

## REPORT FOR CONSIDERATION AT PLANNING SUB-COMMITTEE

### 1. APPLICATION DETAILS

**Reference No:** HGY/2015/3467

**Ward:** Noel Park

**Address:** Alexandra Infants and Junior School Western Road N22 6UH

**Proposal:** New stair to existing caretaker's building to facilitate change of use from former caretaker's flat to educational spaces

**Applicant:** Mr Simon Beames - Kirkland Fraser Moor

**Ownership:** Council

**Case Officer Contact:** Sarah Madondo

**Date received:** 23/11/2015

**Last amended date:** 22/02/2016

**Drawing number of plans:** APS 01 - APS 03, APS 04 Rev A, APS 05 Rev A, APS 06 Rev A.

1.1 The application is being referred to the Planning Sub-Committee as the proposal relates to land within the Council's ownership.

### 1.2 SUMMARY OF KEY REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATION

- The scheme accords with the Council's aims to support the provision of a high standard of education in the borough.
- The design and appearance of the proposal is considered to be high quality causing less than substantial harm to the character, appearance and setting of the adjoining conservation area.
- This harm has been given considerable weight and it is considered it is outweighed by the overall benefits of the proposal by providing additional educational space.

### 2. RECOMMENDATION

2.1 That the Committee resolve to GRANT planning permission and that the Head of Development Management is authorised to issue the planning permission and impose the conditions and informative set out below.

#### Conditions

- 1) Development begun no later than three years from date of decision;

- 2) In accordance with approved plans;
- 3) Materials submitted for approval;

**Informative**

- 1) Hours of construction;

**CONTENTS**

- 3.0 PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT AND SITE LOCATION DETAILS
- 4.0 CONSULTATION RESPONSE
- 5.0 LOCAL REPRESENTATIONS
- 6.0 MATERIAL PLANNING CONSIDERATIONS
- 7.0 RECOMMENDATION
- 8.0 APPENDICES:

Appendix 1: Plans and images

### **3. PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT AND LOCATION DETAILS**

#### **Proposed development**

- 3.1 The proposal is for the erection of a new stair to the existing caretaker's building to facilitate a change of use from the former caretaker's flat to educational spaces. The application has been amended from that submitted changing the facing material of the extension from brick to glazing.

#### **Site and Surroundings**

- 3.2 Alexandra Primary School is in Noel Park Ward and occupies a prominent corner plot on an acute bend on Western Road. The School designed by G.E.T Lawrence, dates from the turn of the 20th Century and comprises of two principle school buildings with various out-buildings arranged around a yard. The site is in the Wood Green Common Conservation Area. The school is part of a cluster of large institutional buildings with a distinct character, contrasting with the rest of the conservation area.
- 3.3 The school buildings are typical for their age and constructed in traditional facing brick and stone mouldings. The proposal relates to the school's former caretaker's residence located within the school grounds. This building was built at the same time as the main school building and is in good condition.
- 3.4 To the rear of this school site is the Chocolate Factory and a number of employment buildings. The Chocolate Factory provides studio and start up units for small businesses directed at artists and creative businesses.

#### **Relevant Planning and Enforcement history**

- 3.5 The site has been subject to numerous planning applications the most recent of which include:

HGY/2012/1981- Erection of an extension to accommodate a nursery and a new extension to form new entrance – Approved 09/12/2012

HGY/2012/1280 - Relocation of kick-about area and temporary erection of mesh fence and new gates to the school boundary wall –Approved 20/08/2012

HGY/2011/0767 - Formation of new entrance to the North Elevation of Alexandra Primary School by alterations to an existing window opening and installation of a new aluminium walkway from the existing ramp to the new entrance. – Approved 09/06/2011

### **4.0 CONSULTATION RESPONSE**

4.1 The following were consulted regarding the application:

- 1) Conservation Officer
- 2) Transportation

4.2 The following responses were received:

Transportation – The proposed change of use of the caretaker's house to educational space does not have any material transport implications. There is no suggestion of an increase in the pupil or staff population. There is no change to the existing access arrangements. The proposal therefore will not create any material harm to the adjoining road network. Transport officers do not wish to object to the proposal.

