

Elliott School – Housing Development Site

Planning Guidelines

Site Area: 1.88 ha

Ward: West Putney

1. Description

- 1.1. The main development site is an area of 1.88 hectares that formerly formed part of the 3.66 hectare Elliott School site. The school building is listed Grade II, and surrounded by open space/playing field land and car parking. The school buildings have a distinctive cruciform layout and range in height from two to five-storeys.
- 1.2. The site is bounded to the east by the Putney Heath Conservation Area.
- 1.3. There many mature trees within and around the periphery of the development site. A tree survey has been carried out and a schedule of trees considered to be worthy of protection has been prepared.
- 1.4. The site is adjoined by two-storey detached and semi detached houses in Westleigh Avenue and two-storey terraced houses in Westrow to the north; six-storey flats to the south within the Ashburton Estate and; three blocks of flats ranging between four and five storeys within the Manor Fields Estate to the west.
- 1.5. An additional 0.2 ha development site is located at Westleigh Lodge on the corner of Westleigh Avenue with Carslake Road which immediately adjoins the north-east corner of the school site. The site comprises a single-storey care home with a two-storey semi-detached house. To the west, on the opposite corner of Carslake Road is a seven-storey block of flats. All other adjoining properties are two-storey.
- 1.6. **Current use**
School playing area. However, the land has been subject to a recent s77 application and this area is now surplus to the requirements of the school and approved as a development site.

2. Policy Context

- 2.1. **Loss of Open Space/Playing Fields**
Policy DMO 2 - The fundamental issues arising from policy DMO 2 have been addressed by the Council in its decision to dispose of the land.

2.2. Listed buildings and the historic environment

Elliott School is a listed building (grade II) and the proposal will need to take its status into account and ensure that any development will not cause harm to its setting in accordance with policy DMS2 of the Development Management Policies Document (DMPD). The application will require supporting details in the form of a Heritage Statement and a Design and Access statement to fully address all key issues and implications associated with listed status of Elliott School.

2.3. Community services and the provision of infrastructure.

Policy IS6 supports the provision and improvement of community facilities (including education). The rebuilding and renewal of secondary schools, including Elliott School, is included in the Infrastructure Delivery Schedule in Appendix 1 of the Core Strategy.

2.4. Provision of new homes

Policy PL5 supports the provision of new homes. The current housing trajectory indicates that the Council is meeting its target for the delivery of housing including the 5-year supply of sites without the need to identify further sites. The provision of affordable housing will be subject to the submission of a viability appraisal, in accordance with IS5 and DMPD policy DMH8.

2.5. An application will be required to provide an acceptable standard of accommodation and size mix in accordance with DMPD policies DMH3, DMH4, DMH6 & DMH7, and the Supplementary Planning Document on Housing.

2.6. In addition, all new homes must be sustainable and of a high quality sufficient to meet the following Council's standards for new housing (policy IS2 and DMPD policy DMS3); the Mayor's London Housing Design Guide standards and the criteria for Building for Life and Lifetime Homes.

2.7. Impact on neighbours

Impact on neighbouring amenity will be assessed in accordance with DMPD policy DMS1.

2.8. Height and Density

Any building of 5 or more storeys would be defined as a tall building and require an assessment under Core Strategy policies IS3 and DMPD policy DMS4.

2.9. Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL).

Market residential development on this site would be liable for Mayoral and Wandsworth Community Infrastructure Levy.

2.10. Justification

Policy IS6 supports the provision and improvement of community facilities (including education) and development of this site will be expected to support the renewal/rebuilding of Elliott School. A site

suitable for residential use will contribute to the housing target set out in the Core Strategy.

2.11. Flood Risk

The site is located within Flood Zone 1. A site specific Flood Risk Assessment is required if an application site is greater than 1 ha.

2.12. PTAL rating

The site lies within levels 2 and 3.

2.13. London Plan Density Matrix: urban/suburban.

3. Design Principles

3.1. There are two broad site specific planning objectives that must be taken into consideration when designing any development on the land to be annexed from the Elliott School site. These objectives are:

- to minimise the impact of new development on the setting of the listed building;
- to avoid any unreasonable impact on the amenities of adjoining residential property.

3.2. In addition, there is a general objective that any new development must be of high quality, commensurate with its location immediately adjacent to a listed building.

4. Impact on the Setting of the Listed School Building

4.1. The issues to be considered are set out under the headings of: layout (plan form and general arrangement of new buildings on the site); massing (bulk and building heights) and appearance (architectural style).

