

**PLANNING,
DESIGN AND ACCESS STATEMENT**

Southbank International School, 16 Netherhall Gardens, London NW3 5TH

Prepared on behalf of Cognita Schools Ltd

July 2016

Planning, Design and Access Statement

Contents

Page Number

Section 1 INTRODUCTION

2

Section 2 BACKGROUND CONTEXT

5

Section 3 THE SITE AND SURROUNDING AREA

7

Section 4 PLANNING POLICY FRAMEWORK

8

Section 5 JUSTIFICATION FOR PLANNING

14

Section 6 INCLUSIVE ACCESS

17

Section 7 CONCLUSION

18

Section 1 INTRODUCTION

This Planning, Design and Access Statement justifies planning permission for:

- Removal of short section of wall, introduction of new brick pier all to allow new pedestrian gate to provide for dedicated pedestrian access for pupils, parents and teachers to the school.
- Creation of realigned car entrance, with entrance gates and bricks pillars and existing timber gates re-used. The existing timber front fencing to Netherhall Gardens would be retained.

Cognita Schools Ltd, the owners of Southbank International School has invested considerably into the school both in terms of the physical fabric of the school and also into facilities, as well teaching expertise at the school.

A recent audit by Deloitte into the school established that there was a serious risk and deficiency to safe pedestrian access to the school. The audit has stated that the front boundary wall needs to be revised and a secure access gate provided to ensure all pupils, parents and teachers can access and egress the school and that the works should be undertaken immediately.

Design Options

In line with this recommendation the school and design team have assessed options taking into account the physical and visual feel of 16 Netherhall Gardens and the Netherhall Gardens road itself, the boundaries to existing properties and also the schools siting within the Fitzjohns Conservation Area.

The first option of installing a wider access gate from the existing access point was discounted due the limited distance and impact. It would also be more noticeable and was felt not felt to be in keeping with the adjacent property frontages and therefore, would not form a feature, which would be acceptable in the Conservation Area.

The best option was the limited intervention of removal of a small section of law wall, the installation of a low metal gate and the very minimal relocation of the existing brick piers to retain the existing access width.

The pedestrian gate was chosen to be long lasting and durable with galvanised black metal finish and to be flat topped, and again chosen to be appropriate for both the street scene and also the Conservation Area.

Planning Considerations

If the school is to meet its obligations to child access and safety and to meet the audit results it has to act and provide a secure boundary with a fully functioning safe and secure pedestrian access and the proposal is the most logical and rational way to achieve this.

This Statement has been prepared to meet the guidance within Department for Communities and Local Government (DCLG) Circular 01/06, Guidance on Changes to the Development Control System as well as the Guidance contained within CABE's "Design and Access Statements, How to write, read and use them" (2006).



This statement provides the planning justification for the proposed development having regard to National Planning Policy, the Development Plan and other material considerations.

It also deals with the Design Statement as well as Inclusive Access.

This Planning, Design and Access Statement demonstrates that the proposal will be a positive gain for the Borough, its residents, the overall community and that it would not adversely impact on the surrounding area.

This Statement sets out the following:

- Section 2 describes the background context of Cognita Schools Ltd.
 - Section 3 describes the site and surrounding area.
 - Section 4 sets out the relevant planning policy framework.
 - Section 5 provides the justification for planning permission.
 - Section 6 discusses access arrangements.
 - Section 7 provides the conclusions
-

Section 2 BACKGROUND CONTEXT

Cognita Schools Ltd was formed in 2004. The company employs over 2,900 teachers and support staff in 56 schools across the UK and international schools in Brazil, Spain, Singapore, Vietnam and Thailand. There are over 15,200 pupils on the roll of these schools. The schools fit a broad profile, including Pre-Prep, Prep and Senior Schools.

Over the years, Chris Woodhead, Cognita's former Chairman has championed the values that are important to millions of parents across the country. 'The basic skills of literacy and numeracy; a broad and balanced curriculum which excites all children; a secure, disciplined learning environment in which each child is known and valued; we do not need to reinvent the 21st century'. He goes on to say that, 'what we want is what concerned parents have always wanted: teachers who care equally about the subjects they teach and the children for whom they are responsible, who have the highest possible expectations of each and every one of their pupils, and who can keep order and explain ideas with clarity and enthusiasm that captures the child's imagination'.

