

FOUR PROPOSED NEW WINDOWS, REPAIR AND RE-FINISHING OF RENDERED GABLES, INTERNAL ALTERATIONS AND ADDITION OF A FRONT ENTRANCE PORCH TO 15 HIGH STREET, BRIMINGTON, CHESTERFIELD S43 1DE

HERITAGE, DESIGN AND ACCESS STATEMENT

The existing building



FRONT (SOUTH) SIDE

The existing building is a stone-built Grade II listed building within the Brimington Conservation Area. It was formerly known as the Old Post House and has most recently been used as a children's day nursery, for which it has a business use class. It is currently vacant and it is proposed to return it to a children's day nursery use by its new owners, BOPH Ltd.

The history of the building and its use today

The new owners recognise the history of what was originally a farmhouse, built in the early 18th century by the Heywood Family. Since that time it has remained an important building in the locality. Like many

buildings of this age, it has undergone additions and alterations and changes of use i.e. farmhouse, post office, private residence, school of music and childcare.

The main body of the building has been added to over the years, and its new owners are very keen to see that its character and fabric are well maintained during their stewardship. The new owners have considerable experience in re-purposing early 18th century buildings for childcare in the region, and a good proportion of the income from this project will go towards maintenance of the fabric in order to ensure the building's survival. This is not a simple task, as the requirements of the Department of Education, the local Fire Authority, Ofsted and numerous other regulatory agencies all have to be met, but the new owners are well experienced in this field.

Continuation of the childcare use

The Government has committed to increasing the availability of quality childcare nationwide in a well-publicised phased programme. The proposed re-use of the building to provide this childcare service will contribute to that goal in the local community and surrounding Chesterfield area. The nursery will be accessible to the public.

The Government intends to make publically funded professional childcare available for younger children in 2024 and this will add complexity to the provision of day care services in that younger children require the services of nursery care workers. The intention is to provide such childcare services here.

Families with children will expect the local authority to exercise their duty to meet sufficient childcare needs in their area, and this facility will contribute to that provision.

The childcare service that could be provided by our proposed development is much needed by the hardworking families in the Brimington and Chesterfield area, as well as providing skilled employment and apprenticeships for a number of employees. The proposal will enable the facility to meet the Early Year's Foundation Stage (EYFS) and mandatory standards for children in 2024.

Based on the above and in line with Government policy, there is a public benefit to preserving and maintaining the building, while ensuring that its usage and function are in line with the current needs of the public and local authority in providing educational activities in 2024.

Repairs and alterations

Externally certain elements of the building have suffered from neglect. The rendered gables on the original building are in need of attention. The render on the east gable in particular (see the photograph on the following page) is cracked where a former shop opening has been infilled, and the render on the infilled part is a different colour, which looks messy. It is proposed to repair and re-finish the render on both gables of the main building, the west gable being visible in the photograph on the page after next.



EAST GABLE END



REAR (NORTH) SIDE SHOWING WEST GABLE

It is proposed to bring the west end single storey extension building into the envelope of the house, and consequently it is proposed to replace the two door openings in this part with windows: one full height and one with a sill height at 1.050m from floor level. These are windows W2 and W3 on the drawings and they are located in what are currently the door openings shown in the extreme right of the above photograph.

The window marked as W1 is a like for like replacement of a window suffering from rot. This is the tall window at ground floor level on the far left of the above photograph.

The window marked as W4 on the drawings replaces a much smaller window in the same location. This is the small window on the right in the photograph on the following page. The small window on the left in the photograph on the following page is to be infilled with matching stonework.

Internally it is proposed to open up three areas to create children's room 7 by removing sections of internal wall.

While most internal elements of the building can be repaired, the staircase from ground to first floor, which features a non-original balustrade, is not safe for children to use and needs to be replaced with a

staircase with a suitable pitch and half landings. The replacement staircase is shown on the plan drawings, along with alterations needed to accommodate it, and on drawing BRI 05.

It is proposed to create 1.500m wide openings in two walls at first floor level to allow greater visibility between spaces.

No internal elements of historic significance are affected by any proposed alterations.



EXISTING EXTENSIONS, SOUTH SIDE

The need for a porch to act as a covered reception space

BOPH Ltd have decades of experience in the field of child day care, and they have identified one problem associated with this use and the building in the 21st century: the absence of a covered reception space where parents can drop off their children and formally hand them over to staff.

Immediately inside the front entrance door shown in the photograph on the previous page and on the plan on the final page of this statement is a corridor that is too narrow for purpose. Parents and children will arrive at roughly the same times, the children taking off coats and the parents, having handed over their children, turning and leaving the building. To try to use the corridor as a reception space would be

chaotic at best. At worst health and safety could be compromised by the tightness of the corridor, and security would be compromised if the doors were left open for children to walk back into the front garden and beyond. Security and safeguarding are of paramount importance in the consideration of childcare. Without the security of a porch/covered entrance reception area it may not be possible to obtain the Department for Education's OFSTED registration. This would be contrary to Government policy to increase the availability of quality childcare nationwide.

