

Heritage Statement

Parliament Hill School and William Ellis School,

Highgate Road, London NW5 1RL

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Client: Camden Children Schools and Families

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1.0 Introduction

This Heritage Statement has been prepared on behalf of Camden Children, Schools and Families in support of the proposed changes and additions to Parliament Hill School and William Ellis School. The schools are situated on adjacent sites between the Highgate Road and the Metropolitan Open Land of Hampstead Heath in London NW5. Both schools are within the Dartmouth Park Conservation Area. Parliament Hill School's playing fields sit within the Metropolitan Open Land boundary.

Parliament Hill School was originally the County Secondary School for Girls built under the 1902 Education Act to designs produced by the LCC Architects Department. The original Morant Building opened in 1911. The school has been much extended and had many alterations and additions. The adjacent William Ellis School was founded by the businessman William Ellis in Gospel Oak in 1862 and re-organised as a boys' secondary school in 1889, before moving to its present location in 1937. It too has had many alterations and additions.

This Heritage Statement deals with the heritage and conservation area implications arising from the demolition and replacement of elements of the school buildings on both sites. In particular it looks at the impact on the Dartmouth Park Conservation Area and Metropolitan Open Land of:

- The construction of a new 6th form centre to be built as a shared facility for La Sainte Union Des Sacres Coeurs School, Acland Burghley, as well as Parliament Hill and William Ellis Schools.
- The construction of new accommodation above the existing southern teaching wing of Parliament Hill School.
- The rebuilding of the west courtyard of William Ellis School.

Neither Parliament Hill School, nor William Ellis School, is designated as a listed building. They are, however, a recognised part of the special character of the Dartmouth Park Conservation Area. The two schools, together with La Sainte Union Des Sacres Coeurs School, form Sub Area 10 of the conservation area. La Sainte Union is listed at Grade II.

No trees on the site are subject to statutory protection by Tree Preservation Order but the trees are recognised as making a significant contribution to the special character of the conservation area and are therefore protected.

This report has been written in the light of current national and local planning policy and guidance relating to the historic built environment. It does not contain an exhaustive account of the relevant planning framework, but it does take account of the following:

- The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) 2012, which provides the national policy framework for decision making affecting historic buildings and areas.

- Planning Practice Guidance (PPG) 2014. Paragraph 126 of the PPG, which deals with preserving and enhancing the historic environment, states that Local planning authorities should take into account a number of issues including:
 - The wider social, cultural, economic and environmental benefits that conservation of the historic environment can bring;
 - The desirability of new development making a positive contribution to local character and distinctiveness.

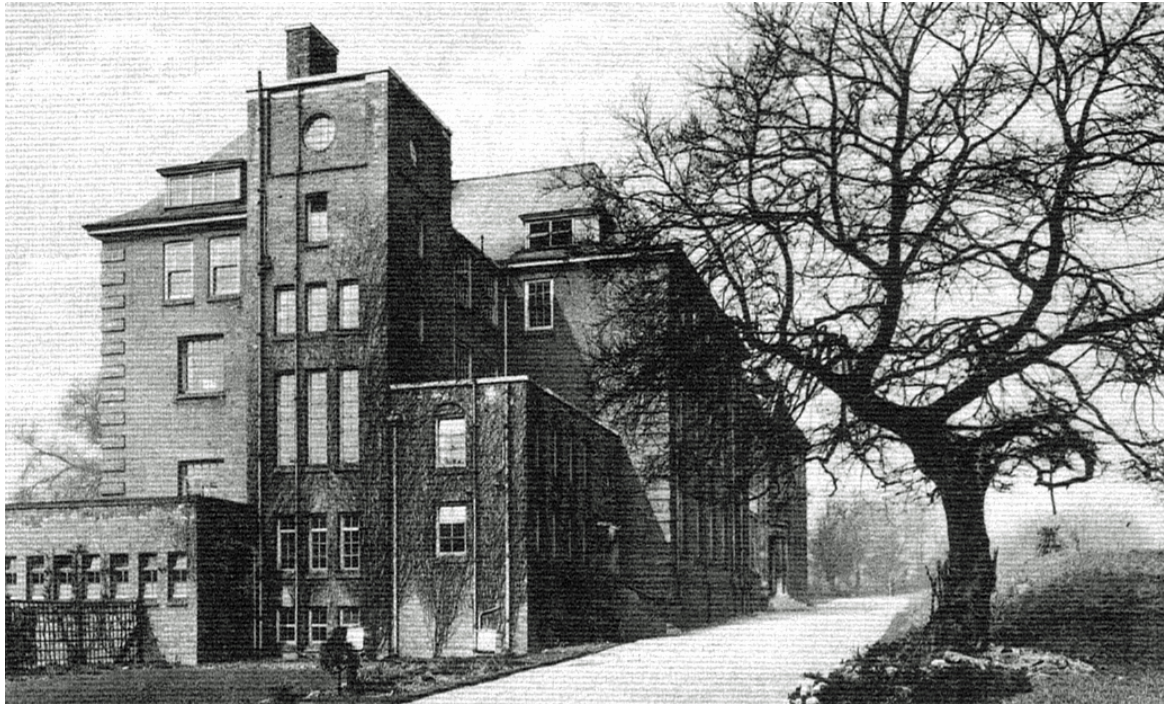
This report should be read in conjunction with other reports prepared for the design team in respect of wider planning policies, archaeological and arboricultural issues. The drawings are contained in the Design and Access Statement.

2.0 Historical Background

2.1 Parliament Hill School

Parliament Hill School is a Six Form Entry all-girls community school. There are 900 students in years 7-11 and 255 students (including boys) in years 12-13. The 6th Form is part of the La Swap consortium. The School has been an all-girls school since its inception in 1906. The school premises comprise a combination of both modern and traditional buildings.