4.2. Layout

The listed building comprises a series of connected elements composed in an orthogonal arrangement to form a cruciform plan. It is important that new development should be congruent with the geometry of this strong plan form and new buildings should be arranged as far as is possible on an orthogonal grid.

4.3. Given the access arrangement coming in from the north, it would appear logical to split the site into two main areas for development on either side of a central north-south spine road.

4.4. The listed building needs space around it and new buildings should not be located so close to it that they might diminish its significance.

4.5. This is especially important on the site's west side, nearest to the school, where the gym block projects into the site. It is suggested that the areas immediately to the north and south of the gym block should remain as open as possible and enclosed by new buildings located on the perimeter of the grid. This is particularly important with regard to the area to the north of the gym block which currently contains an amphitheatre feature. Consideration should be given to retaining the amphitheatre and ideally, allowing it to form a productive part of the school's open air facilities – this may involve sensitively creating improved features such as seating area and a stage. Alternatively, the open areas created could be landscaped and used as communal amenity areas.

4.6. **Massing**

In terms of massing, the most sensitive area of the site is that part closest to the listed building, i.e. the area immediately south of the gym block and to the west of a possible new central spine road.

4.7. Here, building heights and massing must be sensitive to the proximity of the school and new buildings should not dominate or compete with the listed building when seen from any public viewpoints and new viewpoints anywhere within the site. This means restricting building heights to no more than 2/3 storeys and possibly a more restrictive 2 storeys on the area south of the gym block where views are available from Hayward Gardens.

4.8. On the land to the east side of the site, i.e. to the east of the new central spine road, it is possible to envisage a built form incorporating higher buildings, subject always to a satisfactory relationship to adjoining residential properties.

4.9. Here, buildings could range between 4 and 5 storeys in locations where they would not cause unreasonable harm to the residential amenities of neighbouring properties, in particular flats in the Manor Fields Estate and houses in Westleigh Avenue.

4.10. **Appearance**

There are many architectural styles that could be appropriate for the site but whatever style is chosen it should display the following characteristic features:

- Simple, linear building forms (i.e. formal straight lines as far as possible).
- Strong coherent rooflines, using either pitched roofs or flat roofs.
- A simple palette of materials, carefully selected to complement the adjacent listed building.

4.11. Whilst these characteristics may tend to encourage a contemporary architectural style, it could be possible to envisage more traditional design solutions being successful.

5. Impact on the Amenities of Adjoining Residential Property

5.1. The site is surrounded on three sides by residential property:

- Westleigh Avenue (northern boundary) - large detached houses, flats and smaller houses within Westrow;
- Manor Fields Estate: Selwyn House, Keble House and Bede House (eastern boundary) – flats within a private estate and;
- Hayward Gardens (southern boundary) – flats within the Council's Ashburton Estate.

5.2. The layout and the detailed design of the new buildings must be sensitively handled in order to avoid any unreasonable impact on the amenities of all residential occupiers immediately adjoining the site. These areas of concern include:

- daylight and sunlight
- privacy
- noise and disturbance
- visual intrusion, including effect on outlook and sense of enclosure
- security

5.3. Daylight and Sunlight

Any new development must not cause unreasonable loss of daylight and sunlight to any habitable rooms in residential property adjoining the site. It is also important to avoid significantly reducing sunlight to private gardens or any communal amenity space.

5.4. The properties in Westleigh Avenue and the flats in the Manor Fields Estate that lie to the north and east of the site are those with the most sensitivity to change in terms of the amount of sunlight and daylight they will receive. The impact of any new buildings adjacent to all boundaries but especially the northern and eastern boundaries will be assessed and should meet the standards specified in the BRE Trust document - Site Layout Planning for Daylight and Sunlight - A Guide to Good Practice 2011.

5.5. Privacy

The Council has no specified minimum distance between directly facing habitable rooms. However, the relationship between any new buildings and existing adjoining residential property will be assessed carefully to ensure that there will be not be any unreasonable impact on the privacy currently enjoyed by existing residents.

5.6. In the case of houses in Westleigh Avenue, these are set back from the boundary of the site by a distance of more than 30m. The houses that form the Westrow group are much closer and particularly sensitive. The northern boundary of the site and the corner site on Westleigh Avenue is

well planted with mature trees and the retention of these trees will assist in minimising any impact on their privacy.

