

CITY OF WESTMINSTER			
PLANNING APPLICATIONS COMMITTEE	Date 3 February 2015	Classification For General Release	
Report of Operational Director Development Planning		Wards involved West End	
Subject of Report	23 Great Windmill Street, London, W1D 7LF		
Proposal	Installation of a raised deck, access stairs and play structures within the existing playground between the school and Nos. 24-25 Great Windmill Street. Construction of new boundary treatment on the Great Windmill Street boundary in the form of two storey 'play cubes'.		
Agent	Jane's Pond Ltd		
On behalf of	Soho Parish School		
Registered Number	14/08330/FULL	TP / PP No	TP/1920
Date of Application	11.08.2014	Date amended/ completed	28.08.2014
Category of Application	Minor		
Historic Building Grade	Unlisted		
Conservation Area	Soho		
Development Plan Context - London Plan July 2011 - Westminster's City Plan: Strategic Policies 2013 - Unitary Development Plan (UDP) January 2007	Within London Plan Central Activities Zone Within Central Activities Zone		
Stress Area	Within Stress Area		
Current Licensing Position	Not Applicable		

1. RECOMMENDATION

Grant conditional permission.





23 GREAT WINDMILL STREET, W1

2. SUMMARY

The application site comprises an existing school, which has frontages on Archer Street and Great Windmill Street. The school is unlisted but situated within the Soho Conservation Area. The existing playground is situated to the rear of the school and separates the school building from the buildings facing Brewer Street and Great Windmill Street. The nearest residential properties are attached to the school to the rear (St James's Residencies) and there are five residential units at first floor level and above within No.25 Great Windmill Street. This building, which has commercial uses on the lower floors, is separated from the school building by the entrance to the playground. Permission is sought for the installation of a new play deck at first floor level, which will span the gap between the school and the residential building on Great Windmill Street. A new entrance and facade to Great Windmill Street is proposed. A staircase and landing area is also proposed at ground floor level within the playground to allow access to the first floor deck. The deck and staircase will be attached to the school building and the residential building at No.25 Great Windmill Street. The steels will be fitted within anti-vibration pads and bolts to minimise vibration.

The key issues for consideration are:

- The impact of the deck and staircase on the amenity of the residents within Nos. 24-25 Great Windmill Street;
- The impact of the proposals, particularly to the entrance on Great Windmill Street, on the character and appearance of the conservation area.

The proposals are considered acceptable in amenity and design and conservation and therefore comply with the policies set out in the Unitary Development Plan (UDP) and Westminster's City Plan: Strategic Policies.

3. CONSULTATIONS

SOHO SOCIETY

Supports the principle of providing an enhanced playground space. However, the proposed structure should be freestanding. The proposals for the entrance gate should be submitted as there are safeguarding issues for the children at the school.

HIGHWAYS PLANNING MANAGER

No objection.

CLEANSING MANAGER

No objection.

ADJOINING OWNERS/OCCUPIERS AND OTHER REPRESENTATIONS

No. Consulted: 49; Total No. of Replies: 17.

Sixteen objections (eight from the same address) and one letter of support.

Amenity

- Increased noise disturbance.
- Overlooking.
- Vibration caused by the use of the play deck and staircase.
- Playground should be restricted to school hours only.
- Gate on Great Windmill Street should be secure to prevent unauthorised entry.

Other

- Seeking compensation under the Rights to Light Act.
- Supervision of children using the play deck.
- Money should be spent elsewhere instead of an enhanced playground.

- Light on the school should be retained.

ADVERTISEMENT/SITE NOTICE: Yes

4. BACKGROUND INFORMATION

4.1 The Application Site

The application site relates to the Soho Parish School which has frontages on Archer Street and Great Windmill Street. The building is unlisted but situated within the Soho Conservation Area. There is a playground which is situated to the rear of the school building. The playground is also surrounded by existing residential buildings fronting Great Windmill Street and Brewer Street (St James's Residencies). There are residential windows at ground floor which overlook the playground.

There is a gap between the buildings (the school and 24 Great Windmill Street) on Great Windmill Street; this currently provides a gated entrance to the playground.

4.2 Relevant History

None relevant for the school.