None of the buildings on the site are listed but it is recognised that the Morant building makes a significant addition to the Dartmouth Park Conservation Area. The site is not located within an Archaeological Priority Zone as defined in the Borough's Unitary Development Plan Proposals Map. A separate report has nevertheless reviewed the archaeological potential of the site and concluded that the site had a generally low potential for archaeology from past human activity.¹



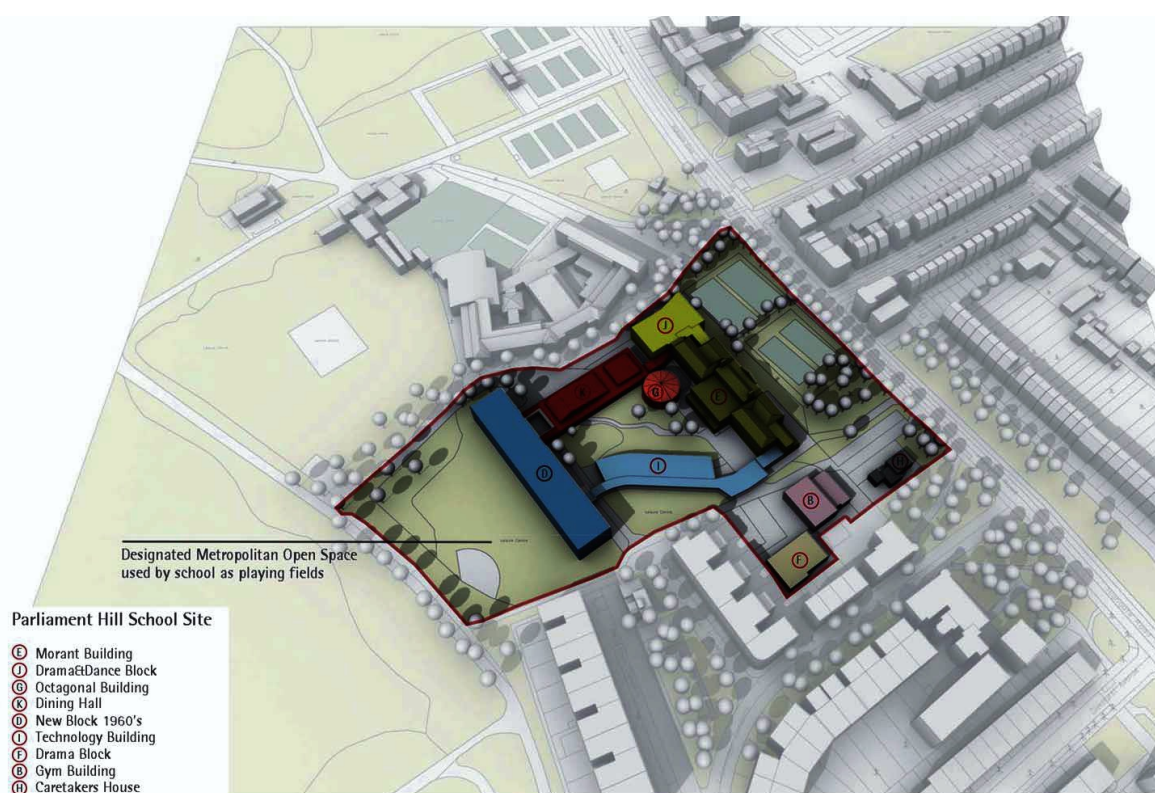
The County Secondary School for Girls (now Parliament Hill School) circa 1914

The school was built under the 1902 Education Act as the County Secondary School for girls. It was developed on a pocket of land on the west side of Highgate Road known as The Grove. The original 'Morant building', was opened in 1914, replacing the original school established in 1906 in nearby Ingestre Road.ⁱⁱ Sir Robert Laurie Morant was the civil servant largely responsible for preparing the 1902 Education Act and between 1903 -1911 he was the Permanent Secretary of the Board of Education.ⁱⁱⁱ The building was designed by the LCC Architects Department. Minor alterations and extensions were subsequently made to the Morant building.

In 1956 Dame Edith Evans opened a range of new school buildings. The 425 pupils forming the original school were joined by a further 390 girls transferring from local schools. The planned roll was 1,350.^{iv} The new additions consisted of the Heath building (block D), the Dining Hall (block K) and the Gym building (block B). In the late 1990's the Octagonal building (block G) was added. A new Courtyard building (block I), designed by architects Haverstock Associates was opened in 2005. A new Performing Arts building (block J), also designed by Haverstock Associates, was opened in 2006.

The timeline highlights the numerous changes and additions made to the school over time.

- 1745 The area was mainly farm land with small buildings.
- 1801- 1842 The site was a building belonging to Sir William which straddled the southern boundary and common land.
- 1860-1896 The site was occupied by a building called “The Gothic” and open land.
- 1906 County Council Secondary School for Girls established in Ingestre Road
- 1914 The main building, known as the ‘Morant building’ was opened on the present site
- 1957 The Heath building, Building K and the New Gym buildings were constructed.
- 1971 The Octagonal building was constructed.
- 2005 The Courtyard building was constructed.
- 2006/07 The Performing Arts building was constructed.



Plan showing the various buildings on the site.

The site slopes up from the south-east to the north-west of the site, such that the ground floor of the courtyard building is at the level of the basement of the Heath Building.

The Morant building is in brick with a tiled, pitched roof. The 1950's buildings are steel and concrete framed buildings with large amounts of curtain walling. The courtyard building is a single storey, brick building with a linked metal covered walkway in metal and a green roof with projecting roof lights. The three story performing arts building has extensive glazing facing on to the Highgate road, with copper cladding to the north facing the William Ellis School.

