment of potential cumulative effects is being undertaken as part of good practice and at the request of Somerset West and Taunton Deane Council in order to inform the

potential townscape and visual impacts of the proposals set out in the masterplan, in combination with other recent development in the study area.

- E32. In TVIA cumulative effects are defined broadly as *“the cumulative landscape and visual impacts that may result from an individual project that is being assessed interacting with the effects of other proposed developments in the area”* (GLVIA3²).
- E33. Following discussions with Somerset West and Taunton Deane Council, the following proposed development schemes have been considered in the assessment of cumulative effects.
- A) East of Taunton Station: Planning permission has been granted under application number 38/18/0144 for the construction of 44 residential apartments in a six storey building. Part of the wider Firepool regeneration area allocated in the Taunton Area Action Plan.
 - B) Pumping Station: Planning permission granted under application number 38/12/0205 for the conversion of the former Pumping Station into a public house and restaurant.
 - C) West of Station Road: This site is allocated in the Area Action Plan and is one of a suite of Firepool regeneration sites. There are no details available of the scheme likely to come forward on this site. The site may be developed in the medium to long term.
 - D) Obridge Yard: This site is allocated for employment uses in the Area Action Plan and is one of a suite of Firepool regeneration sites. There are no further details available of the scheme likely to come forward on this site. The site may be developed in the medium to long term.
 - E) Lord Ian Botham Stand planning permission granted under application number 38/22/0010 for the construction of a third floor with roof terrace to the Lord Ian Botham Stand.
 - F) Tangier Gas Works: Planning permission granted under application 38/18/0162 for the development of 176 residential dwellings on land to the North of Tangier and Castle Street, Taunton.

Cumulative townscape effects

- E34. The cumulative effect of the schemes identified above would lead to the intensification of built form in this area, particularly as experienced from Trenchards Way. These developments are influencing townscape character in this area and redefining its key characteristics to include development of greater footprint and height, with modern, rectilinear architectural details.
- E35. Views towards heritage features and the Blackdown Hills and Quantock Hills are identified as key townscape characteristics in the Districtwide Design Guide 2021. The increase in scale and height of development as a consequence of the in combination effects of these schemes has the potential to obscure some opportunities for views towards these features. The Firepool Masterplan seeks to retain opportunities to view these features in the layout through the alignment of green corridors. Views towards these features from Trenchards

² ‘Guidelines for Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment’ Third Edition (2013) (GLVIA3) Landscape Institute and the Institute of Environmental Management and Assessment

Way are often obscured in the baseline landscape, however, while there are few details available of the schemes likely to come forward at sites C and D, the cumulative impact of the schemes may lead to reduced opportunities to view these features.

- E36. In combination, the schemes would be likely to create opportunities for a wide range of positive uses in this urban location than is currently the case, bringing purpose and activity to the area and enhancing townscape character. The schemes are part of the wider regeneration of the area and would be seen in the context of development which has been completed, such as Lock House, Canal Court, Waterside House, Water's Edge and the Viridor building, which share similar architectural characteristics and mass. Townscape legibility should be protected by ensuring new character areas are created with distinctive characteristics and opportunities to view landmarks

Cumulative visual effects

- E37. In views from within the urban area, such as **Viewpoint 1**, the roof tops of the Firepool Masterplan scheme and the Tangiers scheme may be seen from the same location, changing the existing skyline in some sectors of the view. From this location, it is likely views of the hills and towards the church towers at St James' and St Mary's (Taunton Minster) would be retained.
- E38. In **Viewpoint 9**, from within the Firepool Masterplan area, the proposed additional floor to the Ian Botham stand would be likely to partially obscure the church towers.
- E39. Views from the edges of the Obridge area of Taunton, represented by **Viewpoints 10a** and **10b** would be likely to experience a greater magnitude of change as a consequence of the cumulative effects of these schemes and a moderate effect on the viewpoints. This assessment is uncertain as there are no details for the allocated employment site at Obridge Yard.
- E40. There are occasional views along the river where the Tangiers scheme, the extension to the Lord Ian Botham stand and the Firepool proposals may be seen in combination in the view, intensifying the level of development visible. However, the built form would be seen within a treed context, softening the effect and mitigating the impact.
- E41. In views of Taunton from the surrounding hills, such as the Quantock Hills and Blackdown Hills, the cumulative changes to the views are unlikely to be noticeable or affect the key positive characteristics of the views.

1 Introduction

1.1 Appointment and scope of work

1.1.1 Lepus Consulting Ltd has been appointed by Somerset West and Taunton Council to carry out a Townscape and Visual Impact Assessment (TVIA) of the masterplan proposals for the site at Firepool, Taunton, Somerset (hereafter, referred to as the 'site').

1.1.2 Lepus Consulting Ltd is an environmental assessment practice, based in Cheltenham, Gloucestershire, specialising in landscape, townscape and ecological impact assessment, Sustainability Appraisal and Habitats Regulations Assessment.

1.1.3 Townscape assessment is a form of landscape assessment. The townscape can be defined as,

*"The landscape within the built-up area, including the buildings, the relationship between them, the different types of urban open spaces, including green spaces and the relationship between buildings and open spaces."*³

1.1.4 The purpose of the TVIA is to determine the likely significant effects of development proposals. Not all townscape and visual effects arising as a result of a particular proposal will be significant. Furthermore, where likely significant effects are predicted, this does not necessarily mean that such effects are unacceptable. The acceptability of townscape and visual effects is a matter to be considered by the decision-making authority, weighed in the planning balance alongside other factors.

1.1 Description of development

1.1.5 The Firepool site has been identified by the Council as a key regeneration area for Taunton over a number of years and the site is identified in the Taunton Town Centre Area Action Plan (2008), further details of which are provided in **Section 2**.

1.1.6 The masterplan proposals for the site have subsequently been updated to focus on a residential-led, mixed use development. A more detailed description of development is provided in **Section 6**. The Firepool Masterplan proposes six key development areas, which comprise a variety of uses including:

- Residential development including apartment blocks and terraces houses;
- Leisure and entertainment (a venue, cinema, hotel and restaurants);
- The Innovation Centre and small offices;
- The retained Great Western Railway Building;
- Pedestrianised Boulevard linking the station and river as well as an east-west Greenway.

1.1.7 The following section sets out the planning policy context to the site.

³ Guidelines for Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment' Third Edition (2013) (GLVIA3) Landscape Institute and the Institute of Environmental Management and Assessment

2 Planning policy context

2.1 Introduction

2.1.1 This study has been undertaken within the context of relevant planning policy. The locations of designations and planning policies, where appropriate, are illustrated on **Figures 2.1** and **2.2**

2.1.2 Planning policy and material considerations are taken from:

- National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) 2021;
- Planning Practice Guidance (PPG);
- Taunton Deane Adopted Core Strategy 2011-2028;
- Taunton Dean Site Allocations and Development Management Plan Adopted in 2016;
- Taunton Town Centre Area Action Plan (2008)
- Taunton Garden Town Vision.

2.2 National Planning Policy Framework

2.2.1 The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF)⁴ acts as guidance for local planning authorities, both in plan preparation and making decisions about planning applications. In relation to landscape and townscape character assessment, in general, the following paragraphs of NPPF 2019 are of relevance,

2.2.2 Paragraph 130

“Planning policies and decisions should ensure that developments:

a) will function well and add to the overall quality of the area, not just for the short term but over the lifetime of the development;

b) are visually attractive as a result of good architecture, layout and appropriate and effective landscaping;

c) are sympathetic to local character and history, including the surrounding built environment and landscape setting, while not preventing or discouraging appropriate innovation or change (such as increased densities);

d) establish or maintain a strong sense of place, using the arrangement of streets, spaces, building types and materials to create attractive, welcoming and distinctive places to live, work and visit;

e) optimise the potential of the site to accommodate and sustain an appropriate amount and mix of development (including green and other public space) and support local facilities and transport networks; and

f) create places that are safe, inclusive and accessible and which promote health and well-being, with a high standard of amenity for existing and future users; and where crime and disorder, and the fear of crime, do not undermine the quality of life or community cohesion and resilience”.

⁴ Ministry of Housing Communities and Local Government (2021) 'National Planning Policy Framework' Available at https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/1005759/NPPF_July_2021.pdf [Date accessed: 21/09/22]

2.2.3 In relation to the protection of valued landscapes and townscapes the NPPF states the following.

2.2.4 Paragraph 174

“Planning policies and decisions should contribute to and enhance the natural and local environment by: a) protecting and enhancing valued landscapes, sites of biodiversity or geological value and soils (in a manner commensurate with their statutory status or identified quality in the development plan)...f) remediating and mitigating despoiled, degraded, derelict, contaminated and unstable land, where appropriate”.

2.2.5 Paragraph 175

“Plans should: distinguish between the hierarchy of international, national and locally designated sites; allocate land with the least environmental or amenity value, where consistent with other policies in this Framework; take a strategic approach to maintaining and enhancing networks of habitats and green infrastructure; and plan for the enhancement of natural capital at a catchment or landscape scale across local authority boundaries”.

2.2.6 Paragraph 176

“Great weight should be given to conserving and enhancing landscape and scenic beauty in National Parks, the Broads and Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty which have the highest status of protection in relation to these issues”.

2.3 Taunton Deane Adopted Core Strategy 2011-2028

2.3.1 Local planning policies of relevance to townscape and visual assessment comprise the following;

2.3.2 DM1 General Requirements:

‘Proposals for development, taking account of any mitigation measures proposed, will be required to meet the following criteria, in addition to any other Development Management policies which apply in a particular case:

- *Make the most effective and efficient use of land, giving preference to the recycling of previously developed land where this is in a sustainable location, and with the density of development varying according to the characteristics of the area, with the higher densities in centres and on public transport routes;*
- *Additional road traffic arising, taking account of any road improvements involved, would not lead to overloading of access roads, road safety problems or environmental degradation by fumes, noise, vibrations or visual impact..*
- *The appearance and character of any affected landscape, settlement, building or street scene would not be unacceptably harmed by the development;*
- *Potential air pollution, water pollution, noise, dust, lighting, glare, heat, vibration and other forms of pollution or nuisance which could arise as a result of the development will not unacceptably harm public health or safety, the amenity of individual dwellings or residential areas or other elements of the local or wider environment...”*

2.3.3 DM 4 Design:

“A sense of place will be encouraged by addressing design at a range of spatial scales - town, district, village, neighbourhood, street, space, building - using planning documents that relate to each scale:

- *Town-wide design strategies for Taunton and Wellington;*
- *Masterplans for the proposed urban extensions and strategic development sites in Taunton Urban Extensions SPD and Wellington;*
- *Design codes to amplify masterplans for the major development sites in Taunton and Wellington;*
- *Village design statements and similar; and*
- *Design briefs for sites and design policies in the Site Allocations and Development Management DPD, including Building for Life and Lifetime Homes criteria”.*

2.3.4 CP 8 Environment:

“The Borough Council will conserve and enhance the natural and historic environment, and will not permit development proposals that would harm these interests or the settings of the towns and rural centres unless other material factors are sufficient to override their importance....

A network of green infrastructure assets has been identified and should be retained and enhanced, including through the development of green wedges and corridors as envisaged through the Taunton Deane Green Infrastructure Strategy. A number of green and blue links are proposed. ... New green links are proposed from the town through the existing green wedges to the Quantock Hills AONB to the north and the Blackdown Hills AONB to the south. Developments will be expected to adopt Natural England's Accessible Natural Green Space Standards (ANGS) and contribute to realising the opportunities identified within the Taunton Deane Green Infrastructure Strategy.

Development will be supported at sustainable locations to improve green infrastructure, public access, visual amenity and the overall quality of the natural environment. Development will need to mitigate and where necessary, compensate for adverse impacts on landscape, protected or important species, important habitats and natural networks, river and ground water quality and quantity so that there are no residual effects...”

2.4 Taunton Dean Site Allocations and Development Management Plan (SAADMP) 2016

2.4.1 The SAADMP sets out a number of Local Plan policies which are relevant to the consideration of townscape character and visual amenity.

2.4.2 Policy EN1: Protection of trees, woodland, orchards and hedgerows,

“Development should seek to minimise impact on trees, woodlands, orchards, historic parklands and hedgerows of value to the areas landscape, character or wildlife and seek to provide net gain where possible. Where the loss is unavoidable, the works (or development) should be timed to avoid disturbance to species that are protected by law. Adequate provision must be made to compensate for this loss. Development which would result in the loss of Ancient Woodland, Aged or Veteran Trees will not be permitted. The proper management of this resource for nature conservation purposes will be sought”.

2.4.3 Policy ENV2 Tree planting within new developments,

“The planting of trees within new developments shall be sought where this would benefit wildlife and biodiversity, enhance landscape or public amenity. Trees should be planted in:

A. Communal areas and along streets or/and between buildings; an

B. On highway verges (depending on safety issues and reasonable cost of future maintenance).

Development proposals should where possible provide a broad mix of native and non-native trees in new developments. The proper management of this resource for nature conservation purposes will be sought”.

2.4.4 Policy ENV5 Development in the vicinity of rivers and canals

“Development proposals on, adjacent to or in the vicinity of rivers, streams and canals shall:

A. Improve public access to, along and from the waterway and improve the environmental quality of the waterway corridor;

B. Protect access for vehicular maintenance and future uses;

C. Optimise views of water space through siting, configuration, and orientation of buildings, recognising that appropriate boundary treatment and access issues may differ (between the towing path and offside of the canal); and

D. Prevent adverse impact on amenity including noise, odour, visual and lighting impacts unless adequate compensation and mitigation is provided as part of the application”.

2.4.5 Policy D1: Taunton’s skyline

“Development which would detract from the distinctive character and attractiveness of Taunton’s skyline will not be permitted”.

2.4.6 Policy D2: Approach routes to Taunton and Wellington

“Development which would harm the visual qualities of routes into and out of Taunton and Wellington will not be permitted”.

2.5 Taunton Town Centre Area Action Plan (AAP) 2008⁵

2.5.1 Section 4 of the AAP relates to wider area called 'Firepool', which comprises a number of sites. Policy Fp1 sets out the requirements for development content within Firepool, as envisaged at the time the document was prepared, in 2008. These requirements have subsequently been amended, details of which are set out in the Masterplan document.

2.5.2 Policy FP 1: Riverside - Development Content

"The Riverside development will provide:

- a. at least 47,000 sq m (net) office space*
- b. approximately 8,000 sq m gross of additional retail and leisure floorspace, of which 4,000 sq m gross should be convenience retailing*
- c. approximately 400 dwellings, including 25% affordable housing*
- d. a 500 space multi-storey car park (screened with single aspect development where it adjoins public space)*
- e. a 3- or 4-star hotel with at least 100 bedroom*
- f. primary healthcare facilities*
- g. the relocation of the Produce Market within the town centre*
- h. a 'boulevard' linking the railway station with the River Tone and Priory Bridge Road*
- i. public conveniences close to public parking and the River Tone, to replace the existing facilities at Canal Road and Priory Bridge Road*
- j. potential for active street level uses at locations shown on the Proposals Map*
- k. high quality riverside promenades*
- l. a contribution towards public art at 0.3% of construction costs".*

2.5.3 The accompanying text states,

2.5.4 Paragraph 4.4,

"The development is likely to require buildings averaging 4-5 storeys, with potential for taller structures (up to 8 storeys) in selected locations. Particular care will be needed to protect views of Taunton's church towers and the Blackdown Hills from key points".

2.5.5 Paragraph 4.6,

"A high-quality public realm will be key to a successful development. There is also a real opportunity to provide distinctive buildings that take advantage of the riverside location, and which strengthen Taunton's identity".

⁵ Taunton Deane Borough Council (2008) 'Taunton Town Centre Area Action Plan' Available at <https://www.somersetwestandtaunton.gov.uk/media/1064/taunton-town-centre-area-action-plan.pdf> [Date accessed: 21/09/22]

2.6 Taunton Town Centre Design Code SPD

2.6.1 The Taunton Town Centre Design Code⁶ is an adopted Supplementary Planning Document (SPD). The 'Landmarks and Legibility Strategy' section identifies landmark buildings, key views and gateways. In relation to the Firepool site, the SPD identifies landmark buildings including the churches of St Mary's and St James', the Pumping Station and the GWR building. A 'key view' is identified through the site from the railway station towards St James' Church as well as the opportunities to view the Pumping Station. The importance of the river corridor for biodiversity, recreation and as a route for sustainable travel, such as walking and cycling is recognised.

2.7 Taunton Garden Town

2.7.1 Taunton was designated a Garden Town in 2017. The designation reflects the Council's commitment to deliver housing growth focusing on a number of new growth areas as well as town centre regeneration.

2.8 Taunton The Vision for our Garden Town

2.8.1 The vision document⁷ has been prepared to communicate with a wide audience about the aspirations for the town. The document is structured under four themes,

- Growing our town greener;
- Branching out;
- Growing quality places; and
- New shoots and blossoms.

2.8.2 Under Our Landscape Roots the document summarises the landscape setting of the town,

"Our town enjoys the enormous privilege of straddling the River Tone as it passes through the Vale between the Quantocks and the Blackdown Hills on its way to the Somerset Levels and moors. The gentle topography, the network of streams and wetlands, the rich agricultural hinterland of pastures and orchards, wetlands and woods and our legacy of landscape features around the town such as our canal connecting to Bridgewater, Norton Hillfort, Hestercombe House and Poundisford deer park, all contribute to our unique character. Within the town the rivers and streams, church towers, remnant farms, castle, barracks, large houses and parks such as Vivary Park, all contribute trees, boundaries, local materials and architectural features that we take for granted but which makes our town Taunton and nowhere else".

2.8.3 The document identifies some of the characteristics of Taunton, in summary,

- Quiet waterways, urban and rural, with well-used bankside footpaths;
- The surrounding hills are visible in views from the town;
- Intimate footpaths and spaces;
- Familiar landmarks provide legibility;
- Characterful, distinctive areas;

⁶ Taunton Deane Borough Council (2008) 'Taunton Town Centre Design Code Supplementary Planning Document' Available at <https://www.somersetwestandtaunton.gov.uk/media/1165/taunton-town-centre-design-code-2008.pdf> [Date accessed: 21/09/22]

⁷ Somerset West and Taunton Council (2019) 'Taunton A Vision for Our Garden Town' Available at <https://www.somersetwestandtaunton.gov.uk/media/1450/taunton-garden-town-vision.pdf> [Date accessed: 21/09/22]

- Distinctive housing areas and terraces;
- With a palette of distinctive local materials.

2.8.4 The Firepool site is identified as having opportunities to put the river at the heart of the town; strengthening connections across the River Tone; using rain gardens to capture run off; opportunities to provide diverse green habitats in public spaces; having a location with good potential for sustainable transport choices and the opportunities to develop both knowledge-based and arts-based industries.

2.9 Taunton Garden Town 2040 Town Centre Prospectus

2.9.1 The Prospectus⁸ follows on from The Vision document and sets out Taunton's unique qualities in relation to its location and the aspirations for its future growth. The document sets out an overall masterplanning vision for the town and identifies a number of key development sites in order to deliver this. The Firepool site is identified as one of the key development sites to help drive forward town centre regeneration.

2.10 Landscape Designations

2.10.1 Taunton lies in a valley location surrounded by the rising land of three main hills. The Quantock Hills Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB) lies to the north, the Blackdown Hills AONB lies to the south and the Brendon Hills (part of Exmoor National Park) lies to the west, shown on **Figure 2.1**.

2.10.2 AONB and National Park designation are the highest levels of protection for landscapes in England, recognising the special qualities of these places. AONB designation protects the land to conserve and enhance its natural beauty. These statutorily protected places are identified as those landscapes whose distinctive character and natural beauty are so outstanding that it is in the nation's interest to safeguard them.

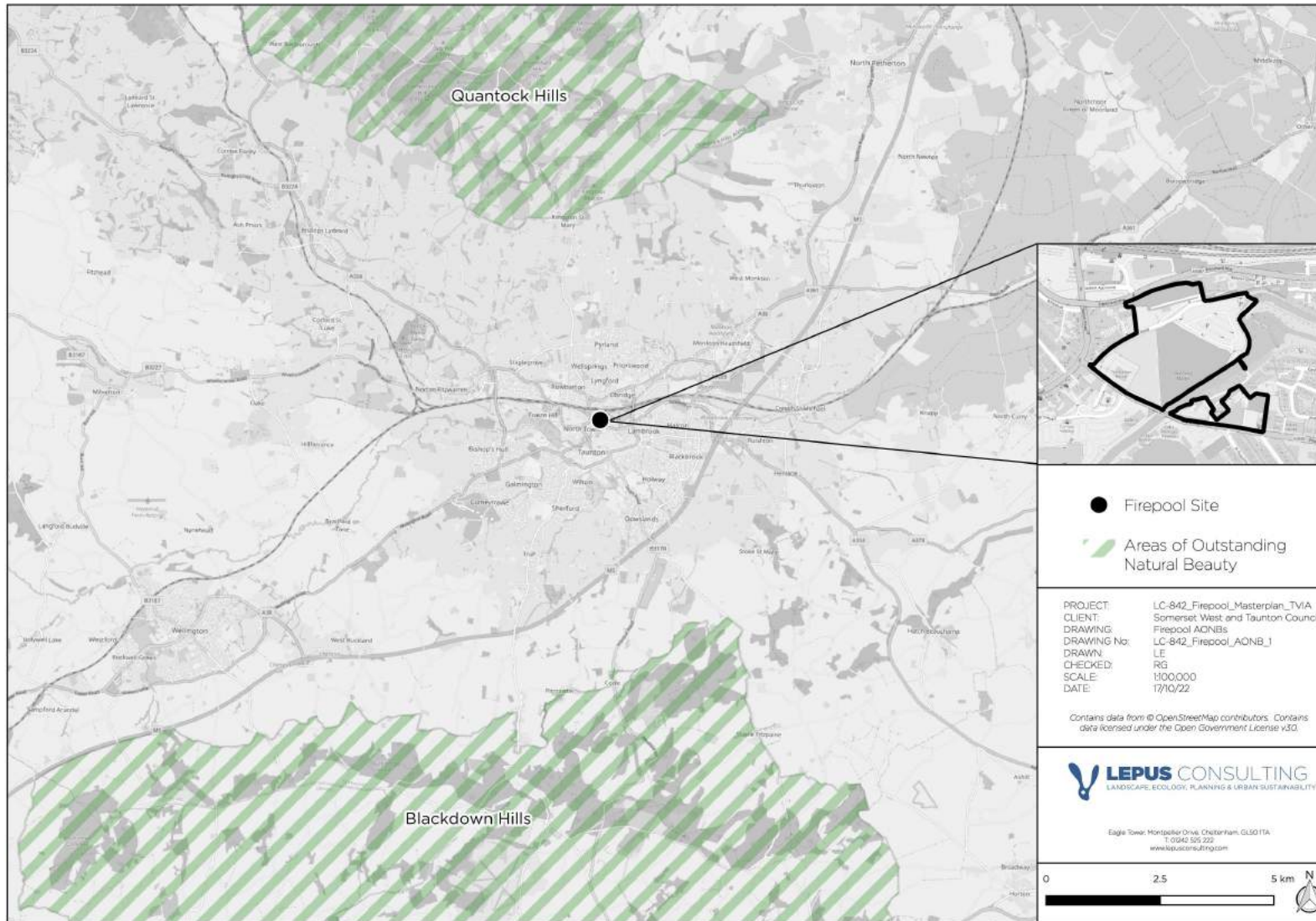
2.10.3 Paragraph 176 of the NPPF sets out the national policy protection for landscapes and their settings,

“Great weight should be given to conserving and enhancing landscape and scenic beauty in National Parks, the Broads and Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty which have the highest status of protection in relation to these issues. The conservation and enhancement of wildlife and cultural heritage are also important considerations in these areas, and should be given great weight in National Parks and the Broads. The scale and extent of development within all these designated areas should be limited, while development within their setting should be sensitively located and designed to avoid or minimise adverse impacts on the designated areas”.

2.10.4 The 'setting' to a protected landscape does not have a defined boundary, it is determined on a case-by-case basis. Development and change outside the designated landscape but which is considered to adversely affect the identified 'special qualities' of the designated landscape is likely to be considered to adversely affect its setting. Such changes can include adverse impacts on views to and from the protected landscape, as well as other changes such reduced sense of tranquillity, amongst others.

⁸ Somerset West and Taunton Council 'Taunton Garden Town 2040 Town Centre Prospectus' Available at <https://www.somersetwestandtaunton.gov.uk/media/2562/tgt-2040-prospectus.pdf> [Date accessed: 06/10/22]

Figure 2.1: Landscape designations



2.10.5 Views towards the site from these designated landscapes will be considered as part of this TVIA.

2.11 Historic environment

2.11.1 There are no designated heritage assets within the site. Within the wider study area there are a number of heritage assets that will be considered in this TVIA. These are shown on **Figure 2.2** and include,

2.11.2

- St Mary's Magdalene Church (Grade I Listed Building).
- St James' Church (Grade II* Listed Building).
- Roman Catholic Church of St Georges Church (Grade II* Listed Building).
- Firepool Pumping Station (Grade II Listed Building).
- Former Shirt and Collar Factory Premises of Barnicotts Limited Printers (Grade II Listed Building).

2.11.3 The St Mary and St James Conservation Area lies approximately 170m to the south of the site at its nearest extent. The Staplegrove Road Conservation Area lies at the western edge of the study area. The previous TVIA found that there are unlikely to be significant effects on views from within these conservation areas as a consequence of the screening effects of intervening built form. These findings have been confirmed by the fieldwork undertaken for this TVIA update.

2.11.4 Undesignated heritage assets of local interest in the study area include the GWR Building to the north of the site and the Firepool Lock and the nearby bridge crossing the Bridgewater and Taunton Canal.

2.11.5 There are no World Heritage Sites, Scheduled Monuments, Registered Parks and Gardens or Registered Battlefields within the study area.

2.11.6 This TVIA considers heritage assets in relation to townscape character and the historical development of the site and local context and in relation to opportunities for views to and from heritage assets. A separate Heritage Statement has been prepared which will consider the potential impacts of the proposed masterplan on the significance of heritage assets.

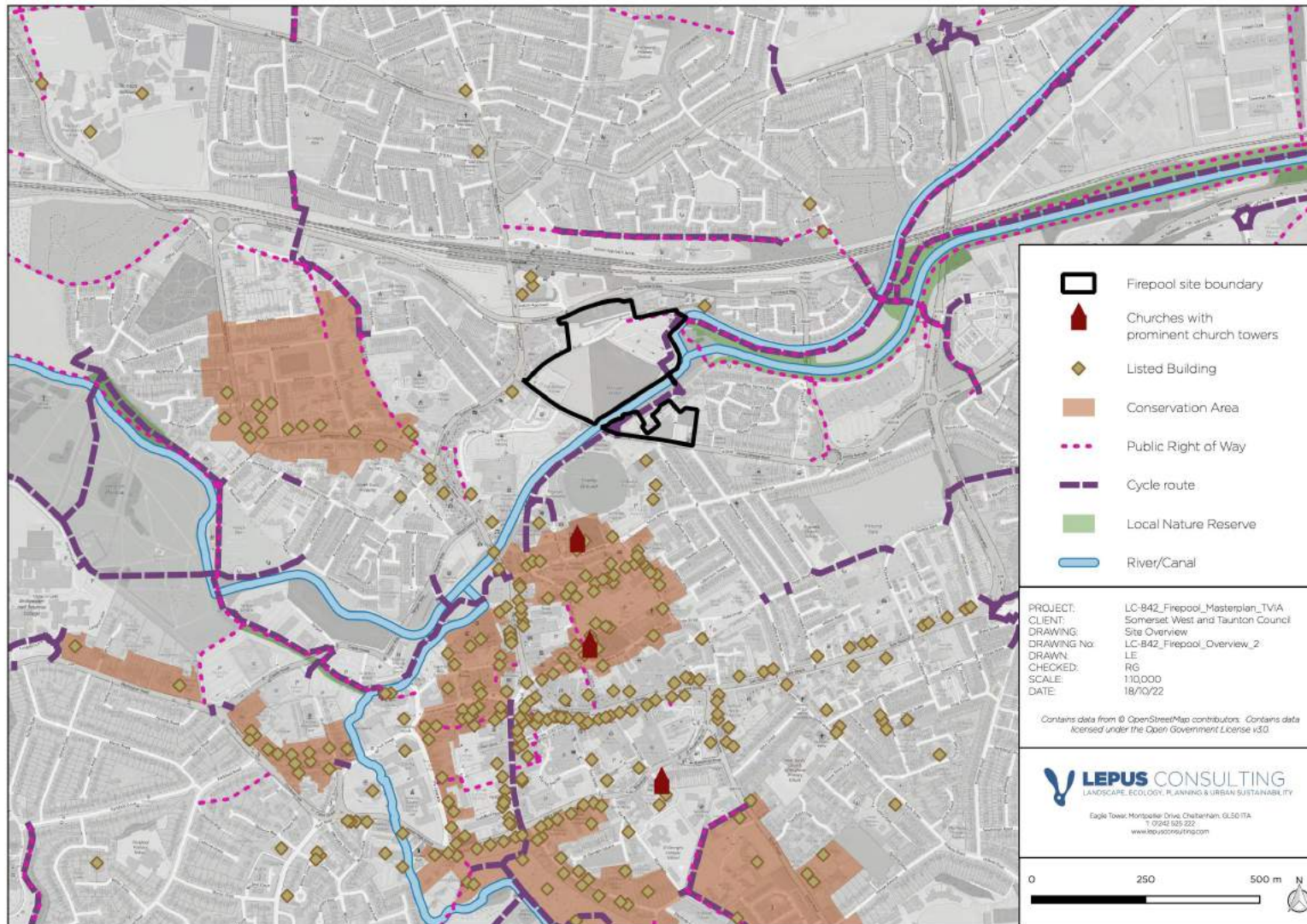
2.12 Recreational routes

2.12.1 Recreational routes in proximity to the site are illustrated on **Figure 2.2**.

2.12.2 A Public Right of Way with bridleway rights connects the eastern part of Canal Road to the bridge crossing the canal at Firepool Lock. Most bridleways can also be used for cycling.

2.12.3 There are informal routes on both banks of the River Tone within the site boundary which include Sustrans/National Cycling route 3 and the route of the Long Distance Path known as the East Deane Way. These routes are considered in relation to their influences on townscape character and the changes to views for users of these recreational routes.

Figure 2.2: Designations and Public Rights of Way



3 Assessment methodology

3.1 TVIA process

3.1.1 This TVIA has been written following the guidance and advice set out in the following documents:

- ‘Guidelines for Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment’ Third Edition (2013) (GLVIA3)⁹;
- GLVIA3 Clarifications¹⁰;
- ‘Townscape Character Assessment’ Technical Information Note 05/2017;¹¹
- ‘An approach to Landscape Character Assessment’ (2014)¹²;
- ‘Visual Representation of Development Proposals’ Technical Guidance Note 06/19¹³.

3.1.2 The process of landscape and townscape assessment seeks to establish the characteristics and visual baseline at the site and in the surrounding area; identify the townscape and visual receptors likely to be affected by the proposed changes; describes the potential effects of the development proposed on the identified receptors and proposes mitigation, where appropriate, to prevent, reduce or offset adverse impacts. Residual effects, following the implementation of any proposed mitigation, are also described.

3.2 The study area

3.2.1 Experience of undertaking TVIAs for similar types of development indicates that many of the effects of the proposals are likely to be more noticeable within 5km of the site. There may be opportunities to view the proposals from a greater distance, in this case from the elevated landscapes of the AONBs lying to the north and south, however, the likelihood of significant effects decrease with distance as the relative scale and visibility of the proposals are reduced.

3.2.2 The desk-based baseline data collection stage focused on a study area of 5km from the site boundary. For more sensitive landscape and visual receptors, such as nationally designated AONBs, a wider search area of up to 15km from the site has been used, in order to ensure that more sensitive receptors are considered in the assessment.

⁹ ‘Guidelines for Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment’ Third Edition (2013) (GLVIA3) Landscape Institute and the Institute of Environmental Management and Assessment

¹⁰ GLVIA3 Clarifications Available at <https://www.landscapeinstitute.org/technical/glvia3-panel/glvia3-clarifications/> [Date accessed: 28/09/22]

¹¹ Landscape Institute (2018) ‘Townscape Character Assessment’ Technical Information Note 05/2017 Revised April 2018 Available at <https://landscapewpstorage01.blob.core.windows.net/www-landscapeinstitute-org/2018/04/tin-05-2017-townscape.pdf> [Date accessed: 28/09/22]

¹² ‘An approach to Landscape Character Assessment’ (2014) Natural England Available at https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/691184/landscape-character-assessment.pdf [Date accessed: 28/09/22]

¹³ ‘Visual Representation of Development Proposals’ Technical Guidance Note 06/19 Available at https://landscapewpstorage01.blob.core.windows.net/www-landscapeinstitute-org/2019/09/LI_TGN-06-19_Visual_Representation.pdf [Date accessed: 28/09/22]

3.2.3 The study area is refined during the assessment process and comprises the site and surroundings likely to be affected by the development proposals, in relation to either townscape, landscape or visual effects.

3.3 Townscape and landscape effects

3.3.1 Townscape and landscape effects derive from changes in the physical environment and the way it is experienced, which may give rise to changes in the character and quality of the townscape or surrounding landscape. These can include direct effects on specific elements (such as loss of buildings, trees or other vegetation) or wider effects on character, through to changes in tranquillity and management.

3.3.2 Townscape assessment studies include:

- Direct effects upon specific elements, especially prominent and eye-catching features;
- Change in character, which is the distinct, recognisable and consistent pattern of elements that creates distinctiveness and a sense of place;
- Subtle effects that contribute towards the experience of intangible characteristics such as tranquillity and cultural associations; and
- Effects on designated landscapes, heritage assets and other acknowledged special areas of interest.

3.4 Visual effects

3.4.1 Baseline studies for the visual assessment aim to establish the area in which the development may be visible, the different types of visual receptors who may be affected and the nature of the views towards the proposals.

3.4.2 Visibility mapping involves identifying the land surrounding the site from where there may be views towards the proposed development. Digital approaches to visibility mapping can use 'bare earth' elevation data, using Digital Terrain Model (DTM), or Digital Surface Modelling (DSM) which takes into account some of the screening effects of buildings and vegetation to map areas which have theoretical visibility of the proposals.

3.4.3 A Zone of Theoretical Visibility (ZTV) has been generated to show the theoretical visibility of the tallest elements of the proposed scheme. Six transmitter heights have been used in the modelling process to represent the heights of the main development blocks in the proposals. The output is illustrated in **Appendix A**.

3.4.4 The ZTV has been generated based on DSM data within the orange dashed area shown on the output. OS Terrain 50 height data has been used outside of this area. DSM data is purchased online. It is derived from aerial radar surveys carried out in 2003/4 and is vertically accurate to +/-1m. DSM data takes account of buildings and vegetation, as surveyed. The OS Terrain data is terrain only and does not account for the screening effects of buildings and vegetation. The ZTV serves as a basis to inform the field work and the selection of viewpoints.

3.4.5 This visual assessment has been undertaken by walking and driving, as appropriate, local highways, rights of way and visiting other publicly accessible locations.

3.4.6 The baseline study will identify the range of people likely to experience views towards the site and therefore experience potential changes in visual amenity. Visual receptors are likely to have different responses to the change in the view depending both on the visual context and the purpose for being at that particular place, for example, recreation, passing through on roads or other forms of transport, at work or undertaking activities where there is a specific focus on enjoying the landscape.

3.4.7 Viewpoints are selected to represent the range of views available towards the proposals, taking account of the different types of activity being undertaken; the direction and distance towards the site; the nature of the view (static or sequential); and, the type of view (glimpsed or panoramic).

3.5 The nature of the effect

3.5.1 Both townscape and visual effects can be adverse, beneficial or neutral, short, medium or long term, permanent or temporary, reversible or irreversible, direct (an effect that is directly attributable to the proposed development) or indirect (effects resulting indirectly from the development as a consequence of the direct effects) and cumulative, relating to additional changes that may arise when the proposed development is considered in conjunction with other similar developments.

3.6 Level of effects

3.6.1 The criteria, against which the effects of proposed development on the site are assessed, are summarised below and explained in terms of the sensitivity (or nature) of receptors and magnitude (or nature) of the effects.

3.6.2 The relationship between sensitivity and magnitude is sometimes presented in the form of a matrix. GLVIA3 (paragraphs 3.34 to 3.36) recommends that in the reporting of identified effects the main aim should be to draw out the key issues and ensure that the level of the effects and the potential for reducing any adverse effects is clearly set out. Tables and matrices may be used to support the narrative text. This guidance also states that when drawing distinctions between the levels of effects 'word scales' can be used. This assessment will use narrative text and word scales to describe the effects of the proposed development.

3.7 Sensitivity, susceptibility and value

3.7.1 Sensitivity refers to the wide array of factors that determine the nature of the receptor (townscape, landscape or visual) likely to be affected. The nature of the receptor's sensitivity should be assessed by combining judgements about its susceptibility to the type of change arising from the specific proposal with judgements about the value attached to the receptor.

3.7.2 The susceptibility of landscape receptors is defined as "the ability of the landscape receptor...to accommodate the proposed development without undue consequences for the maintenance of the baseline situation and/or the achievement of landscape planning policies and strategies"¹⁴.

¹⁴ Guidelines for Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment' (GLVIA) Third Edition (2013) Landscape Institute and the Institute of Environmental Management and Assessment

3.7.3 Susceptibility varies between receptor types, for example, views from PRow would normally be assessed as being more susceptible to change than views from roads. Factors affecting the susceptibility of the receptors include:

- Quality of character, resources and views;
- Importance and rarity of special townscape or landscape elements;
- Ability of the townscape to accommodate change;
- Type and estimated number of receptors/population;
- Expectations of visual receptors at that location;
- Availability and amenity of alternative views;
- Duration and frequency of views; and
- Degree of visibility.

3.7.4 The value of receptors is attached in a relative scale by society depending on a variety of considerations including international, national or local designations, the contribution of the townscape or landscape to a community or its cultural significance e.g. places reflected in literature, poetry and art etc.

3.7.5 Landscape value for each receptor is largely defined by the following scale:

- Internationally/nationally valued landscape, for example, World Heritage Sites; National Parks, Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty;
- Locally designated and locally valued landscapes (for example, Areas of Great Landscape Value and Areas of High Landscape Value) or landscapes of equivalent value where local townscapes and landscape designations have not been identified; and
- Landscape of limited value, for example, degraded landscapes understood as not being valued by local communities.

3.7.6 **Table 3.1** presents a guide to the way in which this TVIA document assesses landscape sensitivity. The criteria used to consider the sensitivity of visual receptors is provided in **Table 3.2**.

Table 3.1: Townscape character sensitivity criteria

Sensitivity	Typical criteria
Very high	<p>Areas of very strong positive character that are highly valued by virtue of their scenic quality. Key characteristics of the landscape and townscape are very vulnerable and could be impacted by the change.</p> <p>The value of landscapes is often recognised through designations such as National Parks or Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty.</p> <p>Buildings, open spaces, or other features, which contribute positively to the character of a Conservation Area and may be designated.</p>
High	<p>Undesignated or locally designated landscapes of very strong positive character that are valued by virtue of their scenic quality. Key characteristics of the landscape are vulnerable and could be impacted by the change.</p> <p>Buildings, open spaces, or other features of townscape merit outside of Conservation Areas and may be designated.</p> <p>Buildings or groups of buildings, and open spaces which have won awards for</p>

	<p>architecture or design quality, such as Civic Trust or RIBA awards.</p> <p>Buildings, open spaces, or other features identified on a local list.</p> <p>Greenspaces or other open spaces, which are designated in the Local Plan or have won awards, such as Green Flag or Landscape Institute awards.</p>
Medium	<p>Areas that exhibit positive character but may have some evidence of alteration to/ degradation of/ erosion of features resulting in areas of more mixed character. Can also apply to areas with evidence of degraded character that remain valued by local communities.</p>
Low	<p>Key characteristics of the landscape are very robust and will not be adversely impacted by the proposed change or areas that have been subject to a high level of alteration, degradation, or erosion of features. Scope for positive enhancement frequently occurs.</p>

Table 3.2: Visual receptor sensitivity criteria

Sensitivity	Typical criteria
Very high	<p>Views of very high value or susceptibility to change, for example, views from within nationally designated landscapes, such as AONBs or National Parks, where appreciation of the view is a key part of the recreational experience.</p> <p>Views from National Trails.</p> <p>Designed views, which may be to or from a designated heritage asset or other important viewpoint, where views of the surroundings are an important contributor to the experience.</p> <p>Key recreational viewpoint shown, for example, through the presence of interpretation boards describing the view, references in literature, art, guidebooks or tourist maps.</p> <p>Protected views recognised by planning policy designation.</p> <p>May include views from residential properties, especially from rooms normally occupied in waking or daylight hours.</p>
High	<p>Highly sensitive visual receptors include people spending time pursuing outdoor recreation associated with enjoying the landscape as part of their recreational experience. They include walkers, horse riders and cyclists using Public Rights of Ways, bridleways and rural cycleways within locally designated or undesignated landscapes.</p> <p>Views identified on mapping or in planning policy as being a specific location to enjoy a view in an undesignated landscape or a landscape of moderate value.</p> <p>Other receptors in this category include visitors to heritage assets, or other attractions where the views of surroundings provide a contribution to the experience.</p>
Medium	<p>GLVIA3 suggests that drivers and other road users in vehicles are considered as medium level visual receptors.</p>
Low	<p>View of clearly lower value and susceptibility. Examples may include road users on main road routes (motorways/A roads), likely to be travelling at speed and in an undesignated landscape.</p> <p>Travellers on rail routes where appreciation of the view is unlikely to be considered a key part of the experience.</p> <p>People at their place of work and views from commercial buildings where views of the surrounding landscape may have some limited importance.</p> <p>People engaged in outdoor sport, which does not depend or involve appreciation of the</p>

	views of landscape or townscape.
--	----------------------------------

3.8 Magnitude

3.8.1 Magnitude refers to the nature of the change likely to occur as a consequence of the proposed development. Factors affecting judgements about the magnitude of change for assessing landscape and visual impacts include:

- Compatibility of the proposals with the surrounding townscape or landscape;
- Duration of impacts under construction and operational phases;
- Size and scale of development;
- Geographical extent of the area over which it will occur;
- Reversibility of change;
- Viewing distance; and
- Potential obstruction of view.

3.9 Duration of effects

3.9.1 The following categories have been used in this assessment in order to describe the duration of any identified effects.

- Long term (15 years+);
- Medium term (5 to 15 years);
- Short term (1 year to 5 years); and
- Temporary (up to 12 months).

3.10 Reversibility

3.10.1 The following categories have been used in this assessment in order to describe the reversibility of any identified effects.

- Irreversible: Unlikely restoration to baseline conditions e.g. major road corridor, power station, urban development etc;
- Reversible: Restoration to baseline conditions is possible e.g. agricultural buildings which are easily demolished leaving little change to the baseline landscape;
- Reversible after decommissioning: Restoration to similar baseline conditions after decommissioning following a fixed period of operation e.g. wind energy development;
- Partially reversible: Restoration to a different baseline following a fixed period of operation e.g. mineral workings; and
- Entirely reversible: e.g. temporary structures.

3.10.2 **Table 3.3** presents a guide to the way in which this TVIA determines magnitude of change.

Table 3.3: Magnitude of change criteria for landscape character and visual receptors

Magnitude of change	Landscape Receptor Criteria	Visual Receptor Criteria
High	<p>Total loss of or major alteration to key elements, features or characteristics of the baseline landscape or introduction of elements considered to be totally uncharacteristic when set within the attributes of the receiving landscape or view.</p> <p>The effects would be long term and/or irreversible.</p>	<p>Full, open views experienced for the majority of a journey or full duration of an activity. The proposals would be close, direct and/or substantially dominate the view.</p> <p>The proposals introduce a new type of element into the view which may not be characteristic of the baseline view.</p> <p>The effects would be long term and/or irreversible.</p>
Medium	<p>Noticeable loss of, or alteration to, one or more key elements, features or characteristics of the baseline and/or introduction of elements that may be prominent but may not necessarily be considered to be substantially uncharacteristic when set within the attributes of the receiving landscape.</p> <p>Or, the effects would be medium term and/or partially reversible.</p>	<p>Noticeable views of the proposals experienced for part of a journey or activity.</p> <p>The proposals introduce a new type of element into the view which may not be characteristic of the baseline view. The proposals are noticeable but not dominating.</p> <p>The views would be middle distance, partially oblique and/or partially occupied by the proposed development.</p> <p>Or, the effects would be medium term and/or partially reversible.</p>
Low	<p>Minor loss or alteration to one or more key elements/features/ characteristics of the baseline. Introduction of elements that are generally characteristic with the surrounding townscape.</p> <p>Or, the effects would be short term and/or reversible.</p>	<p>Partial visibility of the proposals experienced for a short part of a journey or activity. The views would be middle or long distance, partially oblique and/or the proposals comprise a very small element of the overall view.</p> <p>The proposals introduce similar types of elements into the view which are already characteristic of the baseline view.</p> <p>Or, the effects would be short term and/or reversible.</p>
Very low	<p>Very minor loss or alteration to one or more key elements/features/ characteristics of the baseline townscape. Introduction of elements characteristic with the surrounding landscape.</p> <p>Or, the effects would be very short term and/or entirely reversible.</p>	<p>The views would be long distance and/or oblique and/or only a very small part of the view would be occupied by the proposed development. Or very brief glimpsed view as part of a sequential experience/journey.</p> <p>Or, the effects would be very short term and/or entirely reversible.</p>
None	<p>No loss or alteration to key elements/features/ characteristics of the baseline townscape.</p>	<p>Introduction of elements characteristic with the baseline view in terms of character and scale. The baseline view remains substantially unchanged.</p>

3.11 Residual effects

3.11.1 Residual effects are those that remain once the mitigation measures have taken effect. Unless otherwise stated, all effects described within this assessment represent residual effects.

