

# Design & Access Statement

CHA-NVB-BHR-XX-T-A-2910-P01-S2-Design and Access Statement

## Brunner House Redevelopment Channing School

Channing School  
The Bank  
Highgate  
London N6 5HF

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Client  
Channing School  
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# Introduction

## Purpose of Report

This Design and Access Statement has been prepared by NVB Architects on behalf of Channing School, and forms part of the submission package for the proposed works. This includes the extension, and refurbishment of Brunner House alongside, improvements to the surrounding landscape.

## Background

NVB Architects have considerable experience of working on education developments in both private and local authority schools, as well as in conservation areas and with listed buildings. We have built up an extensive portfolio of education work over the past thirty years, including new-build projects, extensions and masterplanning of school campuses. NVB Architects were approached by Channing School to help replan their teaching spaces and classrooms. The school has an urgent need for larger specialist teaching facilities as the current teaching spaces are very limited and are constrained by the historic fabric of the Main School Building.



Fig 1. Aerial view looking east showing the location of proposed works.

# Existing Site

## Site Location and Use

Channing School is an independent day School for Girls aged 4–18. This project is based at the Senior School.

The proposed works include the refurbishment and extension of Brunner House, to provide specialist teaching facilities for science, food technology and design technology. This includes a three storey extension, including a basement, to the northeast and a first floor extension to the southwest of the building.

The site is located on Highgate Hill, sloping west to east across the site. Brunner House sits along the northern edge of the site, parallel to a tall brick boundary wall which runs along Cholmeley Park. There are mature trees immediately outside the boundary wall.



Fig. 2. Aerial view showing the location of Channing School.

# Existing Site

## Site Constraints

There are a number of site constraints, which played an important role in the design process, including accessibility issues and the compact nature of the site, which are illustrated in the diagram below (refer to fig. 3).

Below is a summary of key considerations.

- There are mature trees immediately outside the boundary wall.
- There is no ramped access to Brunner House.
- There is an opportunity for external social space when the temporary classrooms are removed.

- Brunner House sits on a raised plinth which may be a legacy of the original pattern of linear gardens behind the town houses which may have stepped down the hill.
- Due to the lack of space for temporary decant, it is likely that the project will need to be phased to allow for the use of the existing classrooms during construction.