24-25 Great Windmill Street

Planning permission was granted on 26 August 2014 for the use of the basement for (Class A3) restaurant and ground floor for (Class A1) retail purposes. Installation of a fresh air intake duct at rear ground floor level and a brick clad high level extract duct on the side elevation, minor alterations to the shopfront, including the installation of air conditioning units behind the existing shopfront louvres. This permission is currently being implemented on site.

Planning permission was granted on 25 March 2010 for the erection of a mansard roof extension, alterations to the fenestration on the southern side elevation and creation of new residential entrance door at ground floor level, all in connection with use of the upper floors as five self-contained flats. This permission has been implemented.

5. THE PROPOSAL

Permission is sought for various alterations to the playground including the installation of a play deck at first floor level between the school and Nos. 24-25 Great Windmill Street. This deck will be accessed via a staircase which will be fixed to Nos. 24-25 Great Windmill Street at ground floor level. Play cubes are proposed to replace the existing entrance gates on Great Windmill Street.

There are existing gates enclosing the playground to the rear. These gates will be pushed further to the rear to allow for space for the bin store.

An existing lantern light which is fixed to the side elevation of the school is proposed to be removed.

The proposal has been amended since its original submission to lower the height of the landing and to lower and re-position the stairs further away from residential windows. The staircase will still be attached to the residential building.

6. DETAILED CONSIDERATIONS

6.1 Land Use

The additional playspace for the school is considered acceptable in land use terms.

6.2 Townscape and Design

The proposal involves the installation of a timber framed structure within the existing gap in the terrace adjacent to the Victorian Gothic school building, occupied by the playground. The frame is to be infilling with a metal mesh and glazing. Infilling this gap with a permanent building would not be likely to be acceptable in townscape terms but this is an unusual proposal, for a temporary lightweight structure to be used as part of the playground. In this context it is considered that the proposal is acceptable in urban design and conservation terms.

6.3 Amenity

The proposal has been amended to reduce the height of the landing and re-position the stairs to the first floor platform. The staircase and the landing will be attached to the rear and side of Nos. 24-25 and the school building. There are five residential flats within Nos.24-25 at first floor level and above. All the rear windows serve bedrooms; there are also windows on the side elevation which serve bathrooms. The windows on the side elevation are obscurely glazed but are openable. The landing will be 3m below the residential windows at first floor level and the stair riser is situated away from the first floor windows. The play platform at first floor level will be at the same level as the first floor bathroom window.

Objections have been received on the grounds that the new playground will have an adverse impact on residential amenity in terms of increased noise, overlooking, loss of daylight, loss of existing views and the impact of vibration from the staircase and platform.

There are existing vaults under the playground to the rear, therefore the staircase and platform cannot be a freestanding structure and will have to be fixed to the residential building and the school building. Objections have been received on the grounds that this will cause vibration through to the residential flats. Mitigation measures are proposed in order to reduce the potential transfer of vibration from the staircase and deck to the building. Anti-vibration pads are proposed at all steel connections to the building, as well as the connection at the base plate and the connection to the wall. The pads will act as a resilient break between the steelwork and the building, add damping into the system and reduce the effect of the footfall on the stairs transferring into the building. Anti-vibration washers are also proposed which will isolate the bolt. These two mitigation measures are considered acceptable and a condition securing these items is recommended.

It is considered that the re-positioned staircase to the rear is acceptable. The landing is a sufficient distance away from the bedroom windows and the main stair is located closer to the school building rather than the residential building. The first floor platform is shown to extend close to a bathroom window at first floor level. The applicant has shown a 'light box' to surround and enclose this window. This would be 2m high and cover the whole of the window. However, this is not considered acceptable; the window is the only source of ventilation and the occupants of this flat should have the flexibility to open their window. It is considered that this can be addressed via an amending condition; a screen around the window is recommended. This should be at least 1.5m away and at least 2m high. This will allow the occupants to open the window and prevent children from getting too close to the window. The objections received from the flats on the upper floors on the grounds of loss of privacy are not considered sustainable due to the position of the platform at first floor level.

Objections have been received on the grounds that the playground is currently a source of considerable noise and any further play areas will increase the noise levels, especially if the playground is not managed correctly. It should be expected that schools are a source of noise at break times. One of the original documents submitted with the planning application stated that the new playspace would be used by children after hours and at weekends. The headmaster of the school has confirmed that the playground is not regularly used at the

weekends, in the holidays or in the evening beyond 17.30 and there are no plans to change this under the new scheme. This is considered acceptable.

