

# PLANNING STATEMENT

John Lyon School, Oldfield House



April 2019

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## Site: John Lyon School, Oldfield House

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## 1.0 Introduction

- 1.1 The JTS Partnership LLP have been instructed by the Governors of John Lyon School to prepare a planning application for planning permission to demolish the existing Oldfield House building and to build in its place a brand new state-of-the-art STEAM centre.
- 1.2 Education is dynamic and ever changing and it is the school's belief that the Oldfield House is no longer fit for purpose as an educational building. The building no longer meets the needs of the students or staff and does not conform to modern teaching practices. It fails to make efficient use of space and resources, providing just 8 teaching spaces all of which are rigid classrooms, shared between a variety of subjects.
- 1.3 The school has undertaken a **Physical Condition Survey** which is appended to the **Design & Access Statement**. This survey supports schools assessment of the quality of the building and the desire and need to see its replacement.
- 1.4 This proposal forms part of the School's estates Masterplan which seeks to improve access to and provision of teaching accommodation across the whole school site. An Educational Rationale is attached at **Appendix 1** which sets out the School's values and aspirations, as well as detailing the issues that it faces and the need for this proposed building to deliver an enhanced learning experience.
- 1.5 As part of a school-wide development the School wish to achieve a number of key objectives:
  - Decrease classroom occupancy rates to approximately 75-80%, to enable greater timetable flexibility;
  - Provide that specialist subjects are taught in appropriate classrooms
  - House classrooms as flexible learning spaces, including space that can be utilised as conference / seminar accommodation, for both school and external use
- 1.6 The creation of this specialist STEAM hub will not only provide new modern learning space it will also enable the reconfiguration of existing learning accommodation across the school site. It will therefore deliver wide-ranging educational benefits that go beyond of the quality of the proposed building itself.

- 1.7 Oldfield House is highly inefficient in respect of its use of energy. Its design, layout and condition results in uneven heat distribution which not only leads to the waste of resources but also create a poor environment within which to work learn. A replacement building will provide an efficient modern building, that meets and exceeds where possible modern standards, with the working/learning environment being a central part of its design. An **Energy Statement** accompanies the application which details how the building will achieve the Greater London Authority (GLA) carbon reduction target of a 35% reduction on Building Regulations 2013 through a range of measures.
- 1.8 The site is located within the Harrow on the Hill Village Conservation Area and is thus a sensitive location within a predominantly residential location. The existing Oldfield House, constructed in 1980s, provides a building that will have been appropriate for its time but make no positive contribution to the Conservation Area. Its removal and the replacement with a well-designed, 'statement' building provides an opportunity to enhance the visual quality and appearance of the Conservation Area. The importance of the existing heritage asset has been considered as part of the **Heritage Assessment** that accompanies the application and the Harrow-on-the-Hill context has also been assessed by the design team and summarised within the Design & Access Statement.
- 1.9 The Applicant has liaised extensively with the Council's Senior Planning and Conservation Team at the pre-application stage, including consultation with the Design Review Panel. This process has helped in guiding the design approach, agreeing a number of key parameters and evolving the design and appearance. This Statement provides details of the **Design Review Panel** comment, undertaken in December 2018 and March 2019, and the design response to these is also detailed within the Design and Access Statement – See **Appendix 2 & 3**
- 1.10 The Applicant has also consulted with local residents and other stakeholders to inform and seek their view on proposals for a replacement teaching buildings. The comments received have been compiled and these together with the action taken in responding have been set out within the **Statement of Community Involvement** which accompanies the planning application.
- 1.11 Part of this public response has been to prepare a **Construction Management Plan** which details how the construction phase of the development can be achieved

while having the minimal impact on the local area and residents, causing the least amount of disruption through an anticipated 1 year build period.

- 1.12 This **Planning Statement** brings together all of the issues and reports in providing a detailed explanation of the need for this new building and the positive impact it can have in educational terms and on the character and appearance of the area. It sets the proposal in the context of Local, Regional and National Planning Policy to demonstrate that the proposal accords with relevant policy and it will demonstrate significant benefits that will arise from the proposal.

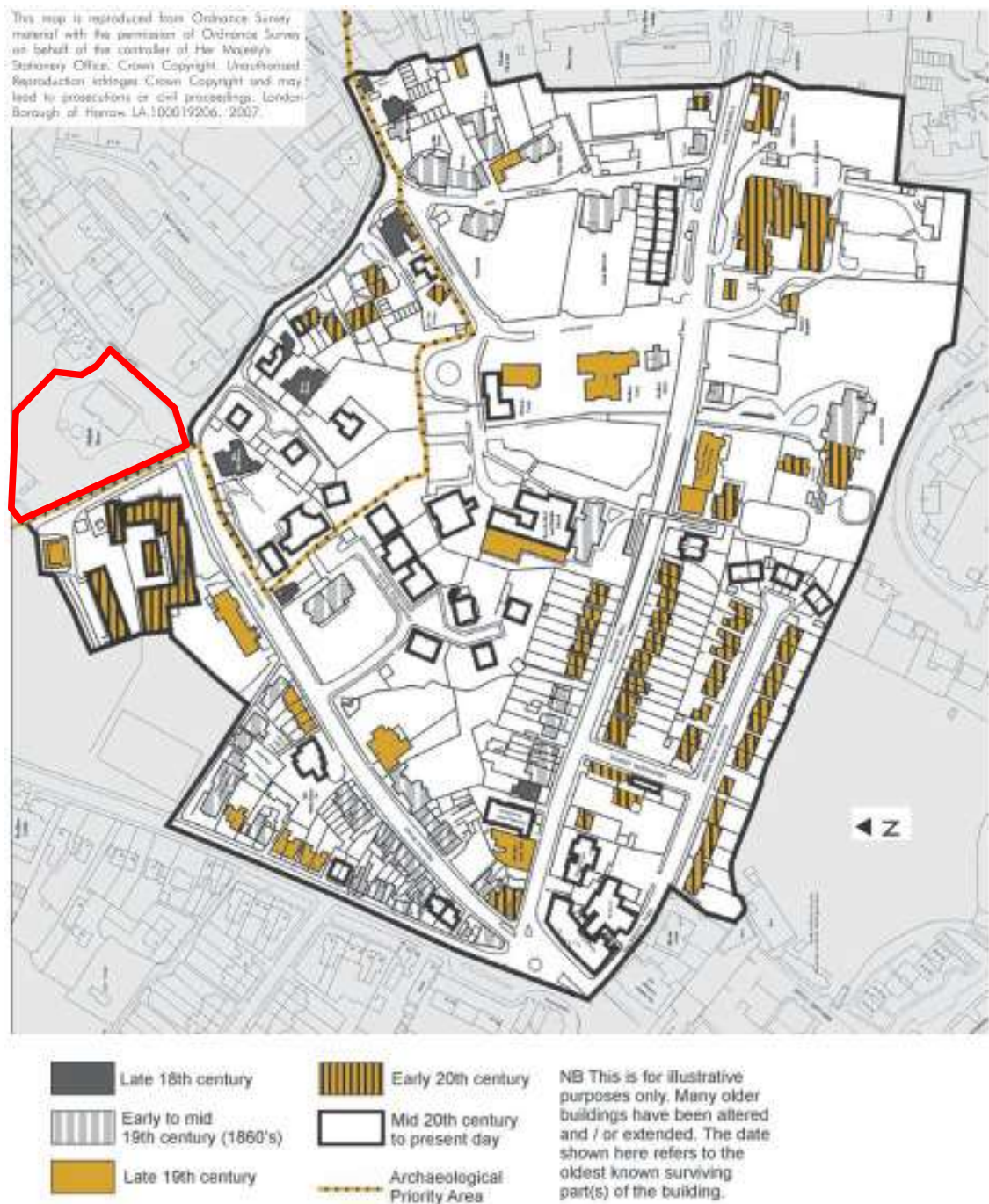
## 2.0 The Application Site

- 2.1 The main school buildings are located within the Roxeth Hill Conservation Area, however, the Oldfield House site is located within Harrow on the Hill Village Conservation Area – see site outlined red on figure 1 below:



**Figure 1 – Extract from Harrow on the Hill Village Conservation Area Appraisal**

- 2.2 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 – see Figure 2 below.
- 2.3 Oldfield house is situated atop a steep slope within the southern part of the site. Its southern elevation faces onto to Crown Street and the Northern elevation looks through the site and across the Harrow School Cricket Fields. Oldfield is separated from the main school buildings to the West by a small road referred to by the school as Piggy Lane.



