

## References:

15 August 2022

App/M5450/Q/21/3281360 (Discharge of Section 106)

App/M5450/W/21/3275231 (Redevelopment)

App/M5450/Q/21/3281359 (Modification to Section 106)

Review of proposals and loss of amenity- Howard House, 56 Crown Street, Harrow on the Hill, HA2 0HR, adjoining proposed built site.

**Historical background:** The school continue to misrepresent the Oldfield House site as being an original part of the school estate and incorrectly states that the “immediate setting of the site is considered to be within the character of the Roxeth Hill conservation area due to the close setting of the buildings”. This is patently incorrect.

As demonstrated in their numerous historical plans Oldfield House and the proposed build site was not part of the school, which is based in Middle Road and part of the Roxeth Hill Conservation area. It is completely distinct from the school estate, separated by a country lane. It is part of Crown Street and was two residential properties (62 and 64 Crown Street) with large gardens, similar to our own, adjoining, property, Howard House, 56 Crown Street. The residential properties were bought by the school in the early 1960s and were knocked down in the early 1980s and the current Oldfield school house built in their place.

Historically, the site was, and remains, part of Crown Street and the Harrow on the Hill Conservation area. The current location and massing of the building reflects this. The current Oldfield House blends in with the residential properties of Crown Street by being neutral in character and appearing to be a large residential building on Crown Street rather than a school building. This was key to the original granting of planning permission to knock down the previous residential house and build the current Oldfield House in the 1980s. As a result the current Oldfield house fits in, and does not detract from, it's surroundings. Thus it was not planned to look like a school building, precisely because, it was not part of the original school estate but had residential origins.

Similarly, the original 62 and 64 Crown Street gardens have not been built on but have simply been used as the school playground. This was the only appropriate course of action as, due to the historical evolutionary nature of the buildings in Crown Street, the Oldfield House gardens/playground wrap around number 60 and adjoin our own garden (Howard House, 56 Crown Street, a Grade II listed building). This is also why the Oldfield House site does not contain any agreed extension to the school development footprint in the S106 agreement signed by the school a few years later in order to obtain a pecuniary advantage to them and support their massive re-development in 1995.

**Location of proposed building:** The problems with the scheme originate from the fact the proposed building is located in the wrong place, in the middle of what was 62 and 64 Crown Street’s garden and is currently the school play ground. It is thus contrary to the pattern of development in the area as demonstrated in the photo from our bedroom window below:



Any proposal should be located closer to Crown Street, addressing the street scene and not in the open land to the rear, next to our garden. In short any proposal should be in the general area of the current school building which is to be demolished.