2.2 William Ellis School

William Ellis School is a boys' school with 600 students in years 7-11 and 250 in years 12-13. The 6th Form is part of the La Swap consortium. The original buildings date from 1938 and are by H.P.G. Maude. There have been many additions.

None of the buildings on the site are listed but it is recognised that the 1937 building in its altered form makes a significant addition to the Dartmouth Park Conservation Area. The site is not located within an Archaeological Priority Zone as defined in the Borough's Unitary Development Plan Proposals Map. A separate report has nevertheless reviewed the archaeological potential of the site and concluded that the site had a generally low potential for archaeology from past human activity.^v

The following history of the school is taken from the William Ellis website. It captures the nature of the school's foundation and the way it has changed to maintain the founder's intentions while addressing changing educational practice and priorities.

William Ellis was a public-spirited businessman who, in the mid-nineteenth century, founded a number of schools and inspired many teachers with his ideas on education. He wanted children to be taught 'useful' subjects such as science (including 'Social Science') and to develop the faculty of reason; his approach differed from many other schools of the time that focused on religious tracts, ancient languages and history. William Ellis School, the only one of his schools that still exists, was established at Gospel Oak in 1862 and reorganized in 1889 as a boys' secondary school.

In 1937, the School moved to its present site, backing on to Parliament Hill Fields. Much ingenuity has gone into extending and converting the building to provide the additional classrooms and specialist accommodation required: first by the post-World War II grammar school's large Sixth Form, and again in more recent years to provide better facilities for the National Curriculum and for Information Technology. The School became fully comprehensive in the years after 1978.

In 1997, the School gained Language College status under the Specialist School Scheme. William Ellis School has a joint Sixth Form with the adjacent Parliament Hill Girls' School, and all classes are co-educational.

The timeline highlights the numerous changes and additions made to the school over time.

1745	The area was mainly farm land with small buildings
1801-1842	The site was a building belonging to Sir William which straddled the southern boundary and common land 1860-1915 The site was occupied by Grove Farm and a reservoir to the north east of the Farm (the reservoir was disused by 1873)
1915-1936	The land was open and may have been sports fields
1937	The main school building was constructed; the original building would have been 2 storeys based around two internal courtyards
1989	2 storey extension to west wing
1993	Extension across rear of building at first floor level
1997	Erection of building in internal courtyard to provide language lab
1998	Roof extension of west wing for additional classroom space
2002	Erection of 2-storey L-shaped block in internal courtyard First floor extension and roof dormers New sports hall and store approved
2004	Alterations to the vehicular access to provide security

2.3 Location and setting within the Dartmouth Park Conservation Area and adjacent to Parliament Hill Fields

The schools are sited within the area now known as the Dartmouth Park Conservation Area and are located below the highlands of Hampstead Heath and Parliament Hill, the southernmost part of Hampstead Heath. Highgate lies to the east, Hampstead to the west and Gospel Oak and Kentish Town to the south east. Dartmouth Park is described by Pevsner as 'a network of small streets laid out haphazardly in the last quarter of C19 (stet) over the undulating foothills of Highgate.'^{vi}

The area formed part of the old parish of St Pancras that extended from Tottenham Court Road to Highgate. There was scattered agricultural development in the medieval period, and the area was crossed with roads and footpaths, but Dartmouth Park had its first significant building developments in the 17th century. Individual properties originally appeared along the road to Highgate, which followed the course of the River Fleet, but the area was still separated from Kentish town by fields and meadows.

By the early 18th century ribbon development increased within the conservation area boundary. Much of the area was copyhold tenure of the Manor of Canteloves, belonging to the Chapter of St Paul's Cathedral. The principal copyholder in the area, Lord Dartmouth, enclosed part of the common land around Highgate Road in 1772. Land was then released for development and as a result Grove Terrace, directly east of the study site, was built between 1777 and 1824. A remnant of common land survives as a narrow strip in front of Grove Terrace and Groves End, and a small parcel of open land directly opposite on the west side of Highgate Road, now protected under the London Squares Preservation Act, 1931.

The 19th century saw the pace of development increase. The building of the Tottenham and Hampstead Junction Railway in 1868, which cut across the southern part of the conservation area, increased the desirability of the area. The teaching order of La Sainte Union des Sacrées Coeurs on the east side of Highgate Road in the 1860's, began the development of a girl's school that now occupies a large block of building opposite the study site.

In the early 20th century a block of mansion flats, Lissenden Mansions were built on the site of Clevedon House, which had been contemporary with Grove Terrace. More similar blocks followed in the period before the First World War in the part of the conservation area directly to south of the study site. In 1911 Parliament Hill Girls' County Secondary School was built on the site formerly occupied by large 19th century houses. In the inter-war period William Ellis Boys' County Secondary School was re-located immediately north of the girls' school.

The area now forms part of the urban continuum of north London, but Dartmouth Park is distinguished from adjacent areas by its leafy feel and proximity to the historic open landscape of Hampstead and the recreational facilities on Parliament Hill Fields.

3.0 Planning Policy Framework

This report has been written in the light of current national and local planning policy and guidance relating to the historic built environment. It does not contain an exhaustive account of the relevant planning framework, but it does take account of the following:

- 1) The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) 2012 – which provides the national policy framework for decision making affecting historic buildings and areas.
- 2) Planning Practice Guidance. Paragraph 126 of the PPG - which deals with preserving and enhancing the historic environment – states that Local planning authorities should take into account a number of issues including:
 - the wider social, cultural, economic and environmental benefits that conservation of the historic environment can bring;

- the desirability of new development making a positive contribution to local character and distinctiveness;

Section 128 of the PPG states that in determining applications, local planning authorities should require the applicant to describe the significance of any heritage assets affected, including any contribution made by their setting. *The level of detail should be proportionate to the assets' importance and no more than is sufficient to understand the potential impact of the proposal on their significance.*

Section 129 of the PPG continues by saying that local planning authorities should identify and assess the particular significance of any heritage asset that may be affected by a proposal (including by development affecting the setting of a heritage asset) taking account of the available evidence and any necessary expertise. *They should take this assessment into account when considering the impact of a proposal on a heritage asset, to avoid or minimise conflict between the heritage asset's conservation and any aspect of the proposal.*

Section 131 of the PPG deals with the need for economic vitality and new development.