**Figure 2 – Extract from Roxeth Hill Conservation Area Appraisal**

The site of Oldfield House is relatively open relative to the rest of the school site. The building is towards the high end of the site with a hard play area in front of it. A landscaped bank leads to a further hard play area in the bottom part of the site. Car parking is located next to the building, accessed from a single access point off Middle Road, in the south west corner of the site.





**Photograph 1 – Oldfield House sited at the southern end of the site, viewed from Middle Road**

- 2.4 The site displays a significant fall in levels through its length in a south to north direction. Oldfield House has an elevated position in the southern part and there are views through to the Harrow School cricket pitch to the north.



**Photograph 2 – Oldfield House viewed from the lower playground, with steep bank visible**





**Photograph 3 – Oldfield House sited at the higher (southern) end of the site**



**Photograph 4 – Oldfield House with hardstanding and landscaped bank to its norther side**



**Photograph 5 – View north from Oldfield House, through to cricket pitch**



- 2.5 The sites boundaries contain a number of mature trees, particularly along its western and southern boundaries. A high brick wall forms the southern boundary with Crown Street. This structure prevents views through the site from the road. Views further up Bryon Hill Road towards the site are also restricted by the presence of the wall and boundary trees.



**Photograph 6 – Oldfield House rear (southern) elevation relative to the walled boundary with Crown Street**

- 2.6 More open views of the site are available at its entrance and it is possible to view the flank elevation, parking and play areas. However, views through the site to the cricket pitch beyond are restricted by the presence of trees. Given the building's siting and restricted views available, it is not readily seen in the same context as the much larger main school buildings which lie to the west.



**Photograph 7 – Panoramic view of Oldfield House and other school buildings**



- 2.7 The site is adjoined to the east by residential properties of Crown Street. That at No.60 sits at a higher level and is in quite close proximity to Oldfield House. It has a number of flank and rear windows which look towards and through the site.



**Photograph 8 & 9 –Flank and Rear Walls of No.60 Crown Street**

- 2.8 No. 58 beyond is more distant and is largely shielded from Oldfield House by no.60. It has some rear facing windows and upper floor which may provide some views through their plot and the application site, towards the cricket pitch – both properties will have views to the north limited by the presence of significant trees along the boundary with the cricket pitch.



**Photograph 10 – Rear of No.60 (nearest) & 56 Crown Street**

- 2.9 Immediately opposite the site is No.40 Byron Hill. This property has a main orientation west, but does provide a small, flank window at upper floor which looks over the application site, to the north.



**Photograph 11 – No.40 Byron Hill, single flank window facing the site**

- 2.10 In the slightly wider area, other residential properties are much more distant from the site and therefore have little direct relationship with it and Oldfield House. The larger school buildings to the west provide a significant and continuous extent of built form, set back from the road, but providing no view through and beyond.



**Photograph 12 – Main School buildings to the west of Oldfield House**





Photograph 13 – Rear Elevation (southern) of Oldfield House



Photograph 13 – Car Parking Area to the west side of Oldfield House

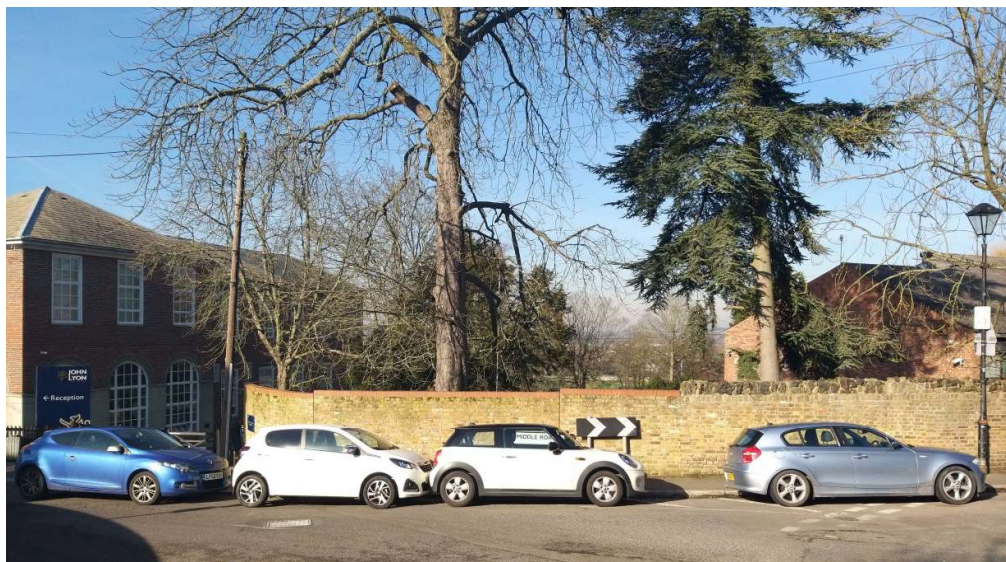


Photograph 14 – View through (north) the site from the car park area





**Photograph 15 – View Through the site from Middle Road**



**Photograph 16 – View Through the site from Middle Road / Byron Hill Road**



**Photograph 16 – View towards the site from Byron Hill Road / Clonmel Close**



**Photograph 17 – View towards the site from further up Bryon Hill Road**

- 2.11 Overall, although the application site provides a lesser concentration of school buildings than the rest of the site to the west, it is clearly, visually, part of the school. Oldfield House itself is a functional, educational building which is perhaps typical of its day but makes little positive contribution to the character and appearance of the area.
- 2.12 From the road the site can be seen to be well-contained within its walled and treed boundaries, with the parking and Oldfield House being the more visible elements within the street scene. Some limited views through the site from the streetscene to the more open rear part of the site are available where a screen of trees provides the backdrop.
- 2.13** The brick boundary wall along the southern boundary with Crown Street provides a solid and attractive structure, clearly delineating the school site but preventing any views of the interior or through the site from Crown Street. The roof structure of Oldfield House can be visible above this walled structure.



### 3.0 Application Proposal

- 3.1 The school has set out a clear educational rationale (See **Appendix 1**) which forms the basis for the proposed development, identifying their needs and the benefits of the scheme for the school. In addition to the need to provide increased and enhanced teaching and learning accommodation, the new state-of-the-art building will be a key selling point for the School and will 'visibly reflect the school's academic identity' and house modern technological facilities that the school does not currently have. In addition the new building will enable the school to expand its curriculum through the creation of new teaching space allowing for the reconfiguration and re-use of space throughout the rest of the school accommodation.
- 3.2 The new building will provide teaching accommodation over 4 floors, within the footprint of 340sq.m (restricted by the Section 106 Agreement), which matches that of the existing Oldfield House – See Section 4 regarding the Section 106 position.
- 3.3 Internally the new block provides an ICT Suite and STEAM Room within an open plan layout within the ground floor. This is within what is described as the 'Big House' part of the building, at the rear (north) – See **Design & Access Statement**.
- 3.4 The Small House part provides the access and circulation space through the block. These spaces are, however, to be utilised by the school to provide break out and informal learning areas together with display/gallery areas. This will make the most efficient use of the floor space. The Design & Access Statement provides a detailed consideration of the use of these informal areas and how they form a key part of the design approach, to create modern flexible teaching accommodation which encourages learning at all times, and not just within the formal teaching areas or during timetabled lessons.
- 3.5 At First Floor there are 3 maths rooms making up the formal teaching accommodation with a knowledge and reading wall within the informal areas.
- 3.6 The Second Floor provides 2 further maths rooms, a reading room, staff accommodation, and additional reading wall within the informal area.
- 3.7 The Third Floor provides a large Art Studio and Design and Ceramic Studio with Kiln and Photography rooms within the formal area. A gallery to display works is provided within the informal, Small House space.