3.12 Level of effect

3.12.1 By combining the assessment of sensitivity and magnitude is it possible to predict the level of the effects. Effects can be categorised as negligible, minor, moderate, major or severe/superior (for adverse/beneficial effects respectively).

3.12.2 The nature of an effect may be negative (adverse) or positive (beneficial); direct, indirect, secondary or cumulative and be either permanent or temporary (short, medium or long term). Effects may also arise at different scales (local, regional or national).

3.12.3 **Table 3.4** presents a ‘word scale’ approach to the level of effects on townscape character and visual receptors.

3.12.4 The level of effects that is considered to be significant is a matter of judgement. As set out in the GLVIA3 Clarifications¹⁵,

“It is for the assessor to define what the assessor considers significant...Depending on the means of judgement and terminology (which should be explicitly set out), effects of varying degrees of change (or levels of change), may be derived. The assessor should then establish (and it is for the assessor to decide and explain) the degree or level of change that is considered to be significant”.

3.12.5 Significant effects are considered to be more likely to occur in townscapes/landscapes and in views which are considered to be of very high sensitivity to change, or where there is predicted to be a very high magnitude of change to the receptors and their key characteristics. In this TVIA, significant effects are considered to be those of major to severe level adverse effects, or moderate, major to superior beneficial effects, as described in **Table 3.4**.

Table 3.4: Word scales describing the level of effects on landscape character and visual receptors

Level of effect	Definition
Severe adverse	A proposed scheme would result in effects that: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Are at a complete variance with the landform, scale and pattern of the townscape or landscape; • Would permanently degrade, diminish or destroy the integrity of valued characteristic features, elements and/or their settings; • Would cause a very high quality landscape to be permanently changed and its quality diminished; or • Would dominate views and would be wholly out of character with the existing situation, the changes would be experienced by a very large

¹⁵ GLVIA3 Clarifications available at <https://www.landscapeinstitute.org/technical/glvia3-panel/glvia3-clarifications/> [Accessed on 03/03/20]

	<p>number of people, and/or the visual receptors would be of high sensitivity to the changes.</p>
Major adverse	<p>A proposed scheme would result in effects that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Are at a considerable variance to the townscape or landscape degrading the integrity of the landscape; • Cannot be fully mitigated and may cumulatively amount to a severe adverse effect; • Would be substantially damaging to a high-quality landscape; or • Would be prominent and contrasting with the existing views, the changes would be experienced by a large number of people, and/or the visual receptors would be of high sensitivity to the changes.
Moderate adverse	<p>A proposed scheme would result in effects that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Would be out of scale with the townscape/landscape or at odds with the local pattern and landform; • Leave an adverse impact on a townscape/landscape of recognised quality; or • Be noticeable in views but not dominating. The changes would be experienced by a medium number of people, and/or the visual receptors would be of medium sensitivity to the changes.
Minor adverse	<p>A proposed scheme would result in effects that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Do not quite fit into the landform and scale of the landscape; • Slightly affect an area of recognised character; • Slightly alter the identified key characteristics of the townscape landscape; or • Would result in small changes to the views, the changes would be experienced by a small number of people, and/or the visual receptors would be of low sensitivity to the changes.
Negligible	<p>A proposed scheme would result in effects that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Complement the scale, landform and pattern of the townscape or landscape; • Maintain existing landscape quality; or • Would be imperceptible in views, the changes would be experienced by a very small number of people, and/or the visual receptors would be of very low sensitivity to the changes.
Minor beneficial	<p>A proposed scheme would result in effects that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improve the townscape or landscape quality and character;

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fit in with the scale, landform and pattern of the townscape and landscape; • Enable the restoration of valued characteristic features partially lost through other land uses; or • Would result in small beneficial changes to the views, the changes would be experienced by a small number of people, and/or the visual receptors would be of low sensitivity to the changes.
<p>Moderate beneficial</p>	<p>A proposed scheme would result in effects that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Enhance the positive key characteristics of the townscape or landscape; • Improve the quality of the townscape through removal of damage caused by existing land uses; or • Would be a noticeable beneficial change in views but not dominating, the changes would be experienced by a medium number of people, and/or the visual receptors would be of medium sensitivity to the changes.
<p>Major beneficial</p>	<p>A proposed scheme would result in effects that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Enhance or redefine the townscape character in a positive manner; • Repair or restore townscape or landscape badly damaged or degraded through previous uses; or • Would lead to prominent beneficial effects on the existing views, the changes would be experienced by a large number of people, and/or the visual receptors would be of high sensitivity to the changes.
<p>Superior beneficial</p>	<p>A proposed scheme would result in effects that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Enhance and redefine townscape or landscape character in a positive manner, making a contribution at a national or international scale; or • Would lead to a substantial restoration of a view compared with the existing situation, the changes would be experienced by a very large number of people, and/or the visual receptors would be of high sensitivity to the changes.

4 Baseline: Townscape character

4.1 Townscape character assessment

- 4.1.1 The description of baseline townscape character is drawn from observations carried out during the site visit, the desktop review of relevant character studies and by reviewing aerial photography.
- 4.1.2 The different individual components of a townscape set one area apart from those adjacent to it and make its character unique to the people who live in or visit the area. Recognition of this character variation requires an understanding of the influences that give different areas a unique 'sense of place'.
- 4.1.3 Townscape character assessment is a process of characterising a townscape and of informing decision-makers when considering effects on character.
- 4.1.4 This section reviews existing landscape and townscape character assessments that relate to the site and the locality.

4.2 Published landscape and townscape character assessments

National level

- 4.2.1 At a national level, landscape character assessment has been defined by the assessment work of Natural England, which has divided England into areas of similar landscape character called National Character Areas (NCAs).
- 4.2.2 The site is located within NCA146 'Vale of Taunton and Quantock Fringes'. This is an extensive character area which lies between Exmoor NCA in the west, the Somerset Levels and Moors NCA in the east and the Blackdowns NCA to the south. Relevant key characteristics of the NCA include the following:
- *"A number of tree-lined streams and rivers wind through the area. The River Tone and its tributaries drain the area to the south.... The Bridgwater and Taunton Canal runs across the south of the area".*
 - *"Woodland cover is generally low, at 6 per cent, although the area has a wooded feel as there are many hedgerow trees (such as oak), orchards, remnants of parkland, small woodlands with ash and oak and bankside trees such as alder and, rarely, black poplar".*
 - *"The area was once characterised by cider apple orchards".*
 - *"Scattered patches of floristically rich lowland meadow and limestone grasslands characterised by lesser knapweed, field scabious, milkwort and thyme".*
 - *"Local vernacular of red sandstone buildings and prominent perpendicular church towers".*
 - *"Exmoor, the Blackdown Hills and the Quantock Hills provide a backdrop to the area and expansive views from these uplands emphasise the lush pastoral nature of this area".*

- *“The M5 motorway runs east-west (as does the main rail line), linking several of the larger towns, including Taunton and Wellington. Incremental development and industrialisation from the towns are evident, especially adjacent to the motorway”.*

District level

4.2.3 The site is located within the Landscape Character Type ‘Urban’ as described by the Taunton Deane Landscape Character Assessment (2011). Relevant extracts reflect many of the characteristics of the wider landscape identified in NCA146 and include:

- *“A low-lying vale landscape centred around the River Tone and the County town of Taunton”.*
- *“A flat to gently undulating terrain with an elevation ranging from (15m-50m AOD)”.*
- *“Principally underlain by a solid surface geology of Keuper Marls giving rise to well-drained coarse and loamy soils (Grades 1, 2 and 3 agricultural land)”.*
- *“Strong sense of being with a vale or wide, shallow bowl-like landform – with the surrounding Quantock Hills AONB and Blackdown Hills AONB offering visual and physical containment”.*
- *“Mixed agricultural land use system – dairying, stock rearing, cereals and fruit cropping (orchards)”.*
- *“Notable rural-urban fringe character around the main towns of Taunton and Wellington”.*
- *“Varied building age and vernacular – in the north red sandstone is prevalent but in the south, blue lias is more common. Painted stone and clay tiles are common throughout”.*
- *“A number of hills that have been designated as Special Landscape Features make an important contribution to the wider landscape eg Knowle Hill, Norton Camp Hill, Rag Hill, the ridge between Stonegallows Hill and Lipe Hill and the river cliff at Bradford-on-Tone”.*
- *“The A38 and M5 motorway have a visual and aural influence on many parts of the vale”.*

Supplementary Planning Documents

4.2.4 The Districtwide Design Guide¹⁶ is an adopted SPD which seeks to improve the quality of the design of new development in the district and supports design which is locally distinctive and responds to local character and sense of place.

4.2.5 The Districtwide Design Guide summarises the character of the District, extracts from which are provided below.

¹⁶ Somerset West and Taunton Deane Council (2021) ‘Districtwide Design Guide’ Supplementary Planning Document Available at <https://www.somersetwestandtaunton.gov.uk/media/3285/districtwide-design-guide-adopted-dec2021.pdf> [Date accessed: 14/09/22]

Landscape, topography and geology

“The District, being quite extensive, is composed of a rich variety of geology and landscape types. It ranges in elevation from the levels and moors to the high ridges of the Quantocks, Blackdowns and Exmoor.

A low-lying, typically flat floodplain landform. Defined by the tributaries and main watercourse of the River Tone.

The town is encircled by ridges and hills which provide visual containment to much of the urban area of Taunton.

At Taunton, the influence of the urban area is strongly felt where relatively recent and ongoing development on or adjacent to the floodplain has increased the sense of human intervention into this natural bowl”.

Settlement types and form

“The settlement of Taunton has early medieval origins and an historic core of Castle and Priory lying on the south bank of the River Tone and has expanded in all directions in key phases most notably the 18th and 19th century...The stone church towers of Taunton are particularly prominent in the town and are glimpsed throughout and for some distance from the town and on approach”.

Built form

“There is a wide variety of built form throughout the town with perhaps the best representative historic industrial buildings surviving... in the District. These are on both a modest scale (workshops, stables and outbuildings) and larger scale (former shirt and textile factories and buildings relating to the railway/canal infrastructure)

The terrace house on both small... and large scales... is a notable building type”.

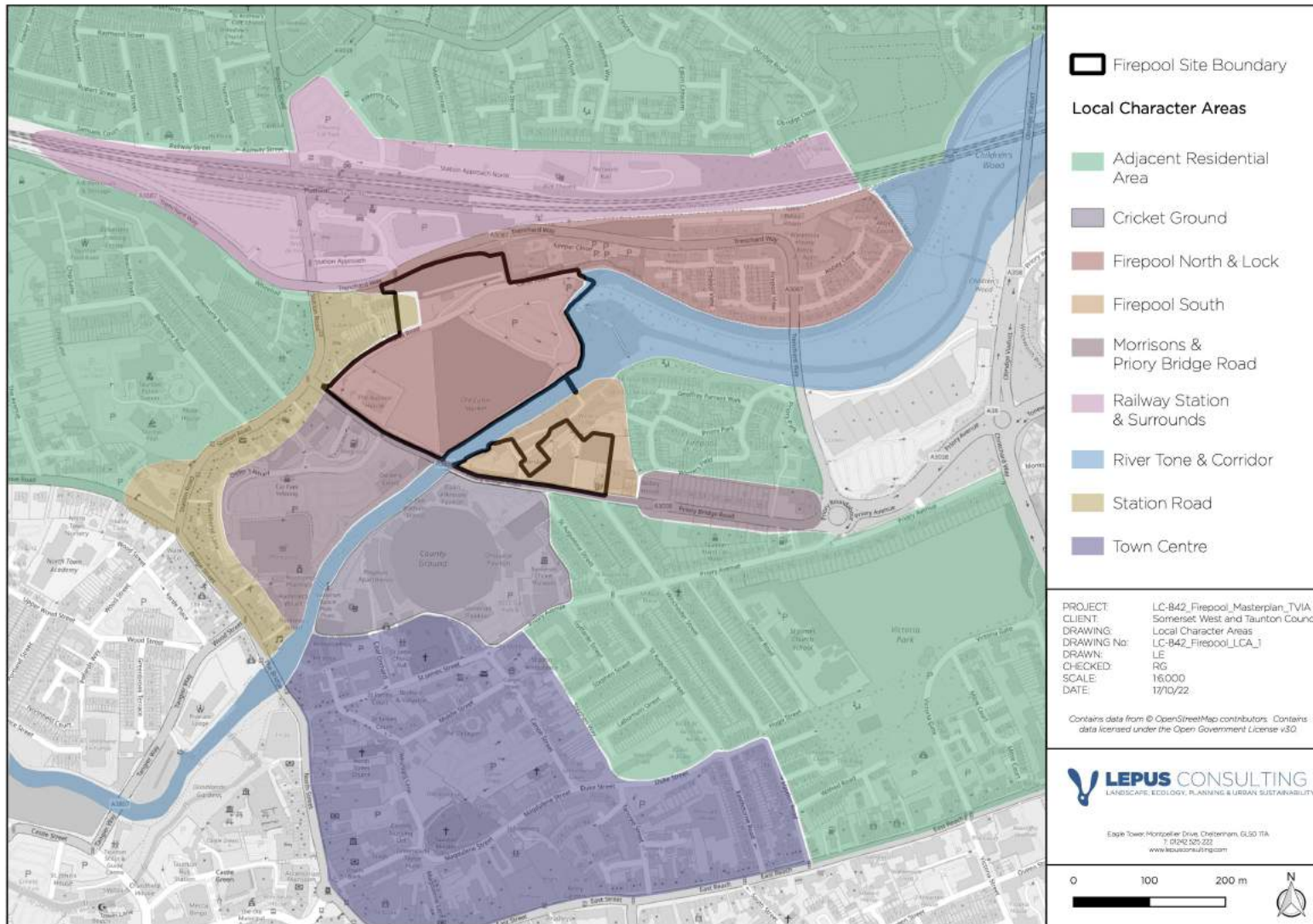
Views

“Views within this character area are often constrained by development and/or the relative flat character of the topography, with the exception of some of the northern suburbs which sit on the base of the Quantocks. The tall square church towers and a spire are always strong landmarks and define the ‘centre’ of the settlement. Views out to ridges particularly to the south (to the Blackdown Hills) are often combined and frame the views to church towers. Taunton has benefitted from a lack of tall buildings which has helped maintain the dominance of the church towers. Views into the town are equally important, such as those from Cotlake Hill for example which is strongly characterised by one of the number of green wedges particularly to the south of the town which form part of its setting”.

4.3 Local Townscape Character Assessment

4.3.1 A TVIA was prepared to accompany an earlier scheme proposed for this site. The TVIA identified eight local Townscape Character Areas (TCAs) which have the potential to be affected by development proposed within the site. The locations of these TCAs are illustrated on **Figure 4.1**. This TVIA has been prepared based on updating both the baseline descriptions and impact assessments for these TCAs.

Figure 4.1: Local Townscape character areas



4.4 Firepool North and Firepool Lock TCA

4.4.1 Firepool North and Firepool Lock TCA lies to the north of Taunton town centre bounded by the railway line to the north with the Bridgewater and Taunton Canal to the east, the River Tone to the south and Priory Bridge Road to the west.

4.4.2 The landform is largely flat over the majority of the area, lying at approximately 14m AOD. There is a significant embankment and level change of approximately four to five metres north of Canal Road, where the landform rises towards Trenchard Way. Planning permission has been granted for an application for drainage works and changes to ground levels. Future ground level across much of the site is likely to be approximately 16mAOD.

Historic development and assets

4.4.3 The visible elements of the historic character of this TCA strongly relate to the Victorian expansion of Taunton following the construction of the Bridgewater and Taunton Canal and later the railway line and station.

4.4.4 The development of these key transport connections served to increase trading links and associated employment opportunities. First Edition mapping from 1889 shows the development of terraced housing along Canal Road and Station Road as Taunton expanded eastwards, with larger dwellings to the west of Station Road. The construction of the railway appeared to lead to the infilling of a section of the Grand Western Canal to the west of the site. Firepool Pumping Station is shown to the east of the site, which supplied water for railway services.

4.4.5 Mapping from 1904 shows further expansion of railway infrastructure which led to the infilling of the Grand Western Canal within the site and a goods shed is shown in this location. Much of the site remains substantially open and a football ground is shown to the south of the site.

4.4.6 Mapping from 1930 shows the newly constructed Priory Bridge Road to the west, the cattle market to the south of the site and a number of structures to the south of Canal Road, possibly relating to the Cattle Market.

4.4.7 The GWR Building was built in the early 1930s as part of the improvements to the railway goods services. The Heritage Assessment¹⁷ accompanying the Firepool Masterplan states that this building type is well-represented form and lacks architectural distinctiveness, however, it does provide visual heritage interest in relation to the expansion of the railways in this era.

4.4.8 By 1947-65 there appears to be further expansion of the cattle market with various related structures and car parking occupying much of the central parts of the site. By 1970 the mapping shows the realignment of the River Tone to its current course, as part of a drainage and flood mitigation strategy for the town. The cattle market was relocated in the early 21st century in anticipation of redeveloping the site.

¹⁷ Cotswold Archaeology (2022) 'Firepool, Taunton, Somerset, Heritage Assessment' CA Report: CR1184_1

Figure 4.2: Photograph of Firepool north TCA



Figure 4.3: Photograph of Firepool north TCA



Movement and connectivity

- 4.4.9 The main road network in this TCA comprises Priory Bridge Road to the west of the site and Station Road to the north west. Trenchards Way lies to the north of the site and forms the Northern Inner Distributor Road (NIDR). The road network appears well-used and audible vehicle noise reduces the sense of tranquillity in these locations. Canal Road lies to the north of the site, connecting Priory Bridge Road in the west to Firepool Lock and the River Tone in the east.
- 4.4.10 Taunton Railway Station lies to the north of the site and provides a key gateway/arrival point into Taunton. There is a good network of Public Rights of Way to the east of the site, connecting to Firepool Lock and routes along the river. Both banks of the River Tone have walking and cycling access and appear to be well-used for recreation and day-to-day travel.
- 4.4.11 A central pathway, which is not a designated Public Right of Way, crosses the site on a north-south alignment connecting Canal Road to the riverside routes at Priory Bridge Road. To the east of this path, central areas of the site are currently used for car parking and have restricted through routes for pedestrians and cyclists. To the west, near the Auction House, is an area of amenity grassland where access is not restricted, and which appears to be used for dog walking.

Urban structure and built form

- 4.4.12 Firepool has been identified as a key town centre regeneration area and recent development has taken place in the local area, primarily for residential use, including Waterside House, Lock House and Canal Court which are redefining the character of the urban environment. This development often has a contemporary, rectilinear aesthetic. Built forms are often of more than two storeys, with some taller buildings of up to seven storeys, such as Waterside House. The palette of finishing materials is varied and largely used harmoniously, including red and buff brick, render in natural lighter and darker tones as well as timber or timber-effect cladding. Roof lines vary and include single pitch as well as double pitched roofs with a butterfly arrangements or central ridgeline.
- 4.4.13 Smaller scale, traditional two storey, terraced housing lies to the north of Canal Road, some dating from the Victorian era and some being more recent development. The Auction House is located to the west of the site and has few strongly characteristic features. The Innovation Centre is under construction in the northern part of the site and is surrounded by temporary Hera fencing. Associated construction activities temporarily reduce the tranquillity of this area.
- 4.4.14 Central parts of the site are used for temporary car parking, surrounded by Heras fencing with security fencing to the south. The landscape in this central area lacks positive features and is in poor condition creating a degraded sense of townscape character.

Green infrastructure and public realm

- 4.4.15 The River Tone forms the key element of green infrastructure in proximity to the site. This green corridor is considered as a separate character area, and its key characteristics are described below.

4.5 Value, susceptibility and sensitivity

- 4.5.1 The key positive characteristics of value:

- Historic characteristics are largely located to the north of the TCA and include buildings and structures associated with the canals and the Victorian expansion of the railway such as Firepool Pumping Station, the GWR Building and Firepool Lock and bridge crossing.
- There is one informal pedestrian route crossing the TCA. Canal Road is an historic route, providing access across the site on an east-west alignment. Access across the site itself is restricted. The site provides the opportunity to improve connectivity to the pedestrian and cycling routes in the local area.
- Recent developments are redefining the grain and scale of development in this TCA, with built forms of greater scale and using a strong rectilinear aesthetic. The TCA does not have a strong historic street pattern. Canal Road remains a legible historic route through the site.
- There are few elements of green infrastructure of value in the TCA. The River Tone lies to the south and is assessed separately.

4.5.2 Overall, this TCA is assessed as being of **low** sensitivity to change. The key positive characteristics of the townscape are robust and could be retained in the future development of the site. Large areas of the TCA have been subject to a high level of alteration and have few positive characteristics. There is substantial scope for enhancement.

4.6 Firepool South

4.6.1 The southern part of the site lies to the south of the River Tone and is part of the wider Firepool redevelopment area, bounded to the west by Priory Bridge Road. This TCA shares many of the townscape characteristics as the Firepool North and Firepool Lock TCA.

Figure 4.4: Photograph of Firepool South TCA



Historic development and assets

4.6.2 Historic mapping shows the area substantially undeveloped until the 1947-65 map where some built form is shown in southern parts of this TCA.

Urban structure and built form

4.6.3 Existing buildings in the area include the six storey Viridor office building and the recently developed waterfront housing called Water's Edge. The latter comprises four to six storey dark, red brick contemporary apartments and four townhouses which address the riverside location.

Movement and connectivity

4.6.4 There are few publicly accessible routes through this TCA. The main accessible routes are associated with access to the Viridor offices, Water's Edge and 'Pip's Park' on the southern bank of the River Tone. Priory Bridge Road lies immediately to the west and crosses the River Tone in this location. Vehicular noise reduces the sense of tranquillity in this TCA.

Green infrastructure and public realm

4.6.5 The majority of the green infrastructure in this TCA is associated with the river corridor, which is identified as a separate TCA. Pip's Park is small publicly accessible park lying between the Viridor building and the river. The park is named after the poet Pip Youngman who was a champion for Taunton and, in 1997, led a project to create the Somerset Space Walk which follows the Bridgewater and Taunton Canal. Pip's Park surrounds two mature willow trees and is has attractive landscape planting. There are remnant, unused areas in this TCA, cleared in preparation for future development, which are predominately tarmacked or grassed. These areas are in poor condition as a consequence of the lack of use or purpose.

4.7 Value, susceptibility and sensitivity

4.7.1 The key positive characteristics of value:

- Recent developments are redefining the grain and scale of development in this TCA, with built forms of greater scale and using a strong rectilinear aesthetic. The TCA does not have a strong historic street pattern to act as a precedent.
- Pip's Park lies to the south of the river and provides an attractive local green space. The River Tone itself is assessed separately.

4.7.2 Overall, this TCA is assessed as being of **low** sensitivity to change. The key positive characteristics of the townscape are robust and could be retained in the future development of the site. Large areas of the TCA have been subject to a high level of alteration and have few positive characteristics. There is substantial scope for enhancement.

4.8 River Tone and canal corridor

4.8.1 The River Tone is the principal landscape feature in the local context, bisecting the northern and southern parts of the Firepool site and forming a Green Infrastructure corridor through Taunton.

Figure 4.5: Photograph of River Tone and canal corridor TCA



Historic development and assets

- 4.8.2 The River Tone originates at Beverton Pond in the Brendon Hills to the west of Somerset and flows easterly towards Taunton and then onwards to the Somerset Levels and Moors.
- 4.8.3 The alignment of the river was altered to its current course in the 1970's as part of a drainage strategy for Taunton. The Bridgwater and Taunton Canal connects with the River Tone in the north east of the TCA at Firepool Lock. There is an attractive red brick bridge crossing the canal in this location. Firepool Lock, the bridge crossing and Firepool Pumping Station form a visually attractive group of heritage assets.

Movement and connectivity

- 4.8.4 There is good public access for walking and cycling along both banks of the River Tone in the TCA, although designated Public Rights of Way are primarily located to the east of the TCA. The National Cycling Route/Sustrans Route 3 follows the northern bank of the river and the East Deane Long Distance Walking route follows the southern bank.
- 4.8.5 There are two bridges crossing the river in this TCA. The crossing at the weir is a designated Public Right of Way, however, this crossing was closed at the time of the field survey. The main crossing used by the public is a modern arched bridge with railings.
- 4.8.6 There is good onwards connectivity for walking and cycling to the east and west. The river corridor appears to be well-used for recreation and day-to-day travel.

Urban structure and built form

- 4.8.7 There are few elements of built form within the TCA, however, the character of the TCA is influenced by its location in the town centre, where built form is frequently seen in views from the riverside. The wooded character of some parts of the river corridor serves to create a treed setting to the recent development along the river, softening the relationship between these developments and the green corridor.

Figure 4.6: Photograph of River Tone TCA



Green infrastructure and public realm

4.8.8 The riverside margins through the TCA have a natural vegetated appearance. There are few mature trees or woody species in the TCA. There is a group of willows in the vicinity of Firepool Lock and two mature willow trees to the north of the Viridor building.

4.8.9 Children's Wood Local Nature Reserve (LNR) lies to the east of Firepool Lock. This is a linear feature following the River Tone in an easterly direction towards the M5. The LNR is designated for its habitats and as a movement corridor for animals including otters and bats. A large number of bird species and butterfly species have been recorded.

4.9 Value, susceptibility and sensitivity

4.9.1 The key positive characteristics of value:

- The River Tone and canal corridor create an important Green Infrastructure corridor through Taunton.
- There is a group of historic assets which add character and interest to the TCA, including Firepool Lock, Firepool Pumping Station and the brick bridge crossing.
- There is good public accessibility along both banks of the river and the canal and a number of recreational walks and cycling routes have been identified which include these paths. These routes are also used for day-to-day travel, such as for access to Morrison's supermarket.
- The wooded nature of some sections of the river corridor create a treed setting to the recent, larger scale development, for example at Firepool View.
- The river corridor to the east is designated as an LNR and there is the potential for the corridor in the vicinity of the site to be enhanced in relation to its ecological interest.

- 4.9.2 Overall, this TCA is assessed as being of **medium** sensitivity to change. The key positive characteristics of the townscape could be retained in the future development of the site. There is potential for enhancement of the river corridor, particularly in proximity to the site.

4.10 Morrisons and Priory Bridge Road

Historic development and assets

- 4.10.1 This TCA is predominantly characterised by the recent development associated with Morrison's supermarket, the car park and filling station.

Movement and connectivity

- 4.10.2 Priory Bridge Road provides the main transport route through this TCA and is well used, reducing the sense of tranquillity.

Urban structure and built form

- 4.10.3 Priory Bridge Road has a generally weak frontage with the Morrisons petrol filling station and car park being a notable features on the south side of the road with Deller's Court set back behind robust landscape planting. Further east on Priory Bridge Road a mix of commercial and residential properties creates a disjointed streetscape, which is in a mixed condition.

Figure 4.7: Photograph of Morrisons and Priory Bridge Road TCA



Green infrastructure and public realm

- 4.10.4 Tree planting within the car park and along the river corridor serve to help integrate the development into its context. The public realm lacks character and planting at the junction between Morrisons and Priory Bridge Road.

4.11 Value, susceptibility and sensitivity

4.11.1 The key positive characteristics of value:

- The key positive characteristics of this TCA relate to the public realm along the river corridor and the associated tree planting.

4.11.2 Overall, this TCA is assessed as being of **low** sensitivity to change. The key positive characteristics of the townscape would be unchanged by the development proposed. There are opportunities to enhance the weak character of the TCA in some locations through the development of the site.

4.12 Station Road

Historic development and assets

4.12.1 Much of the development on Station Road is associated with the Victorian expansion of Taunton in this area following the construction of the railway line and associated train station. Historic mapping from 1889 shows Station Road lined on either side by built form, possibly terraced housing and shops, as it is today. There are occasional Listed Buildings along Station Road, including the shop called 'Gurds', The Wheel Tapper Public House, the former Great Western Hotel and part of the train station itself.

Movement and connectivity

4.12.2 Station Road appears to be a key part of the traffic movement network around this area of Taunton. Vehicular noise and movement is highly noticeable and tranquillity poor as a result.

Figure 4.8: Photograph of Station Road TCA



Urban structure and built form

4.12.3 Station Road has a good sense of enclosure with two and three storey retail units facing onto the street. The architectural styles reflect the Victorian origins of much of the development and this creates a sense of unity in the character of the street scene. Buildings and the public realm are in a mixed condition which occasionally detracts from the character of the street.

Green infrastructure and public realm

4.12.4 Taunton Swimming Pool lies in an attractively landscaped park to the south of the TCA. The public realm along Station Road is otherwise largely restricted to the footways along the road itself.

4.13 Value, susceptibility and sensitivity

4.13.1 The key positive characteristics of value:

- The sense of unity created by the character of the predominantly Victorian development;
- The public park surrounding Taunton Swimming Pool is attractively landscaped and well-used.

4.13.2 Overall, this TCA is assessed as being of **medium** sensitivity to change. The key positive characteristics of the townscape would be unchanged by the development proposed.

4.14 Railway Station and surrounds TCA

4.14.1 Taunton Railway Station lies in close proximity to the northern side of the site.

Historic development and assets

4.14.2 As described for the Firepool North and Firepool Lock TCA, the historic character of this TCA relates to the construction of the railway station and railway lines during the Victorian era. The construction of the railway appeared to lead to the infilling of a section of the Grand Western Canal, a remaining section of the lies to the south. Taunton Station South Block, the Former Great Western Hotel and the Wheel Tappers Public House are Grade II Listed Buildings, all of which lie in proximity to the current railway station.

4.14.3 Other historic buildings associated with the railway, such as Firepool Pumping Station and the GWR building, lie to the south in the Firepool North and Firepool Lock TCA.

Movement and connectivity

4.14.4 Taunton Railway Station provides a key gateway or arrival point into Taunton. The recent redevelopment of station frontage and car parking has enhanced the public realm and created good public access routes from the station southwards. There is a temporary route through the Firepool site which provides connectivity to the off-road pedestrian and cycling network associated with the canal and river corridors. To the north there is good connectivity to the cycleway and footpath through the Obridge area.

4.14.5 The road network in this TCA comprises Trenchards Way which forms the Northern Inner Distributor Road (NIDR). The road and rail network creates audible noise and movement, which reduces the sense of tranquillity.

Figure 4.9: Photograph of Railway Station and Surrounds TCA



Figure 4.10: Photograph of Railway Station and Surrounds TCA



Urban structure and built form

- 4.14.6 This TCA is strongly defined by the linear railway line infrastructure and the associated areas of former or current related development, such as goods sheds and storage areas.
- 4.14.7 The recent redevelopment of the car park to create a multistorey car park and enhancements to the station frontage and public realm have enhanced the character and quality of this part of the TCA. Elsewhere the surrounding landscape lacks positive features and is in poor condition creating a degraded sense of townscape character.
- 4.14.8 The railway station acts as a gateway for people arriving in Taunton, as identified in planning documents, such as the Taunton Town Centre Design Code SPD¹⁸. The Design Code identifies historic buildings such as the church towers of St James' and St Mary's, the Pumping Station and the GWR building as landmark features and that views towards these features aid legibility of the townscape.

Green infrastructure and public realm

- 4.14.9 There are small clusters of trees associated with the existing Great Western Hotel and the car park to the north of the railway lines. Elsewhere, there are limited areas of planting or water-related features.

4.15 Value, susceptibility and sensitivity

- 4.15.1 The key positive characteristics of value:
- The group of historic buildings associated with the railway station.
 - The gateway role of the train station for people arriving in the town and the need to create and maintain legibility in the townscape.
 - Recent development has enhanced the character and quality of the townscape in front of the station.
- 4.15.2 Overall, this TCA is assessed as being of **medium** sensitivity to change. The key positive characteristics of the townscape are largely robust and are unlikely to be affected by future proposals in the Firepool site. There is scope for the enhancement of some areas of the TCA.

4.16 Cricket Ground

Historic development and assets

- 4.16.1 Somerset County Cricket Ground was founded in 1875¹⁹. Historic mapping from 1889 shows Somerset County Cricket Ground in its current location to the south of the River Tone. By 1904 the cricket ground is shown with greater levels of housing development to the east and west and the Shirt and Collar Factory to the east, now a Grade II Listed Building. St James' Church lies adjacent to the southern side of the cricket ground and there are open views towards the church from the grounds. St James' Church lies within the St Mary's and St James' Conservation Area.

¹⁸ Taunton Deane Borough Council (2008) 'Taunton Town Centre Design Code Supplementary Planning Document' Available at <https://www.somersetwestandtaunton.gov.uk/media/1165/taunton-town-centre-design-code-2008.pdf> [Date accessed: 21/09/22]

¹⁹ <https://www.somersetcountycc.co.uk/news/club-news/an-evening-in-sidmouth-the-birth-of-somerset-county-cricket-club/>

Figure 4.11: Photograph of Cricket Ground TCA



Movement and connectivity

- 4.16.2 Access to Somerset County Cricket Ground is via an entrance on Priory Avenue. There is public access along Coal Orchard to the wets of this TCA as well as on the southern bank of the River Tone.

Urban structure and built form

- 4.16.3 The recent development of four to five storey residential apartments at Coal Orchard, and adjacent to the cricket ground, and the floodlighting columns, approximately 54m high, are highly visible features in the local context.

Green infrastructure and public realm

- 4.16.4 The River Tone forms the primary Green Infrastructure corridor in this location. The churchyard surrounding St James' and associated trees provide an element of greening in views from the cricket ground and St James' Street.

4.17 Value, susceptibility and sensitivity

- 4.17.1 The key positive characteristics of value:

- The historic elements of the TCA including ST James' Church and its churchyard and the former Shirt and Collar Factory.
- Somerset County Cricket Ground has been in its present location since 1875, although many aspects of its setting are influenced by recent development.

- 4.17.2 Overall, this TCA is assessed as being of **medium** sensitivity to change.

4.18 Adjacent Residential Areas

4.18.1 Residential areas surrounding the site include Obridge, Priory Park, Priory Avenue and North Town.

Historic development and assets

4.18.2 The Victorian era saw the expansion of residential development in Taunton in area in proximity to the site. Residential development from the Victorian and Edwardian eras is typically two storey, red or buff brick with pitched roofs with a central ridgeline. Victorian and Edwardian terraced housing can be found associated with Albemarle Road, Canal Road, Malvern Terrace, St Augustine Street and Winchester Street, amongst others.

Figure 4.12: Photograph of Adjacent residential area TCA



Movement and connectivity

4.18.3 The movement network mainly focuses on the access provided along residential streets. There is a Public Right of Way and cycleway to the south of Obridge, following the alignment of the railway and providing access between the A3038 in the west to the River Tone near the A358 in the east.

Urban structure and built form

4.18.4 Victorian and Edwardian residential areas are characterised by long, straight roads, with small front gardens, often with low brick garden walls. Built forms are frequently two storey with pitched roofs. Areas of more recent residential development from c.1990s are characterised by more sinuous street layouts with a mix of detached, semi-detached and terraced housing in red or buff brick, for example in Eaton Crescent, Obridge.

Green infrastructure and public realm

Victorian and Edwardian residential areas are often characterised by dense built form with limited areas of open space, planting or other Green Infrastructure. The more recent residential properties tend to have greater set-back distances from the highway, off road parking with areas of amenity greenspace with some tree planting.

4.19 Value, susceptibility and sensitivity

4.19.1 The key positive characteristics of value:

- Areas of Victorian and Edwardian housing have strong character with a sense of time-depth and are likely to be locally valued.

4.19.2 Overall, this TCA is assessed as being of **medium** sensitivity to change.

4.20 Potential effects on the town centre

4.20.1 The historic centre of Taunton is located to the south of the River Tone. While settlement has been recorded in the area dating back to Saxon times, the town grew notably during the 19th century. There are numerous Listed Buildings and conservation areas around the town centre. St Mary and St James' Conservation Area is located immediately to the south of the cricket ground and is the closest conservation area to the site.

4.20.2 The towers and spires of the churches located in and around the centre are visible from the wider area and contribute to the town's skyline. The heights of the church spires range from 27m to 50m.

4.20.3 Due to the relatively flat nature of the town centre and the density of built form, including municipal buildings and shops, there is little inter-visibility between the town centre and the wider area. There is the potential for views of the proposed buildings along the corridor of the River Tone, including from Tone Bridge (Grade II Listed). These views already include town centre development of similar scale and character to that proposed. It is considered unlikely that the proposals for the site would significantly affect the character of the town centre or views from within or towards the town centre and the 'town centre' as a character area has been scoped out of further assessment in this TVIA.

5 Baseline: Visual receptors and viewpoints

5.1 Visibility of the site

- 5.1.1 The site lies in a relatively flat riverside location to the north of Taunton and is substantially surrounded by existing development associated with the town. Surrounding development is of a range of heights and footprints, and includes the recent, larger scale development associated with Trenchard's Way as well as recent development at Somerset County Cricket Ground and Taunton Railway Station. The River Tone passes through Taunton and through the site on a west-east alignment and has a wooded character in places. The existing built form and the wooded character of the river corridor serve to obscure and/or filter some views into the site and limit the likely extent of views towards the proposed development.
- 5.1.2 This TVIA is an update to a previous report prepared to accompany a different layout for the site. The viewpoints selected for this TVIA were based on the previous assessment. In consultation with Somerset and West Taunton Council, some variations to the number and location of the representative viewpoints have been agreed in order to consider the potential range of visual effects of the Firepool Masterplan.

5.2 Zone of Theoretical Visibility

- 5.2.1 As described in **Section 3**, a Zone of Theoretical Visibility (ZTV) has been generated to show the theoretical visibility of the tallest elements of the proposed scheme. Six transmitter heights have been used in the modelling process. The output is illustrated in **Appendix A**. The output from this process did not raise the need to consider including additional viewpoint locations that were not considered in the previous TVIA.

5.3 Visualisation materials

- 5.3.1 The character of each selected viewpoint is represented by annotated photographs. This is classed as Visualisation Type 1 in Technical Guidance Note 06/19. A range of viewpoints have also been selected where the proposed scheme will be modelled to scale in the photograph in a Verified View Montage (VVM), a Type 4 Visualisation. The seven VVMs have been prepared by a visualisation specialist, who has undertaken separate photography and surveying to inform the modelling process. This methodology meets the requirements of TGN 06/19 for Type 4 Visualisations.
- 5.3.2 The Firepool Masterplan provides additional visualisation materials, including plans and images taken from a model of the proposed scheme. These are classed at Type 2 Visualisations, in accordance with Technical Guidance Note (TGN) 06/19.

- 5.3.3 For the 24 illustrative viewpoints, each photograph was taken using a 35mm lens and a Canon EOS 70D with a cropped frame sensor. All photographs have been taken at eye level, approximately 150cm from ground level. Using this combination of camera and lens is approximately equivalent to using a 50mm lens with a full frame sensor. A 50mm lens with a full frame sensor gives an Effective Focal Length of 100%, this would create a single frame image, printed at A3, where the scale of the image would be equivalent to that seen by the human eye in the field. For each illustrative viewpoint a panoramic composite image has been provided to represent the context of the view and illustrate its character. Secondly, a single frame image of the view is presented, to be printed at A3 with a viewing distance of at arm's length to represent the scale of features in the photograph, as seen with the human eye.
- 5.3.4 The camera model and setting for the Verified View Montages are provided on the accompanying images in **Appendix D**.
- 5.3.5 Seasonal variation is recorded where appropriate in the assessment findings. The photographic field work for this assessment was undertaken in September 2022.

5.4 Viewpoint selection

- 5.4.1 Viewpoints have been selected on the basis of updating the TVIA prepared for the previous scheme. The viewpoints represent the range of potential visual receptors and help interpret both the visual and landscape effects of the proposed development. The locations of the viewpoints have been selected to illustrate worst-case scenarios where the development proposals are likely to be most visible. This assessment has been carried out largely from publicly accessible locations.
- 5.4.2 Field surveys were carried out on 12th September 2022, and 22nd September 2022 where each viewpoint was visited and photographed. The exception is Viewpoint 15, selected in the previous TVIA, which represents a private view from the balcony of a residential apartment close to the cricket ground. This photograph has not been updated in this TVIA.
- 5.4.3 The following table summarises the locations of the selected viewpoints and the reasons for the selection of the locations of the VVMs. The 24 illustrative viewpoints have been selected to represent the range and extent of potential visual receptors. Viewpoint locations are illustrated on **Figure 5.1** and **5.2** and the photographs illustrating available views are provided in **Appendices B** and **C**.
- 5.4.4 Subsequent sections (see **Section 8**) assess the potential effects of the proposed development from each of the viewpoints. For each illustrative viewpoint the potential effects of the proposed scheme on the visual receptors are described. Effects may be assessed as beneficial or adverse. The level of the effect is described using the definitions set out in **Table 3.4**.