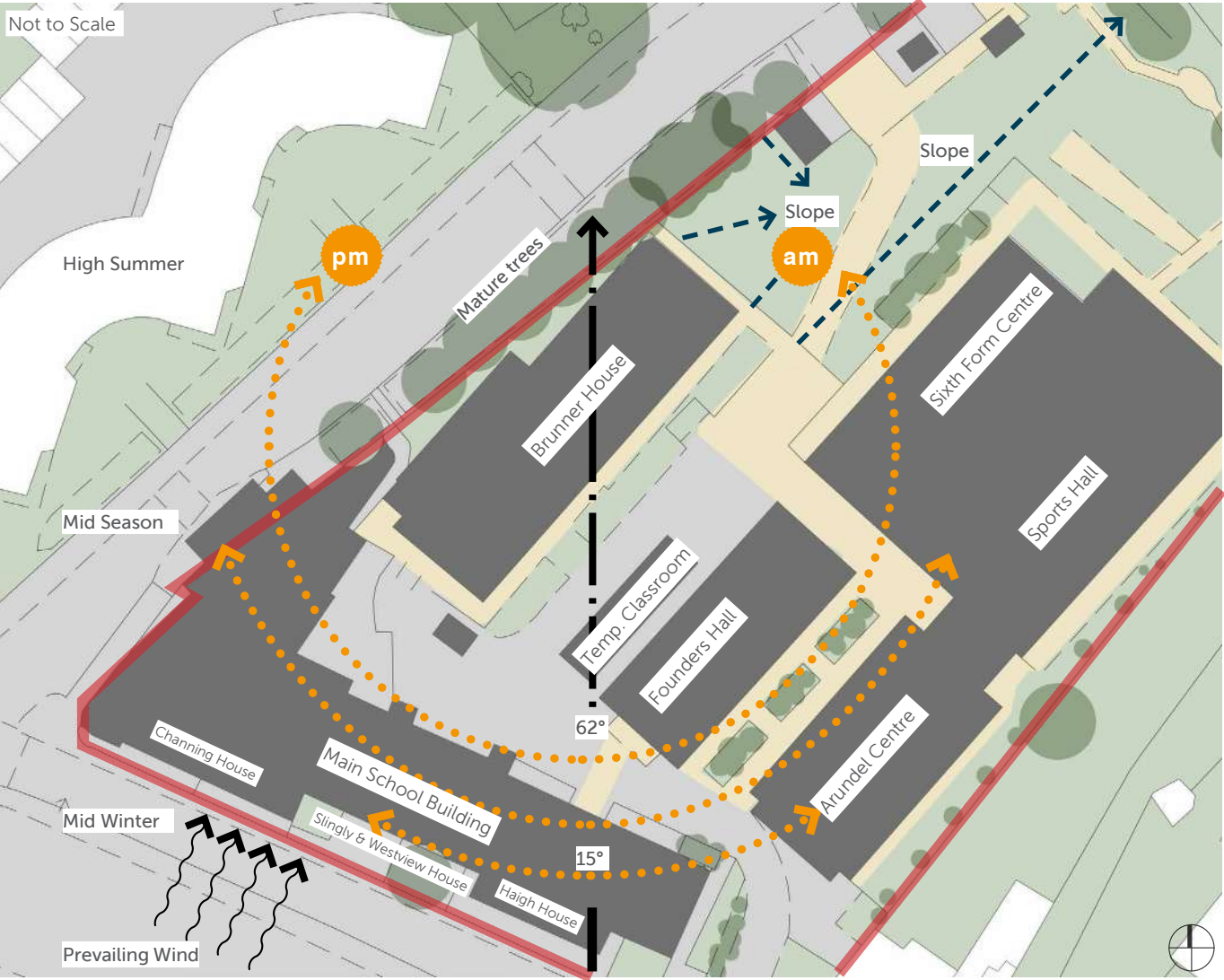


Fig. 3. Existing layout - constraints

# Existing Site



Fig 4. View of Brunner House with Cholmeley Lodge visible beyond.



Fig 5. View of external platform lift enabling access to the front entrance of Brunner House.



Fig 6. View of Brunner House from Cholmeley Park.



Fig 7. Northwest elevation of Brunner House.



Fig 8. View of Channing House and outside space.



Fig 9. View of southwest elevation of Brunner House and outside space.

# Existing Site



Fig 10. View of primary elevation of Brunner House.



Fig 11. View of tiered seating and artificial grass at the northeast elevation of Brunner House.



Fig 12. View of significant level change at the north-eastern end of the building.



Fig 13. View of northeastern elevation of Brunner House.



Fig 14. View from the Main School Building over Brunner House and Founders Hall.



Fig 15. View of northwest elevation against boundary wall

# Design

## Layout

Following guidance from various consultants regarding heritage, trees, ecology and structure and feedback from the local authority at Pre-App the general arrangement plan was adopted, which accommodates the following:

### Basement

- A large DT Workshop with BiFold doors, allowing the classroom to access the external space.
- Basement entrance with level access.
- A DT office with passive supervision over the workshop via a large internal window.
- Plant room with external access.

### Ground Floor

- New ramp access with integrated bench seating and planters to covered entrance.
- Three new classrooms in the proposed extension.
- Four refurbished science classrooms and one science prep room within the existing building.
- Improved WC provision.

### First Floor

- Two new classrooms and one science prep room in the proposed extension.
- One new food technology classroom and three refurbished science classrooms and one science prep room within the existing building.
- Improved WC provision.

