

The existing 1A Community Centre on Laystall Street is situated in southeast Holborn, a priority area for regeneration within Camden's Neighbourhood Renewal Strategy. 1A had been a thriving resource for the local area until problems developed with the management of the building, resulting in a withdrawal of funding in June 1999 followed by closure.

In February 2003 Camden Executive decided to prioritise the option for Sure Start Kings Cross and Holborn to occupy the building jointly with other community groups. A feasibility study was prepared for Sure Start to look at how the building could be used. A steering group was formed to establish a viable user group for 1A, represented by Sure Start, Kings Cross & Holborn, Holborn Community Development Work project, Bangladeshi Mohila, Bosnian Resource & Information Centre and Kosovan Support, Somali Community Centre, and Asian Lone Parents Association.

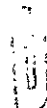
The scheme is primarily funded by Sure Start Children's Centre funding and comprises a communal ground floor hall space, first floor nursery and third floor creche. Upper floors have been extended to provide further accommodation. The basement is to be retained for the use of community offices and art workshops, with a ground floor pottery workshop replacing the former garage under the first floor playdeck. Space at 1A is limited and therefore the scheme relies on the sharing of space and facilities, with careful timetabling to ensure that all rooms are used to a maximum efficiency. The aim of the design is to provide a fully integrated centre which would act as a focus for the community, and be a sustainable base for community groups delivering local services.

The re-location of the multi-purpose space to the ground floor aims to establish a stronger community presence directly accessible from street level. The entrance is re-configured and level access is provided. The nursery at first floor level is served by a new play deck with a steel structure and 1.8m high balustrade made up of metal rainscreen cladding externally, to provide a secure external play space. The extension at second floor is also constructed of a steel frame on columns running adjacent to the existing building. The design intention behind the façade treatment of the new extension is to mark the extension as being clearly distinct from the existing building, whilst making reference to the importance of structure in Victorian architecture. Following discussions with the planners and conservation officer it was agreed that the extension should set back from the existing facade by 500mm. New metal sliding windows allow natural ventilation to the extended areas where possible and the character of existing building is retained by refurbishing the existing sash windows at first, second, third and fourth floors. The ground floor windows will be replaced with double glazed sliding timber windows. The second floor extension roof provides the external play deck for the crèche above. This, again is enclosed by a 1.8m metal rainscreen clad balustrade. The corridor extension at third floor level is further set back from the Laystall Street façade and has solid rendered walls. The car park is enclosed by new 2m high metal railings, providing both security and light. The extension to the existing building has been designed as 'terracing' that steps back as it gets higher in order to minimise impact on the adjacent properties. We have carried out a daylight study in accordance with BRE 'Site Layout Planning for Sunlight: A Guide to Good Practice' to determine the effect on it's immediate neighbours. This has proved that there will be minimal impact by the proposals. (see enclosed report) An acoustic survey was carried out to determine the impact of noise from Rosebery Avenue on spaces internally. The recommendations from this lead to the inclusion of a new secondary glazing system to the fourth floor 'Quiet Area' in the Creche.

Access:

The design proposals comply with Approved Document M. We have relocated the main entrance from the street to provide level access into the building for the street. All spaces on the upper floors (and lower) may be accessed by a passenger lift, which has been adapted to meet Document M requirements. A new stair lift will enable wheelchair users to access the new lower ground floor workshop internally from the basement. There is level access from the new workshop into the carpark.

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External play areas from the Creche and Nursery have level access. Corridors and doors will be wide enough for wheelchairs and we have provided disabled WC's on ground, first, second and third floors. Internal colour schemes will give contrast between doors, floors and walls, to enable partially sighted users to use the building. Doors have vision panels at levels suitable for wheelchair users. Ironmongery and light switches are positioned at heights suitable for wheelchair users. The reception desk has a counter designed for wheelchair users.