



# Broadwater Road West WELWYN · GARDEN · CITY

## Addendum to the Townscape and Visual Impact Assessment Revision A

Environmental Statement Part C Appendix B12  
August 2011

Professor Robert Tavernor Consultancy









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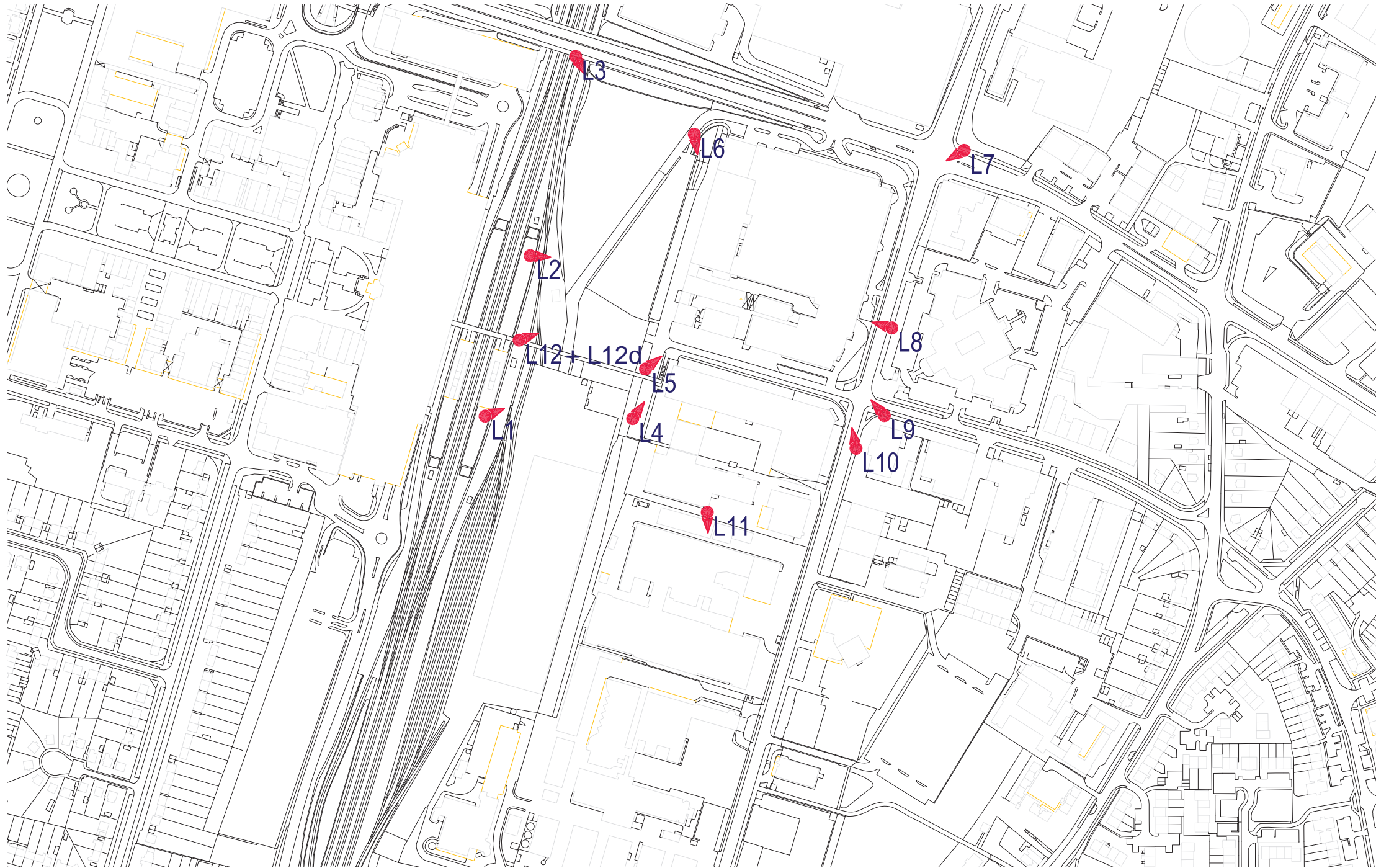




