
DESIGN AND ACCESS STATEMENT

Sant Nirankari Bhawan

MARCH, 2025

SANT NIRANKARI BHAWAN, CENTRE FOR ONENESS
Sipson Road, Hayes, UB3 5EU

Overview

This Design and Access Statement has been prepared to support the planning application for Building a New Community Hall at **International Nirankari Satsang Bhawan, Centre for Oneness**. The site is located at **Sipson Lane, Harlington, Hayes UB3 5EU**, within the jurisdiction of Hillingdon Borough.

Introduction

The purpose of this statement is to outline the design principles and concepts that have been applied to the proposed development.

We submit this planning application for build of a new Hall at Nirankari Bhawan, Hayes. We have in past discussed few options with Hillingdon planning team and option to build a sperate new Hall was agreed to be preferred way forward and to submit a planning application for same.

Previous Meeting with Duty Officer: Mr John Allum in October 2017 at which options were discussed to either:

1. Demolish and rebuild in contemporary style
2. Add extra halls/rooms on the sides and rear
3. Have a separate new hall

Option 3 was preferred. The principle of a freestanding building being erected on the green belt area was perceived as potentially permissible subject to planning application and approval which would allow the existing building to continue to be utilised.

The new building would not need to mirror the existing brick or style but could be of contemporary design or brick style as there are no other buildings in the vicinity which would be affected by the expansion.

Following further meetings with the Planning Dept in September 2018 where option 3 details were further discussed, it was agreed to submit a planning application detailing the background and information on the proposed build be attached.

We couldn't submit and progress with the application in recent years due to Covid and pandemic lockdowns and the usage of the centre was reduced and was not regular during 2019-2021, but since last 2-3 years the requirement to have proper hall space for holding the community congregations and social and welfare programmes and activities has risen again and hence recent discussion in 2024 with planning team suggested to submit the planning application for the preferred option of separate new Hall build.

Background to the Organisation

The Sant Nirankari Mission is a peaceful spiritual movement, uniting people across all communities for the good of humanity. The Mission believes in equality for all and living responsibly in society. Holding all religious and spiritual movements in equal and high regard, the Mission promotes the recognition of one formless power, 'Nirankar', in every individual, infused through every aspect of the universe.

The Mission has established Centers for Oneness across the world and run numerous projects and initiatives ranging from blood donation campaigns, tree plantation drives, well-being forums, youth engagement, pastoral support, various sporting events, and disaster relief.

1. The Sant Nirankari Mission UK (SNM) was registered in 1974 as UK charity bearing Charity number 503029. The SNM is a global spiritual movement, established in India in 1929. The Mission has 14 active centres in UK and approximately 3,000 global centres.

The existing Sipson Lane Branch have been serving the community from last 40 years since 1985, when the centre was established.

2. The SNM's ideology is to create a sense of harmony and oneness across all communities through its spiritual and social initiatives worldwide. In accordance with the SNM's core values, people of all faiths and background attend regular gatherings to share their experiences of the One God under whose protection and grace we all co-exist.

3. We consistently have people of Hindu, Christian, Sikh, Buddhist and other faiths coming together and have an open-door policy. The Mission welcomes all people of all backgrounds in the warm and cordial atmosphere found within its Centres.

4. The Mission has no paid employees. It operates on the strength of its dedicated volunteers, which includes its National Executive, Local Committees and other administrators. Volunteers participate to discharge all manner of functions and events, which are organised both at National and Local Levels.

Location

5. The site at Sipson Lane, Harlington is recorded by the Registrar General under the provisions of the Places of Worship Registration Act 1855 as The International Nirankari Satsang Bhawan as both a place of worship and for registration of marriages

6. The whole of the grounds hold significant spiritual importance being a site of international pilgrimage for the members from across the globe. Thousands of visitors per year pay homage at the site. It holds for them, special powers to grant fruition of their prayers through the Grace of the Almighty.