Conservation - The revised design is considered to be a satisfactory solution which ensures that the building remains safe and useful without causing significant harm to the character and appearance of the conservation area. Require details of proposed materials to be submitted as part of the application, including a specification and/or manufacturers details for the glass curtain walling and fixtures. Use of inappropriate materials could cause harm to the character and appearance of the conservation area.

## **5. LOCAL REPRESENTATIONS**

5.1 The application has been publicised by way of 1 site notice displayed in the vicinity of the site and 69 letters. No representations were received.

## **6. MATERIAL PLANNING CONSIDERATIONS**

6.1 The main planning issues raised by the proposed development are:

1. Principle of development;
2. Siting and design;
3. Impact on the character and appearance of the adjoining conservation area;
4. Other issues.

### **Principle of development**

6.2 Local Plan Policy SP0 supports the broad vision of the NPPF, and states that the Council will take a positive approach to reflect the presumption in favour of sustainable development. Permission will be granted by the Council unless any benefits are significantly outweighed by demonstrable harm caused by the proposal.

6.3 Paragraph 72 (proactive approach to meeting the need for new school places) of the NPPF recognises that the planning system can play an important role in

facilitating social interaction and creating healthy, inclusive communities. London Plan policy 3.18 lends support to proposals that enhance education provision and serve to meet the demands of a growing population. Local Plan policy SP16 seeks to ensure the appropriate improvement and enhancements of community facilities. Draft DM DPD policy - DMM59 'Managing the quality of Community Infrastructure' states that proposals for new and extended social and community facilities community facilities will be supported by the Council subject to having no significant adverse impact on road safety or traffic generation; and the protection of amenity of residential properties.

- 6.4 At ground level the building is currently used as a specialist classroom space and benefits from generous sized windows and high to floor ceilings. Above this space are two further levels which are constrained in terms of use by reason of a two stage internal stair which is not compliant with current guidance.
- 6.5 The conversion of the upper floor space in question to educational spaces is considered acceptable and needed to provide urgent accommodation to fulfil space demands for this school, which occupies a tightly filled and constrained site. There will be no increase in the pupil or staff population.

### **Siting and design**

- 6.6 Local Plan Policy SP11 states that all new development should enhance and enrich Haringey's built environment and create places and buildings that are high quality, attractive, sustainable, safe and easy to use. Development shall be of the highest standard of design that respects its local context and character and historic significance, to contribute to the creation and enhancement of Haringey's sense of place and identity, which is supported by London Plan Policies 7.4 and 7.6.
- 6.7 In order to access the space in question a new stair is required to allow safe access to and from the upper levels. This will be accommodated within a glazed side extension which will sit flush with the facade of the existing building. New openings will be created in the flank wall of the caretaker's building to provide appropriate access onto the stair.
- 6.8 The extension was amended from that initially submitted, a solid/ brick faced extension to a glazed extension, so as to create a clear visual difference between the old and the new. As such the extension now clearly reads as a modern architectural addition separate from the existing building and not a continuation of the facade as earlier presented. The amended design also means that the symmetry of the original building is better respected.
- 6.9 The roof profile of the extension will sit below the eaves height of the main building to ensure it is subordinate in nature. The existing decorative door surround will be reused on the front facade of the new extension.

- 6.10 The applicant's have specified the system that will be provided to create a minimal visual mass in relationship to the existing care takers building. The glazed panels will span between floors with no interim transom, to create as much transparency as possible. The panels of glass will be double glazed with a low e coating on surface 3, to prevent too much heat. The final manufacturer's details for the glass curtain walling and fixtures will be required to be submitted to the LPA for approval.

### **Impact on the character and appearance of the adjoining conservation area**

- 6.11 The caretaker's building sits just outside of the conservation area boundary, but the proposed new extension would abut the school yard and both front and side elevations would be clearly visible from the street. As such it forms part of the setting of the Wood Green Common Conservation Area.