# 1 Introduction

- 1.1 This Addendum to the Townscape and Visual Impact Assessment replaces the Addendum issued in June 2011, following minor changes to the bridge design which resulted from consultation. Views L1 and L12d have been updated to account for the design changes. The assessment text remains valid and has not been changed.
- 1.2 This document has been prepared as part of the planning application submitted by Spenhill Regeneration Limited for the Site at Broadwater Road West (BRW). It provides an assessment of the potential impact of the proposed footbridge on the surrounding townscape character and views. The assessment was undertaken by the Professor Robert Tavernor Consultancy. The verified views were prepared by Miller Hare.
- 1.3 This present document is an addendum to the TVIA presented in the Revised ES (February 2011). This document covers the townscape and visual impact assessment of the proposed upgrades to the bridge which are part of a separate but linked planning application, which proposed the part replacement of the pedestrian footbridge linking the Redevelopment to the Howard Centre. Please refer to the Allies + Morrison Design and Access Statement for the footbridge planning application for full details of the bridge design.
- 1.4 The methodologies for the assessment and verified view production, relevant planning policy and baseline assessment of the existing townscape are the same as that of the Townscape and Visual Impact Assessment (TVIA) to which this document is appended, and so have not been duplicated here. This assessment should be read in conjunction with the TVIA, the Design and Access Statement prepared by Allies and Morrison, the full Environmental Statement prepared by Hurleypalmerflatt and the PPS5 Statement and Architectural Assessment prepared by the Professor Robert Tavernor Consultancy.





Viewpoint Location Map





## 2 Baseline And Views Assessment

### Assessment of the existing bridge

- 2.1 The existing footbridge was constructed after the original Shredded Wheat factory complex in 1924-6 and after the new mainline station opened in 1925. A plan in The Builder of June 1925 (Figure 26 in the Architectural Assessment) shows the station, factory and new housing east of the rail line, but no bridge in this location. It first appears on the OS map of 1946 (Figure 3 in the Architectural Assessment). It is likely to have been built shortly after the expansion of the Garden City east of the rail line, but was not designed specifically in relation to the factories or houses there.
- 2.2 The original eastern section of the footbridge is functional in design and has no features of special architectural or engineering interest. It is also in poor condition and includes a modern, temporary balustrade within the trusses and temporary guarding beside the rail line.
- 2.3 The footbridge is situated outside the Welwyn Garden City Conservation Area, which is to the west, and to the southwest of the Grade II Listed Shredded Wheat Factory buildings. The existing footbridge detracts from the setting of the Listed factory buildings and, in accordance with PPS5 Policy HE10.2, therefore forms an opportunity “for changes in the setting to enhance or better reveal the significance of [the] heritage asset”.
- 2.6 An additional view from the footbridge (L12d) has been prepared due to the lack of visibility from the existing footbridge viewpoint (L12) prepared for the TVIA. The 1.8m height of the balustrade at this point on the bridge is required by current safety regulations and will obstruct views out.
- 2.7 The four views include modelled representations of the proposed bridge, which is formed of simple steel trusses resting on piers. Further details of the design are provided in the Allies + Morrison Design and Access Statement for the footbridge planning application. Assessment of potential impacts on each view and the significance of these impacts is provided at section 3 below.
- 2.8 The verified views below show that the proposed bridge will relate visually to the functional aesthetic of the Grade II Listed former Shredded Wheat factory complex and will form a strong horizontal counterpoint to the landmark silos and chimney rising beyond. A metal roof cover will provide weather protection and the sides will be formed in a wire mesh externally with solid balustrading internally to allow safe passage as well as views eastwards to the listed silos and factory complex.

### Assessment of the proposed bridge

- 2.4 Four verified views have been prepared in order to assess the potential impact of the proposed footbridge in relation to the Proposed Development on the BRW site.
- 2.5 Three of these views are reproduced from the TVIA, with the bridge added: L1, L3 and L12.