Figure 5.1: Viewpoint locations in the town centre

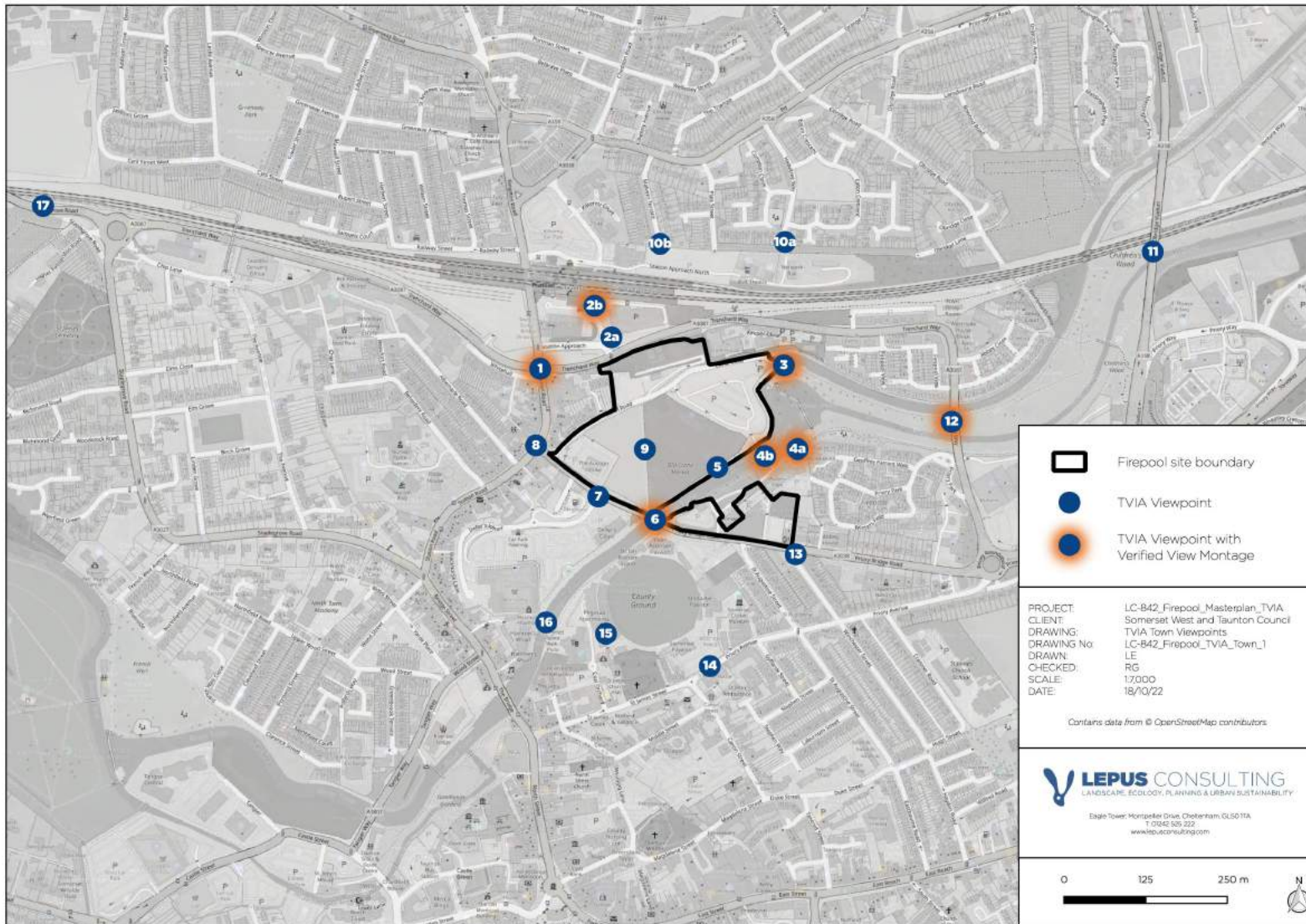


Figure 5.2: Viewpoint locations in the wider landscape

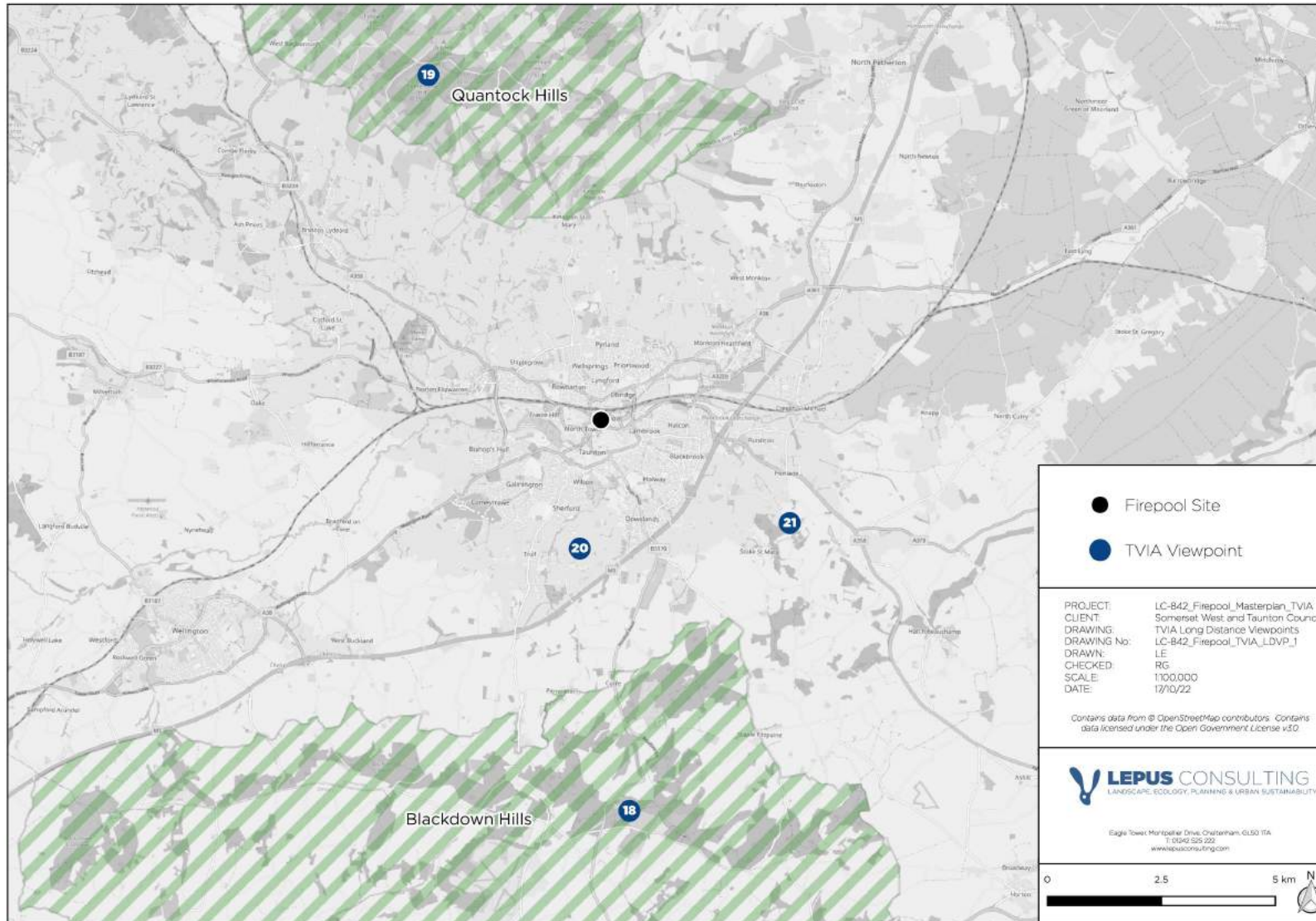


Table 5.1: Representative viewpoints

Viewpoint	Location	Distance from site	Receptor type	Type of visualisation and reason for selection of Verified View Montages
1	Centre of Trenchard Way Bridge, view south west	121m NW	Pedestrians and road users, including people in vehicles and cyclists	Type 4 Verified View Montage Informs the assessment of the location and height of the proposals when seen in the context of existing built form and the relationship between the proposals and the church towers of St Mary's and St James'
2a	Taunton Station Footway	30m N	Pedestrians and road users arriving at Taunton by train. A gateway/ arrival point for the town.	Type 1
2b	Taunton Station Entrance	80m N	Pedestrians and road users arriving at Taunton by train. A gateway/ arrival point for the town.	Type 4 Verified View Montage Informs the assessment of the location and height of the proposals when seen in the context of existing built form and the towers of the churches of St Mary's and St James'
3	Bridgewater and Taunton Canal Bridge, Firepool Lock	3m E	Pedestrians/ walkers and cyclists using the river corridor for recreational and day-to-day purposes in proximity to heritage features including Firepool Lock and the Pumping Station.	Type 4 Verified View Montage Illustrates the relationship between the proposals and the river corridor at this location in proximity to a group of heritage assets, including Firepool Lock and the Pumping Station.
4a	Pedestrian path near the Water's Edge development	45m	Pedestrians/ walkers and cyclists using the river corridor for recreational and day-to-day purposes	Type 4 Verified View Montage Illustrates the relationship between the proposals and the river corridor.
4b	Footbridge over the River Tone	Within the site	Pedestrians/ walkers and cyclists crossing the river corridor, using routes for both recreational and day-to-day purposes	Type 4 Verified View Montage Illustrates the relationship between the proposals and the river corridor.
5	Northern riverside path near the Water's Edge development	Within the site	Pedestrians/ walkers and cyclists using the river corridor for recreational and day-to-day purposes, including using Sustrans Route 3.	Type 1
6	Priory Bridge Road on the bridge crossing the River Tone	3m S	Pedestrians and road users, including people in vehicles and cyclists	Type 4 Verified View Montage Illustrates the relationship between the proposals and the river corridor when seen from a more elevated height on the bridge crossing the River Tone.

Viewpoint	Location	Distance from site	Receptor type	Type of visualisation and reason for selection of Verified View Montages
7	Pedestrian island at junction of Priory Bridge Road and Dellers Wharf	6m SW	Pedestrians and road users, including people in vehicles and cyclists	Type 1
8	Footway at junction of Station Road and Priory Bridge Road	20m W	Pedestrians and road users, including people in vehicles and cyclists	Type 1
9	Pedestrian route in the site	Within the site	Pedestrians using a local route across the site, not identified as a Public Right of Way with views towards the church towers of St Mary's and St James'	Type 1
10a	Heavitree Way, Obridge	165m N	Pedestrians and cyclists in a local residential area	Type 1
10b	Malvern Terrace, Obridge	140m N	Pedestrians and cyclists in a local residential area	Type 1
11	A358 Obridge Viaduct	590m E	Pedestrians and road users, including people in vehicles and cyclists	Type 1
12	Trenchard Way, crossing the River Tone	300m E	Pedestrians and road users, including people in vehicles and cyclists	Type 4 Verified View Montage Informs the assessment of the location and scale of the proposals when seen from the river corridor at a greater distance from the site.
13	Junction of Priory Bridge Road and Winchester Street	10m SE	Pedestrians and road users, including people in vehicles and cyclists	Type 1
14	Somerset County Cricket Ground, Priory Road entrance	200m S	People watching a sporting activity, largely focused on the cricket ground.	Type 1
15	Somerset County Cricket Ground, Roof Terrace of apartment	165m S	Residents in an apartment adjacent to the cricket ground	Type 1
16	Footbridge over the River Tone, near Morrisons supermarket	230m SW	Pedestrians/ walkers and cyclists using the river corridor for recreational and day-to-day purposes, including Sustrans Route 3.	Type 1
17	Staplegrave Road, south of railway crossing	860m NW	Pedestrians and road users, including people in vehicles and cyclists	Type 1

Viewpoint	Location	Distance from site	Receptor type	Type of visualisation and reason for selection of Verified View Montages
18	Blackdown Hills AONB close to Staple Hill public viewpoint	8.5km S	Walkers using Public Rights of Way in a nationally designated landscape	Type 1
19	Quantock Hills AONB, close to Cothelstone Hill	8.5km S	Walkers using Public Rights of Way in a nationally designated landscape	Type 1
20	Cotlake Hill, Trull	2.7km S	Walkers using Public Rights of Way in an undesignated landscape	Type 1
21	Stoke Hill	4.5km SE	Walkers using Public Rights of Way in an undesignated landscape	Type 1

6 The proposed scheme

6.1 Summary of the proposals

6.1.1 The masterplan for the Firepool site is described in the 'Firepool Masterplan Design Report FB5-AHR-XX-XX-RP-A-08900-P04'. The document sets out the evolution of the proposed masterplan based on the opportunities and constraints identified over many years of site appraisal and assessment and how the current masterplan proposes to meet the identified local needs and planning context.

6.1.2 The proposals will redevelop the site in accordance with the principles set out in the Taunton Town Centre Area Action Plan (2008), Taunton Town Centre Design Code (2008) and Taunton Garden Town documents. This will create a vibrant new district within the town centre as part of a wider regeneration strategy for Taunton.

6.1.3 The Firepool site has been identified as one of the key town centre regeneration areas for many years. In 2019 outline planning consent was granted for a commercial-led scheme. Since this time the economic context has changed, and the current Firepool Masterplan proposes a residential-led scheme with some mixed-use development.

6.2 Design principles

6.2.1 The layout of the Firepool Masterplan has evolved from a detailed analysis of the constraints and opportunities present within the site and the local context. In relation to the TVIA, the masterplan seeks to address the following:

- Provide Green Infrastructure or tree lined boundaries to Canal Road, Priory Bridge Road and the corridor of the River Tone.
- Retain opportunities for views through the site towards key heritage assets, including views of the church towers of St Mary's and St James' as well as views towards the Pumping Station. These views have been retained in the layout through the creation of the central boulevard, aligned north south, and the Greenway, aligned east-west.
- Create a pedestrian priority east-west link that connects Firepool Lock to the central boulevard and onwards to Morrisons and the town centre.
- Create a segregated cycle lane around the site that connects to the existing offsite cycle routes on Trenchard Way and to both the east and west on Sustrans route 3.
- Maintain townscape legibility by retaining key views to heritage features, creating connectivity to the surrounding movement network and through the creation of new character areas within the masterplan.

6.2.2 These key townscape matters have been incorporated into the proposed Firepool Masterplan. In environmental assessment, this is referred to as inherent mitigation.

6.3 Summary description of the development blocks

6.3.1 The masterplan proposes five main development areas, called development 'Blocks'.

- 6.3.2 Block 1 lies to the south of the River Tone and comprises four blocks of four to seven storeys in height. These are predominantly residential development blocks, including a seven storey signature building to address the corner location between the site and Priory Bridge Road.
- 6.3.3 Block 2 lies to the east of the site and north of the River Tone and comprises three blocks of residential apartments of six to seven storeys, as well as three storey, terraced and detached residential dwellings with private gardens.
- 6.3.4 Block 3 lies to the north and addresses Trenchards Way. Development blocks in this location include the Student Accommodation block, a commercial block and the redevelopment of the GWR building to create a new café or restaurant with an associated terrace. The Innovation Centre has planning permission and is currently under construction.
- 6.3.5 Block 4 lies to the east of the proposed central boulevard and comprises development blocks with mixed uses on the ground floors and predominantly residential apartments above. Buildings are proposed of up to 7 storeys in height.
- 6.3.6 Block 5 is a large area lying to the east of Priory Bridge Road and comprises various leisure uses, including a cinema, a venue and a hotel, as well as a health hub. Development blocks in this location would have heights of 32.5m AOD with the venue having a height of 38m AOD.
- 6.3.7 Block 6 comprises the Innovation Centre which has planning permission and at the time of the field survey work was in construction.
- 6.3.8 At this stage of design development, details of the ground levels have not been confirmed. In relation to the modelling of buildings in the photomontages, a ground floor level of 16m AOD has been used for all development blocks. In some locations, for example along the river frontage to the east and by the canal lock, the ground level is likely to be slightly lower at 15.8m AOD and therefore a 'worst-case' scenario in relation to building height has been shown in the photomontage work.

6.4 Planning applications and consented schemes within the masterplan

- 6.4.1 The Firepool Masterplan sets out the overarching strategy for the development of the site. There are four schemes within the boundary of the masterplan that have planning consent and have been included in the overall masterplan layout:
- Block 3: Planning permission granted (March 2022) for office development and boulevard north of Canal Road.
 - Block 6 The Innovation Centre: Planning permission granted (February 2021) and the project is currently under construction.
 - The Southern Boulevard: A planning application has been submitted for this development and is scheduled for Committee in November.
 - The vehicular access south of Trenchards Way.
 - Drainage and levels works between Canal Road and the River Tone: A planning application has been submitted to enable development of the site.

6.5 Townscape change

- 6.5.1 The regeneration proposals for the Firepool site would lead to the intensification of development in this location. Built form of greater height and footprint is proposed to the north and west of the site, with decreasing scale and mass to the east, creating a transition towards existing residential areas. Taller development blocks are proposed addressing the boulevard, as well as to the east of Priory Bridge Road and also addressing the riverside, creating a strong sense of enclosure to these locations. Proposed building heights would be 38mAOD for the proposed Venue to the west of the central boulevard and between 33.5mAOD and 39.25mAOD for the proposed blocks to the east of the boulevard and those blocks addressing the riverside.
- 6.5.2 The proposals will create opportunities for a much greater range of positive uses on the site than is currently the case, bringing purpose and activity to the site.
- 6.5.3 The proposals would be seen in the context of other recent development such as Lock House, Canal Court, Waterside House, Water's Edge and the Viridor building, which share similar architectural characteristics and mass.
- 6.5.4 Views towards the church towers to the south have been retained by creating a central boulevard with an enhanced public realm including paved surfaces, opportunities for seating, tree planting and other soft landscape planting. The boulevard creates a central movement route through the site for pedestrians and cyclists, and a gateway from the train station. Opportunities for views towards the Pumping Station and Firepool Lock have been created along the Greenway, aligned east-west.
- 6.5.5 The redevelopment of the site would enhance the quality of the townscape fabric. Materials proposed include red or buff brick as well as timber effect cladding and rolled zinc finishing materials. The use of red and buff brick reflects the industrial heritage features in the local area, such as the GWR building and the Pumping Station.
- 6.5.6 The proposals would lead to the substantial enhancement of the public realm, primarily through the creation and enhancement of green corridors through the site creating opportunities for soft landscape planting and amenity spaces for social interaction.
- 6.5.7 The masterplan layout would require the removal of the majority of existing trees, this can be mitigated by new tree and landscape planting which would also deliver a net-gain in biodiversity.
- 6.5.8 There would be an increase in noise, movement and lighting as a result of the operation of the proposed scheme and therefore tranquillity would be reduced. However, the scheme seeks to prioritise pedestrians and cycling and reduce car usage where practical.
- 6.5.9 The following sections describe the predicted impacts of these changes on the townscape and visual receptors identified in **Sections 4 and 5**.

7 Townscape character effects

7.1 Introduction

7.1.1 A detailed assessment of the predicted effects of the proposed redevelopment of the Firepool site on landscape character is provided in **Table 7.1**. The following provides a summary of the findings. The viewpoints identified in **Section 4**, and accompanying photographs and photomontages help to inform the assessment of effects on the TCAs.

7.2 Note on construction effects

7.2.1 As a consequence of the scale of development and the size of the masterplanning area, it is likely that construction activities would have a moderate to high adverse impact on both local townscape character and visual amenity during the period of construction. The impact of most construction activities decreases in magnitude with greater distance from the site. Construction effects are unlikely to be significant at distances greater than 300m from the site. Although some construction machinery, such as mobile cranes, can be seen at greater distances, there are unlikely to be significant adverse impacts due to the temporary nature of the effect. Receptors of greater sensitivity in proximity to the site include the character of the River Tone corridor and the views from the associated Public Rights of Way and Sustrans route as well as residents in their homes.

7.2.2 While the phasing and period of construction is uncertain, construction effects would be likely to be temporary and medium term.

7.2.3 Mitigation measures to reduce the adverse townscape and visual impacts of construction can include:

- The use and design of hoardings at the construction site boundary to provide opportunities for art or information about the project.
- Limiting the hours of operation to reduce noise, activity and lighting on the construction site.
- Operations to abate noise, lighting and dust.
- Considerate storage of materials.
- Considerate timing of deliveries to limit the number of construction-related vehicular movements.

7.3 Operational effects

7.3.1 The proposals will redevelop the site in accordance with the principles of development set out within the adopted Taunton Town Centre Area Action Plan (2008), Taunton Town Centre Design Code (2008) and Taunton Garden Town Vision document. The masterplan seeks to create a vibrant new district within the town centre as part of a wider regeneration strategy for Taunton.

7.3.2 The following table describes the predicted effects of the proposed masterplan for the site on the eight TCAs identified in **Section 4**. The site is composed of two TCAs, Firepool North and Lock TCA and Firepool South TCA.

Table 7.1: Townscape character assessment

Townscape Character Area	Sensitivity	Magnitude of change: Operational effects	Residual effect
<p>Firepool North and Firepool Lock</p>	<p>Low Large areas of this TCA have been subject to a high level of alteration and have few positive townscape characteristics. The key positive characteristics of the townscape include the local and designated heritage assets associated with the railway and canal network as well as the opportunity for people to enjoy the river corridor. Opportunities for views towards the Pumping Station and church towers are positive characteristics of the site. There is substantial scope for enhancement.</p>	<p>High The proposed scheme would lead to the redevelopment of the site introducing new uses and functions to this under-used town centre location. The proposals would lead to the intensification of development in this location. Built form of greater height and footprint is proposed to the north and west of the site, with decreasing scale and mass to the east, creating a transition towards the existing residential areas. Views towards the church towers to the south have been retained by creating a central boulevard with an enhanced public realm including paved surfaces, opportunities for seating, tree planting and other soft landscape planting. This route creates a central movement route through the site for pedestrians and cyclists and a gateway from the train station. Opportunities for views towards the Pumping Station and Firepool Lock have been created along the Greenway, aligned east-west. Taller development blocks are proposed along the boulevard, as well as to the east of Priory Bridge Road and also to address the riverside, creating a strong sense of enclosure to these locations. Proposed building heights would be 38mAOD for the proposed Venue to the west of the central boulevard and between 33.5mAOD and 39.25mAOD for the proposed blocks to the east of the boulevard and those blocks addressing the riverside location. Terraced housing is proposed to the east of the site, reflecting precedents in the local context. The proposals would be seen in the context of other recent development on Trenchards Way, such as the Innovation Centre, Lock House, Canal Court and Waterside House., which share similar architectural characteristics and aesthetics. The redevelopment of the site would enhance the quality of the townscape fabric. Materials proposed include red or buff brick as well as timber effect cladding and rolled zinc finishing materials. The use of red and buff brick reflects the</p>	<p>Moderate beneficial The site is currently under-used, lacks a sense of purpose and has poor quality townscape fabric with few positive townscape characteristics. The proposed masterplan would lead to the intensification of development in this location while retaining the key positive townscape characteristics, such as opportunities to view heritage assets and enjoy the riverside location. The quality of the townscape fabric would be substantially enhanced, particularly through the creation of movement corridors through the site, which would be the focus for tree planting and other landscape planting. There is scope for the ecological enhancement of the site through the design and planting of the green corridors and particularly the green corridor along the River Tone.</p>

Townscape Character Area	Sensitivity	Magnitude of change: Operational effects	Residual effect
		<p>industrial heritage features in the local area, such as the GWR building and the Pumping Station.</p> <p>The proposals will create opportunities for a much greater range of positive uses than is currently the case, bringing purpose and activity to the site.</p> <p>The proposals would lead to the substantial enhancement of the public realm, primarily through the creation and enhancement of green corridors through the site creating opportunities for soft landscape planting and amenity spaces for social interaction.</p> <p>Tranquillity in the baseline landscape is affected by the audible noise lighting associated with nearby traffic movement. There would be an increase in noise, movement and lighting as a result of the development of the site and tranquillity would be reduced. However, the scheme seeks to prioritise pedestrians and cycling and reduce car usage where practical.</p>	
<p>Firepool South</p>	<p>Low</p> <p>The key positive characteristics of the townscape include the riverside location and the small pocket park, which lies outside the proposed developed area. Parts of the TCA have been subject to a high level of alteration and have few positive characteristics. There is scope for enhancement.</p>	<p>Medium</p> <p>As described for the Firepool North and Lock TCA, the proposed scheme would lead to the redevelopment of the site, introducing new uses and functions to this under-used location.</p> <p>The local context to this TCA has a greater level of existing built form of a similar height and footprint to that proposed in the masterplan, including the Viridor Building and Water's Edge.</p> <p>The proposals would lead to the intensification of development in this area. Three development blocks are proposed to the east of the Viridor office building, decreasing in height from 37.5m AOD to 31.5m AOD in the east to create a transition to the smaller scale development further east on Priory Bridge Road. A signature building is proposed with a building height of 39.75m AOD on the corner location between the River Tone and Priory Bridge Road to address this location. This block would be of the same height as the existing Viridor building.</p>	<p>Minor beneficial</p> <p>The site is currently under-used, lacks a sense of purpose and has poor quality townscape fabric with few positive townscape characteristics.</p> <p>The proposed masterplan would lead to the intensification of development in this location, which already has similar scale development in the local context, while retaining the key positive townscape characteristics, such as opportunities to enjoy the riverside location. The quality of the townscape fabric would be substantially enhanced and there is scope for the ecological enhancement of the site through the design and planting of the green corridors along the River Tone.</p>

Townscape Character Area	Sensitivity	Magnitude of change: Operational effects	Residual effect
		<p>Pedestrian and cycling connectivity across the river is maintained.</p> <p>The redevelopment of the site would enhance the quality of the townscape fabric. Materials proposed include red or buff brick and rolled zinc for the upper floor in some cases. The use of red and buff brick reflects the industrial heritage features in the local area, such as the former Shirt and Collar Factory.</p> <p>The proposals will create opportunities for a greater range of positive uses than is currently the case, bringing purpose and activity to the site and an associated enhancement of the public realm, particularly surrounding the signature building in the prominent corner location.</p> <p>Tranquillity in the baseline landscape is affected by the audible noise and lighting associated with Priory Bridge Road. There would be minor increase in noise, movement and lighting as a result of the development of the site and tranquillity would be reduced to some extent.</p>	
<p>River Tone and Corridor</p>	<p>Medium</p> <p>The key positive characteristics of the townscape could be retained in the future development of the site. There is potential for enhancement of the river corridor, particularly in proximity to the site. The Childrens Wood LNR lies to the east of Firepool Lock.</p>	<p>Medium</p> <p>The masterplan seeks to enhance both the quality of the public realm along the River Tone and the variety of habitats for wildlife.</p> <p>To the north of the river the masterplan proposes a widened non-vehicular route to facilitate pedestrian and cycle use of the river corridor. Native tree planting is proposed along the route, softening the built form, creating shade and providing habitats for wildlife.</p> <p>The proposed development blocks are staggered along the river side edge to allow for greening of the public realm between and through the development. Amenity spaces for social interaction have been created at nodal points, for example at the intersection with the southern boulevard, creating openness and opportunities for tree planting as well as directing movement through the site.</p> <p>The assessment of changes to visual amenity considers views from the river corridor towards the site from more distant locations, for example from the footbridge at</p>	<p>Moderate beneficial</p> <p>The masterplan seeks to enhance the quality of the public realm along the river corridor and create new amenity spaces for social interaction. New native planting is proposed to soften built form and create new habitats for wildlife. The quality of the townscape fabric would be enhanced.</p>

Townscape Character Area	Sensitivity	Magnitude of change: Operational effects	Residual effect
		Morrisons and from the A358 crossing. It is likely that there would be a greater degree of built form seen in these views, following the development of the site. Built form of a similar scale and aesthetic already characterises many of these views from the river corridor and the change to the view would be minor.	
Morrisons and Priory Bridge Road	Low The key positive characteristics of the townscape are likely to be unchanged by the development proposed. There are opportunities to enhance the weaker character of the TCA along Priory Bridge Road.	Low The development proposed in the masterplan would increase the intensity of development experienced from Priory Bridge Road and nearby locations such as Morrison's supermarket. The character of this area is already influenced by recent development of a similar height, footprint and character, such as that at Coal Orchard and the Viridor building. The proposed Venue and Hotel development blocks would address Priory Bridge Road and create a sense of enclosure to the site which is currently lacking. The blocks would have heights of 38m AOD and 32.5m AOD respectively. The finished height of the nearby existing Viridor building is 39.75m AOD. The masterplan proposes a line of tree planting and separate footway along Priory Bridge Road to soften the built form and enhance the public realm. There would be views of the western end of the Greenway from Priory Bridge Road, creating legibility and directing movement through the site.	Minor beneficial The proposed development blocks would create a sense of enclosure to the eastern side of Priory Bridge Road and lead to the enhancement of the quality of the public realm through the creation of a new separated footway and new tree planting. The quality of the townscape fabric would be enhanced.
Station Road	Medium The key positive characteristic of the townscape is the sense of unity created by the character of existing development along Station Road.	Low The proposed redevelopment of the site would influence the character of this TCA by bringing a greater intensity of development into some views from Station Road. The proposed development blocks would have a strong rectilinear aesthetic that would be likely to contrast with this neighbouring TCA. The redevelopment of the site would create a sense of enclosure to the highway along Priory Bridge Road and enhance the quality of the townscape and public realm.	Minor adverse The scale and character of the development blocks proposed in the masterplan would be likely to contrast with character of Station Road. Although there would be enhancement to the public realm on Priory Bridge Road visible from Station Road the overall effect is assessed as minor adverse.

Townscape Character Area	Sensitivity	Magnitude of change: Operational effects	Residual effect
Railway Station and surrounds	Medium The key positive characteristics of the townscape relate to the group of historic buildings associated with Taunton Station, the opportunity to create a gateway location for the town and the enhanced character and quality of the townscape through recent redevelopment.	Low The Firepool site lies to the south of this TCA and has the potential to change views available in this direction and influence legibility in the townscape at this gateway location. It is likely that existing views of the church towers of St Mary's and St James' from the station would be substantially obscured by the proposed development blocks. The church towers have been identified in the Taunton Town Centre Design Code SPD as aiding legibility and providing a sense of direction for people arriving at the station. The masterplan proposes a central boulevard through the site, which has been designed to retain views towards the church towers. The northern part of the boulevard seeks to create a gateway, in order to lead pedestrians and cyclists arriving at the train station through the Firepool site and towards the town centre. This layout seeks to replace the potential loss of townscape legibility. The proposed masterplan would be unlikely to affect other key characteristics of the TCA, such as the group of historic buildings, and would be in keeping with the character of the recent redevelopment of the train station.	Negligible The proposed masterplan for the Firepool site would lead to the development of built form in views from this TCA. The new development has a contemporary aesthetic in keeping with the character of recent development at the train station. The Firepool masterplan proposes a wide central boulevard with views towards the church towers of St Mary's and St James' in order to aid legibility for pedestrians and cyclists through the site and towards the river corridor and the town centre. This layout seeks to replace the potential loss of townscape legibility as a result of reduced opportunities for views towards the church towers from the train station.
Somerset County Cricket Ground	Medium The key positive characteristics of the townscape largely relate to the historic location of the cricket ground and opportunities to view heritage assets from within the TCA.	Low The development blocks proposed in the masterplan have the potential to influence the character of this TCA through changes to views experienced from the grounds. Existing views from the cricket ground towards the site are already characterised by recent built form in many directions. The proposed development blocks would be likely to be visible in views in the direction of the site but would not obscure views towards the heritage features such as the church towers and the Shirt and Collar Factory. The redevelopment of the site would enhance the character of the townscape in a location in proximity to the cricket ground and would have a low beneficial effect on the character of this adjacent TCA in comparison to the baseline.	Minor adverse The development blocks proposed in the masterplan would be likely to increase the built form visible in views from the TCA and would not obscure views of heritage assets.

Townscape Character Area	Sensitivity	Magnitude of change: Operational effects	Residual effect
Adjacent residential areas	<p>Medium</p> <p>The key positive characteristic of the townscape is the sense of unity created by the character of historic residential development in some parts of the character area.</p>	<p>Low</p> <p>The development blocks proposed in the masterplan would increase the intensity of development visible from nearby residential areas. The proposals seek to reduce the heights and scales of development to create a transition between the larger scale blocks to the west and the residential development. The masterplan proposals would lead to the regeneration of the site and lead to a better quality of townscape design and quality than in the baseline.</p>	<p>Minor adverse</p> <p>The development blocks proposed in the masterplan would be likely to increase the built form visible in views from the TCA.</p>

8 Visual effects

8.1 Introduction

- 8.1.1 The locations of the representative viewpoints have been selected based on updating the TVIA prepared previously and refined in consultation with Somerset West and Taunton Council. The locations of the viewpoints are illustrated on **Figures 5.1** and **5.2** and the panoramic photographs of the views are provided in **Appendices B** and **C**.
- 8.1.2 This section provides a summary of the assessment of the likely visual effects of the proposals on the 24 viewpoints. A detailed assessment for each viewpoint can be found in **Table 8.1**.
- 8.1.3 Verified View Montages (VVMs) have been prepared for seven of the 24 viewpoint locations which illustrate the proposed scheme modelled into the view in these locations. The VVMs are provided in **Appendix D**.
- 8.1.4 The proposed masterplan for the site is summarised in **Section 6** and the assessment of visual impacts has been undertaken in accordance with the methodology set out in **Section 3**.
- 8.1.5 The ZTV and fieldwork found that many views towards the site are obscured or filtered by existing built form around the site and the wooded areas associated with the corridor to the River Tone.
- 8.1.6 There are few positive townscape or visual features within the site itself that would be affected by the proposed masterplan. The site is substantially vacant and being used for temporary parking, with associated Heras fencing and poor quality associated landscape and townscape with a weak character. The site requires a new purpose to bring active uses, management and character into the site. The proposals would introduce substantial elements of built form into the baseline context of a largely open and flat site. The scale of the proposed development is considered appropriate for this town centre location, where development of a similar height and footprint has taken place in recent years. More details of the nature of the change likely to be experienced in each view is provided in **Table 8.1** and summarised below.

Table 8.1: Viewpoint assessment

Viewpoint	Location	Receptor type	Sensitivity	Magnitude of change: Operational effects	Residual effect
1 Verified View Montage available	Centre of Trenchard Way Bridge, view south west	Pedestrians and road users, including people in vehicles and cyclists	Medium Drivers, cyclists and pedestrians using a main road travelling in a direction with oblique views towards the site. The viewpoint is at a more open location on the bridge where there an opportunity for views towards the site. Receptors are likely to be travelling to work or to undertake day-to-day activities and are unlikely to be at the location specifically enjoy the view. Receptors are assessed as being of medium sensitivity to change.	Low The baseline view is strongly influenced by built form and the variety of roof tops and chimneys visible in the view. The skyline is defined by the mix of roof tops with opportunities to view the church towers of St Mary's and St James' which project up from the other built form and are noticeable landmarks in the view. There are views along Station Road which lead the eye in this direction, with the Blackdown Hills visible in the distance. To the left of the view the built form is more varied with a mix of traditional domestic rooftops combined with views of more recent, larger scale, development including the Viridor building and Water's Edge. The floodlighting columns at Somerset Cricket Ground are prominent vertical elements in the view and are of a greater scale than surrounding development. The site lies to the left of the view in this location. The scale of the proposed built form will create a new skyline in this part of the view, with the existing varied domestic and commercial development along Canal Road and Station Road remaining visible in the foreground. The proposed built form will not obscure views towards the church towers, however, there will be a greater scale and mass of development in proximity to the towers. The existing floodlighting columns disrupt the view towards the towers to some extent. The proposals would not restrict opportunities to view the Blackdown Hills forming the skyline to the right of the photograph. The proposals will increase the built form visible in the view, however as the baseline view is strongly characterised by existing development and the proposals would not impact the key positive characteristics of the view, the magnitude of change is assessed as low.	Minor adverse The proposals would not substantially change the key characteristics of this view. The opportunities to view the church towers of St Mary's and St James' as well as views towards the Blackdown Hills would be retained. Visual receptors are likely to be at this location to undertake day-to-day activities in a town centre location, where enjoying the view is not a key part of the reason for being at the location and where receptors are likely to expect to experience substantial built form in the view.

Viewpoint	Location	Receptor type	Sensitivity	Magnitude of change: Operational effects	Residual effect
2a	Taunton Station Footway	Pedestrians and road users arriving at Taunton by train. A gateway/ arrival point for the town.	<p>High to medium</p> <p>The viewpoint represents views available as people arrive at Taunton from the railway station with views in the direction of the site.</p> <p>Some receptors may be travelling for recreational reasons where appreciating the view and the context is part of the reason for being at the location. Other receptors may be travelling to work or to undertake day-to-day activities.</p> <p>Receptors are assessed as being of high to medium sensitivity to change.</p>	<p>Medium</p> <p>Baseline views are predominantly characterised by the recent development in this context, including the multistorey car park associated with train station and the development of the Innovation Centre which was under construction at the time of the field survey. The design of these new developments has a strong contemporary aesthetic with built form often characterised by development blocks using strong forms and patterns. Existing built form is frequently greater than two storeys.</p> <p>To the right of the view there is a greater degree of openness, with the roof tops of the housing at Canal Road just visible with close board fencing visible in the foreground. Opportunities to view the church towers of St Mary's and St James' from this location have been obscured by the development of the Innovation Centre.</p> <p>The proposals for the site will introduce new built form into the view which has been designed to respond to the context and has a strong architectural design which will enhance the character and quality of the townscape in this location.</p> <p>The proposed development blocks reflect the heights and footprints of the adjacent new development, including the Innovation Centre.</p> <p>The proposals seek to create a Northern Gateway, where the public realm would be designed to lead users towards and through the site along the boulevards. The Northern and Southern boulevards would facilitate views through the site and create new opportunities to view the church towers of St Mary's and St James' as wayfinding features, in a newly designed context.</p>	<p>Moderate beneficial</p> <p>As a gateway location, visual receptors may be arriving at Taunton from the railway station, where an appreciation of the visual context is a key part of the experience of being at the location.</p> <p>The proposals would not substantially change the key characteristics of this view, which is predominantly characterised by contemporary built form and the recently implemented, high quality public realm at the train station entrance.</p> <p>The proposals would introduce a new, high quality scheme with a contemporary aesthetic and an enhanced public realm, enhancing the character of the view and providing new opportunities for views through the site towards heritage features, including the church towers of St Mary's and St James'.</p>

Viewpoint	Location	Receptor type	Sensitivity	Magnitude of change: Operational effects	Residual effect
2b Verified View Montage available	Taunton Station Entrance	Pedestrians and road users arriving at Taunton by train. A gateway/ arrival point for the town.	High to medium The viewpoint represents views available as people arrive at Taunton from the railway station with views in the direction of the site. Some receptors may be travelling for recreational reasons where appreciating the view and the context is part of the reason for being at the location. Other receptors may be travelling to work or to undertake day-to-day activities. Receptors are assessed as being of high to medium sensitivity to change.	Medium As for Viewpoint 2a, baseline views are predominantly characterised by recent development in this location, including the multistorey car park at the train station and the Innovation Centre. The design of these new developments has a strong contemporary aesthetic with built form often characterised by development blocks using strong rectilinear forms and patterns. Existing built form is frequently greater than two storeys. To the right of the view there is a greater degree of openness, with the rooftops of the housing at Canal Road just visible. The church towers of St Mary's and St James' are visible as landmark features, although their dominance in the view is affected by floodlighting columns, which clutter the view. The proposals would substantially reduce opportunities to see the church towers and the Blackdown Hills from this location. Views of these features are available from within the site and in many other locations across Taunton. This is considered to be moderate adverse effect on the view. The proposed Northern Boulevard will connect to the Southern Boulevard, creating space between the development blocks, facilitating views through the site and creating opportunities to view the church towers of St Mary's and St James' from within the site.	Mixed effects As for Viewpoint 2a, this is a gateway location where visual receptors may be arriving at Taunton from the train station. Enjoying the visual context is a key part of the experience of being at the location. The proposals would substantially reduce opportunities to see the church towers and the Blackdown Hills from this location. Views of these features are available from within the site and in many other locations across Taunton. The proposals would retain opportunities to see the church towers from within the site, along the proposed boulevard, and enhance the surrounding setting of the view. Overall, this is considered to be moderate adverse effect on the view. The proposals would introduce a new, high quality scheme with a contemporary aesthetic enhancing the character of the view leading to moderate beneficial effects.
3	Bridgewater and Taunton	Pedestrians/ walkers and cyclists using	High to medium Pedestrians and cyclists using the Public Rights of Way and	Medium Baseline views are characterised by the Bridgewater and Taunton Canal and the River Tone and its associated	Moderate beneficial Receptors are likely to be at this location for purposes which

Viewpoint	Location	Receptor type	Sensitivity	Magnitude of change: Operational effects	Residual effect
Verified View Montage available	Canal Bridge, Firepool Lock	the river corridor for recreational and day-to-day purposes	<p>Sustrans route 3 along the banks of the River Tone.</p> <p>Children's Wood LNR is an accessible area of local green space to the east of the viewpoint.</p> <p>This location has a number of heritage features in close proximity, including the Pumping Station as well as Firepool lock, and the canal bridge may be a place where people may pause to appreciate the view</p> <p>Some receptors are likely to be at the location for recreational purposes where enjoying the view is part of the recreational experience, however, receptors are travelling through a town, where built form would be expected to be seen in some parts of the view. Receptors are assessed as being of high to medium sensitivity to change.</p>	<p>vegetation with opportunities to enjoy views of the heritage features including the Pumping Station, the canal lock gates and bridge. Recent, larger scale development, flanks the river in many locations. Contemporary residential and commercial development is beginning to characterise riverside views. This type of development is often of multiple storeys, for example, Water's Edge which is a six-storey residential development on the southern side of the river as well as the Viridor office building. Development at the Somerset County Cricket Ground can often be seen. These developments and the floodlighting columns bring urbanising influences into existing views.</p> <p>Willow trees and wetland vegetation often lie at the edge of the water, softening the built form and having a positive influence on the character of views. Areas of grassland create openness along the river and opportunities for recreation.</p> <p>The proposals seek to address the riverside location while also being set back from the water's edge to facilitate the introduction of planting to soften the built form and enhance the setting of the buildings.</p> <p>The masterplan proposes smaller scale residential development/houses of three storeys in proximity to the viewpoint, with the heights and footprint of development blocks increasing towards the west of the site. The landscaping proposals include a Greenway through the centre of the site, creating a new connection to this location as well as a green corridor along the river's edge. Lock View is a proposed seating area within the site with views towards Firepool lock. The green corridors and areas for seating will create an enhanced public realm in these locations and will provide opportunities for planting, including tree planting along</p>	<p>include appreciating the view and to enjoy opportunities to view nearby heritage assets. Receptors are using routes within the urban area of Taunton and are likely to be expecting to experience some built form in the view as well as appreciating opportunities to view the river and the associated green corridors.</p> <p>The proposals will introduce further development into view, however the development blocks have been designed following good urban design principles which reflect local architectural precedents.</p>

Viewpoint	Location	Receptor type	Sensitivity	Magnitude of change: Operational effects	Residual effect
				<p>the river's edge, creating a vegetated context to the built form and enhancing views from this location.</p> <p>The proposed development is staggered along the river side with spaces between and connecting the residential blocks allowing landscape planting between the blocks, softening the visual context and creating places for play and other amenity uses.</p> <p>The maximum heights of the proposed blocks reflect the height of the Viridor building, the tallest proposed building being 39.75m AOD.</p> <p>Finishing materials reflect those in the local context and use a predominantly more subtle range of tones and textures, with brick texture detailing, flat roofs, and river facing brick framed balconies.</p>	
4a	Pedestrian path near the Water's Edge development	Pedestrians/walkers and cyclists using the river corridor for recreational and day-to-day purposes	<p>High to medium</p> <p>Pedestrians and cyclists using the Public Rights of Way along the southern bank of the River Tone. The East Deane Long Distance Walking Route follows the river in this location.</p> <p>Some users are likely to be at the location for recreational purposes where enjoying the view is part of the recreational experience. Receptors are travelling through a town, where built form would be expected to be seen in some parts of the view. Receptors are assessed as being of high to medium sensitivity to change.</p>	<p>Medium</p> <p>Baseline views are characterised by the River Tone, and its associated vegetation. Contemporary residential and commercial development is beginning to characterise riverside views. This type of development is often of more than three storeys. The recent development along Trenchards Way can be seen across the vacant site. Development at Somerset County Cricket Ground can often be seen in riverside views. These developments and the floodlighting columns bring urbanising influences into views.</p> <p>Hazel trees and the wetland vegetation often lie at the edge of the water, softening the built form and having a positive influence on the character of views. Areas of amenity grassland create openness along the river and opportunities for recreation.</p> <p>The masterplan proposals would lead to the development of this vacant and underused site and the</p>	<p>Moderate beneficial</p> <p>Receptors are likely to be at this location for purposes which include appreciating the view. Receptors are using routes within the urban area of Taunton and are likely to be expecting to experience some built form in the view as well as appreciating opportunities to view the river and the associated green corridor.</p> <p>The proposals will introduce further development into the view, however the development blocks have been designed following good urban design principles which reflect local architectural precedents. The</p>

Viewpoint	Location	Receptor type	Sensitivity	Magnitude of change: Operational effects	Residual effect
				<p>removal of the discordant elements which result from underuse, visible in this view, such as temporary fencing around the car parking and the barrier wire fencing along the edge of the riverside path.</p> <p>The proposals seek to address the riverside location while also being set back from the water's edge to facilitate the introduction of planting to soften the built form and enhance the setting of the buildings. In this location there will be views available towards the Block 2 and Block 4 residential apartments. The development edge is staggered with spaces between and connecting the residential blocks allowing landscape planting between the blocks, softening the visual context and creating places for play and other amenity uses. Finishing materials reflect those in the local context and use a predominantly more subtle range of tones and textures, with brick texture detailing, flat roofs, and river facing brick framed balconies.</p> <p>The proposed green corridor along the southern bank of the River Tone will incorporate tree planting and wetland planting to integrate the development with its riverside location and enhance views along the riverside in comparison to the baseline.</p>	<p>landscape proposals seek to create a strong green corridor along the river's edge which would serve to integrate the proposals into the river side setting and would reflect the character of existing recent development.</p>
4b Verified View Montage available	Footbridge over the River Tone	Pedestrians/ walkers and cyclists crossing the river corridor, using routes for both recreational and day-to-day purposes	High to medium Pedestrians and cyclists crossing the River Tone. Sustrans Route 3. Some users are likely to be at the location for recreational purposes where enjoying the view is part of the recreational experience. Receptors are travelling through a town, where built form would be expected to be seen in some parts of the view, reducing the susceptibility of visual receptors. Receptors are assessed as being	Medium Baseline views are characterised by the River Tone, and its associated vegetation. Contemporary residential and commercial development is beginning to characterise riverside views. This type of development is often of more than three storeys. The recent development along Trenchards Way can be seen across the vacant under used site. Development at Somerset County Cricket Ground can often be seen in riverside views. These developments and the floodlighting columns bring urbanising influences into views.	Moderate beneficial Receptors are likely to be at this location for purposes which include appreciating the view. Receptors are using routes within the urban area of Taunton and are likely to be expecting to experience built form in the view as well as appreciating opportunities to view the river and the associated green corridor.