- 6.12 There is a legal requirement for the protection of the Listed Building and Conservation Area and Historic Park. The Legal Position on the impact on these heritage assets is as follows, and Sections 66(1) and 72(1) of the Listed Buildings Act 1990 provide:

“In considering whether to grant planning permission for development which affects a listed building or its setting, the local planning authority or, as the case may be, the Secretary of State shall have special regard to the desirability of preserving the building or its setting or any features of special architectural or historic interest which it possesses”.

“In the exercise, with respect to any buildings or other land in a conservation area, of any functions under or by virtue of any of the provisions mentioned in subsection (2), special attention shall be paid to the desirability of preserving or enhancing the character or appearance of that area.” Among the provisions referred to in subsection (2) are “the planning Acts”.

- 6.13 The Barnwell Manor Wind Farm Energy Limited v East Northamptonshire District Council case tells us that "Parliament in enacting section 66(1) did intend that the desirability of preserving listed buildings should not simply be given careful consideration by the decision-maker for the purpose of deciding whether there would be some harm, but should be given “considerable importance and weight” when the decision-maker carries out the balancing exercise.”

- 6.14 The Government in the case of the Queen (on the application of The Forge Field Society) v Sevenoaks District Council says that the duties in Sections 66 and 72 of the Listed Buildings Act do not allow a Local Planning Authority to treat the desirability of preserving of listed buildings and the character and appearance of conservation areas as mere material considerations to which it can simply attach such weight as it sees fit. If there was any doubt about this before the decision in

Barnwell, it has now been firmly dispelled. When an authority finds that a proposed development would harm the setting of a listed building or the character or appearance of a conservation area or a Historic Park, it must give that harm considerable importance and weight. This does not mean that an authority's assessment of likely harm to the setting of a listed building or to a conservation area is other than a matter for its own planning judgment. It does not mean that the weight the authority should give to harm which it considers would be limited or less than substantial must be the same as the weight it might give to harm which would be substantial. But it is to recognise, as the Court of Appeal emphasized in Barnwell, that a finding of harm to the setting of a listed building or to a conservation area gives rise to a strong presumption against planning permission being granted. The presumption is a statutory one, but it is not irrebuttable. It can be outweighed by material considerations powerful enough to do so. An authority can only properly strike the balance between harm to a heritage asset on the one hand and planning benefits on the other if it is conscious of the statutory presumption in favour of preservation and if it demonstrably applies that presumption to the proposal it is considering.

- 6.15 In short, there is a requirement that the impact of the proposal on the heritage assets be very carefully considered, that is to say that any harm or benefit needs to be assessed individually in order to assess and come to a conclusion on the overall heritage position. If the overall heritage assessment concludes that the proposal is harmful then that should be given "considerable importance and weight" in the final balancing exercise having regard to other material considerations which would need to carry greater weight in order to prevail.
- 6.16 The caretaker's house reflects the design, materials and architectural quality of the other school buildings on this site. It is part of a cluster of school buildings with group value.
- 6.17 The scheme as amended will provide an interesting contrast with the existing building clearly distinguished, whilst at the same time preserving the visual integrity of the original.
- 6.18 The Council's Conservation Officer views the revised design to be a satisfactory solution which will ensure that the building remains safe causing less than substantial harm to its character and appearance and the setting of the conservation area.
- 6.19 The Conservation Officer indicates that while the facade of the proposed extension is not set back from the existing facade, the glass construction means that the extension would contrast with the existing building and read as a separate addition and not as a continuation of the original facade. The use of a transparent glass will mean that the original features, proportions and symmetry of the building would still be apparent.

- 6.20 The proposed extension as amended is deemed to be acceptable causing less than substantial harm to the character, appearance and setting of the adjoining conservation area. This less than substantial harm has been given substantial weight and is outweighed by the public benefit of the proposal; namely providing much needed educational space to this school.
- 6.21 As such the proposal is consistent with the legal tests outlined above and relevant planning policies - saved UDP Policy CSV5, Local Plan Policies SP12, London Plan Policies 7.4, 7.6 and 7.8 and SPG2 'Conservation and archaeology'.