Cognita's vision is to own and manage a family of independent schools, each of which enjoys an excellent reputation within its community. Each school's reputation will grow as a result of consistently meeting the aspirations that parents have for their child's education. Their child will be happy and enthusiastic about the school. The school will be seen to

invest in its relationship with individual parents and it will be recognised as keen to nurture a culture that treats parents as customers.

The Group will implement three key strategies in all its schools, in order to deliver this vision. It will:

- Protect, preserve and develop the atmosphere, ethos and culture of each school so that it promotes its own identity
 - Recruit, retain and develop very good teachers in order to provide the very best education. It will therefore recruit and retain the best head teachers, invest in regular and appropriate staff development programmes, develop programs to support, measure, review and reward excellent performance, foster best practice initiatives between schools and departments, implement regular internal quality control reviews that audit education delivery and performance, and invest in the development and maintenance of a broad and balanced curriculum.
 - Develop excellent communications between the school and its parents through frequent and routine communications, easy access to information, the provision of easy access of staff at all levels, regular forums including staff and parents, the promotion of schemes to encourage parental involvement, programs that adopt appropriate technologies.
-

The group will exercise four unique sources of competitive advantage in developing these strategies. The Group:

- Maintains a staff of leading educationalists, who are very successful and experienced in education, in teaching and in the development of schools
- Is run by professional management, who have broader business skills than are to be found in most schools
- Has access to funds for the development of people, organisation, facilities and systems infrastructure
- Enjoys the benefits of scale of being a large group. It employs a large cadre of excellent teachers, able to exchange best practice experiences, it is financially robust and it can deliver savings and efficiencies through its support services
- Maintains a staff of leading educationalists, who are very successful and experienced in education, in teaching and in the development of schools
- Is run by professional management, who have broader business skills than are to be found in most schools
- Has access to funds for the development of people, organisation, facilities and systems infrastructure
- Enjoys the benefits of scale of being a large group. It employs a large cadre of excellent teachers, able to exchange best practice experiences, it is financially robust

and it can deliver savings and efficiencies through its support services

preparatory schools. It will also continue with the “open door” policy for parents.

Due to its size, every child will receive a high level of recognition. Intelligence and ability will be given a new framework and, whilst the school will provide traditional core subjects on the curriculum, and it will also seek to provide a broad range of non-traditional subjects.

Section 3 THE SITE AND SURROUNDING AREA

Southbank International School, 16 Netherhall Gardens is set part way down Netherhall Gardens and occupies a corner site at the junction with Nutley Terrace.

It comprises a school taking pupils from 3 to 11 years of age, set in a traditional red brick building.

The site frontage is characterised by the existing treed setting at the front, which will not be affected in any way by the proposal.

Netherhall Gardens comprises a mainly residential street in nature but does contain other uses. It is a street of predominantly brick buildings, with some white rendered buildings interspersed and with parking either side of the road.

The school occupies a brick building which is 3 stories in height.

Section 4 PLANNING POLICY FRAMEWORK

The Development Plan provides the statutory policy framework against which planning applications should be made. Decisions should normally be made in accordance with the development plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise. Other material considerations such as National Policy Guidance may be taken into account in reaching decisions.

National Policy Framework

National Planning Policy Framework (March 2012)

The NPPF sets out clearly the rational and aim of sustainable development in paragraph 7, namely:

- an economic role – contributing to building a strong, responsive and competitive economy, by ensuring that sufficient land of the right type is available in the right places and at the right time to support growth and innovation; and by identifying and coordinating development requirements, including the provision of infrastructure;
- a social role – supporting strong, vibrant and healthy communities, by providing the supply of housing required to meet the needs of

present and future generations; and by creating a high quality built environment, with accessible local services that reflect the community's needs and support its health, social and cultural well-being; and

- an environmental role – contributing to protecting and enhancing our natural, built and historic environment; and, as part of this, helping to improve biodiversity, use natural resources prudently, minimise waste and pollution, and mitigate and adapt to climate change including moving to a low carbon economy.

