

# ASTRONAUT KAWADA ARCHITECTURE

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## **Existing**

Park Lane Stables is an established and thriving local facility and business serving the community of Teddington and also the wider boroughs of Richmond Upon Thames and Hounslow, and as well as further afield. The stables are a horse riding school, and have been established in the area for many years. The stables provide riding and numerous activities for adults and children of all ages. The less able and disabled are also enthusiastically welcomed, and a significant part of the stables' activities are specifically geared towards the less able. The stable is registered and home to a thriving Pony Club, is a member of the Riding for the Disabled Association, and is also a registered charity, because of the work that it does. Please refer to the website at [www.parklanestables.co.uk](http://www.parklanestables.co.uk) for much more background.

The building itself is one of very few urban stables remaining in London. It was originally a fire station, with stables for the horses that pulled the fire tenders. It has a wonderful setting within the streetscape of Park Lane. But over the years the building itself has gradually become more and more rundown. Works are urgently needed to replace the main roof, which is in a very poor state and needs to be replaced. As well as this, the general fabric of the building needs attention and repair. Existing facilities connected to the stables, within the building, include a very dated external wc, tack room facilities adjacent the stable bays and within the upper space, within the roof. The roof space also houses a small teaching and events room, for visitors and riders that attend the school, as well as other members of the community. These upper spaces are an important and intrinsic part of the stable facilities but access is very difficult, via some very steep metal steps/ladders. This often prevents the less able and disabled from being involved in these areas. The hay for the horses has to be stored in one of the stable bays because of lack of space.

The fabric of the building is constructed primarily as a brick walled structure. The building is composed of several parts that have evolved and joined together over the years to form a very individual building. Main roofs are slate clad, with lower roofs at the front, adjacent the pavement, covered with various corrugated roofing sheets.

## **Existing Access**

The stables are accessed off the street, through the original gateway, across a dropped pavement. Within the ground floor, various patterns of old cobbled stones form the floor surface, but these are very uneven and partly broken. This causes problems cleaning, as well as a difficult surface for walking on. The facilities within the roof space are accessed via steep steps and ladders, as described above, which restrict access for the less able.

## **Proposed**

The most urgent aspect of the proposal is to rebuild the main roof. It is in a very poor state and is also leaking. Therefore significant efforts are currently being made to raise money to hopefully start works this August. Numerous local people and groups are donating and volunteering their services to make this happen. The intent is to complete the works by the Autumn, before the bad weather returns.

Re-roofing the building is a significant exercise in itself, and is costly. Therefore we are taking the opportunity to review how the building works, and try to improve the function of the facilities while carrying out the necessary repair works. Therefore rather than just building like for like, we are looking to re-think the stable and spend the money rebuilding the roof, but within a design that gives us the opportunity to improve the facilities to make everything more accessible for all. Therefore this application is to propose a design that provides greatly improved facilities for the less able and disabled.

The main area of the ground floor stables will remain primarily the same. But the main move is to re-build the main roof as a pitched gable roof, rather than a butterfly, and build a new stair up to the roof space that is created. After testing various layouts, the best

solution being adopted is to build an external stair that runs up directly from the pavement, to the right side of the stables. This provides much improved access to the relocated training and events space within the new roof space. By keeping the new stair to the side, and outside, the stable facilities for the horses are not compromised. To further improve these facilities and disabled wc and small reception are to be located under the new stairs. By moving the existing training and events room, the existing and retained smaller roof space is utilized as a hay loft and tack room.

The construction and finishes of the new works are designed to tie in with the existing, and to complement and respect the character of the existing building. Part of the existing brick walls around the perimeter of the main roof are to be continued up as matching brick. The main parapet levels are retained, including that adjacent the neighbour. Where the wall is raised at the back, the parapet will follow to complete the detail. The roof finish will be slate, to blend in with the existing, and form a coherent roofline of pitched slate roofs. A window at the front is minimally framed, to read as a large opening, allowing people within the new teaching and event space to look down over the main yard, and going on. This idea is continued with windows along the side of the space, letting light in, but also allowing visual connection between the teaching space and the horses in their stables below, via a long rooflight. This window and rooflight are out of sight from the street. The hay loft is connected to the outside via a new small wooden door in the front elevation. From this a small platform juts out, onto which hay bales are loaded directly from a truck. The existing black wooden fencing, along the front of the building and pavement, is to be renewed.

### **Proposed Access**

The existing main access of the street is to be retained as is. The main improvement to vertical access will be the new external stair, giving access for the able and disabled, up to the training space. It is also intended to fit a stair lift along the wall that runs up with the new stair.

Internally, the hayloft and tack room will be accessed by re-using and improving the metal stairs that previously led to the old tack room. The uneven cobbled floor finish will be replaced with a concrete floor, to improve this area. The cobbles will be re-laid level and smooth in the front yard, to retain the character of this aspect of the building.

Toilet facilities will be considerably improved for all by building a new disabled toilet. The reception will be re-located next to the wc in the front yard, providing easier access for all.