

## DESIGN & HERITAGE STATEMENT FOR NEW FREESTANDING CANOPY PROPOSAL

College Francais Bilingue de Londres  
87 Holmes Road London NW5 3AX



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## 1.0 INTRODUCTION

### 1.1 CFBL

The Collège Français Bilingue de Londres (CFBL) opened in 2011, following a major restoration and conversion of the Grade II Listed former London Board School.

The school delivers a bilingual and bi-cultural education, teaching the French curriculum to a total of up to 700 pupils authorized by the DfE from many nationalities. The requirement for pupils to speak French means that the majority of current pupils are of French nationality or come from countries where French is one of the official languages. However, CFBL now also holds Open Days in English to encourage more British families to join the school, including the future pupils who speak French when they arrive at CFBL.

CFBL offers coeducation for girls and boys ranging from 5 to 16 years of age, in three educational sections, commencing with the Year 1 ('Maternelle') section for 5 to 6 year olds, the remainder of the Primary school section from 6 to 11 year olds, and the Secondary school section from 11 to 16 year olds.

CFBL also engages with the local community, and interacts with other educational institutes.



## 1.2 Location



1. School Location and Boundary Line, NW5 3AX

## 1.3 Need for Proposed Canopy

The Maternelle Section of CFBL is accessed directly from Cathcart Street and operates for teaching separately to the main school, with only dining shared in the main school area. The Maternelle Section comprises two classrooms, and associated support spaces accommodating up to 50 infants and four staff. The two Maternelle classrooms open directly onto a small secure outdoor teaching and play amenity space, set immediately behind the two-metre high brick boundary wall along Cathcart Street.

This outside teaching and activity space is a vital part of the curriculum, which due to the physical limitations of the size of space available, needs to function to the maximum available area. Similarly, this outdoor space is required to be used on occasion during inclement weather.

Currently, the line of mature trees immediately adjacent to the Maternelle play space, substantially overhang this space (see photos). This causes the play surface to be covered in leaves and seeds during autumn and substantial bird droppings from roosting birds for a large part of the year. Both problems cause Health and Safety issues and limit the use of the outdoor space.

Therefore there is a manifest need for a canopy to shelter the outdoor space to facilitate and maximise its proper use.



1. View toward single storey year 1 Maternelle classrooms



2. View to NE along Cathcart Street

## 1.4 Consultations

An informal consultation has taken place with the Inkerman Area Residents Association, and the representative from Azania Mews (which directly overlooks the site of the future canopy), who have both confirmed having no objections to the proposal for the canopy.

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## 2.0 PROPOSAL

### 2.1 Canopy Brief

-The area requiring covered shelter runs from the classroom thresholds to the boundary wall (approximately 5 metres wide) and for the full width of the maternelle suite of spaces (approximately 10.3m long).

-The covered space is to be unencumbered with canopy structure but should provide good natural air flow within the covered space.

-The canopy should allow good daylight transfer and should be easily cleanable, both naturally from rainfall and manually.

### 2.2 Constraints

The existing brick boundary wall partly acts as a retaining structure with the play space ground levels being approximately 300mm above Cathcart Street footpath. It is decided therefore not to impose any further load on this wall, with the canopy designed as a freestanding structure.

The visual impact of the canopy from Cathcart Street footpath is to be minimised, but without creating an oppressive over enclosed space for student use.

