

MR/OC/P5900  
11<sup>th</sup> March 2020

David Peres Da Costa  
London Borough of Camden  
Regeneration and Planning  
5 Pancras Square  
London  
N1C 4AG

Dear David,

**The Channing Junior School, 1 Highgate High Street, N6 5JR  
ALTERATIONS TO BOUNDARY WALL ON HIGHGATE HILL IN CONNECTION WITH CREATION  
OF NEW VEHICULAR ACCESS, INSTALLATION OF GATES AND RECONFIGURATION OF  
EXISTING CAR PARK (INCLUDING BIN ENCLOSURE).**

**LPA REFERENCE: 2019/5756/P**

We write in response to the comments received to date during the public and statutory consultation period of the above planning application.

In addition to this letter we also provide a response as requested by Camden Highways; which addresses sections 2.1-2.4 of the Stage 1 Road Safety Audit.

Conservation and Design

Multiple listed structures surround the application site but these are largely obscured from view on account of the boundary treatment to the site. In addition to the Conservation Officer's comments that are explored in detail below, a small number of public responses have been received querying the impact of the proposal on the character and appearance of the HCA. Some of the responses have also described the property as a listed building. These issues are addressed in tandem.

The Conservation Officer response states that:

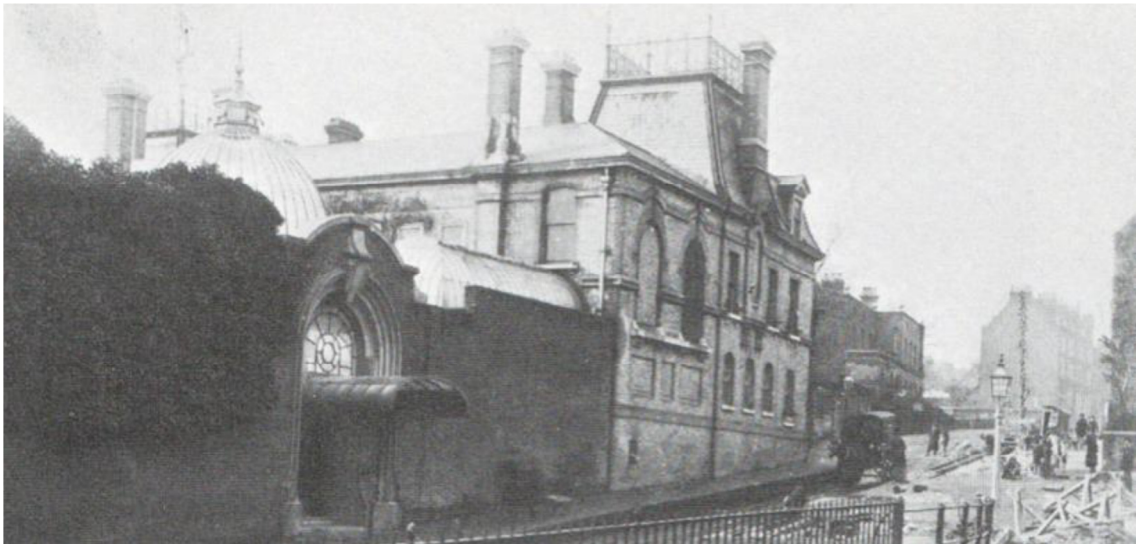
*'The continuous, high boundary wall is an important part of the historic streetscape and creating a permanent opening would adversely impact on its imposing, sweeping character which defines this part of the conservation area.'*

The site is not a statutory listed building nor is it registered on the Council's local list. The only heritage designation falling on the site is the Highgate Conservation Area (HCA).

The boundary wall is not a historic element of the site. Fairseat House, as the site was previously known, experienced significant demolition in the early 1900s when the tramway was implemented on Highgate High Street. As pictured below, the property itself formed part of the original boundary

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treatment of the site. The property also experienced war damage due to a landmine. This history perhaps explains why metric bricks are present in the boundary wall, which dates some of the fabric post 1965. The property has not therefore always been situated behind a boundary wall nor is the boundary wall historic fabric.