### **Other issues**

- 6.22 The proposed change of use of the caretaker's house to educational space does not have any material transport implications. There will be no increase in the pupil or staff population. There is no change to the existing access arrangements. The proposal therefore will not create any material harm to the adjoining road network. The Council's Transport Team do not object to the proposal.
- 6.23 Given the nature of this site and the fact that there are no residential properties in the immediate surroundings of this site there will be no impact on residential amenity.

### **Conclusion**

- 6.24 The scheme accords with the Council's aims to support the provision of a high standard of education in the borough. The design and appearance of the proposal is considered to be high quality causing less than substantial harm to the character, appearance and setting of the adjoining conservation area. This harm has been given considerable weight and it is considered it is outweighed by the overall benefits of the proposal by providing additional educational space.
- 6.25 All other relevant policies and considerations, including equalities, have been taken into account. Planning permission should be granted for the reasons set out above. The details of the decision are set out in the RECOMMENDATION

## **7.0 RECOMMENDATIONS**

GRANT PERMISSION subject to conditions

Applicant's drawing No.(s)

Subject to the following conditions:



1. The development hereby authorised must be begun not later than the expiration of 3 years from the date of this permission, failing which the permission shall be of no effect.

Reason: This condition is imposed by virtue of the provisions of the Planning & Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 and to prevent the accumulation of unimplemented planning permissions.

2. The development hereby authorised shall be carried out in accordance with the following approved plans and specifications:

APS 01 - APS 03, APS 04 Rev A, APS 05 Rev A, APS 06 Rev A.

Reason: In order to avoid doubt and in the interests of good planning.

3. Notwithstanding the information submitted with this application, no above ground development shall take place until a specification and/or manufacturers details for the glass curtain walling and fixtures are submitted to, approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority.

Reason: In order to retain control over the external appearance of the development in the interest of the visual amenity of the area and consistent with Policy SP11 of the Haringey Local Plan 2013 and Saved Policy UD3 of the Haringey Unitary Development Plan 2006.

**INFORMATIVE:**

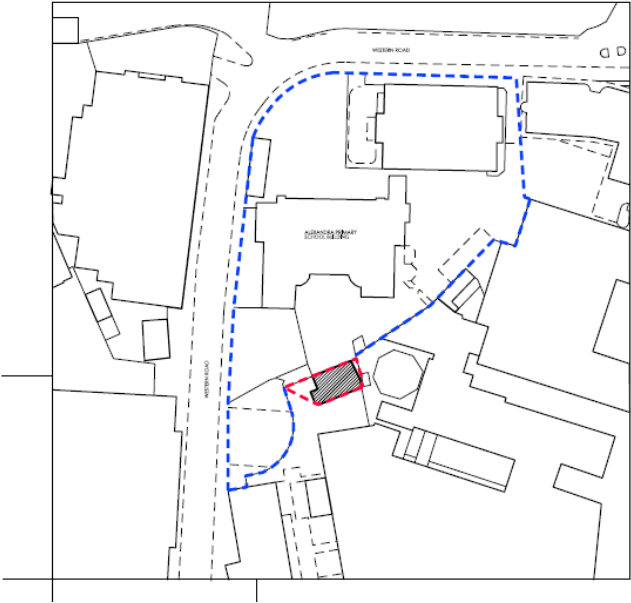
Hours of Construction Work: The applicant is advised that under the Control of Pollution Act 1974, construction work which will be audible at the site boundary will be restricted to the following hours:-

- 8.00am - 6.00pm Monday to Friday
- 8.00am - 1.00pm Saturday
- and not at all on Sundays and Bank Holidays.

