



22nd November 2022
(via email)

Dear Ms Thatcher

EMBANKMENT EVENT SPACE / SQUARE and EVENT SPACE (GENERAL)

The representation below from the Twickenham Riverside is in addition to that made in March 2022 on similar considerations. The March 2022 representation is included at the bottom of this letter, for your convenience.

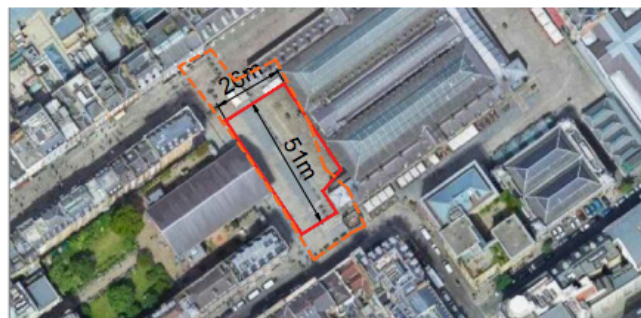
EMBANKMENT EVENT SPACE / SQUARE

The additional documents provided in October 2022 show no fewer than four differently sized Embankment-level 'Event Spaces':

(below) Page 21: Landscape and Public Realm Strategy pt 1 (Oct 2022) - c.1600m²

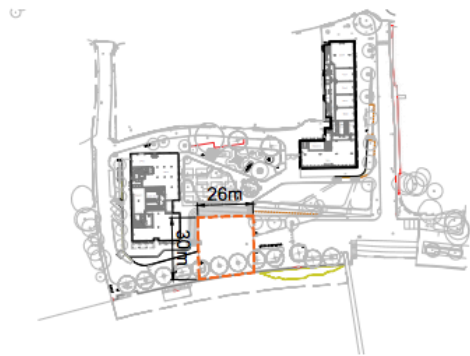


Twickenham Riverside - area of Town Square



Covent Garden - Performance area