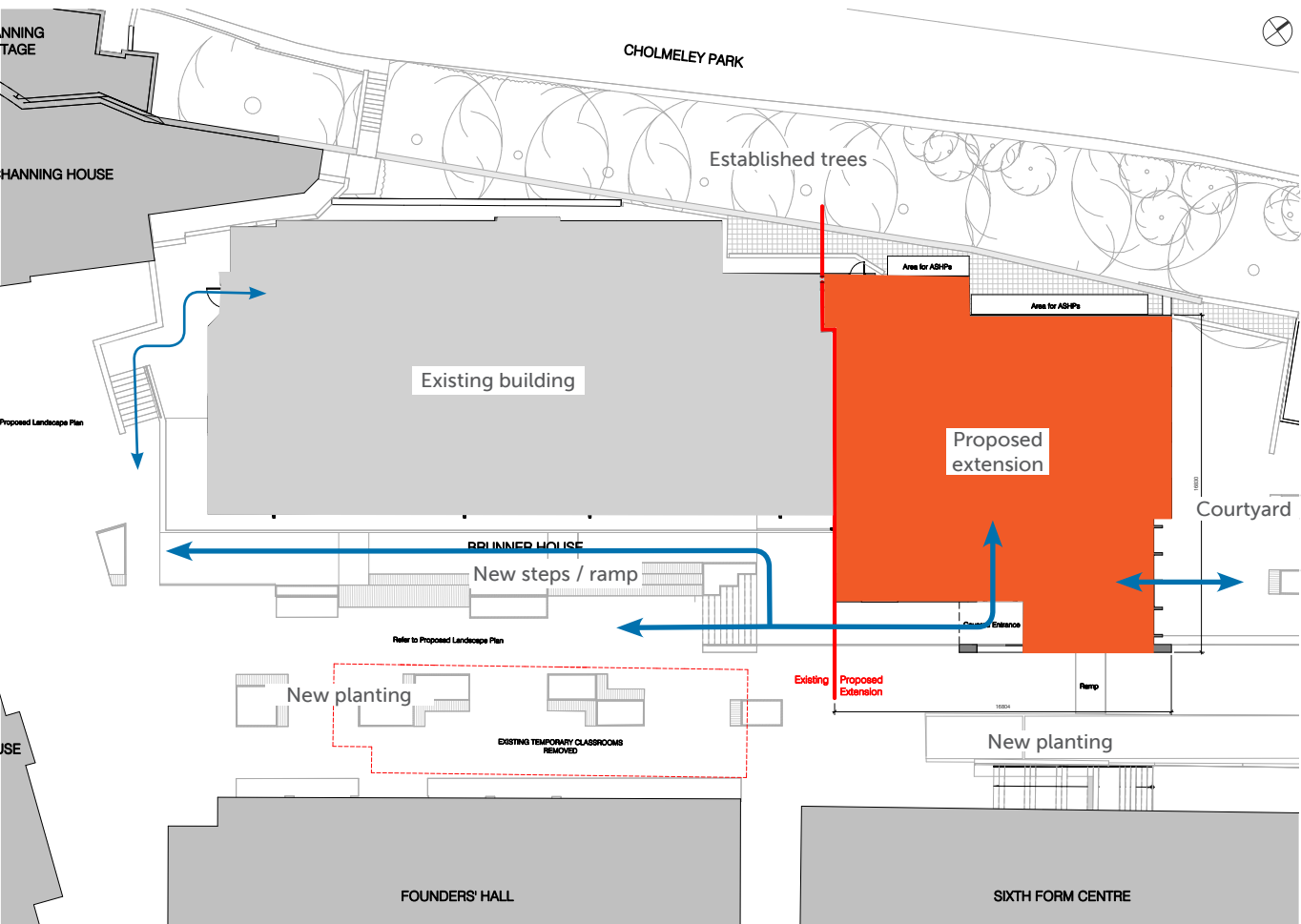


Fig. 16. Proposed layout - key moves.

Development

The current building has poor circulation with narrow corridors and a single stair and lacks a defined entrance. Any proposed works need to rectify these circulation issues. Additionally, any works need to include the provisions for a lift to improve accessibility throughout the building, external access should also be considered to improve access to the building. Any proposed works should not encroach on the existing boundary wall and established wall. For all of these reasons a simple linear extension to Brunner House was dismissed (fig. 17).