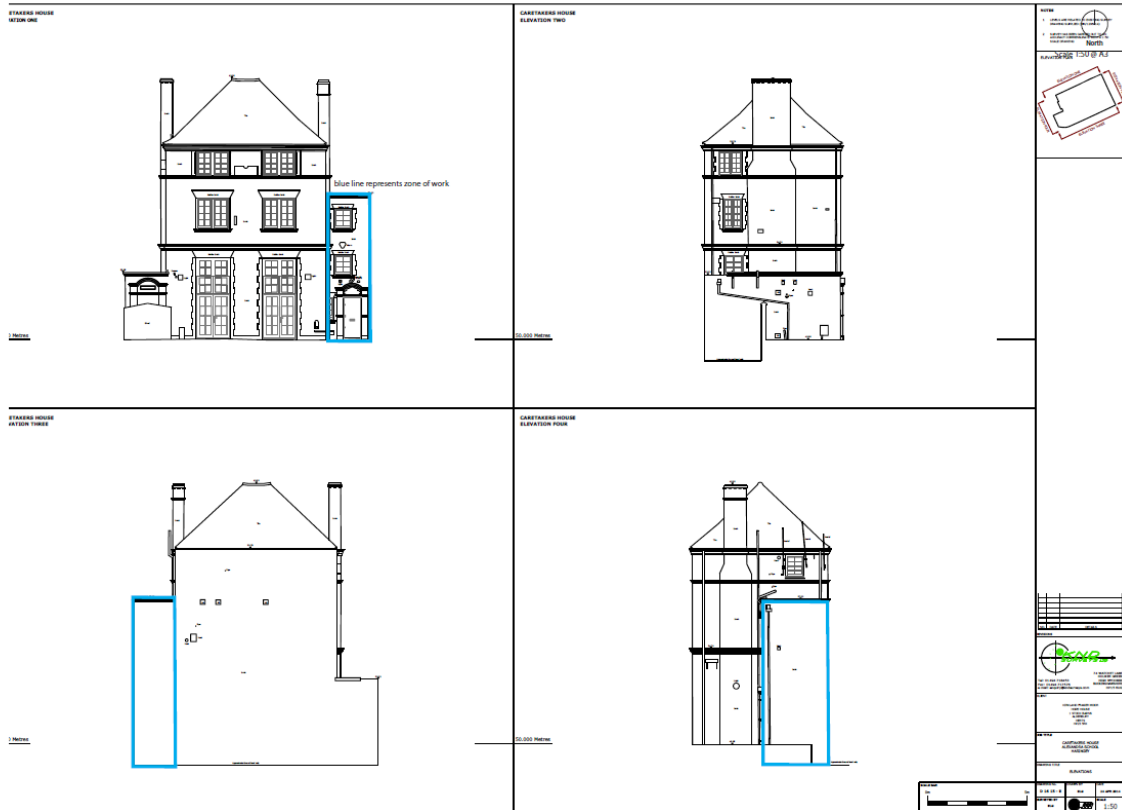
**Appendix 1 Plans and Images**



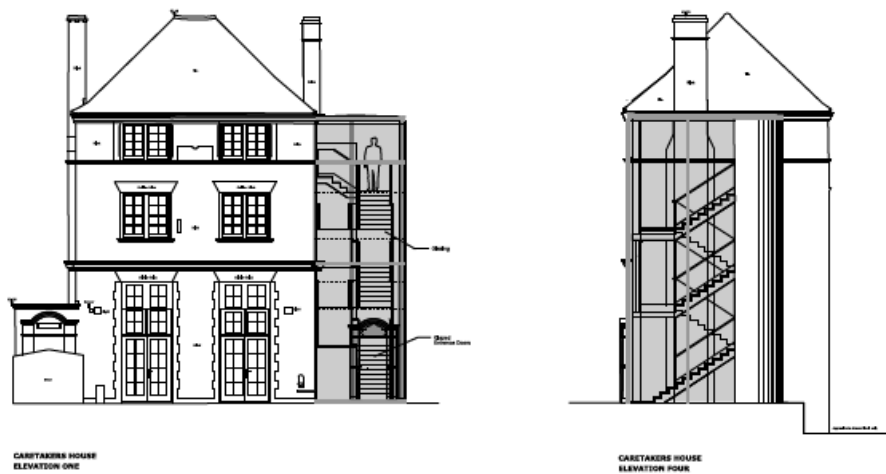
**Caretaker's building**



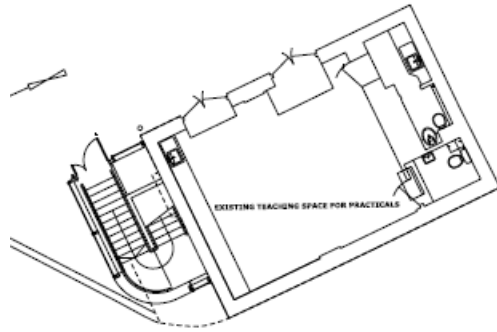
**Location Plan**



**Existing elevations**

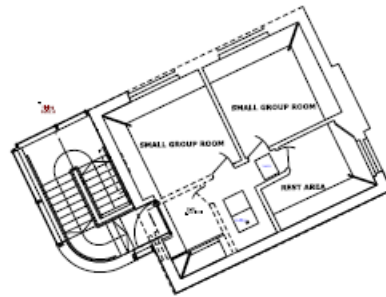