Objections have been received on the grounds that the new entrance gates will not be as secure as the existing gates and unauthorised access may be gained to the residential flats on the upper floors. The new entrance/facade on Great Windmill Street will be constructed of timber and glass, and will be taller than the existing gates. It is considered that due to the increased height, unauthorised access will be minimised.

The proposed drawings show that the lower part of the residential windows within Nos.24-25 at first floor level will be obscurely glazed. This is not considered appropriate and an amending condition requiring the removal of obscure glazing is recommended.

The bin store is proposed to be relocated to the rear of the playground. This will be in close proximity to the existing residential flats within St James's Residencies on Brewer Street. The bin store will be close to a small obscurely glazed window which appears to serve a store room. As the waste is collected daily from Great Windmill Street the location of the bin store is considered acceptable.

6.4 Transportation/Parking

The Highways Planning Manager has no objection to the proposal. Objections have been received on the grounds that the proposals will lead to the loss of the street light which is attached to the school building. The existing light is not a Council owned street light, therefore its removal is considered acceptable and a replacement is not required.

There is an existing barrier on the pavement outside the school gates on Great Windmill Street. This will require modification to allow vehicular access to the school site. As this is on the public highway, the applicant will have to contact the City Council's Highways Team to discuss these alterations.

6.5 Economic Considerations

Any economic benefits generated are welcomed.

6.6 Other UDP/Westminster Policy Considerations

Not applicable.

6.7 London Plan

The proposals do not raise strategic issues.

6.8 National Policy/Guidance Considerations

Central Government's National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) came into effect on 27 March 2012. It sets out the Government's planning policies and how they are expected to be applied. The NPPF has replaced almost all of the Government's existing published planning policy statements/guidance as well as the circulars on planning obligations and strategic planning in London. It is a material consideration in determining planning applications.

Until 27 March 2013, the City Council was able to give full weight to relevant policies in the Core Strategy and London Plan, even if there was a limited degree of conflict with the framework. The City Council is now required to give due weight to relevant policies in existing plans "according to their degree of consistency" with the NPPF. Westminster's City Plan: Strategic Policies was adopted by Full Council on 13 November 2013 and is fully compliant with the NPPF. For the UDP, due weight should be given to relevant policies according to their

degree of consistency with the NPPF (the closer the policies in the plan to the NPPF, the greater the weight that may be given).

The UDP policies referred to in the consideration of this application are considered to be consistent with the NPPF unless stated otherwise.

6.9 Planning Obligations

Not applicable.

6.10 Environmental Assessment including Sustainability and Biodiversity Issues

Not applicable.

6.11 Access

The main access to the school on Archer Street is unaffected by the proposal.

6.12 Other issues

Objections have been received on the grounds that the glazing to the entrance to the playground is inappropriate and views to children playing on the deck could be gained by members of the public. It is considered that this is a matter for the school, and if they wished to install obscure glazing rather than clear glazing this would be acceptable.

An objection has been received on the grounds of Right to Light. This is not a planning matter and is a private matter between the applicant and neighbouring occupiers.

6.13 Conclusion

The proposal to the playground and entrance is considered acceptable and complies with the policies set out in the UDP and City Plan.

BACKGROUND PAPERS

1. Application form and covering letter
2. Letter from the Soho Society dated 13 October 2014
3. Memorandum from Cleansing Manager dated 11 September 2014
4. Memorandum from the Highways Planning Manager dated 22 October 2014
5. Letters from owner/occupier of Flat 2, 25 Great Windmill Street dated 5 September 2014 and 18 December 2014
6. Letter from Soho Housing dated 22 September 2014
7. Letter from owner/occupier of 4 Archer Street Chambers dated 23 September 2014
8. Letters from owner/occupier of Flat 3, 25 Great Windmill Street dated 25 September, 26 September, 29 September and 2 January 2015
9. Letters from owner/occupier of Flat 1, 25 Great Windmill Street dated 25 September 2014
10. Letter from owner/occupier of Flat 25, St James's Residencies, Brewer Street dated 29 September 2014
11. Letter from owner/occupier of Flat 5, 25 Great Windmill Street dated 14 October 2014

IF YOU HAVE ANY QUERIES ABOUT THIS REPORT OR WISH TO INSPECT ANY OF THE BACKGROUND PAPERS PLEASE CONTACT PAUL QUAYLE ON 020 7641 2547 OR BY E-MAIL –pquayle@westminster.gov.uk

DRAFT DECISION LETTER

Address: 23 Great Windmill Street, London, W1D 7LF

Proposal: Installation of a raised deck, access stairs and play structures within the existing playground between the school and 24/25 Great Windmill Street. Construction of new boundary treatment on the Great Windmill Street boundary in the form of two storey 'play cubes'.