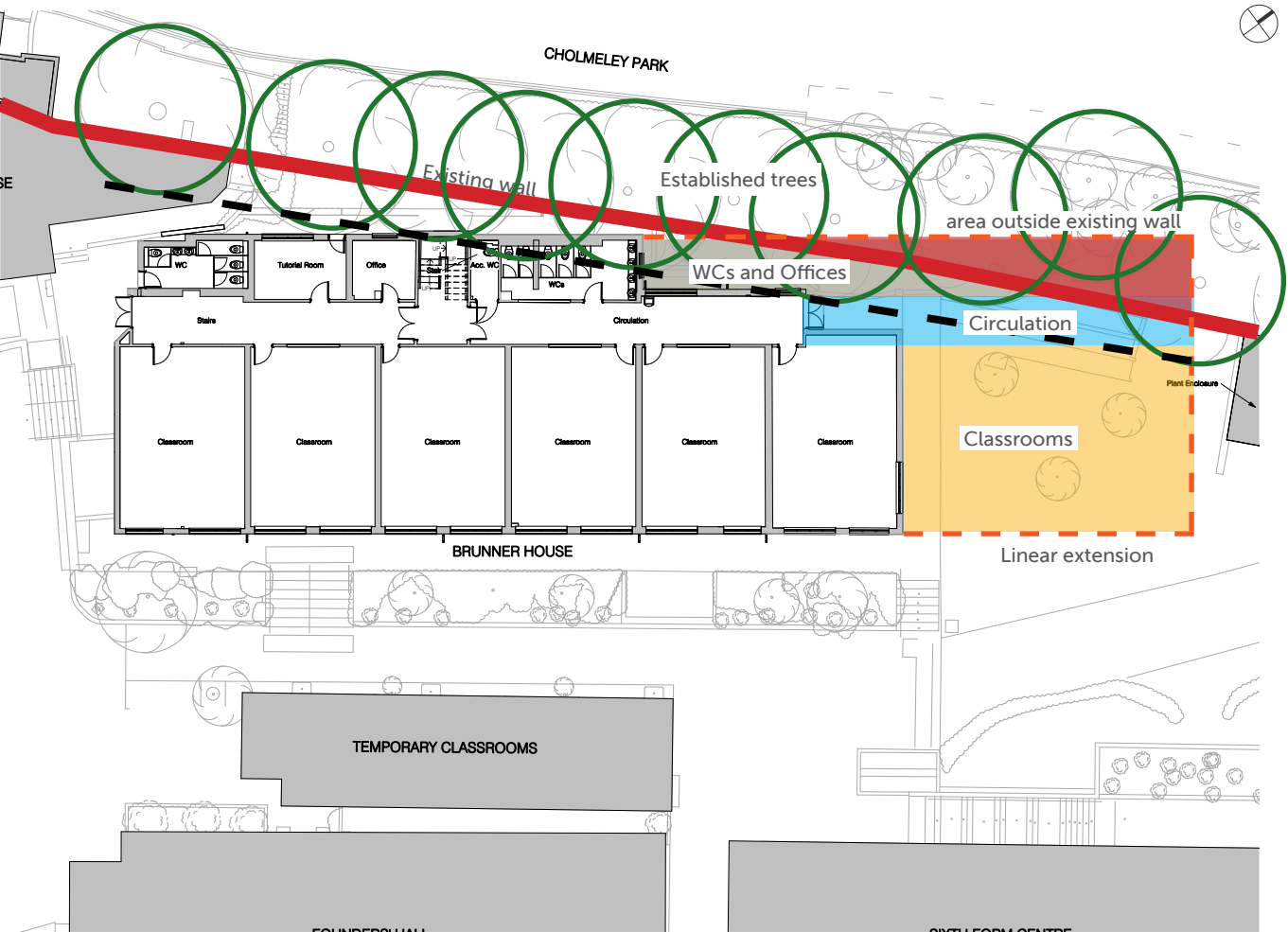


Fig. 17. Proposed layout - Linear extension

Considered Design Options

A series of design options were considered and assessed against the ability to meet the brief, practical implications, and disruption to school life.

Option A (fig. 18) proposes the refurbishment of Brunner House and adds an additional floor to the building. Whilst this option maximises the retention of the existing building, it poses a number of practical implications. In order for the ridge height to match the existing buildings on site the floor to floor heights are extremely low making servicing unachievable, this compromises the ability to improve and upgrade the thermal performance of the existing building to meet current standards. The addition of a third storey imposes a greater visual impact on the surrounding conservation area. Additionally, this design option does not support the space required for an internal lift, eliminating disabled access to the building.

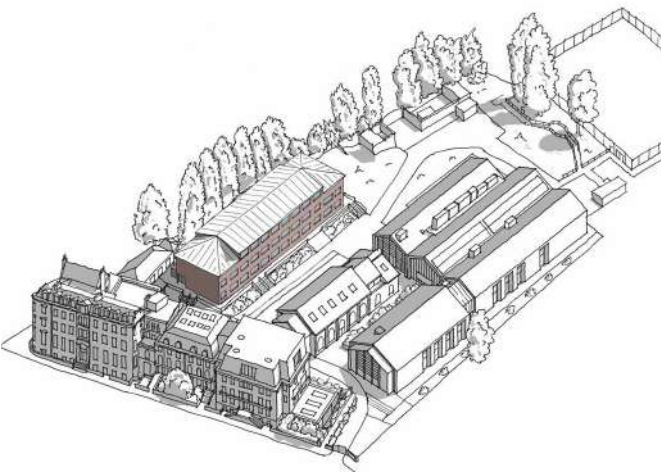


Fig 18. Option A.

