



Design, Access & Planning Statement
Extension and Alterations to Derry House at
Wolverhampton Grammar School, Compton Road, Wolverhampton, WV3 9RB

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Technology Centre • Glaisher Drive • Wolverhampton Science Park • Wolverhampton • WV10 9RU
t: 01902 713316 • w: broadpa.com • e: ask@broadpa.com

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2.0 Site Description and Characteristics

- 2.1 The proposal relates to the back section of the Derry building within the wider school grounds.
- 2.2 The existing locker room is set back under a first floor which is supported on columns, resulting in an open space on the ground floor. The section of Derry House which forms the application site currently consists of a large locker room, a small office and cleaner's store. The site area for the existing locker room and spaces under the first-floor amounts to approximately 0 sq.m.
- 2.3 The application also includes the windows in the adjacent Male WC's which are to be replaced.
- 2.4 The application site is located on the South side of the Derry building facing the playing fields.
- 2.5 The site of the proposed works is not seen from any other building within the school complex due to its location.



View of Derry House

3.0 Planning History

- 3.1 The Grammar School has an extensive planning history, however there is no recent or relevant history which relates to this particular proposal.

4.0 Planning Policy Context

- 4.1 The Revised Black Country Core Strategy (BCCS) 2011 and the Unitary Development Plan (UDP) 2006 is relevant national planning policy for this proposal and the following section are particularly relevant:

4.2 Policy ENV3 'Design Quality' of the BCCS reads:

- 4.3 *Each place in the Black Country is distinct and successful place-making will depend on understanding and responding to the identity of each place with high quality design proposals.*

Development proposals across the Black Country will deliver a successful urban renaissance through high quality design that stimulates economic, social and environmental benefits by demonstrating that the following aspects of design have been addressed through Design and Access Statements reflecting their particular Black Country and local context:

1. *Implementation of the principles of "By Design" to ensure the provision of a high quality network of streets, buildings and spaces;*
2. *Implementation of the principles of "Manual for Streets" to ensure urban streets and spaces are designed to provide a high quality public realm and an attractive, safe and permeable movement network;*
3. *Use of the Building for Life criteria for new housing developments, to demonstrate a commitment to strive for the highest possible design standards, good place making and sustainable development, given local circumstances;*
4. *Meeting Code for Sustainable Homes Level 3 or above for residential development and Building Research Establishment Environmental Assessment Method (BREEAM) Very Good or above for other development, or the national requirement at the time of submitting the proposal for planning permission, to demonstrate a commitment to achieving high quality sustainable design;*
5. *Consideration of crime prevention measures and Secured By Design principles.*
6. *Including design features to reduce the urban heat island effect such as tree cover, green roofs and the inclusion of green space in development.*

4.4 Policy D9 'Appearance' of the UDP reads:

4.5 Buildings, structures, boundary treatments and landscape features should make a positive contribution to the locality through the use of appropriate form and good quality detailing and materials. Developers are expected to provide details of the external materials and finishes to be used on proposed buildings.

Proposals should take account of the following principles

- *Form.* As well as scale (height and massing), composition, proportion, articulation, modulation, rhythm, balance and framing are all important to the appearance of a development and may significantly affect the character or quality of an area.
- *Detailing.* Details include all building elements such as entrances, walling, fenestration, roofs, gables, eaves, bays, balconies, porches, walls and fences, and external works. The way in which these details are designed and articulated will effect the visual interest, character and quality of a development when viewed as a whole or in close proximity. The richness of detail is particularly important at ground level or where it is prominent and easily appreciated.
- *Materials.* The quality of materials and finishes contribute to the attractiveness of a proposal's appearance and the character of an area. The use of good quality materials will be required.
- *The use of local and/or reclaimed materials, where appropriate, can be a major factor in enhancing local distinctiveness and will be encouraged.*

4.6 The proposed extensions and alterations have been designed to utilise the existing internal space better and to incorporate the external space which is wasted at present.

4.7 The proposal would result in a more coherent flow of air circulation space while retaining the locker room facility.

4.8 The proposed extension and internal alterations will provide additional facilities for the school while respecting the current building line and fenestration of the existing building.