Plan Nos: No:SOE04, design and access statement, visual of front elevation on Great Windmill Street, management of playground, management plan for outside space dated 15.10.2014, vibration report, visual of first floor play deck, site location plan, draft timber deck details, noise and vibration control document, No: SOE02

Case Officer: Helen MacKenzie

Direct Tel. No. 020 7641 2921

Recommended Condition(s) and Reason(s):

- 1 The development hereby permitted shall be carried out in accordance with the drawings and other documents listed on this decision letter, and any drawings approved subsequently by the City Council as local planning authority pursuant to any conditions on this decision letter.

Reason:

For the avoidance of doubt and in the interests of proper planning.

- 2 You must apply to us for approval of detailed drawings (at scale 1:20) of the following parts of the development:

The Great Windmill Street frontage of the structures

You must not start any work on these parts of the development until we have approved what you have sent us.

You must then carry out the work according to these detailed drawings. (C26DB)

Reason:

To make sure that the appearance of the building is suitable and that it contributes to the character and appearance of this part of the Soho Conservation Area. This is as set out in S25 and S28 of Westminster's City Plan: Strategic Policies adopted November 2013 and DES 1 and DES 5 or DES 6 or both and paras 10.108 to 10.128 of our Unitary Development Plan that we adopted in January 2007. (R26BE)

- 3 You must carry out any building work which can be heard at the boundary of the site only:

- * between 08.00 and 18.00 Monday to Friday;
- * between 08.00 and 13.00 on Saturday; and
- * not at all on Sundays, bank holidays and public holidays.

Noisy work must not take place outside these hours. (C11AA)

Reason:

To protect the environment of neighbouring residents. This is as set out in S29 and S32 of Westminster's City Plan: Strategic Policies adopted November 2013 and ENV 6 of our

Unitary Development Plan that we adopted in January 2007. (R11AC)

- 4 The mitigation measures proposed as set out in the 'Noise and Vibration Control' document, must be integral to the construction of the play deck and staircase must be maintained for as long as the play structure is in place.

Reason:

To protect neighbouring residents from noise and vibration nuisance, as set out in S24, S29 and S32 of Westminster's City Plan: Strategic Policies adopted November 2013 and ENV 6 of our Unitary Development Plan that we adopted in January 2007. (R13EC)

- 5 You must apply to us for approval of detailed drawings showing the following alteration(s) to the scheme:

- the installation of a screen/cut out around the first floor bathroom window to be 1.5m away from the window and at least 2m high.
- the removal of the obscure glazing from the lower section of the residential windows at first floor level.

You must not start on these parts of the work until we have approved what you have sent us. You must then carry out the work according to the approved drawings. (C26UB)

Reason:

To protect the privacy and environment of people in neighbouring properties. This is as set out in S29 and S32 of Westminster's City Plan: Strategic Policies adopted November 2013 and ENV 6 and ENV 13 of our Unitary Development Plan that we adopted in January 2007. (R21BC)

- 6 You must carry out the measures included in your management plan dated 15.10.2014 at all times that the playground is in use.

Reason:

To protect neighbouring residents from noise nuisance, as set out in S24, S29 and S32 of Westminster's City Plan: Strategic Policies adopted November 2013 and ENV 6 and ENV 7 of our Unitary Development Plan that we adopted in January 2007. (R13FB)

Informative(s):

- 1 In dealing with this application the City Council has implemented the requirement in the National Planning Policy Framework to work with the applicant in a positive and proactive way. We have made available detailed advice in the form of our statutory policies in Westminster's City Plan: Strategic Policies adopted November 2013, Unitary Development Plan, Supplementary Planning documents, planning briefs and other informal written guidance, as well as offering a full pre application advice service, in order to ensure that applicant has been given every opportunity to submit an application which is likely to be considered favourably. In addition, where appropriate, further guidance was offered to the applicant at the validation stage.