3.8 The building provides 1030sq.m of internal floor space, including the provision of a plant room at basement level. The internal floor areas of the proposed building breaks down as shown in Figure 3 below:

988B JOHN LYON SCHOOL SCHEDULE OF ACCOMMODATION					
Option 2B	LG	UG	FF	SF	TF
STEAM		55			
ICT		62			
Maths 1			51		
Maths 2			49		
Maths 3			52		
Maths 4				48	
Maths 5				56	
General Classroom		54			
WC		7	4	6	4
Circulation			59	68	32
Reading/Knowledge Wall			41	41	
Reading Room				23	
Staff Room		21		12	
Staff Room / Staff Pupil drop in		8			
Society Room		18			
Lobby		17			
Locker Lobby		24			
Art Staff + Resources					16
Gallery Space					16
6F Studio					11
Art Studio					68
Design and Ceramics Studio					81
Plant	30				
Total		265	255	253	226
Total (including plant)			1,031		

**Figure 3 – Schedule of Proposed Areas**

- 3.9 All floors area accessed internally via two separate stair cases and WC facilities are provided on all floors. A small plant room is provided at basement level.
- 3.10 The proposed building is sited centrally within the site. As has been described within the **Design and Access Statement**, the building design and siting has evolved through the process and has also been influenced by the need to create a building that can be delivered. The central siting has been carefully considered to ensure it has minimal impact on the boundary trees. An **Arboricultural Impact Assessment** has been carried out and provided with the application to determine the impact on trees and what mitigation measures might be necessary.
- 3.11 However, the siting of the building within the central part of the site has also reflected other concerns raised against an alternative location in the northern, lower part. These can be summarised as:

- The central part of the site is more level and a more natural siting for the proposed building
- Being a more level part of the site it requires much less dig and earth removal and is a more straightforward build;
- Its more central siting removes the building further from the views from adjoining properties (compared to a more northern siting), with any such views being more oblique;
- Its siting further south removes the building further from the cricket pitch and it's building line relates better to the siting of the main school buildings to the east. This lessens its visual impact when viewed from the north.

3.12 Many of these decisions reached in setting the buildings siting have reflected issues raised by the Council and Design Review Panel at pre-application stage and through the public consultation process undertaken by the applicant. These will be detailed further in the Planning and Appraisal Section of this Statement – see Section 6.

3.13 The proposals will see the demolition of the existing Oldfield House, although it will be retained through the construction to allow for its continued use for teaching during the predicted 1 year construction phase.

3.14 In its place, an area of new hard play space will be provided, together with a reconfigured parking area to serve the school. The application submissions include detailed **Landscape Proposals** which set out the site's landscape context and proposed access and connectivity through the proposed layout in determining the design principles of the hard and soft landscape scheme. It also reflects the schools requirements in terms of the provision of usable external space for informal recreation, learning and car parking.

3.15 Across the site hard play space and parking is provided in the northern part with the positioning of the existing vehicular parking maintained. The parking space is reconfigured and a hard surface play area is provided on the site of Oldfield House.

3.16 Immediately around the proposed building, on both north and south sides, seated teaching areas are provided. Immediately around the building is circulation and space with level access provided to all sides of the building. In the lower part of the



site the existing hard play area is maintained, with stepped access down from the building.

- 3.17 Outside of these areas, predominantly to the sides of the building and close to all boundaries, additional planting will be provided, including trees shrubs and wild flowers – species and their siting are detailed within the Landscape Proposals document. These will reinforce and enhance the existing planting and landscaped areas of the site.
- 3.18 Access to the site will be largely unchanged. Vehicular access will be maintained at its current position although the car park will be reconfigured.
- 3.19 Pupil and staff access is currently achieved via a side door from the main buildings and a footpath to the north of the existing car park. This arrangement will be maintained and will provide natural and easy level access to the new building.
- 3.20 The car park will see an increased capacity of 14 spaces (from 11) with 4 of these being for school mini-buses.
- 3.21 In design terms, the final design and its evolution through the pre-application consultation process are detailed within the **Design and Access Statement**. It identifies that the building form takes its cues from the other historic Victorian and Edwardian buildings on the hill. The main elevations are articulated with a limited palette of materials, primarily comprising finely crafted hand fired bricks and crisp detailing; such as horizontal bands of dog tooth, wider areas of dentil brick detailing on the west flank elevation and protective brick details to entrance ways and window cills.
- 3.22 The punctured openings are gathered to form a vertical order over the façade. The deep reveals of the openings allow a modelling of light and shade appropriate to a building of such scale.
- 3.23 The north wall is designed with a formal composure and large openings which faces both the cricket field and long views to hills beyond.
- 3.24 The materiality of the façade is offset by the peg tiled gambrel roof, which allow the top floor to be fully usable while respecting the eaves and ridge levels of the adjacent buildings. The pitched gables are a nod to the range of gables and finials that top many of the Harrow village roof tops.

- 3.25 Both main elevations give a gentle expression to the function of each of the teaching rooms within. On the north elevation large scale glazed units are utilized to the ground floor STEAM concourse. The clear span structural elements allow this space to be set out as an open forum space, giving it multiple uses such as art exhibitions, seminar and other forums.
- 3.26 Overall the proposals seek to provide a modern replacement teaching block that will deliver considerable educational benefits that go beyond the provision of new teaching accommodation. The design of the building and layout of the site will enhance the character and appearance of the area through its high quality design and sensitive layout of the site, retaining and enhancing the landscape setting of the existing building. The proposal will allow for improved informal play areas and enlarged parking provision, reflecting a much better use of this constrained site.

## 4.0 Section 106

- 4.1 In 1995 a Section 106 Legal Agreement was put in place to limit the amount of development that can take place across the John Lyon School campus. The 1995 application sought extensions to the building and it was considered necessary to prevent any further extension to the school through the use of a Section 106 Legal Agreement
- 4.2 Set out below is an extract from the original document:

1) The Developer agrees that no development (whether requiring express planning permission or permitted by virtue of a Development Order or any statutory successor) shall take place outside the building envelope hereby agreed and shown edged red on drawing No.977/31/B save that future development may be granted planning permission in the areas edged blue on the drawing upon application being made to the Council.

- 4.3 This is the key clause of the S.106 which states that no development shall take place outside of the built envelope, as defined by the land edged red on drawing No.977/31/B. The applicant does not hold an coloured original of that drawing however, it is believed, and understood through reference to later variations that that edged red includes all the present building across the site, including Oldfield House. Areas were also identified in blue where future extension could occur.
- 4.4 In 2007, a variation was agreed that allowed for the construction of the three-storey science block. A variation was agreed that maintained the restriction of development outside of the built envelope, but allowed for the development being sought at that time – see below:

7. On 30 November 2006 the Developer submitted a planning application (ref: P/3420/06/CFU) to the Council for planning permission for a three-storey side/rear extension to the existing science block, to provide three new classrooms together with various internal alterations ("the Scheme")
8. The Scheme is located outside the building envelope edged in red on the Plan
9. The Council resolved at a meeting of its Strategic Planning Committee on 18 April 2007 to grant planning permission for the Scheme subject to variation of the Principal Agreement in the manner set out in this Agreement

4.5 The S.106 was varied in the following way:

1. On and from the date of this Agreement the Principal Agreement shall be read and construed as if:

a. The following definition is inserted in Clause (1) (Interpretation) of the Principal Agreement:

"the Scheme" means the three-storey side/rear extension to the existing science block to provide three new classrooms together with various internal alterations approved by the Council under planning application reference P/3420/06/CFU

b. A new Clause 1.1 is inserted immediately after Clause 1 of the Second Schedule (Obligations Affecting the Development) of the Principal Agreement as follows:

1.1 Nothing in Clause 1 of this Schedule shall prohibit or limit the development of the Scheme outside the building envelope edged red on Drawing No. 977/31/B

4.6 A variation will be necessary in this case. Although the proposed development is not increasing the amount of footprint that is currently provided in the form of Oldfield House, it will be providing this in an alternative location and will thus be outside of the existing built envelope defined by the red line, and not forming part of the blue line.

