

## Design & Access Statement

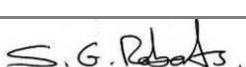
**The Barn House, Meadow Way, Eastcote, HA4 8TP**

**On Behalf of:- Blossom Tree Montessori Limited**



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## 1.0 Introduction

- 1.1 iCON Building Consultancy Limited has been instructed by Blossom Tree Montessori Limited to prepare a Design & Access Statement to accompany an application for Listed Building Consent required for minor alterations to The Barn House to create a new 97 place children's day care nursery.
- 1.2 This Design & Access Statement should be read in conjunction with the following supporting information: -
  - Heritage Statement prepared by Geoff Noble Heritage Consultants
  - iCon BC's drawing BTM\_001-02 – Existing Ground Floor Plan
  - iCon BC's drawing BTM\_001-03 – Existing First Floor Plan
  - iCon BC's drawing BTM\_001-04A – Ground Floor Demolition Plan
  - iCon BC's drawing BTM\_001-05 – First Floor Demolition Plan
  - iCon BC's drawing BTM\_001-06C – Proposed Ground Floor Plan
  - iCon BC's drawing BTM\_001-07C – Proposed First Floor Plan
  - Supporting Design Statement prepared by D1 Properties.
- 1.3 This Design & Access Statement takes into account the preliminary pre-app advice provided by Emma Lauze, a Conservation Consultant engaged by Hillingdon Council, dated 14<sup>th</sup> March 2023, following her inspection of the property on 13<sup>th</sup> March 2023.

## 2.0 Site Evaluation & Design Development

- 2.1 The site is located on the corner of Field End Road and Meadow Way in Eastcote, Ruislip and is to the south of Field End Farmhouse. The front elevation of the property overlooking Field End Road faces due east.
- 2.2 Today the property is known as The Barn House, 38 Meadow Way, but was formerly known as Barn to South of Field End Farmhouse.
- 2.3 The property is Grade II Listed and was listed on 12<sup>th</sup> December 1957 with a description as "Probably late 16<sup>th</sup> Century timber framed barn, with old tiled roof. Weatherboarded except on south side which has exposed framing with brick noggins, Queen-post roof trusses. Lean to north aisle".
- 2.4 The property is currently vacant but was previously used as commercial offices for the law firm known as The Sethi Partnership Solicitors.
- 2.5 We understand that the property was converted from a derelict barn to commercial offices in 1977 and this was a rather brutal conversion where a lot of the original structure appears to have been removed and a modern first floor was constructed. Furthermore, attempts were made to replicate 16<sup>th</sup> Century timber framed construction by the installation of imitation oak beams and posts constructed from fibreglass.
- 2.6 Today, the property looks tired and dated with materials and finishes which are not very sympathetic to the character of this rural property, including a deep red broadloom carpet to the main ground floor office areas, cheaply constructed toilet to the first floor and cheap quality surface mounted strip lights fixed to the roof timbers with exposed cabling.



**Figure 1 – Deep red broadloom carpet to ground floor**



**Figure 2 – Cheaply constructed toilet to first floor**



**Figure 3 – Cheap surface mounted light fittings fixed to rafters**

- 2.7 Following preliminary advice provided by Geoff Noble Heritage Consultants and Emma Lauze from Hillingdon Council, it became clear that sub-dividing the ground floor open space with corridor partitions and folding doors would not be acceptable to the Council, as it would change the character of an open plan barn. Furthermore, the construction of mesh fencing at the front of the building would change the rural character and setting of this Listed building.
- 2.8 The design team have taken on board these preliminary comments and, in conjunction with the client, have decided not to make any changes to the front garden.
- 2.9 The design team have also re-planned the ground floor to remove the corridor at the southern end of the space and also omitted the folding doors. The existing partitions to the northern end of the ground floor will be re-planned as these are essential for the safe operation of the nursery.
- 2.10 We also understand that forming a new door opening to the north elevation will require planning permission. We have therefore omitted this from the design.

### 3.0 Building Layout & Form

- 3.1 The current configuration of the building lends itself very well to convert from commercial offices to a children's day care nursery with large open spaces, good natural light, two means of escape staircases, secure garden, large car park and access to local facilities.
- 3.2 The existing rooms on the ground floor east side of the building are also an ideal size and location for the ancillary spaces required for a modern children's day care nursery, including staff office / reception, staff toilets, kitchen, staff room and toddler's toilets.
- 3.3 The existing rooms on the first floor are also an ideal size for toddlers and pre-school children.
- 3.4 Therefore, no major re-planning, or structural alterations are required and the intervention is limited to the construction of additional toilets for the children, plus facilities for nappy changing and preparing milk bottles.
- 3.5 The existing partition at the northern end of the ground floor needs to be removed as this compromises the use of the space as a toddler's room for 16 children and 6 staff. This partition was, unfortunately, removed as part of the internal stripping out works. However, as this was not an original part of the building, we understand that retrospective listed building consent will be granted. For record purposes, Figure 4 below illustrates the partition.



**Figure 4 – Original partition to northern end of ground floor**

- 3.6 A new corridor at the northern end of the ground floor between the existing main stairwell and the toddler's toilets to the north east corner of the building is essential operationally to enable staff to access the ground floor toddler's toilets without disturbing the babies in the main room at the southern end of the ground floor.
- 3.7 The existing large open plan space to the southern end of the ground floor space is to remain unaltered so that the open plan feel of the former barn is maintained.
- 3.8 The proposed office, main kitchen, staff room and toddler's toilets on the ground floor can all be accommodated with minimal intervention to the existing rooms on the east side of the building.
- 3.9 It is essential to provide two toilets for toddlers on the first floor and three toilets on the first floor for pre-school children. The toddler's toilets will occupy the same footprint as an existing kitchen. The pre-school toilets will occupy a slightly larger footprint to the existing single person toilet. The figures below illustrate the current layout of the existing kitchen.