Section 134 of the PPG deals with designated assets, which can be taken to include conservation areas. *Where a development proposal will lead to less than substantial harm to the significance of a designated heritage asset, this harm should be weighed against the public benefits of the proposal, including securing its optimum viable use.*

In dealing with a non-designated heritage asset such as the un-listed schools sitting within their conservation area section 135 states that:

The effect of an application on the significance of a non-designated heritage asset should be taken into account in determining the application. In weighing applications that affect directly or indirectly non designated heritage assets, a balanced judgement will be required having regard to the scale of any harm or loss and the significance of the heritage asset.

Section 137 is pertinent to the new development of Parliament Hill and William Ellis Schools. Local planning authorities should look for opportunities for new development within Conservation Areas and within the setting of heritage assets to enhance or better reveal their significance. Proposals that preserve those elements of the setting that make a positive contribution to or better reveal the significance of the asset should be treated favourably.

3.1 Local Plan Policy

The London Plan (consolidated with Alterations since 2004); Mayor of London; 2008, the Camden Local Development Framework 2010, the Core Strategy 2010 and the Local Development Framework.

Hampstead Heath Management Plan, part I, Towards a Plan for the Heath 2007 – 2017, City of London 2007.

The Dartmouth Park Conservation Area Appraisal and Management Strategy, 22 January 2009.

The Camden Local Development Framework (LDF) replaced their Unitary Development Plan (UDP) in November 2010. It is a collection of planning documents that (in conjunction with national planning policy and the Mayor's London Plan) sets out their strategy for managing growth and development in the borough including conservation area policy. CS14 Promoting high quality places and conserving our heritage is set out in Section 3 of the Core Strategy 2010-2025. CS14 seeks buildings and places that are attractive, safe and easy to use.

These combined aims are important, particularly the reference to "easy to use". Access is a fundamental 21st century requirement and as such historic buildings and places are required to adapt to contemporary standards. It is worth setting out clause d) in full:

d) Seeking the highest standards of access in all buildings and places and requiring schemes to be designed to be inclusive

With regard to the quality of new design, Camden will not accept design that is considered *inappropriate to its context or which fails to take opportunities to improve the character and quality of an area and the way it functions*. Camden Development Policies (policy DP24) provides more detailed guidance. In addition Camden also state that in assessing design they will take into account government/CABE guidance *By Design – Urban Design in the planning system: towards better practice*.^{vii}

Section 14.9 states that Camden will take into account conservation area statements, appraisals and management strategies as material considerations.

Other relevant documents include Camden Planning Guidance supplementary documents. Key evidence and documentation cited by Camden in their local plan include:

- Easy Access to Historic Buildings, English Heritage, 2004
- Easy Access to Historic Landscapes, English Heritage, 2005
- Conservation Principles, Policies and Guidance, English Heritage, 2008
- Tree Preservation Orders (for the majority of trees on site)

Hampstead Heath Management Plan listed a series of essential actions. B9 sought to encourage local planning authorities to introduce a more rigorous process to review proposed developments around the Heath, including potential threats to its views and immediately adjacent boundary. The Plan also sought to promote the sense of natural

landscape and countryside within the Heath, but built development adjacent to, or visible from, the Heath can threaten this sanctuary.

The London View Management Framework SPG March 2012. The designated views to St Paul's from the gazebo at Kenwood house goes over the site. St Paul's can be viewed from the flat roof on top of the Morant building.

3.2 The Dartmouth Park Conservation Area

The Dartmouth Park Conservation Area is a mainly residential area, but integral to its character are the interspersed uses scattered throughout it.

Dartmouth Park was designated as a conservation area on 4 February 1992. The Dartmouth Park Conservation Area Appraisal and Management Statement was adopted on 22 January 2009. A section of Highgate Road was designated on 1 November 1985 as part of Highgate Village and transferred to Dartmouth Park in 1992. The following edited extracts explain what is important about the area.^{viii}

The Dartmouth Park Conservation Area is a mainly residential area, but integral to its character are the interspersed uses scattered throughout it. There are small groups of workshops and offices in the southern tip, four large schools, several nurseries, small institutional buildings, four churches, four local shopping centres, a library, seven public houses, a community centre, a health centre and a recreational centre. Part of the sense of character is derived from its social cohesion. The area has changed considerably over time but managed to retain its social and physical diversity which underpins its character. It is a vibrant and diversified urban quarter.