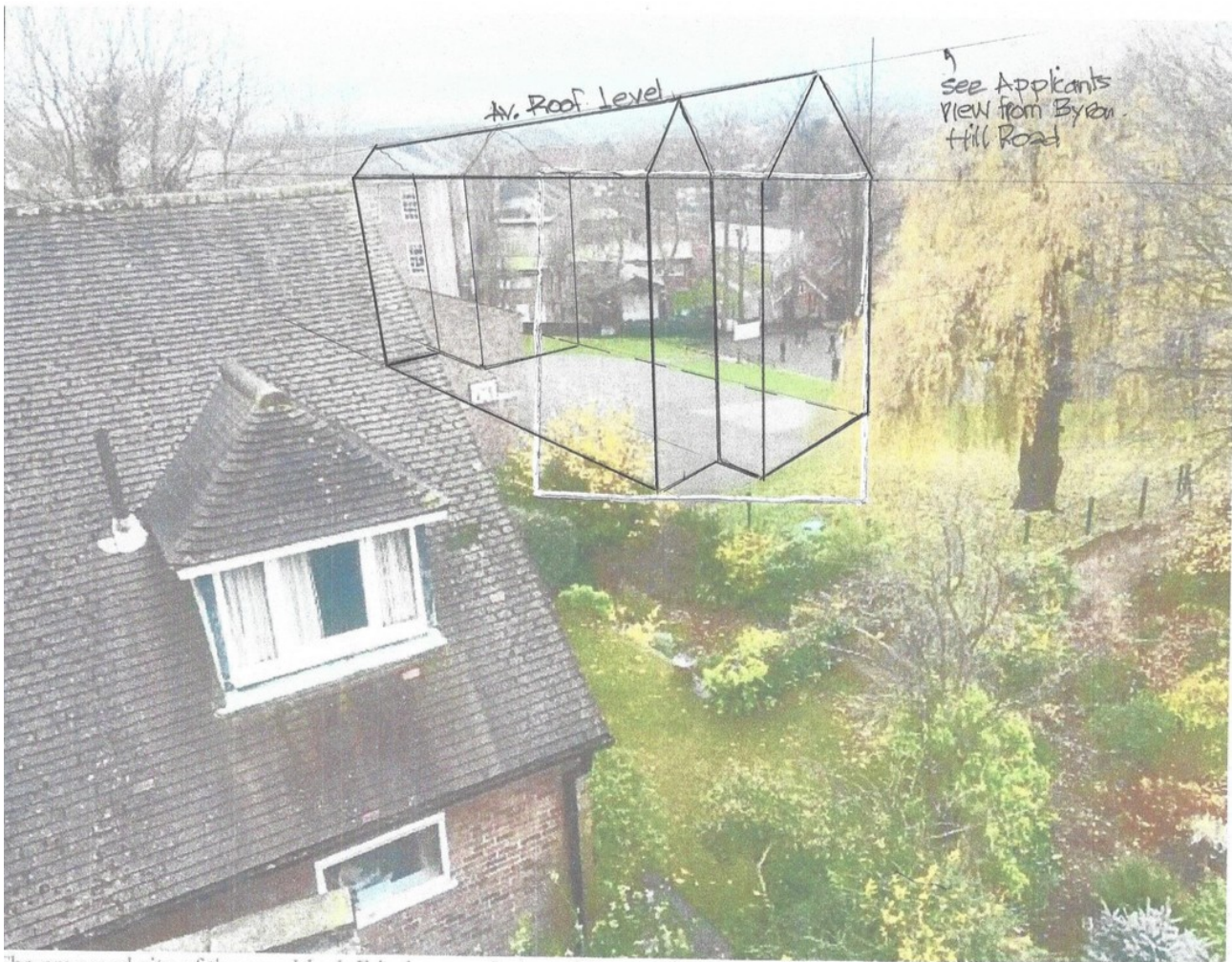
The reason for proposing a building in the proposed location is for non-planning related matters. John Lyon's Strategic Plan states: 'For minimum disruption to learning it would be better to build a new building alongside the current building (then demolish the old one), so that uninterrupted learning can continue during the year-plus construction period'. This is a short term operational issue for the School and should not be used to dictate the location of a building which would then have a long term detrimental impact on the area and our amenity.

The school have previously used two storey temporary classrooms sited at the bottom of the proposed site (Planning permission WEST/387/02) to decamp all the pupils currently residing in Oldfield House and fully refurbish the current building in 2002-2005. There is therefore a precedent for continuing the education of the children via the use of temporary classrooms. This would be a much better arrangement, and a much cleaner solution, than the school's proposed solution which would involve major, loud, dust generating building work and the associated health and safety issues, very close to the current building for a period of 12-18 months. In addition by building in the current building footprint there would be no necessity to contravene the previously agreed section 106.



### Height, bulk, massing

The height of the proposal is in part derived from the School's desire for more area and mis-application of a section 106 agreement to restrict the proposed footprint of any new building to that of the building that is to be demolished. The outcome is a proposal that is too high, incongruous in its scale and massing within this sensitive context and plonked in the middle of the field (see enclosed photo from bedroom window below).



This leads to substantial loss of amenity to our Grade II listed neighbouring house, as can also be seen from the photo below taken from our garden wall.





The proposal constitutes, in effect ‘back-land, garden, development’. This is totally unacceptable in a conservation area and any proposal would not normally have even have got to the submission stage as it runs counter to so many planning rules.

The inappropriate bulk and massing, together with the location of the proposed building fails to preserve the openness of the existing site which informs the character of the conservation area and will also adversely affect the setting of our Grade II listed property, the grading of which includes it’s environs.

Furthermore having a 4 storey building adjacent to our garden will lead to loss of loss of light and overshadowing. It will also cause substantial overlooking/loss of privacy and will detract from our visual amenity. These losses will be aggravated by the loss of mature trees and their associated nature. Moving the building away from the current build line and into the previous garden area whilst also increasing it’s volume and capacity will also increase the transmitted noise, light, and general disturbance resulting from it’s use.

**Conclusion:** Irrespective of a section 106 agreement planning law would not allow me to build a 4 storey building in my back garden so I do not understand why the school thinks it should be allowed to do so purely for convenience and cost saving,

Furthermore I do not understand why a commercial enterprise such as the school should be allowed to save money, by, in effect, causing me and future custodians of Howard House, a long term amenity penalty.

Howard house (built 1585) has been here a lot longer than the school and was not originally anywhere near the school buildings when the school was founded in Middle Lane, almost 300 years later in 1876.

It needs to be protected and should not have to bear long term amenity losses in order to minimise the school's costs. These are not a planning issue but seem to have been the main driver for designing the wrong building in the wrong location leading to a proposed back-land development.

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