There also needs to be consideration for disabled access to the building as required by the Equality Act 2010. Please see below the paragraph on access.

The rooms either side of the corridor are ideal nursery rooms, too big for reception purposes but not large enough to have a reception area divided off. There remains a need for a dedicated reception space that doesn't currently exist.

Other areas of the building have been considered to cite a new reception entrance, including the side and rear, but that would necessitate taking out a room designated for childcare and reducing the overall available spaces in the setting. Again, this would be contrary to government policy, which is to increase the availability of quality childcare nationwide.

Therefore there is a need for an adequately sized front porch/covered reception space to ensure that parents can queue inside and leave enough space for the children's safety and security, and for the access requirements to be met. The proposals described below are designed to provide the minimum amount of space needed to provide this essential facility.

Advice from the pre-application enquiry regarding the porch/ covered reception space

A pre-application enquiry was made to establish whether or not the Planning Authority would consider the addition of a porch/covered front reception space. The Planning Officer advised that in principle a porch would be acceptable, but that size, design and style should be considered. (A photomontage prepared for the pre-application enquiry was to indicate massing rather than to show any detailed design.)

The following are links examples of porches on Grade II listed buildings within the Chesterfield LPA area to such porches, the porch in the first link being shown in the photograph on the following page.

<https://historicengland.org.uk/listing/the-list/list-entry/1367079>

<https://historicengland.org.uk/listing/the-list/list-entry/1088284>

<https://historicengland.org.uk/listing/the-list/list-entry/1334674>

<https://historicengland.org.uk/listing/the-list/list-entry/1088310>

<https://historicengland.org.uk/listing/the-list/list-entry/1088308>

The proposals for the entrance porch

Two alternative designs are proposed. One is very traditional: the type that would be expected as an addition to an early 18th century farmhouse. The other uses glass to allow vision of the existing entrance doorway and surround. We hope that either design might be acceptable.

The traditional proposal

This is shown on drawings BRI 03H and BRI 04E. Its style is based on the design at Grade II listed Elmwood House, Hollingwood, Chesterfield, shown in the photograph below. Where the Elmwood House porch has a hipped roof, we have chosen a gable to fit in with our existing building. The stone work on our proposed porch would match that of the existing building, as would the roof slates. The size of our proposal does not appear dissimilar to that on Elmwood House, where the Historic England listing describes the Elmwood House porch as a 'later solid porch'. The Elmwood House porch is also on the front elevation of the building.

<https://historicengland.org.uk/listing/the-list/list-entry/1367079>



ELMWOOD HOUSE, HOLLINGWOOD, CHESTERFIELD

The glazed proposal

This is shown on drawings BRI 03K and BRI 04G. Its style is based on the example shown in the photograph below.



In both cases the proposed porch would not encroach beyond the lintels and sills of the windows adjacent and its length would be no more than the width allowed by those lintels and sills. It would be square on plan. Any smaller than this and the porch would not serve its function to meet the needs of security and safety of the children, as outlined above.

We believe that either porch would be sympathetic and in keeping with the character and appearance of the main building. Certainly either design would register less of an impact on the existing building than the Elmwood House example, and we hope that the LPA can find at least one of the designs acceptable.

Access

The necessary replacement of the ground to first floor staircase to allow children to safely access the first floor has already been mentioned. (Second floor accommodation is for staff only.)

Regarding access into the building, the following necessary access features are included in the design:

- A gentle ramp up to the proposed entrance porch
- A wider entrance doorway
- An entrance porch that allows a wheelchair with carer to turn through 180 degrees, which currently isn't possible in the narrow corridor.

Without these provisions, there would be limited disabled access to the building.

The Equality Act 2010 requires employers and bodies providing services to anticipate the need for reasonable adjustments so as not to discriminate against disabled people. This is relevant not only to occupiers of buildings, but also to the planning and building control process, as highlighted in the House of Commons Report 'Building for Equality: Disability and the Built Environment' dated April 2017.

Not only do the updated requirements of the Equality Act 2010 need to be met, but also various mandatory requirements of OFSTED and other standards bodies apply to this use in this building, as mentioned above. Regulations have changed since the building last sought OFSTED registration in 1998, and it may be that the building cannot operate as a children's nursery in 2024, despite its use class, if adequate provision for dropping off and collecting children isn't in place. This is the principal reason for the application for a porch/reception area. A secondary reason is that the children's nursery business may not be sustainable if parents view the dropping off facility as inadequate and, given the current building form, it would be inadequate.

And finally...

It is unusual to apply for two different options, but we are not asking the LPA to choose between them. Rather we are asking if either will be acceptable and could be granted planning approval.