4.7 As Oldfield House is to be demolished there will be no net increase in the built envelope and this has been approved in principle with the Council in pre-application discussions. A variation of the S106 will have to be agreed that sees the allowance of the proposed development where its footprint does not exceed that of Oldfield House and Oldfield House is demolished. This will be done by an exchange of letters with between the Council and the applicant.

4.8 It should be noted that the S.106 also limits the school role. This application is not seeking to change the number of pupils attending the school and no variation will be required in this respect.

## 5.0 Planning Policy Context

### Planning Policy Framework

- 5.1 Section 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 states that local planning authorities will determine planning applications in accordance with the development plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise.
- 5.2 For the purposes of Section 38(6) the development plans relevant to this application are the London Plan (2016), the Harrow Core Strategy (2012), the Development Management Policies DPD (2013). In addition to the National Planning Policy Framework (2018) which is a material consideration to any planning application.

### Relevant Planning Policies

#### Heritage Assets

- 5.3 Policy DM7: Heritage Assets Part A of the Development Management Policies states that “When assessing proposals affecting heritage assets, including non-designated heritage assets, priority over other policies in the DPD will be afforded to the conservation of the assets affected and their setting as appropriate to the significance of the assets. Proposals that secure the preservation, conservation or enhancement of a heritage asset and its setting, or which secure opportunities for sustainable enjoyment of the historic environment, will be approved ”.
- 5.4 Policy DM7 Part B then sets out how the impact of proposals affecting heritage assets will be assessed:
- a) Emerging or adopted supplementary planning documents, including character appraisals and management plans or other relevant documents;
  - b) Relevant issues of design, appearance and character including proportion, scale, height, massing, bulk, alignment, materials, historic fabric, use, features, location, relationship with adjacent assets, setting, layout, plan form and landscaping;
  - c) The preference to be afforded to proposals that both conserve and sustain heritage assets and their setting;
  - d) Any sustainable economic benefits;
  - e) The need to mitigate climate change and to ensure that heritage assets are resilient to the effects of climate change; and

- f) The desirability of increasing understanding and interpretation of heritage assets; a
  - g) The reversibility of any change.
- 5.5 Policy DM7 part D specifically relates to heritage assets within conservation areas and states that “in addition to (A) and (B) above, when considering proposals within conservation areas, the Council will:
  - a) Support the redevelopment of sites that detract from the character or appearance of the conservation area; and
  - b) Exploit opportunities to restore lost features or introduce new ones that would enhance the character and appearance of the conservation area.
- 5.6 In Part E Policy DM7 relates specifically to listed buildings and sets out the following
 

“In addition to (A) and (B) above, when considering proposals affecting listed buildings and their setting, the Council will:

  - a) Pay special attention to the building’s character and any features of special architectural or historic interest which it possesses, and the role of the building’s setting in these regards; and
  - b) Exploit all opportunities to secure the future of listed buildings particularly those on the ‘heritage at risk’ register”.
- 5.7 Similarly, Section 66 of the planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 states that “In considering whether to grant planning permission for development which affects a listed building or its setting, the local planning authority 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. Following this in section 72 it states that ‘special attention shall be paid to the desirability of preserving or enhancing the character or appearance of that area”.
- 5.8 This is echoed in Policy 7.8D of the London plan which states that “Development affecting heritage assets and their setting should conserve their significance, by being sympathetic to their form, scale, materials and architectural detail”.

### **Character and Landscape**

- 5.9 Policy 7.4 part (A) of the London Plan states that developments “should have regard for form, function, and structure of an area, place or street and the scale, mass and orientation of surrounding buildings. It should improve an area’s visual or physical connection natural features. In areas of poor or ill-defined character, development should build on the positive elements that can contribute to establishing an enhanced character for the future function of the area”.
- 5.10 Part (B) then states that “Buildings, streets and open spaces should provide a high quality design response that:
- a) Has regard to the pattern and grain of the existing spaces and streets in orientation, scale, proportion and mass.
  - b) Contributes to a positive relationship between the urban structures and natural landscape features, including the underlying landform and topography of an area.
  - c) Is Human in scale, ensuring buildings create a positive relationship with street level activity and people feel comfortable in their surroundings
  - d) Allows existing buildings and structures that make a positive contribution to the character of a place to influence the future character of the area.
  - e) Is informed by the surrounding historic environment”.
- 5.11 Similarly, Policy DM6 of the Development Management Policies states that
- “Proposals affecting an area of special character will be considered having regard to:
- a) The impact of the proposal upon the strategic value of the area of special character
  - b) The desirability of preserving or enhancing the environmental, architectural, historic and landscape features that contribute to the area of special character.
  - c) The protected views to and from areas of special character”.

5.12 The Harrow Core Strategy 2012 states that:

- a) “Proposals that would harm the character of suburban areas and garden development will be resisted. All development shall respond positively to the local and historic context in terms of design, siting, density and spacing, reinforce the positive attributes of local distinctiveness whilst promoting innovative design and/or enhancing areas of poor design; extensions should respect their host building”.
- b) Proposals that would harm identified views or impede access to public viewpoints will be resisted.
- c) Proposals that would harm the significance of heritage assets including their setting will be resisted. The enhancement of heritage assets will be supported and encouraged
- d) All new development must create and maintain accessible, safe and secure neighbourhoods in accordance with best practice standards. Where appropriate, development should also seek to promote and enhance biodiversity in accordance with the aims of the Harrow Biodiversity Action Plan and best practice”.

### **Education**

5.13 Policy 3.18 of the London Plan states that “Development proposals which enhance education and skills provision will be supported, including new build, expansion of existing facilities or change of use to educational purpose”.

5.14 Paragraph 94 of the NPPF (2018) states that “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:

- a) Give great weight to the need to create, expand or alter schools through the preparation of plans and decisions on applications; and
- b) Work with schools promoters, delivery partners and statutory bodies to identify and resolve key planning issues before applications are submitted”.



## 6.0 Planning Assessment & Appraisal

### Educational need

- 6.1 The John Lyon School is a leading North West London independent boys' school, based in Harrow-on-the-Hill. Academic excellence is at the very heart of what the School achieves for the 600 or so boys who study there.
- 6.2 The school strives to ensure that they continue to meet their values of *Ambition, Excellence, Innovation, Creativity, Heritage, Community Enquiry and Resolve* in all they do and this naturally follows through in to their Strategic Planning for their facilities. The School seeks not only to provide good quality teaching and learning space but to create a learning environment that will enable their pupils to develop and attain to the very best of their ability. Their dedicated staff work to develop learning skills, creativity and the ability to apply in all areas of life. While the school is very successful and highly considered in this regard, education is a dynamic and ever changing sector and the school has to continually review, plan, evolve and develop the school estate to meet changing educational demands and learning opportunities. As an academically selective independent boys' school with a tradition of educational excellence, there is also the need to meet the expectations of discerning school parents and families.
- 6.3 As is highlighted with the **Educational Rationale** at **Appendix 1**, there is a need to continue to develop and evolve the School Estate to ensure their values are achieved. The School have developed a Strategic Masterplan that has identified areas across the school where improvements can be made through the better use of existing facilities and resources, including the renewal of facilities where circumstances allow.
- 6.4 The Masterplan approach has enabled the school to consider its needs and issues in seeking solutions that will enable widespread improvements across the delivery of education. In identifying Oldfield House as a building that no longer meets the needs of modern learning and teaching, it has seen an opportunity to provide a replacement that can deliver improved much improved learning accommodation for the future as well as enabling the reconfiguration of teaching space and enhancements throughout the whole school.