And in paragraph 14 it emphasises that at the heart of the NPPF is a **presumption in favour of sustainable development**, which should be seen as a golden thread running through both plan making and decision taking. This means approving development proposals that accord with the development plan without delay.

Through paragraphs 29 to 41 it sets out the promotion of sustainable transport, and advises on the need for Travel Plans for significant generators while in paragraph 32 it advises that 'development should only be refused on transport grounds where the residual cumulative impacts of development are sever'.

Section 7 through paragraphs 56 to 68 sets out the importance of understanding site context and good design. In paragraph 61 it

emphasises the need of planning policies and decisions to ‘address the connections between people and places and the integration of new development into the natural, built and historic environment’.

Through section 8 it promotes healthy communities in paragraphs 69 to 78. Paragraph 72 advises that ‘the Government attaches great importance to ensuring that a sufficient choice of school places is available to meet the needs of existing and new communities. Local planning authorities should take **a proactive, positive and collaborative approach to meeting this requirement**, and to development that will widen choice in education. They should:

- **give great weight to the need to create, expand or alter schools;** and
- work with schools promoters to identify and resolve key planning issues before applications are submitted’.

Section 12 sets out the position in relation to conserving and enhancing the historic environment through paragraphs 126 to 141.

Through paragraph 131 it advises that in determining planning applications, local planning authorities should take account of:

- the desirability of sustaining and enhancing the significance of heritage assets and putting them to viable uses consistent with their

conservation;

- the positive contribution that conservation of heritage assets can make to sustainable communities including their economic vitality; and
- the desirability of new development making a positive contribution to local character and distinctiveness.

The Consolidated London Plan (March 2015)

The London Plan has 3 main themes, which are:

- Growth
- Equity
- Sustainable Development



Education and Employment

Key POLICY 3.1 ENSURING EQUAL LIFE CHANCES FOR ALL

Strategic

The Mayor is committed to ensuring equal life chances for all Londoners. Meeting the needs and expanding opportunities for all Londoners – and where appropriate, addressing the barriers to meeting the needs of particular groups and communities – is key to

tackling the huge issue of inequality across London.

Planning decisions

Development proposals should protect and enhance facilities and services that meet the needs of particular groups and communities. Proposals involving loss of these facilities without adequate justification or provision for replacement should be resisted.

POLICY 3.18 EDUCATION FACILITIES

Strategic

The Mayor will support provision of early years, primary and secondary school and further and higher education facilities adequate to meet the demands of a growing and changing population and to enable greater educational choice, particularly in parts of London with poor educational performance.

The Mayor strongly supports the establishment of new schools, including free schools and opportunities to enable local people and communities to do this.

Planning decisions

Development proposals which enhance education and skills provision will be supported, including new build, expansion of existing or change of use to educational purposes. Those which address the current and projected shortage of primary school places and the projected shortage of secondary school places will be particularly

encouraged. Proposals which result in the net loss of education facilities should be resisted, unless it can be demonstrated that there is no ongoing or future demand.

Policy 4.1 Developing London's Economy

Strategic

A The Mayor will work with partners to promote and enable the continued development of a strong, sustainable and increasingly diverse economy across all parts of London, ensuring the availability of sufficient and suitable workspaces in terms of type, size and cost, supporting infrastructure and suitable environments for larger employers and small and medium sized enterprises, including the voluntary and community sectors.

To drive London's transition to a low carbon economy and to secure the range of benefits this will bring.

To support and promote outer London as an attractive location for national government as well as businesses, giving access to the highly-skilled London workforce, relatively affordable work space and the competitive advantages of the wider London economy.

To support and promote the distinctive and crucial contribution to

London's economic success made by central London and its specialist clusters of economic activity.

To emphasise the need for greater recognition of the importance of enterprise and innovation.

POLICY 7.3 DESIGNING OUT CRIME

Strategic

Boroughs and others should seek to create safe, secure and appropriately accessible environments where crime and disorder, and the fear of crime do not undermine quality of life or community cohesion.

POLICY 7.6 ARCHITECTURE

Strategic

Architecture should make a positive contribution to a coherent public realm, streetscape and wider cityscape. It should incorporate the highest quality materials and design appropriate to its context.

