

# DESIGN AND ACCESS STATEMENT

Conversion of the Old Bridge Nursery,  
Jubilee Place, Shincliffe Village,  
Durham,  
DH1 2NJ



On behalf of Mr Gadd  
December 2022  
Rev A

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## **1.0 INTRODUCTION & CONTEXT**

### **1.1 Introduction**

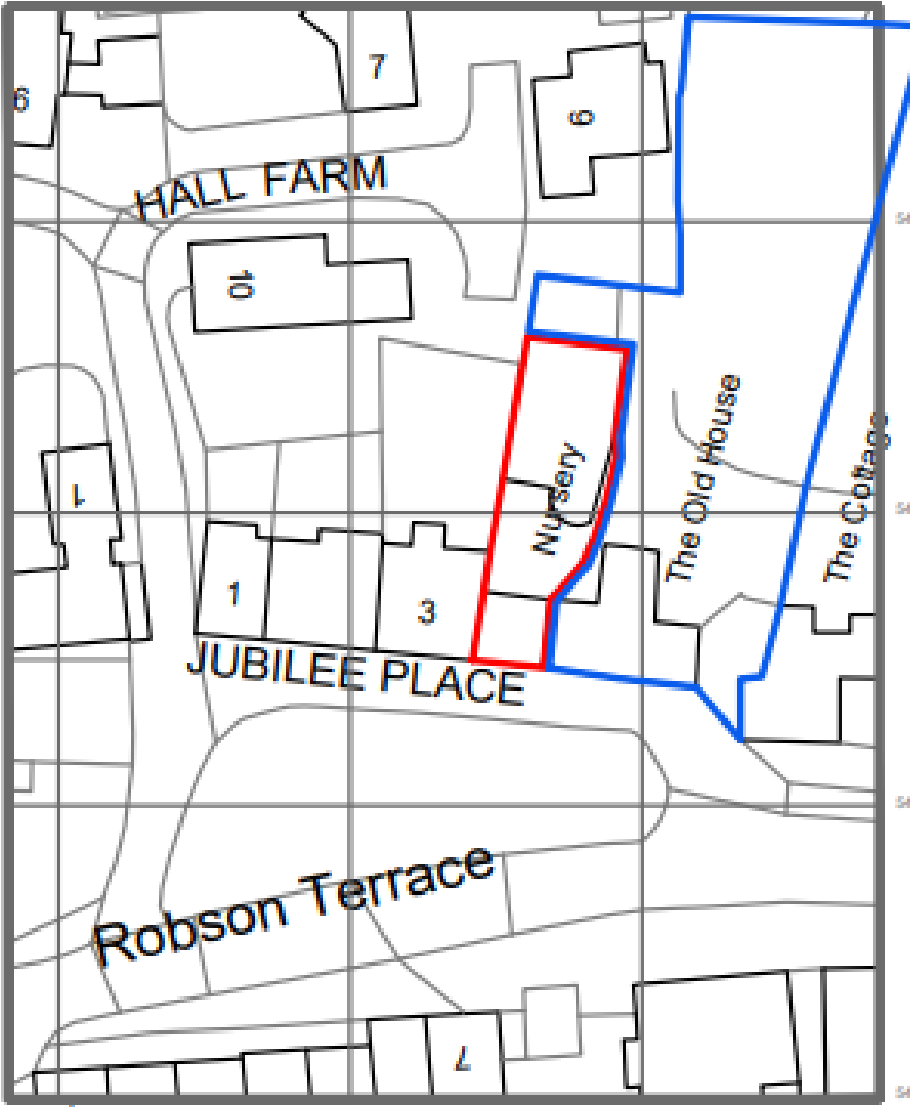
The Design & Access Statement has been prepared in support of this planning application on behalf of the client, who is the owner and occupier of the Old House adjacent to the application site and the nursery located on the site. The client seeks approval for a change of use of a children's day nursery, known as the Old Bridge Nursery, to two dwellings. The nursery comprises of two buildings, one being a first-floor building located on Jubilee Place, Shincliffe Village, Durham, DH1 2NJ and the other building to the rear, known as the Old Dairy.

Please refer to the Heritage Statement for a more detailed review of the existing buildings.

### **1.2 The Site and Surroundings**

Shincliffe is a small village situated just over a mile from Durham City centre and has been designated a conservation area to preserve its historic character. The site is in a residential area bounded by existing dwellings surrounding a small green. The site is immediately west of the Grade II Listed building known as The Old House, sharing a boundary wall. The area of the site equates to approximately 0.22Ha, which is highlighted red on the ordnance survey map below, which also highlights in blue the client's full ownership – including The Old House and the nursery.

The nursery buildings are not listed and neither is the wall between the nursery and the Old House that requires small section is to be removed and rebuilt in a slightly different location. The nursery has no dedicated parking and the drop off area is via by an unadopted section of road to Jubilee Place or on High Street - the latter is a narrow lane. The number of drop offs generated by the nursery can be problematic for the residents.