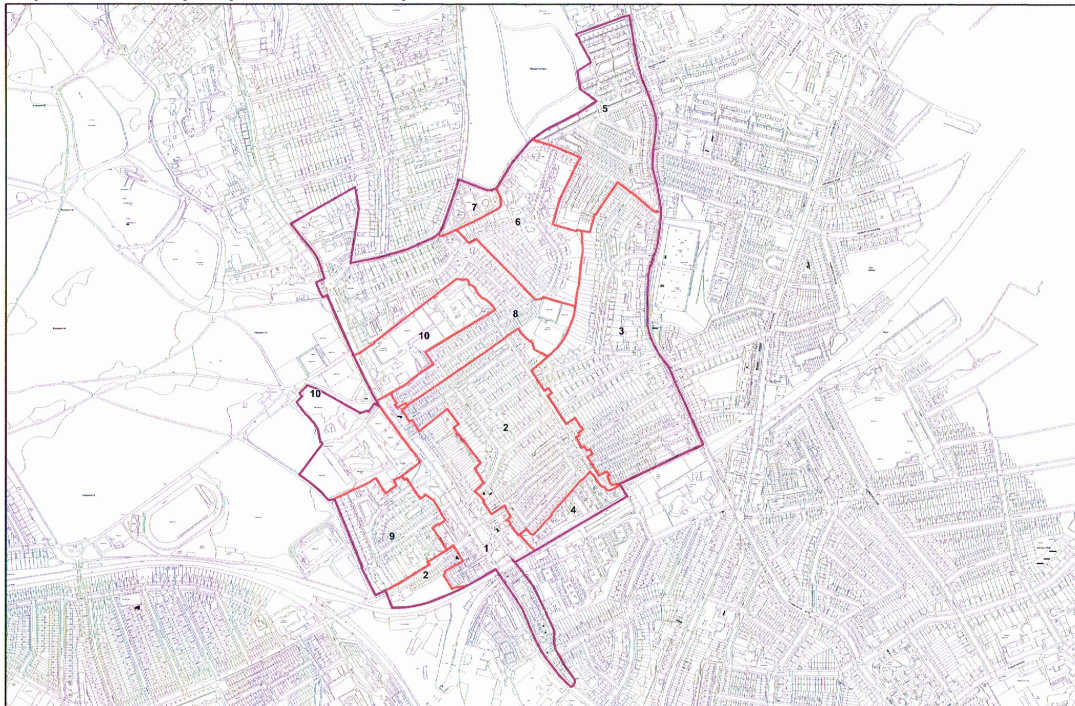
The conservation area has a variety and complexity that charts the history of domestic architecture from the late 18th century to the present day. Late 18th century terraces contrast with contemporary housing estates and tiny cottages with large mansion blocks and Victorian villas. Hedges often provide or supplement house and street boundaries and, together with the numerous trees in private gardens and along the Highgate Road, contribute a semi-rural character to the area, in which the open boundary to Parliament Hill Fields plays a significant role.

The semi-rural quality of this area on the fringes of the Heath, with the leafy feel of its tree canopy is an important aspect, and a correlative factor is the quality of darkness at night to which Parliament Hill Fields, the schools, the Greens, the back-lands of Mansfield Bowling Club and Kenlyn Tennis Club, and the large trees in streets and gardens, together with Highgate Cemetery contribute so significantly.^{ix}

The Conservation Area is defined by two important local roads — Highgate Road on the western edge and Dartmouth Park Hill on the east. To the west is the open land of Parliament Hill and Hampstead Heath, the north abuts both Holly Lodge and Highgate Conservation Areas. To the east is the borough boundary with the London Borough of

Islington. Other than the small projecting arm of Highgate Road the railway line marks its southern boundary.

There are 10 sub areas within the Conservation Area boundary. The two schools, together with a third school, La Sainte Union, forming their own distinct Sub Area 10. Sub Areas 2, Dartmouth West, and Sub Area 9, Lissenden Gardens, share boundaries Area 10. The impact of the proposed development is assessed on all these sub areas.



3.3 Sub Area 10, the Schools.

Sub Area 10 is bifurcated by Highgate Road and is distinct in that it contains three imposing school buildings of varied age and design that individually have landmark qualities. By virtue of their scale and setting within large areas of open space they form an attractive and cohesive group of buildings which give this sub-area its unique character.

The establishment of the teaching order of La Sainte Union des Sacrées Coeurs on the east side of Highgate Road to the north of the Bull and Last pub in the 1860s began the development of a girls' school that has come to occupy a large block extending as far east as Brookfield Park. It was established in Sir Henry Bessemer's residence, Charlton House, in 1864. A four-storey north wing designed by George Goldie was added in 1869 as a boarding house, with chapel, and about 1892 Edward Goldie added the matching south wing and rebuilt the central façade of three storeys. Of yellow stock brick with Bath stone dressings, the school is Renaissance in style; the tall sash windows have arched heads, and to the first floor heavily carved architraves with medallion heads in the wings. The arches of the raised

ground floor are echoed in the wings' top storey. Red brick apron panels and blank arches over the windows add colour to the façade. It is listed Grade II.

As has already been noted Parliament Hill Girls' County Secondary School (1911) was built on the site of large 19th century houses. Between the wars, William Ellis Boys' County Secondary School was re-located immediately north of the girls' school and these have been considerably extended in the late 20th and early 21st centuries.

The grounds of the school are identified in the UDP as a mainly green private open space, including tennis courts. New school buildings were erected close to the back gardens of the Brookfield Park houses in 1965-7, subsequently extended in the 1990s. The school is surrounded by a high wall and gates (also listed) so that the building has little direct relationship with the street, but because of its height the original building is clearly visible from the street as well as from Parliament Hill Fields and points in Dartmouth Park Hill.

Despite their size the three schools do not overpower their surroundings due to the large areas of open space around the buildings which allow them to be set back from the road and provide a spacious setting. Their boundaries are marked by a significant number of mature trees. Given their close proximity to Hampstead Heath the two schools make a valuable contribution to the area by providing a transitional zone from the more densely developed residential streets to the south and east and the green open space of Parliament Hill to west.

Appendix 2 of the Conservation Area Appraisal lists Parliament Hill School and William Ellis School as making a positive contribution to the area. The fact that the trees along Parliament Hill School's frontage have been replaced by an unpainted timber fence which restricts views through to the building is listed as a negative feature in the area.

3.4 Sub Area I, Highgate Road

Highgate Road dominates the character and appearance of this sub area. It is acknowledged that there is a more commercial feel to the sub area due to the ground floor shops and other commercial activities. Development took place in an ad hoc manner resulting in an area of diverse ages and styles. The buildings are linked by common themes such as materials and plot width resulting in a street informal in character.