- 6.5 The Educational Rationale at paragraph 6 – 14 identifies a number of areas of the school where improvements can be made and will be enabled by the delivery of the proposed replacement building.
- 6.6 Those highlighted at paragraph 6 and 7 demonstrate the improvement to the learning experiences and outcomes through the provision of a high quality new building, enabling the introduction of new curriculum options and better collaboration between subjects which can be sited close to each other.
- 6.7 Paragraphs 8 – 12 identify the practical and logistical issues that the school experiences. The current teaching spaces have a high occupancy rate which leads to teachers having to take lessons in several different teaching spaces resulting in lost time through transitioning between rooms. Classrooms are used for a number of different subjects, including those which require specialist materials, leading to examples such as science lessons being held in non-specialist laboratories or without laboratory equipment or other subjects being taught in laboratories. Put simply, there are not enough classrooms.
- 6.8 Given the limitations of the teaching spaces, it is not possible to create teaching hubs which see the dedication of teaching space to particular subjects or the grouping of departments which allow for beneficial collaboration.
- 6.9 Much of the current teaching spaces are inflexible, traditional rooms with a limited capacity. The ability to deliver modern teaching practices is restricted by their inflexible and constrained nature.
- 6.10 Considering Oldfield Houses in isolation, the building has been shown to have a number of failures which limit the quality of the learning environment. Built in the early 1980's the building has reached the end of its useful life. The **Physical Condition Survey**, appended to the Design & Access Statement, identifies a large range of physical defects with the building's condition and the considerable amount of investment required to address them. In addition the building makes a highly inefficient use of energy, with poor heat distribution throughout resulting in simultaneous overheating and underheating of parts of the building.
- 6.11 Even where addressing some of these physical faults, the building, if retained, would not overcome the issues the school experiences, as outlined in the Educational Rationale – its accommodation is traditional and inflexible and there is a need for more teaching spaces across the school.

- 6.12 This building has been identified as the best opportunity to deliver improvements to the school teaching spaces that will deliver on their values. Oldfield House's retention and refurbishment would not achieve this and would represent a poor use of resources or meet educational requirements in to the future. The school are committed to investing significant sums of money to deliver improvements across the whole school through the creation of a new replacement teaching block.
- 6.13 In line with their values and aspirations, the proposed building seeks to demonstrate ambition, excellence innovation, creativity and heritage. The school has commissioned architects highly experienced in delivering modern educational buildings and the design team has worked tirelessly to develop a proposal that meets the needs and aspirations of the school while, also fully reflecting the physical and planning context. The aim being not only to provide improved educational facilities but to deliver this within a statement building that makes a positive contribution to the locality and is a distinctive feature of the school and future selling point. This process has involved consultation with the Council at every stage including workshops with the Design Review Panel.
- 6.14 As outlined in the Educational Rationale, the benefit to the delivery of education as a result of this proposal are widespread. It will enable the school to continue to achieve levels of excellence in to the future and provide an improved educational experience for staff and pupils. These benefits are a significant material consideration which should be given weight in the consideration of the planning application.

#### Section 106

- 6.15 The first consideration has been of the 1995 Section 106 (and subsequent variations) which limits the Building Envelope of the school. The Council have not been able to identify the historic rationale behind this restriction. However, with the school being sited on a constrained site, with limited open space and within a Conservation Area, it is likely that merit was seen in ensuring continued expansion of the school does not negatively affect its provision of open spaces or the character and appearance of the Conservation Area
- 6.16 The building envelope includes all the buildings currently sited on the John Lyon School campus, with the exception of those subsequently granted planning consent under the 2007 variations. This proposal would see the creation of a new building outside of that envelope. However, it also proposes the demolition of the existing

Oldfield House. In matching its 340sq.m footprint, the proposed new building would see no net gain in the extent of the built envelope and would thus maintain the extent of the built envelope as defined by the S106. Any sprawl of buildings and loss of open space across the school would not occur as a result of this proposal.

- 6.17 The S106 also controls the number of pupils on the school roll, currently to 600. This proposal does not seek to increase the roll. Therefore, while the S106 will require a variation to reflect the change in the siting, but not extent, of the building envelope, the proposals do not work against the purpose and rationale of the S106. This position has been discussed with the Council through the pre-application process. The principle of this approach has been agreed to be acceptable, subject to agreeing an appropriate variation.

#### Design & Layout

- 6.18 The design of the scheme has evolved significantly through the pre-application phase and in particular in response to comments received from the Council, Design Review Panel (DRP) and through public consultation.
- 6.19 The DRP consultation held in December 2018 proposed the 'Rig' design approach which saw a 5 storey building, sited in the northern end of the site – See the Design & Access Statement for a full history of the design process. The response at that time (see **Appendix 2**) made a number of comments to be considered by the design team. In particular, with regard to height of the building, the importance of any new proposal being sympathetic to the main school building was highlighted. It was commented that the constrained footprint was thought to result in making the building of too greater height. This position was also expressed verbally at the consultation with concern the 5-storey building, sited close to the cricket pitch could create a 'cliff effect'.
- 6.20 In addition greater distinction needed to be made between the north and south façade with the southern (facing Crown Street) being emphasised as the primary elevation.
- 6.21 Although these earlier proposals were generally well-received at the Public Consultation Event held on 9<sup>th</sup> January 2019, some adverse comments were received which fed into the continued designed work. The **Statement of Community Involvement** (SOCI) provided with the application sets out in detail the process of that event, the information provided and the comments and other

responses received – See SOCI Section 3. Section 5 summarises the feedback and response to it.

- 6.22 In respect of design, comments from immediate neighbours centred on concern of the buildings siting which would block their views towards the cricket ground, and a further written response also expressed the same concern.
- 6.23 The SOCI also highlights a high level of support for the scheme, appreciation of its design and appearance and the impact it will have on the area. Many were concerned with the impact of the construction phase and of the general parking and access to the school site which is an existing acute problem of key concern to locals.
- 6.24 In response to comments received all aspects of the proposal were reviewed to respond to expressed concerns, and also to the applicants own internal requirements. As a result the proposed building has been changed significantly.
- 6.25 The key change is its new siting in the central part of the site. Being slightly more constrained by trees in this location, the buildings depth has been increased and its width narrowed. This ensures that the proposed building has no materially harmful impact on the existing trees of the site, which are mainly sited along its boundaries. With reference to the **Arboricultural Impact Assessment** submitted with the application, there will be the loss of a number of trees along the western boundary – Trees T28, T29, T30, T31 and group G3 will all be lost. All of these, with the exception of T30, are category C trees which are defined as unremarkable trees of very limited merit or with a significant impaired condition not warranting an 'A' or 'B' category, with an estimated life expectancy of at least 10 years.
- 6.26 While the retention of T30 would be ideal, it has not been possible to ensure this. Importantly, the **Landscape Proposals** demonstrate significant planting in this area to the west of the new building to replace and reinforce that boundary, as part of the provision of twenty-five replacement amenity trees planted around the site. This will ensure the continued high landscape setting of the proposal long into the future with potential enhancements through the replacement of low grade trees that occupy part of the site.
- 6.27 There will therefore be no harmful impact on the landscape character of the area and the additional planting and enhanced landscape provision across the whole site

will see an improvement in the quality of the landscaped setting within the Conservation Area.