(below) Page 22: *Landscape and Public Realm Strategy pt 1 (Oct 2022) - 780m²*

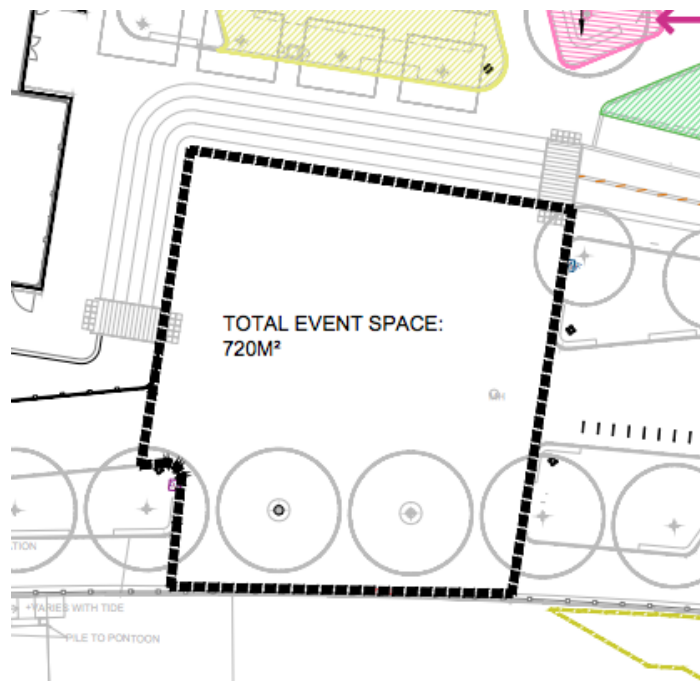


Twickenham Riverside - area of Town Square

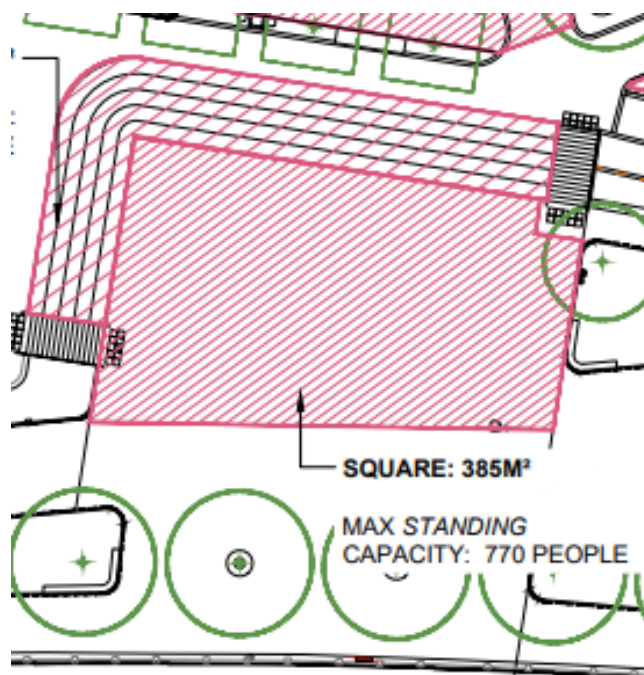


National Theatre - area of flexible plaza

(below) Page 33: *Landscape and Public Realm Strategy pt 1 (Oct 2022) - 720m²*



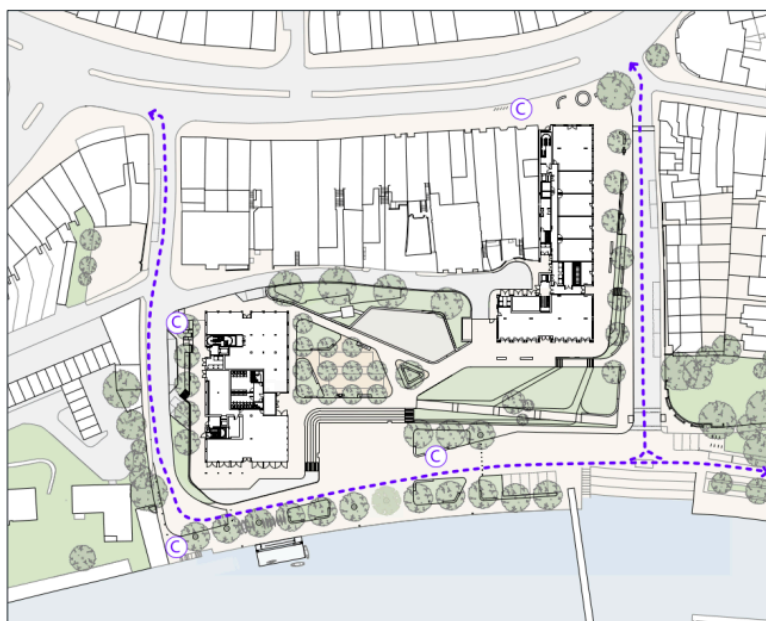
(below) Event Capacity drawing (Oct 2022) - 385m²



Of the four different Embankment-level Event Spaces being proposed by this Planning Application, only one is not bisected by the main cycle route (see diagram below) being proposed along the riverside - and this Event Space/Square measures 385m².

(below) Page 44 (Transport Assessment, October 2022):

