

SGP

Architects + Masterplanners

Design & Access Statement



24-015 – Upminster Court Coach House

Date: 04th June 2024 Ref: P2



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1.0 Introduction

- 1.1 This Design and Access Statement has been produced on behalf of Uniserve Holdings Limited to support the submission of a Full Planning & Listed Building Consent Application for the conversion and change of use of the existing Stable Block (or Coach House) at Upminster Court into a training centre with overnight accommodation, to support the training provided by the company on the Upminster Court site.
- 1.2 This application follows a Full Planning & Listed Building Consent Application for a wider scheme on the site that was granted in July 2009 – application ref. P2370.07 & L0018.07. The approved scheme incorporated work to the Grade II Listed Upminster Court building, as well as the conversion and extension of the Coach House covered by this application; this permission is valid in perpetuity as the majority of the approved scheme has been implemented. Although a Section 106 Agreement was signed under the original approval, specifying the timescales in which different phases of the work would be implemented, this agreement does not override the planning consent which is still deemed to be valid.
- 1.3 The proposed works to the Coach House under this application are informed by the approved proposals under P2370.07 & L0018.07. This application seeks to make minor alterations to the approved design to meet the requirements of Uniserve Holdings Ltd, which have evolved since the original proposal was granted in 2009.
- 1.4 A Full Planning & Listed building application of the Coach House, which introduced alterations to the previously approved design, was refused in 2022 due to heritage concerns; subsequent to this, Pre-Application Heritage Advice has been obtained from Place Services and amendments made to the proposals to ensure that the conservation of the Heritage Asset is fully considered under this application. Further information can be found in the Heritage Statement which accompanies this application.
- 1.5 The application site is located at 133 Hall Lane, Upminster. The application site is shown on SGP drawing no. 24-015-SGP-XX-ZZ-DR-A-130001 bounded by the solid red line; the application site forms part of the wider Upminster Court site, identified by the solid blue line, all of which is owned by the client.

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- 1.6 This application covers the conversion of the existing Grade II Listed stable block to the north of the Grade II Listed Upminster Court, both designed in the neo-classical style by Professor Charles Reilly in 1905. The application site, indicated on the drawings which accompany this application, sits within the grounds of Upminster Court, which are themselves a Grade II Listed Park and Garden.
- 1.7 Upminster Court currently serves as the Head Office of Uniserve Holdings Limited, the UK's largest logistics provider, and since 2011 the 'Supply Chain Academy' (SCA) has been run from the site under the umbrella of Uniserve Holdings Ltd.
- 1.8 The Supply Chain Academy (SCA) is the only worldwide learning centre that focuses solely on the supply chain, offering excellent facilities for executives to stay and learn. The SCA's primary focus is to develop executives and senior management through director programmes, master classes, consultancy, executive coaching and leadership events, with high quality overnight accommodation for attendees provided in the main Upminster Court building.
- 1.9 The Supply Chain Academy has an additional skills training and qualifications arm which focuses on developing managers and aspiring managers with high quality and engaging end-to-end supply chain training and apprenticeship qualifications.
- 1.10 The aim of the Supply Chain Academy is to professionalise the supply chain sector at all levels through a supply chain career development pathway framework. This framework can be used to develop supply chain professionals from Level 3 to Level 7, using funding from the apprenticeship levy.
- 1.11 The existing stable block currently provides ancillary accommodation to the function of the Upminster Court offices, but the building is in poor condition and needs some repair and ongoing maintenance. There are a few small office spaces within the building, as well as spaces which are used by the groundsmen for the storage of garden equipment and similar items. There are also two small 2-bedroom cottages, one within each wing of the building, which provide living accommodation for 2 members of staff and their families on the site.

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- 1.12 This application proposes the change of use and extension of the stable block into a training centre with additional overnight accommodation, as part of the expansion of the Supply Chain Academy. The facility will provide 15 ensuite bedrooms, as well as classroom spaces and a small gym, to enhance their existing 'Learn and Stay' experience and expand their education and apprenticeship offer to a wider audience – with a particular focus on younger people, recent school leavers and early career professionals in the supply chain sector.
- 1.13 The clients anticipate that the proposed conversion of the Coach House into additional accommodation and facilities for the Supply Chain Academy will increase staff numbers, student numbers and revenue by 100%.
- 1.14 Further information on the proposed scheme can be found within the drawings and Heritage Statement accompanying this application.

