

Design and Access Statement for Rosary RC Primary School Proposed Detached Timber Framed Education Building

The Garden Escape Ltd / Metropolis Architecture Ltd

Location: Rosary RC Primary School

GE Type: Classroom - Bespoke

Assessment

Physical Context

- This Roman Catholic Primary school consists presently of the main 4 1/2 storey Victorian-style school building of relatively imposing scale along Haverstock Hill. It is of traditional red brick construction with some attractive detailing and despite being set back from the road side confidently contributes to the 'street scene'. In the lower tarmac area where the proposed is located is a small detached timber classroom unit of small scale and conventional, plain appearance. Within the site's curtilage are mostly hard landscaped areas, on which one classroom currently sits, and other areas given mostly to outdoor play / seating areas and associated landscape and foliage.
- The existing timber building neither contributes nor detracts greatly to the character of the locale because of its diminutive scale and distance from the street (being located deep into the site) The setting from the roadside is fairly typical of a busy London street with a variety of building types, periods and uses, although the area of the site which contains the proposal is mostly obscured from view.
- The site and its existing buildings are not listed and are not part of any conservation area.
- The ground levels across the site are such that they do not adversely affect access to the proposal. Materials will be transported manually from the site's point of access. The modular / prefabricated building system - utilising mostly small-size components - is well suited to this type of environment.

Social Context

- The proposal, which is the replacement for a similar sized unit which was lost to fire, will provide much needed additional teaching space for the school and will not have any particular negative affect on neighbouring properties as it is of similar scale and size to the building which preceded it. Moreover the improved aesthetics offered by the proposal will make for a more pleasing outlook for those properties which surround the site.
- The proposed development will be for the associated uses within the primary school's curtilage and as such has been designed for the sole use and requirements of its occupants.
- The School currently has 16 full time staff and 35 part time staff (the equivalent of 37.4 FT).
- Currently the School has 354 pupils on roll. The proposal will not result in any increase of staff or student numbers.
- Current School Opening hours: 9.00 am - 3.30 pm Monday to Friday. The proposed centre will NOT affect these times.
- Presently there are no staff cars on site. Once constructed, the proposal is not likely to result in an increase in vehicular activity, owing to the fact that it seeks to replace what was there before.

Evaluation

- Due to the lack of any objection or identification of problems and issues thus far, the proposal has progressed as intended by the designers and client. With no problems or issues of conflict yet incurred.

Design

- The principle aims are to improve and augment the school's current teaching facilities by providing an additional building, creating greater space and flexibility and offering a satisfying environment in which to teach and be taught.
- The Garden Escape's sleek, contemporary exterior will sit within most settings irrespective of their types or styles and will not detract or compete with the existing timber unit or the red-brick main building.
- The proposed setting, on the school's area of hardstanding is freestanding and to the east of the existing school building.
- The building is designed as a relatively quiet, subtle structure which will remain ancillary to the existing building while still providing something of a 'design feature'.
- The interior is designed as a fully plastered finished and serviced space, to the same or greater level as would be expected from the main school building. Acoustics, lighting, heating, ventilation, cooling and all other services and provisions are to the latest relevant standards.
- The building will have a flat roof construction which minimises the impact on adjacent boundaries, as well as continuing the precedent, aesthetically of the roofs of the current and preceding timber units.
- The majority of the external deck area is covered allowing for all-season use. It also provides a shading effect - lessening the chance of overheating within the classroom spaces.

Layout

- The Garden Escape will be located approximately 15 metres away from the main school building thus forming a separate pavilion within the landscape but remaining easily accessible.

Amount / Scale

- The individual Garden Escape is a single storey space subservient to the main building.
- The overall external dimensions are (including the attached store/covered deck area): Height ~3200 mm, Width: ~29, 800, Depth: ~10,100 mm, giving an internal floor area of 200 sqm (not including external store). (See drawings).
- Accommodation consists of: entrance lobby / cloakroom of 24 sqm, two classrooms (with wet play areas incorporated) of 63 sqm (incorporating 3.9 and 4.6sqm of walk-in storage), two WCs of 5.1sqm, separate WC of 2.1sqm, meeting room of 12sqm, servery of 18sqm, an external store of 5.8sqm and an external covered deck (which spans the majority of the width of the building) of 70sqm.

Appearance / Environmental Awareness

- The exterior of the Garden Escape will be clad in Western Red Cedar from a sustainable source. The cladding is either left to weather naturally to a silver - grey colour or can be treated with oil / stain.
- Doors and window frames will be constructed from Sapele. This is a sustainable sourced hardwood that is protected with an oiled finish.
- The roof will consist of a single ply Alwitra Evalon membrane coloured dark grey with strategically located light-pipe units providing natural daylighting for the building's occupants. This is of obvious benefit from the perspective of energy conservation and provides a more wholesome, friendly environment for the school's children. Extensive glazing to the south east facing elevation will provide consistent daylight lessening the demands for artificial lighting. The extended roof line provides a natural shading effect.
- Opening windows to both of the front and rear elevations, together with a shallow plan help encourage natural cross ventilation, improving thermal comfort for the building's occupants and lessening demands on cooling systems.
- Classroom areas are heated with air-source units (an ingenious system whereby heat is extracted from the atmosphere to provide heating - like a refrigerator circuit in reverse).
- The Garden Escape, in addition to the sustainability of its materials and construction is highly insulated and therefore helps to reduce energy consumption.
- It is designed to be an appropriate addition to the locale creating a feature that compliments the surrounding landscape and buildings, avoids slavish repetition or pastiche and presents an ecologically aware aesthetic which is of its time.
- External lighting will be provided to the front external soffit over the glazed screen to enhance the night time setting of the building within the school's site and illuminate the external deck area. Ultra-low watt LED fittings are used to limit energy consumption.

Landscaping

- The Garden Escape will be located on the tarmac area towards the east of the site.
- The proposal will be a minimum of 300mm from the adjacent boundaries. See drawing 11 (site plan) for positioning. The proposal will replace the timber fence shown in the site images of drawing 15.
- No landscaping alterations are proposed.

Access

- Pedestrian access and approach within the curtilage of the site is largely unaffected.
- Glazed screens adjacent to entrance/pedestrian areas are fully compliant with Part N of the Building regulations and provide good visibility into the building.
- The building will be easily reached and internally navigable and useable by all persons, regardless of age or disability.
- The proposal will not affect or impinge vehicular access on or off the site. No car parking is lost as a result of the proposal. There is not likely to be an increase in vehicular movement and activity (as discussed above) once the proposal has been constructed.

Supporting Documents / Statements