

<b>Committee:</b> Development	<b>Date:</b> 4th March 2010	<b>Classification:</b> Unrestricted	<b>Agenda Item Number:</b>
<b>Report of:</b> Corporate Director of Development and Renewal		<b>Title:</b> Listed Building Application (Council's own development)	
<b>Case Officer:</b> Kathryn Phillipson		<b>Ref No:</b> PA/09/2134 (TH11904)	
		<b>Ward:</b> East India and Lansbury	

## 1. APPLICATION DETAILS

1.1 **Location:** Lansbury Lawrence Nursery School, Cordelia Street E14

**Existing Use:** Nursery school

**Proposal:** Internal and external alterations and refurbishments to the nursery school buildings including some demolition. Connecting and enlarging the two buildings on Cordelia Street by infilling a small yard and raising the roof of the lower building. Re-location of pupils toilets in south block from within classrooms to a single central area

1.2 **Drawing Nos.** LL-001/P1, 002/P3, 003/P5, 004/P4, 005/P1, 011/P1 and 012/P2

**Supporting Documents:** Photographs of existing kitchen, toilets, medical room and classrooms (LL-006/P1, 007/P1, 008/P1, 009/P1 and 010/P1)

**Applicant:** LBTH Children's Services

**Owner:** LBTH

**Historic Building:** Grade II,

**Conservation Area:** Lansbury

## 2. SUMMARY OF MATERIAL PLANNING CONSIDERATIONS

2.1 The local planning authority has considered the particular circumstances of this application against the Council's approved planning policies contained in the London Borough of Tower Hamlets Unitary Development Plan, the Council's Interim Planning Guidance (2007), associated supplementary planning guidance, the London Plan and Government Planning Policy Guidance and has found that:

a) Subject to appropriate conditions regarding detailed design, the proposed extension, alterations and works of refurbishment to the school are acceptable in terms of their scale, form and design. The proposal therefore complies with PPG15, saved policies DEV27 and DEV37 of the Tower Hamlets Unitary Development Plan 1998 (saved 2007) and policies DEV2, CON1 and CON2 of the Interim Planning Guidance: Core Strategy and Development Control Submission Document 2007, which seek to ensure that alterations to listed buildings preserve their special architectural and historic

interest and that minor alterations do not have a detrimental impact on the character and appearance of conservation areas.

b) Subject to appropriate conditions regarding detailed design the proposed works to the school would not be detrimental to the character and appearance of the conservation area, in line with PPG15, saved policies DEV1 and DEV17 of the UDP 1998 (saved 2007) and policies CP49, DEV2 and CON2 of the Interim Planning Guidance 2007: Core Strategy and Development Control Submission Document 2007, which seek to ensure high quality design in the Borough and development which preserves and enhances conservation areas.

### **3. RECOMMENDATION**

3.1 That the Committee resolve to refer the application to the Government Office for London with the recommendation that were it within its authority to do so this Council would be minded to grant Listed Building Consent and that power is delegated to the Head of Planning and Building Control to recommend to the Secretary of State conditions and informatives to secure the following matters:

3.2 1. Development to be implemented within three years

2. Details of the following to be submitted and approved before work commences:

a) revised drawings to show the north elevation of the proposed infill set back from the building line of the two existing buildings

b) detailed drawings of the junction between the retained roof of the original 'blue class' building and the proposed extension

c) bricks (including sample panels to show bond, mortar and pointing) roofing, coping, roof lights and windows for proposed parents/dining room. Re-use salvaged bricks.

d) retention, cleaning and re-use of terrazzo lavatory partitions and omission of encasement panels.

e) internal finishes for new toilet areas.

f) all new work and work of making good to original fabric to match original in terms of materials, detailed execution and finished appearance

3.3 Informatives .

Listed building consent would be required for the incorporation of security fencing above the altered building and you are advised that such structures are considered detrimental to the character and appearance of the conservation area.

### **4. PROPOSAL, LOCATION AND BACKGROUND DETAILS**

**Proposal:**

- 4.1 The Council seeks listed building consent for internal and external alterations and refurbishments to the nursery school buildings including some demolition. Connecting and enlarging the two buildings on Cordelia Street by infilling a small yard and raising the roof of the lower building. Re-location of pupils toilets in south block from within classrooms to a single central area.
- 4.2 The council is prohibited from granting itself listed building consent. Regulation 13 of the Planning (Listed Building and Conservation Areas) Regulations 1990 requires that such applications are referred to the Secretary of State, together with any representations received following statutory publicity. Statutory publicity consisting of site notices displayed for 21 days, a notice in the local press and consultation of English Heritage has been carried out, as has the consultation of local occupiers. The responses are set out at Section 6 below.