- 5.7. The flats in Bede House, Keble House and Selwyn House that form part of the Manor Fields Estate are much closer to the eastern boundary of the site. Here, distances from these flats to the boundary range from 18m to as little as 4m and due consideration must be given to the siting and massing of new buildings to ensure that the privacy enjoyed by the occupiers of these flats will be respected. However, the boundary shared between the Manor Fields flats and the site is well planted with mature trees which provide a very effective screen. It will be very important to retain these trees to ensure this screening is maintained and to mitigate any impact on the privacy of residents of Manor Fields.
- 5.8. The flats in Hayward Gardens (Ashburton Estate) that face north over the site are approximately 15m from the boundary and could be sensitive to new buildings in close proximity. However, it is likely that any scheme that is acceptable in terms of impact on the setting of the listed building will also avoid affecting the privacy of the flats in Hayward Gardens.
- 5.9. **Noise and Disturbance**
The new development should be designed in order to avoid noise and disturbance to adjoining residents.
- 5.10. The properties in Westrow (Westleigh Avenue) are very close to the access road to the site from Carslake Road and will be sensitive to the noise of traffic. Measures should therefore be adopted to ensure that this is minimised and these must include the retention of the mature trees growing on the northern boundary of the site adjoining Westrow. The larger detached houses in Westleigh Avenue are further away from the access road and will be less sensitive. Again, the tree screen on the northern boundary of the site will afford some protection and it is important that these trees remain. New tree planting along this northern boundary would be beneficial where the existing tree cover is sparser.
- 5.11. Open car parking areas should not be located close to existing residential property where it could be the source of noise and disturbance. Where ever possible parking should be contained within buildings, garages or accommodated underground within a basement. Access to parking areas must not be located close to adjoining residential property where it could be the source of unreasonable noise and disturbance.
- 5.12. Children's play space should be designed with sensitivity to the amenities of neighbours and should not be located close to existing residential property.
- 5.13. **Visual Impact including Outlook and Sense of Enclosure**
There are no buildings on the site and consequently some adjoining residents currently enjoy an open outlook. When the site is developed this outlook will change and it must be accepted that new buildings will

be visible from some adjoining properties and in some locations the change will be more noticeable than others.

- 5.14. The Council's planning policy does not specify a minimum distance between buildings. However, the relationship between any new buildings and existing adjoining residential property will be assessed carefully to ensure that there will be not be any unreasonable impact on the outlook currently enjoyed by existing residents.
- 5.15. There are flats within Selwyn House, Keble House and Bede House (Manor Fields Estate) that enjoy an outlook to the west over the site and in some cases this is likely to change noticeably. However, there are flats in locations where views to the west are already well screened by trees growing either within the site or within Manor Fields. Where possible the trees on the eastern boundary of the site should be retained in order to minimise the change in outlook. Any new buildings adjacent to the eastern boundary of the site should not appear overbearing when viewed from either the resident's flats or from the communal garden spaces of the Manor Fields Estate.
- 5.16. Properties in Westleigh Avenue are less sensitive being some 30m from the site boundary. Westrow houses are significantly more sensitive. In both cases, the trees growing on the boundary do provide an effective screen and where possible these should be retained. New tree planting should be considered to supplement the existing tree screen.
- 5.17. The flats in Hayward Gardens (Ashburton Estate) that face north over the site are approximately 15m from the boundary and resident's outlook could be sensitive to new buildings in close proximity. However, it is likely that any scheme that is acceptable in terms of impact on the setting of the listed building will also avoid affecting the outlook of the flats in Hayward Gardens.
- 5.18. **Security**
The site is currently enclosed with no public access. Opening the site could prejudice the security of residents with property that shares a boundary with the site. Care should be taken to ensure that the security of resident's property is not compromised in any way by the design of the scheme and advice contained in the National and Secured by Design good practice guidance should be followed.
- 5.19. In particular the layout of new development should be designed to avoid exposing adjoining private or communal gardens to the risk of access from public spaces within the development. Wherever possible the layout should be designed to arrange secure private garden spaces abutting the adjoining resident's private garden space. Access roads, pathways and communal parking spaces should avoid locations adjacent to surrounding private property and must be well overlooked and well lit at night.

6. Transport

6.1. Applications for this site will need to be accompanied by a transport assessment,

6.2. Infrastructure

To support sustainable development of the site, in accordance with Policies IS1 and PL3, a new vehicular access route would provide connection to the existing transport network

7. TPO – to be considered.

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