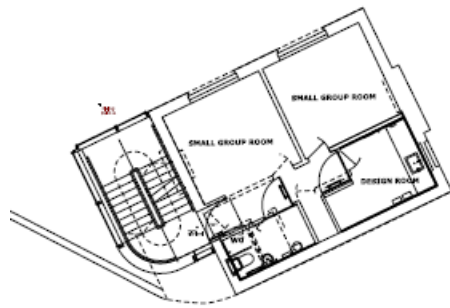


**Proposed front and side elevation**



CARPENTERS HOUSE

CARPENTERS HOUSE  
SECOND FLOOR PLAN



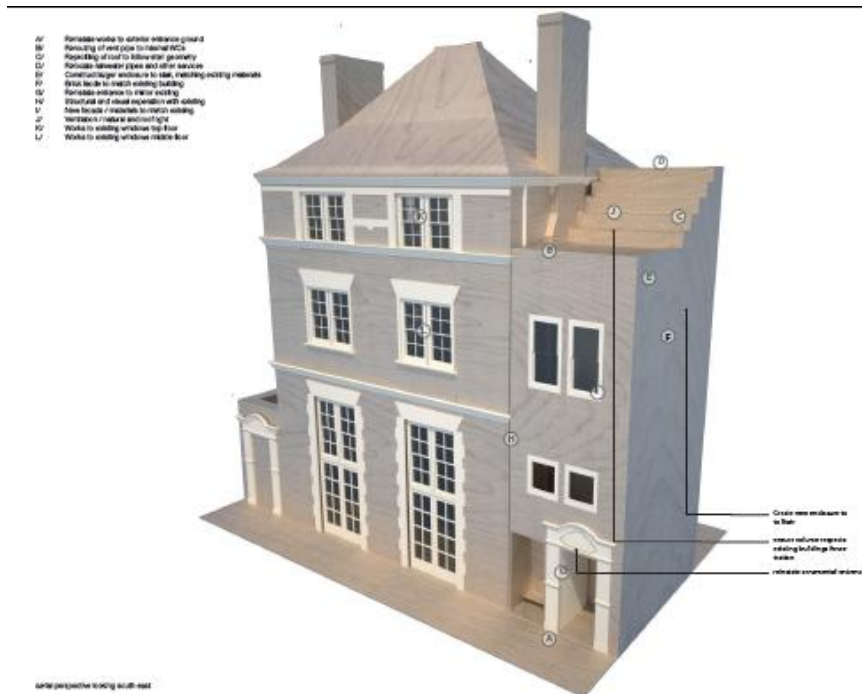
## Floorplans



## Visualisation



Visualisation



Visualisation of initial scheme