

Northwood College, Maxwell Road, Northwood, London HA6 2YE

Planning Statement

on behalf of Girls Day School Trust

October 2019



Contact

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Job reference no: 32404/3

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1.0 Introduction

- 1.1 This Planning Statement has been produced by Nexus Planning on behalf of Girls' Day School Trust (GDST) to support a planning application relating to the following proposed development:

Continued use of temporary classroom accommodation comprising of a two storey building of 1,600sqm for a further period of three years from 14 September 2020 (as previously approved by planning application references 2082/AOO/2014/600 and 2082/APP/2017/2086) at Northwood College, Maxwell Road, Northwood, London HA6 2YE ("the Site").

- 1.2 As agreed with the Local Planning Authority, and in addition to this Planning Statement, the planning application comprises the following:

- a. Completed application form and ownership certificates;
- b. Site Location Plan (Drawing no. 10 rev D);
- c. Proposed Ground Floor Plan (Drawing no. 246 13 01 Rev S-8);
- d. Proposed First Floor Plan (Drawing no. 246 13 02 Rev S-7); and
- e. Restoration Plan (Drawing no. 2207_AP (90) 201 Rev P1).

- 1.3 The Local Planning Authority has confirmed that owing to the nature of this application, the submission of technical reports are not required to support this application.

2.0 Site Description

- 2.1 The Site forms part of Northwood College and is located on the western side of Maxwell Road in Northwood.
- 2.2 The application site makes up the northern portion of what was the college's existing sports pitch, comprising an area of grassland and Astro turf tennis pitch.
- 2.3 The current use of the Site is as a temporary science block for the college which was originally approved for a temporary period from September 2014 – September 2017. This permission was then renewed for a further three years in September 2017. This is set out in detail within Section 3.
- 2.4 The main entrance to the Site is provided via Maxwell Road outside the main school building, which houses the main school reception.
- 2.5 The area surrounding the site is predominately residential in character with a range of housing types varying from large, two storey detached properties to 3-4 storey purpose built flats. The local centre (Northwood) is located to the north of site where a range of shops and services can be accessed within a short five minute walk. In terms of transportation, the centre is served by Northwood Underground Station (Metropolitan Line) and a number of buses including the 331 bus route (located on Maxwell Road) which directly serves the college from Uxbridge and Ruislip.

3.0 Planning History

3.1 This section of the Planning Statement considers the planning history of the Site. Although the wider college has a more extensive planning history, the application site has a more limited planning history. This is considered to be of direct relevance to the Proposed Development and is set out below:

Application Reference	Proposal	Decision
2082/APP/2018/3819	The erection of a 4 storey block to accommodate a new science and sixth form centre, and the re-surfacing of the play space fronting Vincent House to facilitate car parking with associated works.	Refused 20 th June 2019
2082/APP/2018/981	Details pursuant to Condition 6 (community use agreement) of planning permission ref: 2082/APP/2017/2086, dated 14-09-17 (Continued use of temporary classroom accommodation, comprising a two storey building of 1,600 sq. m for a further temporary period of three years	Granted 8 th October 2018
2082/APP/2017/2086	Continued use of temporary classroom accommodation, comprising a two storey building of 1,600 sq. m for a further temporary period of 3 years (as previously approved in planning permission ref: 2082/APP/600).	Granted on 14 th September 2017 for a period of three years
2082/AOO/2014/600	Demolition of existing storage sheds and construction of two storey building comprising 1,600 sq. m of temporary classroom accommodation, for a period of 3 years from 4 September 2014 (excluding construction/deconstruction period).	Granted on 8 th May 2014 for a period of three years

4.0 Proposed Development

- 4.1 The proposal is for the continued temporary use of the site for a science block within the college site. The proposed description of development is defined as:

"Continued use of temporary classroom accommodation comprising of a two storey building of 1,600sqm for a further period of three years from 14 September 2020 (as previously approved in planning application reference 2082/AOO/2014/600 and 2082/APP/2017/2086)."

- 4.2 The Science Block is required in this location for a temporary period to ensure that teaching accommodation remains in place whilst wider improvements to the college emerge. These longer term, permanent proposals will seek to increase and enhance the college's facilities, ultimately allowing for the removal of the temporary accommodation.
- 4.3 Following the submission and approval of the original application (2082/AOO/2014/600) it was not envisaged that the temporary planning permission would need to be extended. However the wider proposals took longer than anticipated to bring forward which resulted in the need to extend the temporary permission (2082/APP/2017/2086).
- 4.4 Following the renewal of the temporary permission, a planning application for a permanent science building was submitted on 29th October 2018. However, unfortunately, this application was refused at Planning Committee on 16th June 2019. The applicant is working closely with the Local Planning Authority to prepare a revised planning application for the permanent science block which it is anticipated will overcome the reasons for refusal. Therefore, this application seeks to further extend the temporary permission to allow for the planning and construction period of the new permanent proposal.
- 4.5 In the context of positive feedback from the Local Planning Authority on revised proposal for the permanent building, it is anticipated that a new planning application will be submitted by the end of 2019.
- 4.6 The Applicant is committed to bringing forward the permanent building. It is vital to the education of pupils at the school that a high quality learning environment is maintained and that the temporary

science block is retained whilst planning permission is secured and the permanent building is constructed.