**Site and surroundings:**

- 4.3 The Lansbury Lawrence Primary School and Nursery School share a large campus bounded by Cordelia Street, Kerbey Street, Ricardo Street and Bygrove Street. This is just north-west of Chrisp Street Market shopping centre and at the north end of the Lansbury Conservation Area. Across the streets on all sides is low and medium rise housing. This application relates only to the nursery, which occupies the north west corner of the site and is separated from the main school by wire fences.

**Relevant History:**

- 4.4 The nursery was originally the Elizabeth Lansbury Nursery and the school was the Susan Lawrence Primary. As noted by English Heritage they were built in the early 1950s as part of the Lansbury Estate. There have been a number of subsequent planning permissions and listed building consents relating to alterations and extensions, the relevant one to this case being the construction of a parents' room extension to the nursery's north block, permitted in 1984. This is included in the current application

**5. POLICY FRAMEWORK**

- 5.1 For details of the status of relevant policies see the front sheet for 'Planning Applications for Determination' agenda items. The following policies are relevant to the application:

**5.2 Government Planning Policy Guidance**

PPG15 preserve and enhance character and appearance of Conservation Areas and

special historic and architectural character of listed buildings and their settings.

**5.3 Spatial Development Strategy for Greater London Consolidated with Alterations since 2004 (London Plan 2008)**

4B.11 maintain the contribution of the built heritage to London's environmental quality.

**5.4 Unitary Development Plan 1998 (as saved 2007)**

Policies

- DEV1 all development to take account of character of surrounding area in terms of design, scale and materials and take account of building and roof lines and street patterns
- DEV2 residential amenity
- DEV9 resist minor alterations which would adversely effect the appearance of the building or visual integrity of the street
- DEV27 impact of minor alterations in conservation area on the building in question and on the conservation area
- DEV37 alterations to listed buildings to preserve special architectural or historic interest of the building, including retention of original plan form, repair of original features and use of traditional materials

**5.5 Interim Planning Guidance for the purposes of Development Control (2007)**

Core Strategies

- CP49 protect and enhance the historic environment including character and setting of listed buildings and conservation areas

Policies

- DEV1 protect amenity of residents and public realm
- DEV2 development to take account of local character and protect and enhance historic environment, particularly listed buildings, conservation areas and their settings; high quality design and materials
- CON1 alterations to listed buildings not to have adverse impact on character, fabric and identity of the building and to use appropriate design, scale, detailing and materials
- CON2 development in conservation areas to preserve/enhance distinctive character in terms of scale, form, height, materials, architectural details and design.

**5.6 Community Plan 2008/09**

- A great place to live
- A safe and supportive community
- A healthy community
- One Tower Hamlets

**6. CONSULTATION RESPONSE**

- 6.1 The views of the Directorate of Development and Renewal are expressed in the MATERIAL PLANNING CONSIDERATIONS section below. The following were consulted regarding the application:

English Heritage

- 6.2 This school, built in 1951-2 is a key part of the Lansbury Estate Conservation Area. it was a pioneering facility designed by Yorke, Rosenberg and Mardall and was the first post-war nursery school in London. It is an important listed building which demonstrates historical, aesthetic and communal value. The following general observations are made and the Council is urged to address the issues therein.

- 6.3 The western end of the low key Cordelia Street façade has previously been altered to the detriment of the appearance of the building. We would advise that the proposed infilling of the recess/gap should be carefully considered. Some form of slight recess at this point may help articulate the façade and help to overcome problems with bonding brickwork etc.

(officer comment – this option discussed on site, revised drawings can be required by condition)

- 6.4 We would advise that particular attention should be paid to the type of brick, brick bond and pointing profile of the proposed new external work so that it matches the original brickwork.

(officer comment – suitable conditions recommended)

- 6.5 The school toilet areas incorporate many original features. They were built with hard wearing finishes such as terrazzo and given the fact that they are almost sixty years old, they have stood up well to the rigours of daily use. It is important that the new facilities incorporate finishes of equal quality. We would particularly urge that the proposed finishes over the retained terrazzo cubicles are omitted and that the terrazzo is cleaned.

(officer comment - recommend appropriate condition)

- 6.6 The opportunity should be taken to review the existing roof security measures which detract from the appearance of the building.

(officer comment – these fences should have listed building consent, informative regarding detrimental effect recommended)

## **7. LOCAL REPRESENTATION**

- 7.1 A total of 38 neighbouring addresses were consulted by letter, site notices were posted and a press notice published. No responses have been received.