Existing Site and Activities

7. The building is designated under Serial No 222 - within the Heathrow Villages Ward under the London Borough of Hillingdon as Buildings of Architectural or Historic Importance. The building dates from 1884 and holds architectural significance; a stone plaque commemorates dedication of the operating theatre of the hospital at that site to the men of the parish of Hillingdon who laid down their lives in the Great War 1914 -1919 and holds significance as a Former Maternity Cottage Hospital. (A

Sant Nirankari Bhawan, Centre for Oneness, Sipson Lane, UB3 5EU – MA- March 2025

copy of the Statement of significance/ Reasons for designation Serial No 222 together with a copy of the image of the inscribed plaque mentioned is also attached.)

8. The ongoing upkeep of the buildings and land and the activities in the community have been and continue to be self-funded to date. The Site continues to be developed due to the growing needs of the community, but with complete sensitivity to the architectural value placed on the building and grounds by the parishioners of Hillingdon.

9. The social and welfare activities carried out from the Centre are a real beacon of hope within the local community and surrounding villages since the resurrection of this Heritage Building by the SNM. The opportunities that the SNM enables to devotees and local residents alike, of all ages and backgrounds provides a strong value-based life, particularly for the youngsters, who commit their time and efforts to meeting the objectives. The SNM branch in West London attracts members from all socio-economic backgrounds eager to involve themselves in community life. The practical implementation of the SNM ethos and philosophy creates such a beautiful public spirit which all communities so desperately need.

10. The Centre is a leading light in the South of England, which has the strongest connection to our International Community obviously because of its location in London. The Centre is well established for its charitable local and national community activities. It has received recognition and awards from the Borough of Hillingdon for the work of the Volunteers. Local Civic officers are all aware of the Missions numerous initiatives.

11. During the Olympic Games in London, an official Community Games in partnership with LOCOG was organised by the SNM which was attended by thousands of people.

12. Regular activities include

i. use by the National Blood Service as a Donation Centre every quarter,

ii. Monthly chiropractic sessions, health check-ups and health awareness sessions.

iii. Weekly Yoga

iv. street cleaning, river / canal cleaning

v. tree planting and environment conservation locally and nationally,

vi. disaster relief support locally and nationally, (Grenfell tragedy June 2017, Chertsey Flood Relief 2014, and in Yorkshire

vii. Support at local children's hospitals and hospices including distribution of Easter eggs and food parcels,

viii. Christmas Activities with local communities

ix. Annual music events, poetic symposiums, and national conventions on relevant themes

x. Organising Festivals and Sports events,

xi. Annual cricket – 'Oneness Match' with the Armed forces

xii. free communal meals after the regular gatherings

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The multitude of outputs of these activities is evidenced in the neighbourliness in the surrounding community across the villages as well as the significant positive impact on the local economy. The initiatives by the SNM with the armed forces have encouraged recruitment and ongoing support.

The SNM is recognised for its work across a whole range of activities, particularly focussed on peace across nations. The core ethos of SNM worldwide is of serving society and as a result is the beneficiary of numerous awards of which some are:

a) Satguru Baba Hardev Singh Ji Maharaj was posthumously awarded Supreme Spiritual Icon of the Year in New York in 2017

b) United Nations: SNM has special Consultative Status – 2012 In particular ECOSOC and its subsidiaries to achieve ‘Millennium Development Goals’ for the uplift of the world community.