Planning decisions

Buildings and structures should:

- a) be of the highest architectural quality

- b) be of a proportion, composition, scale and orientation that enhances, activates and appropriately defines the public realm
- c) comprise details and materials that complement, not necessarily replicate, the local architectural character
- d) not cause unacceptable harm to the amenity of surrounding land and buildings, particularly residential buildings, in relation to privacy, overshadowing, wind and microclimate. This is particularly important for tall buildings
- e) incorporate best practice in resource management and climate change mitigation and adaptation
- f) provide high quality indoor and outdoor spaces and integrate well with the surrounding streets and open spaces
- g) be adaptable to different activities and land uses, particularly at ground level
- h) meet the principles of inclusive design
- i) optimise the potential of sites

Local Development Framework

Camden Core Policy and UDP



Land Use Principles

CS10 - Supporting community facilities and services

The Council will work with its partners to ensure that community facilities and services are provided for Camden's communities and people who work in and visit the borough.

Policy DP15 - Community and leisure uses

New community and leisure uses must be:

- g) close or accessible to the community they serve;
- h) accessible by a range of transport modes, in particular walking, cycling and public transport;
- i) located in the Central London Area or in the Town Centres of Camden Town, Swiss Cottage/Finchley Road, Kilburn, West Hampstead or Kentish Town if they are expected to attract larger numbers of visitors.

New community facilities must be provided in buildings which are flexible and sited to maximise the shared use of premises.

Conservation and Urban Design

CS14 - Promoting high quality places and conserving our heritage

The Council will ensure that Camden's places and buildings are attractive, safe and easy to use by:

- a) requiring development of the highest standard of design that respects local context and character;
- b) preserving and enhancing Camden's rich and diverse heritage assets and their settings, including conservation areas, listed buildings, archaeological remains, scheduled ancient monuments and historic parks and gardens;
- c) promoting high quality landscaping and works to streets and public spaces;
- d) seeking the highest standards of access in all buildings and places and requiring schemes to be designed to be inclusive and accessible;

Policy DP24 - Securing high quality design

The Council will require all developments, including alterations and extensions to existing buildings, to be of the highest standard of design and will expect developments to consider:

- a) character, setting, context and the form and scale of neighbouring buildings;

- b) the character and proportions of the existing building, where alterations and extensions are proposed;
- c) the quality of materials to be used;
- d) the provision of visually interesting frontages at street level;
- e) the appropriate location for building services equipment;
- f) existing natural features, such as topography and trees;
- g) the provision of appropriate hard and soft landscaping including boundary treatments;
- h) the provision of appropriate amenity space; and
- i) accessibility.

Policy DP25 - Conserving Camden's Heritage

Conservation areas

In order to maintain the character of Camden's conservation areas, the Council will:

- a) take account of conservation area statements, appraisals and management plans when assessing applications within conservation areas;
- b) only permit development within conservation areas that preserves and enhances the character and appearance of the area;
- c) prevent the total or substantial demolition of an unlisted building that makes a positive contribution to the character or appearance of a conservation area where this harms the character or appearance of the conservation area, unless exceptional

- circumstances are shown that outweigh the case for retention;
- d) not permit development outside of a conservation area that causes harm to the character and appearance of that conservation area; and
- e) preserve trees and garden spaces which contribute to the character of a conservation area and which provide a setting for Camden's architectural heritage.

Access

Policy DP29 - Improving access

The Council will seek to promote fair access and remove the barriers that prevent people from accessing facilities and opportunities. We will:

- a) expect all buildings and places meet the highest practicable standards of access and inclusion;
- b) require buildings and spaces that the public may use to be designed to be as accessible as possible;
- c) expect facilities to be located in the most accessible parts of the borough;

Having run through in detail the planning policy position to understand the material considerations, it is now considered appropriate to focus in on each of the issues, and how these policies would relate to the proposals before the Local Planning Authority.