## **8. MATERIAL PLANNING CONSIDERATIONS**

### **Land use:**

- 8.1 There are no land use issues relevant to the consideration of the listed building application. The small loss of outdoor space is dealt with in the parallel planning application.

### **Amenity:**

- 8.2 The proposals would have no impact on the amenity of local residents.

### **Design and Conservation:**

- 8.3. The nursery school is a collection of linked single storey buildings set in a curtilage which includes playgrounds and garden areas. The entrance (west) façade faces Bygrove Street and is set back from the road and almost hidden from view by high hedges. The south elevation is separated and largely hidden from Ricardo Street by playground, trees and part of the Primary

School and the east elevation faces the adjoining school and is not visible from the street. The north elevation however runs close to the site boundary with a 45m frontage along the south side of Cordelia Street.

- 8.4 This frontage is in three parts. The largest part is an original building containing a classroom and kitchen. This long low building emphasises its horizontality by the use of three building elements layered one above the other - stock brick wall, strip windows and shallow mono-pitch copper clad roof, currently somewhat marred by the addition of a security fence, intended in part to prevent the roofing being stolen. West of this is the 1980s parents' room and a store. These are flat roofed structures the same height as the eaves of the classroom but with a blank façade to the street. The bricks are clearly intended to blend but are visibly lighter/cleaner. Beyond them is the remaining section of the 2.3m garden wall the buildings replaced.
- 8.5 Separating the 1950s and 1980s buildings is a 1.5m gap with a gate from the street. This is a small yard giving access to the school kitchen but closed by a wall at the south end. The current proposal seeks to build over this yard, demolish the west wall of the 1950s building and the east wall of the 1980s building and combine the parents' room and the school kitchen to provide a large room doubling as parents room and school dining room.
- 8.6 The principle of the alterations is not considered unacceptable. The classroom area would remain intact, the kitchen has no important original features and the changes inside would not alter the appearance of the important external elevations. The 1980s building has no historic or architectural merit. However, in order to achieve this improvement to school facilities two buildings of different design have to be physically joined, and the proposal includes not only building across the gap but raising the height of the 1980s building and the infill structure by 0.8m on all but the south side, to create a parapet wall which would hide a membrane covered roof and roof lights raised above the roof surface.
- 8.7 This will have an impact on the street elevation by increasing the bulk of the plainer building; involves detailing a suitable interface between the pitched roof and the new wall and would require very careful choice of bricks to avoid drawing inappropriate attention to what should be a subsidiary building by a multiplicity of brick colours, textures and bonds. English Heritage and Council Officers are in agreement that one thing which could be done to help retain the visual integrity of the 1950s building would be to set the infill back from the building line to keep the ghost of the gap. This would also make it easier to deal with the inevitable difference in materials and increase the separateness of the higher building. Revised drawings and more details of the junction between the buildings should be sought as well as full details of all materials including roof lights.
- 8.8 There are internal alterations to the classroom in the north building, to provide a larger medicine room, a new store and a smaller toilet area. The reversible partition walling is not considered to be detrimental to the character of the building. The child size toilets are of historic interest in that they are contemporary with the school building and benefited from the same attention to detail and use of quality materials, such as the terrazzo partitions. Toilets elsewhere in the nursery are to be relocated (see below) but in this classroom they will remain in their original position. English Heritage urge the retention

