

ST. CHRISTOPHER'S SCHOOL RECEPTION CLASSROOMS PROJECT HERITAGE STATEMENT

January 2021

PRE-APPLICATION STAGE

Introduction

This Heritage Statement accompanies an application for planning permission and demolition of buildings in a Conservation Area.

The location of proposals and their extent is shown the Design & Access Statement and plans submitted with the application.

The National Planning Policy Framework sets out the Government's policies on different aspects of spatial planning in England. The NPPF sets out planning policies on the conservation of the historic environment. Paragraph 128 of the National Planning Policy Framework states that:

"In determining applications, local planning authorities should require an 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."

The alterations and impact of the demolitions are considered to be not harmful, and this Heritage Statement is considered to be proportionate to this scale of intervention.

The author of this Heritage Statement, Edward Toovey MA Dipl Arch [Cantab] is an RIBA Chartered Architect based in London with over 35 years experience.

Edward Toovey has worked over the years on many high quality architectural projects in UK, Ireland and Australia including residential and commercial, but particularly education and independent schools. Projects he has led have won outstanding recognition including Royal Fine Art Commission Building of the Year, Civic Trust Award, Building Council for Office National Award, Green Office of the Year, RIAI National Regional Award, RAIA National Refurbished Building, President's Award.

Independent school buildings and master-planning have been a particular specialism since 1989, with many projects in challenging, sensitive historic sites and conservation areas, including working with or adjacent to listed buildings.

Projects of this nature, all in Conservation Areas, include:

- Grade II* Listed historic house conversion in Reigate Surrey for Canon UK
- Grade II Listed historic building conversion for classrooms and Lodge refurbishment and extension at University College School, Hampstead
- Grade II Listed historic building alterations at Sussex House School in Cadogan Place, London
- Grade II Listed historic building conversion and extension at Uppingham School, Rutland
- Grade II* Listed historic building conversion and extension at Rugby School, Rugby
- Grade II Listed building refurbishment and extension at Chigwell School, Essex
- Grade II Listed building refurbishment and extension at UCS School, Hampstead
- Buildings connected to listed building at Highgate School, Highgate

Site Location & Description

The site lies within the Fitzjohns Netherhall Conservation Area, on private land at the north side of the School premises.

The demolitions are partial only and refer to the following:

1. Partial demolition of the south façade of two existing classrooms and plantroom
2. Partial demolition of a roof area adjacent to the classrooms
3. Alterations to external works, a short pedestrian ramp and stair.

Description of Development

The proposals aim to form an extension that creates more floor area and toilet accommodation for two classrooms, in order to use the rooms for Reception Year.

There are also proposals for external hard landscaping and use, to convert an existing car park area into a playground for Reception Year pupils.

Consultation

Pre-application advice has been received from Camden Council.

Assessment of Heritage Assessment

Significance of Heritage Asset: main building

The classroom and plantroom block was constructed in 2007/08. The building is clad in vertical and horizontal stained timber boarding, with polyester powder coated grey aluminium windows and doors.

Although it is considered to be a building of good design, it has no special status or historic significance, and the new extension will be in keeping with the retained building. The aims sustainability aims of the original design are also an important part of the new design strategy.

For this reason it is not considered that the demolitions will cause any harm or diminish the qualities of the building.

Significance summary

The demolitions proposed will allow the new extension building of high quality design and materials, purpose-designed for this context, with the creation of a new outdoor play space. The service yard area will be re-organised and enhanced. This will improve the context of the School and thereby the Conservation area. No harm is done by the minor demolitions.

Assessment of impact

All necessary large scale plans, elevations, sections, context drawings and perspectives included with the application drawing set to scale show the impact of the proposed works on the site, its setting and wider context.

Conclusions

The significance of the buildings has been appraised and they are considered to be of little Heritage or architectural significance. Nevertheless they are buildings considered to be of good, thoughtful and well-planned design, and the new extensions will both minimise any harm and aim to continue the spirit of the original buildings. For example the existing canopy structure and awning is being removed, but will be adapted and replaced in this design to the new elevations. Also the materials and proportions of the original are the reference point for the new design.

The proposals have been carefully assessed against the criteria of the National Planning Policy Framework and found to be of no harm and bring positive benefit.

Photographs of buildings and site



Photo of existing classroom block – the south wall is to be demolished for the new extension



Photo of existing link area roof, ramp and stairs