JANE'S POND

design create play

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GL11 6AW

Key

-  Proposed position of duct
-  Proposed position of light box / windows box



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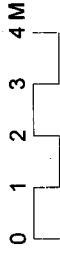
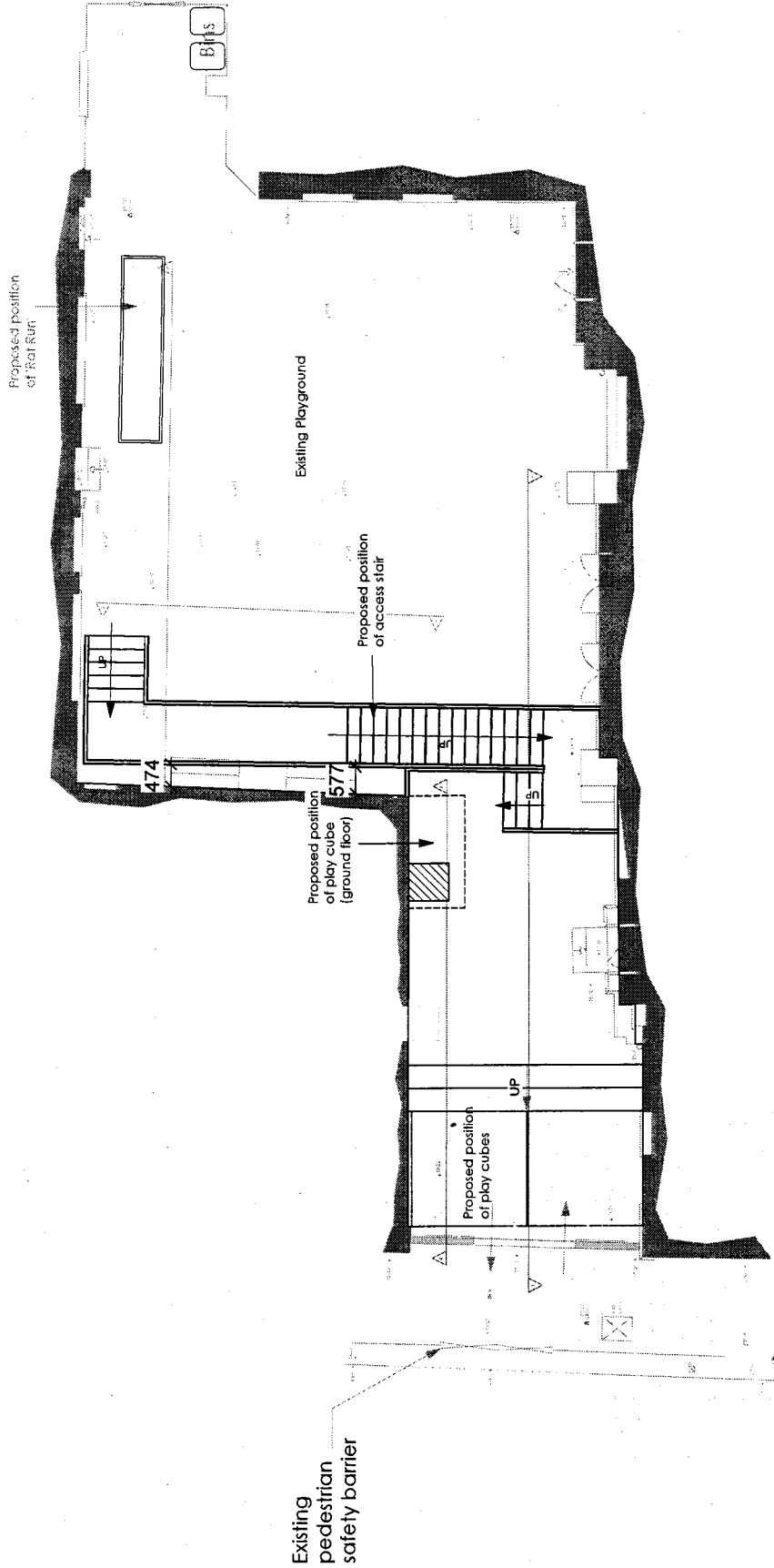
Proposed Plan Layout