OS Plan Showing application site and client's ownership

### 1.3 Planning History

- DM/21/02182/LB Listed Building Consent for the conversion of existing garage/ Old Dairy to 1 bed apartment (use class C3). Permitted Development 6<sup>th</sup> July 2021
- DM/21/02181/FPA Conversion of Existing Garage/ Old Dairy to 1 bed apartment (granny annexe) at the Old House, High Street, North Shimpliffe 2<sup>nd</sup> August 2021
- 4/95/00741/VOC Variation of consent to permit permanent use and remove personal condition in respect of nursery
- 4/05/00915/FPA The installation of timber gates to the front elevation of archway
- 4/05/00698/LB The installation of timber gates to the front elevation of archway
- 4/07/00936/LB Retention of non-illuminated sign to existing gates

## **2.0 EVALUATION**

### **2.1 Client's Objective**

It is proposed that both buildings used by the nursery will be converted to create two self-contained dwellings. The section of the Old Dairy, currently being used by the nursery, will be converted to a two-bedroom dwelling. This will involve removing the recent extension and conservatory which have a concrete corrugated roof and flat roof respectively. These extensions will be replaced with a one single storey, flat roof orangery that will be constructed using dressed stone and will extend to the same building line that exists for the main extension - but not as far as the existing conservatory.

The existing rough cast render to the east will be removed and the existing brick exposed as the proposed wall finish. Permission is also sought for an additional window to the western elevation of the Old Dairy to provide natural light to the habitable space to this area. The two existing windows to the east elevation, that overlook the private garden of the Old House, will be removed and blocked. A section of the boundary wall that separates the nursery and the Old House will be removed and repositioned to accommodate the extension as shown on the drawings. This wall is not considered to be of any architectural interest and is a simple brick-built boundary wall.

The building fronting Jubilee Place, will provide a self-contained studio apartment and will involve the removal of an existing arch and the creation of a ground floor area with a vannel allowing for pedestrian.

## **2.2 Development Opportunities**

The proposed extension work to the Old Dairy will not visible from any public viewpoints as it is surrounded by buildings. However, the proposed window to the west elevation can be seen from the cul-de-sac of Hall Farm. The annexe section of this building benefits from two windows to this elevation and the additional window required for the proposed work will replicate these both in style and pattern. An additional high level obscure window is to be added to the east elevation to provide natural light to the proposed ensuite.

The development of the Old Dairy does not involve the loss of any original features; indeed, the building would benefit by the removal of the relatively new extensions. The proposed works are considered to be an improvement to the character of the existing building and therefore enhance the character of the area. Disruption to the historic element of this building has been reduced to an absolute minimum. The proposed stone orangery would be similar to the orangery recently added to the cottage located within the grounds of Poplar Tree Garden Centre, which is just a stone throw away from this application site. Detrimental visual impact is not considered to be an issue as the character of the existing building and surrounding buildings have been considered and

are reflected in the proposal. The small section of the eastern boundary wall to be demolished and rebuilt is not of any architectural interest and is a simple brick-built boundary wall, which cannot be seen from any public vantage point.

Removing the arch is necessary to ensure that the building above can be converted to a self-contained studio apartment by accommodating an internal stair that will be required to access the building above. This is needed to ensure that this structure has a use, as without it - it is difficult to see another use or arrangement for this building. However, it is not considered that the arch to the existing building fronting Jubilee Place is original as shown in the image below. The proposed elevation will be in-keeping with the adjacent buildings and the wider street scene and once the elevation has been made good and re-rendered, it is considered that this will be an acceptable and workable solution.

### **2.3 Constraints**

The site is located within the Conservation Area of Shincliffe, that was designated in 1976 and is adjacent to The Old House, which is a Grade II listed building that was first listed on January 1985. It dates from the late C17 – early C18 with C19 alterations. To the north is the Old Dairy.

The Old Dairy is not a listed building. It is of simple design that has been bastardised over the years and now has several wall finishes and relatively recent extensions added to the south elevation of the main structure. The application site is bounded by properties and only small section of the building is visible from the cul-de-sac of Hall



Farm. In its current form, it is not considered that this building contributes to the historic character of the area, due to its modern extensions and multiple wall finishes.

The building fronting Jubilee Place has an arch opening to the ground floor that is used to access the Old Dairy and a first-floor structure above. However, it is not believed that this arch is an original feature and is not in-keeping with the character of the street.

#### **2.4 Departure from Nationally Described Space Standards (NDSS) – Unit 1**

As described above, currently there is a first-floor structure fronting the street scene, marked unit 1 on the drawings, that can only be accessed via external stairs. Below this structure is an open space/ access leading from an arch opening through to the Old Dairy. The first-floor room is not linked to any adjacent buildings and appears as though it was being utilised as a small office or storage space to the nursery.