Viewpoint	Location	Receptor type	Sensitivity	Magnitude of change: Operational effects	Residual effect
			of high to medium sensitivity to change.	<p>Hazel trees and the wetland vegetation often lie at the edge of the water, softening the built form and having a positive influence on the character of views. Areas of amenity grassland create openness along the river and opportunities for recreation.</p> <p>The masterplan proposals would lead to the development of this vacant and underused site and the removal of the discordant elements which result from underuse, visible in this view, such as temporary fencing around the car parking and the barrier wire fencing along the edge of the riverside path.</p> <p>The proposals seek to address the riverside location while also being set back from the water's edge to facilitate the introduction of planting to soften the built form and enhance the setting of the buildings. In this location there will be views available towards the Block 2 and Block 4 residential apartments. The development edge is staggered with spaces between and connecting the residential blocks allowing landscape planting between the blocks, softening the visual context and creating places for play and other amenity uses. Finishing materials reflect those in the local context and use a predominantly more subtle range of tones and textures, with brick texture detailing, flat roofs, and river facing brick framed balconies.</p> <p>The proposed green corridor along the southern bank of the River Tone will incorporate tree planting and wetland planting to help to integrate the development with its riverside location and enhance views along the riverside in comparison to the baseline.</p>	<p>The proposals will introduce new development into this largely vacant, under-used site. The proposals will introduce development blocks of a scale and footprint which reflect recent development in the local context.</p> <p>The development blocks have been designed following good urban design principles which reflect local architectural precedents. The landscape proposals seek to create a strong green corridor along the river's edge which would serve to integrate the proposals into the river side setting and would reflect the character of existing recent development.</p>
5	Northern riverside path near the	Pedestrians/walkers and cyclists using	High to medium	Low Contemporary residential and commercial development strongly influences the character of views in this location,	Minor mixed effects Receptors are likely to be at this location for purposes which

Viewpoint	Location	Receptor type	Sensitivity	Magnitude of change: Operational effects	Residual effect
	Water's Edge development	the river corridor for recreational and day-to-day purposes. Sustrans Route 3.	<p>Pedestrians and cyclists using routes along the River Tone, including Sustrans Route 3.</p> <p>Some users are likely to be at the location for recreational purposes where enjoying the view is part of the recreational experience. Receptors are travelling through a town, where built form would be expected to be seen in some parts of the view, reducing the susceptibility of visual receptors. Receptors are assessed as being of high to medium sensitivity to change.</p>	<p>including the Viridor building and Water's Edge. These developments are six storeys high and bring urbanising influences into views. The buildings are set back from the water by approximately 35-40m.</p> <p>The willow trees and wetland vegetation at the edge of the river, soften the built form and have a positive influence on the character of views. Amenity planting and areas of grassland create openness along the river and opportunities for recreation.</p> <p>Southern areas of this part of the site are used for car parking with temporary Heras-type fencing, creating some discordant elements in the view.</p> <p>The proposals seek to lead to the loss of an area of amenity grass and the introduce additional built form which will be a continuation of the line of existing developments in this location. The height and footprint of the proposed Block 1, visible in this location, reflects that of adjacent buildings.</p> <p>The landscape proposals seek to create a strong green corridor along the river's edge which would serve to integrate the proposals into the riverside setting and would reflect the character of existing recent development. The existing willow trees would be retained.</p>	<p>include appreciating the view. Receptors are using routes within the urban area of Taunton and are likely to be expecting to experience built form in the view as well as appreciating opportunities to view the river corridor.</p> <p>The proposals would lead to the loss of an area of amenity grassland and introduce additional built form into the view, of a similar scale and footprint to existing development in this view.</p> <p>While the proposals would lead to increased levels of built form in views, usually considered to be adverse impact on views, the development blocks have been designed following good urban design principles to create a new contemporary aesthetic and reflect local architectural precedents with a strong green corridor along the river's edge, leading to beneficial effects on views.</p>
6 Verified View Montage available	Priory Bridge Road	Pedestrians and road users, including people in vehicles and cyclists	Medium Drivers, cyclists and pedestrians using a main road travelling in a direction with oblique views towards the site. The viewpoint is at an open location with opportunities for views across	High Baseline views from this location are elevated, allowing open views across the site. As an under-used site, there are few positive features within the site visible in the view, with the exception of the River Tone and the boundary trees which add a sense of scale and a green setting to the view. In the wider landscape, there are	Moderate beneficial Receptors are using routes within the urban area of Taunton and are likely to be expecting to experience built form in the view as well as appreciating opportunities to view the river

Viewpoint	Location	Receptor type	Sensitivity	Magnitude of change: Operational effects	Residual effect
			<p>much of the site and proposals. Receptors are likely to be travelling to work or to undertake day-to-day activities and are unlikely to be at the location specifically enjoy the view. Receptors are assessed as being of medium sensitivity to change.</p>	<p>opportunities to see the Pumping Station as well as the Quantock Hills, visible in the distance. The existing Victorian housing along Canal Road is visible in the middle distance and adds some characteristic features to the view. There are opportunities to enjoy the openness of the river and its associated vegetation, contrasting with the recent development on both sides of the bridge including the Viridor building, Water's Edge and the development in the middle distance including the Innovation Centre and Lock House.</p> <p>Visual receptors are travelling through an area of mixed residential and commercial development, including buildings of greater height, footprint and mass. There is a mix of ages and styles of built form visible in many views in this location, although many views include more recent development, for example, the Viridor building, Morrisons and Somerset Cricket Ground.</p> <p>The proposals seek to address the riverside and roadside location. The proposed built forms would create a sense of enclosure, structure, direction and purpose to this town centre location, which are currently lacking.</p> <p>In this location there will be views available towards Block 5, the Venue, as well as views towards Block 4, residential apartments. There will be opportunities for views along the proposed boulevards, leading the eye and creating a sense of direction through the site and towards the train station. The scheme has been designed to create a new public realm at the water's edge in proximity to the viewpoint, called the Amphitheatre.</p> <p>The proposals would be likely to obscure views towards the Pumping Station and views of the Quantock Hills in the distance. The layout proposes a central Greenway</p>	<p>and the associated green corridor.</p> <p>The proposals will introduce new development into this largely vacant, under-used site. The proposals will introduce development blocks of a scale and footprint which reflect recent development in the local context.</p> <p>The development blocks have been designed following good urban design principles which reflect local architectural precedents. Opportunities for views towards heritage features, such as the Pumping Station, have been incorporated into the layout.</p> <p>The new, high quality, public realm would serve to enhance views and draw users through and into the site.</p> <p>The landscape proposals seek to create a strong green corridor along the river's edge which would serve to integrate the proposals into the river side setting and would reflect the character of existing recent development.</p>

Viewpoint	Location	Receptor type	Sensitivity	Magnitude of change: Operational effects	Residual effect
				<p>which has been orientated to retain views towards the Pumping Station from within the site.</p> <p>The development edge is staggered with spaces between and connecting the blocks allowing landscape planting between the blocks, softening the visual context and creating places for social interaction, play and other amenity uses.</p> <p>Finishing materials reflect those in the local context and use a predominantly more subtle range of tones and textures, with brick texture detailing, flat roofs, and river-facing brick framed balconies.</p> <p>The proposed green corridor along the southern bank of the River Tone will incorporate tree planting and wetland planting to integrate the development with its riverside location and enhance views along the riverside in comparison to the baseline.</p>	
7	Pedestrian island at junction of Priory Bridge Road and Dellers Wharf	Pedestrians and road users, including people in vehicles and cyclists	<p>Medium</p> <p>Drivers, cyclists and pedestrians entering and leaving Deller's Court and Morrisons supermarket. Receptors are travelling towards the site with direct views across the site. Receptors are likely to be travelling to undertake day-to-day activities and are unlikely to be at the location specifically enjoy the view. Receptors are assessed as being of medium sensitivity to change.</p>	<p>High</p> <p>The site occupies a substantial proportion of baseline views. From this location, there are views towards the western site boundary, with associated visual clutter of advertising banners and unused signage columns. There are views across the under-used site towards the Innovation Centre, the multistorey car park and other blocks of residential apartments. There are opportunities to see the Pumping Station and the GWR building, which have heritage interest, however, these buildings do not form defining elements of the baseline view.</p> <p>Visual receptors are travelling through an area of mixed residential and commercial development, including buildings of greater height, footprint and mass. There is a mix of ages and styles of built form visible in many views in this location.</p>	<p>Moderate beneficial</p> <p>Receptors are using routes within the urban area of Taunton and are likely to be expecting to experience built form in the view.</p> <p>The proposals will introduce new development into this largely vacant, under-used site. The proposals will introduce development blocks of a scale and footprint which reflect recent development in the local context.</p> <p>The development blocks have been designed following good urban design principles which</p>

Viewpoint	Location	Receptor type	Sensitivity	Magnitude of change: Operational effects	Residual effect
				<p>The proposals seek to address this roadside location. The proposed built forms would create a sense of enclosure, structure, direction and purpose to this town centre location, which are currently lacking.</p> <p>In this location there will be views available towards Block 5, including the Venue and the proposed hotel. The proposed Western Greenway will connect to Priory Bridge Road in this location, leading users into and through the site. The proposals seek to provide a high quality public realm along the western site boundary, including tree and amenity planting and enhanced public access.</p> <p>Finishing materials reflect those in the local context and use a predominantly more subtle range of tones and textures. The Venue and the hotel would have a different palette of materials to the residential development in order to distinguish between these types of development.</p>	<p>reflect local architectural precedents.</p> <p>The new, high quality, public realm would serve to enhance views and draw users through and into the site. Tree planting would serve to soften the scale of built form and enhance the visual qualities of the public realm.</p>
8	Footway at junction of Station Road and Priory Bridge Road	Pedestrians and road users, including people in vehicles and cyclists	<p>Medium</p> <p>Drivers, cyclists and pedestrians at the junction of Station Road and Priory Bridge Road.</p> <p>Receptors may be travelling in the direction of the site with narrow slot views towards the site.</p> <p>Receptors are likely to be travelling to undertake day-to-day activities and are unlikely to be at the location specifically enjoy the view. Receptors are</p>	<p>High</p> <p>In baseline views from this junction, the site can be seen between existing development along Station Road. From this location, there are views towards the north western corner of the site. The site is under-used and a range of elements are visible, including the Auction House as well as visual clutter of temporary or poorly maintained fencing, advertising banners and various columns for lighting and signs.</p> <p>Visual receptors are travelling through an area of predominantly retail and commercial development. Station Road itself has a well-defined character of predominantly smaller scale and older buildings. In</p>	<p>Moderate beneficial</p> <p>Receptors are using routes within the urban area of Taunton and are likely to be expecting to experience built form in the view.</p> <p>The proposals will introduce new development into this largely vacant, under-used site.</p> <p>The development blocks have been designed following good urban design principles which</p>

Viewpoint	Location	Receptor type	Sensitivity	Magnitude of change: Operational effects	Residual effect
			assessed as being of medium sensitivity to change.	<p>views towards the site there is a mix of ages and styles of built form visible.</p> <p>The proposals seek to address this corner location. The proposed built forms would create a sense of enclosure, structure and purpose in this view, which are currently lacking.</p> <p>In this location there will be views available towards the proposed 5 storey hotel which will address, and be set back from, the corner location. Upper elements of the proposed cinema are likely to be visible above the roof tops of the existing buildings on Station Road to the left of the view. Views along Priory Bridge Road would include the proposed Venue.</p> <p>Finishing materials reflect those in the local context and use a predominantly more subtle range of tones and textures. The Venue and the hotel would have a different palette of materials to the residential development in order to distinguish between these types of development.</p> <p>The new public realm along Priory Bridge Road will lead the eye and users along this boundary and towards the Greenway within the site. This area would incorporate tree planting and additional landscape planting to soften the built form and further enhance the view.</p>	<p>reflect local architectural precedents.</p> <p>The new, high quality, public realm would serve to enhance views and draw users through and into the site. Tree planting would serve to soften the scale of built form and enhance the visual qualities of the public realm.</p>
9	Pedestrian route in the site	Pedestrians using a local route across the site, not identified as a Public Right of Way.	Medium Receptors are using an informal route through the site that provides a connection between the River Tone routes and Canal Road, and onwards to the train station, further north. People may be at the location to	High Visual receptors using an informal route within the site, where the site surrounds the receptor. Baseline views are largely characterised by the under-used site, with views towards the temporary car parks and fencing. There are views towards more recent development outside the site, including Deller's Court and Morrison's supermarket.	Moderate beneficial The proposals will introduce new development into this largely vacant, under-used site, creating structure and purpose to the view.

Viewpoint	Location	Receptor type	Sensitivity	Magnitude of change: Operational effects	Residual effect
			undertake day-to-day activities or for dog walking in a town-based location with medium susceptibility to change. Receptors are assessed as being of medium sensitivity to change.	<p>When travelling in a southerly direction, there are opportunities to see the church towers of St Marys' and St James', which form positive landmarks in the view and have a wayfinding function.</p> <p>The masterplan proposes a central boulevard through the site, the Northern Boulevard and Southern Boulevard, which seek to provide pedestrian connections through the site and a substantially enhanced public realm, incorporating tree and landscape planting.</p> <p>The boulevards have been aligned specifically with the purpose to retain views towards the church towers.</p> <p>The proposals will introduce substantial change in the view in the introduction of built forms. The proposed buildings will provide structure and purpose to the site, which is currently lacking. To the left of the view, the proposed Block 2 and 4 apartments would be seen, these buildings would be 5 to 7 storeys, increasing in height towards the river. To the left of the view, the Health building would be visible, with the proposed water feature lying centrally within the view.</p> <p>Finishing materials reflect those in the local context and use a predominantly more subtle range of tones and textures. The Venue and the hotel would have a different palette of materials to the residential development in order to distinguish between these types of development.</p>	<p>The development blocks have been designed following good urban design principles which reflect local architectural precedents. The location of the main boulevard will retain opportunities to view the church towers.</p> <p>The new, high quality, public realm would serve to enhance views and draw users through and into the site. Tree planting would serve to soften the scale of built form and enhance the visual qualities of the public realm.</p>
10a	Heavitree Way, Obridge	Pedestrians and cyclists	Medium Receptors are using a Public Right of Way and cycle route	Low Baseline views are largely characterised by the boundaries to residential development in the immediate	Negligible The proposals are unlikely to be noticeable elements in this view.

Viewpoint	Location	Receptor type	Sensitivity	Magnitude of change: Operational effects	Residual effect
			within a residential area to the north of the site. People may be at the location to undertake day-to-day activities in a town-based location with medium susceptibility to change. Receptors are assessed as being of medium sensitivity to change.	<p>context with views towards the site across the railway lines and development associated with the railway. There are views towards the Grade II Listed Pumping Station, where the rooftop can just be seen. The recent four storey development called Canal Court is prominent in the view. The six storey Waters Edge development is almost entirely obscured by vegetation.</p> <p>The site lies to the right of the view. It is likely that the rooftops of the proposed four storey student accommodation block would be visible to the right of the photograph. In the central part of the view, the three storey residential developments are likely to be obscured by intervening built form and vegetation.</p>	
10b	Malvern Terrace, Obridge	Pedestrians and cyclists	Medium Receptors are using a Public Right of Way and cycle route within a residential area to the north of the site. People may be at the location to undertake day-to-day activities in a town-based location with medium susceptibility to change. Receptors are assessed as being of medium sensitivity to change.	Low Baseline views are substantially characterised by the recent development along Trenchard's Way, including the multistorey car park at the train station, the four storey development at Canal Court and the four storey development at the Lock House. It is likely that the proposed four storey development of the student block would be visible in the view, lying between the multistorey car park and Lock House. The proposals would be of a similar scale and mass to existing development visible in the view and in keeping with the new townscape character being established along Trenchard's Way.	Negligible The proposals are likely to be visible in the view and would be of a similar scale and character to other recent development in adjacent locations. The impact on the view would be negligible.
11	A358 Obridge Viaduct	Pedestrians and road users, including people in vehicles and cyclists	Medium Drivers, cyclists and pedestrians travelling along a main road with elevated, oblique views towards the site. Receptors are likely to be travelling to undertake day-to-day activities and are unlikely to	Very low Baseline views towards the site are characterised by views along the river corridor and its associated vegetation, with elements of taller development visible, set within a generally wooded context. Waterside House is a prominent element in the view, breaking the skyline to the right of the view. The church towers of St Mary's and St George's are noticeable landmarks, visible to the left of the photograph. The Viridor building is just visible,	Negligible The proposals are unlikely to be noticeable elements in this view and would have a negligible impact.

Viewpoint	Location	Receptor type	Sensitivity	Magnitude of change: Operational effects	Residual effect
			be at the location for recreational reasons. Receptors are assessed as being of medium sensitivity to change.	<p>between the floodlighting columns at Somerset County Cricket Ground.</p> <p>The proposed development would be located to the right of the view, in proximity to the Viridor building. The tallest building in the proposed scheme is approximately 0.5m below the roof height of the Viridor building. Views towards the proposals would be largely obscured by the intervening vegetation and built form. The proposals would not affect the key positive characteristics of the view, namely, views along the vegetated river corridor with opportunities to view the town and some of its associated heritage features, such as the church towers, with the skyline in the distance largely formed by the Blackdown Hills.</p>	
12 Verified View Montage available	Trenchard Way, crossing the River Tone	Pedestrians and road users, including people in vehicles and cyclists	<p>Medium Drivers, cyclists and pedestrians travelling along a main road with panoramic elevated views across Taunton and oblique views towards the site.</p> <p>Receptors are likely to be travelling to undertake day-to-day activities and are unlikely to be at the location for recreational reasons. Receptors are assessed as being of medium sensitivity to change.</p>	<p>Low Baseline views in this location are characterised by the recent residential development associated with Trenchard's Way to the north of the river, with mixed, slightly older, commercial and residential development to the south. The river corridor and its associated vegetation create a green corridor through the area and in the view. Views westwards, in the direction of the site, are characterised by the combination of the river corridor and built form, with recent three to four storey residential development in the foreground and taller development blocks in the middle distance. The upper floors of the Viridor building and Water's Edge are visible to the left of the view, while to development at the train station can be just seen through the wooded vegetation.</p> <p>The tower of St James' church is noticeable as a landmark to the left of the photograph, although the floodlights at the cricket ground clutter the view and reduce its prominence. The Viridor and Water's Edge development blocks break the skyline.</p>	<p>Minor adverse The upper floors of the proposed development blocks would be visible, creating a new skyline in some sectors of the view. Development would be of a similar scale and character to other recent development in nearby locations. The key positive characteristics of the view would be substantially unaffected. Visual receptors are unlikely to be at the location for recreational reasons or specifically to enjoy the view and would experience views towards the site at an oblique angle to the direction of travel.</p> <p>The increase in built form and change to skyline would lead to</p>

Viewpoint	Location	Receptor type	Sensitivity	Magnitude of change: Operational effects	Residual effect
				<p>VVM 12 illustrates the proposals in the view. The upper floors of the proposals would be seen located between Somerset County Cricket Ground to the left and towards the railway station. Vegetation and built form in the foreground and middle ground serve to obscure views of the proposals. The proposed built forms would create a new skyline across central areas of the view, bring additional urbanising influences.</p> <p>The proposals would not introduce elements into the view that are not already characteristics features of the view. The key positive characteristics of the view would be retained, namely the opportunities for views along the river corridor and opportunities to view the church towers in this view as well as in the wider context.</p>	minor adverse effects on the view.
13	Junction of Priory Bridge Road and Winchester Street	Pedestrians and road users, including people in vehicles and cyclists	<p>Medium Drivers, cyclists and pedestrians travelling along a main road with views in the direction of the site.</p> <p>Receptors are likely to be travelling to undertake day-to-day activities and are unlikely to be at the location for recreational reasons or specifically to enjoy the view. Receptors are assessed as being of medium sensitivity to change.</p>	<p>Medium Baseline views are characterised by the recent development blocks, including the Viridor building, Water's Edge and, to some extent, the development at Somerset County Cricket Ground. The vacant areas lying within the site and the associated temporary fencing are prominent elements of the baseline view. The viewpoint lies at a transition area, between smaller scale, two to three storey development to the east of the viewpoint and taller buildings to the west. There is a mix of commercial and residential development located along this main road. Trees associated with the river corridor serve to add a sense of human scale to the taller elements of development. There are few positive landmark elements in views from this location. The proposals will introduce new development blocks into this view of a similar height and footprint to the existing development blocks. The proposed development blocks would create a sense of enclosure</p>	<p>Moderate beneficial Receptors are using routes within the urban area of Taunton and are likely to be expecting to experience built form in the view.</p> <p>The proposals will introduce a sense of purpose and enclosure this underused location. The proposals introduce built form of a similar height and footprint to existing development in the view, stepping down in height towards the existing smaller scale built form to the east of the site and using architectural references from the local area. Proposed planting and finishing materials reflect the characteristics of the local context.</p>

Viewpoint	Location	Receptor type	Sensitivity	Magnitude of change: Operational effects	Residual effect
				<p>and purpose to the currently under-used, vacant part of the site.</p> <p>The masterplan proposes a signature building to address the corner location between Priory Bridge Road and the River Tone, towards the centre of this view, with a finished height the same as that of the Viridor building. The proposed development blocks step down in height in an easterly direction.</p> <p>Proposed finishing materials for the signature building include red brick and metal cladding with recessed balconies creating definition to the facades and providing opportunities for plant pots and greening. The other Block 1 apartments have vertical proportions to the facades facing Priory Bridge Road which have been informed by the former Shirt and Collar Factory. Whilst the metal cladding to the top floor of Block 1.2 reflects the top floor of the listed Pump Station.</p> <p>Landscape planting, including tree planting, is proposed associated with the corner location of the signature building, creating visual amenity and habitats for wildlife in this location in proximity to the river.</p>	
14	Somerset County Cricket Ground, Priory Road entrance	People watching a sporting activity focused on the cricket ground.	Medium to low People watching a sporting activity in an urban context where attention is focused on the enclosed sports ground and people are unlikely to be at the location specially to enjoy of the view.	Low Baseline views are predominantly characterised by the cricket ground itself which is enclosed by existing development. There are no noticeable landmark features in the view, such as views towards church towers or the elevated hills in the AONBs. There are views available in the direction of the site from this location. The upper two to three storeys of the Viridor building can be seen, with the Water's Edge development block lying to the right of the view and, at a greater distance from the viewpoint, appearing to be of smaller scale in this view. The proposed signature building would be the same height as the Viridor building and would be seen to the left of the Viridor building in this view, partially obscured	Negligible Visual receptors are likely to have their attention focused on the sporting activity and are unlikely to be at the location specifically to enjoy the view. The upper storeys of the proposed development would be likely to visible in the view however, the proposals would not affect the key characteristics of the view.

Viewpoint	Location	Receptor type	Sensitivity	Magnitude of change: Operational effects	Residual effect
				<p>by the cricket ground buildings. It is likely that the upper floors of other proposed Block 1 buildings would be just visible in the view.</p> <p>The proposed development would introduce additional elements of development into views from this location. However, baseline views are substantially characterised by similar types of existing development.</p>	
15	Somerset County Cricket Ground, Roof Terrace of apartment	Residents in an apartment adjacent to the cricket ground	<p>High</p> <p>Residential receptors in their homes are assessed by GLVIA3 as likely to be of high sensitivity to change. However, LVIA guidance also notes that planning system acts in the public interest and rarely protects private views.</p>	<p>Low</p> <p>Baseline views are characterised by the panoramic view over the northern parts of Taunton, with the Quantock Hills visible in the distance. The photograph was provided by the Estate Agents for the property and was taken before the construction of the Water's Edge development block.</p> <p>The proposed development would be likely to create a new skyline of built form across some sectors of the view and reduce opportunities to see the Quantock Hills in these sectors. There are likely to be some opportunities for views towards the hills to the right and left of the view. The proposed development would be in keeping with the character of existing recent development in the town centre.</p>	<p>Minor adverse</p> <p>The proposals would introduce greater levels of built form visible and reduce the extent of the Quantock Hills visible in the view. This is a private residential view.</p>
16	Footbridge over the River Tone, near Morrisons supermarket	Pedestrians/walkers and cyclists using the river corridor for recreational and day-to-day purposes. Sustrans Route 3.	<p>High to medium</p> <p>Pedestrians and cyclists crossing the River Tone and using Sustrans Route 3. Some users are likely to be at the location for recreational purposes where enjoying the view is part of the recreational experience. Receptors are travelling through a town, where built form would be expected to be seen in some parts of the view, reducing the susceptibility of visual receptors. Receptors are assessed as being</p>	<p>Low</p> <p>Baseline views are characterised by the river corridor and its associated vegetation, as well as the recent development associated with Morrison's supermarket and Somerset County Cricket Ground. The roof top of the Deller's Court building, approximately four storeys high, is visible to the centre of the view, with the rooftop of the Pumping Station just visible above the trees to the right.</p> <p>The proposed development to the south of the river would be likely to be largely obscured by the built form at the cricket ground. To the north of the river the proposals would be likely to be visible above the tree</p>	<p>Minor adverse</p> <p>The upper floors of the proposals lying to the north of the site are likely to be visible above the trees in the view and would be of a similar scale and character to other recent development in nearby locations. The increase in built form and change to skyline would lead to minor adverse effects on the view.</p>

Viewpoint	Location	Receptor type	Sensitivity	Magnitude of change: Operational effects	Residual effect
			of high to medium sensitivity to change.	tops and lying predominantly to the left of the roof to the Pumping Station building.	
17	Staplegrave Road, south of railway crossing	Pedestrians and road users, including people in vehicles and cyclists	<p>Medium Drivers, cyclists and pedestrians travelling along a main road with views in the direction of the site.</p> <p>Receptors are likely to be travelling to undertake day-to-day activities and are unlikely to be at the location for recreational reasons or specifically to enjoy the view. Receptors are assessed as being of medium sensitivity to change.</p>	<p>Very low In baseline views, the site is substantially obscured by intervening built form and vegetation. The existing floodlighting columns at Somerset County Cricket Ground are approximately 54m high and are just visible in the view. The proposed development would lie below the level of the floodlights and would be likely to be only just visible above the rooftops of the houses to the right of the view and the TMC commercial building to the left of the view.</p>	<p>Negligible Visual receptors are likely to be at this location to undertake day-to-day activities. The proposals would be likely to be just visible in</p>
18	Blackdown Hills AONB close to Staple Hill public viewpoint	Walkers using Public Rights of Way in a nationally designated landscape	<p>Very high Walkers using Public Rights of Way in the Blackdown Hills, a nationally designated landscape, where appreciation of the view is a key part of the recreational experience.</p>	<p>Very low Baseline views from this location are characterised by the panoramic view available from the Blackdown Hills, across the valley to the Quantock Hills in the distance. The town of Taunton can be seen, lying in the valley, at a distance of approximately 8km. At this distance, the human eye can just discern different buildings in the town, including the lighter facades of the Platinum Skies building and the floodlighting columns at Somerset County Cricket Ground. The Viridor building can just be seen, particularly the upper floors which have lighter finishing materials. The church towers of St Mary's and St James' can be just seen against the backdrop of other development associated with the town. The proposed built form would be just seen within the context of other development of a similar height and scale. From this direction the proposed buildings would lie behind the church towers and are unlikely to affect the legibility of these features in the view. The proposed built form would not alter the skyline or the perceived extents of built form/the urban area in the view. The</p>	<p>Negligible While receptors in this location are considered to be very high sensitivity to change, the proposed development would not affect the key positive characteristics of the view and, at a distance of 8.5km from the site, the impact on the view would be negligible.</p>

Viewpoint	Location	Receptor type	Sensitivity	Magnitude of change: Operational effects	Residual effect
				<p>proposed finishing materials are generally of natural tones of red or buff brick and are likely to appear more recessive in the view when seen in the context of other buildings of similar tones.</p> <p>Lighting within the proposed scheme would be seen in the context of existing urban lighting and would be unlikely to affect the view.</p>	
19	Quantock Hills AONB, close to Cothelstone Hill	Walkers using Public Rights of Way in a nationally designated landscape	Very high Walkers using Public Rights of Way in the Quantock Hills, a nationally designated landscape, where appreciation of the view is a key part of the recreational experience.	<p>Very low</p> <p>Baseline views from this location are characterised by the panoramic view available towards the Blackdown Hills with the town of Taunton lying in the valley, at a distance of over 8km. At this distance, the human eye can only just discern different buildings in the town, including the lighter facades of the Platinum Skies building and the floodlighting columns at Somerset County Cricket Ground. At this distance it is difficult to discern the church towers within the context of other built form.</p> <p>The proposed built form would be just seen within the context of other development of a similar height and scale. The proposals would not alter the skyline or the perceived extents of built form/the urban area in the view. From this direction the church towers would lie to the right of the site and to the right of Somerset County Cricket Ground. The proposals would be unlikely to affect the legibility of these features in the view. The proposed finishing materials are generally of natural tones of red or buff brick and are likely to appear more recessive in the view when seen in the context of other buildings of similar tones.</p> <p>Lighting within the proposed scheme would be seen in the context of existing urban lighting and would be unlikely to affect the view.</p>	Negligible While visual receptors in this location are considered to be very high sensitivity to change, the proposed development would not affect the key positive characteristics of the view and, at a distance of 8.5km from the site, the impact on the view would be negligible.
20	Cotlake Hill, Trull	Walkers using Public Rights of Way in an	High Walkers using Public Rights of Way in an undesignated, rural landscape, where appreciation of	<p>Very low</p> <p>Baseline views from this location are characterised by the panoramic view available across the valley to the Quantock Hills in the distance. Taunton can be seen,</p>	Negligible While visual receptors in this location are considered to be of high sensitivity to change, views

Viewpoint	Location	Receptor type	Sensitivity	Magnitude of change: Operational effects	Residual effect
		undesigned landscape	the view is a key part of the recreational experience.	<p>lying in the valley, at a distance of approximately 2.5km. Existing buildings in the town can be readily identified in the view, including the lighter facades of the Platinum Skies building and the floodlighting columns at Somerset County Cricket Ground. The upper floors of the Viridor building can just be seen. The church towers of St Mary's and St James' can be just seen against the backdrop of other development associated with the town. The Platinum Skies building partially obscures views towards the tower of St Mary's Church.</p> <p>The proposed buildings would be seen within the context of other development of a similar height and scale. The proposed built form would be at the same height, or lower, than the Viridor building and would be substantially obscured by intervening existing buildings and vegetation. From this direction the proposed buildings would be seen lying behind the church towers and are unlikely to affect the legibility of these features in the view.</p>	towards the proposed development would be substantially obscured by existing built form and vegetation. The proposals would not affect the key positive characteristics of the view. The impact on the view would be negligible.
21	Stoke Hill, Henlade	Walkers using Public Rights of Way in an undesignated landscape	High Walkers using Public Rights of Way in an undesignated, rural landscape, where appreciation of the view is a key part of the recreational experience.	<p>Very low</p> <p>Baseline views from this location are characterised by the panoramic view available towards the Quantock Hills, to the right of the view, with Exmoor National Park visible in the distance. Northern parts of Taunton can be seen, lying in the valley, at a distance of approximately 4.5km. Existing buildings in the town can be readily identified in the view, including the upper floors of the Viridor building and Waterside House. The church towers of St Mary's and St James' can be seen to the left of the view.</p> <p>The proposed buildings would be seen within the context of other development of a similar height and scale. The proposed built form would be at the same height, or lower, than the Viridor building. The proposals in the northern part of the site would be partially obscured by the Viridor building and Water's Edge. The finishing materials for the proposed buildings would be red or buff</p>	Negligible While visual receptors in this location are considered to be of high sensitivity to change, views towards the proposed development would be substantially obscured by existing built form and vegetation. The proposals would not affect the key positive characteristics of the view. The impact on the view would be negligible.

Viewpoint	Location	Receptor type	Sensitivity	Magnitude of change: Operational effects	Residual effect
				brick. These natural tones would help to integrate the proposals into the view. The proposals would not adversely affect the skyline or opportunities to view the church towers.	

9 Residual effects

9.1 Note on residual effects

9.1.1 The development of the Firepool Masterplan has incorporated townscape and visual matters into the proposed layout, landscape approach and use of materials. Where mitigation of potential impacts is incorporated into the design it is referred to as inherent mitigation in environmental assessment. The remaining effects as a result of the proposed masterplan are referred to as residual effects and comprise those effects identified in **Sections 7 and 8**. These are summarised in this section.

9.1.2 The assessments account for the mitigating effects of the proposed landscape planting. Tree planting has been shown in the Verified View Montages at predicted heights fifteen years after planting.

9.2 Summary of townscape effects

9.2.1 The two TCAs identified within the site currently lack positive townscape characteristics. Substantial parts of the site are used for temporary car parking, surrounded by Heras fencing with some security fencing. Much of the landscape is in poor condition creating a degraded sense of townscape character.

9.2.2 The regeneration proposals for the Firepool site would lead to the substantial intensification of built form in this location. The proposals will create opportunities for a much greater range of positive uses in this urban location than is currently the case, bringing purpose and activity to the site.

9.2.3 The proposals would be seen in the context of other recent development in the local context such as Lock House, Canal Court, Waterside House, Water's Edge and the Viridor building, which share similar architectural characteristics and mass. These developments are influencing and changing the townscape character in areas in proximity to the train station, following Trenchards Way and in some locations addressing the river corridor.

9.2.4 The redevelopment of the site would enhance the quality of the townscape fabric. Materials proposed include red or buff brick as well as timber effect cladding and rolled zinc roofing materials. The use of red and buff brick reflects the industrial heritage features in the local area, such as the GWR building and the Pumping Station.

9.2.5 The proposals would lead to the substantial enhancement of the public realm, primarily through the creation and enhancement of green corridors through the site creating opportunities for soft landscape planting and amenity spaces for social interaction.

9.2.6 The masterplan layout would require the removal of the majority of existing trees, this can be mitigated by new tree and landscape planting which would also deliver a net-gain in biodiversity.

9.2.7 There would be an increase in noise, movement and lighting as a result of the operation of the proposed scheme and therefore tranquillity would be reduced. However, the scheme seeks to prioritise pedestrians and cycling and reduce car usage where practical.

9.2.8 The effects on the townscape character of the Firepool North and Firepool Lock TCA would be **moderate** and **beneficial** and **minor beneficial** effects on the Firepool South TCA.

- 9.2.9 In the surrounding area, many of the key characteristics of the TCAs identified as medium sensitivity are retained. The River Tone and Corridor TCA would benefit from the proposed enhancements to the public realm, including improved quality of pedestrian and cycling routes and increased landscape planting to enhance the visual quality and ecological diversity of the river corridor, leading to a **moderate beneficial** effect. There would be anticipated to be **minor beneficial** effects on the Morrisons and Priory Bridge Road TCA. In the remaining TCAs assessed in this TVIA, the proposed masterplan for the Firepool site would lead to a greater scale and height of built form visible from within those TCAs, leading to urbanising influences on townscape character and **minor adverse** effects on these TCAs.
- 9.2.10 The assessment has identified potential impacts on townscape legibility as a result of the reduced opportunities for views towards the church towers from Taunton Station. However, the proposed scheme seeks to address this loss through the creation of the central boulevard, directing pedestrians and cyclists from the train station through the site. There will be opportunities to view the church towers from the newly created boulevard within the context of an enhanced public realm including paved surfaces, opportunities for seating, tree planting and other soft landscape planting. Opportunities for views towards the Pumping Station and Firepool Lock have been created along the Greenway, aligned east-west. The overall impact on townscape legibility is **negligible**.

9.3 Summary of visual effects

- 9.3.1 The following summarises the potential visual effects of the proposed scheme, described in detail in **Section 8**.

9.4 Views from public routes within the urban area

- 9.4.1 Many views from publicly accessible locations within the urban area are assessed as being of **medium** sensitivity to change, for example, **Viewpoints 1, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10a, 10b, 11, 12, 13** and **17**. Visual receptors are likely to be in these locations to undertake day-to-day activities and would be expecting to experience built form in views from within this town centre location. The proposals would introduce additional built form into the views from these locations. The proposals have been designed to follow good urban design principles in the layout of the proposed development blocks, references to local architectural precedents in relation to scale, footprint and finishing materials and the quality of the proposed public realm. The impacts on **Viewpoints 6, 7, 8, 9** and **13** are assessed as **moderate** and **beneficial**.
- 9.4.2 In **Viewpoints 1** and **12** there are limited views of the site itself and its associated townscape detractors in the baseline view. The proposals would introduce views of additional built form into the view, namely the rooftops of the proposed development blocks, assessed as a **minor adverse** impact.

- 9.4.3 **Viewpoints 2a and 2b** represent views towards the site from Taunton Railway Station. These views are assessed as being of **high to medium** sensitivity to change to reflect the role of this location as a gateway to Taunton for people arriving by train, where people are likely to be more aware of the visual context. Baseline views are predominantly characterised by recent development in this location, including the multistorey car park at the train station and the Innovation Centre, and the high quality public realm in the foreground. The church towers of St Mary's and St James' are visible as landmark features, although their dominance in the view is affected by the floodlighting columns, which clutter the view.
- 9.4.4 The proposals would substantially reduce opportunities to see the church towers and the Blackdown Hills from this location. The proposals would retain opportunities to see the church towers from within the site along the proposed boulevard and enhance the surrounding setting of the view, maintaining townscape legibility. Overall, this is considered to be moderate adverse effect on the view.
- 9.4.5 The proposals would introduce a new, high quality scheme with a contemporary aesthetic enhancing the character of the view leading to moderate beneficial effects. Overall, there would be mixed (beneficial and adverse) effects on views from the Taunton Railway Station.
- 9.4.6 The proposals would introduce a new, high quality scheme with a contemporary aesthetic enhancing the character of the view leading to moderate beneficial effects.
- 9.4.7 The proposed Northern Boulevard will connect to the Southern Boulevard, creating space between the proposed development blocks, facilitating public access through the site and enhancing opportunities to view the church towers of St Mary's and St James' which act as navigational landmarks. **Viewpoint 9** represents this view. The proposals would enhance the public realm in this location and the impact on the view is assessed as **moderate and beneficial**.
- 9.4.8 In **Viewpoints 10a, 10b, 11 and 17** existing built form and vegetation serve to obscure or filter many views of the proposals. The proposals would be seen in the context of other development of a similar scale and design and would not alter the key positive characteristics of the view. The magnitude of change is **low to very low** in these viewpoints and the impacts on the views assessed as **negligible**.

9.5 Views from the corridor of the River Tone

- 9.5.1 **Viewpoints 3, 4a, 4b, 5 and 16** represent views of pedestrians and cyclists using routes along the corridor of the River Tone. People may be at the location in order to undertake day-to-day activities or to for recreational reasons. Receptors are likely to be aware of being in an urban environment and would be expecting to experience some built form in views from these routes. The viewpoints are assessed as being of **high to medium** sensitivity to change.

- 9.5.2 Baseline views are characterised by the River Tone, and its associated vegetation. Contemporary residential and commercial development is beginning to characterise riverside views. This type of development is often of more than three storeys. The recent development along Trenchards Way and development at Somerset County Cricket Ground can often be seen in riverside views. These developments and the floodlighting columns bring urbanising influences into views. The proposals would lead to the development of this vacant and underused site and the removal of the discordant elements which result from underuse. The proposals seek to address the riverside location while also being set back from the water's edge to facilitate the introduction of planting to soften the built form and enhance the setting of the buildings. The development edge is staggered with spaces between and connecting the residential blocks allowing landscape planting between the blocks, softening the visual context and creating places for play and other amenity uses.
- 9.5.3 Finishing materials reflect those found in the local context and use a predominantly more subtle range of tones and textures, with the use of red brick, flat roofs, and river-facing brick framed balconies. The proposed green corridor along the southern bank of the River Tone will incorporate tree planting and wetland planting to integrate the development with its riverside location and enhance views along the riverside in comparison to the baseline. The impact on **Viewpoints 3, 4a, 4b** and **5** is assessed as **moderate** and **beneficial**.
- 9.5.4 In **Viewpoint 16** baseline views are characterised by the river corridor and its associated vegetation which provides a setting to the recent development associated with Morrison's supermarket and Somerset County Cricket Ground.
- 9.5.5 The proposed development to the south of the river would be likely to be substantially obscured by the existing built form at the cricket ground. To the north of the river the proposals would be likely to be visible above the tree tops and would introduce additional built form into the view. The impact on views from this location are assessed as **minor adverse**.

9.6 Views of Taunton in its landscape setting

- 9.6.1 **Viewpoints 18, 19, 20** and **21** represent longer distance views towards Taunton and the site from more elevated locations in the surrounding countryside. Taunton occupies a valley location and buildings in the town centre are often seen against a backdrop of existing built form.
- 9.6.2 **Viewpoints 18** and **19** represent views from the Blackdown Hills AONB and Quantock Hills AONB, respectively, and are located approximately 8km from the site. In these long distance views, the different buildings in Taunton are just discernible in the view, particularly the lighter facades of the Platinum Skies building and the floodlighting columns at Somerset County Cricket Ground. The upper floors of the Viridor building can just be seen. The church towers of St Mary's and St James' can be just seen against the backdrop of other development associated with the town.
- 9.6.3 The proposed built form would be just seen within the context of other development of a similar height and scale. The proposals would not alter the skyline or the perceived extents of built form/the urban area in the view. The proposed finishing materials are generally of natural tones of red or buff brick and are likely to appear more recessive in the view than lighter colours, when seen in the context of other buildings of similar tones.

- 9.6.4 Lighting within the proposed scheme would be seen in the context of existing urban lighting and would be unlikely to affect views in the AONBs. The impact on **Viewpoints 18 and 19** was assessed as **negligible**.
- 9.6.5 There are opportunities for views towards Taunton from some of the surrounding hills outside the AONBs, including Cotlake Hill, Trull and Stoke Hill, Henlade. These views are represented by **Viewpoints 20 and 21**. In these views the relationship between the built forms in Taunton is more readily discernible.
- 9.6.6 From Cotlake Hill (**Viewpoint 20**) the proposed buildings would be seen within the context of other development of a similar height and scale. The proposed built form would be at the same height, or lower, than the Viridor building and would be substantially obscured by intervening existing buildings and vegetation. From this direction the proposed buildings would be seen lying behind the church towers and are unlikely to affect the legibility of these features in the view.
- 9.6.7 From Stoke Hill (**Viewpoint 21**) built form in Taunton is seen within a more treed context, where the lighter tones of the upper floor of the Viridor building and Waterside House are more noticeable in baseline views. The proposed buildings would be seen within the context of other development of a similar height and scale and would be at the same height, or lower, than the Viridor building. The proposals in the northern part of the site would be partially obscured by the Viridor building and Water's Edge. The finishing materials for the proposed buildings would be red or buff brick. These natural tones would help to integrate the proposals into the view. The proposals would not adversely affect the skyline or opportunities to view the church towers. The impact on **Viewpoints 20 and 21** is assessed as **negligible**.

9.7 Visual effects and heritage assets

- 9.7.1 Opportunities for views of the church towers in Taunton has been identified as one of the key townscape characteristics, as described in **Section 2**, Planning Policy. This visual assessment considers the nature of the changes to opportunities to view the church towers as a consequence of the proposals for the Firepool site.
- 9.7.2 St James', St Mary's (Taunton Minster) and St George's Churches are the most frequently seen church towers in the assessed views. These church towers are visible in **Viewpoints 1, 2b, 9, 10b, 11 and 12** as well as in the long distance views, **Viewpoints 18, 19, 20 and 21**.
- 9.7.3 In many of these views, opportunities to view the church towers would remain substantially unaffected by the proposed development. In **Viewpoint 2b**, views towards the church towers would be substantially obscured by the development proposed. The Firepool masterplan proposes a wide central boulevard with views towards the church towers of St Mary's and St James' in order to aid legibility for pedestrians and cyclists through the site and towards the river corridor and the town centre. This layout seeks to replace the potential loss of townscape legibility as a result of reduced opportunities for views towards the church towers from the train station.
- 9.7.4 There are also likely to be reduced opportunities to view the church towers from Trenchards Way in proximity to the site and the proposed development blocks following the development of the site. Views would be oblique to the direction of travel and would be likely to be glimpsed views as the receptors travel along this section of the highway.

- 9.7.5 There are views available of St Mary’s Church tower from Obridge (Viewpoint 10b) however in this view the recent development along Trenchards Way, including the multi-storey car park, Canal Court and Lock House are visually dominant in the view and the church tower appears less prominent and less discernible as a landmark feature.
- 9.7.6 In long distance views (**Viewpoints 18, 19, 20 and 21**) the proposed built forms would not affect opportunities to see the church towers. Where the site lies within the same part of the view as the church towers, the height of the proposals would not affect the prominence of the church towers in these views. In **Viewpoint 21**, the church towers and the site are seen in separate parts of the view.
- 9.7.7 There are some opportunities to view the Grade II Listed Pumping Station from locations in proximity to the site. In **Viewpoints 6 and 7** the proposed development would be likely to obscure views of the Pumping Station. The proposed scheme has created opportunities for users of the site to enjoy views along the eastern section of the proposed Greenway, providing new opportunities to view the Pumping Station in an enhanced townscape setting. In **Viewpoint 10a** the Pumping Station is just visible above existing rail-related development and the proposed development would not obscure this view.

9.8 Note on residential visual receptors

- 9.8.1 As set out in **Section 5**, it is widely acknowledged that the planning system acts in the public interest and rarely protects private views from residential properties. However, GLVIA3 suggests that residential receptors are likely to be of high sensitivity to changes in views, particularly from rooms and locations within the curtilage of the property that are frequently used during the day.
- 9.8.2 Visual receptors likely to experience greater levels of change to the views from their properties include residents of in the following locations:
- Canal Road.
 - Deller’s Court.
 - Priory Bridge Road.
 - Lock House.
 - Canal Court.
 - Priory Park/Wintersfield.
 - Water’s Edge.
 - Coal Orchard.
 - St Augustine Street.
 - Winchester Street.
- 9.8.3 The masterplanning proposals that help to mitigate impacts on residents views from their properties include:
- The scale of the development blocks has been informed by the surrounding buildings.
 - Green corridors are proposed along both Priory Bridge Road and Canal Road, including tree planting, creating distance between residents and the proposals, with tree planting softening the built form.
 - The primary green corridor along the River Tone would allow for tree planting along the river, softening views towards the site from the south.

-
- 9.8.4 The mitigation and enhancement measures proposed will help to integrating the scheme into the townscape and will filter views of and through the development over time. The proposals will deliver a master plan framework which will create a new purpose and structure to the site, using contemporary architectural styles with references to architectural precedents in the local context. The proposals offer opportunities for an enhanced public realm within the site, offering greater permeability and access for existing and future residents.