Proposed steps / platform layout

24 - 25 Great Windmill Street,
Soho, London, W1D 7LQ

08/12/2014

Drawn: NS
Scale: 1:100@A3
Checked: JB
Draw: No: SSC1001
Status: FOR PLANNING
DO NOT SCALE FROM THESE DRAWINGS





JANE'S POND

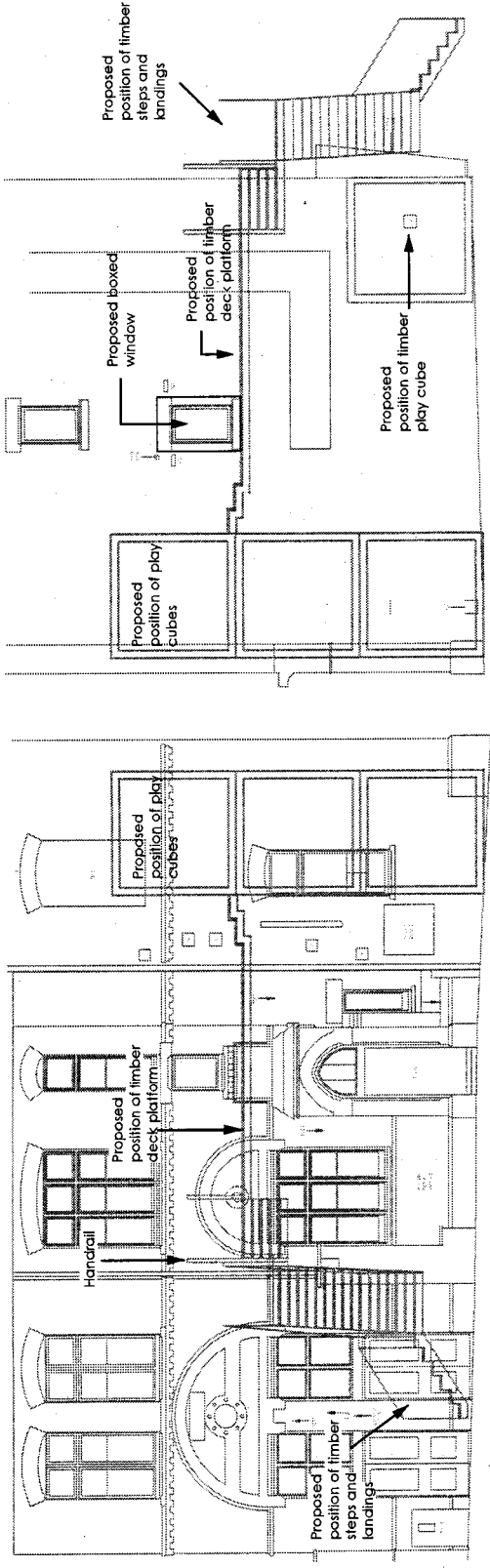
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Proposed steps /
platform elevations

Soho Parish School
W1D 7LF

Drawn: NS Scale: 1:100@A3
Checked: Div: No: SOE04
Status: For Planning
Date: 02/12/2014

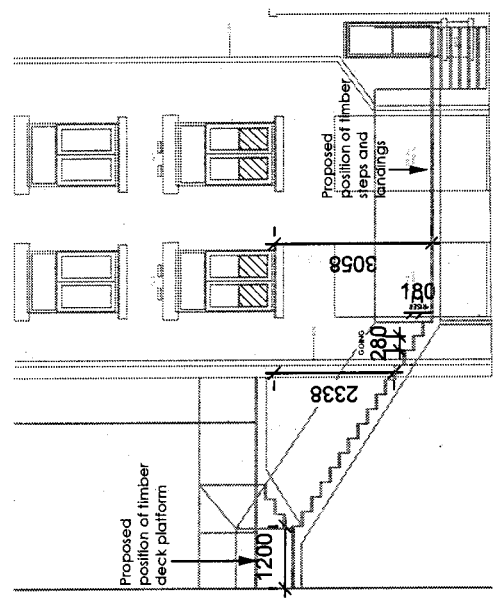


ELEVATION 1

ELEVATION 2

ELEVATION 3

ELEVATION 4



GOING = 280MM
RISERS = 180MM

Proposed position of 'Rat Run'