View No.	Wireline/Render	View description
L1	wireline	Welwyn Garden City Station, platform 4 south
L3	wireline	Bridge Road railway bridge (centre)
L12	wireline	Welwyn Garden City footbridge - above platform 4 -
L12d	wireline	Welwyn Garden City footbridge - east of view L12





# View L1: Welwyn Garden City Station, platform 4 south



View as existing

## Existing

This view looks northeast from the southern end of platform 4. Prominent in the distant centre of the view are the listed former grain silos; the western range of 18 silos that date from 1926, the 27 silos to the east were added in 1937-39. Adjacent to the silos to the north is the listed multi storey production hall dating from 1926. In front of the silos and rising taller than them is the chimney of the Boiler House and at its base the cylindrical water tanks. The red brick building visible to the right (south) of the silos forms the western end of the annex range of office, research and warehouse buildings built by Nabisco south of Hyde Way in the 1960s. Further south, the former Polycell factory site is now cleared. The red brick office building at the far right of the view marks the southern junction of Hyde Way with Broadwater Road. The middle distance of the view is dominated by the railway line and open land adjacent to it. From the left of the view running eastward to the centre is the metal footbridge across the railway tracks, the principal and most direct pedestrian route from the station platforms and the Site to Welwyn's shopping centre.



Camera Location  
National Grid Reference 523965.2E 212827.1N  
Camera height 87.84m AOD  
Looking at Centre of Site  
Bearing 68.7°, distance 0.2km

Photography Details  
Height of camera 1.60m above ground  
Date of photograph 17/06/2010  
Time of photograph 15:46





## Views Assessment

### Proposed

Beyond the footbridge to the left the YMCA (plot B) will run northward parallel to the railway lines, the leisure centre (plot A) will be set lower in height to its south and can just be seen beyond the eastern end of the footbridge and the proposed lift structure. The predominantly residential buildings (plot K) will extend southwards parallel to the residential linear park out of sight beyond. The proposed office building (plot F) will be visible between the leisure centre and residential buildings, the trees in its foreground marking the location of the proposed public square, the immediate destination of the footbridge and around which the new urban quarter is centred. The heights of the proposed buildings relate well to one another, establishing a general height datum beyond which the retained silo structure and chimney of the retained Boiler House (plot G) will rise as the focus of the urban composition. The proposed footbridge will relate visually to the functional aesthetic of the Grade II Listed former Shredded Wheat factory complex and will form a strong horizontal counterpoint to the landmark silos and chimney rising beyond. The settings of the retained listed structures will not be harmed by the Proposed Development; indeed they will be enhanced as the sculptural focal point of a new publicly accessible urban centre.

**Significance of Impact: major, beneficial**



View as proposed





# View L3: Bridge Road railway bridge ( centre )



## Existing

This view, located on Bridge Road railway bridge, looks southeast towards the Site. The middle distance of the view is dominated by the unkempt and wild open land that separates the railway land from the former factory site. Beyond this are the western elevations of the former factory. Running from north to south (left to right) is the listed multi storey production hall (1926), grain house (1926) and the Boiler House (1926) with garages behind (1927). The former grain silos and the Boiler House chimney rise are visible against open sky.



Camera Location  
National Grid Reference 524034.8E 213103.7N  
Camera height 94.75m AOD  
Looking at Centre of Site  
Bearing 152.0°, distance 0.2km

Photography Details  
Height of camera 1.93m above ground  
Date of photograph 17/06/2010  
Time of photograph 16:36

View as existing





### Proposed

From left to right, the Hotel (plot H) and the YMCA (plot B) will run southward parallel to the railway lines, and the leisure centre (plot A) will be set to its south to the far right of the view. The chimney of the retained Boiler House (plot G) and the upper portion of the silos will remain visible against the sky. The top of the proposed footbridge will be just visible above the foliage to the right of the view; its simple design will visually relate to the character of the Grade II Listed former Shredded Wheat factory complex and to the new development which addresses the rail line. The settings of the tallest retained listed structures in view will not be harmed by the Proposed Development; indeed they will be enhanced by being set visually against the constant height datum of the proposed foreground buildings against which their sculptural forms will create a contrasting character and visual draw.