10 Cumulative effects

10.1 Definition of cumulative effects

10.1.1 This assessment of potential cumulative effects is being undertaken as part of good practice and at the request of Somerset West and Taunton Deane Council in order to inform the potential townscape and visual impacts of the proposals set out in the masterplan, in combination with other recent development in the study area.

10.1.2 Cumulative effects are defined broadly as “*impacts that result from incremental changes caused by other past, present or reasonably foreseeable actions together with the project*” (Hyder, 1999: 7 quoted in GLVIA3²⁰).

10.1.3 Paragraph 7.8 of GLVIA3 states that “*Of greater importance for LVIA are the cumulative landscape and visual impacts that may result from an individual project that is being assessed interacting with the effects of other proposed developments in the area*”.

10.2 Identifying projects to be considered in the cumulative effects assessment

10.2.1 Following discussions with Somerset West and Taunton Deane Council, the following proposed development schemes have been considered in the assessment of cumulative effects. The locations of these proposals are shown on **Figure 10.1**.

- A) East of Taunton Station: Planning permission has been granted under application number 38/18/0144 for the construction of 44 residential apartments in a six storey building. Part of the wider Firepool regeneration area allocated in the Taunton Area Action Plan.
- B) Pumping Station: Planning permission granted under application number 38/12/0205 for the conversion of the former Pumping Station into a public house and restaurant.
- C) West of Station Road: This site is allocated in the Area Action Plan and is one of a suite of Firepool regeneration sites. There are no details available of the scheme likely to come forward on this site. The site may be developed in the medium to long term.
- D) Obridge Yard: This site is allocated for employment uses in the Area Action Plan and is one of a suite of Firepool regeneration sites. There are no further details available of the scheme likely to come forward on this site. The site may be developed in the medium to long term.
- E) Lord Ian Botham Stand planning permission granted under application number 38/22/0010 for the construction of a third floor with roof terrace to the Lord Ian Botham Stand.
- F) Tangier Gas Works: Planning permission granted under application 38/18/0162 for the development of 176 residential dwellings on land to the North of Tangier and Castle Street, Taunton.

²⁰ ‘Guidelines for Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment’ Third Edition (2013) (GLVIA3) Landscape Institute and the Institute of Environmental Management and Assessment

Figure 10.1: Cumulative assessment schemes

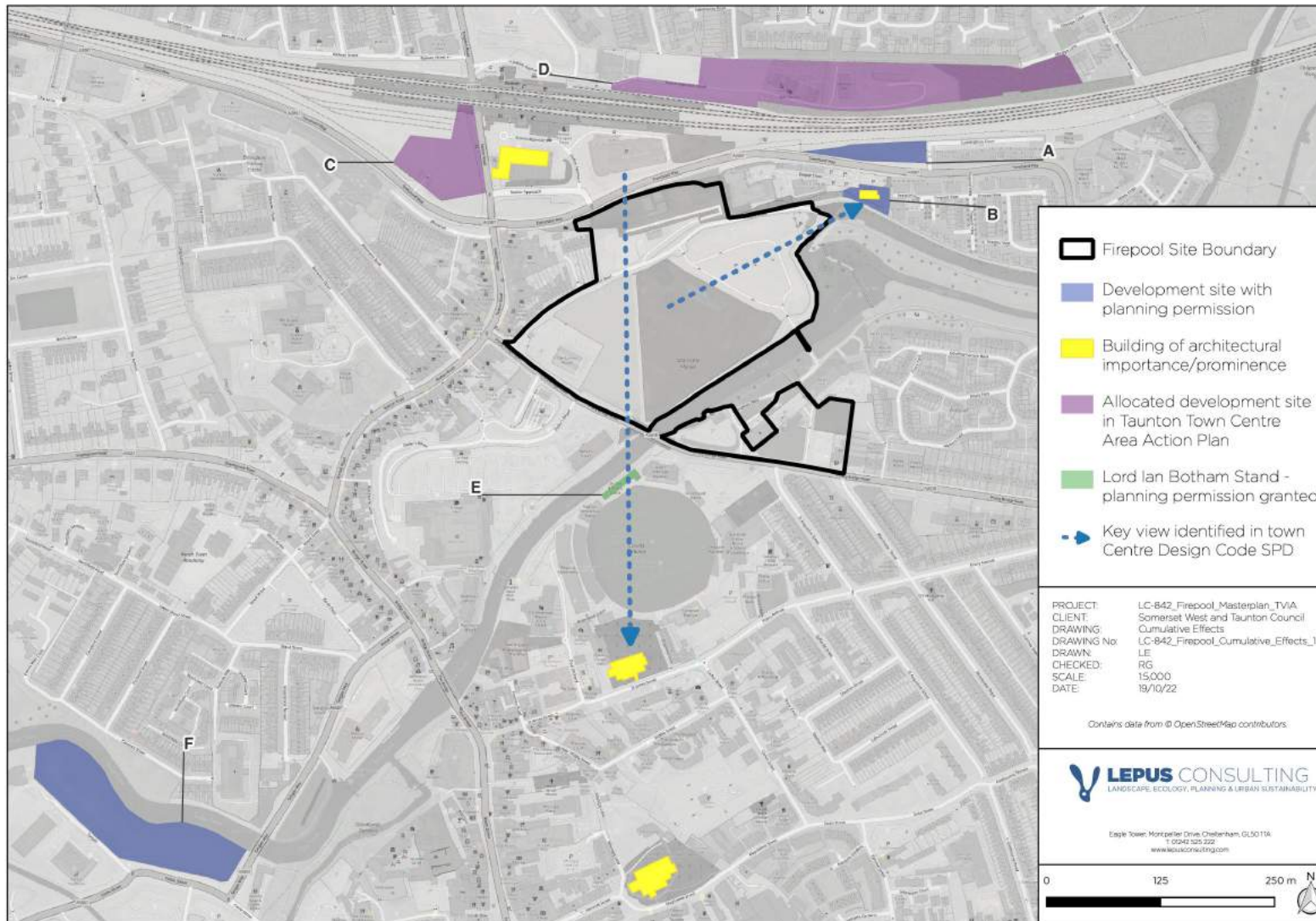


Table 10.1: Cumulative townscape effects

Townscape Character Areas	Sensitivity	Magnitude of change: Cumulative schemes	Cumulative effect
<p>Firepool North and Firepool Lock</p> <p>Firepool South</p>	<p>Low</p> <p>Low</p>	<p>Very high</p> <p>The regeneration proposals for the wider Firepool area (including cumulative assessment schemes a to e, above) would lead to the intensification of built form in this area, particularly as experienced from Trenchards Way. These developments are influencing townscape character in this area and redefining its key characteristics to include development of greater footprint and height, with modern, rectilinear architectural details.</p> <p>Views towards heritage features and the Blackdown Hills and Quantock Hills are identified as key townscape characteristics in the Districtwide Design Guide 2021. The increase in scale and height of development as a consequence of the in combination effects of these schemes has the potential to obscure some opportunities for views towards these features. The Firepool Masterplan seeks to retain opportunities to view these features in the layout through the aligned of green corridors. Views towards these features from Trenchards Way are often obscured in the baseline landscape, however, while there are few details available of the schemes likely to come forward at sites C and D the cumulative impact of the schemes may lead to reduced opportunities to view these features.</p> <p>In combination, the schemes would be likely to create opportunities for a wide range of positive uses in this urban location than is currently the case, bringing purpose and activity to the area and enhancing townscape character.</p> <p>The schemes are part of the wider regeneration of the area and would be seen in the context of development which has been completed, such as Lock House, Canal Court, Waterside House, Water's Edge and the Viridor building, which share similar architectural characteristics and mass.</p> <p>Townscape legibility should be protected by ensuring new character areas are created with distinctive characteristics and opportunities to view landmarks.</p>	<p>High beneficial</p> <p>The development of the regeneration areas would lead to the intensification of development in this location. There is the opportunity retain the key positive townscape characteristics, such as opportunities to view heritage assets and the hills in the distance. The broadly consistent architectural approach being put forward across the sites creates a sense of unity in the emerging new townscape character for these areas.</p> <p>The quality of the townscape fabric and the public realm and opportunities for greater levels of planting and green infrastructure have the potential to be substantially enhanced.</p>

Townscape Character Areas	Sensitivity	Magnitude of change: Cumulative schemes	Cumulative effect
River Tone and Corridor	Medium	<p>Medium</p> <p>In addition to the Firepool Masterplan, other schemes coming forward which may influence the character of the corridor of the River Tone include schemes E the additional floor to the Ian Botham Stand and F the residential development at the Tangiers site.</p> <p>There would be a greater degree of built form of greater scale and mass within this TCA and the skyline may be more urbanised in some locations. Built form of a similar scale and aesthetic already characterises the river corridor. Views along the corridor are often obscured by existing built form or filtered by vegetation.</p> <p>The schemes would be likely to enhance both the quality of the public realm along the River Tone and the variety of habitats for wildlife (in line with the requirements to deliver Biodiversity Net Gain in most major development). Tree planting provides the opportunity to soften built form and create transition in the sense of scale at the river's edge.</p> <p>Non-vehicular routes along the river corridor would be maintained.</p>	<p>Moderate beneficial</p> <p>Some of the schemes seek to enhance the quality of the public realm along the river corridor and create new amenity spaces for social interaction. New native planting is proposed to soften built form and create new habitats for wildlife. The quality of the townscape fabric would be enhanced.</p>
Morrisons and Priory Bridge Road	Low	<p>Low</p> <p>As for the River Tone and Corridor TCA, there would be a greater degree of built form of greater scale and mass within this TCA and the skyline may be slightly more urbanised as a consequence of the proposals at the Lord Ian Botham Stand.</p> <p>The schemes would be likely to enhance both the quality of the public realm along the River Tone and Priory Bridge Road. Tree planting provides the opportunity to soften built form and create transition in the sense of scale.</p> <p>Non-vehicular routes along the river corridor would be maintained.</p>	<p>Minor beneficial</p> <p>The proposals set out in the Firepool Masterplan would create a sense of enclosure to the eastern side of Priory Bridge Road and lead to the enhancement of the quality of the public realm. The quality of the townscape fabric would be enhanced. The cumulative impact of the proposals at the Ian Botham Stand would be negligible.</p>
Station Road	Medium	<p>Low</p> <p>Other schemes identified in this cumulative assessment are unlikely further impact on the key characteristics of this TCA. The assessment remains unchanged.</p>	<p>Minor adverse</p> <p>The scale and character of the development blocks proposed in the Firepool Masterplan would be likely to contrast with character of Station Road. Although there would be</p>

Townscape Character Areas	Sensitivity	Magnitude of change: Cumulative schemes	Cumulative effect
			enhancement to the public realm on Priory Bridge Road visible from Station Road the overall effect is assessed as minor adverse.
Railway Station and surrounds	Medium	Uncertain Schemes C and D lie in proximity to the railway station. The intensification of development surrounding the railway station has the potential to have impacts on its key positive characteristics, including the group of Listed Buildings and townscape legibility in this gateway location. As there are no available details for these sites, which are allocated in the AAP but do not have any detailed proposals, the impacts on these characteristics are uncertain at this stage.	Uncertain
Somerset County Cricket Ground	Medium	Low Scheme E for the Ian Botham Stand would be likely to have a negligible impact on the key positive characteristics of this TCA. The assessment remains unchanged.	Minor adverse The developments proposed would be likely to increase the built form visible in views from the TCA to some extent and would not obscure views of heritage assets.
Adjacent residential areas	Medium	Uncertain The sites allocated in the AAP (schemes C and D) have the potential to lead to the intensification of development in proximity to adjacent residential areas. The key characteristics of these residential areas are the small scale of the existing development. As there are no available details for these sites, the impacts on the key positive characteristics of this TCA are uncertain at this stage.	Uncertain

10.3 Summary of the cumulative visual assessment

- 10.3.1 The potential cumulative effects of the schemes identified above have been assessed for each of the 24 representative viewpoints and the findings are summarised in Table 10.2.
- 10.3.2 In views from within the urban area, such as Viewpoint 1, the roof tops of the Firepool Masterplan scheme and the Tangiers scheme may be seen from the same location, changing the existing skyline in some sectors of the view. From this location, it is likely views of the hills and towards the church towers would be retained.
- 10.3.3 In Viewpoint 9, from within the Firepool Masterplan area, the proposed additional floor to the Ian Botham stand would be likely to partially obscure the church towers.
- 10.3.4 Views from the edges of the Obridge area of Taunton, represented by Viewpoints 10a and 10b would be likely to experience a greater magnitude of change as a consequence of the cumulative effects of these schemes and a moderate effect on the viewpoints. This assessment is uncertain as there are no details for the allocated employment site at Obridge Yard.
- 10.3.5 There are occasional views along the river where the Tangiers scheme, the extension to the Ian Botham stand and the Firepool proposals may be seen in combination in the view, intensifying the level of development visible. However, the built form would be seen within a treed context, softening the effect and mitigating the impact.
- 10.3.6 In views of Taunton from the surrounding hills, such as the Quantock Hills and Blackdown Hills, the cumulative changes to the views are unlikely to be noticeable or affect the key positive characteristics of the views.

Table 10.2: Cumulative visual effects

Viewpoint	Location	Receptor type	Sensitivity	Magnitude of change: Cumulative schemes	Cumulative effect
1	Centre of Trenchard Way Bridge, view south west	Pedestrians and road users, including people in vehicles and cyclists	Medium Drivers, cyclists and pedestrians using a main road travelling in a direction with oblique views towards the site. The viewpoint is at a more open location on the bridge where there an opportunity for views towards the site. Receptors are likely to be travelling to work or to undertake day-to-day activities and are unlikely to be at the location specifically enjoy the view. Receptors are assessed as being of medium sensitivity to change.	Low Unchanged Scheme C: West of Station Road lies to the north of the viewpoint and Scheme E: The Ian Botham Stand is obscured by existing development. Scheme F: Tangiers is likely to lie to the right of the viewpoint and outside the extents of the assessed view. The cumulative effects on this viewpoint are unchanged from the residual effects of the Firepool Site.	Minor adverse Unchanged
2a	Taunton Station Footway	Pedestrians and road users arriving at Taunton by train. A gateway/ arrival point for the town.	High to medium The viewpoint represents views available as people arrive at Taunton from the railway station with views in the direction of the site. Some receptors may be travelling for recreational reasons where appreciating the view and the context is part of the reason for being at the location. Other receptors may be travelling to work or to undertake day-to-day activities. Receptors are assessed as being of high to medium sensitivity to change.	Medium Unchanged This viewpoint lies in close proximity to the Firepool Masterplan area. The other schemes considered in the cumulative assessment would have no further change to this view.	Moderate beneficial Unchanged
2b	Taunton Station Entrance	Pedestrians and road users arriving	High to medium The viewpoint represents views available as people arrive at	Medium Unchanged	Mixed effects Unchanged

Viewpoint	Location	Receptor type	Sensitivity	Magnitude of change: Cumulative schemes	Cumulative effect
		at Taunton by train. A gateway/ arrival point for the town.	Taunton from the railway station with views in the direction of the site. Some receptors may be travelling for recreational reasons where appreciating the view and the context is part of the reason for being at the location. Other receptors may be travelling to work or to undertake day-to-day activities. Receptors are assessed as being of high to medium sensitivity to change.	This viewpoint lies in close proximity to the Firepool Masterplan area. The other schemes considered in the cumulative assessment would have no further change to this view.	
3	Bridgewater and Taunton Canal Bridge, Firepool Lock	Pedestrians/ walkers and cyclists using the river corridor for recreational and day-to-day purposes	High to medium Pedestrians and cyclists using the Public Rights of Way and Sustrans route 3 along the banks of the River Tone. Children's Wood LNR is an accessible area of local green space to the east of the viewpoint. This location has a number of heritage features in close proximity, including the Pumping Station as well as Firepool lock, and the canal bridge may be a place where people may pause to appreciate the view Some receptors are likely to be at the location for recreational purposes where enjoying the view is part of the recreational experience, however, receptors are travelling through a town, where built form would be expected to be seen in some	Medium Unchanged This viewpoint lies in close proximity to the Firepool Masterplan area. The other schemes considered in the cumulative assessment would have no further change to this view.	Moderate beneficial Unchanged

Viewpoint	Location	Receptor type	Sensitivity	Magnitude of change: Cumulative schemes	Cumulative effect
			parts of the view. Receptors are assessed as being of high to medium sensitivity to change.		
4a	Pedestrian path near the Water's Edge development	Pedestrians/ walkers and cyclists using the river corridor for recreational and day-to-day purposes	High to medium Pedestrians and cyclists using the Public Rights of Way along the southern bank of the River Tone. The East Deane Long Distance Walking Route follows the river in this location. Some users are likely to be at the location for recreational purposes where enjoying the view is part of the recreational experience. Receptors are travelling through a town, where built form would be expected to be seen in some parts of the view. Receptors are assessed as being of high to medium sensitivity to change.	Medium Unchanged This viewpoint lies in close proximity to the Firepool Masterplan area. The other schemes considered in the cumulative assessment would have no further change to this view.	Moderate beneficial Unchanged
4b	Footbridge over the River Tone	Pedestrians/ walkers and cyclists crossing the river corridor, using routes for both recreational and day-to-day purposes	High to medium Pedestrians and cyclists crossing the River Tone. Sustrans Route 3. Some users are likely to be at the location for recreational purposes where enjoying the view is part of the recreational experience. Receptors are travelling through a town, where built form would be expected to be seen in some parts of the view, reducing the susceptibility of visual receptors. Receptors are assessed as being of high to medium sensitivity to change.	Medium Unchanged. Scheme E: The proposed additional floor to the lan Botham Stand would be visible to the left of Priory Bridge Road and would lie in front of the existing Pegasus Apartment building. Scheme F: Tangiers would be likely to be just visible above the river, viewed at a distance of approximately 850m. Baseline views are characterised by the combination of the natural features associated with the river, including the water course itself, the river banks and associated tree planting, with built form present along the waterway and forming part of the skyline. Cumulatively, the proposals would introduce some additional elements of built form which would not affect the key positive characteristics of the view.	Moderate beneficial Unchanged

Viewpoint	Location	Receptor type	Sensitivity	Magnitude of change: Cumulative schemes	Cumulative effect
5	Northern riverside path near the Water's Edge development	Pedestrians/walkers and cyclists using the river corridor for recreational and day-to-day purposes. Sustrans Route 3.	High to medium Pedestrians and cyclists using routes along the River Tone, including Sustrans Route 3. Some users are likely to be at the location for recreational purposes where enjoying the view is part of the recreational experience. Receptors are travelling through a town, where built form would be expected to be seen in some parts of the view, reducing the susceptibility of visual receptors. Receptors are assessed as being of high to medium sensitivity to change.	Low Unchanged This viewpoint lies in close proximity to the Firepool Masterplan area. The other schemes considered in the cumulative assessment would have no further change to this view.	Minor mixed effects Unchanged
6	Priory Bridge Road	Pedestrians and road users, including people in vehicles and cyclists	Medium Drivers, cyclists and pedestrians using a main road travelling in a direction with oblique views towards the site. The viewpoint is at an open location with opportunities for views across much of the site and proposals. Receptors are likely to be travelling to work or to undertake day-to-day activities and are unlikely to be at the location specifically enjoy the view. Receptors are assessed as being of medium sensitivity to change.	High Unchanged Scheme A: East of the Station, Scheme B: The Pumping Station and Scheme D: Obridge Yard Employment site are potentially visible from this location. The proposals in the Firepool Masterplan would obscure views in these directions. There would be no further change to this view as a result of the cumulative schemes.	Moderate beneficial Unchanged
7	Pedestrian island at junction of Priory Bridge Road and Dellers Wharf	Pedestrians and road users, including people in	Medium Drivers, cyclists and pedestrians entering and leaving Deller's Court and Morrisons supermarket. Receptors are	High Unchanged This viewpoint lies in close proximity to the Firepool Masterplan area. The other schemes considered in the cumulative assessment would have no further change to this view.	Moderate beneficial Unchanged

Viewpoint	Location	Receptor type	Sensitivity	Magnitude of change: Cumulative schemes	Cumulative effect
		vehicles and cyclists	travelling towards the site with direct views across the site. Receptors are likely to be travelling to undertake day-to-day activities and are unlikely to be at the location specifically enjoy the view. Receptors are assessed as being of medium sensitivity to change.		
8	Footway at junction of Station Road and Priory Bridge Road	Pedestrians and road users, including people in vehicles and cyclists	<p>Medium Drivers, cyclists and pedestrians at the junction of Station Road and Priory Bridge Road.</p> <p>Receptors may be travelling in the direction of the site with narrow slot views towards the site. Receptors are likely to be travelling to undertake day-to-day activities and are unlikely to be at the location specifically enjoy the view. Receptors are assessed as being of medium sensitivity to change.</p>	<p>High Unchanged This viewpoint lies in close proximity to the Firepool Masterplan area. The other schemes considered in the cumulative assessment would have no further change to this view.</p>	Moderate beneficial Unchanged
9	Pedestrian route in the site	Pedestrians using a local route across the site, not identified as a Public Right of Way.	<p>Medium Receptors are using an informal route through the site that provides a connection between the River Tone routes and Canal Road, and onwards to the train station, further north. People may be at the location to undertake day-to-day activities or for dog walking in a town-based location with medium susceptibility to change.</p>	<p>High Scheme E is the proposed additional floor to the lan Botham Stand and would be visible in the view from this location. The additional height to this building would be likely to partially obscure views towards the church towers of St Mary's and St James' which are landmark features and enhance townscape legibility.</p>	<p>Moderate beneficial/Minor adverse The proposals for the Firepool Masterplan area would create a strong new design and enhanced public realm. The additional height of the lan Botham stand would partially obscure the church towers, leading to adverse effects on this view. In combination the scheme would have mixed effects on this view.</p>

Viewpoint	Location	Receptor type	Sensitivity	Magnitude of change: Cumulative schemes	Cumulative effect
			Receptors are assessed as being of medium sensitivity to change.		
10a	Heavitree Way, Obridge	Pedestrians and cyclists	Medium Receptors are using a Public Right of Way and cycle route within a residential area to the north of the site. People may be at the location to undertake day-to-day activities in a town-based location with medium susceptibility to change. Receptors are assessed as being of medium sensitivity to change.	Medium Uncertain Scheme A: East of Taunton Station would lie between Scheme D and the Firepool Masterplan area and may come forward before Scheme D. The six storey residential apartment building would be likely to be seen behind and to the left of the Pumping Station and would be readily identifiable in the view. Scheme D: Obridge Yard Employment site, lies between the viewpoint and both Scheme A and the Firepool Masterplan area. This site is allocated in the Taunton AAP, however, there are no detailed proposals available at this stage. As a consequence of the close proximity of Scheme D site to the viewpoint, it is likely that the future proposals would obscure many view views towards the Firepool Masterplan area and Scheme A.	Moderate Uncertain Scheme A lies between the Firepool Masterplan area and the viewpoint and would be likely to increase the intensity of built form visible in views from Obridge. The proposals for the Obridge Employment site are uncertain,
10b	Malvern Terrace, Obridge	Pedestrians and cyclists	Medium Receptors are using a Public Right of Way and cycle route within a residential area to the north of the site. People may be at the location to undertake day-to-day activities in a town-based location with medium susceptibility to change. Receptors are assessed as being of medium sensitivity to change.	Medium Uncertain Scheme D: Obridge Yard Employment site, lies between the viewpoint and the Firepool Masterplan area. This site is allocated in the Taunton AAP, however, there are no detailed proposals available at this stage. As a consequence of the close proximity of the Scheme D site to the viewpoint, it is likely that the future proposals would obscure many view views towards the Firepool Masterplan area.	Moderate Uncertain The proposals for the Obridge Employment site are uncertain, however, there scheme is likely to obscure views to the Firepool Masterplan area.
11	A358 Obridge Viaduct	Pedestrians and road users, including people in	Medium Drivers, cyclists and pedestrians travelling along a main road with elevated, oblique views towards the site.	Very low Unchanged Scheme F: The Tangiers site would lie, broadly, in a location from the centre of the Somerset County Cricket Ground to the edge of the Waterside	Negligible Unchanged

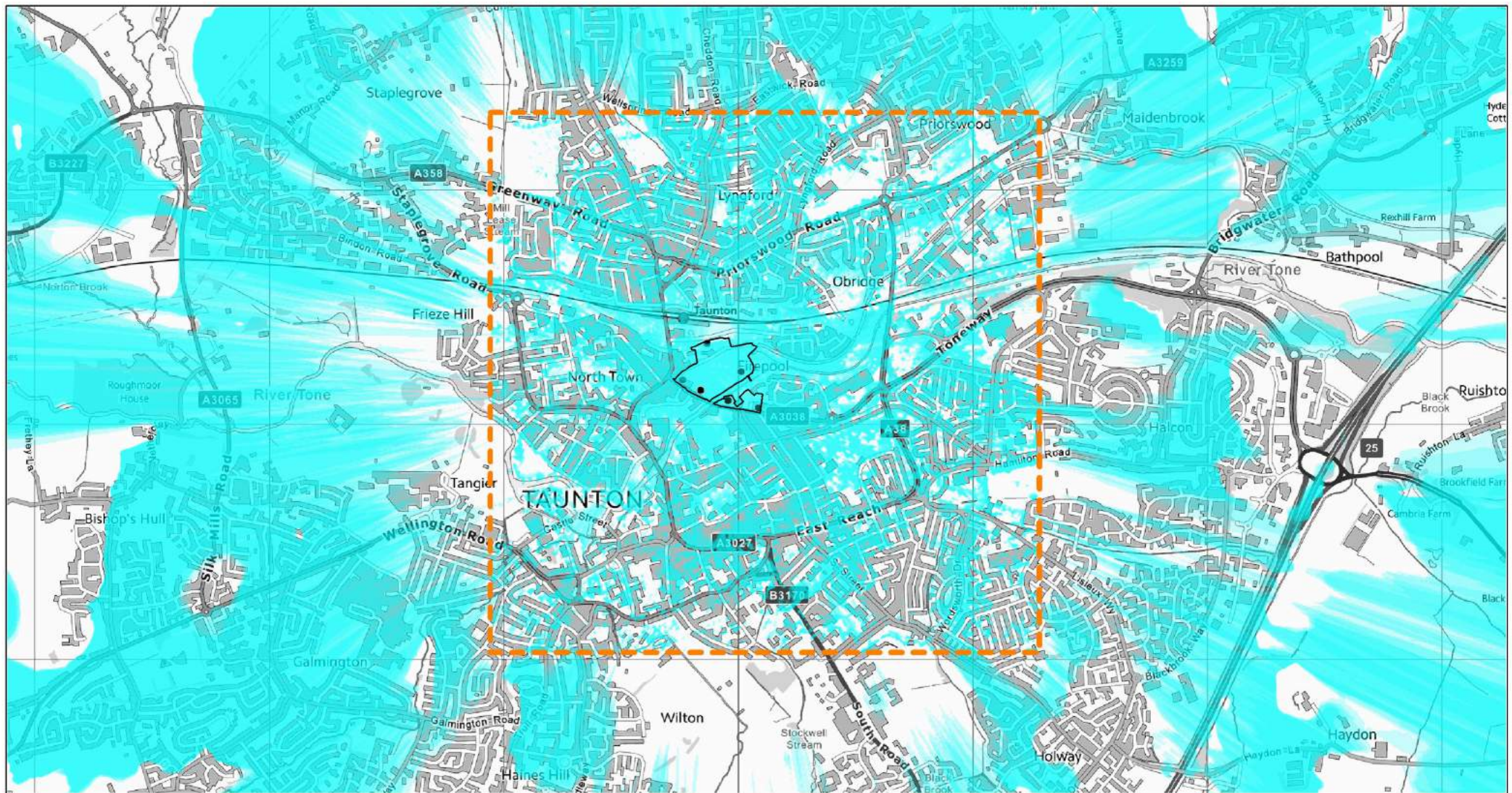
Viewpoint	Location	Receptor type	Sensitivity	Magnitude of change: Cumulative schemes	Cumulative effect
		vehicles and cyclists	Receptors are likely to be travelling to undertake day-to-day activities and are unlikely to be at the location for recreational reasons. Receptors are assessed as being of medium sensitivity to change.	building. Intervening built form would be likely to obscure views to the Tangiers site. Scheme A: East of Taunton Station would be likely to be obscured by the development at Firepool View.	
12	Trenchard Way, crossing the River Tone	Pedestrians and road users, including people in vehicles and cyclists	Medium Drivers, cyclists and pedestrians travelling along a main road with panoramic elevated views across Taunton and oblique views towards the site. Receptors are likely to be travelling to undertake day-to-day activities and are unlikely to be at the location for recreational reasons. Receptors are assessed as being of medium sensitivity to change.	Low Unchanged Scheme F: The Tangiers site would lie, broadly, in a location within the floodlighting columns of the Somerset County Cricket Ground and to the right of the church tower of St James'. At a distance of over 1km, the proposals would be likely to lead to a barely noticeable change to the view. The Pegasus apartment building can just be seen and Scheme E: The addition to the Ian Botham stand is unlikely to be noticeable in the view. Scheme A: East of Taunton Station would be likely to be obscured by the development at Firepool View.	Negligible Unchanged
13	Junction of Priory Bridge Road and Winchester Street	Pedestrians and road users, including people in vehicles and cyclists	Medium Drivers, cyclists and pedestrians travelling along a main road with views in the direction of the site. Receptors are likely to be travelling to undertake day-to-day activities and are unlikely to be at the location for recreational reasons or specifically to enjoy the view. Receptors are assessed as being of medium sensitivity to change.	Medium Unchanged Scheme E: The addition to the Ian Botham stand would lie to the left of the view in proximity to the floodlighting column on Priory Bridge Road. In summer the existing vegetation filters views in this direction. There is likely to be greater visibility towards Scheme E in winter, when the trees are not in leaf. The additional impact of the Scheme E would be low and the overall magnitude of change remains unchanged.	Moderate beneficial Unchanged
14	Somerset County Cricket	People watching a sporting	Medium to low People watching a sporting activity in an urban context	Low Unchanged	Negligible Unchanged

Viewpoint	Location	Receptor type	Sensitivity	Magnitude of change: Cumulative schemes	Cumulative effect
	Ground, Priory Road entrance	activity focused on the cricket ground.	where attention is focused on the enclosed sports ground and people are unlikely to be at the location specially to enjoy of the view.	Scheme E: The additional floor to the Ian Botham stand would be visible between the Marcus Trescothick Pavilion and the floodlighting column and would be likely to be seen in combination with the development proposed in the Firepool Masterplan area. When seen in combination, the additional change to the view as a result of Scheme E would be negligible.	
15	Somerset County Cricket Ground, Roof Terrace of apartment	Residents in an apartment adjacent to the cricket ground	High Residential receptors in their homes are assessed by GLVIA3 as likely to be of high sensitivity to change. However, LVIA guidance also notes that planning system acts in the public interest and rarely protects private views.	Low Unchanged Scheme E: The additional floor to the Ian Botham Stand would be visible to the left of the view and would obscure views towards some parts of the proposals for the Firepool Masterplan area. Given the larger scale of the Firepool scheme the overall effect of the schemes in combination remains low.	Minor adverse Unchanged
16	Footbridge over the River Tone, near Morrisons supermarket	Pedestrians/walkers and cyclists using the river corridor for recreational and day-to-day purposes. Sustrans Route 3.	High to medium Pedestrians and cyclists crossing the River Tone and using Sustrans Route 3. Some users are likely to be at the location for recreational purposes where enjoying the view is part of the recreational experience. Receptors are travelling through a town, where built form would be expected to be seen in some parts of the view, reducing the susceptibility of visual receptors. Receptors are assessed as being of high sensitivity to change.	Low Unchanged View of Scheme E: The additional floor to the Ian Botham stand would be likely to be obscured by the Pegasus apartment building.	Minor adverse Unchanged
17	Staplegrove Road, south of railway crossing	Pedestrians and road users, including people in	Medium Drivers, cyclists and pedestrians travelling along a main road with views in the direction of the site.	Very low Unchanged Scheme C: West of Station Road would be potentially visible from this location, depending on the scale of development proposed.	Negligible Unchanged

Viewpoint	Location	Receptor type	Sensitivity	Magnitude of change: Cumulative schemes	Cumulative effect
		vehicles and cyclists	Receptors are likely to be travelling to undertake day-to-day activities and are unlikely to be at the location for recreational reasons or specifically to enjoy the view. Receptors are assessed as being of medium sensitivity to change.	Existing built form in the view substantially obscures views in this direction. Should taller buildings be proposed as part of Scheme C the change to the view is likely to be very low.	
18	Blackdown Hills AONB close to Staple Hill public viewpoint	Walkers using Public Rights of Way in a nationally designated landscape	Very high Walkers using Public Rights of Way in the Blackdown Hills, a nationally designated landscape, where appreciation of the view is a key part of the recreational experience.	Very low Unchanged In baseline views Taunton can be seen, lying in the valley, at a distance of approximately 8km. At this distance, the human eye can just discern different buildings in the town. The proposed schemes are unlikely to alter the skyline or the perceived extents of built form/the urban area in the view.	Negligible Unchanged
19	Quantock Hills AONB, close to Cothelstone Hill	Walkers using Public Rights of Way in a nationally designated landscape	Very high Walkers using Public Rights of Way in the Quantock Hills, a nationally designated landscape, where appreciation of the view is a key part of the recreational experience.	Very low Unchanged In baseline views Taunton can be seen, lying in the valley, at a distance of approximately 8km. At this distance, the human eye can just discern different buildings in the town. The proposed schemes are unlikely to alter the skyline or the perceived extents of built form/the urban area in the view.	Negligible Unchanged
20	Cotlake Hill, Trull	Walkers using Public Rights of Way in an undesignated landscape	High Walkers using Public Rights of Way in an undesignated, rural landscape, where appreciation of the view is a key part of the recreational experience.	Very low Unchanged In baseline views Taunton can be seen, lying in the valley, at a distance of approximately 2.5km. Existing buildings in the town can be readily identified in the view. The proposed schemes would be seen within the context of other development of a similar height and scale. The schemes are unlikely to create a new skyline or increase the extent of urban form visible in the view.	Negligible Unchanged

Viewpoint	Location	Receptor type	Sensitivity	Magnitude of change: Cumulative schemes	Cumulative effect
				From this direction, most of the proposed schemes would be seen lying behind the church towers and Scheme F: Tangiers would be seen to the left of County Hall and behind the spire of St John's Church. The schemes are unlikely to affect the key positive characteristics of the view.	
21	Stoke Hill, Henlade	Walkers using Public Rights of Way in an undesignated landscape	High Walkers using Public Rights of Way in an undesignated, rural landscape, where appreciation of the view is a key part of the recreational experience.	Very low Unchanged In baseline views northern parts of Taunton can be seen, lying in the valley, at a distance of approximately 4.5km, set within a well-treed context. The church towers of St Mary's and St James' can be seen to the left of the view. The wooded context filters views of the built form in the urban area. Only the top floors of the Viridor building can be seen. Many of the proposed schemes would be seen within the context of other development of a similar height and scale. Scheme F: Tangiers would lie to the left of St Mary's and would not be seen in this field of view. The schemes would not adversely affect the skyline or opportunities to view the church towers.	Negligible Unchanged While visual receptors in this location are considered to be of high sensitivity to change, views towards the proposed development would be substantially obscured by existing built form and vegetation. The proposals would not affect the key positive characteristics of the view. The impact on the view would be negligible.

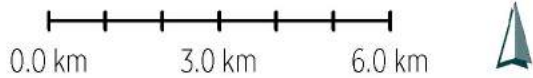
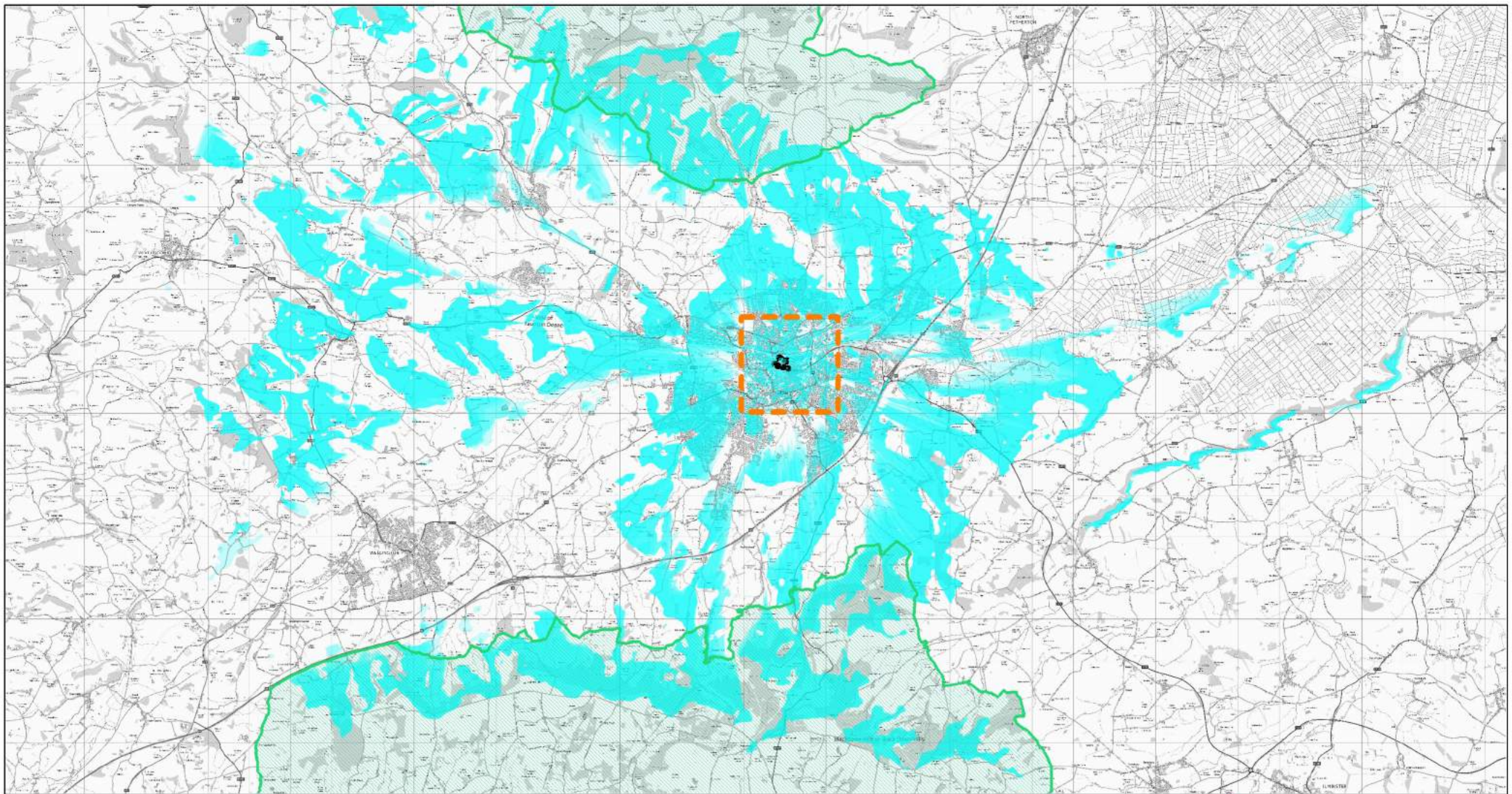
Appendix A: Zone of Theoretical Visibility



	Digital Surface Model area (NextMap 5m)
	Firepool Site Boundary
	Viewshed Analysis area
PROJECT: LC-842_Firepool_TVIA	
CLIENT: Somerset West and Taunton Council	
DRAWING: Zone of Theoretical Visibility 1	
DRAWING NO.: LC-842_ZTV1	
DRAWN: LE	
CHECKED: RG	
SCALE: 1:10,000	
DATE: 19/10/22	
 LANDSCAPE, ECOLOGY, PLANNING & URBAN SUSTAINABILITY	

Zones of Theoretical Visibility

Modelled using NextMap 5m Digital Surface Model (DSM) data and OS Terrain 50 data. DSM data is derived from aerial radar surveys carried out in 2003/4 and is vertically accurate to +/-1m. DSM data takes account of the surface, including buildings and vegetation, as surveyed. Terrain only data does not account for the screening effects of buildings and vegetation.



Zones of Theoretical Visibility

Modelled using NextMap 5m Digital Surface Model (DSM) data and OS Terrain 50 data. DSM data is derived from aerial radar surveys carried out in 2003/4 and is vertically accurate to +/-1m. DSM data takes account of the surface, including buildings and vegetation, as surveyed. Terrain only data does not account for the screening effects of buildings and vegetation.

