

Project Number 6402

DESIGN STATEMENT

**Proposed Nursery School,
No. 81 Belsize Park Gardens, London for
Care Concern Nurseries Ltd.**



Fig 1: Entrance elevation - view from Belsize Park Gardens looking south west



1.00 Introduction

This Design and Access Statement has been prepared in accordance with PAS and CAB guidance notes.

It should be read in conjunction with the Conservation Statement, as the Conservation Statement describes the context and significance in greater detail.

2.00 Context of Site and its Surroundings

The site is number 81 Belsize Park Gardens and has D2 use class, most recently used as a gym and sports club.

The site is a linear arrangement bound by existing residential properties and gardens, with a narrow frontage to Belsize Park Gardens.

The site is accessed from Belsize Park Gardens and also has a means of escape to the lane called Lancaster Stables.

3.00 Physical Context

There is a small area of hardstanding to the north at the front entrance area.

The site is bounded to the west by immediately adjoining residential terraced buildings.

There is a private garden immediately to the west and the existing building has a limited number of windows looking to this garden.

There is a private courtyard to the south of the narrow southerly façade.

4.00 Existing Buildings

The existing buildings has a linear form, containing a variety of sport, gymnasium, spa, changing and related facilities.

There is a swimming pool in a rectangular portion to the west of the linear block. The pool occupies the space which was formally a car repair workshop.

The existing buildings are in a reasonable state of repair.

5.00 Social & Economic Context

The surrounding area is predominately residential. In the 2011 census the population of Belsize was 12,702.

The completed project will provide a useful facility for local residents, providing a high quality nursery school environment for early years learning.

6.00 Planning, Policy and Involvement



The site is in a conservation area and the Conservation Statement describes the response to this in greater detail.

The proposals respond in particular to Camden Planning Guidance BE9 which seeks that new development should be seen as an opportunity to enhance the conservation area.

7.00 Evaluation and Design

The applicant's market appraisal concludes that there is a need in the area for a nursery school to accommodate pre-school infants.

The design has been developed to provide high quality play and learning spaces, utilising the existing volumes while repurposing these to a learning environment.

The proposals remove the swimming pool in order to create a "secret garden". This will be enclosed at the existing walls but will be open ended, naturally screened from nearby houses to maintain privacy and provide a safe environment for organised outdoor play/learning.

The opportunity is being taken to improve the appearance of the northern façade by the following measures:-

7.01 Introduction of a feature window of a scale and proportion sympathetic to the surrounding houses.

7.02 Removal of unsympathetic lean-to roof in favour of a new canopy to protect the entrance from the elements.

7.03 Integration of existing unsightly outhouses into the overall canopy composition.

Limited areas of new glazing are proposed to the easterly façade, with obscured glazing in order to maintain privacy for the private gardens, while providing daylight to the nursery areas and maintaining acoustic and fire performance of the façade.

8.00 Use

The development will provide D1 children's nursery.

This will provide flexible child support for local families, with rooms suitable for babies, toddlers and pre-school children.

The accommodation will also provide space for staff training.

9.00 Amount

The development will provide nursery accommodation for 120 infants.

The development boundaries are well defined, remaining within the existing envelope while improving the northerly hard standings.

10.00 Layout

The layout reutilises the existing buildings.



The secret garden makes good use of the historical enclosed former car repair workshop (presently occupied by the swimming pool).

Internal reconfiguration provides for wheelchair access throughout by means of a new lift (contained within the existing volume).

The design reflects a human scale in keeping with the setting and proposed use.

11.00 Landscaping

The existing front hard standings will be improved. The secret garden will be landscaped appropriately for organised play.

12.00 Appearance

The existing building will be retained, with minimal interventions to provide an improved appearance on the northerly façade facing Belsize Park Gardens.

13.00 Access

The existing pedestrian access points will be retained.

The existing building does not presently have disabled access to the upper levels.

Disabled access will be provided throughout the building, with a new lift and gentle gradients to reflect the nature of the building user group.

14.00 Plant

The existing building has a significant amount of external plant, relating to its use as a sports facility and swimming pool.

Where this assessed as redundant it will be removed.

More efficient modern equipment will be installed in its place.

The energy demand of the building will be significantly reduced under the new use as the heating infiltration associated with the pool will no longer be required, nor will the significant ventilation associated with the pool environment.