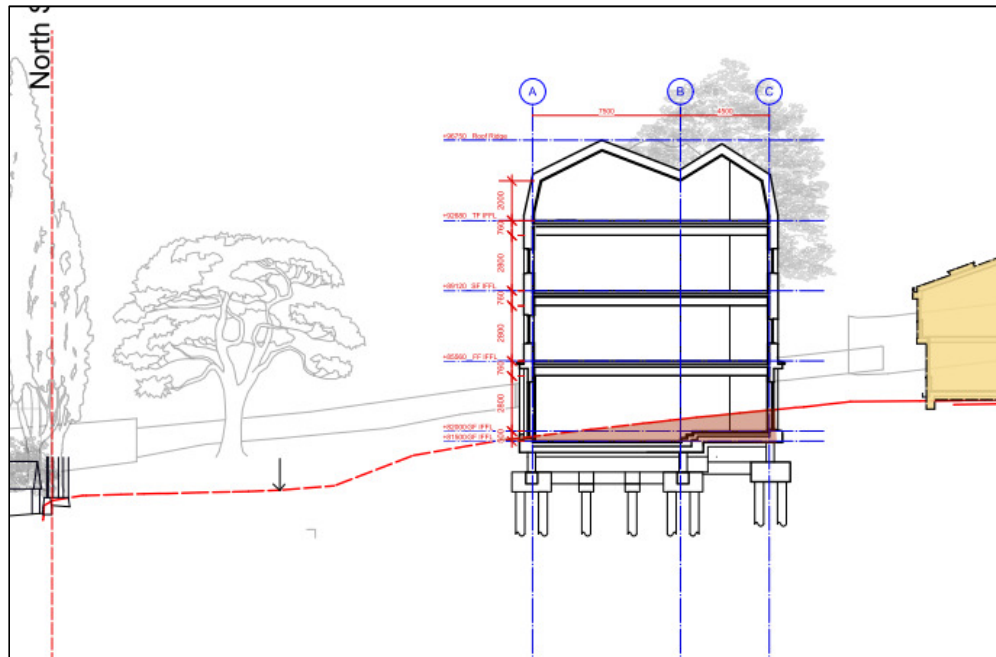
- 6.28 The central siting has a dual positive effect on the concerns raised through the neighbourhood consultation. Firstly, its positioning further up the slope removes it further the view from the rear of the immediate neighbours (No.60 & 56 Crown Street). While the building will now be closer to no.60, such views will be more oblique and will no longer interrupt views towards the cricket pitch in the same way as the previous layout did. In respect of no.56, the building will be almost entirely out of view and leaving a clear uninterrupted view towards the cricket pitch – See Figures 6 & 7 below.



**Figure 6 – Proposed Layout showing views from immediate neighbours**







**Figure 9 – Required dig under proposed siting**

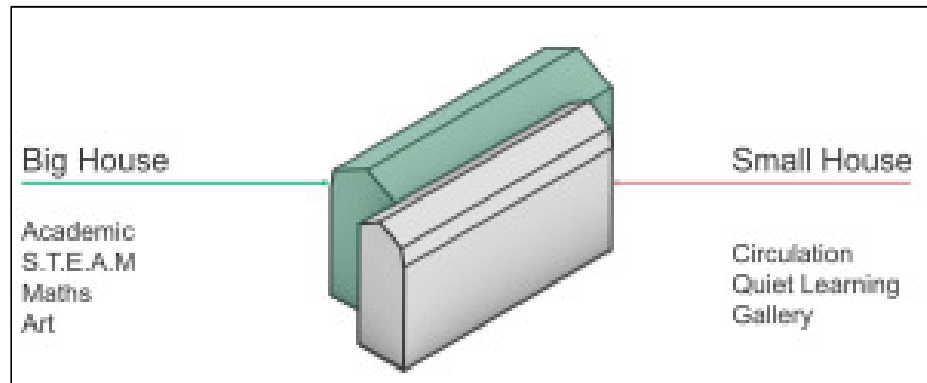
6.30 The siting also responds to the DRP concerns about the position of a 5-storey building close to the cricket pitch, with the potential to create a cliff of built form. Its siting further up the hill removes it from this context and sees it siting more sympathetic to the existing school buildings, rather than forward of them and closer to the cricket pitch. Its visual impact is therefore lessened when viewed from the north and this is further reinforced by the removal a storey of accommodation, reducing its height considerably. It continues to maintain the ridge and eave levels that respect the main school buildings. These changes were well received by the DRP at the second consultation in March 2019 – See response received in April 2019 at **Appendix 3**.



**Figure 10 – Artists Impression from the cricket pitch**



- 6.31 As described in Section 3 above and the Design & Access Statement, the design breaks up the massing and volume of the building in to a 'small house, big house' arrangement – a concept considered as strong by the April DRP. Its layout with the 'big house' set back from the western end of the 'small house' also has the impact of reducing the visible depth of the building when viewed from the road – the main view available into the site. The increased depth has enabled the shortening of the frontage of the building and the DRP April comment also identified this as a positive response.



**Figure 11 – Big House Small House Concept**



**Figure 11 – Big House Small House concept in layout**

- 6.32 In addition to the DRP and Public comments received on the application, the final stages of design also gained input from the LB Harrow's planning department. Copy of their comments are provided at **Appendix 4**. These comments provided support to the changes that had been made post April DRP as well as making some additional comments. These included requests to see the location of the plant room in the basement, see greater detail on the external landscape seating areas, omit the protruding balconies and rationalise the provision of windows on the main elevations.
- 6.33 All of these comments have been accommodated within the submission drawings
- 6.34 The **Heritage Statement** provides the detailed assessment of the character and importance of the Heritage assets, being the Conservation Areas and Listed Building of the Red House. Its conclusions endorse the views expressed by the DRP in respect of the achieved mass and scale, the restrained brick façade with quality brick and the window detailing.

*The current Oldfield House building has no significance providing neutral impact on the character of the conservation areas and the setting of the listed buildings as it is screened from view either by the wall along Crown Street or the pavilion and established trees from Lower Road.*

*The proposed design reflects the sensitive nature of the site, whilst presenting a modern design to reflect the progressive nature of the school.*

*The ridge height respects the neighbouring buildings and open spaces, which whilst it is higher than the existing the topology, retains the views and aspects when looking from Crown Street.*

*The simple material palette allows the building to work within the built environment. The brick choice compliments the adjoining school buildings providing a more unified school complex. The details within the building break up the mass, which is further enhanced by the creation of 'two' buildings which are slightly offset. The simple copper details compliment the building, complementing the light play on the brick details.*

*The glazing provides good natural light without being a dominating factor, and more importantly within this sensitive setting, the fenestration is restrained to prevent large reflective surfaces which would be eye catching and therefore*

*distracting within its setting. It is these details that create interest in the building and enhance the design quality.*

*The building uses the topology of the site to reduce the impact on the surrounding landscape and the more significant views from the hill across the wider landscape. The rhythm of the windows and the relationship of the brickwork respects Field House, with the established tree growth providing screening to ensure that the listed building remains the key focus from the cricket field.*

- 6.35 Overall it is concluded that the proposed scheme does not have any harmful impact on the character, appearance and significance to the surrounding heritage assets. The proposal will therefore, as a minimum, preserve the heritage asset and its setting. Indeed the removal of the existing Oldfield House, the provision of a replacement building of high quality design, and the reconfiguration of the site to include enhanced landscaping, can be viewed as having a positive impact on the heritage asset and its setting. The proposal therefore accords with Policy DM7.
- 6.36 The applicant considers the design of the building, both in terms of the internal formal and informal learning areas and the external appearance of the building, to be a complete success. It will deliver the modern teaching environment that will be of the highest standard. It also creates a striking *Statement Building* which, while blending into the existing built environment, is of the highest quality that demonstrates the values of the school. It will act as a real selling point.