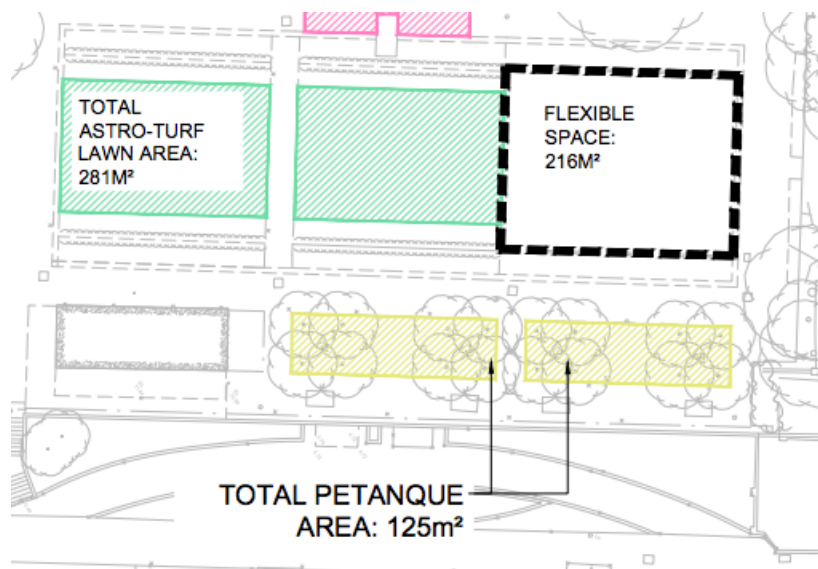
Figure 4-4 - Cycle movement and access concept through the site (source: Hopkins)



Given that the Event Capacity document is the one that addresses in most detail the logistics of hosting events on the proposed spaces, it is to be assumed that it is the most accurate.

As an Event Space, its area of 385m² is over 100m² less than the area on the existing Diamond Jubilee Gardens that is currently used to partially deliver events i.e. the hard standing and the artificial grass area.

(below) Page 32: *Landscape and Public Realm Strategy pt I (Oct 2022) - 281 + 216 = 497m²:*



If one includes the contiguous Petanque area, which is frequently used as additional event space, the existing Diamond Jubilee Gardens are able to provide a minimum of c.625m² of the Event Space that is:

- (1) on the same level
- (2) contiguous
- (3) enclosed
- (4) not subject to flooding
- (5) not bisected by or directly adjacent to the main riverside cycle route

Regarding (5) above, it is to be noted that neither of the two event spaces cited as comparables by the Applicant (Covent Garden Performance Space, National Theatre Piazza) is bisected by a main cycle route in their respective locations, as per Event Space being proposed on Twickenham's Embankment.

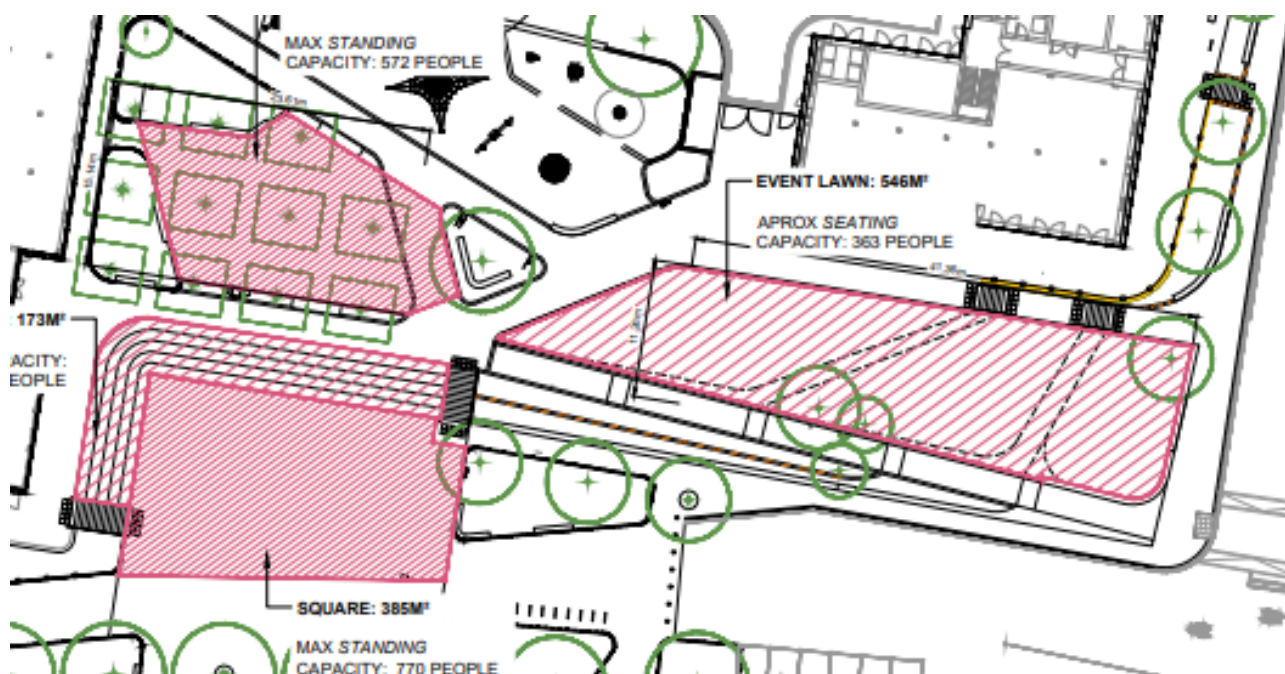
It is also, most significantly, subject to Climate Change, in a borough that has declared a Climate Change Emergency. This is underlined by planning considerations that form part of the emerging Local Plan.