Fairseat House c. 1800



Extent of Fairseat Demolition early 1900s

Of the heritage designation to which the site is located, namely the Highgate Conservation Area, the conservation area guidance is limited in its reference to the site, simply stating, *'To the north of Waterlow Park, a Victorian mansion is set behind a high brick wall within generous gardens which have been adapted for educational use as Fairseat.'* This notably contrasts with the rest of the detail afforded to sites in the conservation area appraisal. The appraisal does not detail as to whether the boundary is considered a particular positive or negative feature of the conservation area.

In addition, the wall has a number of existing permanent openings, including the main entrance to the school and a pedestrian entrance to the south. The sweeping nature of the wall means that the proposed gate will not be visible from most parts of Highgate High Street.

Notwithstanding the above, the small section of wall to be removed is to be replaced with a timber gate. The proposed gate has been designed to integrate sensitively with the existing architecture of

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the HCA. The high quality timber gate will match the existing gate which is seen at the main vehicular entrance and will be painted black to match the existing pedestrian access point to the south. The replacement of this small part of the wall with a timber gate that is in character with the existing entrance will not have an adverse impact on the character of the HCA. It should also be noted that the gate will be closed for the vast majority of the day and will only be opened when required for access.

The Conservation Officer further states:

*'In relation to the car parking, I note that the space prior to construction access was not a formal car park, more an area of hardstanding adjacent to a garden area. The proposed car parking, concrete paving, electrical charging points and bin store would result in a level of development which would impact on the green, verdant character of this part of the site.'*

The existing space was an established car parking area before any construction commenced. There are 18 delineated car parking spaces. However, historically staff regularly double park in this area which brought the overall capacity up to around 25 spaces. The car parking area, though within Metropolitan Open Land, is entirely hardstanding (as recognised by the Conservation Area's comments) and cannot therefore be described as having a 'green, verdant character'. There are no planning restrictions on the use of this area, and it could be returned to a car park once construction works have been completed.



Existing Car Parking area prior to construction work (extract from Ecological Survey under application 2018/4925/P)

In summary of the above, there will be no impact on the conservation area as a result of the proposals. Any perceivable harm could only be described as less than substantial. In accordance with paragraph 196 of the NPPF:

*'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, where appropriate, securing its optimum viable use.'*

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The clear public benefits of the proposal are:

1. The new permanent access will allow a safer, more suitable vehicular access point to the school grounds. Vehicles will no longer pass through the pedestrianised area of the site to reach the car parking area, which will create a safer environment for children at the Channing School. This approach was encouraged by highway officers during previous discussions with the Council. It was also supported by design officers as it improved the landscaping, access and safety arrangements around the main building.
2. There will be a reduced risk of incident between the current entrance and the pedestrian crossing, where a number of both slight and serious accidents have been recorded (as per Appendix C of the submitted Transport Assessment).
3. Private transport modes to the site and vehicular pollution will be significantly reduced with mini-buses utilised instead and electric charging points provided.
4. All servicing and collections could be undertaken onsite rather than on-street.
5. Improved access for all forms of emergency vehicles.

These clear benefits to the public, particularly in terms of safety, weigh in favour of any perceivable harm of the heritage asset.

#### Transport

It is understood the Transport Officer has asked for a response to items 2.1-2.4 of the submitted Stage 1 Road Safety Audit. I attach to this letter a detailed response from Caneparo Associates which provides clarification on these issues.

Please note that with regards to item 2.1 (referring to the absence of lighting, utility, signage and vegetation removal details, full construction details can be provided at the detailed design stage.

#### Summary

I trust the above is clear and adequately addresses those conservation and design issues that have been raised by the Conservation Officer, the Highgate Conservation Area Advisory Committee and the Transport Officer. The proposal will not adversely impact the wider character and appearance of the HCA, will create a safer environment for staff and pupils at the Channing School and should therefore be granted planning permission in accordance with paragraph 11 of the NPPF.

Should you have any further queries, please do not hesitate to contact the undersigned.

Yours faithfully,

*Mark Rattue*

For and on behalf of  
Rolfe Judd Planning Limited