**Figure 12 – Artists Impression of Southern View**

### Environmental

- 6.37 As has been identified within the earlier sections of this Statement, the current Oldfield House is no longer fit for purpose with an extensive amount of physical defects and other failings inherent in its poor design and layout. These include a very inefficient use of energy in particular with regards to heating the building. The window provision and heating system result in an inflexible building which in parts can be overheated by solar gain with uneven heat distribution through the rest of the building. As with other accommodation across the school, the classrooms are traditional rectangular inflexible teaching spaces.
- 6.38 The replacement building provides an opportunity to deliver a modern energy efficient building that makes the best use of the schools resources while also reducing the impact on the environment. It has been designed with its internal layout, window placement and size to ensure that the teaching spaces are served well by light to create high quality learning environment but without issues of excessive solar gain. The formal teaching areas have generally north facing windows which will not provide direct sunlight but does provide a more consistent level of light through the day.
- 6.39 The **Energy Statement**, submitted with the application, highlights the relevant policies of the LB Harrow Plan and the London Plan – See Section 5 above.
- 6.40 It demonstrates a fabric first approach in meeting the London Plan Energy Hierarchy (lean, clean & green). This will see the provision of high efficiency lighting appliances throughout, a 20% improvement on Building Regulations in respect of insulation (lean). The building will be principally naturally ventilated with no combustible technologies within the building (clean). The use of ground source heat pumps for heat generation and 20sq.m of photo voltaic panels on the inner SE facing roof (green).
- 6.41 The proposed development will comply with all criterion of Building Regulations Part L2A and based on the current Building Regulations carbon factors, shows a 35% improvement over the notional building in accordance with the GLA's Energy Assessment Guidance 2018.
- 6.42 The carbon reduction has also been calculated using the new SAP10 carbon conversion factors and a 50% reduction on Building Regulations 2013 is achieved as well as 22% reduction in carbon emissions as a result of on-site renewables.

- 6.43 The proposal therefore meets the current standards and will deliver a building that significantly exceeds the sustainability performance of the existing.
- 6.44 The planning application has also been accompanied by a **Drainage Strategy and SuDS Statement**. In summary of that report, a SuDS strategy for the site has been prepared following the advice and guidance provided by Harrow Council. The SuDS hierarchy has been followed in order to employ the most suitable and practicable SuDS techniques to improve surface water run-off rates from the site.
- 6.45 The proposed development will restrict surface water run off to the public sewer to 3.0l/s. This provides betterment on existing of 97% for the 1 in 100-year event. The main methods used are the provision of below ground attenuation, to be located under the existing hard play area in the north of the site.
- 6.46 Overall the surface water management of the proposed site will see a significant betterment from the existing case.

#### Access - Vehicular

- 6.47 The existing site provides a single access from Middle Road serving a car park providing 11 spaces. These are used by the school, including mini-bus parking. At the entrance a refuse and recycling area is currently provided.
- 6.48 The proposal does not include any increase in the school roll or the need for staff and therefore there will be no impact on the amount of vehicles serving the site. However, the school wish to take the opportunity to increase off-street parking where possible. The existing access is to be maintained but the car parking will be reconfigured to provide increased capacity (14). The refuse store is to be relocated elsewhere on the school site, to a more suitable location closer to the main school buildings.
- 6.49 On-street parking is an acknowledged issue that repeatedly arose during the public consultation exercise. While the proposal is only able to make a small extra provision of parking, this is nonetheless an improvement on the current situation and the proposal will thus not result in any harmful impact on the highway conditions.



**Figure 13 – Reconfigured Car Parking Area**

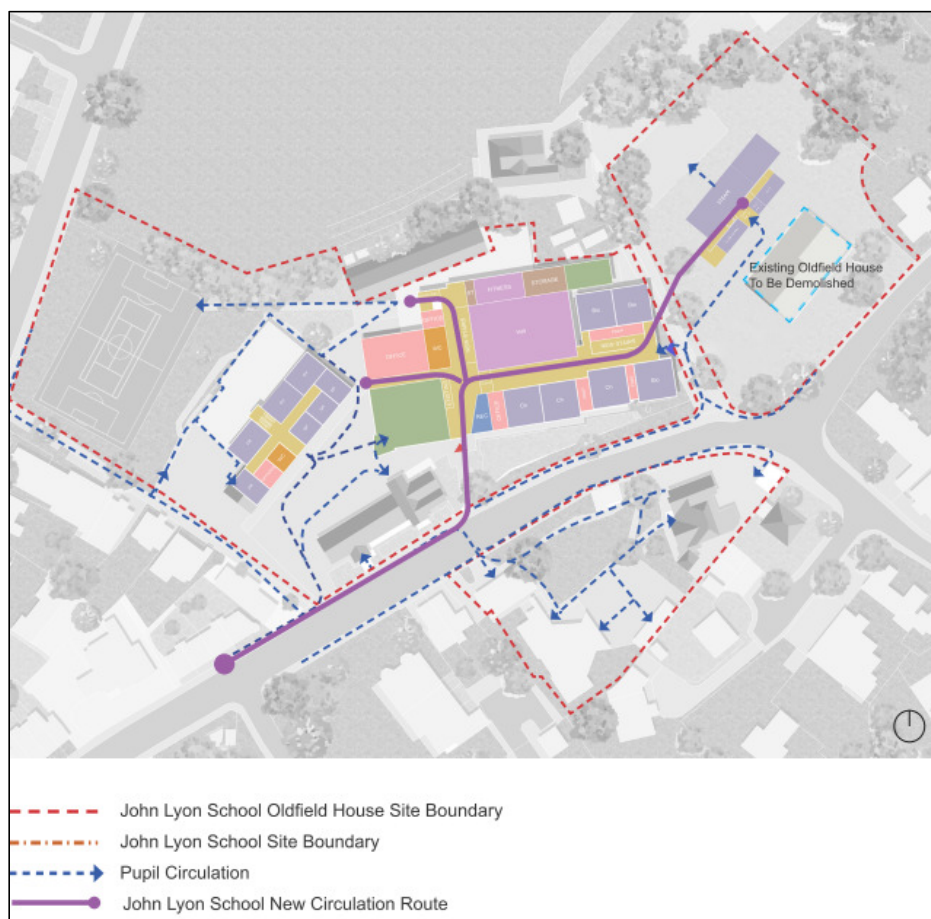
- 6.50 Given the nature of the proposal, there has been no need to prepare any highway statement or travel plan as it will not generate any additional movements.