Section 5 JUSTIFICATION FOR PLANNING

This Planning, Design and Access Statement justifies planning permission for:

- Removal of short section of wall, introduction of new brick pier all to allow new pedestrian gate to provide for dedicated pedestrian access for pupils, parents and teachers to the school.
- Creation of realigned car entrance, with entrance gates and bricks pillars and existing timber gates re-used. The existing timber front fencing to Netherhall Gardens would be retained.

Cognita Schools Ltd, the owners of Southbank International School has invested considerably into the school both in terms of the physical fabric of the school and also into facilities, as well teaching expertise at the school.

A recent audit by Deloitte into the school established that there was a serious risk and deficiency to safe pedestrian access to the school. The audit has stated that the front boundary wall needs to be revised and a secure access gate provided to ensure all pupils, parents and teachers can access and egress the school and that the works should be undertaken immediately.

Design Options

In line with this recommendation the school and design team have assessed options taking into account the physical and visual feel of 16 Netherhall Gardens and the Netherhall Gardens road itself, the boundaries to existing properties and also the schools siting within the Fitzjohns Conservation Area.

The first option of installing a wider access gate from the existing access point was discounted due the limited distance and impact. It would also be more noticeable and was felt not felt to be in keeping with the adjacent property frontages and therefore, would not form a feature, which would be acceptable in the Conservation Area.

The best option was the limited intervention of removal of a small section of law wall, the installation of a low metal gate and the very minimal relocation of the existing brick piers to retain the existing access width.

The pedestrian gate was chosen to be long lasting and durable with galvanised black metal finish and to be flat topped, and again chosen to be appropriate for both the street scene and also the Conservation Area.

Planning Considerations

If the school is to meet its obligations to child access and safety and to meet the audit results it has to act and provide a secure boundary with a fully functioning safe and secure pedestrian access and the proposal is the most logical and rational way to achieve this.

Conservation Area, Design and Adjacent Amenity

Good design is central to all objectives of the London Plan and is specifically promoted by the policies contained within Chapter 7, which address both general design principles and specific design issues. London Plan Policy 7.6 sets out the overarching design principles for development in London.

All development within the Borough should create a high quality urban environment. There should be an approach to accessible and inclusive

urban design that considers how good design, quality public realm and land use can be integrated to help regenerate places.

The proposal complies with:

Policy DP25 - Conserving Camden's Heritage

Conservation areas

In order to maintain the character of Camden's conservation areas, the Council will:

- a) take account of conservation area statements, appraisals and management plans when assessing applications within conservation areas;
- b) only permit development within conservation areas that preserves and enhances the character and appearance of the area;
- c) prevent the total or substantial demolition of an unlisted building that makes a positive contribution to the character or appearance of a conservation area where this harms the character or appearance of the conservation area, unless exceptional circumstances are shown that outweigh the case for retention;
- d) not permit development outside of a conservation area that causes harm to the character and appearance of that conservation area; and
- e) preserve trees and garden spaces which contribute to the character of a conservation area and which provide a setting for

Camden's architectural heritage.

Access

Policy DP29 - Improving access

The Council will seek to promote fair access and remove the barriers that prevent people from accessing facilities and opportunities. We will:

- a) expect all buildings and places meet the highest practicable standards of access and inclusion;
- b) require buildings and spaces that the public may use to be designed to be as accessible as possible;
- c) expect facilities to be located in the most accessible parts of the borough;

Secured By Design

Both the London Plan Policy 7.3, sets out to address safety.

The introduction of the pedestrian gate would retain the safe and secure frontage and it will address this and ensure a safe and secure site, which would meet Secure by Design criteria.

The proposal is considered to provide a safe and secure environment and to meet the key proposals in Secured by Design as well as London Plan policy 7.3.

The proposal will therefore accord with the NPPF, London Plan and Local Plan policies on design and safety.

Section 6 INCLUSIVE ACCESS

Policy on inclusive access is set out through the NPPF, Planning and Access for Disabled People: a good practice guide (ODPM) as well as London Plan policy 7.2, and Accessible London: achieving an inclusive environment SPG. These policies supplement building regulations and require all future development to meet the highest standards of accessibility and inclusion.

This Planning, Design and Access Statement explains how the principles of inclusive design have been incorporated into the scheme. No changes are proposed to access routes or any building.