Option B (fig. 19) considers the viability of a new-build square plan with improved access to external space. The ridge height of proposed building exceeds the existing ridge height established on site and would create a negative visual impact on the surrounding conservation area. Whilst the compact building form creates good standardised science labs the proximity to Founder's Hall compromises vehicle access to site and fire access alongside restricting pedestrian flow around the school. The lack of decant space on site would increase the strain on existing resources, particularly on the Main School Building (Channing House, Slingly and Westview and Haigh House). The proximity of works along Cholmeley Park boundary wall would impact the structural stability of the wall.



Fig 19. Option B.

Option C (fig. 20) refurbishes Brunner House and adds an extension to the north. This design maximises the retention of the existing building and creates new enclosed outdoor social space. Although the north extension breaks from the linear form it enables the retention of the existing ridge height and pitched form over the existing building, whilst the extension appears subservient and provides the opportunity for a flat green sedum roof. The form of the building creates a clear and defined entrance, orientating visitors and pupils. This design also creates the opportunity for ramped access to the building and has the provisions for an internal lift providing access to all levels of the building.



Fig 20. Option C.

The rigorous analysis of the design options demonstrates that Option C is the most viable and practical in meeting the client brief and negating practical implications on site.

Scale

The scale and architectural form was developed from the restrictive nature of the site, and by utilising the existing buildings on site. The roof form over the existing building and proposed extension has changed following feedback from a second Pre-App. The existing ridge line and pitched roof form is retained on the existing building, whilst the extension adopts a flat roof appearing subservient in the surrounding context and allowing for the inclusion of a green sedum roof. The view of the new extension in the street views is limited and is screened by existing trees along Cholmeley Park.



Fig 21. Proposed entrance, southeast elevation.

Amount

The area of the new extension on the basement is 255m<sup>2</sup>, of which 126m<sup>2</sup> is dedicated for teaching space classroom. The area of the new extension on the ground floor is 234m<sup>2</sup>, of which 35-60m<sup>2</sup> is dedicated for each classroom. The area of the new extension on the first floor is 319m<sup>2</sup>, of which 35-60m<sup>2</sup> is dedicated for each classroom. These figures are driven by the national standards as set out in Building Bulletin (BB) 103. Area calculations were done as part of the space audit exercise by NVB Architects to compare the areas of the school with national standards, optimise existing facilities and maximise the number of teaching spaces, which could accommodate 24 pupils.



Fig 22. Proposed northeast elevation.

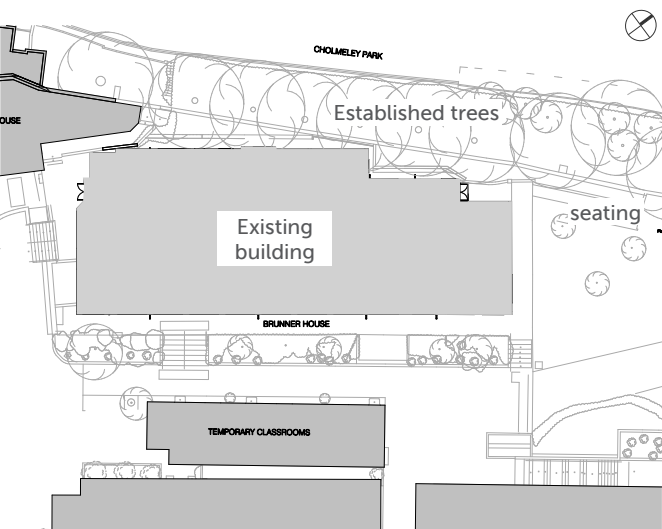


Fig 23. Existing building footprint on ground floor.

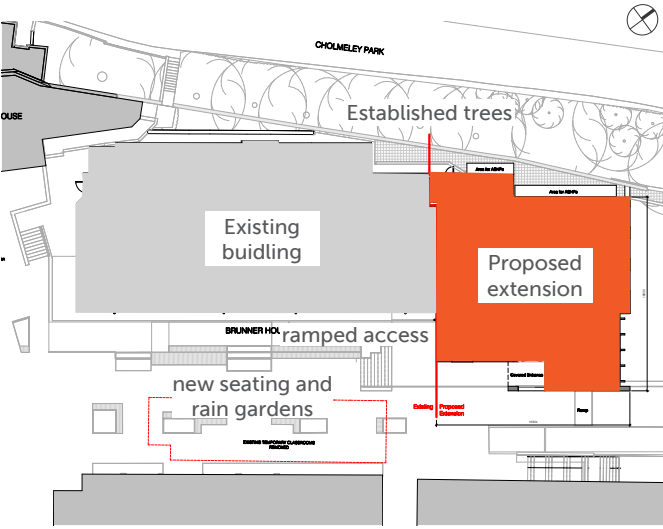


Fig 24. Proposed building footprint on ground floor.