With comparing the existing event-hosting capacity of the Diamond Jubilee Gardens to that of the wider development, the existing hard-standing, artificial grass area and petanque areas of the Diamond Jubilee Gardens do not fully represent the area used to deliver events.

On the proposed development, it is envisaged that the Embankment Square (385m²) and the Petanque area (286m²) will be used, giving a total area of 671m². This is comparable in size to the existing area as detailed in the paragraph above.

However, because these two event spaces are on different levels, they are only fully accessible by exiting/entering via the Water Lane ramp at the far end of the development or by using Wharf Lane to the rear and side of these event areas. These event spaces are situated centrally, but the accessible routes between the two are, somewhat inconveniently, are not.

(below) *Event Capacity drawing (Oct 2022)*



The c.625m² of the existing areas (hard-standing, artificial grass, Petanque courts) does not include the areas (1) between the Petanque courts and the front of the Gardens overlooking the Embankment where event gazebos are frequently placed, or (2) the area between the hard-standing and the Petanque courts, which has also been used for event gazebos.

It is also to be noted that the arrangement of the pleached trees on the existing Petanque area allows for the erection of gazebos on the centre of each court and also in the area between the courts. The proposed tree arrangement does not allow for this in the Petanque area.

The existing event space (contiguous, on one level, enclosed, unaffected by flooding, not directly adjacent to a cycle route) is therefore also much more flexible in being to host a variety of events with different layouts than that being proposed.

Whilst it is to be noted that vehicular access over the Embankment is intended to be limited (though the application is unclear on this matter), we do have concerns that once the untested vehicular movement strategy for Water Lane is put into full practice, later revisions to the built

scheme may seek to impose more frequent vehicular directly adjacent to the Event Space/Square, impacting its already reduced amenity value when compared to the existing still further.

The third area being proposed as an event space is the “flexible lawn space with playful sloped terraces”, with an area of 546m².

It is to be noted that the middle terrace is an irregular configuration and the lower terrace is a very small area. Neither of these spaces are therefore large enough or flexible enough to successfully host a variety of events or part of an event. Indeed, the application makes no suggestion (apart from “seating”) as to what type of event might be hosted here, with sloped access between the three spaces that make up this area.

It should also be noted that the Embankment area as existing has hosted several events in the past, with parking being either partially or fully suspended for the duration of the event.

SUMMARY

The Event Spaces being proposed as part of this development do not provide the flexibility and amenity value of that which is already available to the public.