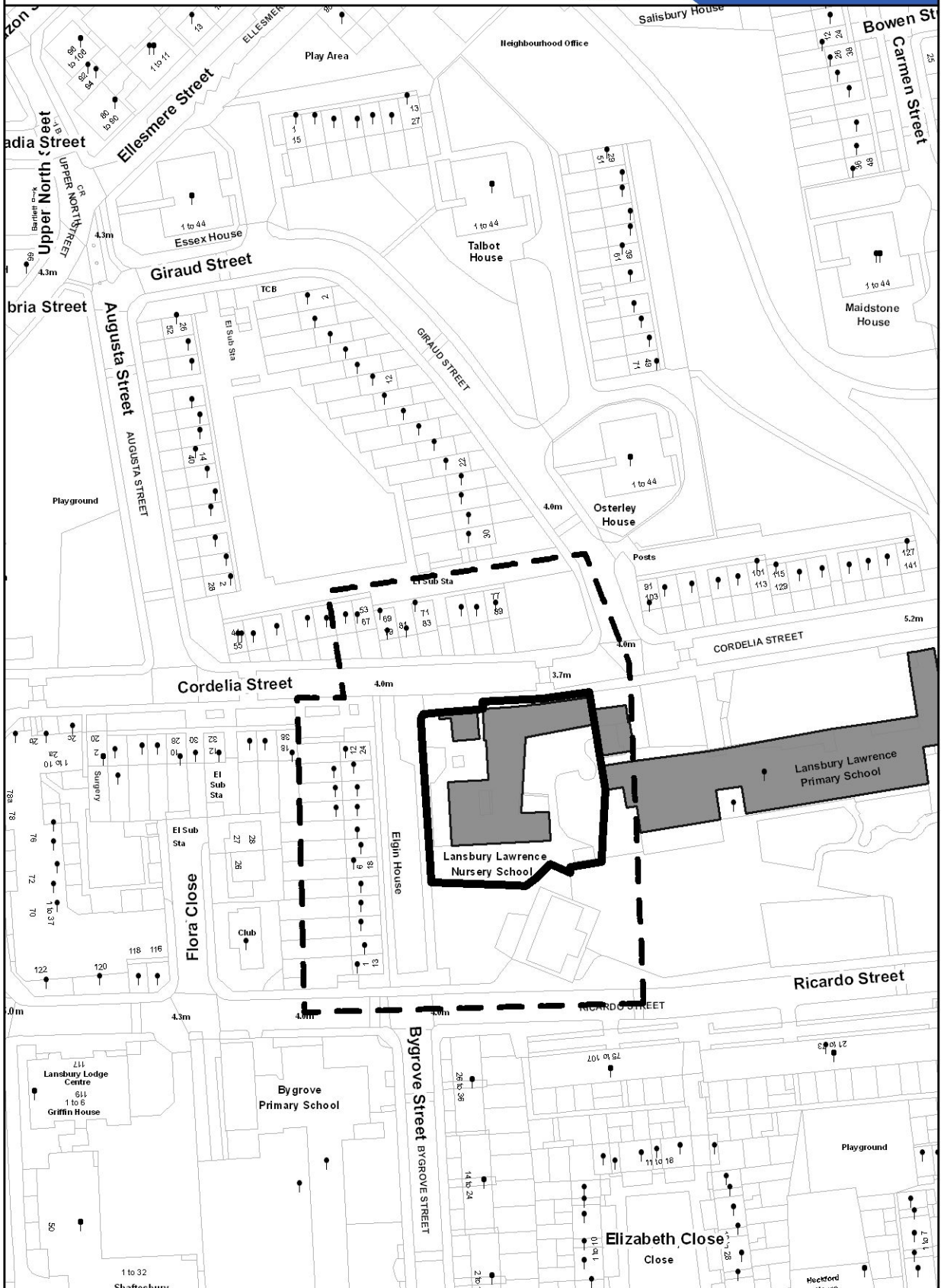
and renovation of an example of the original facilities and this is the appropriate location. Conditions are recommended to ensure this.

- 8.9 Apart from replacing sliding glass doors to the playground on the south elevation with outward opening glass doors plus a fixed panel, and the replacement of doors to the entrance garden on the north elevation with very similar new ones, the works to the south part of the building are all internal. There is no objection to these external alterations subject to the materials matching the existing.
- 8.10 This part of the building contains two large classrooms. each of which has internal rooms within rooms for storage and for pupil toilets. The proposal is to remove the toilet areas to provide better space in the classrooms and to provide new pupil, staff and visitor toilets in a central cluster which still provides direct access to separate facilities from each classroom. This involves the use of what was originally a light well, and still has windows into it, but is now roofed over. The proposal retains the form of the well but partitions it into two halves and blocks the windows.
- 8.11 The removal of the partition walls within the classrooms and the works to create the new toilet area do not impact on the external appearance of the building or on its primary internal layout and are not therefore considered to be detrimental to the character or appearance of the listed building. However, as mentioned above, it is considered desirable, and also sustainable, to retain quality materials from these facilities and re-use them elsewhere. As noted by English Heritage it is important that new toilet area finishes should be of high quality and a details should therefore be conditioned.

## **9. CONCLUSIONS**

- 9.1 All relevant policies and considerations have been taken into account The Secretary of State can be advised that this Council would have been minded to grant Listed Building Consent for the reasons set out in the SUMMARY OF MATERIAL PLANNING CONSIDERATIONS and the details of the decision are set out in the RECOMMENDATION at the beginning of this report.

# Planning Application Site Map



Planning Application Site Boundary



Statutory Listed Buildings



Consultation Area



Land Parcel Address



1:1,500

This Site Map displays the Planning Application Site Boundary and the neighbouring Occupiers / Owners who were consulted as part of the Planning Application process. The Site Map was reproduced from the Ordnance Survey mapping with the permission of Her Majesty's Stationary Office (c) Crown Copyright