For the continued contribution in higher responsibilities, the Mission was given the General Consultative Status in 2018 by UN

c) The Queens Award for Voluntary Services was bestowed to our branch in the West Midlands in 2015

d) The Bradford Branch secured the Duke of York’s Community Initiative Award also in 2015.

e) The London Centre has encouraged and supported the local youth volunteering team, which has been awarded the Hillingdon Youth Volunteering Team several times in recent years

Design

USE OF NEW PROPOSED BUILDING

- The multiple variety of activities at the site by SNM and the local community has reached a point whereby additional contemporary facilities are required, having outgrown the exiting extended facilities.
- The quarterly blood donation gathering alone sees the existing main hall and existing dining area completely taken over by donor beds and tea and biscuits requirement.
- We are therefore in need of a free-standing unit alongside the existing building, which would therefore retain the existing Architectural Interest Building for parallel use.
- The land adjacent to the current building (Sipson Lane) is very suitable. It has the potential to accommodate both the current and longer-term needs.
- The existing and new building would be used to expand the activities which already serve the local community with greater effectiveness.
- The additional multi-purpose building would be better able to accommodate more varied activities from those currently carried out to include wellbeing, and health related discussions and particularly for a variety of activities for the elderly and retired with a drop-in centre and library /reading area and exhibition area. Indoor sports, arts and recreational activities for youth could also be introduced making use of internal screening for the multiple activities to take place at the same time.

- The building would include a reception, meeting rooms, cloakroom, toilets, projection, AV Rooms, Hall and stores.

FREQUENCY OF USE

The existing Weekly Timetable of Activities is given below.

These would be extended to suit demand for the additional activities.

Sunday: 10AM to 1PM

Sunday Communal Meal - 1PM – 4PM

Wednesday and Friday: 7.00 – 9.00 pm

Wednesday and Friday Communal Meals – 8.30PM – 10.00PM

Saturday: 6.00 pm – 8.00 pm

Saturday Communal Meal (Occasionally) – 8PM – 9.30PM

Meetings and other community events are also held on an ad-hoc basis to suit the convenience and availability of the volunteers and administration teams.

Cleaning and maintenance are a regular occurrence by volunteers to maintain the high levels of health, safety and hygiene regulations.

Site Layout

The layout of the proposed development has been designed to maximize the use of the site while respecting the front road view of the building. Key features include:

- Building location at rear of the existing build.
- Having green spaces all around to enhance biodiversity.
- Access points for vehicles and pedestrians to ensure safe and convenient entry and exit.
- Ample parking space availability

Appearance

The appearance of the new hall build has been restricted to a single-storey, low pitched (flat roof) solution with parapet detail and remains subservient to the original building. It has been located to an area of the site which is at rear of the existing buildings.

The material selection of proposing local yellow brick to the build gives a resemblance to the original building, columns and aluminium powder coated windows and doors.

IMAGES OF EXISTING AND PROPOSED BUILDING

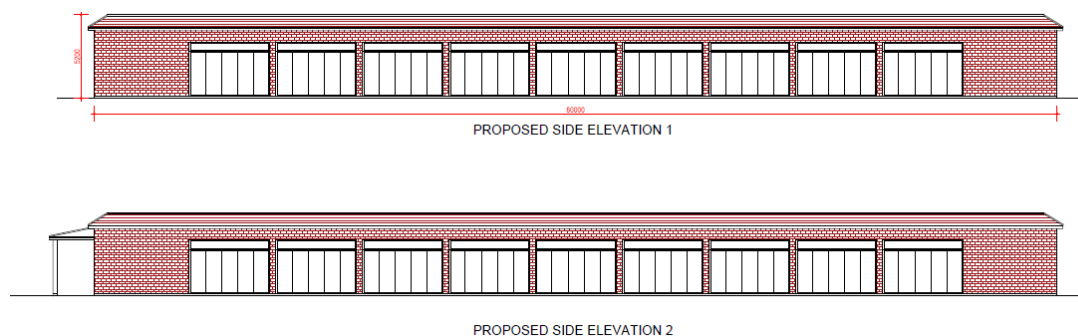
The following aerial view shows the existing building and the location of the proposed new stand-alone building.



PROPOSED NEW BUILD – OUTLINE ONLY



PROPOSED NEW BUILD – OUTLINE ONLY



Layout

The internal layout of the scheme has been led by the client, with the spaces and respective floor areas designed to meet the operational requirements of the Sant Nirankari Mission.