Vehicular

No changes to vehicular access widths are proposed.

Pedestrian

The existing pedestrian routes to and from the existing and proposed building will not be altered through this proposal.

The proposals will comply with Part M of the Building Regulations and also with BS 8300:2001 'Design of buildings and their approaches to meet the needs of disabled people – Code of Practice'.

Section 7 CONCLUSIONS

This Planning, Design and Access Statement justifies planning permission for:

- Removal of short section of wall, introduction of new brick pier all to allow new pedestrian gate to provide for dedicated pedestrian access for pupils, parents and teachers to the school.
- Creation of realigned car entrance, with entrance gates and bricks pillars and existing timber gates re-used. The existing timber front fencing to Netherhall Gardens would be retained.

Cognita Schools Ltd, the owners of Southbank International School has invested considerably into the school both in terms of the physical fabric of the school and also into facilities, as well teaching expertise at the school.

A recent audit by Deloitte into the school established that there was a serious risk and deficiency to safe pedestrian access to the school. The audit has stated that the front boundary wall needs to be revised and a secure access gate provided to ensure all pupils, parents and teachers can access and egress the school and that the works should be undertaken immediately.

Design Options

In line with this recommendation the school and design team have assessed options taking into account the physical and visual feel of 16 Netherhall Gardens and the Netherhall Gardens road itself, the boundaries to existing properties and also the schools siting within the Fitzjohns Conservation Area.

The first option of installing a wider access gate from the existing access point was discounted due the limited distance and impact. It would also be more noticeable and was felt not felt to be in keeping with the adjacent property frontages and therefore, would not form a feature, which would be acceptable in the Conservation Area.

The best option was the limited intervention of removal of a small section of law wall, the installation of a low metal gate and the very minimal relocation of the existing brick piers to retain the existing access width.

The pedestrian gate was chosen to be long lasting and durable with galvanised black metal finish and to be flat topped, and again chosen to be appropriate for both the street scene and also the Conservation Area.

Planning Considerations

If the school is to meet its obligations to child access and safety and to meet the audit results it has to act and provide a secure boundary with a fully functioning safe and secure pedestrian access and the proposal is the most logical and rational way to achieve this.

Conservation Area, Design and Adjacent Amenity

Good design is central to all objectives of the London Plan and is specifically promoted by the policies contained within Chapter 7, which address both general design principles and specific design issues. London Plan Policy 7.6 sets out the overarching design principles for development in London.

All development within the Borough should create a high quality urban environment. There should be an approach to accessible and inclusive

urban design that considers how good design, quality public realm and land use can be integrated to help regenerate places.

The proposal complies with:

Policy DP25 - Conserving Camden's Heritage

Conservation areas

In order to maintain the character of Camden's conservation areas, the Council will:

- a) take account of conservation area statements, appraisals and management plans when assessing applications within conservation areas;
- b) only permit development within conservation areas that preserves and enhances the character and appearance of the area;
- c) prevent the total or substantial demolition of an unlisted building that makes a positive contribution to the character or appearance of a conservation area where this harms the character or appearance of the conservation area, unless exceptional circumstances are shown that outweigh the case for retention;
- d) not permit development outside of a conservation area that causes harm to the character and appearance of that conservation area; and
- e) preserve trees and garden spaces which contribute to the character of a conservation area and which provide a setting for

Camden's architectural heritage.

Access

Policy DP29 - Improving access

The Council will seek to promote fair access and remove the barriers that prevent people from accessing facilities and opportunities. We will:

- a) expect all buildings and places meet the highest practicable standards of access and inclusion;
- b) require buildings and spaces that the public may use to be designed to be as accessible as possible;
- c) expect facilities to be located in the most accessible parts of the borough;

Secured By Design

Both the London Plan Policy 7.3, sets out to address safety.

The introduction of the pedestrian gate would retain the safe and secure frontage and it will address this and ensure a safe and secure site, which would meet Secure by Design criteria.

The proposal is considered to provide a safe and secure environment and to meet the key proposals in Secured by Design as well as London Plan policy 7.3.

The proposal will therefore accord with the NPPF, London Plan and Local Plan policies on design and safety.