Opposite the Parliament hill School is the Bull and Last Public House. It appears in the Sessions Rolls of 1721 and was rebuilt in 1883. It was one of the coaching inns on the route north from London, and continues to be a public house. It occupies a prominent site on the corner with Woodsome Road with a fascia and details of pilasters, fine Composite capitals, corbels, a projecting cornice, stucco details and metal gargoyle lamp.

3.4.1 The significance of No's 6-27 Grove Terrace and their importance within the conservation area.

Nos. 6 – 27 Grove Terrace are diagonally opposite the school site. They are an unusually comprehensive survival of an 18th century piece of speculative development and are listed Grade II*. *The Survey of London*^x cites: “The terrace is composed of a block of 22 houses (Nos. 6 to 27) with a smaller block (Nos. 1 to 5) of later date separated by a service roadway. Nos. 1-5 are listed Grade II. The main (or earlier) group is composed of houses of three storeys (also in two groups), with one of loftier proportions in the centre of the larger group. The houses to the north of this central feature were the first to be erected and are stepped upwards in sympathy with the rise in the ground. The material of the walls is stock brickwork with brick bands above the ground and second floor windows. The chief feature of each house is its entrance doorway which has a semi-circular headed opening flanked in the majority of cases by three quarter columns of Doric character, with a simple fanlight over the door.”

Lord Dartmouth, as the principal copyholder in this area, enclosed part of the common around Highgate Road in 1772. Grove Terrace was built between 1777 and 1824 on land released for development by Lord Dartmouth. A remnant of the common land survives as a slim strip fronting Grove Terrace and Grove End, as well as the pocket of open land directly opposite on the west side of Highgate Road protected under the London Squares Preservation Act, 1931.

In urban design terms its significance lies with its setting on Highgate Road and remaining fragments of the ancient common land of the area.^{xi}

3.5 Sub Area 9, Lissenden Gardens

Lissenden Gardens, famous as the birthplace of John Betjeman, forms a loop between Gordon House Road and Highgate Road, with the western side facing Parliament Hill Fields and the northern side abutting and overlooking Parliament Hill School. There are three elements to it; the mansion blocks; the early 20th century terraced housing and the commercial development. The most noticeable characteristic of this area is the larger scale of development with the predominant built form being higher and denser than other parts of the conservation area.

Most of the road forms a mansion-block development known collectively as Lissenden Gardens Estate, of 1900-06 by Bohemer and Gibbs, specialists in this sort of housing designed for the middle classes. Inspired by William Morris's Arts and Crafts movement, the three blocks (Parliament Hill, Clevedon and Lissenden Mansions) are five-storey in a rich matte orange-red brick, terminating in tall corner towers with Jacobean domes; triangular

and semi-circular gable pediments recall Palladian and 'Queen Anne' styles. Parliament Mansions overlook Parliament Hill Fields, Clevedon is a short terrace opposite, with a garden square between with a gardener's cottage (modified in 2007) to the north.

3.6 Hampstead Heath and Parliament Hill Fields

Hampstead Heath is a 275 hectare open space owned and managed by the City of London as a registered charity. It comprises a mosaic of habitats including woodland, grassland, scrub and open water. Close to the centre of London, it is one of the most important areas for recreation in the capital.^{xii}

"The views south across London are spectacular... The interplay between the Heath and the immediate surrounding townscape, including the historic village centres of Hampstead and Highgate and the Hampstead Garden Suburb, is noteworthy."^{xiii}

During the 19th century concern was being raised that open land was rapidly being lost to building sites and gravel or brick works. One of the areas of concern included Parliament Hill Fields adjacent to the conservation area. A major national campaign led to the purchase of the Fields in 1889 for public use and they were incorporated into Hampstead Heath.

The Metropolitan Open Land boundary encompasses the Parliament Hill School playing fields. The Hampstead Cricket ground next to William Hill School is also within the boundary.

4.0 The Proposed Works

Detailed drawings are provided by Astudio Architects for the proposed new development. The reader is also referred to the design and access statement which sets out the design thinking.

4.1 The proposed new development at Parliament Hill School

The proposed development consists of the construction of several new buildings to replace a number of the older ones. They are:

1. A new single storey 6th form centre for students at the La Swap Sixth Form; a consortium of the four schools in the area in front of the Morant building on the site of former tennis courts, and
2. A new two and three storey teaching block to be built over the existing courtyard building and following the same curvilinear plan.
3. New dining hall, Sports Hall and Activity Hall.

The new buildings are designed to be environmentally friendly, incorporating a number of features to reduce carbon emissions.

The proposed new 6th form centre will be a single storey building set back from the Highgate Road, and built on the site of disused tennis courts belonging to Parliament Hill School. It is designed so as to have minimum impact on the existing setting. It will be constructed of high quality materials. The architectural design has been carefully considered to respond to the quality of the existing school buildings whilst retaining the setting of the school behind a landscaped boundary. The new building will be a single storey construction and have a 'green wall' façade that will further reduce the impact of the new buildings.

A new pedestrian access will be provided to the 6th form centre. Retained spaces for surface area parking are carefully landscaped and shielded from the road. There is an opportunity for both Parliament Hill and William Ellis Schools to redevelop and enhance the boundary between the two Schools.

The mature trees fronting on to the Highgate Road within the site are to be retained. Camden Council is contracted as the schools' maintenance team and is advised by an arboriculture consultant.

Behind the re-landscaped car parking area will be a new sports hall and activity hall with a two / three storey glazed link to the Morant Building.

4.2 The proposed new development at William Ellis School

The William Ellis site is very restricted in terms of area and has already had several additions and modifications to the existing building in order to maximise the amount of accommodation provided. Due to these restrictions the new sixth form centre is to be located on the adjacent Parliament Hill School site. (For further detail please refer to the LaSWAP Stage A report.) The relocation of the 6th form accommodation to the Parliament Hill School site frees up some additional area for the school within the existing buildings.

