

# DESIGN STATEMENT

3, THE OLD SCHOOL HOUSE, GEORGE STREET, HEMEL, HP2 5HJ



## INTRODUCTION

This statement seeks to explain the rationale behind the submitted proposal in terms of both design and access. It also aims to demonstrate how local context and planning policy have been taken into account, leading to an informed and considered planning proposal.

## SUMMARY OF PROPOSAL

Planning approval is sought for the conversion from existing office use (class B1) to residential (class C3).

Subdivision of the existing office space, to four '1bed' studio apartments, and one '2bed' duplex apartment is proposed, with the re-use of existing parking and amenity space.

The alterations and new fit out will be internal and will not dramatically affect the external envelope of the building which is to be retained as existing, however two new windows are proposed to the western flank elevation facing Heather Way.



*Fig. 1 – Existing front elevation from 'George Street' to remain the same*

## SITE LOCATION AND DESCRIPTION

The application site is located on the corner of George Street and Heather Way, Hemel Hempstead.

It is understood that The Old School House and attached school building was the first building to be erected on this site. It was originally built in the late 1800's and the building and use remained unchanged up until 1985. The building is a traditional brick built school with attached residential accommodation on each side for use by the headmaster on one side and head mistress on the other.

### **DUSEK DESIGN ASSOCIATES LTD**

Moor House Farm Estate, Lower Road, Higher Denham, Middlesex, UB9 5EN  
01895 831 103 info@dusek.co.uk www.dusek.co.uk

VAT REG. NO. 809 9514 00

REGISTERED OFFICE: ENTERPRISE HOUSE, BEESON'S YARD, BURY LANE, RICKMANSWORTH, HERTS, WD3 1DS

In 1985 the building freehold was sold by the Hertfordshire County Council to the current owner who applied for planning consent for a change of use to Office Use. Planning consent was given and works were undertaken.

The existing building envelope was retained, and fitted out for the office use improving thermal insulation and the refinishing the inside of the building. Works included and installing new windows and doors all to comply with the Building Regulations and standards expected in 1985.

It is known that since this time the building has been continuously used as an office with associated off street parking and amenity space, and was separated into 4 individual offices named units 1-4.

Recently planning has been granted to convert units 1 and 4 to residential, consisting of 5 individual apartments that have now been built. (Planning ref No 4/00245/17/OPA)

Following the above, a further application was submitted and approved for two new build apartments with undercroft parking. (Planning ref No 4/00007/18/FUL)

Please note Unit 2 remains commercial for office use, however it seems as though no one is accommodating the area.

Our client Mrs James is the owner of 'James Corporate Health', and currently owns the building of Unit 3.

Mrs James is in the process of re-locating her business, and aims to convert Unit 3 to residential as per the adjoining units 1 & 4.

## **LAYOUT & SITING**

The proposal will not have any effect on the layout and siting of the existing school house, as all the changes remain to subdivide the internals.

In terms of access, the existing access points from George Street and Heather Way will be retained, whilst re-using the existing car parking spaces currently assigned to unit 3. (5 spaces)

Please note due to local transport links close to the site, along with previous schemes that have been approved in the road and the area generally, it can be said that 5 'off street' car parking spaces is acceptable in this location.

With regards to amenity, the current buildings share a courtyard that is linked to all units, and this will remain to be shared for the new flats.

Close to the site and within walking distance, you have the main high street and 4 green areas/parks, which are Gadbridge Park, Randall Park, Planets Park and Keens Field, of which can be used as public space.

### **DUSEK DESIGN ASSOCIATES LTD**

Moor House Farm Estate, Lower Road, Higher Denham, Middlesex, UB9 5EN  
01895 831 103 info@dusek.co.uk www.dusek.co.uk

VAT REG. NO. 809 9514 00

REGISTERED OFFICE: ENTERPRISE HOUSE, BEESON'S YARD, BURY LANE, RICKMANSWORTH, HERTS, WD3 1DS

In conclusion, it can be seen that the layout and impact of the proposal in its immediate surroundings is acceptable, protecting the private amenity of the site and adjoining properties, and the character and appearance of the area generally due to no external alterations.