Appearance

A palette of high quality, sustainable and low maintenance materials is proposed for this scheme, which will complement the existing materials at the school. The new extension will have ashlar stone, brick, anodised metal, and slate roofing to tie in with existing buildings on site, and copper coated or anodised aluminium windows and doors. The existing building will be over clad with insulated render to improve thermal efficiency.

The proposed ramp and stairs will include integrated concrete and timber seating, and timber planters.



Fig. 25. Concrete and timber benches



Fig. 26. Tiered timber planters



Fig. 27. Ashlar stone walls



Fig. 28. Permeable paving slabs



Fig. 29. Grey slate roof



Fig. 30. Dark grey zinc gutter



Fig. 31. Dark grey hopper



Fig. 32. Red brick



Fig. 33. Coated aluminium railings



Fig. 34. Coated aluminium metal



Fig. 35. Coated aluminium windows



Fig. 36. Coated aluminium doors

Key Views



Fig 37. Existing aerial view

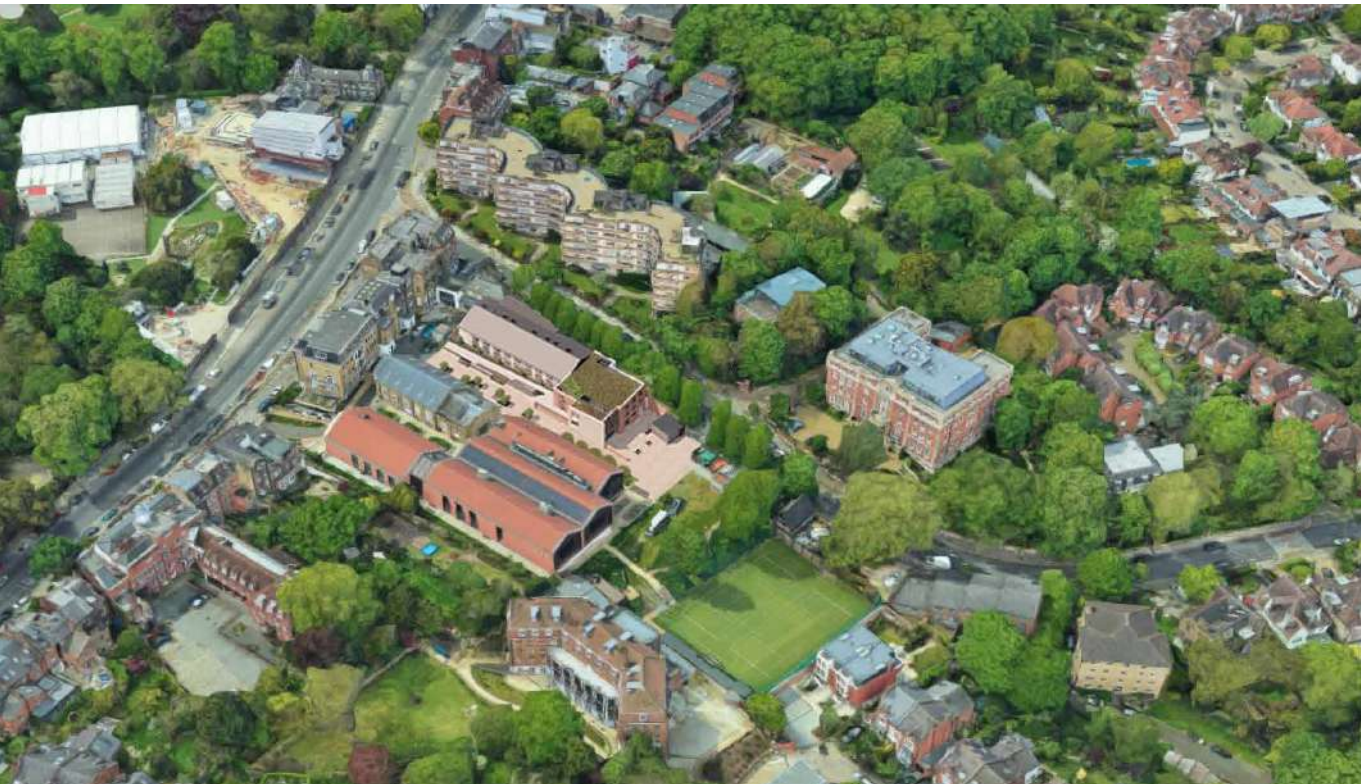


Fig 38. Proposed aerial view

Key Views



Fig 39. Existing view from northeast corner of site



Fig 40. Proposed view from northeast corner of site

Key Views



Fig 37. Existing view from Cholmeley Park, facing south.



Fig 38. Proposed view from Cholmeley Park, facing south.

Key Views



Fig 39. Existing view from Cholmeley Park, facing north



Fig 40. Proposed view from Cholmeley Park, facing north.

Trees

The proposed scheme was designed with the intention to avoid negative impact on existing trees along the boundary and introduce native / rain garden suitable tree and shrub planting wherever possible. More details on the proposed planting can be found in the submitted planting plan. For the information on the impact on existing trees and mitigation strategy refer to the submitted arboriculture report.

Ecology