**Significance of Impact: major, beneficial**



View as proposed



# View L12: Welwyn Garden City footbridge, above platform 4



View as existing

BROADWATER ROAD WEST, WELWYN GARDEN CITY | AUGUST 2011

## Existing

This view, located on the Welwyn Garden City station footbridge, above platform 4, looks eastward towards the former factory buildings. The view position is situated between Views L1 and L2 described above. From this elevated position much of the western and southern facades of the former factory can be seen. Most prominent in the view are the tall concrete silos and the Boiler House chimney at the core of the factory site. To the left of the view the multi storey production hall (1926) can be seen stepping down towards the north. To the right, the grain house (1926) is visible, the yellow square on its western façade denoting where the ‘Shredded Wheat Factory’ sign was once displayed, and beyond the grain house the late 1950s warehouse. The foreground of the view is made up of neglected railway land and lines, the random planting and scrub bushes adding to the run down character of the view. Located close to Welwyn’s shopping centre and the first view of eastern Welwyn for those arriving by train this is clearly a site in need of major regeneration.



Camera Location  
National Grid Reference 523991.3E 212885.6N  
Camera height 92.49m AOD  
Looking at Centre of Site  
Bearing 70.4°, distance 0.1km

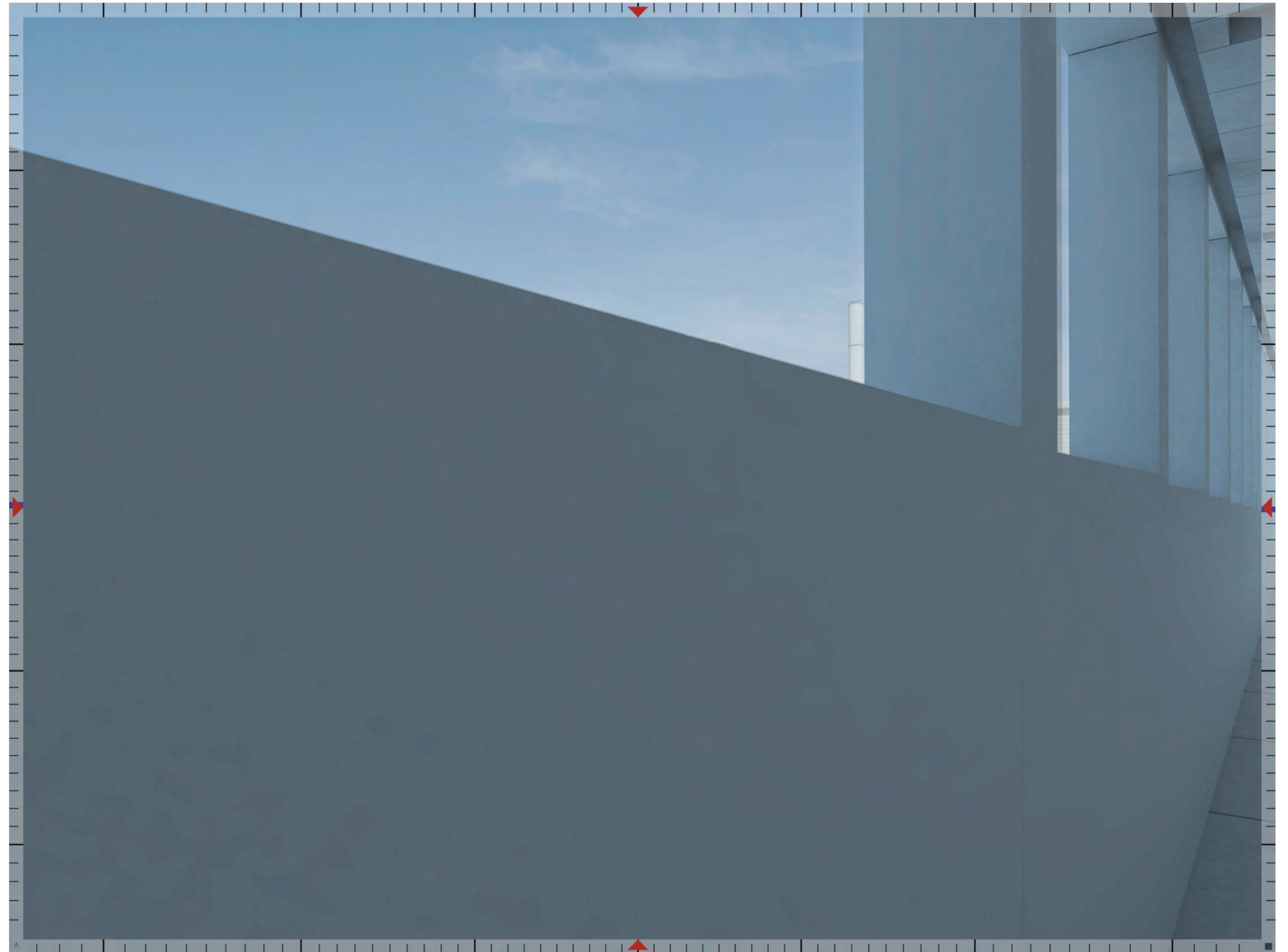
Photography Details  
Height of camera 1.60m above ground  
Date of photograph 17/06/2010  
Time of photograph 16:01