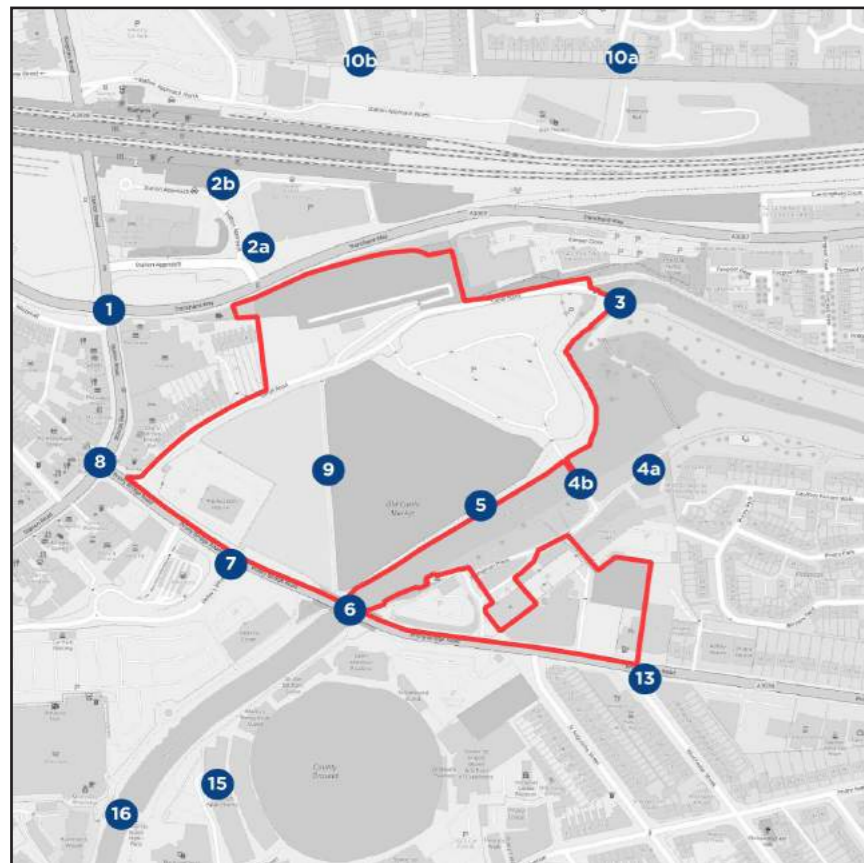
	AONB
	Digital Surface Model area (NextMap 5m)
	Firepool Site Boundary
	Viewshed Analysis area
PROJECT: LC-842_Firepool_TVIA	
CLIENT: Somerset West and Taunton Council	
DRAWING: Zone of Theoretical Visibility 2	
DRAWING NO.: LC-842_ZTV2	
DRAWN: LE	
CHECKED: RG	
SCALE: 1:100,000	
DATE: 19/10/22	
	

Appendix B: Viewpoint Panoramas

Approximate extent of site

Viridor building

Church towers of St Mary's and St James'



Contains OS data Crown copyright and database right (2016)
Ordnance Survey 0100031673

Viewpoint 1

PROJECT CODE: LC-842

PROJECT NAME: Firepool Masterplan, Taunton, Somerset

CLIENT: Somerset West and Taunton Council

LOCATION: Centre of Trenchard Way Bridge

DISTANCE FROM SITE: 121m

DIRECTION FROM SITE: NW

GRID REFERENCE: 322704, 125339

DRAWING: Viewpoint 1

DRAWN: RG

CHECKED: ND

SCALE: Not to scale

DATE: 12.09.22

TIME: 13:50

VIEWPOINT HEIGHT (AOD): 17m (approx)

CAMERA: Canon EOS 70D

LENS: 35mm

SHUTTER SPEED: 1/120

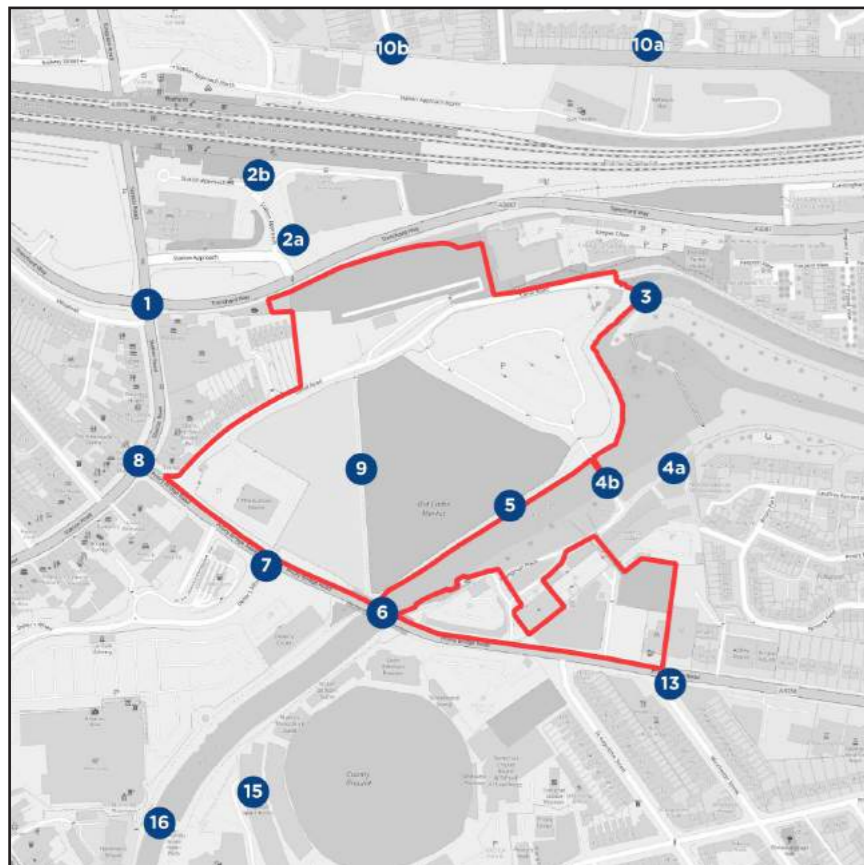
APERTURE: f/11

Approximate extent of site



The Innovation Centre, under construction at the time of the field survey

Church towers of St Mary's and St James'



Contains OS data Crown copyright and database right (2016)
Ordnance Survey 0100031673

Viewpoint 2a

PROJECT CODE: LC-842

PROJECT NAME: Firepool Masterplan, Taunton, Somerset

CLIENT: Somerset West and Taunton Council

LOCATION: Taunton Station Footway

DISTANCE FROM SITE: 30m

DIRECTION FROM SITE: N

GRID REFERENCE: 322813, 125377

DRAWING: Viewpoint 2a

DRAWN: RG

CHECKED: ND

SCALE: Not to scale

DATE: 22.09.22

TIME: 13:25

VIEWPOINT HEIGHT (AOD): 15m (approx)

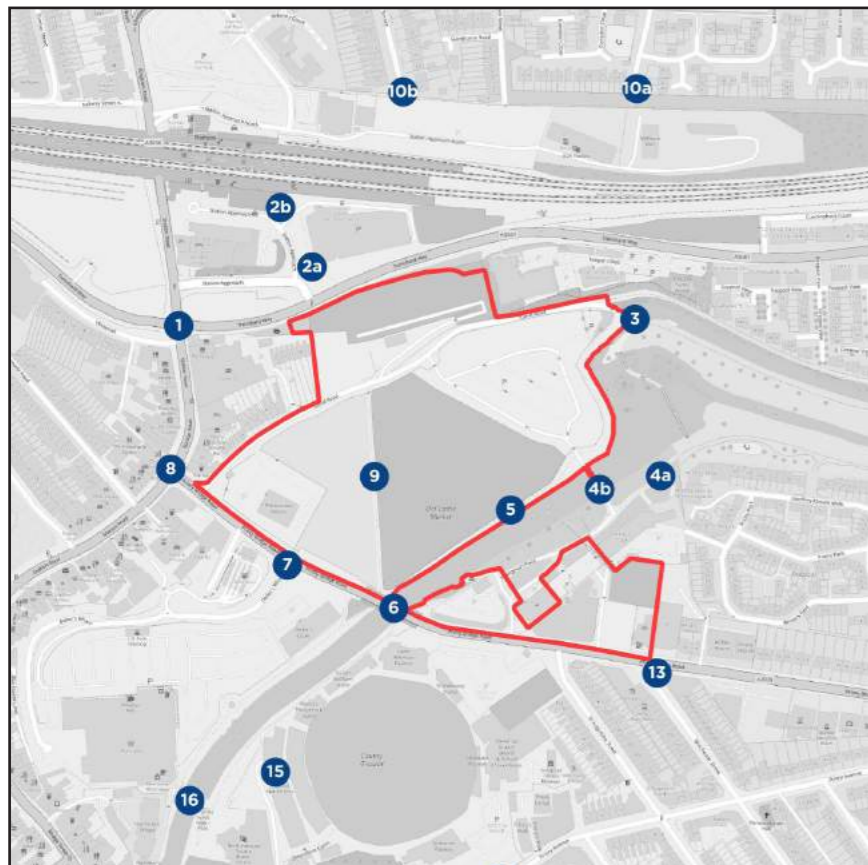
CAMERA: Canon EOS 70D

LENS: 35mm

SHUTTER SPEED: 1/120

APERTURE: f/11

Approximate extent of site



Viewpoint 2b

PROJECT CODE: LC-842

PROJECT NAME: Firepool Masterplan, Taunton, Somerset

CLIENT: Somerset West and Taunton Council

LOCATION: Taunton Station Entrance

DISTANCE FROM SITE: 80m

DIRECTION FROM SITE: N

GRID REFERENCE: 322794, 125422

DRAWING: Viewpoint 2b

DRAWN: RG

CHECKED: ND

SCALE: Not to scale

DATE: 22.09.22

TIME: 13:15

VIEWPOINT HEIGHT (AOD): 15m (approx)

CAMERA: Canon EOS 70D

LENS: 35mm

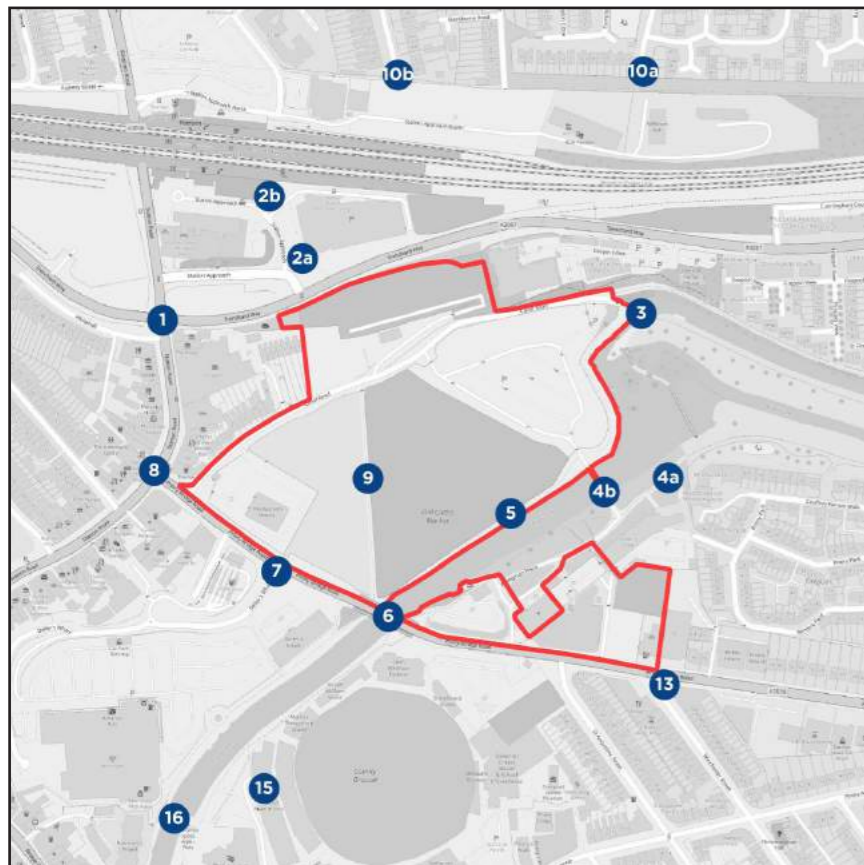
SHUTTER SPEED: 1/120

APERTURE: f/11

Approximate extent of site



Somerset County Cricket Ground and associated floodlighting



Viewpoint 3

PROJECT CODE: LC-842

PROJECT NAME: Firepool Masterplan, Taunton, Somerset

CLIENT: Somerset West and Taunton Council

LOCATION: Bridgewater and Taunton Canal Bridge, Firepool Lock

DISTANCE FROM SITE: 3m

DIRECTION FROM SITE: E

GRID REFERENCE: 323072, 125338

DRAWING: Viewpoint 3

DRAWN: RG

CHECKED: ND

SCALE: Not to scale

DATE: 12.09.22

TIME: 11:55

VIEWPOINT HEIGHT (AOD): 15m (approx)

CAMERA: Canon EOS 70D

LENS: 35mm

SHUTTER SPEED: 1/120

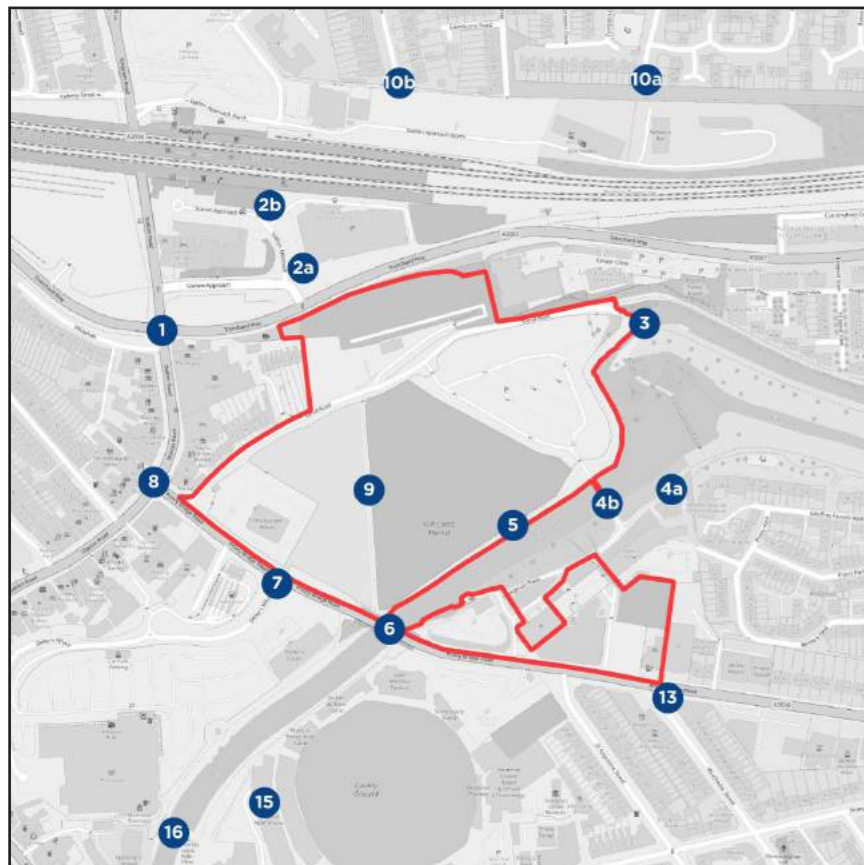
APERTURE: f/11

Approximate extent of site visible



The Innovation Centre with the GWR building to the left

Recently constructed multi-storey car park at Taunton railway station



Viewpoint 4a

PROJECT CODE: LC-842

PROJECT NAME: Firepool Masterplan, Taunton, Somerset

CLIENT: Somerset West and Taunton Council

LOCATION: Pedestrian path near the Waters Edge development

DISTANCE FROM SITE: 45m

DIRECTION FROM SITE: SE

GRID REFERENCE: 323095, 125206

DRAWING: Viewpoint 4a

DRAWN: RG

CHECKED: ND

SCALE: Not to scale

DATE: 12.09.22

TIME: 12:10

VIEWPOINT HEIGHT (AOD): 15m (approx)

CAMERA: Canon EOS 70D

LENS: 35mm

SHUTTER SPEED: 1/120

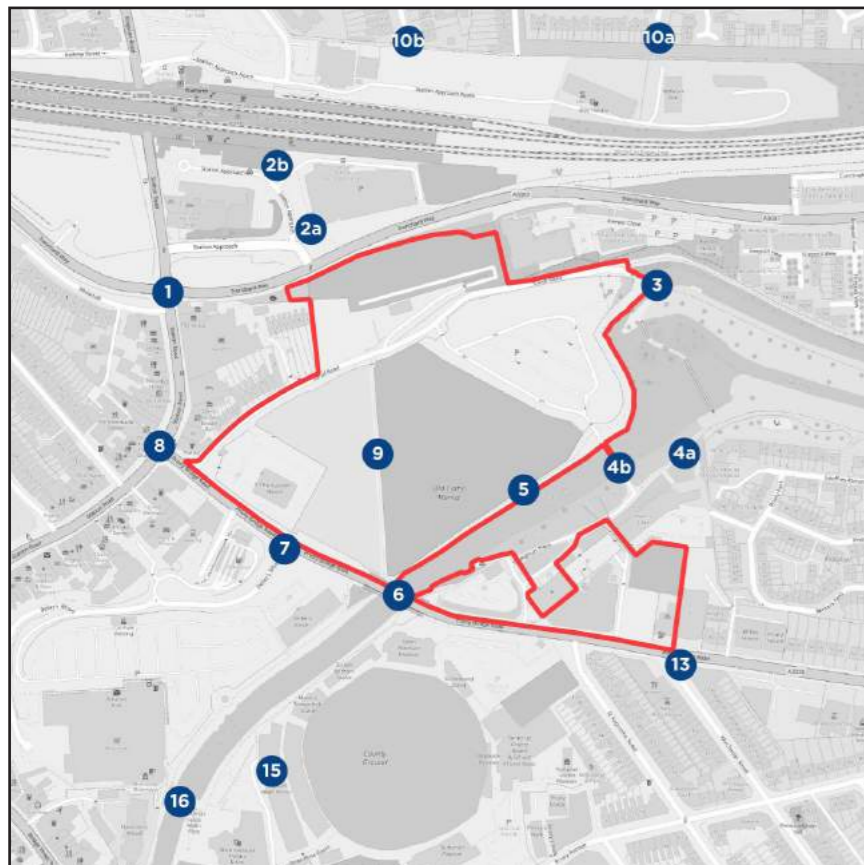
APERTURE: f/11

Approximate extent of site visible



The Viridor building

The Innovation Centre



Contains OS data Crown copyright and database right (2016)
Ordnance Survey 0100031673

Viewpoint 4b

PROJECT CODE: LC-842

PROJECT NAME: Firepool Masterplan, Taunton, Somerset

CLIENT: Somerset West and Taunton Council

LOCATION: Footbridge over the River Tone

DISTANCE FROM SITE: Within site boundary

DIRECTION FROM SITE: Looking north west

GRID REFERENCE: 323039, 125198

DRAWING: Viewpoint 4b

DRAWN: RG

CHECKED: ND

SCALE: Not to scale

DATE: 22.09.22

TIME: 12:20

VIEWPOINT HEIGHT (AOD): 17m (approx)

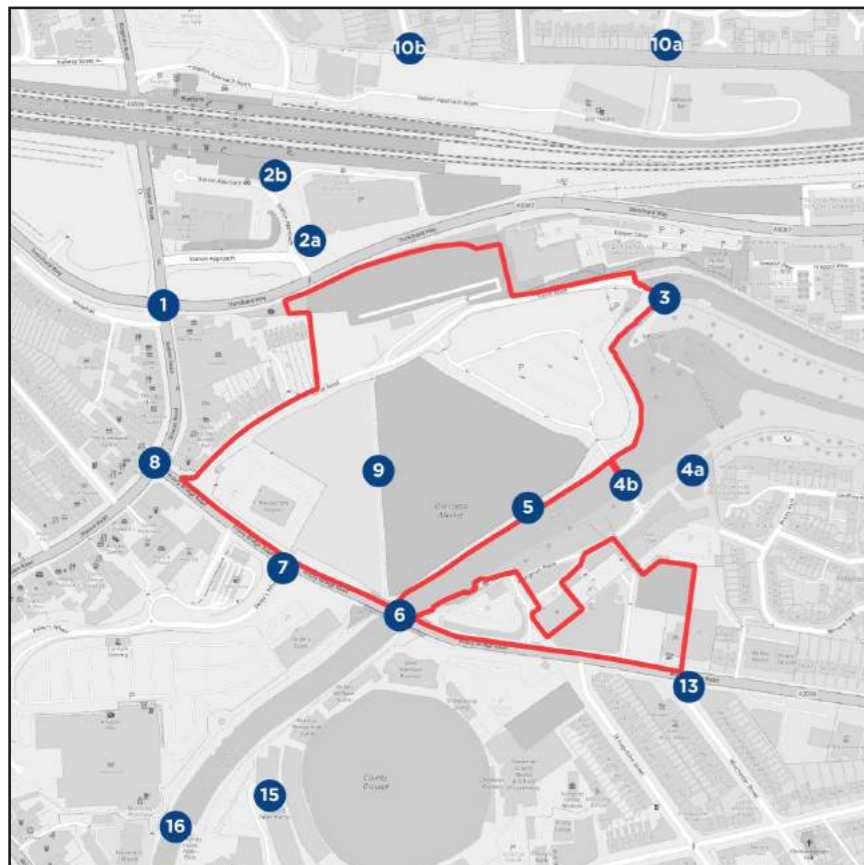
CAMERA: Canon EOS 70D

LENS: 35mm

SHUTTER SPEED: 1/120

APERTURE: f/11

Approximate extent of site visible



Contains OS data Crown copyright and database right (2016)
Ordnance Survey 0100031673

Viewpoint 5

PROJECT CODE: LC-842

PROJECT NAME: Firepool Masterplan, Taunton, Somerset

CLIENT: Somerset West and Taunton Council

LOCATION: Northern riverside path near Waters Edge development

DISTANCE FROM SITE: Within site boundary

DIRECTION FROM SITE: Looking south east

GRID REFERENCE: 322994, 125184

DRAWING: Viewpoint 5

DRAWN: RG

CHECKED: ND

SCALE: Not to scale

DATE: 12.09.22

TIME: 12:20

VIEWPOINT HEIGHT (AOD): 15m (approx)

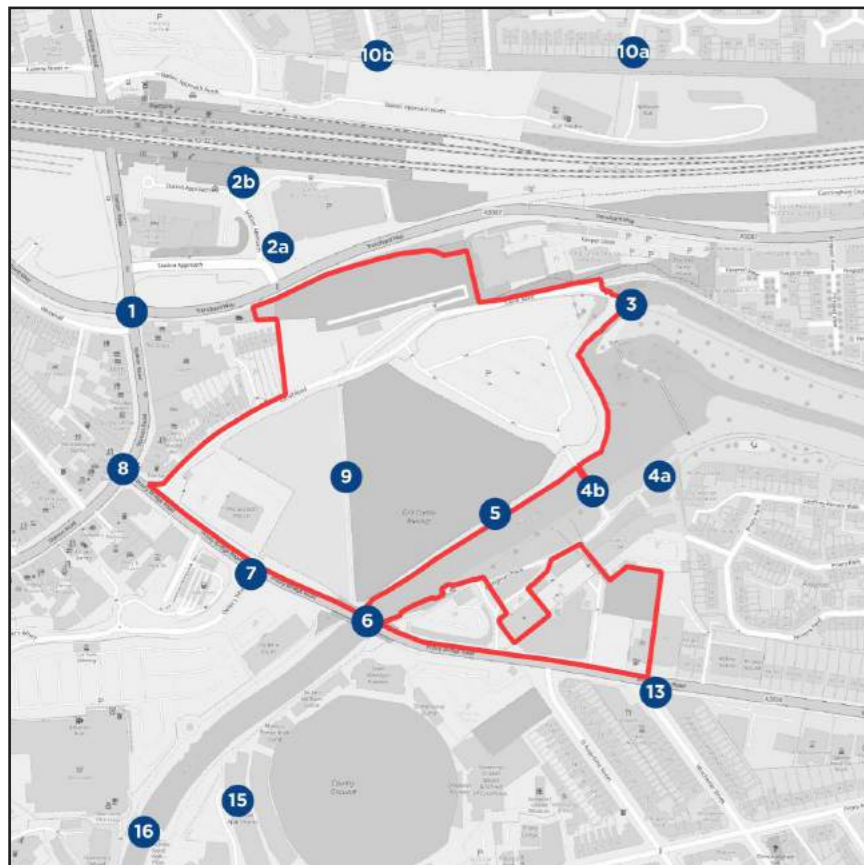
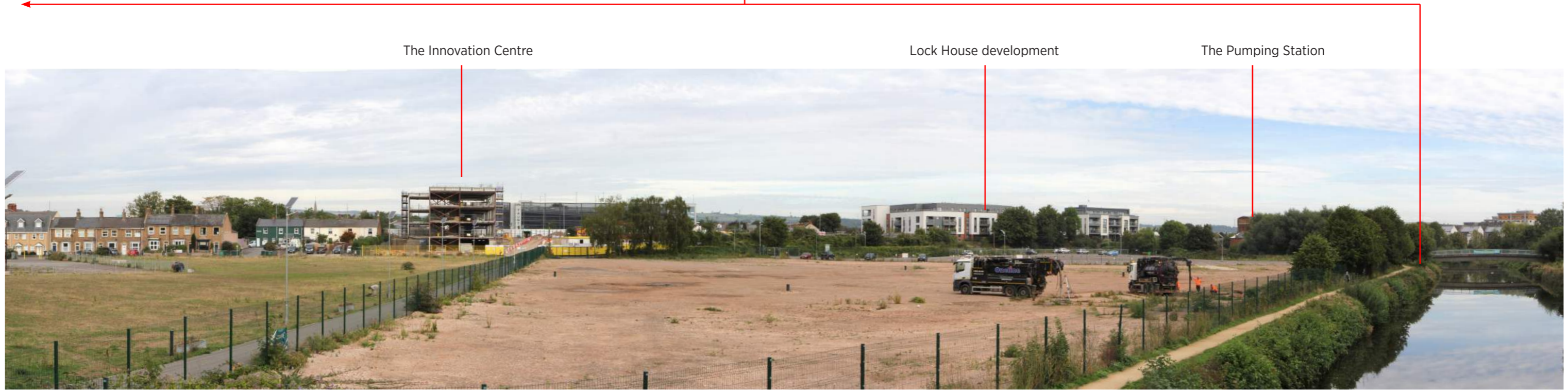
CAMERA: Canon EOS 70D

LENS: 35mm

SHUTTER SPEED: 1/120

APERTURE: f/11

Approximate extent of site visible



Contains OS data Crown copyright and database right (2016)
Ordnance Survey 0100031673

Viewpoint 6

PROJECT CODE: LC-842

PROJECT NAME: Firepool Masterplan, Taunton, Somerset

CLIENT: Somerset West and Taunton Council

LOCATION: Priory Bridge Road, at the bridge crossing

DISTANCE FROM SITE: 3m

DIRECTION FROM SITE: S

GRID REFERENCE: 322889, 125096

DRAWING: Viewpoint 6

DRAWN: RG

CHECKED: ND

SCALE: Not to scale

DATE: 12.09.22

TIME: 12:30

VIEWPOINT HEIGHT (AOD): 17m (approx)

CAMERA: Canon EOS 70D

LENS: 35mm

SHUTTER SPEED: 1/120

APERTURE: f/11

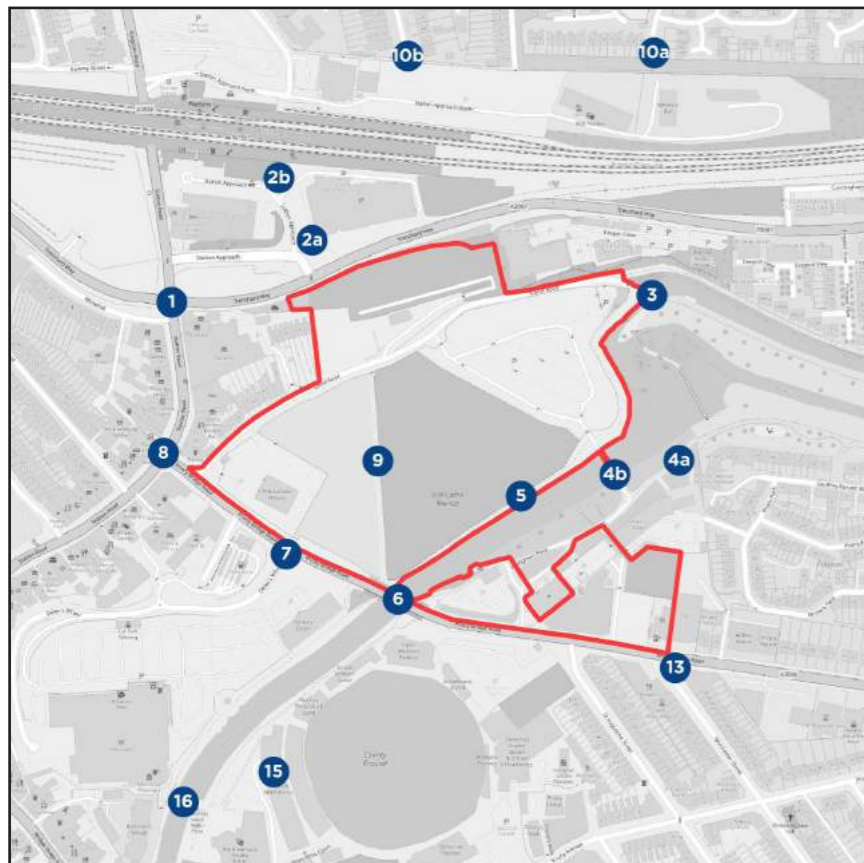
Approximate extent of site visible



The GWR building with the multi-storey car park at Taunton Train Station to the left

The Pumping Station

Waterside House and Water's Edge just visible



Contains OS data Crown copyright and database right (2016)
Ordnance Survey 0100031673

Viewpoint 7

PROJECT CODE: LC-842

PROJECT NAME: Firepool Masterplan, Taunton, Somerset

CLIENT: Somerset West and Taunton Council

LOCATION: Pedestrian island at junction of Priory Bridge Road and Dellers Wharf

DISTANCE FROM SITE: 6m

DIRECTION FROM SITE: SW

GRID REFERENCE: 322793, 125125

DRAWING: Viewpoint 7

DRAWN: RG

CHECKED: ND

SCALE: Not to scale

DATE: 12.09.22

TIME: 13:25

VIEWPOINT HEIGHT (AOD): 15m (approx)

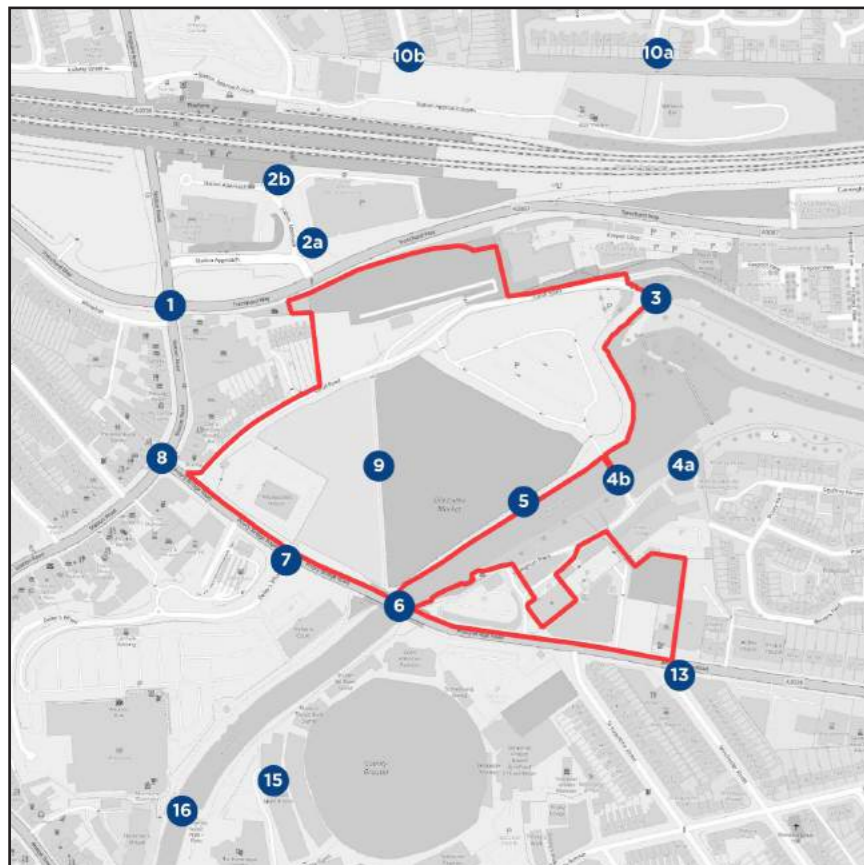
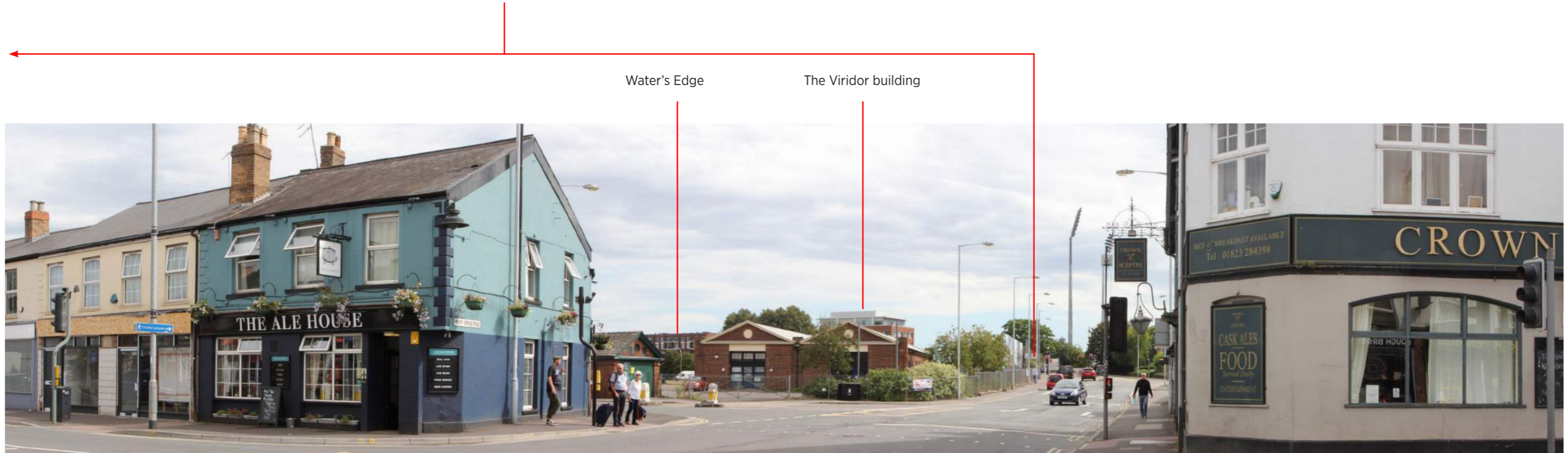
CAMERA: Canon EOS 70D

LENS: 35mm

SHUTTER SPEED: 1/120

APERTURE: f/11

Approximate extent of site visible



Viewpoint 8

PROJECT CODE: LC-842

PROJECT NAME: Firepool Masterplan, Taunton, Somerset

CLIENT: Somerset West and Taunton Council

LOCATION: Footway at junction of Station Road and Priory Bridge Road

DISTANCE FROM SITE: 20m

DIRECTION FROM SITE: W

GRID REFERENCE: 322693, 125208

DRAWING: Viewpoint 8

DRAWN: RG

CHECKED: ND

SCALE: Not to scale

DATE: 12.09.22

TIME: 13:40

VIEWPOINT HEIGHT (AOD): 15m (approx)

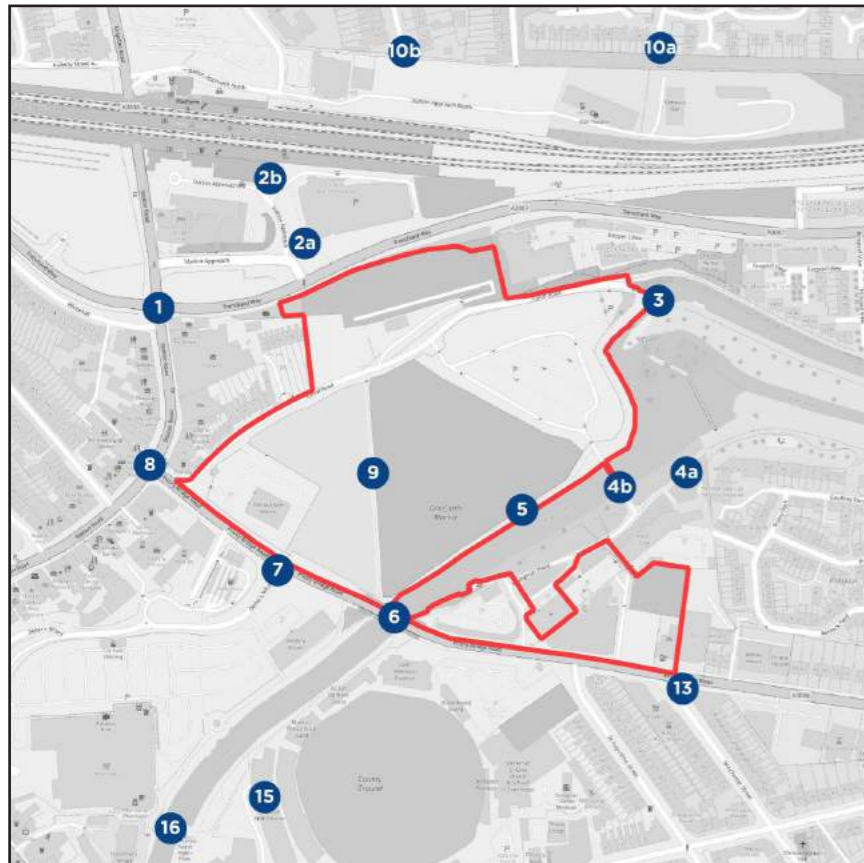
CAMERA: Canon EOS 70D

LENS: 35mm

SHUTTER SPEED: 1/120

APERTURE: f/11

Approximate extent of site visible



Contains OS data Crown copyright and database right (2016)
Ordnance Survey 0100031673

Viewpoint 9

PROJECT CODE: LC-842

PROJECT NAME: Firepool Masterplan, Taunton, Somerset

CLIENT: Somerset West and Taunton Council

LOCATION: Pedestrian route in the site

DISTANCE FROM SITE: Within the site

DIRECTION FROM SITE: Looking south

GRID REFERENCE: 322866, 125209

DRAWING: Viewpoint 9

DRAWN: RG

CHECKED: ND

SCALE: Not to scale

DATE: 12.09.22

TIME: 13:10

VIEWPOINT HEIGHT (AOD): 15m (approx)

CAMERA: Canon EOS 70D

LENS: 35mm

SHUTTER SPEED: 1/120

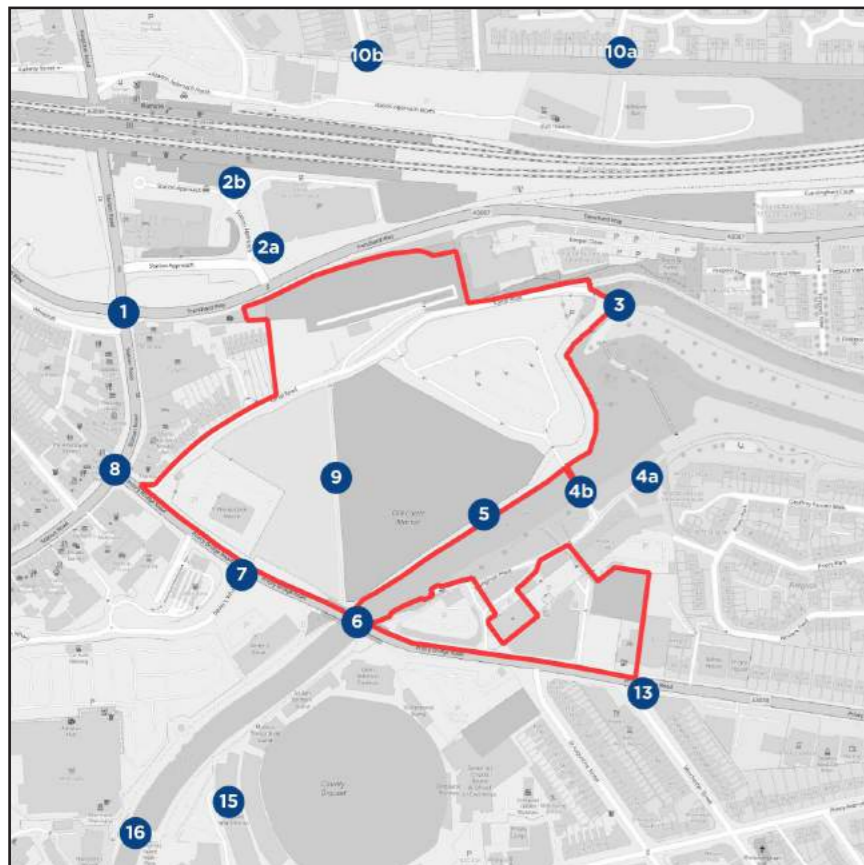
APERTURE: f/11

Approximate extent of site

The Grade II Listed Firepool Pumping Station, just visible above the more modern rail development

Water's Edge development hidden behind vegetation

Floodlighting at Taunton Cricket Ground visible behind the Canal Court development



Contains OS data Crown copyright and database right (2016) Ordnance Survey 0100031673

Viewpoint 10a

PROJECT CODE: LC-842

PROJECT NAME: Firepool Masterplan, Taunton, Somerset

CLIENT: Somerset West and Taunton Council

LOCATION: Heavitree Way, Obridge

DISTANCE FROM SITE: 165m

DIRECTION FROM SITE: N

GRID REFERENCE: 323082, 125524

DRAWING: Viewpoint 10a

DRAWN: RG

CHECKED: ND

SCALE: Not to scale

DATE: 12.09.22

TIME: 15:00

VIEWPOINT HEIGHT (AOD): 17m (approx)

CAMERA: Canon EOS 70D

LENS: 35mm

SHUTTER SPEED: 1/120

APERTURE: f/11

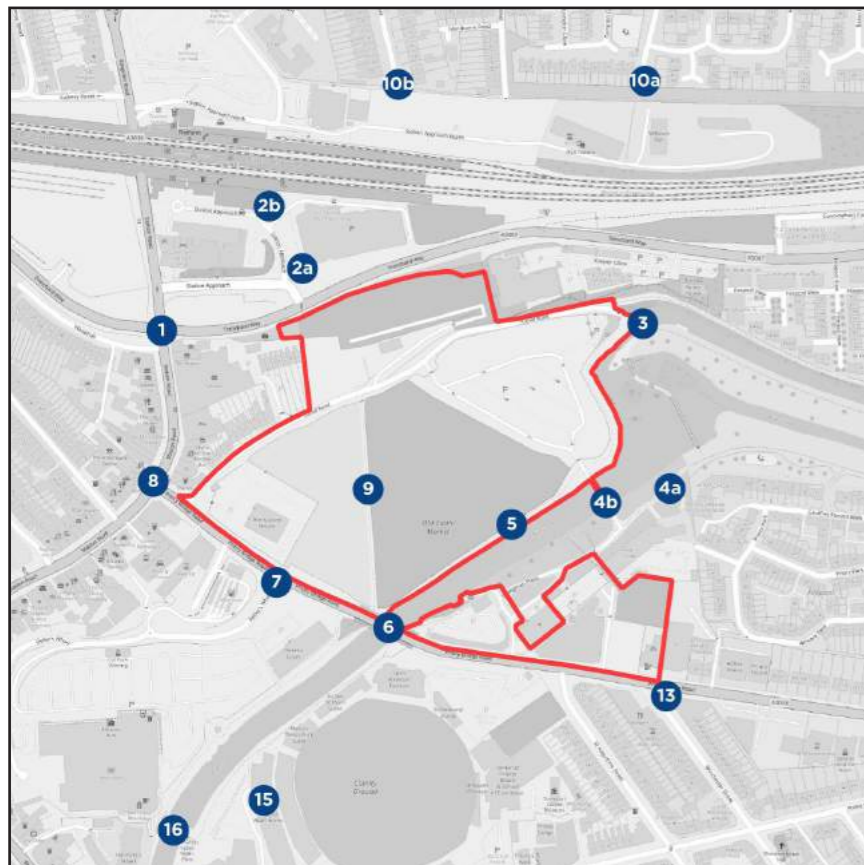
Approximate extent of site

Canal Court development

Viridor building

St Mary's Church tower

Multi-storey car park at Taunton Railway Station



Contains OS data Crown copyright and database right (2016)
Ordnance Survey 0100031673

Viewpoint 10b

PROJECT CODE: LC-842

PROJECT NAME: Firepool Masterplan, Taunton, Somerset

CLIENT: Somerset West and Taunton Council

LOCATION: Malvern Terrace, Obridge

DISTANCE FROM SITE: 140m

DIRECTION FROM SITE: N

GRID REFERENCE: 322890, 125518

DRAWING: Viewpoint 10b

DRAWN: RG

CHECKED: ND

SCALE: Not to scale

DATE: 12.09.22

TIME: 14:50

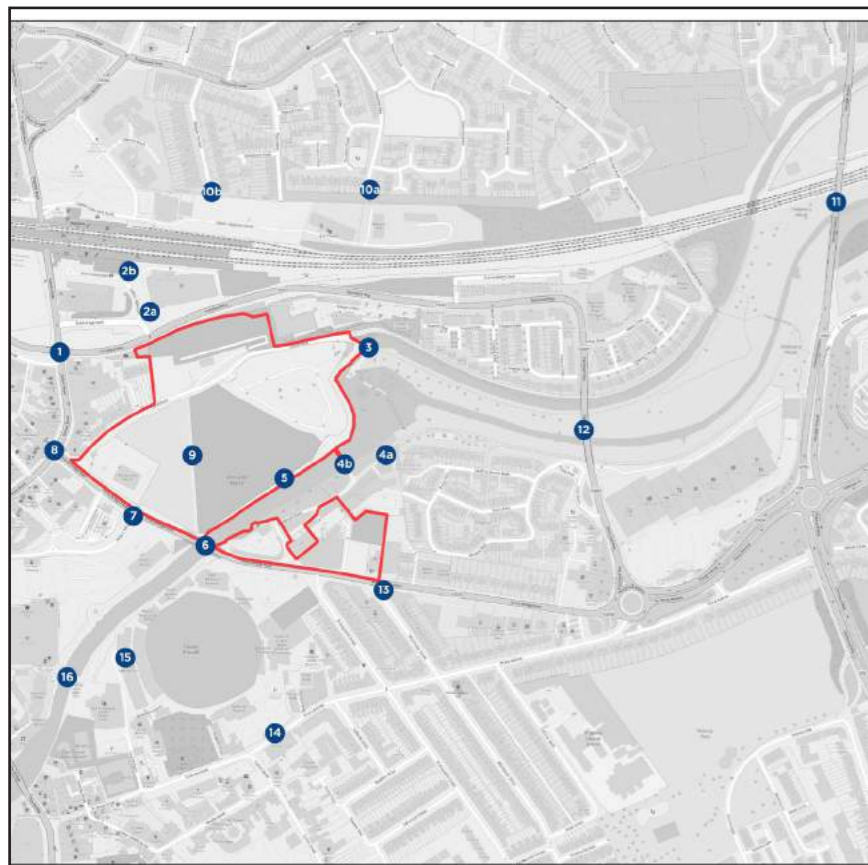
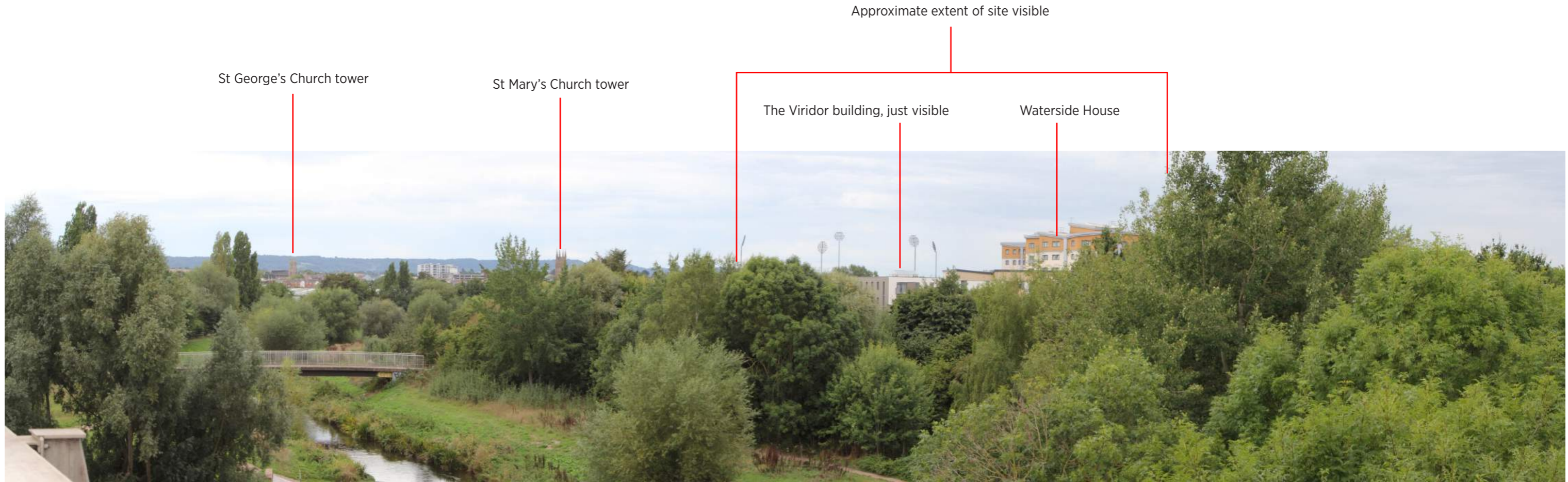
VIEWPOINT HEIGHT (AOD): 17m (approx)