A cycle parking area will be adopted as part of the scheme, in addition to providing level access to the rear hall from the car park to improve access overall.

Landscaping

The majority of soft landscaping works will remain as existing with minor improvements not directly relevant to the application.

Construction (Design and Management) Regulations

The scheme has been designed to take account of the latest CDM regulations, and the safe construction of the building will be considered at all times.

Policy BE1 of the Hillingdon Local Plan: Part One - Strategic Policies require all

new development to maintain the quality of the built environment including providing high quality urban design. Furthermore, policies BE13 and BE15 of the Hillingdon Local Plan: Part Two - Saved UDP Policies resist any development which would fail to harmonise with the existing street scene or would fail to safeguard the design of existing and adjoining sites.

Also, the rear hall would be constructed using matching materials. It is considered that it would not have a negative impact upon the visual amenity of the site or the surrounding area in compliance with Policy BE1 of the Hillingdon Local Plan: Part One - Strategic Policies and policies BE13 and BE15 of the Hillingdon Local Plan: Part Two - Saved UDP Policies.

The proposed development would not have any overlooking and loss of privacy to adjoining occupiers. Therefore, it is considered that the proposed development would not constitute an unneighborly form of development in compliance with Policies BE19, BE20, BE21 and BE24 of the Hillingdon Local Plan: Part Two - Saved UDP Policies.

SUSTAINABILITY:

The proposed building has been designed to be environmentally, socially, and economically sustainable, and to ensure that the proposed build can make a positive influence over time. The selection of materials for construction will be influenced by the need to reduce carbon emission, energy conservation and whenever possible, use naturally occurring products from sustainable source in accordance with the Local plan approved policies.



The design will incorporate the following features:

- Use of high lumen/watt efficiency indoor lighting throughout.
- Purchase of materials from local suppliers to reduce transportation to the site that will also help in terms of lowering the fuel usage and reducing impact on the local environment.
- Low carbon design and construction, including low carbon renovation of the housing stock and provision of low carbon construction service and trades.
- Maximize natural light using detailed fenestration to reduce the loss of Energy (argon filled glass) and windows and doors.
- SMART HOME scheme will apply within this development.
- Low Energy AAA Rated appliances will be specified and installed.
- The front access with ramp will ensure that the access for all is ensured and the comfort of the specially enabled community members residents is ensured.
- Potential to have solar panels and the roof space to accommodate the storage battery system.
- In line with SUDS and sustainability, the rainwater falling on the roof would not go into the sewage system but would be harvested for other purposes and/ drain into the surrounding soil.
- The rainwater potentially be harvested into a tank and used for toilet flushes and add to sustainability using pumps powered by the solar system battery. Separate tank for the toilet output into a digester tank which natural microbes break down the waste so that water only is piped underground into the soil away from the building.

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE/ REASONS FOR DESIGNATION SERIAL NO 222