0.1 2 3 M

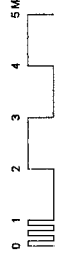
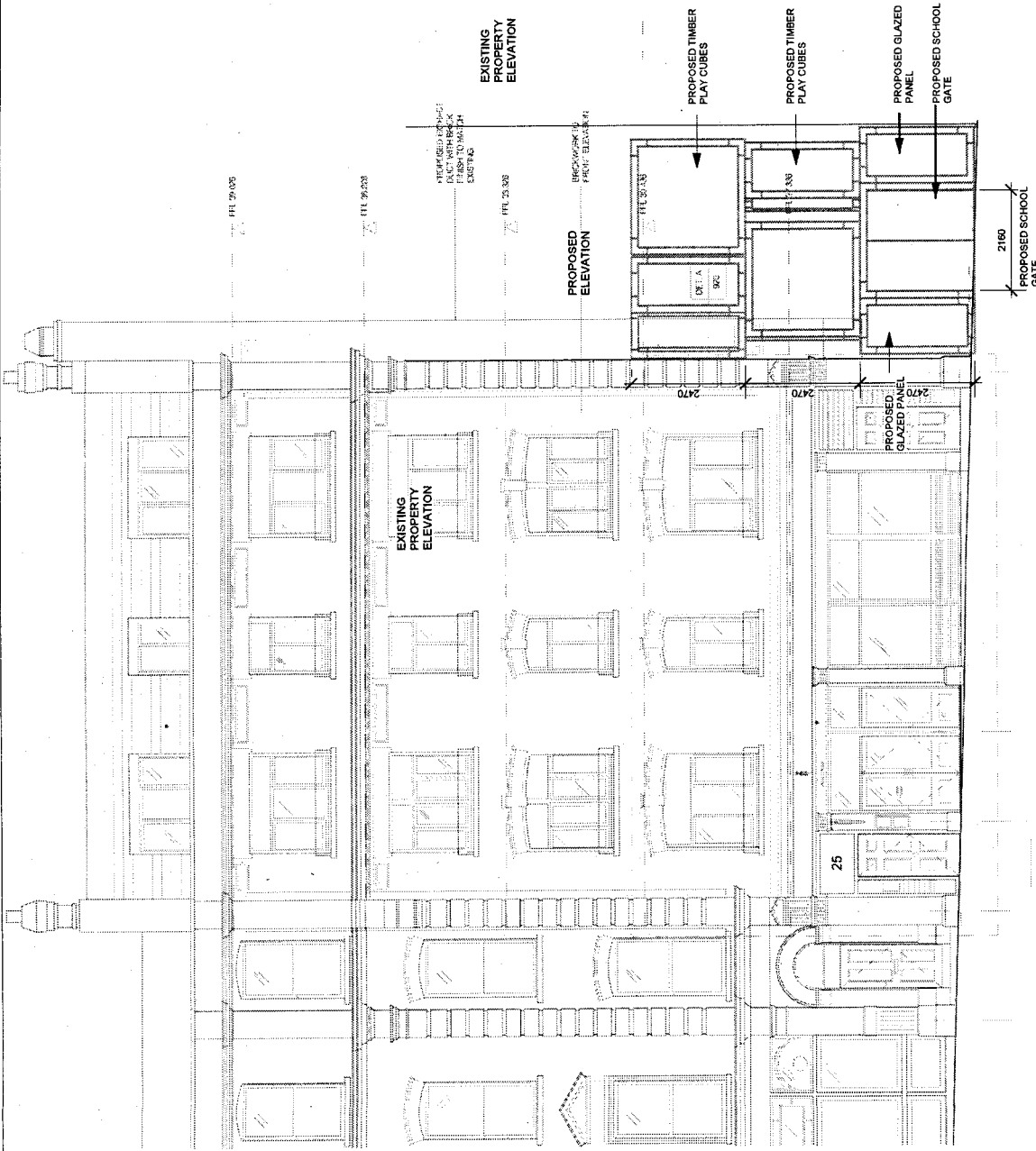


DO NOT SCALE FROM THESE DRAWINGS

Proposed street elevation

Soho Parish School
WID 71F

Drawn: NS Scale: 1:100@A3
Checked: Drw. No: SOE02
Status: FOR PLANNING
Date: 17/01/2014



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