The proposed development consists of the construction of two new buildings to replace a number of the older ones. They are:

1. A two storey extension to the east wing will provide additional teaching accommodation in an independent structure.
2. The west courtyard is redeveloped, with the existing MFL building being demolished, and a covered external dining space created. There will be a new staircase and lift to provide an additional circulation route around the existing hall at first floor level.

All the mature trees fronting on to the Highgate Road within the site are all to be retained. Camden Council is contracted as the schools' maintenance team and is advised by an arboriculture consultant.

5 .0 Assessment of Impacts and Policy Compliance

This section of the report assesses the impacts of proposals to develop parts of Parliament Hill and William Ellis schools on the conservation area, on the Metropolitan Open Land, and on the setting of adjacent listed buildings. It appraises the scheme's compliance with policy and guidance. The following facts should be acknowledged:

- The schools have experienced considerable change and alteration;
- The schools' capacity to absorb change is greater than most given its educational use historically subject to change in education policy and practice with the consistent need for new facilities resulting in a series of buildings of different periods and styles;
- The boundaries of two school are lined with mature trees that screen the existing sites;

Before discussing the policies relevant to the setting of the schools within the conservation area, it is worth considering the definition of 'conservation' in Annex 2 of the NPPF, which is quoted in full below:

“The process of maintaining and managing change to a heritage asset in a way that sustains and, where appropriate, enhances its significance.”

This definition is important because it recognises that change to the historic environment is unavoidable, and makes it clear that conservation does not imply preventing or resisting change. Instead, it implies managing change to ensure the heritage significance is sustained and, in certain circumstances, enhanced.

The definition goes beyond simply managing change. Conservation, according to the definition, is also a process of maintaining change and embracing, rather than resisting, change. Change is only harmful insofar as it erodes significance.

The Government's objectives for the historic environment, which are set out in paragraph 126 of the NPPF. This states that local planning authorities should 'conserve them (heritage assets) in a manner appropriate to their significance'. When developing a 'positive' strategy for the conservation and enjoyment of the historic environment LPAs should take into account:

- The desirability of sustaining and enhancing the significance of heritage assets and putting them to viable use consistent with their conservation;
- The wider social, cultural, economic and environmental benefits that conservation of the historic environment can bring;
- The desirability of new development making a positive contribution to local character and distinctiveness; and
- Opportunities to draw on the contribution made by the historic environment to the character of a place.

The NPPF carries on the concept of heritage ‘significance’:

“The significance is the value of a heritage asset to this and future generations because of its heritage interest. That interest may be archaeological, architectural, artistic or historic. Significance derives not only from a heritage asset’s physical presence, but also from its setting. The effects of any development on a heritage asset therefore need to be assessed against the four components of its heritage interest: its archaeological, architectural, artistic or historic interest.

5.1 The impact of the new development on the existing schools

It is in the nature of schools that have been on their sites for a considerable period that they will receive many additions and changes, and the two timelines above show extensive change has taken place with both schools. Over time the number of new additions that have changed the architecture and mass of both sets of buildings.

A tour of the Parliament Hill School site indicates that no single style dominates the architecture. There is no formal structure to the buildings or the open spaces around them. The overriding characteristic is one of diverse and vibrant activity marked by a series of buildings and spaces of different periods and functions set within a landscape dominated by mature trees. The imposing mass of the Morant building will continue to act as a visual anchor for the diverse and sometimes disparate additions.

The William Ellis site is already built to near capacity. There is no formal structure to the buildings or the open spaces around them. The demolition of elements within the site will make room for new building which in its form and mass is similar to what now exists. The preservation of the school playing fields and the existing trees to the west will mean that the majority of the setting of the two schools is unchanged. The experience, whilst somewhat changed, will not be harmed by the new development.

5.2 Impact of the new development on the Dartmouth Conservation Area

Parliament Hill School is not listed but makes a positive contribution to the special interest of the conservation area by way of its distinctive architecture as the product of the 1902 Education Act to designs produced by the LCC Architects Department; its continuing use as a school; its qualities as a local landmark arising from its scale and length of frontage; and its contribution to the social and economic diversity of the area.

In its widest sense the setting of the school includes all the structures in its grounds and merges with the setting of the adjacent William Ellis School. The school is not visible from every place within the conservation sub-area because of the filtering effects of trees and screening of some buildings. It would be clearly right to see the interrelated setting of two schools together with their screening trees as being experienced most strongly from the Highgate Road.

Parliament Hill School presents a strong frontage to the Highgate Road but is set back behind a line of trees. William Ellis School is set well back behind tennis courts, a pair of caretakers' cottages belonging to the school and a car park. It does not have a presence on to Highgate Road and effectively fronts on to Parliament Hill School.

The development within the grounds of Parliament Hill School and in front and to one side of the main 1902 building will affect the setting of the conservation area, most notably when viewed from Highgate Road. There will be an impact on the entrance area to the school and on the visibility of the main elevation. However the new elements have been thoughtfully and sensitively designed and positioned within the site so as to minimise the impact.

The new 6th form building takes into account the existing relationship between the school and Highgate Road and seeks to retain the relationship with the wooded boulevard. The existing fence, a negative feature in the conservation management plan, will be removed and replaced with new boundary railings that will improve the quality of the setting through the use of higher quality materials and the removal of late 20th century unsympathetic post and wire treatment.

Taking the design aspects first, the Design and Access Statement demonstrates that much thought has been given to position of the new building so as to retain a clear view to the central entrance feature of the Morant Building. The new centre manages student arrivals within the site with minimum impact beyond the school boundary with Highgate Road. Provision has been made for wheelchair access via a carefully detailed ramp.

The height of the new building has been kept to a minimum with a single storey block set so as to minimise its impact and enable retained views of the upper storey of the 1908 structure.