2.0 Use

- 2.1 The stable block at Upminster Court is currently in mixed use. The central bay of the south elevation and the single storey wing to the east are both in use as office spaces; this use has become mostly redundant, as staff are now all accommodated within the main office spaces in Upminster Court, with some rooms currently rented out for use by other groups.
- 2.2 The two double-storey elements at the northern end of each wing of the stable block are currently in domestic residential use. There is a small two-bedroom cottage in each wing, both of which are currently rented out to staff members.
- 2.3 The remainder of the building is used as ancillary storage space. Some of this is office storage, with a couple of rooms given over to document storage and unused office equipment. Garden and maintenance storage is also accommodated within the stable block, with space for large and small tools (including lawnmowers), ladders, paint, cleaning equipment and other similar items.

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- 2.4 This application seeks to bring the building into a single use as a training centre with overnight accommodation to support the Supply Chain Academy, with all the existing uses accommodated elsewhere on the site.
- 2.5 The centre will provide 15 high quality ensuite bedrooms for attendees of master classes or events at Upminster Court, alongside a large central meeting and events space, two smaller classrooms in an extension and a small gym for use by overnight residents.

3.0 Amount

- 3.1 The stable block currently provides approximately 150 sq m of office space, incorporating 6 individual or shared offices, 2 kitchen spaces and associated WCs.
- 3.2 There are 2no. 85 sqm two-bedroom dwellings in the stable block, one in each wing of the building.
- 3.3 There is 84 sqm of miscellaneous storage space inside the stable block, with an additional 38 sqm of ancillary storage provided in timber lean-to sheds to the west elevation of the building. An 85 sqm former scout hut immediately to the west of the stable block has also been given over to miscellaneous storage space.
- 3.3 This proposal seeks to create a training centre within the former stable block; the following accommodation will be provided within the building:
- 15no. bedrooms with ensuite bathrooms (including 1no. wheelchair accessible bedroom and bathroom)
 - 1no. central meeting room / events space
 - 2no. classrooms
 - Gym & associated changing rooms
 - Ancillary WCs, Kitchen and storage spaces

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4.0 Layout

- 4.1 This proposal works within the constraints of the existing building to provide the required accommodation with the minimal possible alterations to the existing building.
- 4.2 The bedrooms are located to the perimeter of the building at ground and first floor, making use of existing windows for natural light and ventilation. The access corridor for these bedrooms runs around the inside face of the existing building, separate from the central courtyard, to allow access to and from the bedrooms while the central classroom / meeting space is in use.
- 4.3 A new roof is introduced to the central courtyard to turn this area into the main events space for lectures and large group activities; in the evenings this space will also become the main communal gathering space for overnight residents of the training centre.
- 4.4 The proposed classrooms and gym are in the new extension to the west of the stable block, which sits on the footprint of the former scout hut. The gym is at the lower ground floor, set down into the landscape, with the meeting rooms on a level with the ground floor facilities to ensure accessibility and provide a view over the gardens and surrounding landscape from the classrooms.

5.0 Scale

- 5.1 The existing stable block has a footprint of 315 sqm, with an internal floor area of approximately 421 sqm. The scout hut to the west has an additional floor area of approximately 85 sqm.
- 5.2 The proposed roof over the courtyard and extension to the west will create an additional 265 sqm of internal floor space, leading to a total internal floor area of 686 sq m.
- 5.3 The proposed extension works are at a scale appropriate to the existing building and the overall site.

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6.0 Landscaping

- 6.1 Minimal landscaping is proposed as part of the scheme, in order to minimise any impact of the works on the Listed Garden. Minor alterations to the ground levels are proposed around the new extension, to reduce the bulk of the building; these levels will tie into the existing informal terraced levels of the lawns in this part of the garden.
- 6.2 Hard Landscaping works will be confined to gravel footpaths from the main stable block to the extension.

7.0 Appearance

- 7.1 Minimal alterations are proposed to the external appearance of the stable block; where new windows are required, these are designed to match the existing and respect the symmetry of the neo-classical design.
- 7.2 A lightweight roof and glazed walls are proposed to the courtyard, designed to be reminiscent of a traditional 'orangery' structure with a large area of glazing to minimise the visual impact of the infill, ensure a sense of open-ness and maintain the view through the, while ensuring adequate access for maintenance to the existing building at first floor.
- 7.3 The proposed new extension is designed to be a sympathetic modern building that is subservient to the Listed building, using copper cladding and a sedum roof to allow the extension to sit comfortably in the landscape.
- 7.4 Solar PV panels are proposed to the roof of the extension. These are angled to optimise solar gain while ensuring that the visibility of the panels from the surrounding area is minimised.

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8.0 Access

- 8.1 There is an existing car park to the south of Upminster Court which serves the offices and Supply Chain Academy; this car park is sufficient to meet the increased demand of the new training centre, and no further parking is proposed as part of the application.
- 8.2 Level access entry is proposed throughout the training facility, with a wheelchair accessible bedroom and bathroom provided at ground level to ensure use by residents with a range of access needs.

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