4.9 For the above reasons we consider the proposal to be in accordance with Policy ENV3 of BCCS and Policy D9 of the UDP.

4.10 **Policy HE13 'Development Affecting A Listed Building' of the UDP reads:**

4.11 *Where a proposal for development may affect a listed building or its setting, a full planning application will be required, giving sufficient detail, within the plans and the design statement accompanying the application, to fully assess*

the impact of the proposal on the special architectural or historic interest of the listed building and its setting.

Such proposals should pay particular attention to, and precisely define the impact of the development on, the scale, proportions, character, materials and detailing of the listed building and its setting.

Where appropriate, the submission of a general historic survey and impact assessment with the proposal, including documentary research information and an archaeological evaluation, may also be required. Where development is permitted which may harm or destroy any important feature of a listed building, conditions may be imposed to ensure that:

- *Such features are investigated and recorded to an appropriate level prior to or during works;*
- *Where possible, such features are preserved either in situ or off site;*
- *Provision is made for any records to be deposited with the archive service*

4.12 The Grammar School is a Listed Building and therefore a Heritage Asset.

4.13 The proposal relates to a small section of a Modern building located to the rear of the School complex.

4.14 The proposal is a modest extension and alterations which does not protrude past the existing building line and replicates the existing fenestration.

4.15 The proposal is not seen from any other building within the complex; however, it is seen from the playing fields which it faces.

4.16 For the above reasons we consider the proposals to be in accordance with Policy HE13 of the UDP.

5.0 Heritage Considerations

5.1 The existing locker room is under utilised and the space outside under the first floor does not serve a purpose. The proposed new layout would make more efficient use of the space while respecting the original fenestration of the building.

5.2 The proposed windows to the new offices and male wc's would reflect the existing positions, while providing better thermal qualities.

5.3 The proposal relates to an area of Derry House towards the rear of the cluster of buildings which forms the Grammar School. This building is a later addition. The proposed site of the extension would not be seen from any other building; however, it does face the playing fields so is visible from the wider site.

5.4 The proposal would be in keeping with the existing building and therefore would not cause harm to the setting.

6.0 Considerations & Constraints

6.1 The existing locker room is a level throughfare within the building, it also provides access to the male wc, a cleaner's store and an enclosed office.

6.2 The rear elevation is set back under the first floor with windows and an external door and the first floor is supported on columns.



Rear of the Derry House Building



Locker Room

- 6.3 The cleaner's store is no longer required, and the proposal is to make internal alterations to remove this and improve the circulation space creating an internal lobby.
- 6.4 The existing locker room is under utilised with lockers against the two main walls and the centre of the room left clear with just the supporting columns for the first floor.
- 6.5 The proposal is to reduce the size of this room, while retaining its function as a locker room and throughfare.
- 6.6 The remaining space can then be utilised to create new office spaces which can also be extended under the first-floor overhang making better use of this otherwise dead space.
- 6.7 As part of the proposals the windows in the adjacent male wc's will also be replaced.

7.0 Design Response and Philosophy

- 7.1 The proposal retains a section of the Locker Room to provide circulation space and space for the lockers.



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- 7.2 The proposal utilises the existing columns as a natural position to split the room to provide the new offices. Once again, the columns which form part of the existing external wall are also reutilised to form internal meeting rooms within the offices.
- 7.3 The positions of the existing columns are then reflected in the new section of wall which follows the main building line, and this forms the rhythm of the new fenestration on the external wall.
- 7.4 The external door on elevation 'A' is to be retained in its current position to provide a natural open porch under the first floor. The windows to the male wc will be upgraded as part of the proposals.

8.0 Summary

- 8.1 The proposal is to extend and alter the rear section of the Derry Building.

To summarise, the scheme is designed to:

- Result in a modest sized extension which respects the current building line and fenestration.
- Make more efficient use of the space and provide much needed additional facilities.
- The proposal would not have a negative impact on the wider setting or harm the heritage asset.