Access - Pedestrian

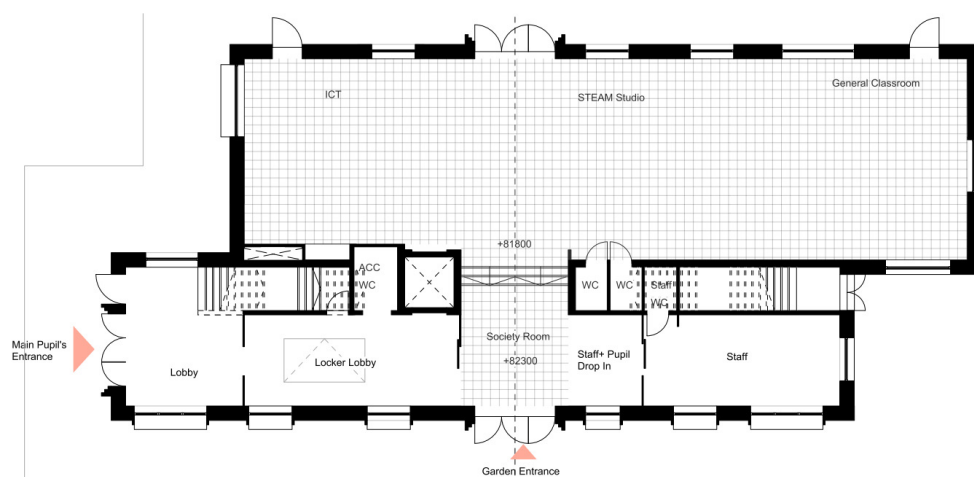
- 6.51 Pedestrian movement around the site (off-site) will not be affected by the development. Existing footpaths will be unchanged by the development. In terms of pupil and staff movement through the site the footpath from the flank of the main buildings which serves the Oldfield House site will be maintained. A Primary student step free access route will be provided to the circulation space around the new building and the building entrances.
- 6.52 As can be seen from Figure 14 below, the proposal has considered the access arrangements through the whole school in developing new circulation routes to enable the best and most efficient movement of pupils and staff through the whole site. This forms part of the schools Estate Master Planning and it is hoped to



provide further informal learning, reading and gallery areas throughout other parts of the school site as part of a wider reconfiguration of space.



**Figure 14 – Access through the whole school campus**



**Figure 15 – Main Pupil Access to west elevation & secondary 'Garden Entrance' to southern elevation**

- 6.53 Within the building itself, an internal staircase provides access to upper floors, while a second staircase, accessed from the eastern elevation, provides secondary access and a second means of escape. All levels are accessible by lift ensuring access to those with restricted mobility. As such the proposed building is fully inclusive for both staff and pupils.

#### Impact on Neighbours

- 6.54 It has already been touched on above that the revised siting of the building will lessens its visibility from the rear of immediate neighbours, ensuring views through to the cricket ground are available.
- 6.55 The main concern raised by a number of residents who attended the public consultation event was the impact of the construction on them and the highway conditions in particular – See **Statement of Community Involvement**.
- 6.56 The school is acutely aware of the sensitivities of neighbours and the potential impact the construction phase might have. Accordingly, they have instructed Elliot Wood to prepare an outline **Construction Management Plan** to look at issues such as site deliveries, material and equipment storage, contractor parking, managing noise, vibration and dust and handling materials and waste.
- 6.57 The outline has assessed the surrounding roads to consider what size vehicles will be able to access the site and ensured that there is sufficient space to allow for access and turning. How the access points are controlled and the timing so of such deliveries are also considered. All aspects of the plan will be finalised with the Council at the discharging of condition stage with the objective of minimising the impact on local residents and other road users.
- 6.58 In addition to this, the school will be seeking to achieve a construction timetable that will allow for some of the most disruptive works to be undertaken in the summer holidays. For example, it is intended to commence development in the summer of 2020 and it is at this time when the majority of the ground works and earth removal will be undertaken. At the end of the construction phase, the demolition of Oldfield House will occur and again the aim will be to undertake this work principally during the summer holiday before the new building is opened for the 2021 academic year.



- 6.59 Undertaking such work during these out of term time periods will reduce the conflict with the everyday access to and from the school by staff, parents and pupil, minimising any impact on the road network.
- 6.60 The school will also be utilising the car park at Sudbury playing fields to accommodate any displaced parking and contractor parking during the duration of the build.

## 7.0 Summary & Conclusions

- 7.1 John Lyon School has a proud record of delivering educational excellence, is a highly regarded independent school and an asset to Harrow-on-the-Hill and the Borough. The Governors, as part of their Estate Masterplan, have identified the need to replace Oldfield House, which has reached the end of its useful life, and make a significant investment in achieving this.
- 7.2 With the constraints of the Section 106 across the site, a new teaching block to replace the old is the only opportunity to deliver the teaching spaces required without expanding the building envelope.
- 7.3 The site of Oldfield House provides the space to create a new building while the existing remains in use until its demolition – this is key in minimising disruption to pupils and staff.
- 7.4 Its setting and topography allows for the provision of a larger building which can sit comfortably within its surroundings and the Conservation Area.
- 7.5 It will allow for the more efficient use of the site to provide a larger teaching block, new and enhanced play areas, external learning areas and car parking.
- 7.6 The consideration of the location and the impact of the proposed building has been assessed in detail through the Heritage Appraisal. The siting, mass and scale of the building has been developed through extensive consultation with the Council's planning and conservation departments, the Design Review Panel and through public consultation.
- 7.7 Its siting has reflected concerns raised by immediate neighbours in respect of their outlook to the rear, towards the cricket ground. The layout has responded through a more central location within the site, taking the building more from view.
- 7.8 The proposed building has been positively received through this process, with many local residents responding well to the designs displayed during the public consultation exercise, particularly when it was confirmed that the proposals were seeking to provide a replacement teaching block and not to expand the school roll.
- 7.9 Other key concerns relating to the impact of the construction process have also been addressed through the provision of an Outline Construction Management

Plan, which aims to minimise disruption on residents through the proactive and thorough identifying and addressing of issues that can impact upon them.

- 7.10 In terms of the design of the building, the Heritage Statement concludes that it will have no harmful impact on the character and appearance of its conservation area location, or on the setting of the listed building.
- 7.11 Indeed, it is the applicant's opinion that the building is of exceptional design and will have a positive impact on the setting of the heritage asset.
- 7.12 The new building not only provides a greater number of teaching spaces, its layout and form, providing formal and informal areas, will deliver high quality, flexible learning spaces that will enable the use of modern teaching practices. The ground floor provides open forum space for extra curricula and other provision, such as the holding of seminars, open evenings, exhibitions and so on.
- 7.13 The provision of informal learning alongside the formal classrooms provides the opportunity to make full use of the building, creating areas where pupils can break-out, study and gather to share knowledge in groups, outside of the formal area.
- 7.14 The benefits to the pupils and staff will go beyond the provision of the new facility; it will benefit all by enabling the reconfiguration of spaces across the school, providing more learning spaces, enabling greater efficiency, allowing for better use of these spaces to create hubs and foster collaboration between departments, reduce time wasted in moving between teaching spaces. Its provision will allow for many of the identified issues with the current teaching accommodation throughout the school to be addressed - as identified within the Educational Rationale.
- 7.15 The educational benefits are significant and of significant weight. It is the opportunity to deliver these wide ranging improvements that have encouraged the school to make the huge commitment to this proposed development.
- 7.16 The proposal also provides the opportunity to improve and enhance the provision of outdoor space, with renewed hard play areas, enlarged parking provision and new planting and landscaping. These all have a positive impact on the learning environment while also enhancing the setting and landscape character of the site itself.
- 7.17 Additional parking will have some benefit to the highway and parking conditions at the school.

- 7.18 Consideration of the landscape, trees, flood risk and drainage all demonstrate the ability to see improvements over the current circumstances of the site.
- 7.19 The new building will be highly efficient, meeting the carbon standards set out within the GLA Guidance 2018 for non-residential buildings. Ground-source heat pumps, photovoltaic panels, energy efficient lighting and appliances all contribute but will also see the better use of the school resources in comparison to the aging Oldfield House.
- 7.20 In summary, the proposal represents a key opportunity to deliver significant educational benefits across the school through the replacement of old learning stock with a modern state-of-the-art building. In addition, the project team, working with the Council, have identified the importance of delivering a well-designed building that will make a positive contribution to the conservation area location. The proposals show a 'statement building' that will make such a contribution but will also act as a key selling point for the school
- 7.21 Full regard has been had to local, regional and national policy in the development of the scheme, as well as to the concerns of local residents through a public consultation exercise. The proposals have evolved through the process to ensure a balance is met between the competing needs of policy, the school and residents. The result is a very well-designed building that will bring forward significant educational benefits and will further add to the status of the school and Harrow-on-the Hill in delivering education of the highest quality.