Best wishes

Ted Cremin

Chair, Twickenham Riverside Trust

PREVIOUS REPRESENTATION DATED 21 March 2022

Dear Ms Thatcher,

Planning Application 21/2758/FUL

With reference to Documents:

'Design and Access Statement', part 4 of 13, pp70-74 Design: Town Square (3456754.pdf)

'Response to Additional Officer Comments' p.3-4 with reference to the Town Square/Event Space in the sections on Diamond Jubilee Gardens and Town Square (3446988.pdf)

'Applicant Response Covering Letter' p4 Landscape (3446987.pdf)

In the covering letter, the Applicant states:

Landscape

Existing artificial lawn in Diamond Jubilee Gardens (DJG)

An existing area of artificial grass in the DJG adjacent to the astroturf is currently used flexibly for outdoor gatherings and events. This space is 216sqm and has no connections to either power or water. The loss of this space in the proposed development is offset by the provision of 720sqm of flexible event space on the Embankment which will have power and water connections. The submitted Landscape Design and Access Statement identifies how this space can also be used for smaller-size activities. Plans showing the existing and proposed provision are enclosed.

The Trust would like to offer clarification regarding the above statement, and also further clarifications made about the existing event space provided on Diamond Jubilee Gardens (DJG).

- I. The area of artificial grass referred to above is indeed used 'flexibly for outdoor gatherings and events.' However, it is not the only area with the existing DJG to be used to host events. The wider Gardens are used, too. This provides for a much larger space than the 216m² quoted above.

If one includes the hard standing area (457m²) adjacent to the above mentioned soft-scaped areas, this event space extends to 218m² + 457m² = 675m².

Additionally, the petanque courts (125m²) are also used.

These three contiguous areas within the existing DJG therefore create a flexible event space area of c.800m².

It should be noted that:

(a) this figure (c.800m²) does not include the circulation space between the above mentioned areas, which could be said to also form part of any 'flexible event space.'

(b) the existing flexible event space is on a single, contiguous, enclosed level.

(c) in contrast to the proposed event space in the Embankment-level Town Square, it is not subject to flooding

(d) in contrast to the proposed event space in the Embankment-level Town Square, it is not bisected by either the main cycle route through the development or a controlled highway.

2. The above statement also refers to “no connections to either power or water.” This is incorrect. There are external sources of both power and water on the existing DJG, the former inset into the hard standing and the latter via an external tap on the Sunshine Cafe. Internal power supplies in the Sunshine Cafe have also been used for events.

The Trust supplied DJG event layouts and photographs to inform the 2019 RIBA Design Brief, some of which are reproduced below. If planning officers wish to see more detail, this can be made available.

Animal Magic event layout:



Wednesday, 13 February 19

Dog Show event layout:

Official



Christmas Event event layout:

Official



Borough's Best Banger event photos:



Brass on the Grass event photos:



Dog Show event photos (showing tents in place on petanque courts and the artificial grass):



The Gardens have also hosted events of the type described on p.71 of the Design and Access Statement, namely markets, outdoor cinema evenings and concerts. The latter as recently as September 2021, when one of the main stages of the High Tide Festival was located in the Gardens.

Please see photographs below. Note how the contiguous spaces within the existing Diamond Jubilee Gardens of the artificial grass, the hard standing and the petanque pitches were all used to deliver this event.



It is important to also note that the artificial grass area and the hard standing are not just used for “outdoor events and gatherings”:

- I. For the most part they are used extensively for the informal and more formal play, to include ball games (football, cricket). The proximity to the river of the Embankment-level proposed replacement area would not allow for this type of activity. Nor would the proposed areas of lawn with sloped sections connecting them.

2. The artificial grass areas and the hard standing, and the wider Gardens themselves, are also used for bicycle riding, scootering and roller skating. Whilst these activities would be possible on the Embankment-level proposed replacement area, the area is both the main cycle route through the proposed development and also a controlled highway.
3. Several nurseries make use of the year-round artificial grass area, too, both for informal play and for more organised activities. Please see below for a photograph taken on Friday 4th March 2022 for an example of one such organised activity. Additional photographs of such activity are available should planning officers require them.



4. The artificial grass also provides year-round amenity for general leisure i.e picknicking and general relaxation. The artificial surface drains well and dries quickly, especially given the orientation of the Gardens ensuring that the surface is able to benefit from sunshine all year.

With my best wishes,

Luke Montgomery-Smith
Chair, Twickenham Riverside Trust