The new elevations are architecturally neutral, with a simplicity and rhythm that responds to the original, while making it clear that this is a 21st century contribution to the architecture of the two schools. High quality details and design respect the functional building quality of the Morant Building.

The Parliament Hill School is best experienced from its principal elevation (eastern) and approach to it. The new building respects the axial setting of the original and improves the detailed working of the entrance to the site through the careful detailing and positioning of walls and gates. It enhances the setting of the two schools through the creation of improved access for wheelchairs and the disabled.

5.3 Impact on Sub Area I, Highgate Road

The boundary of Sub Area I for the most part includes both sides of the Highgate Road, but as it gets to the schools it runs down the back edge of the pavement. The boundary is marked by a row of mature trees which will all be retained.

This development scheme will not materially harm No's 6-27 Grove Terrace or their setting. The assessment of significance has demonstrated that Grove Terrace holds interest primarily in connection with its historical development and associations, but also through its position set back from the Highgate Road behind a large landscaped area which retains its historic form and character contemporary with the listed buildings. The listed buildings at Nos. 1-5 Grove Terrace are further south and not directly affected by proposals.

The long views along Highgate Road remain protected by the existing mature trees. The views of Grove Terrace and the green are not affected by the proposed development.

5.4 Impact on Sub Area 10, The Schools

The capacity of area 10 to absorb change is greater than most of the rest of the conservation area given the mix of styles/ages and quality and different scales of the mostly 20th century buildings, and the fact that Sub Area 10 is set back behind the strong avenue of mature trees that defines Sub Area 1. The school buildings are set well back as is Grove Terrace. The new 6th form school is set to the north away from the buildings. The new sports hall and classroom wing are also set back from Highgate Road.

The effects on the setting of the school will not be substantial. The new development cannot be considered to equate to substantial harm or total loss of significance of the Parliament Hill School as a whole or the Morant Building in particular. The NPPF differentiates between proposed development that will lead to substantial harm or loss of significance. Paragraph 134 states that "Where a development proposal will lead to less than substantial harm to the significance of a designated heritage asset, this harm should be weighed against the public benefits of the proposal, including securing its optimum viable use."

The significance of the setting of the school will be preserved and in the case of the immediate surroundings will be enhanced by the replacement of the boundary fence and reworking of the entrance.

Key views of the building will be preserved. Whilst the frontage will be permanently changed by the new development, it has been placed in such a way as to preserve the landscape features at the important boundary between the school and Highgate Road. This change, whilst it could be considered to be slightly harmful to the setting of the Morant Building, does not amount to substantial harm and will be outweighed by the public benefits of bringing the school complex up to date, improving access, and securing a better quality boundary treatment.

Local policy contained within Camden Council's supplementary planning documents is addressed with the provision of easier access. The development briefing produced for this site acknowledges the need to maintain the schools as viable, leading, educational institutions. This development fulfils that brief, and provides new development in a way that preserves the key aspects of the schools site and its relationship with the surroundings.

La Sainte Union Des Sacrées Coeurs School is self-contained within its enclosure, and has little direct relationship with the street. The area around the school has changed overtime but the general setting is protected by the walls and gate. The setting will not be harmed by the proposed development.

5.5 Impact on Sub Area 9, Lissenden Gardens

The northern most flats in Parliament Hill Mansions enjoy a view, through the poplar trees which line the boundary, across the Parliament Hill School Playing fields towards Parliament Hill. This view will not be affected. The present view from Clevedon Mansions is of the existing block D, the Heath Building, which is to be demolished and replaced with the new accommodation block built above block J.

The view from the Cottage at present is dominated by the somewhat dilapidated Heath Building, with a glimpsed view of the playing field. The proposed new structure is considered to improve the view.

There is a K2 telephone box at corner of Highgate Road and Lissenden Gardens. It is not considered to be any impact on the listed structure.

5.6 Impact on the Metropolitan Open Land

None of the proposed new buildings will be higher than the Morant building such that the long views across London enjoyed by those on the Metropolitan Open Land will be affected. All the new building is set back behind mature trees which will remain. The new two storey teaching block above block I, the courtyard building, will be visible from Hampstead Heath. However the Morant Building will retain its visual dominance of the site.

6.0 Conclusions

Parliament Hill School is not a listed building, but it does have special local significance. The main building dates from 1914 and is a generic design produced by the LCC that has been altered and added to over the last 100 years. A series of additional facilities have been built on the site from time to time to ensure that the teaching facilities remain up to date and fit for purpose. These additions are all in different styles that reflect the period when they were commissioned. Collectively they have transformed the nature of the school grounds in the immediate vicinity of the school but significantly the general nature of the school campus is such that the site is still dominated by tall mature trees and the overall impact on the conservation area and the heath has not been significant.

The proposed development designed by AStudio Architects takes full account of the constraints and sensitivities of the site and its buildings. It has been specifically designed to minimise its impact while fitting an educationally necessary facility on to the constrained site in such a way as to maintain the educational viability of the Parliament Hill School and the adjacent William Ellis School that will share the facility.

The significance of the Dartmouth Park Conservation Area and in particular the significance of the impacts of the proposed development has been assessed.

- The proposed new buildings and the works associated with them will improve access to both schools.
- The degree of change, while quite extensive, is comparable to other changes to the conservation area experienced over time. It is a degree of change envisaged and encouraged by national guidance and English Heritage.
- The NPPF accepts that economic and social change (i.e. change to school layout driven by social and economic considerations) and should be considered equally with physical change.
- The character of the Highgate Road is only marginally affected by the new building and in detail it is improved by removing the fence and replacing it with new railings and enhanced landscape.
- There is no evidence of harm.

Sources Consulted

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Colloms & Weindling: *Camden Town and Kentish Town*, 2003

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