Temporary Loss of Sports Facility

- 4.7 The Applicant has met with Sport England and the Local Planning Authority to discuss the continued siting of the temporary building on the tennis courts at the site. Feedback from both was positive, and the Council have confirmed that they will provide a letter of comfort to Sport England once the design of the proposed building has been further reviewed.
- 4.8 For the avoidance of doubt, the Applicant agrees to a condition requiring the tennis courts to be reinstated to their original condition once the temporary building has been removed from the site.
- 4.9 To mitigate the temporary loss of tennis courts a £1.5 million refurbishment of the swimming pool was completed in 2019. This included a new pool, plant, new LED lighting, competition grade lanes and starting blocks, poolside seating and a complete overhaul of all tiling.
- 4.10 The Multi Use Games Area (MUGA) is also proposed to be resurfaced with a new fence surrounding the area (Application Ref: 2082/APP/2019/2828).
- 4.11 Sports England has confirmed that these measures mitigate the temporary loss of the tennis courts.
- 4.12 In accordance with the approved Community Use Agreement (Application Ref: 2082/APP/2018/981), the following community sport users also have access to the school's sports facilities:
 - Push and Glide Swimming Club use the pool 7 days a week;
 - Watford Swimming Club use the pool 3 days a week;
 - Cricket Tikes cricket coaching;
 - Netball training academy run by parents which is open to pupils of other local schools;
 - Queensmead Netball League train on site;
 - Bushey Badders badminton group train on site; and
 - Parent Association run a badminton team which competes locally.

- 4.13 As detailed above, it is clear that the School are taking measures to mitigate the temporary loss of the tennis courts and ensure that the local community have access to a range facilities available at the school. That, alongside support from Sport England should we feel, render the continued temporary use of the courts for the siting of the science block acceptable.

5.0 Development Plan Documents

- 5.1 The London Borough of Hillingdon Development Plan is comprised of:
- a. The Hillingdon Local Plan: Part 1 Strategic Policies;
 - b. The Saved Policies of the Unitary Development Plan (2007); and
 - c. The London Plan (2016 as amended).
- 5.2 In addition to the Development Plan Documents, we consider the following to represent Material Considerations in the determination of this application:
- a. National Planning Policy Framework 2019 (NPPF)
 - b. National Planning Practice Guidance (NPPG)
 - c. The emerging Local Plan: Part 2 Development Management Policies
- 5.3 Relevant national and local level policies are summarised below. Section 6 then seeks to assess the proposed development against those policy objectives.

National Planning Policy Framework (2019)

- 5.4 The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) was adopted on 27th March 2012, and the Government published the updated NPPF in July 2018. This was then revised in February 2019. The NPPF sets out the Government's planning policies and how these are expected to be applied.
- 5.5 Paragraph 7 of the NPPF sets out that the purpose of the planning system is to achieve sustainable development. Paragraph 8 then identifies the three overarching objectives of sustainable development; the social, environmental and economic objectives.
- 5.6 Paragraph 11 of the NPPF outlines a presumption in favour of sustainable development, and for decision-taking this means:

"Approving development proposals that accord with an up to date development plan without delay."

5.7 Further paragraph 94 states:

"It is important that a sufficient choice of school places is available to meet the needs of existing and new communities. Local planning authorities should take a proactive, positive and collaborative approach to meeting this requirement, and to development that will widen choice in education. They should... give great weight to the need to create, expand or alter school through the preparation of plans and decision on applications."

Local Plan: Part 1 Strategic Policies (2012)

Policy HE1: Heritage

5.8 The Site is located in the Northwood Town Centre, Green Lane Conservation Area ("the Conservation Area") to which this policy relates. It states that the Council will conserve and enhance Hillingdon's distinct and varied environment, its settings and the wider historic landscape, which includes designated heritage assets such as, inter alia, Conservation Areas.

Policy BE1: Built Environment

5.9 This policy relates to the design of new development. In the context of the Site it is closely related to Policy HE1. The policy seeks to require all new development to improve and maintain the quality of the built environment in order to create successful and sustainable neighbourhoods, where people enjoy living and working and that serve the long-term needs of all residents. All new developments should achieve a high quality of design in all new buildings.

Policy EM1 - Climate Change Adaptation and Mitigation

5.10 This policy details a range of expectations of new development in order to adapt to climate change. The policy seeks in part, for climate change mitigation to be addressed at every stage of the development process by (in part), by ensuring development meets the highest possible design standards whilst still retaining competitiveness within the market.

Policy CI1 – Community Infrastructure Provision

- 5.11 This policy sets out the Council's approach towards new educational facilities. It states that the Council will ensure that community and social infrastructure is provided in Hillingdon to cater for the needs of the existing community and future populations by, inter alia, supporting extensions to existing schools and the development of new schools and youth facilities.

Saved UDP Policies (1998) (Saved 2007)

- 5.12 Policy R10 states that the Council will consider that proposals for new buildings for education will be acceptable in principle subject to other policies.