CAMERA: Canon EOS 70D

LENS: 35mm

SHUTTER SPEED: 1/120

APERTURE: f/11



Contains OS data Crown copyright and database right (2016)
Ordnance Survey 0100031673

Viewpoint 11

PROJECT CODE: LC-842

PROJECT NAME: Firepool Masterplan, Taunton, Somerset

CLIENT: Somerset West and Taunton Council

LOCATION: A358 Obridge Viaduct

DISTANCE FROM SITE: 590m

DIRECTION FROM SITE: E

GRID REFERENCE: 323638, 125479

DRAWING: Viewpoint 11

DRAWN: RG

CHECKED: ND

SCALE: Not to scale

DATE: 12.09.22

TIME: 15:25

VIEWPOINT HEIGHT (AOD): 20m (approx)

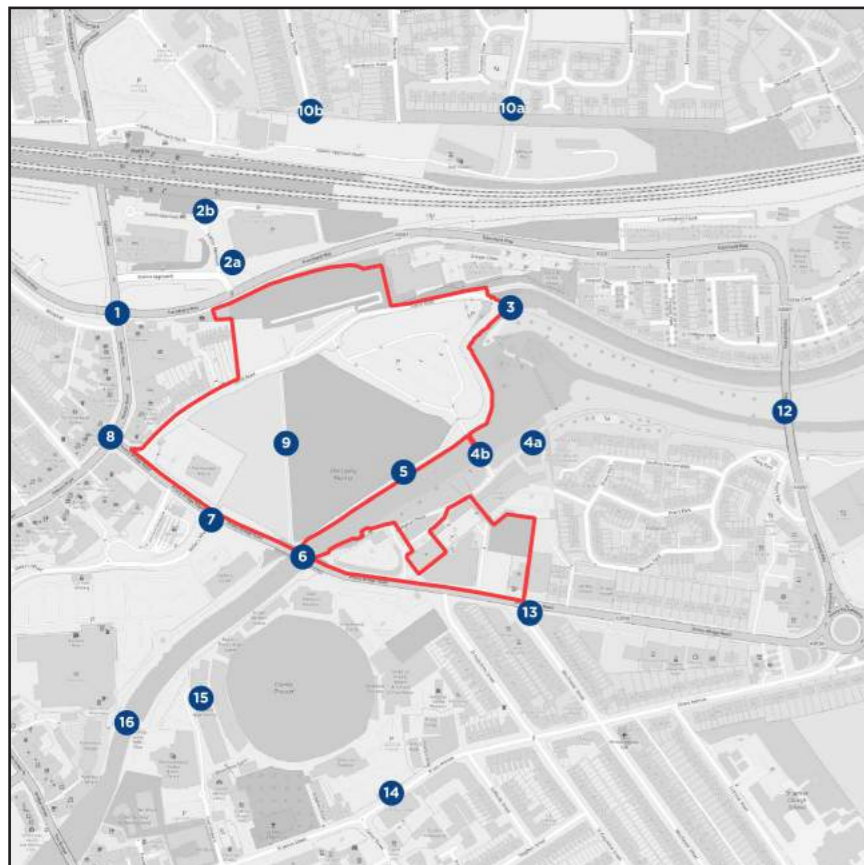
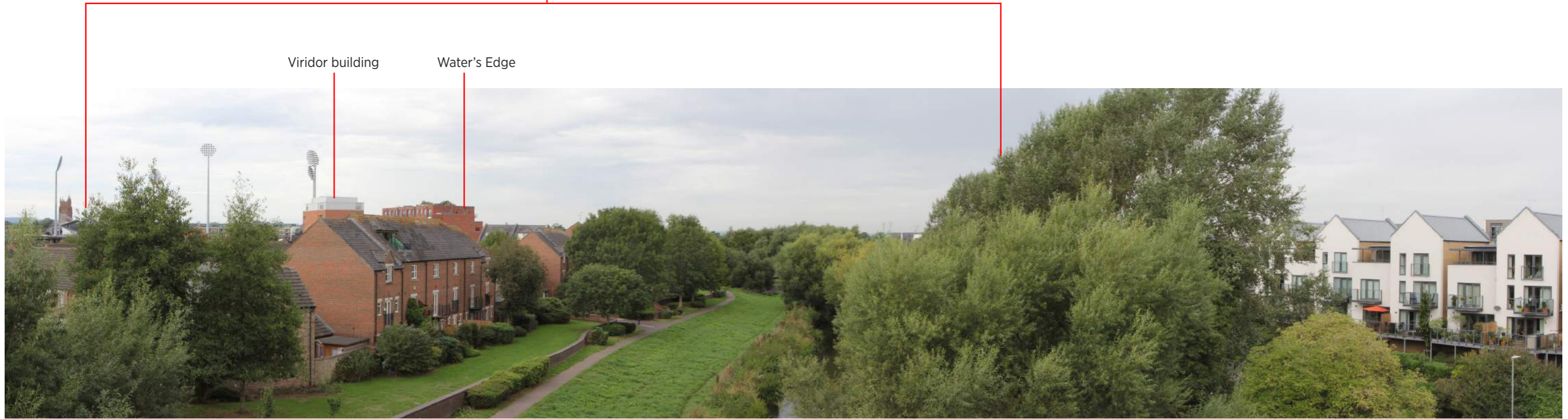
CAMERA: Canon EOS 70D

LENS: 35mm

SHUTTER SPEED: 1/120

APERTURE: f/11

Approximate extent of site visible



Viewpoint 12

PROJECT CODE: LC-842

PROJECT NAME: Firepool Masterplan, Taunton, Somerset

CLIENT: Somerset West and Taunton Council

LOCATION: Trenchard Way, crossing the River Tone

DISTANCE FROM SITE: 300m

DIRECTION FROM SITE: E

GRID REFERENCE: 323340, 125237

DRAWING: Viewpoint 12

DRAWN: RG

CHECKED: ND

SCALE: Not to scale

DATE: 12.09.22

TIME: 12:50

VIEWPOINT HEIGHT (AOD): 20m (approx)

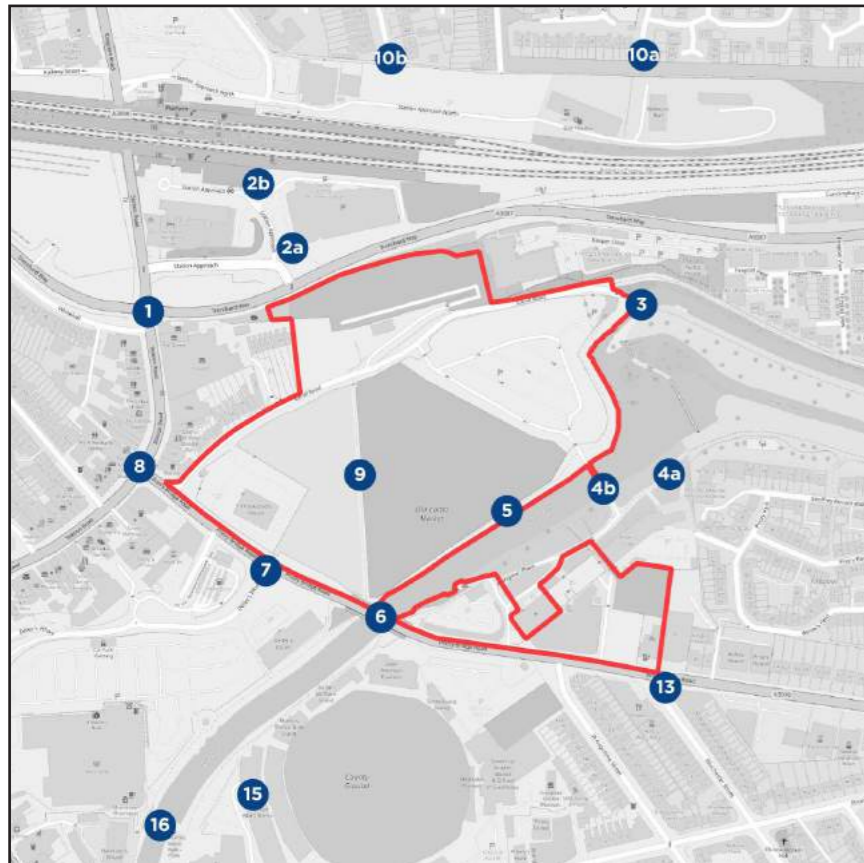
CAMERA: Canon EOS 70D

LENS: 35mm

SHUTTER SPEED: 1/120

APERTURE: f/11

Approximate extent of site visible



Contains OS data Crown copyright and database right (2016)
Ordnance Survey 0100031673

Viewpoint 13

PROJECT CODE: LC-842

PROJECT NAME: Firepool Masterplan, Taunton, Somerset

CLIENT: Somerset West and Taunton Council

LOCATION: Junction of Priory Bridge Road and Winchester Street

DISTANCE FROM SITE: 10m

DIRECTION FROM SITE: SE

GRID REFERENCE: 323064, 125050

DRAWING: Viewpoint 13

DRAWN: RG

CHECKED: ND

SCALE: Not to scale

DATE: 12.09.22

TIME: 12:35

VIEWPOINT HEIGHT (AOD): 15m (approx)

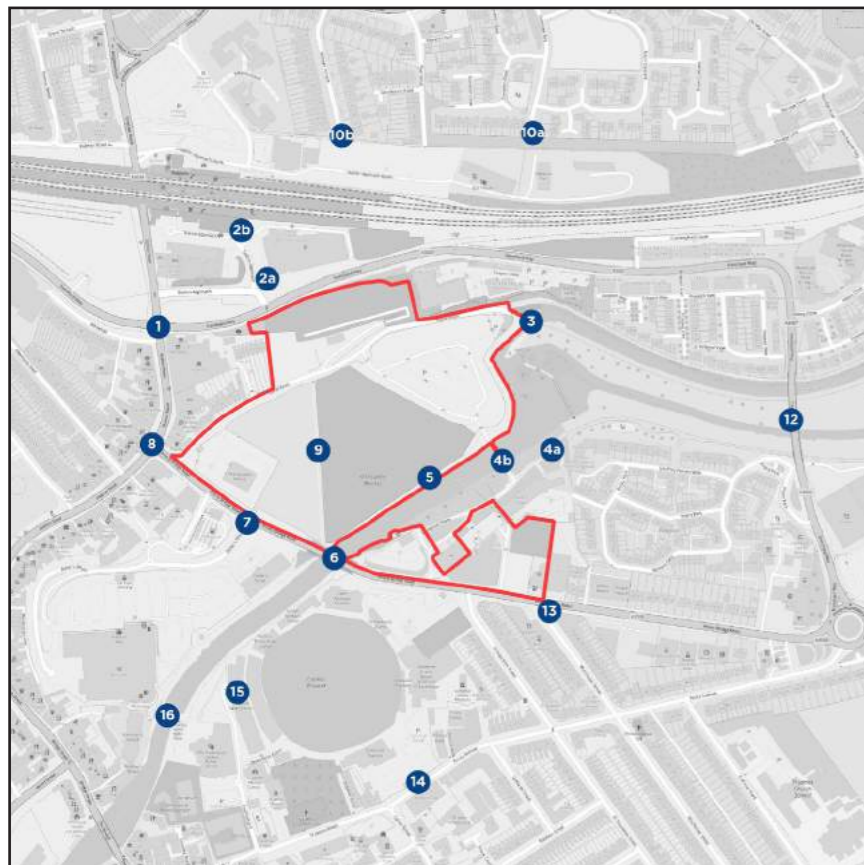
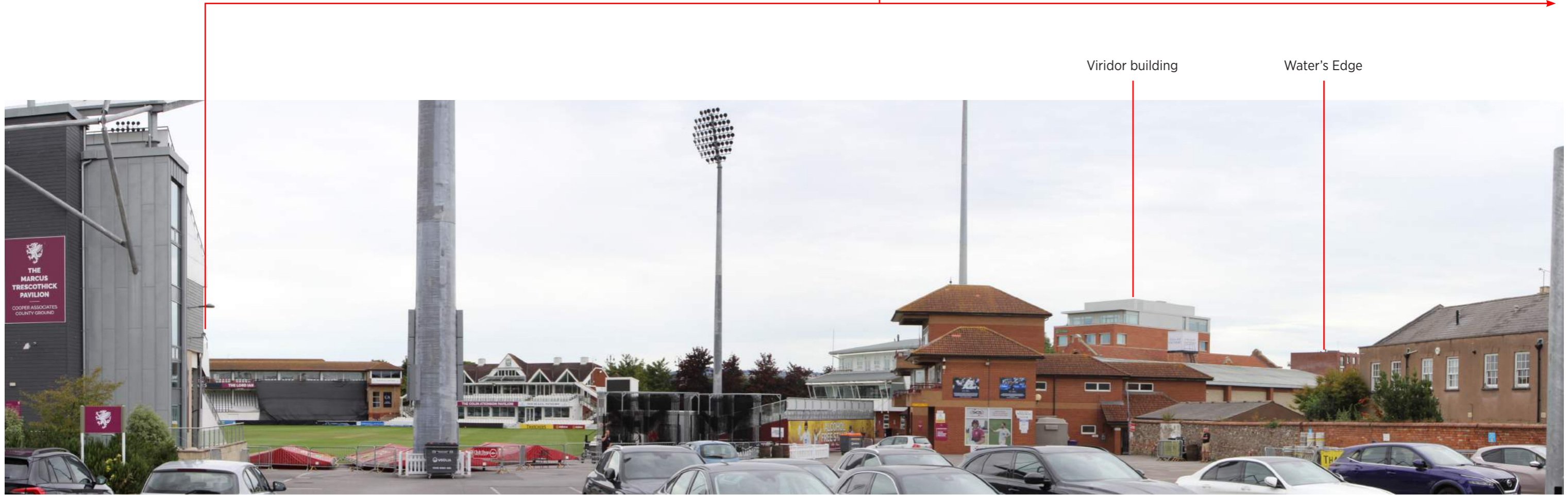
CAMERA: Canon EOS 70D

LENS: 35mm

SHUTTER SPEED: 1/120

APERTURE: f/11

Approximate extent of site visible



Contains OS data Crown copyright and database right (2016)
Ordnance Survey 0100031673

Viewpoint 14

PROJECT CODE: LC-842

PROJECT NAME: Firepool Masterplan, Taunton, Somerset

CLIENT: Somerset West and Taunton Council

LOCATION: Somerset County Cricket Ground, Priors Road entrance

DISTANCE FROM SITE: 200m

DIRECTION FROM SITE: S

GRID REFERENCE: 322936, 124851

DRAWING: Viewpoint 14

DRAWN: RG

CHECKED: ND

SCALE: Not to scale

DATE: 12.09.22

TIME: 14:15

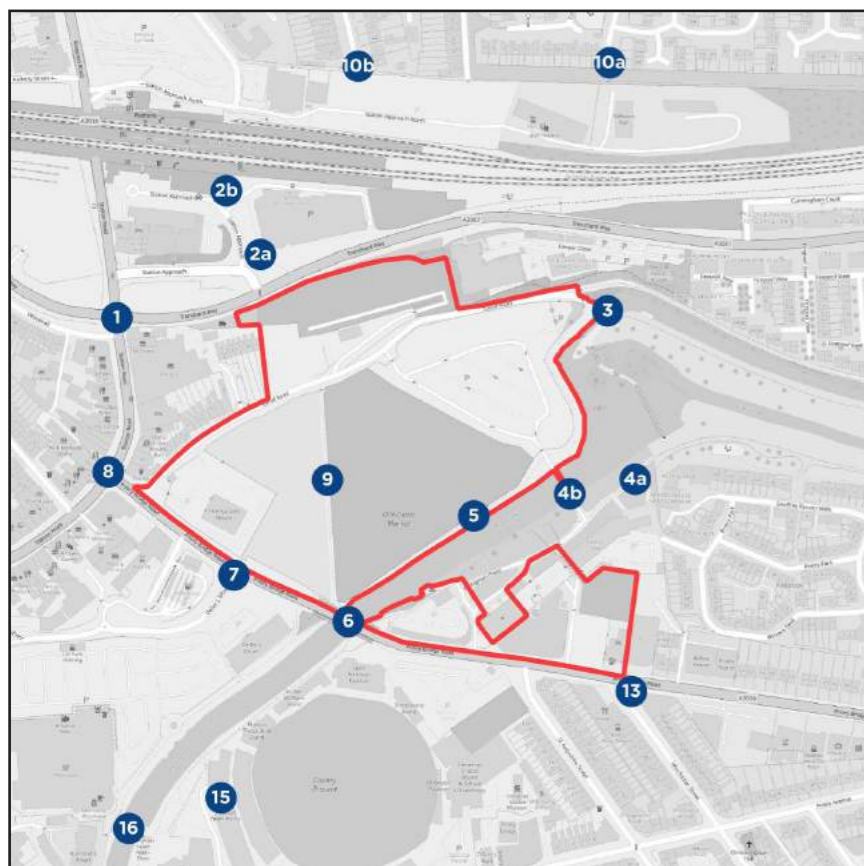
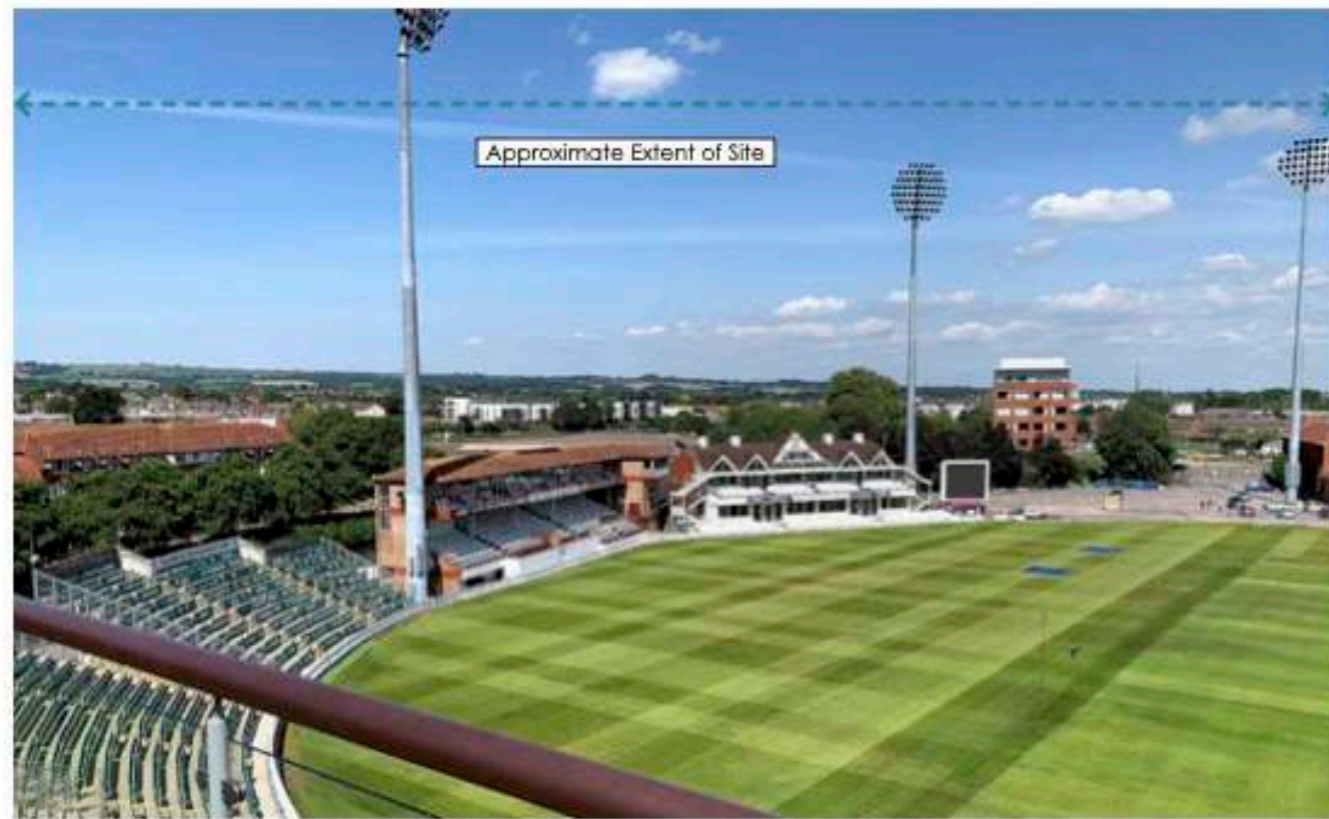
VIEWPOINT HEIGHT (AOD): 15m (approx)

CAMERA: Canon EOS 70D

LENS: 35mm

SHUTTER SPEED: 1/120

APERTURE: f/11



Contains OS data Crown copyright and database right (2016)
Ordnance Survey 0100031673

Viewpoint 15

PROJECT CODE: LC-842

PROJECT NAME: Firepool Masterplan, Taunton, Somerset

CLIENT: Somerset West and Taunton Council

LOCATION: Somerset County Cricket Ground, Roof Terrace of apartment

DISTANCE FROM SITE: 165m

DIRECTION FROM SITE: S

GRID REFERENCE: 322794, 124968

DRAWING: Viewpoint 15

DRAWN: RG

CHECKED: ND

SCALE: Not to scale

DATE: June 2020

TIME: Not known

VIEWPOINT HEIGHT (AOD): Not known

CAMERA: Not known

LENS: Not known

SHUTTER SPEED: Not known

APERTURE: Not known

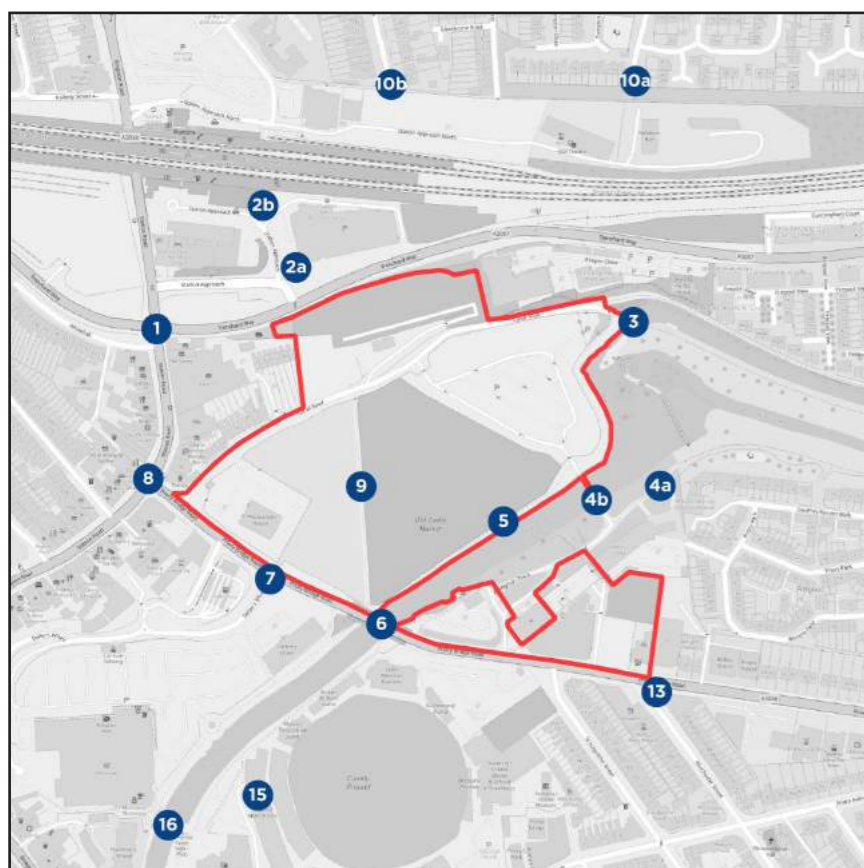
Approximate extent of site



Roof top of Deller's Court just visible

Roof top of the Pumping Station just visible

The Viridor building lies behind the development associated with the cricket ground



Contains OS data Crown copyright and database right (2016)
Ordnance Survey 0100031673

Viewpoint 16

PROJECT CODE: LC-842

PROJECT NAME: Firepool Masterplan, Taunton, Somerset

CLIENT: Somerset West and Taunton Council

LOCATION: Footbridge over the River Tone, near Morrison's

DISTANCE FROM SITE: 230m

DIRECTION FROM SITE: SW

GRID REFERENCE: 322551, 124709

DRAWING: Viewpoint 16

DRAWN: RG

CHECKED: ND

SCALE: Not to scale

DATE: 12.09.22

TIME: 15:50

VIEWPOINT HEIGHT (AOD): 19m (approx)

CAMERA: Canon EOS 70D

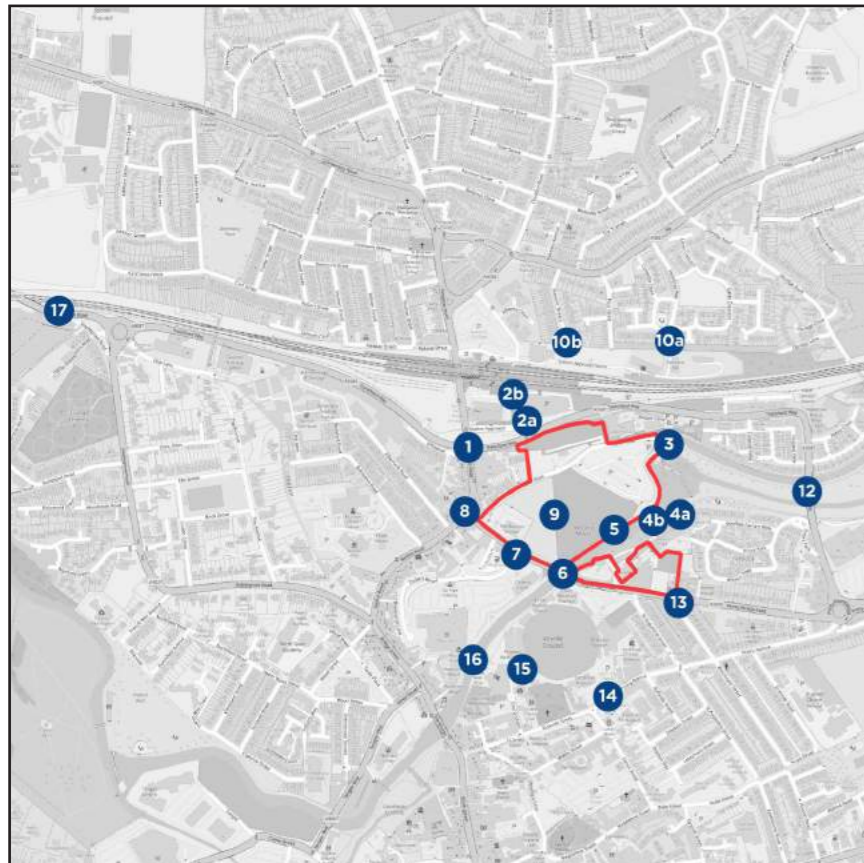
LENS: 35mm

SHUTTER SPEED: 1/120

APERTURE: f/11

Approximate extent of site

The floodlighting at Somerset County Cricket Ground just visible above the trees



Contains OS data Crown copyright and database right (2016)
Ordnance Survey 0100031673

Viewpoint 17

PROJECT CODE: LC-842

PROJECT NAME: Firepool Masterplan, Taunton, Somerset

CLIENT: Somerset West and Taunton Council

LOCATION: Staplegrove Road, south of railway crossing

DISTANCE FROM SITE: 860m

DIRECTION FROM SITE: NW

GRID REFERENCE: 321944, 125576

DRAWING: Viewpoint 17

DRAWN: RG

CHECKED: ND

SCALE: Not to scale

DATE: 22.09.22

TIME: 16:05

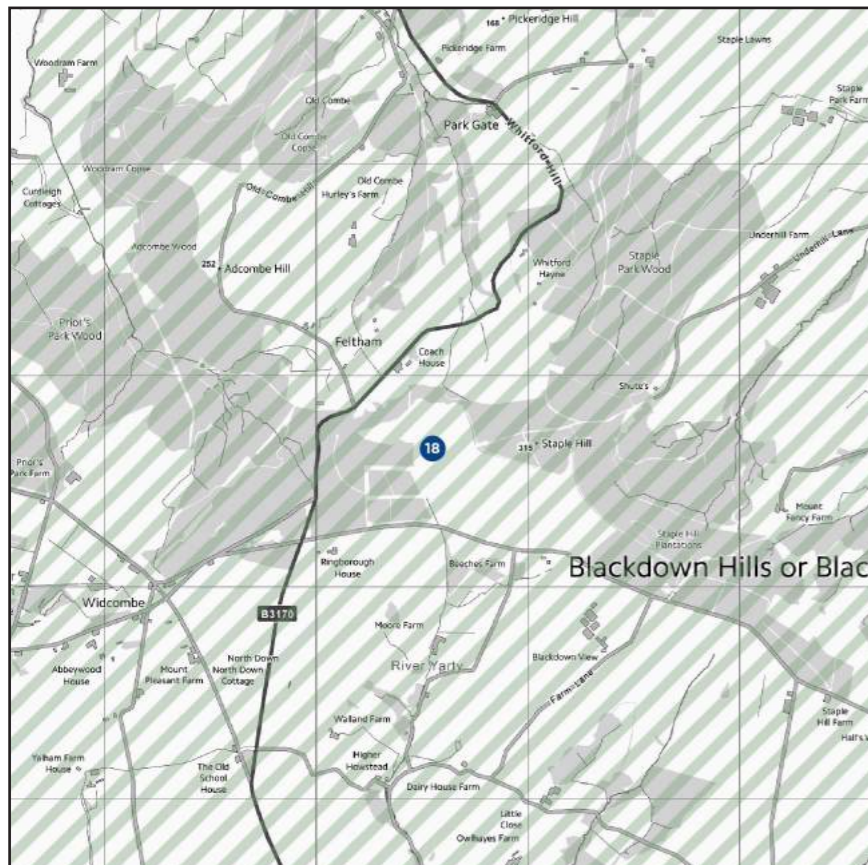
VIEWPOINT HEIGHT (AOD): 20m (approx)

CAMERA: Canon EOS 70D

LENS: 35mm

SHUTTER SPEED: 1/120

APERTURE: f/11



Contains OS data Crown copyright and database right (2016)
Ordnance Survey 0100031673

Viewpoint 18

PROJECT CODE: LC-842

PROJECT NAME: Firepool Masterplan, Taunton, Somerset

CLIENT: Somerset West and Taunton Council

LOCATION: Blackdown Hills AONB close to Staple Hill public viewpoint

DISTANCE FROM SITE: 8.5km

DIRECTION FROM SITE: S

GRID REFERENCE: 323570, 116673

DRAWING: Viewpoint 18

DRAWN: RG

CHECKED: ND

SCALE: Not to scale

DATE: 22.09.22

TIME: 12:00

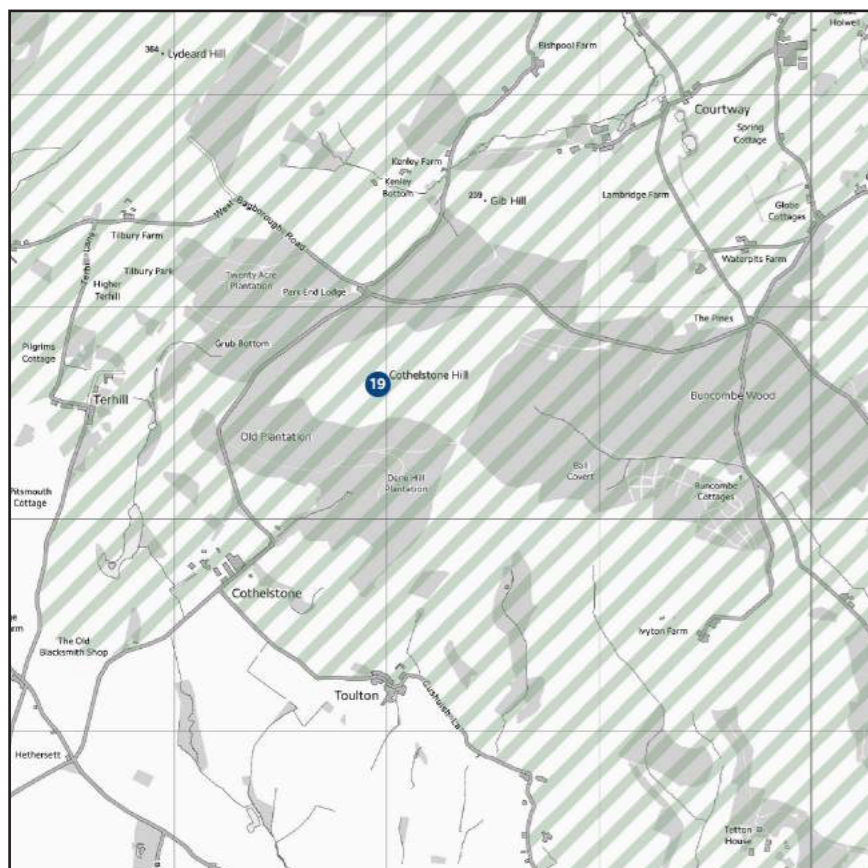
VIEWPOINT HEIGHT (AOD): 305m AOD (approx)

CAMERA: Canon EOS 70D

LENS: 35mm

SHUTTER SPEED: 1/120

APERTURE: f/11



Contains OS data Crown copyright and database right (2016)
Ordnance Survey 0100031673

Viewpoint 19

PROJECT CODE: LC-842

PROJECT NAME: Firepool Masterplan, Taunton, Somerset

CLIENT: Somerset West and Taunton Council

LOCATION: Quantock Hills AONB, close to Cothelstone Hill

DISTANCE FROM SITE: 8.5km

DIRECTION FROM SITE: S

GRID REFERENCE: 318984 , 132655

DRAWING: Viewpoint 19

DRAWN: RG

CHECKED: ND

SCALE: Not to scale

DATE: 19.10.22

TIME: 12:00

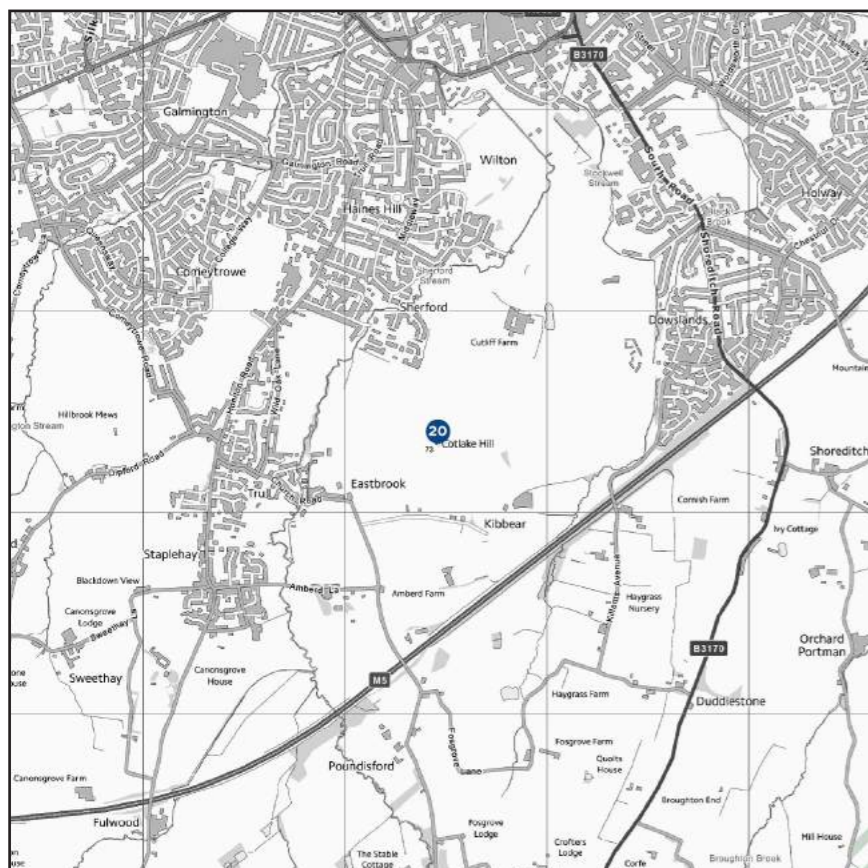
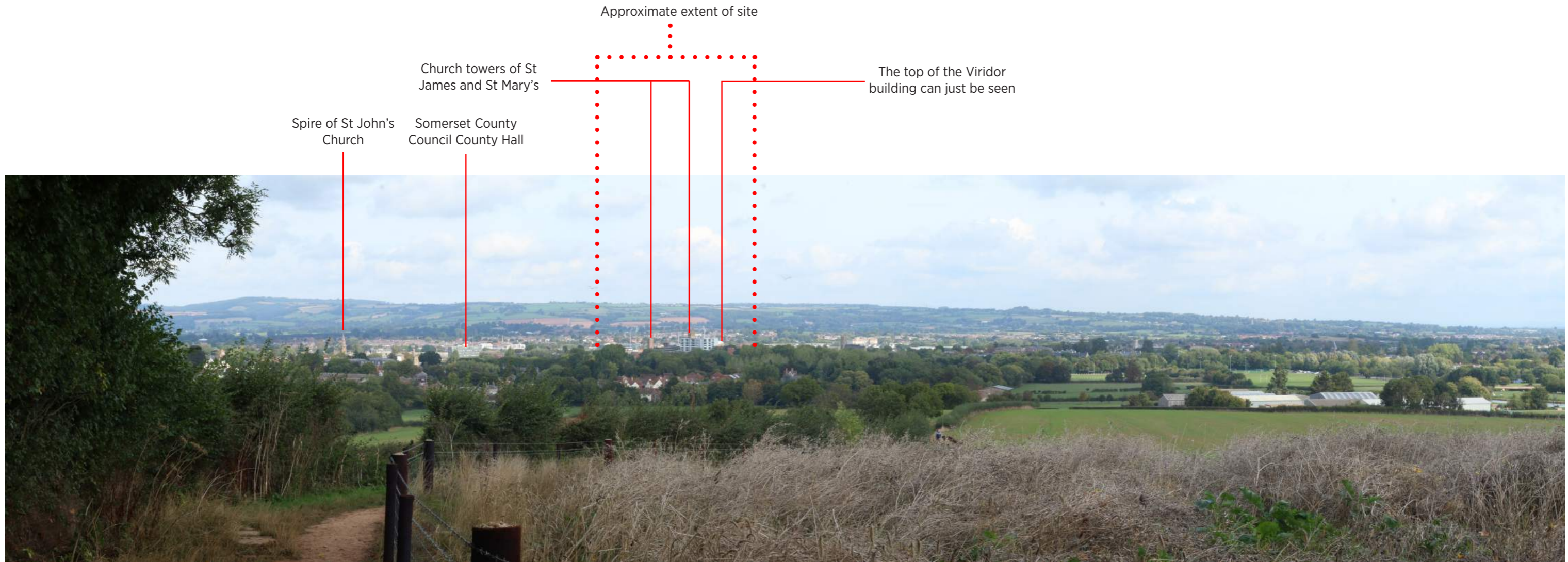
VIEWPOINT HEIGHT (AOD): 325m AOD (approx)

CAMERA: Canon EOS 70D

LENS: 50mm

SHUTTER SPEED: 1/120

APERTURE: f/11



Contains OS data Crown copyright and database right (2016)
Ordnance Survey 0100031673

Viewpoint 20

PROJECT CODE: LC-842

PROJECT NAME: Firepool Masterplan, Taunton, Somerset

CLIENT: Somerset West and Taunton Council

LOCATION: Cotlake Hill, Trull

DISTANCE FROM SITE: 2.7km

DIRECTION FROM SITE: S

GRID REFERENCE: 322464, 122410

DRAWING: Viewpoint 20

DRAWN: RG

CHECKED: ND

SCALE: Not to scale

DATE: 22.09.22

TIME: 10:20

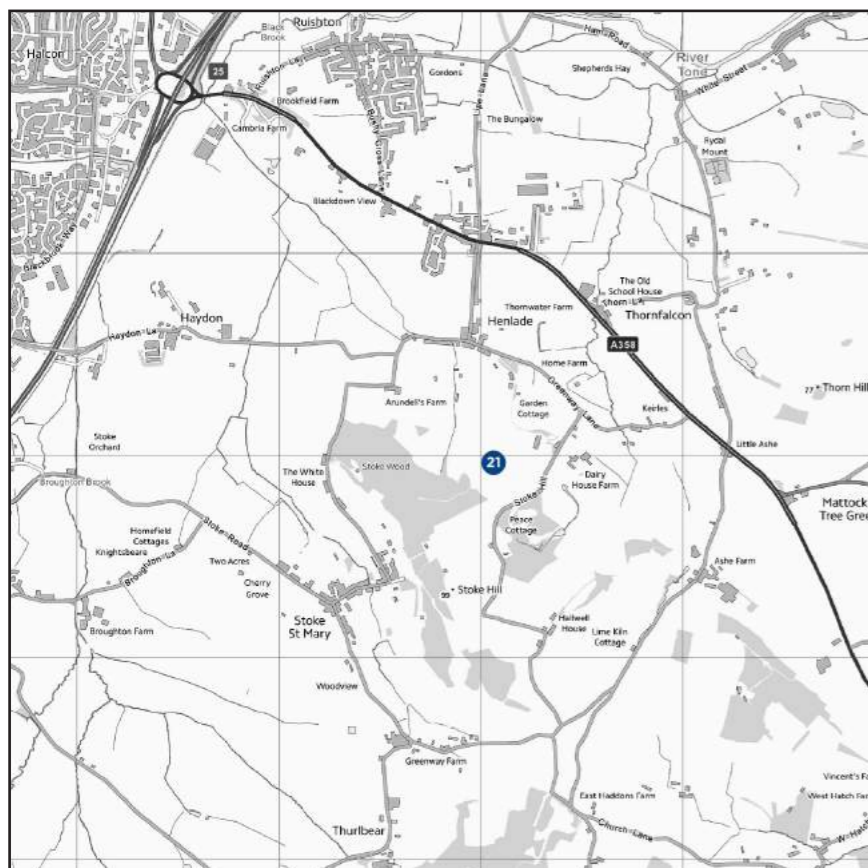
VIEWPOINT HEIGHT (AOD): 65mAOD (approx)

CAMERA: Canon EOS 70D

LENS: 35mm

SHUTTER SPEED: 1/120

APERTURE: f/11



Viewpoint 21

PROJECT CODE: LC-842

PROJECT NAME: Firepool Masterplan,
Taunton, Somerset

CLIENT: Somerset West and
Taunton Council

LOCATION: Stoke Hill, Henlade

DISTANCE FROM SITE: 4.5km

DIRECTION FROM SITE: SE

GRID REFERENCE: 327062, 122962

DRAWING: Viewpoint 21

DRAWN: RG

CHECKED: ND

SCALE: Not to scale

DATE: 22.09.22

TIME: 13:10

VIEWPOINT HEIGHT (AOD): 50mAOD (approx)

CAMERA: Canon EOS 70D

LENS: 35mm

SHUTTER SPEED: 1/120

APERTURE: f/11

Appendix C: Viewpoints image at A3



Viewpoint 1

• Images printed at A3 are considered to reflect the scale as seen by the human eye in the field

Eagle Tower, Montpellier Drive Cheltenham,
Gloucestershire, GL50 1TA





Viewpoint 2b

• Images printed at A3 are considered to reflect the scale as seen by the human eye in the field

Eagle Tower, Montpellier Drive Cheltenham,
Gloucestershire, GL50 1TA



Viewpoint 3

• Images printed at A3 are considered to reflect the scale as seen by the human eye in the field

Eagle Tower, Montpellier Drive Cheltenham,
Gloucestershire, GL50 1TA





Viewpoint 4b

• Images printed at A3 are considered to reflect the scale as seen by the human eye in the field

Eagle Tower, Montpellier Drive Cheltenham,
Gloucestershire, GL50 1TA



Viewpoint 5

• Images printed at A3 are considered to reflect the scale as seen by the human eye in the field

Eagle Tower, Montpellier Drive Cheltenham,
Gloucestershire, GL50 1TA



Viewpoint 6

• Images printed at A3 are considered to reflect the scale as seen by the human eye in the field

Eagle Tower, Montpellier Drive Cheltenham,
Gloucestershire, GL50 1TA



Somerset Jobs co.uk
THE TAUNTON JOBS FAIR
Wednesday 28th Sept, 10.30am-4pm
Somerset County Cricket Club
28 SEPTEMBER
www.somersetjobs.co.uk