The NDSS were originally introduced for new build dwellings, however, Durham County Council have implemented these requirements for all applications for C3 or C4 residential developments, including conversions and proposed change of use projects (with the exception of converting C3 to C4) as part of CDP policy 29. It should be noted that the NDSS has no standards for studio apartments such as what is being proposed, and only has a section for single bedroom dwellings, which does not strictly relate to the proposed use. Should the LPA choose to adopt these standards, unit 1 does not meet the requirements, however, paragraph 5.302 of the CDP states "Evidence shows that many **new homes** across the country are being built below the recommended NDSS minimum standards". It goes on to say that "All housing schemes will be

expected to apply the standards UNLESS THEY CAN DEMONSTRATE TO THE COUNCIL THAT THEY WOULD RENDER THE SCHEME UNVIABLE." As discussed with the case officer, there is no use for this building without it being converted into a separate self-contained studio apartment. The existing first-floor building is not accessible from adjacent buildings, being a standalone unit accessed by external spiral stairs. The proposal simply involves utilising the external ground floor space below, to create an ample sized kitchen and dining/ breakfast area with an internal stair leading to the first floor to create a usable habitable space. The proposed layout demonstrates that the studio apartment is perfectly proportioned for such a use. Using the NDSS in the instance of this conversion would render the scheme unviable. Without the conversion, it is difficult to identify a use for this building, which could overtime become derelict and fall into disrepair if a viable use is not found.

### **3.0 DESIGN**

The section of the Old Dairy currently being occupied by the nursery, will be converted to a two-bedroom dwelling. This will involve removing the recent extension and conservatory which has a concrete corrugated roof and flat roof respectively. These extensions will be replaced with a one single storey, flat roof orangery that will be constructed using dressed stone and will extend to the same building line that exists for the main extension - but not as far as the existing conservatory. The existing rough cast render to the east will be removed and the existing brick exposed as the proposed wall finish. Permission is also sought for an additional window to the western elevation of the Old Dairy to provide natural light to the habitable space to this area. The two existing windows to the east elevation, that overlook the private garden of the Old House, will be removed and blocked. A section of the boundary wall that separates the nursery and the Old House will be removed and repositioned to accommodate the extension. This wall is not considered to be of any architectural interest and is a simple brick-built boundary wall.

#### **3.1 Use**

The proposal is to change the current use, which is a nursery to two no. dwellings.

#### **3.2 Amount**

Two dwellings will be created, a studio apartment to Jubilee Street and a two-bedroom dwelling to the Old Dairy. The proposal to the Old Dairy will use less area than currently exists, whilst the building to the front has an increased floor space of approximately

14msq to the ground floor that is required to allow this building to function as a dwelling by creating sufficient floor space that can also accommodate internal stairs.

### **3.3 Layout, Scale & Appearance**

It is proposed to add a ground floor and vennel to the property fronting Jubilee Place. This will create additional internal space for this property to create an open plan kitchen/ dining area, thereby, allowing this building to be self-contained studio apartment with an internal stair leading to the first floor, but whilst still maintaining access to the Old Dairy. A small covered outdoor seating is included as part of the proposal for this unit located to the rear (north) of the property.

The proposed orangery will use the existing footprint of the recent extension that will be removed and replaced with a proposed stone-built orangery that will be used to create an open plan living/ kitchen/ dining area, whilst the retained main body of the house will accommodate two bedrooms and subsequent bathrooms and utility spaces. The orangery will be a single storey structure.

### **3.4 Landscaping**

The existing yard will provide a garden space for the dwelling in the Old Dairy. Landscape.

## **4.0 ACCESS**

The buildings are served by High Steet, which is an adoptable road adjacent to Jubilee Place which is a private shared drive. The occupiers of the proposed buildings will use on-street parking that is common for the area. Pedestrian access to both properties will be via a vunnel that will be created by removing the existing open arch.

### **4.1 Vehicular and Transport Links**

As the buildings are located just over a mile away from Durham City, they benefit from all the services expected of a city. Within 350m of the site there is the Rose Tree Pub, Poplar Tree Garden Centre, Seven Stars Inn, Shincliffe Church Hall, a children's play area and bus stops heading in both directions. There are also good public footpaths to the west of the site and the Amaani Pumphouse is just a little further northwest of the site

## **5.0 CONCLUSION**

The proposal seeks to convert two buildings to provide two self-contained dwellings comprising of a studio apartment and a two-bedroom dwelling. The work to the Old Dairy is considered to improve the character of the existing building by removing the recent extensions, whilst the proposed work to the property of Jubilee Place would ensure a usage of this building that would otherwise be a difficult to provide for any other arrangement. The proposals would be in-keeping with the character of the surrounding area, whilst allowing access to the otherwise landlocked Old Dairy.

The proposed orangery to the Old Dairy, would create sufficient space to allow the building to be used as a self-contained dwelling consisting of two bedrooms of relative size for modern day living and provide an improvement to the character of the existing building.

The number of car movements will be vastly reduced when considering the proposed change of use from a nursery to two dwellings with only a combined number of 3 bedrooms between both units. This should alleviate parking issues for the local residents but still allow on-street parking for the proposed occupiers at a reduced number of spaces needed.

It is therefore hoped that for reasons outlined above, that the Council can consider the proposal as being acceptable in its entirety despite the necessary departure from NDSS.