Review of Local List of Buildings of Architectural or Historic Importance

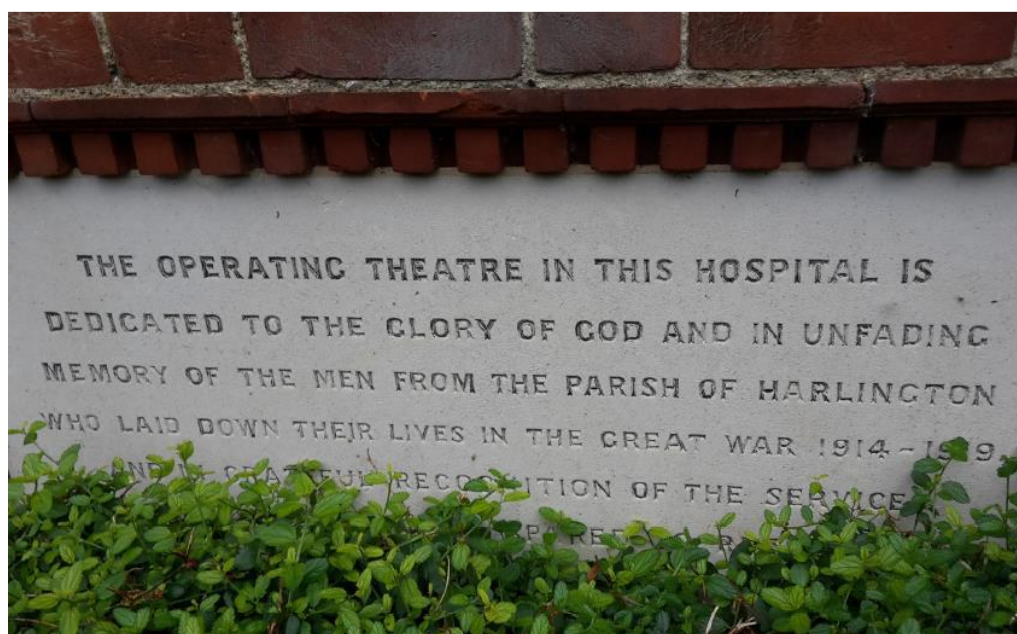
Building Name/No:	Sant Nirankari Bhawan (Former Cottage Hospital)	Serial No:	222
Address:	Sipson Lane, Sipson, UB3 5EU		
Ward:	Heathrow Villages	Use:	Religious/Community

<p>Photograph</p> 	<p>Statement of significance/ Reasons for designation</p> <p>Architectural: 1884. Two storey, stock brick and new tiled roof. Two prominent tile hung gables to centre, giving symmetrical appearance. Steeple and wings to side, two storey hip to one side and one and half storey to the other. Stone quoins to doors and windows on ground floor. Later front gabled porch. Extended early 1920s. Much altered.</p> <p>Townscape: Acts as a key landmark building. Contributes to the local character and street scene.</p> <p>Historical: Former Maternity Cottage Hospital, closed in 1974. Community associations.</p>
<p>Information provided by: Hayes and Harlington Local History Society</p> <p>Photograph: July 2008</p> <p>Location Map</p>  <p>© Crown copyright. London Borough of Hillingdon 1 000 19 222 2 009</p> <p>Authenticity (I.C): 1; Townscape (III.f): 2; Historical (IV.h): 2</p> <p>Total = 5</p> <p>Included in the Local List.</p>	

London Borough of Hillingdon

May 2010

STONE PLAQUE AT SNM PROPERTY, SIPSON LANE



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Access and Movement

Vehicular and Transport Links

There is direct vehicular access to the site off Sipson Lane.

There is sufficient vehicular parking on site.

The site is within a two-minute walk of bus stops.

A Cycle Parking (lockable) rack is to be located at the front of the property with final location to be determined

Inclusive Access

The main access for all parties is provided via the main front entrance which includes ramped provision for wheelchair users.

Internal doors will ensure inclusive access throughout the ground floor area.

There are further access points for deliveries and staff at various ground floor points.

This Design and Access Statement demonstrates that the proposed development has been thoughtfully designed to respect its context, provide high-quality living spaces, and promote sustainability and inclusivity. We believe the project will be a valuable addition to the area and contribute positively to the community.

Summary of Scheme Benefits

Assessments of the proposal conclude that the development will not have a detrimental effect on the surrounding properties. We regard the proposed development as an appropriate, sympathetic addition to the area, which will be well designed, sustainable and will be built to last. The proposal would comply with relevant planning policies and would not cause any demonstrable harm in planning terms.

The proposal will improve an existing asset.

The proposal has been developed to be sensitive to the historical importance of site.

The proposal is self-sufficient in terms of vehicular parking.

The proposal allows retention and expansion of an existing charitable. community facility and place of worship.

It is believed that the proposal is an appropriate solution for the site following site analysis and a detailed research and design development process.