453S

Slimming World
TAUNTON
Taunton Baptist Church, 19 Silver Street, TA1 3DH
Saturdays at 8.30am
Call Down on 07779 404038

DOUGH BROS.
67 STATION ROAD
← 150 METRES

SOMERSET COUNTY SHOW
17th & 18th September
Taunton Racecourse

Cygnit Hospital Tounon
Life changing careers
We are currently recruiting high quality **Mental Health Nurses, Healthcare Assistants and Allied Health Care Professionals.**
Are you looking to make a real difference in mental health care?
See your local recruitment agent for more information. Please call 0117 9250000





Viewpoint 9

• Images printed at A3 are considered to reflect the scale as seen by the human eye in the field

Eagle Tower, Montpellier Drive Cheltenham,
Gloucestershire, GL50 1TA





Viewpoint 10b

• Images printed at A3 are considered to reflect the scale as seen by the human eye in the field

Eagle Tower, Montpellier Drive Cheltenham,
Gloucestershire, GL50 1TA









Viewpoint provided by the estate agents for the apartment. 50mm equivalent image not available





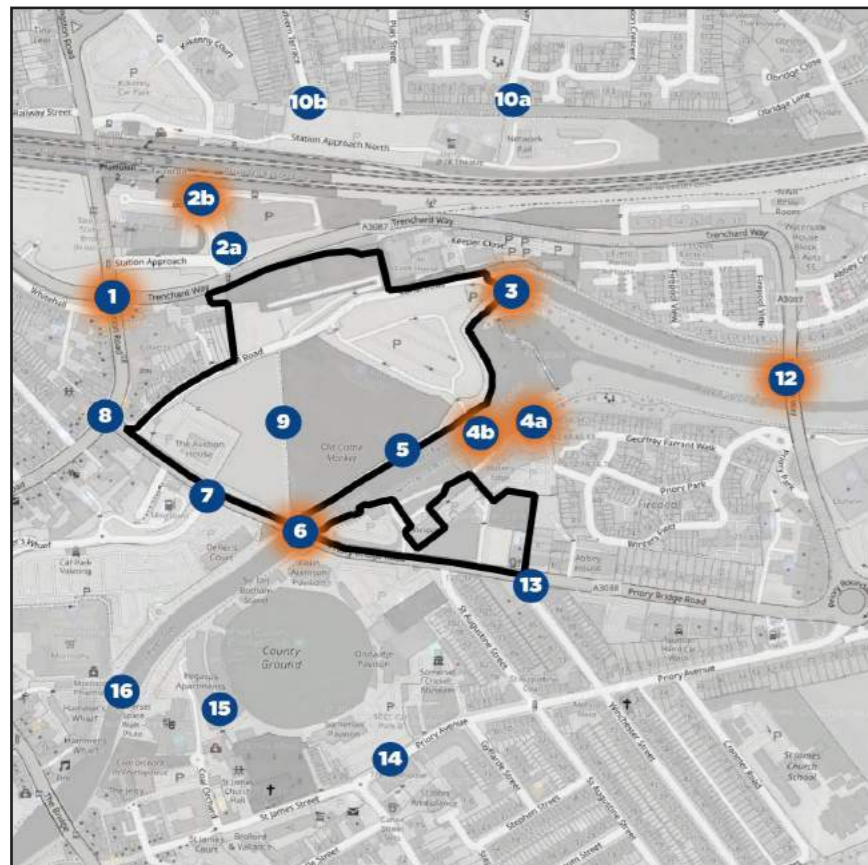








Appendix D: Verified View Montages



Contains OS data Crown copyright and database right (2016)
Ordnance Survey 0100031673

Viewpoint 1: Baseline

PROJECT CODE: LC-842

PROJECT NAME: Firepool Masterplan, Taunton, Somerset

CLIENT: Somerset West and Taunton Council

LOCATION: Centre of Trenchard Way Bridge

DISTANCE FROM SITE: 121m

DIRECTION FROM SITE: NW

GRID REFERENCE: 322704, 125339

DRAWING: VVM 1

DRAWN: RHVisuals

CHECKED: RG

SCALE: Not to scale

DATE: 29.09.22

TIME: 14:50

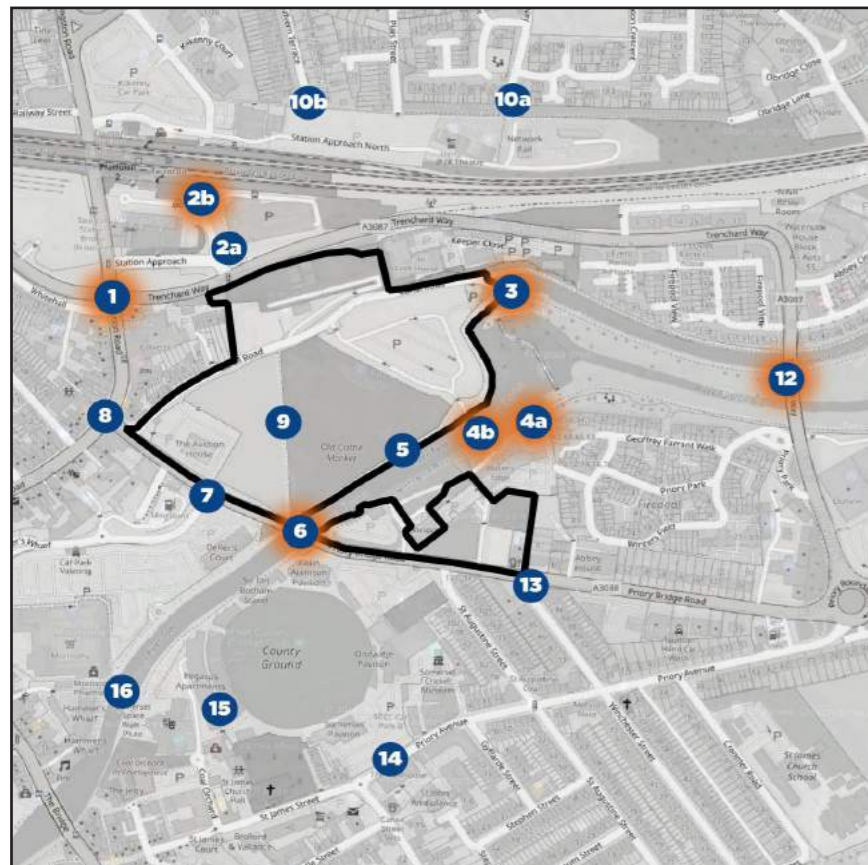
VIEWPOINT HEIGHT (AOD): 23.97m AOD

CAMERA: Canon 5D MKII

LENS: EF50

SHUTTER SPEED: 1/40

APERTURE: f1.8



Contains OS data Crown copyright and database right (2016)
Ordnance Survey 0100031673

Viewpoint 1: Verified View Montage

PROJECT CODE: LC-842

PROJECT NAME: Firepool Masterplan, Taunton, Somerset

CLIENT: Somerset West and Taunton Council

LOCATION: Centre of Trenchard Way Bridge

DISTANCE FROM SITE: 121m

DIRECTION FROM SITE: NW

GRID REFERENCE: 322704, 125339

DRAWING: VVM 1

DRAWN: RHVisuals

CHECKED: RG

SCALE: Not to scale

DATE: 29.09.22

TIME: 14:50

VIEWPOINT HEIGHT (AOD): 23.97m AOD

CAMERA: Canon 5D MKII

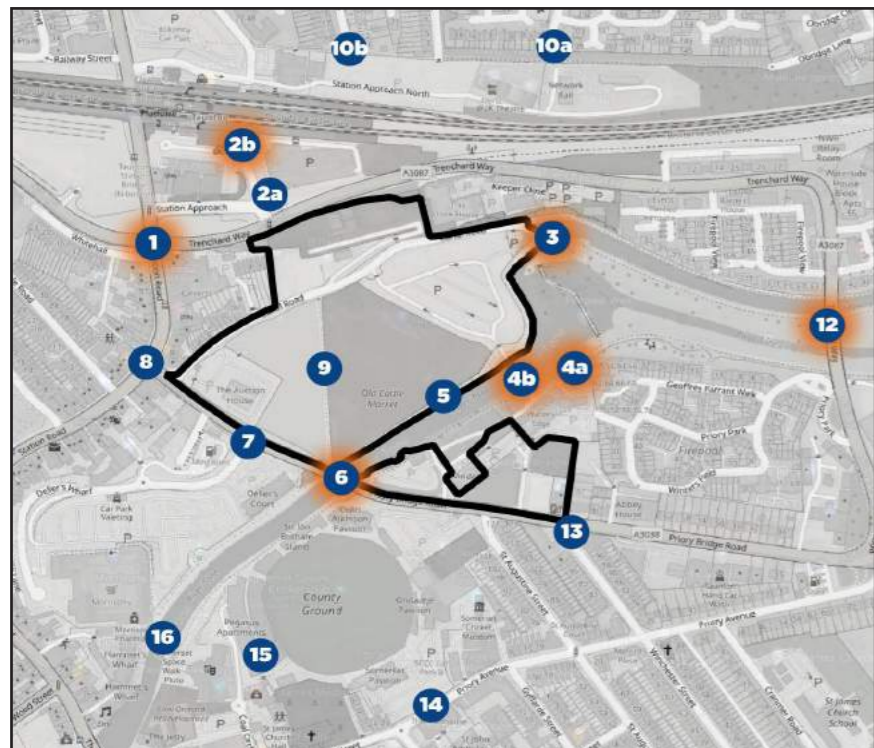
LENS: EF50

SHUTTER SPEED: 1/40

APERTURE: f1.8



Viewpoint 2: Baseline



PROJECT CODE: LC-842

PROJECT NAME: Firepool Masterplan, Taunton, Somerset

CLIENT: Somerset West and Taunton Council

LOCATION: Centre of Trenchard Way Bridge

DISTANCE FROM SITE: 121m

DIRECTION FROM SITE: NW

GRID REFERENCE: 322704, 125339

DRAWING: VVM 2

DRAWN: RHVisuals

CHECKED: RG

SCALE: Not to scale

DATE: 29.09.22

TIME: 14:30

VIEWPOINT HEIGHT (AOD): 21.88mAOD

CAMERA: Canon 5D MKII

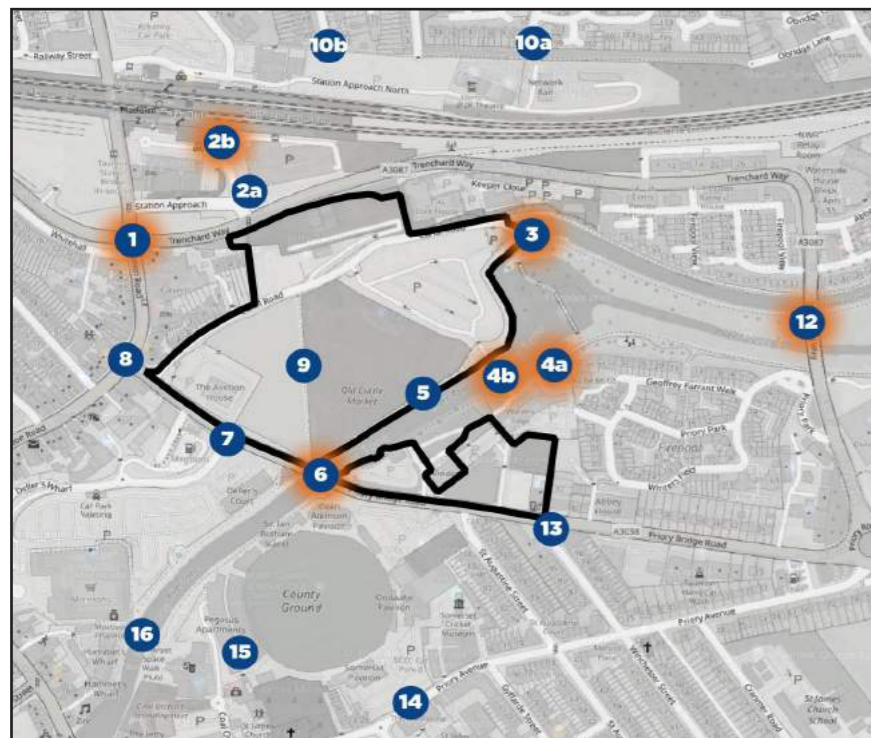
LENS: EF50

SHUTTER SPEED: 1/40

APERTURE: f1.8



Viewpoint 2: Verified View Montage



Contains OS data Crown copyright and database right (2016)
Ordnance Survey 0100031673

PROJECT CODE: LC-842

PROJECT NAME: Firepool Masterplan, Taunton, Somerset

CLIENT: Somerset West and Taunton Council

LOCATION: Centre of Trenchard Way Bridge

DISTANCE FROM SITE: 121m

DIRECTION FROM SITE: NW

GRID REFERENCE: 322704, 125339

DRAWING: VVM 2

DRAWN: RHVisuals

CHECKED: RG

SCALE: Not to scale

DATE: 29.09.22

TIME: 14:30

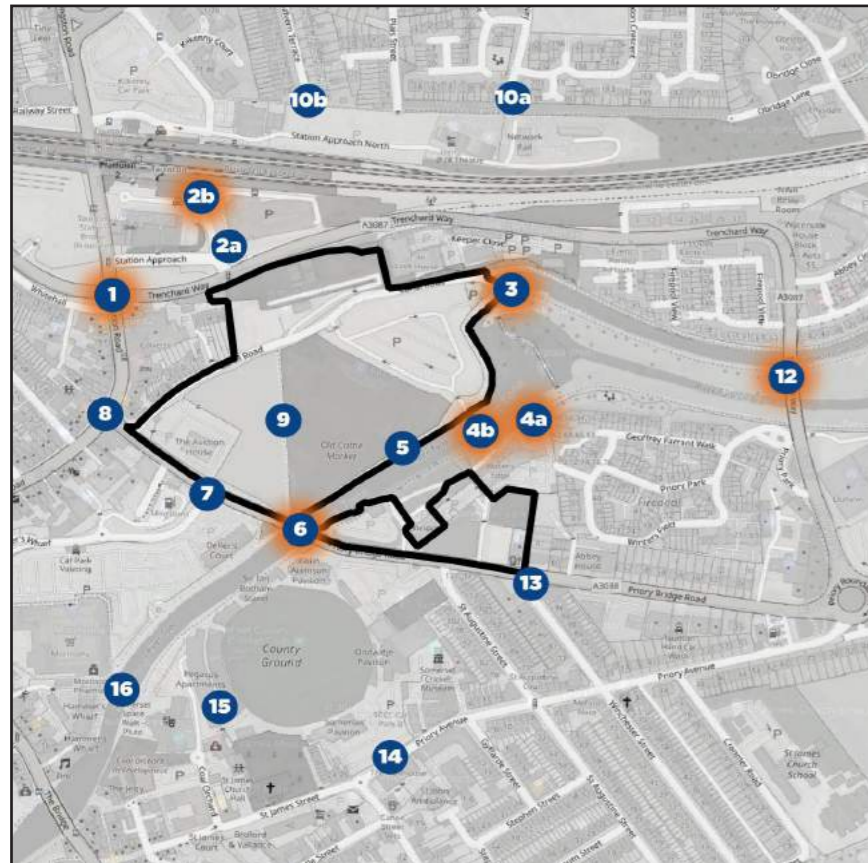
VIEWPOINT HEIGHT (AOD): 21.88mAOD

CAMERA: Canon 5D MKII

LENS: EF50

SHUTTER SPEED: 1/40

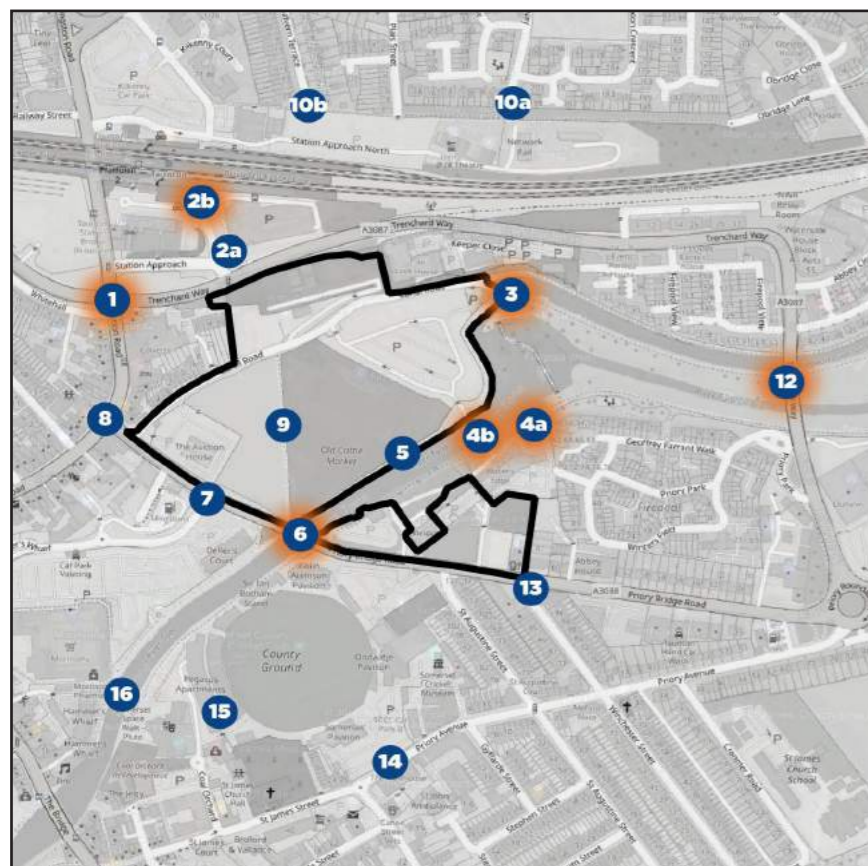
APERTURE: f1.8



Contains OS data Crown copyright and database right (2016)
Ordnance Survey 0100031673

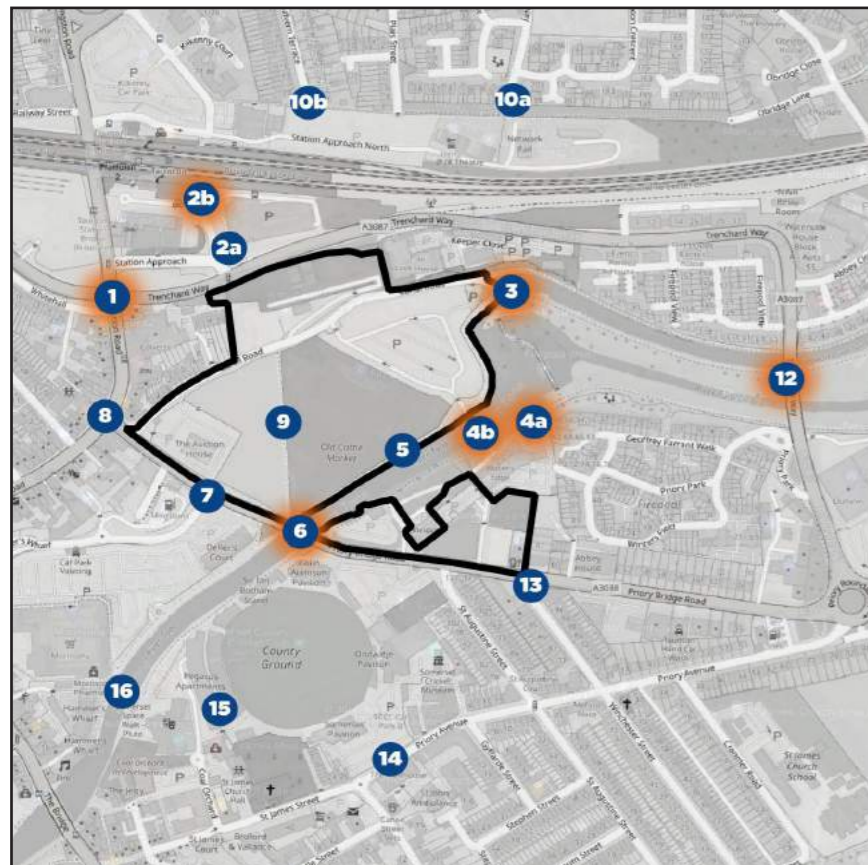
Viewpoint 3: Baseline

PROJECT CODE:	LC-842	GRID REFERENCE:	322704, 125339	TIME:	13.05
PROJECT NAME:	Firepool Masterplan, Taunton, Somerset	DRAWING:	VVM 3	VIEWPOINT HEIGHT (AOD):	17.85mAOD
CLIENT:	Somerset West and Taunton Council	DRAWN:	RHVisuals	CAMERA:	Canon 5D MKII
LOCATION:	Centre of Trenchard Way Bridge	CHECKED:	RG	LENS:	EF50
DISTANCE FROM SITE:	121m	SCALE:	Not to scale	SHUTTER SPEED:	1/40
DIRECTION FROM SITE:	NW	DATE:	29.09.22	APERTURE:	f1.8



Viewpoint 3: Verified View Montage

PROJECT CODE:	LC-842	GRID REFERENCE:	322704, 125339	TIME:	13.05
PROJECT NAME:	Firepool Masterplan, Taunton, Somerset	DRAWING:	VVM 3	VIEWPOINT HEIGHT (AOD):	17.85mAOD
CLIENT:	Somerset West and Taunton Council	DRAWN:	RHVisuals	CAMERA:	Canon 5D MKII
LOCATION:	Centre of Trenchard Way Bridge	CHECKED:	RG	LENS:	EF50
DISTANCE FROM SITE:	121m	SCALE:	Not to scale	SHUTTER SPEED:	1/40
DIRECTION FROM SITE:	NW	DATE:	29.09.22	APERTURE:	f1.8



Contains OS data Crown copyright and database right (2016)
Ordnance Survey 0100031673

Viewpoint 4a: Baseline

PROJECT CODE: LC-842

PROJECT NAME: Firepool Masterplan, Taunton, Somerset

CLIENT: Somerset West and Taunton Council

LOCATION: Centre of Trenchard Way Bridge

DISTANCE FROM SITE: 121m

DIRECTION FROM SITE: NW

GRID REFERENCE: 322704, 125339

DRAWING: VVM 4a

DRAWN: RHVisuals

CHECKED: RG

SCALE: Not to scale

DATE: 29.09.22

TIME: 12:40

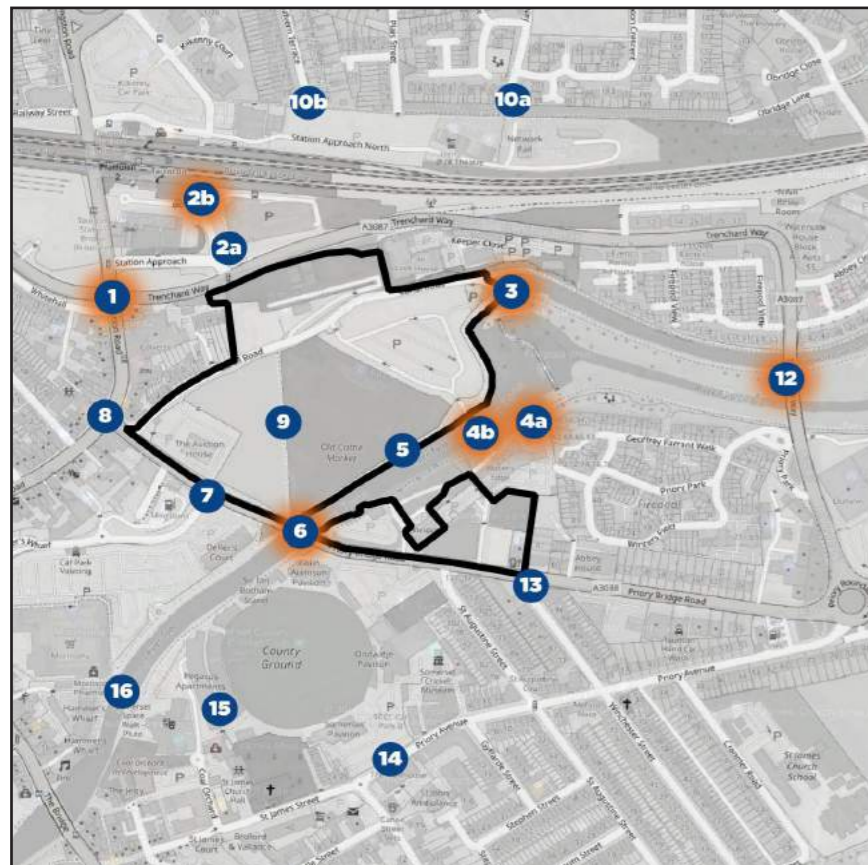
VIEWPOINT HEIGHT (AOD): 17.21m AOD

CAMERA: Canon 5D MKII

LENS: EF50

SHUTTER SPEED: 1/40

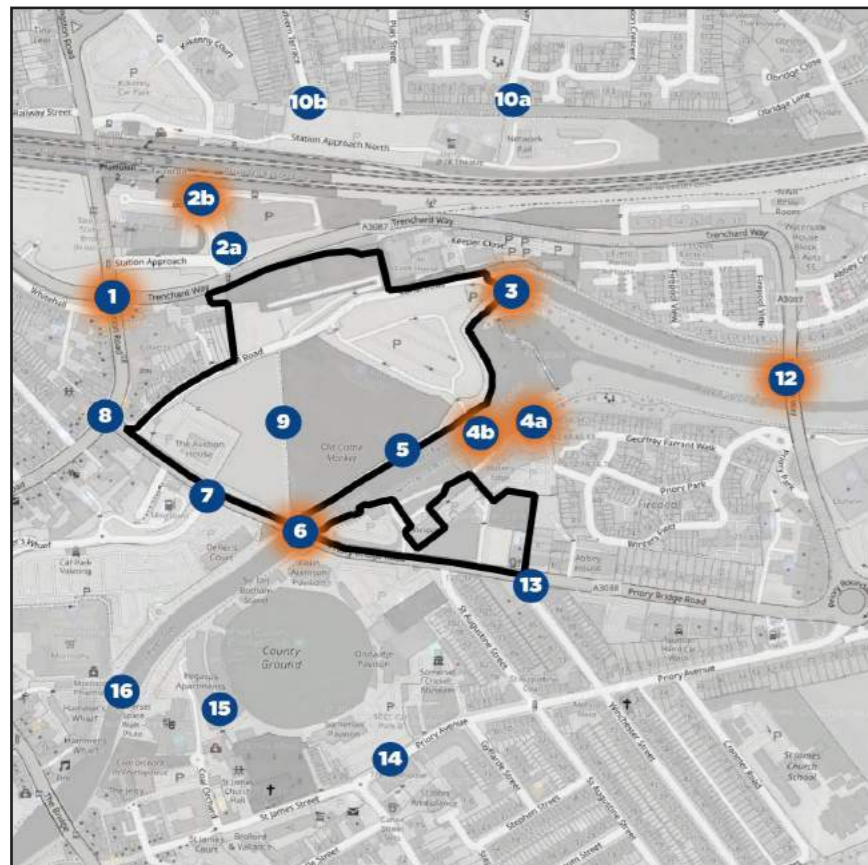
APERTURE: f1.8



Contains OS data Crown copyright and database right (2016)
Ordnance Survey 0100031673

Viewpoint 4a: Verified View Montage

PROJECT CODE:	LC-842	GRID REFERENCE:	322704, 125339	TIME:	12:40
PROJECT NAME:	Firepool Masterplan, Taunton, Somerset	DRAWING:	VVM 4a	VIEWPOINT HEIGHT (AOD):	17.21m AOD
CLIENT:	Somerset West and Taunton Council	DRAWN:	RHVisuals	CAMERA:	Canon 5D MKII
LOCATION:	Centre of Trenchard Way Bridge	CHECKED:	RG	LENS:	EF50
DISTANCE FROM SITE:	121m	SCALE:	Not to scale	SHUTTER SPEED:	1/40
DIRECTION FROM SITE:	NW	DATE:	29.09.22	APERTURE:	f1.8



Contains OS data Crown copyright and database right (2016)
Ordnance Survey 0100031673

Viewpoint 4b: Baseline

PROJECT CODE: LC-842

PROJECT NAME: Firepool Masterplan, Taunton, Somerset

CLIENT: Somerset West and Taunton Council

LOCATION: Centre of Trenchard Way Bridge

DISTANCE FROM SITE: 121m

DIRECTION FROM SITE: NW

GRID REFERENCE: 322704, 125339

DRAWING: VVM 4b

DRAWN: RHVisuals

CHECKED: RG

SCALE: Not to scale

DATE: 29.09.22

TIME: 12:15

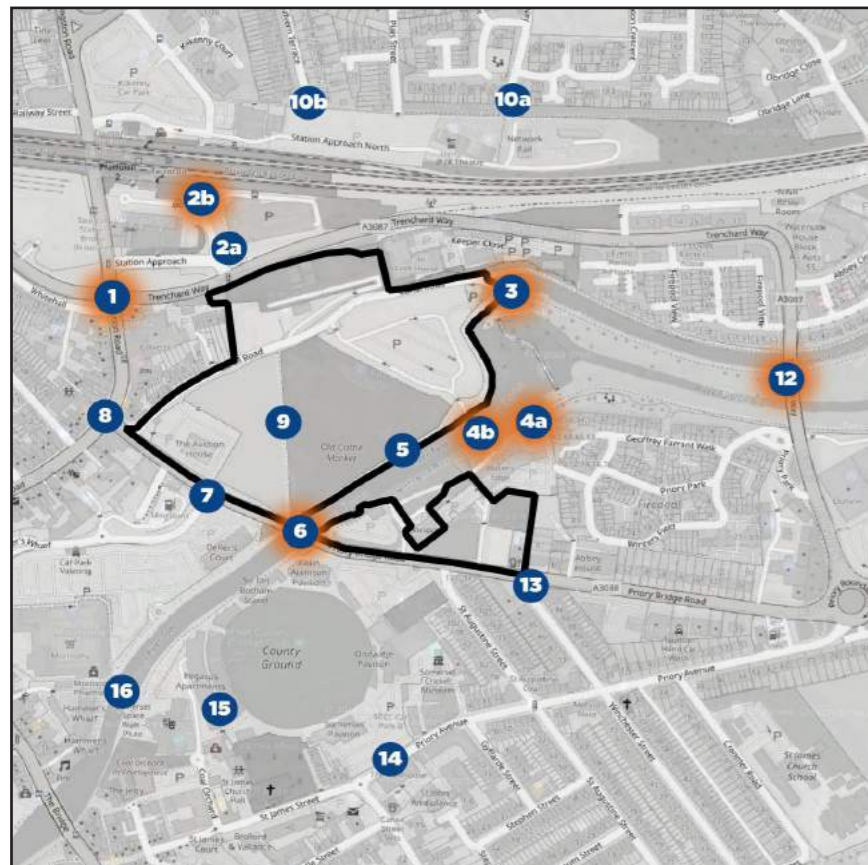
VIEWPOINT HEIGHT (AOD): 18.66mAOD

CAMERA: Canon 5D MKII

LENS: EF50

SHUTTER SPEED: 1/40

APERTURE: f1.8



Contains OS data Crown copyright and database right (2016)
Ordnance Survey 0100031673

Viewpoint 4b: Verified View Montage

PROJECT CODE: LC-842

PROJECT NAME: Firepool Masterplan, Taunton, Somerset

CLIENT: Somerset West and Taunton Council

LOCATION: Centre of Trenchard Way Bridge

DISTANCE FROM SITE: 121m

DIRECTION FROM SITE: NW

GRID REFERENCE: 322704, 125339

DRAWING: VVM 4b

DRAWN: RHVisuals

CHECKED: RG

SCALE: Not to scale

DATE: 29.09.22

TIME: 12:15

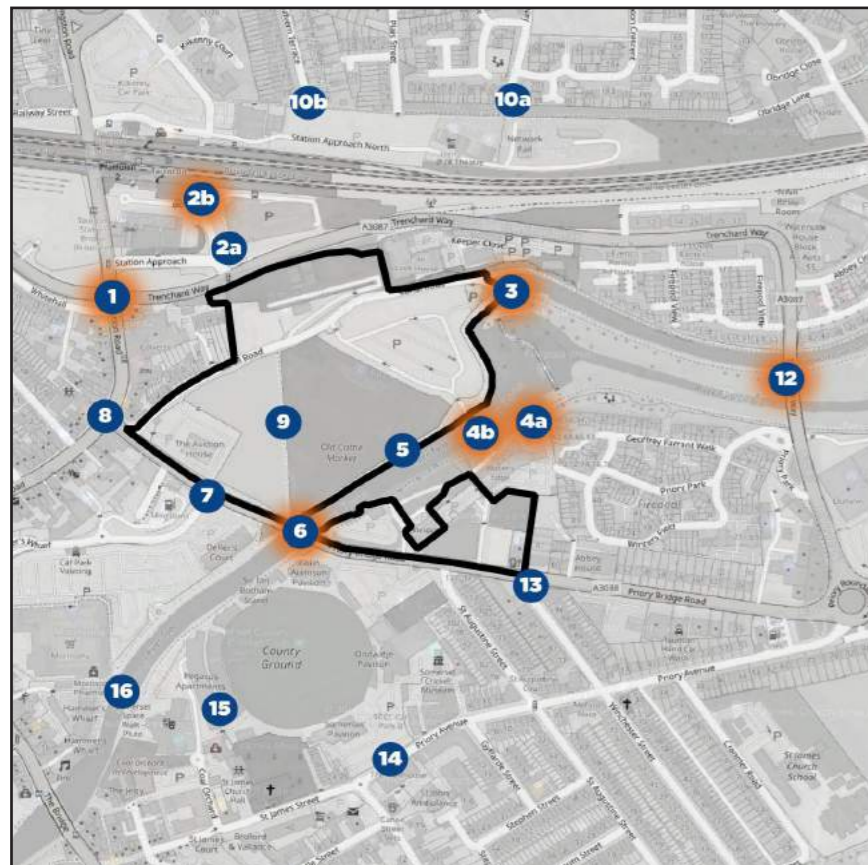
VIEWPOINT HEIGHT (AOD): 18.66mAOD

CAMERA: Canon 5D MKII

LENS: EF50

SHUTTER SPEED: 1/40

APERTURE: f1.8



Contains OS data Crown copyright and database right (2016)
Ordnance Survey 0100031673

Viewpoint 6: Baseline

PROJECT CODE: LC-842

PROJECT NAME: Firepool Masterplan, Taunton, Somerset

CLIENT: Somerset West and Taunton Council

LOCATION: Centre of Trenchard Way Bridge

DISTANCE FROM SITE: 121m

DIRECTION FROM SITE: NW

GRID REFERENCE: 322704, 125339

DRAWING: VVM 6

DRAWN: RHVisuals

CHECKED: RG

SCALE: Not to scale

DATE: 29.09.22

TIME: 13:50

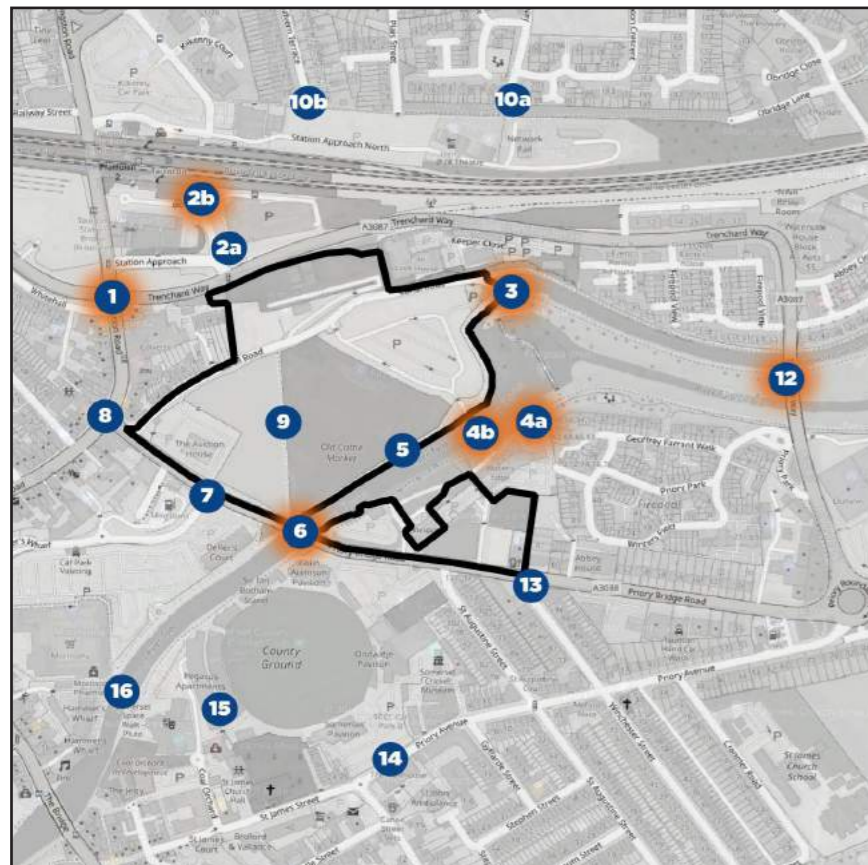
VIEWPOINT HEIGHT (AOD): 19.64mAOD

CAMERA: Canon 5D MKII

LENS: EF50

SHUTTER SPEED: 1/40

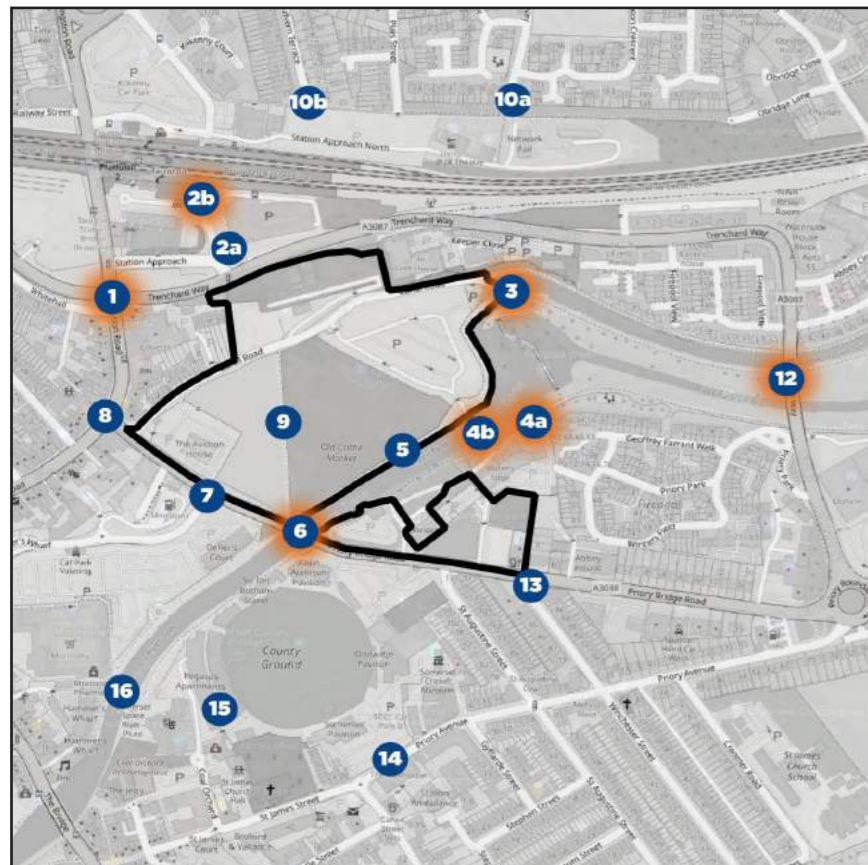
APERTURE: f1.8



Contains OS data Crown copyright and database right (2016)
Ordnance Survey 0100031673

Viewpoint 6: Verified View Montage

PROJECT CODE:	LC-842	GRID REFERENCE:	322704, 125339	TIME:	13:50
PROJECT NAME:	Firepool Masterplan, Taunton, Somerset	DRAWING:	VVM 6	VIEWPOINT HEIGHT (AOD):	19.64mAOD
CLIENT:	Somerset West and Taunton Council	DRAWN:	RHVisuals	CAMERA:	Canon 5D MKII
LOCATION:	Centre of Trenchard Way Bridge	CHECKED:	RG	LENS:	EF50
DISTANCE FROM SITE:	121m	SCALE:	Not to scale	SHUTTER SPEED:	1/40
DIRECTION FROM SITE:	NW	DATE:	29.09.22	APERTURE:	f1.8



Contains OS data Crown copyright and database right (2016)
Ordnance Survey 0100031673

Viewpoint 12: Baseline

PROJECT CODE: LC-842

PROJECT NAME: Firepool Masterplan, Taunton, Somerset

CLIENT: Somerset West and Taunton Council

LOCATION: Centre of Trenchard Way Bridge

DISTANCE FROM SITE: 121m

DIRECTION FROM SITE: NW

GRID REFERENCE: 322704, 125339

DRAWING: VVM 12

DRAWN: RHVisuals

CHECKED: RG

SCALE: Not to scale

DATE: 29.09.22

TIME: 13:25

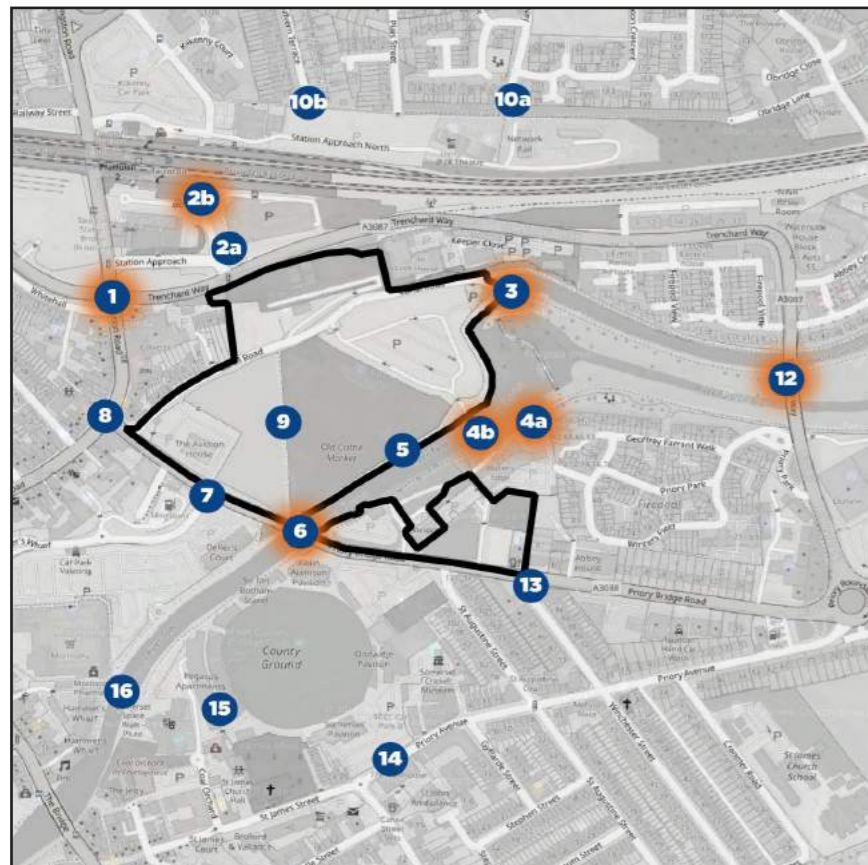
VIEWPOINT HEIGHT (AOD): 24.26m AOD

CAMERA: Canon 5D MKII

LENS: EF50

SHUTTER SPEED: 1/40

APERTURE: f1.8



Contains OS data Crown copyright and database right (2016)
Ordnance Survey 0100031673

Viewpoint 12: Verified View Montage

PROJECT CODE: LC-842

PROJECT NAME: Firepool Masterplan, Taunton, Somerset

CLIENT: Somerset West and Taunton Council

LOCATION: Centre of Trenchard Way Bridge

DISTANCE FROM SITE: 121m

DIRECTION FROM SITE: NW

GRID REFERENCE: 322704, 125339

DRAWING: VVM 12

DRAWN: RHVisuals

CHECKED: RG

SCALE: Not to scale

DATE: 29.09.22

TIME: 13:25

VIEWPOINT HEIGHT (AOD): 24.26mAOD

CAMERA: Canon 5D MKII

LENS: EF50

SHUTTER SPEED: 1/40

APERTURE: f1.8

Habitat Regulations Assessments

Sustainability Appraisals

Strategic Environmental Assessments

Landscape Character Assessments

Landscape and Visual Impact Assessments

Green Belt Reviews

Expert Witness

Ecological Impact Assessments

Habitat and Ecology Surveys



LEPUS CONSULTING
LANDSCAPE, ECOLOGY, PLANNING & URBAN SUSTAINABILITY

© Lepus Consulting Ltd

Eagle Tower

Montpellier Drive

Cheltenham

GL50 1TA

T: 01242 525222

E: enquiries@lepusconsulting.com

www.lepusconsulting.com

CHEL TENHAM



Lepus Consulting
Eagle Tower, Montpellier Drive
Cheltenham
Gloucestershire GL50 1TA

t: 01242 525222
w: www.lepusconsulting.com
e: enquiries@lepusconsulting.com