PROPERTY TECTONICS

Design and Access Statement - UHSM Buccleuch Lodge Day Care Unit, Elizabeth Slinger Road, Withington, Manchester M20 2XA

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Proposed building extension to central courtyard.

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Assessment of Physical Context –
The existing site is Buccleuch Lodge, a Day Care Unit /Intermediate Care Centre, operated by University Hospital South Manchester (NHS Foundation Trust), and comprises a quadrangle of single-storey buildings around a central open courtyard, each building being linked by single-story glazed corridors. The main entrance of the unit faces a vehicle driveway onto the east side of Elizabeth Stringer Road, the central courtyard being unseen from the road. The buildings (c.1970) are of cavity brick wall construction, some with pitched, concrete tiled roofs, some with felt /asphalt flat roofs. Proposed building alteration /extension works would include structural alterations to the glazed corridor link at the east side of the central courtyard, and the construction of a brick cavity wall, flat-roof extension containing additional patient changing rooms, shower room, and small laundry room. This extension would create 43.75 sq.metres additional floor space internally.
The single-storey extension will utilise facing brickwork, window units, and rainwater goods to match existing building finishes as closely as possible, and the aesthetics of the extension will complement the style of the existing building. In this way, the proposed new-build works will retain the character present in the architectural features of the surrounding buildings.

Social /Economic context and Planning context –
The Day Care Unit is a purpose-built facility, and in line with current DDA regulations, has dropped-kerb /ramped pavement access to the building externally, and level access throughout the unit /central courtyard internally. The improvement to the former Withington Hospital site, and social responsibility of making the unit accessible to outpatients, have been fully addressed, with full compliance given to Building Regulation Part M: 2001 (Access To and Use of Buildings), and Local Government Design for Access Policy: 2003.

Involvement of local interests –
Although originally an integral part of the outpatient services provided by the former Withington Hospital, the Buccleuch Lodge Day Care Unit now operates alongside the new Withington Community Health Centre, located on adjacent land to the east of the site. The proximity of existing health facilities such as Buccleuch Lodge were taken into account during the recent construction of the new Community Health Centre, and extensive car parking is provided nearby.
The parking area immediately adjacent to Buccleuch Lodge has dropped-kerb pavements in three locations, allowing full access to the Day Care Unit site.

Evaluation –
The assessment of this proposed building extension work was viewed in the context of the ongoing programme of outpatient day care undertaken by University Hospital of South Manchester, in promoting the longevity of the Buccleuch Lodge site, in extending the day care services available to outpatients, in improving the working environment of NHS staff, and in reflecting the architectural character of the existing building.

Design Principles –
This proposed building extension within the open central courtyard of the site was considered in terms of the improved functionality of its increased floorspace, its improved thermal efficiency contained in wall and roof construction using latest techniques, the use of timber from a sustainable source, and the value to the community in preserving the existing character of the property. This proposed extension to the Day Clinic will not affect the use of the building, which will still be accessible to everyone.

Amount of development –
This proposed work would involve alteration /extension of the existing building structure, to form a new development within the existing site, and an increase in floorspace of 43.75 sq.metres.

Layout –
This proposed new development work within the open courtyard at the centre of the site, will mean a change to the existing layout of the building. The provision of new male & female changing rooms, a unisex shower room, and a small laundry room will be built partly on the footprint of the former glazed corridor link at the east side of the courtyard, and extend outwards into the courtyard proper. As this new-build work will take place within the confines of the existing Day Care Unit, there will be no change of use to the building, no change to the existing boundaries of the site, no change in visual impact to occupiers of neighbouring properties, and no change to the existing pedestrian or vehicle access routes to the site.

Scale –
The 43.75 sq.metre, single-storey building extension, will be built to match the height of adjacent flat-roofed areas, and in appearance will reflect the construction scale of the existing Buccleuch Lodge.

Landscaping –
This proposed extension will be built on a presently concrete paved area of the central courtyard, and will have minimal impact on the planted /lawned areas of the garden. The landscaping features of the central courtyard would remain, as existing.

Appearance –
The proposed single-storey extension will utilise contemporary specification roof materials, facing brickwork, window units, and rainwater goods to match existing building finishes as closely as possible, and having the advantage of increased thermal performance in line with current standards.
Roofing and window construction components in particular will have greatly increased durability in relation to the current materials, and will retain the character of the building and its surroundings.

Access –
Pedestrian and vehicular access, especially for disabled patients to the Day Care Unit, will be unaffected by this proposed building extension work.

Architectural /Historical Importance of the Building –

The Buccleuch Lodge building c.1970, is similar to several intermediate /outpatient care centres built on the former Withington Hospital site at that time. Now operated as an NHS Foundation Trust by University Hospital South Manchester, the building is not listed, and is a typical construction of its period, with cavity brick wall construction, a combination of pitched, tiled roofs, and felt flat roofs. Proposed building alteration /extension works would maintain the appearance of the original construction, while utilising the increased thermal properties of modern building standards.

The style of the existing structure would therefore be retained, while providing a much improved health facility for day visitors /patients, and a more functional and flexible work environment for NHS staff, which is the real importance of this site.