**Figure 5 – Proposed location of first floor toddler's toilets**



**Figure 6 – Proposed location of first floor pre-school toilets**

3.10 The current largely open plan arrangement on the first floor with the 16<sup>th</sup> Century Queen post roof trusses very visible is to remain to preserve the character of this former barn.

## 4.0 Building Fabric & Heritage Features

- 4.1 The proposed works generally comprise internal cosmetic alterations and fitting out works to create a new compliant children's nursery and none of the proposed work will cause injury to the building fabric or any heritage feature.
- 4.2 We understand from the preliminary pre-app advice provided by Emma Lauze that concern has been raised over how the historic posts on the east side of the first floor will be protected from splashing and absorbing moisture from the proposed toilets.
- 4.3 The design team have considered this and we propose to construct an independent false wall along the east side of the proposed toddlers toilets to separate the toilets from the historic posts. The wall will be constructed from timber studs clad with 12mm marine plywood and 12.5mm moisture resistant plasterboard. This will provide a splash proof barrier to protect the historic posts. The plumbing will all be independent of the original wall.
- 4.4 We also propose to construct an independent false wall along the east side of the proposed pre-school toilets, using the same forms of construction as the toddler's toilets, to separate the toilets from the historic posts.
- 4.5 We also understand from the preliminary pre-app advice provided by Emma Lauze that concern has been raised over how the proposed sink to the ground floor staff kitchen is to be drained and whether this impacts on the listed building. We have repositioned the sink to the opposite end of the worktop and propose to install a 38mm diameter plastic waste pipe in the corner of the room extending up to the ceiling and then along the wall / ceiling junction inside the main kitchen to connect into the existing soil and vent pipe located. The pump will be located inside the base unit. The pipe will then be boxed in with plasterboard and decorated in with the ceiling. Therefore, no external waste pipes will be installed.
- 4.6 The waste from the other proposed sinks on the ground floor will also be drained via a pumped system and the pipework will be concealed inside the new partitions and will extend within the first floor structure across to the existing soil and vent pipes. No waste pipework will be visible.
- 4.7 No external grilles are to be installed on the front elevation and the extract fans for the new toilets will utilise existing vent positions on the north elevation.
- 4.8 The existing plastered ceilings will all be prepared and redecorated with white emulsion paint to provide a clean fresh finish.

- 4.9 The existing and proposed plastered walls will also be prepared and redecorated with a neutral colour emulsion paint to provide a clean fresh finish.
- 4.10 None of the historic timbers will be decorated and will simply be vacuumed cleaned to remove general dust and debris.
- 4.11 The concrete ground floor slab and suspended timber first floor will all be covered with a non-slip vinyl sheet floor finish. The colour and style has yet to be selected by the client, but this is expected to be a natural colour.

## 5.0 Inclusive Access

- 5.1 The philosophy for the design of the proposed day care nursery is fundamentally an inclusive approach for all, with particular care being taken to accommodate the needs of the children.
- 5.2 The existing building has level access to the principal entrance via a compliant wheelchair accessible ramp which is to be retained. This will be particularly useful for parent with prams and buggies.
- 5.3 All new doors will be 926mm wide to provide a clear opening width of 900mm.
- 5.4 Unfortunately, due to the nature of the building, it is not reasonably practicable to provide lift access to the first floor, or wheelchair accessible toilet accommodation. However, as a service provider, Blossom Tree Montessori Limited operate another nursery at Joel Street, Northwood Hills, which is less than 1 mile from this property. Therefore, if a child who uses a wheelchair is interested in attending the proposed nursery, then they could be accommodated at Joel Street, which is wheelchair accessible.

## **6.0 Sustainability**

- 6.1 The existing fluorescent lighting will be replaced with modern LED luminaires, with PIR absence detectors, which will reduce the energy consumption and avoid lights from being left on in unoccupied rooms.
- 6.2 The new sanitaryware will include dual flush cisterns to the WCs and push button taps to the wash basins to minimise water consumption.
- 6.3 The contractor will be required to set up and manage a Waste Management Plan for the construction works, which will include a requirement to sort and re-cycle materials where practicable and possible.
- 6.4 All new timber specified will be from sustainable sources and the use of tropical hardwood is prohibited. Where possible, timber used will be FSC (Forest Stewardship Council) accredited.

## **7.0 Vehicular & Pedestrian Access**

- 7.1 The existing vehicular access to The Barn House is via Meadow Way and this will not be altered as part of the proposed works.
- 7.2 The existing pedestrian access to The Barn House is also via Meadow Way along a public footpath and this will also not be altered as part of the proposed works.
- 7.3 To the east side of the building there is an existing car park which provides spaces for 12 Nr vehicles. This is more than adequate for a nursery of this size and will not be altered as part of the proposed works. There is also adequate space for turning vehicles and drop offs.
- 7.4 Cycle and buggy storage is to be provided inside the existing outbuilding to the northern end of the site.

## **8.0 Landscaping**

- 8.1 The existing soft landscaping to the east side of the building will not be altered as part of the proposed works.
- 8.2 The existing hard landscaping to the east side of the building, including gravel car park, kerbs and ramps, will also not be altered as part of the proposed works.
- 8.3 The existing fenced bin store to the right hand side of the existing vehicle entrance, which accommodates 2 Nr 1100 litre commercial bins, is adequate for the proposed nursery and will not be altered as part of the proposed works.