The London Plan (2016)

Policy 3.18 Education Facilities

- 5.13 This Policy adds considerable support to proposals that expand education facilities.
- 5.14 The planning decision section of Policy 3.18 states:

Development proposals which enhance education and skills provision will be supported, including new build, expansion of existing or change of use to educational purposes. Those which address the current and projected shortage of primary school places and the projected shortage of secondary school places will be particularly encouraged. Proposals which result in the net loss of education facilities should be resisted, unless it can be demonstrated that there is no ongoing or future demand.

In particular, proposals for new schools, including free schools should be given positive consideration and should only be refused where there are demonstrable negative local impacts which substantially outweigh the desirability of establishing a new school and which cannot be addressed through the appropriate use of planning conditions or obligations.

- 5.15 Although the wording of some elements of this policy is focused on the provision of new schools it gives an indication of the general thrust of London Plan policy on supporting education provision in the Capital.

Local Plan Part 2: Development Management Policies

- 5.16 At the time of writing, the Local Plan Part 2: Development Management Policies has undergone examination in public and is expected to be adopted by Full Council in January 2020. In accordance with Paragraph 48 of the NPPF (2019) Local Planning Authorities may give weight to relevant policies in emerging plans, with the more advanced the plan is, the greater the weight that may be given.
- 5.17 Although there are no specific policies which relate to the provision of education facilities, Policy DMC2 seeks the provision of new community infrastructure.

6.0 Planning Assessment

6.1 We consider the following to be key issues to consider in the determination of this application:

- a. Principle of Development
- b. Design and Heritage
- c. Sustainability
- d. Transport

Principle of Development

6.2 The Local Planning Authority has previously, through the two preceding applications, approved the principle of development and it is considered that the policy framework continues to support such a proposal in this location.

6.3 National Planning Practice Guidance (Paragraph 014 Reference Id: 21a-014-20140306) does not prevent temporary planning permission from being extended in circumstances where a clear rationale is provided such as temporary classrooms and school facilities.

6.4 We consider that it is justifiable to renew the temporary consent for the Proposed Development. Due to the refusal of application 2082/APP/2018/3819 the delivery of the permanent science accommodation has unfortunately taken longer than expected. However, as set out in Paragraph 4.7 above the Council are supportive of the revised scheme which will be submitted before the end of the year.

6.5 We consider that the principle of the development should be found to be acceptable.

Design and Heritage

6.6 The design of the temporary building is unchanged from that as approved in the two preceding applications 2082/AOO/2014/600 and 2082/APP/2017/2086.

6.7 As detailed within the Committee Report for the original application (2082/AOO/2014/600), the size and the height of the building has been kept to the minimum possible to provide the necessary

facilities. Its design is typical of that of a temporary classroom, and due to its temporary basis it is considered to be acceptable. Furthermore, the Council's Urban Design / Conservation Officer raised no objections to the design of the temporary classroom on either applications.

- 6.8 Accordingly, and in the context of consistency in decision making being a material planning consideration, we consider that the effects of the proposal on heritage assets should be found acceptable again in this case.

Sustainability

- 6.9 Due to the temporary nature of the proposed building on the Site, which will be removed once the permanent building is available, it is not considered viable to achieve significant energy savings on a short term proposal due to long term pay back periods associated with renewable energies.
- 6.10 Furthermore, the Council's Sustainability Officer raised no objections to the original application and was comforted by a letter from the school which identified their commitment to sustainability (application reference 2082/APP/ 2017/2086).
- 6.11 As such, we consider that the energy performance of the temporary building should be found to be acceptable.

Transport

- 6.12 The original application provided a Transport Statement which was updated for the renewal permission in 2017. The Transport Statements demonstrated that the proposed development would not cause any demonstrable harm or any issues in relation to highways and transportation. The renewal of the temporary permission would not result in any additional highways impacts.
- 6.13 Accordingly, we consider that the transportation impacts of the development should be found acceptable.

7.0 Summary and Conclusions

- 7.1 This Planning Statement supports a planning application for the renewal of the temporary classroom accommodation at Northwood College for a further three years from 14th September 2020.
- 7.2 This application has been submitted to ensure that Northwood College can continue to provide its students with a high quality learning environment while the permanent facilities on the site are being progressed. The Applicant is committed to providing the long term building on site for which an application is due to be submitted before the end of the year (following positive pre application discussions with the Council).
- 7.3 Positive pre-application discussions have been held with Sport England to discuss the temporary loss of the sports facilities. The school has undertaken enhancements to the existing facilities which are available to the local community (as agreed through the Community Use Agreement).
- 7.4 We have reviewed relevant policies of the Development Plan and other material planning considerations and have identified that there would be no conflicts. Temporary planning permission has been granted on two previous occasions and consistency in decision making is a material planning consideration. There have been no material changes in circumstances that should result in the Local Planning Authority making a different decision to those previously made in this case.
- 7.5 In conclusion, the Proposed Development complies with the Development Plan and national policy, constitutes sustainable development and therefore, we request that this application is approved without delay, in accordance with Paragraph 11 of the Framework.

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