The proposals include a number of features to achieve a measurable net gain in biodiversity as suggested during the pre-application process. This involves the provision of 5 native trees planted in a naturalised area located separately from the proposed planting beds within the landscape scheme, 3 swift boxes, 2 bat boxes, 1 hibernacula to be located with the 5 native trees , 1 log pile to be located in the same area and the use of native planting mixes and wild grasses in the rain gardens and planters. For more information refer to the Ecological Mitigation Plan and Detailed Proposed Landscape Plans.

Sustainability

The development will make use of an air source heat pump and solar PV panels on the south roof of the existing building. A high-performance facade with high levels of insulation coupled with exposed thermal mass in external walls and soffits of classrooms provide a sustainable way of heating and cooling the building. HVR units are also implemented to aid in ventilation and Solar control measures are introduced in the form of brise soleils to reduce over-heating. Sustainable drainage systems are utilised to manage surface water runoff, in the form off permeable hard surfaces, rainwater gardens and appropriate native planting for filtering water.

Vehicular Access

- Vehicle access onto the site is not affected by the proposals.
- External area around the development, which was previously used for vehicular access, will have pedestrian priority for safety reasons.
- New surfaces to the access route and pedestrian areas.
- A transport report by Caneparo has been produced and is included in the planning submission.

Pedestrian Access

- Pedestrian access onto the site has not been affected by the proposals.
- Access to the building has been improved via the inclusion of a 8-10 person lift, a generous accommodation stair and secondary stair
- Ground floor entrance with new external ramp access to improve accessibility for pupils with mobility issues.
- Stepped access and seating to the main entrance and along the southeast elevation.