**Proposed**

The 1.8m height of the balustrade at this point on the bridge is required by current safety regulations and will obstruct view of the listed former factory buildings and new development almost entirely at this point.

***Significance of Impact: major, adverse***



View as proposed





# View 12d: Welwyn Garden City footbridge, east of view L12



## Existing

This view has been prepared from a position on the footbridge east of view 12 in order to demonstrate that views of the Listed former factory complex will be retained on parts of the bridge where safety requirements allow a lower balustrade height. As in view 12, much of the western and southern facades of the former factory is seen, including the tall concrete silos and the Boiler House chimney at the core of the factory site. However, in this view, the existing footbridge dominates: its rusty framework and inner modern balustrade have no design merit, detracting from the setting of the white Listed factory complex beyond and creating a restricted and uninviting passage eastwards for pedestrians.



Camera Location  
National Grid Reference 523996.1E 212882.4N  
Camera height 92.49m AOD  
Looking at Centre of Site  
Bearing 83.4°, distance 0.1km

Photography Details  
Height of camera 1.60m above ground  
Date of photograph 08/02/2011  
Time of photograph 15:36

View as existing

BROADWATER ROAD WEST, WELWYN GARDEN CITY | AUGUST 2011





**Proposed**

This additional view from the footbridge (L12d) has been prepared due to the lack of visibility from view L12 in the TVIA. The proposed footbridge will provide pedestrians with safer and easier movement under cover, and will allow views across to the top of the silos and the boiler house chimney, beyond the leisure centre (plot A), and glimpses of the treetops marking the new, formally landscaped space at the base of the bridge steps. The top of the grain silos and the Boiler House chimney will retain their local landmark quality on the skyline, drawing pedestrians along the extended railway footbridge into the heart of the new urban quarter.

**Significance of Impact: major, beneficial**



View as proposed









### 3 Conclusion

- 3.1 The Tavernor Consultancy has appraised the existing footbridge through site inspections and archival research and conclude that it has no historic or architectural merit. Its replacement offers an opportunity to enhance the setting of the Listed former Shredded Wheat factory buildings and the proposed redevelopment of the surrounding BRW site.
- 3.2 The Views Assessment shows that the proposed footbridge will form an attractive whilst unobtrusive addition to the local skyline and will encourage safe and easy pedestrian movement between the centre of Welwyn Garden City and the redeveloped land east of the rail line, enhancing the vitality and appearance of the setting of the Listed former factory buildings.
- 3.3 View 12 of the assessment shows that, due to current safety regulations, the height of the footbridge balustrade will obscure views of the Listed Building from the western end of the bridge. In accordance with PPS5 Policy HE10, the harm caused to the visual setting of the Listed factory at this viewpoint has been weighed against the public benefit brought by the design overall. The primary public benefit will be the safety of pedestrians, which in turn will allow and increase movement between Welwyn Garden City centre and the redeveloped land within the setting of the former factory buildings. Views of the landmark silos and boiler house chimney will be enjoyed at other positions on the footbridge, where it is safe to have a lower balustrade, and the design of the footbridge will enhance the setting of the Listed former factory in views where the structures are seen in relation to each other.
- 3.4 On balance, the potential impact on the significance of the Listed Building and the character of the local townscape will be major and beneficial.