## **SCALE**

Due to the proposals being a conversion to an existing building, the scale, bulk and height of the building remain the same.

## **APPEARANCE**

The proposals will not have any effect on the external appearance of the existing school house, as all the changes remain to subdivide the internals.

However we do propose to install two new windows to flats 2 & 4 to the western flank facing Heather Way, but the materials and design of the windows and surrounds will match the existing.



*Fig. 2 – Existing flank elevation*



*Fig. 3 – Proposed flank elevation illustrating the proposed two windows to match the existing windows and surrounds elsewhere on the building*

### **DUSEK DESIGN ASSOCIATES LTD**

Moor House Farm Estate, Lower Road, Higher Denham, Middlesex, UB9 5EN  
01895 831 103 info@dusek.co.uk www.dusek.co.uk

VAT REG. NO. 809 9514 00

REGISTERED OFFICE: ENTERPRISE HOUSE, BEESON'S YARD, BURY LANE, RICKMANSWORTH, HERTS, WD3 1DS

## **LANDSCAPING**

All hardstanding that currently exists on the site will remain the same and untouched.

The proposed amenity area that is a shared courtyard has been recently renovated as part of the adjoining development to units 1 & 4, and will remain the same for the use of our proposal.

## **CONSIDERATIONS (ACCESS)**

In terms of access, the existing access points from George Street and Heather Way will be retained, whilst re-using the existing car parking spaces currently assigned to unit 3. (5 spaces)

The proposed site is within easy reach of local bus and train transport connections and a local cycle network, and with this in mind, and on the basis that the proposal provides 5 'off street' parking spaces, it is considered that the increase in the number of journeys that are outside of the optimal walking distance is minimal.

It could be argued that the number of cars/journeys will be reduced due to the amount of staff and client parking being used by the health centre, so with the change of use in mind, traffic flow and on street parking should be reduced greatly.

## **FLOOD RISK**

The environmental flood map illustrates a flood plain and river (river Gade) sited within the lower levels of the Gade Valley.

The river and flood plain are at some distance from the Old Town's High Street but because the land gently rises above the flood plain, St Mary's Church, cemetery and The Old Town High Street are both safely elevated above the flood plain.

The land continues to rise gently forming the shallow valley slopes upon which the Old Town residential areas are built.

George Street climbs away from the Old Town and although relatively close, the Old School House site is significantly higher and consequently is not at risk of flooding.

### **DUSEK DESIGN ASSOCIATES LTD**

Moor House Farm Estate, Lower Road, Higher Denham, Middlesex, UB9 5EN  
01895 831 103 info@dusek.co.uk www.dusek.co.uk

VAT REG. NO. 809 9514 00

REGISTERED OFFICE: ENTERPRISE HOUSE, BEESON'S YARD, BURY LANE, RICKMANSWORTH, HERTS, WD3 1DS

## **CONCLUSION**

As described within this statement, the alterations and new fit out will be internal and will not dramatically affect the external envelope of the building which is to be retained as existing, however two new windows are proposed to the western flank elevation facing Heather Way.

In terms of access, the existing access points from George Street and Heather Way will be retained, whilst re-using the existing car parking spaces currently assigned to unit 3. (5 spaces)

Please note due to local transport links close to the site, along with the previous schemes that have been approved in the road and the area generally, it can be said that 5 'off street' car parking spaces is acceptable in this location.

Overall, for the reasons set out and justified within this report, it is strongly believed that the submitted scheme should be considered an acceptable and appropriate form of development for the site.

**DUSEK DESIGN ASSOCIATES LTD 23/04/2019**

**DUSEK DESIGN ASSOCIATES LTD**

Moor House Farm Estate, Lower Road, Higher Denham, Middlesex, UB9 5EN  
01895 831 103 info@dusek.co.uk www.dusek.co.uk

VAT REG. NO. 809 9514 00

REGISTERED OFFICE: ENTERPRISE HOUSE, BEESON'S YARD, BURY LANE, RICKMANSWORTH, HERTS, WD3 1DS