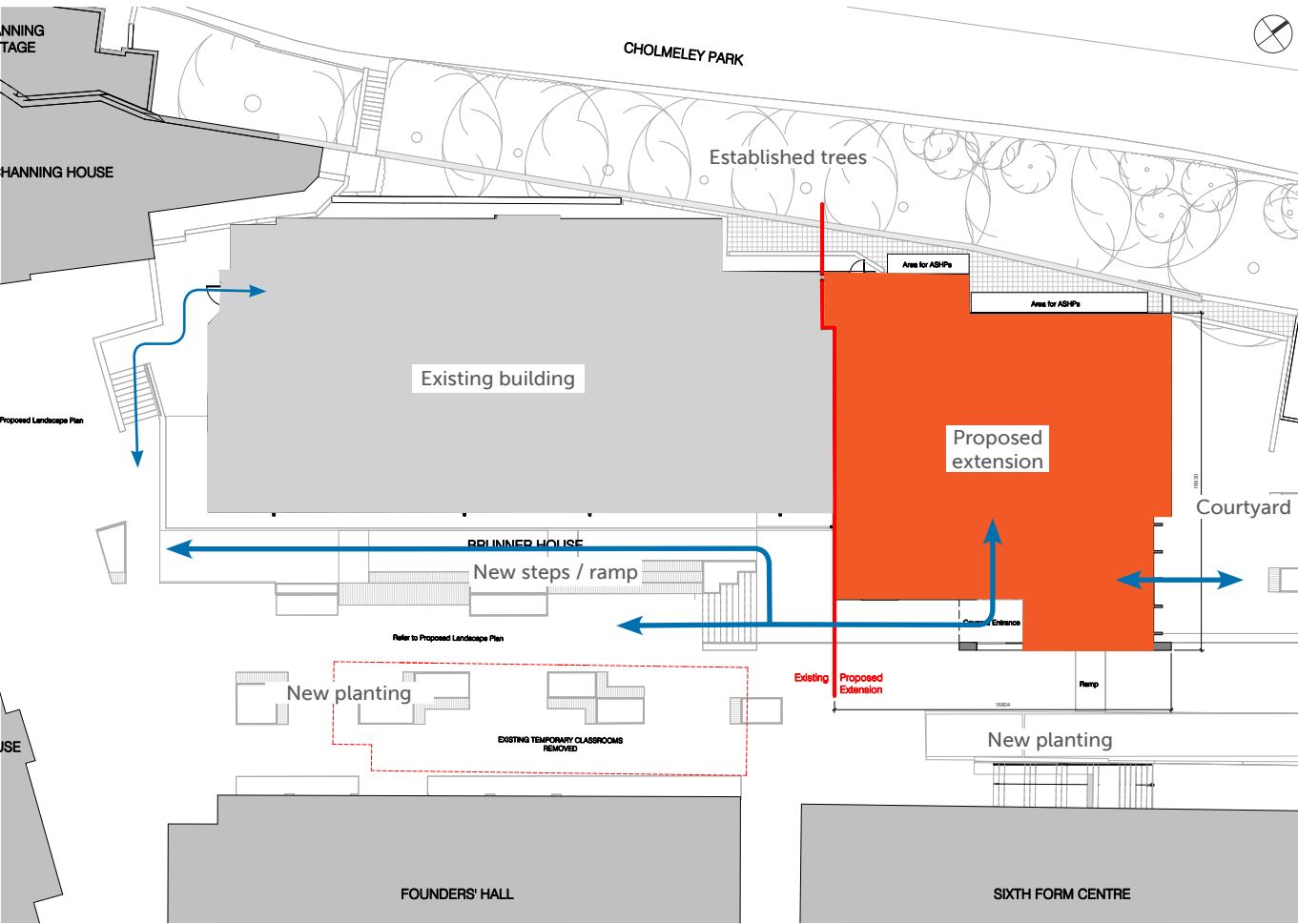


Fig. 41. Proposed layout - access.



# Proposed Landscape



## Planting - Removed and Proposed



# Landscaping social space

## Summary

This area will provide a social space for students. There are benches throughout the space for sitting, relaxing & chatting. The terrace style seating along the ramp also provides further seating. The trees and planting will soften the space and give a sense of informality and encourage pupils and staff alike to slow down and enjoy their surroundings. The trees will give a perportionate sense of scale and shade during sunny summer months.

The rain gardens will aid drainage within the space and the soft planting will breakup the hard landscaping. The lines of the planting beds echo the lines of the buildings.



Rain gardens with seating - precedent image



Social seating plaza with trees - precedent image



Rain garden example



Landscape sketch proposal showing rain gardens with benches and tiered terrace seating



Landscape sketch proposal showing accessible ramp with tiered seating, planters, rain gardens, benches and trees

## Appearance

A palette of high quality, sustainable and low maintenance materials is proposed for this scheme, which will complement the existing landscape materials at the school.



Marshall's Mistral  
Permeable Paving



Marshall's Mistral  
Permeable Paving



Timber & concrete bench



Fig. 22. Tiered timber  
planters



Acer campestre  
'Streetwise'



Alnus incana 'Aurea'



Nyssa sylvatica



Pyrus calleryana  
'Chanticleer'



Prunus avium



Malus sylvestris



Crataegus monogyna



Sorbus aucuparia



Cornus alba 'Elegantissima'



Cornus sanguinea  
'Midwinter fire'



Hydrangea macrophylla



Viburnum opulus

## Summary

This document together with other submitted reports outlines how the important design considerations of use, layout, amount, scale, appearance, views, trees, ecology, sustainability and landscape as well as vehicular and pedestrian access have been taken into account during the design process of the proposed extension and refurbishment of Brunner House at Channing School.

The proposals for the new extension have been developed to ensure that the existing building's use can be enhanced and brought up to modern standards in order to meet the school's requirements in the coming years whilst responding to the scale and character of the surrounding context.