### 2.3 Design

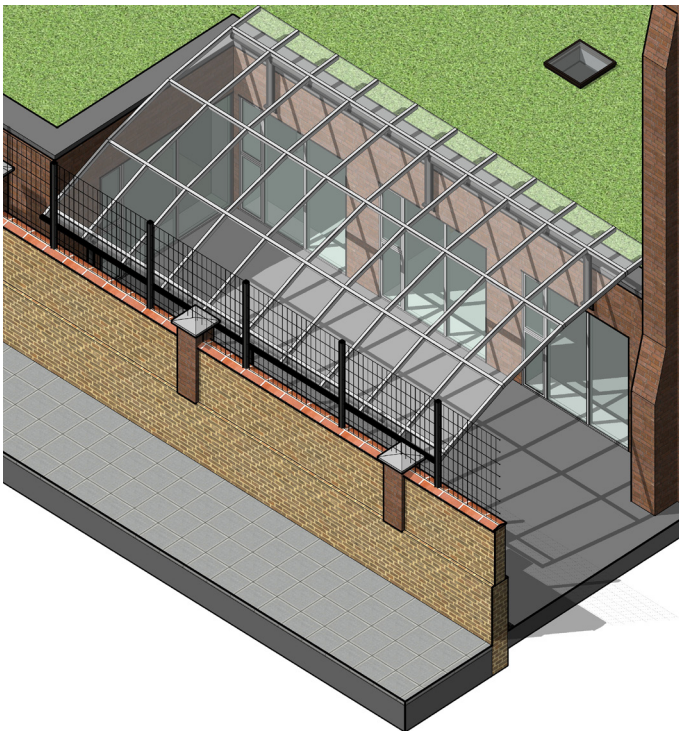
The proposal therefore is for a slightly curved sloping canopy, which sits 450mm away from the boundary wall, supported on three circular columns, and rises up and oversails the single storey parapet. The covered area is approximately 5m wide by 10metres long, and provides covered space allowing for good natural air flow under.



## 2.4 Appearance

The canopy appears as a shallow curved floating structure, set behind the boundary wall copings and rising just above the single storey classrooms parapet. The height and shape of the canopy therefore minimises the visual impact seen from the public realm. The canopy structure comprises three 100mm diameter steel freestanding columns at the down slope with three steel brackets supported off the single storey parapet brickwork at the oversailing edge of the canopy.

The primary column and beam structure consists of minimally sized circular and square hollow steel sections, powder coated in a neutral tone, supporting panels of lightweight, translucent self-cleaning polycarbonate. (see supporting sectional drawings for more detail).



1. Birds eye view of the proposed canopy

## 3.0 HERITAGE NOTE

### 3.1 Background History

The Collège Français Bilingue de Londres is a Grade II Listed Building, set within the Inkerman Conservation Area. Originally designed by the School Board of London Architect, E R Robson, built in 1873-4, it has subsequently undergone changes, alterations and additions. The original 1874 building fronted Mansfield Place (later renamed Holmes Road) was further extended along Holmes Road toward George IV PH in 1891. Further extensions were added along Cathcart Street and subsequently in Willis Road after WW1.

More recently, following a period of the site being unoccupied, the French Education Charitable Trust purchased the property and were granted Listed Building Consent and Planning Permission for major internal and external renovation and new build extensions for the proposed Collège Français Bilingue de Londres school, which opened in 2011.

### 3.2 The Setting

The immediate setting for the proposed canopy relates solely to the 2011 extension at the SE end of Cathcart Street. The red brick single storey L-shaped classroom wing together with the existing two-metre high boundary wall define the area in which the canopy sits. The line of mature trees in the adjacent footpath form a nature screen to this part of the site.

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### 3.3 Impact on the Historic Setting

The proposed canopy causes no negative impact on the historic setting. The canopy makes no point of contact with the original period architecture, and is screened behind the existing brick boundary and existing run of trees.

The screening, low scale and transparent nature of the canopy makes it recessive, which does not in any way compete or encumber the grand scale and solidity of the original architecture.



1. View of proposed canopy as seen along Cathcart Street footpath



2. View toward Cathcart Street site

## 4.0 CONCLUSION

The proposed canopy is a necessary but unobtrusive addition to the site, which will provide benefit and enhancement to teaching and recreational activities of CFBL. It is an independent, lightweight structure which will add positive visual counterpoint to the larger scale and robust period architecture.