

Design, Access, and Heritage Statement Briarcourt, 28 Occupation Road, Lindley, Huddersfield. HD3 3EE

Briarcourt was built circa 1895 as a grand domestic residence to a design by the widely respected architect Edgar Wood, combining Arts and Crafts Movement principles with influences from vernacular Jacobean architecture. Although altered over the last 70 years to suit the needs of local authority service users and personnel, many of its important architectural and decorative features remain, hence its Grade II listed building status.

We are acutely aware of the architectural pedigree of the building, its social history, and the role it has played in the wider local community for over 120 years. This is reflected in our membership of the Edgar Wood Society and Edgar Wood Heritage Group (Yorkshire); our deep involvement in the publication of 'Briarcourt. The Story of a House with a Heart' (2022); and our regular commitment to sharing the history of the house with the public as part of Heritage Open Days.

Proposal 1a: Addition of Contemporary Stained Glass Decorative Screens to Windows in Modern Toilet Extension

The toilet extension in question is sited towards the rear of the ground floor on the west elevation of the house, with two windowpanes facing west and two facing north (Appendix 1). As such they are only visible to 30 Occupation Road, and at a distance.

In studying plans held by the West Yorkshire Archives Service, we have confirmed that this toilet block was not part of Edgar Wood's design or an addition that was made during the tenure of its original owners. It is likely to have been added by the local Council post-1945 after which the building changed to institutional use.

We do not consider the current windows in this block to be in keeping with those in the rest of the building (which are predominantly leaded). They are comprised of 'arctic' machine-rolled textured glass panes in metal frames.

These windows are due to be replaced with double-glazed units as per LBC application **2022/92434**. As part of this work, it would be possible to integrate opaque glass for privacy. Alternatively, we could retain the existing glass panes and use them to create 'decorative screens' which could be fitted externally to the window stonework - the same process as is described for conserving the original leaded windows in LBC **2022/92434**.

Although we recognise that this option would fulfil the function of affording privacy and would allow the reuse of existing materials, the existing windowpanes are much later additions to the building, are inconsistent with the design of most of the other windows, and in our minds significantly detract from the overall aesthetic of the building.

Instead, we propose commissioning new handmade stained-glass decorative screens. As well as increasing the privacy of new windows, the use of leaded lights and decorative artisanal elements would seem to us to be more in keeping with the original architecture of Briarcourt and its Arts and Crafts Movement roots than the utilitarian glass that is currently in situ or new opaque glass.

When we have previously commissioned stained glass to replace non-original glazing for Briarcourt (LBC **2015/91831** and small individual bathroom windowpanes approved via email correspondence with Kirklees Council Conservation and Design Dept), Deborah Lowe has designed and created the pieces (Appendix 2). She knows Briarcourt, its history, and our relationship with the building and its

grounds; she is a hugely talented and well-established stained-glass artist; and it seems preferable to have one contemporary stained-glass 'voice' expressed within the building rather than a mix of styles. The design she proposes incorporates the briar rose which is a key theme within the original architectural decoration in the building, nature's seasons - echoing the stained-glass in the front door, and references to Edgar Wood's ongoing influence at Briarcourt and in the local area 'by taking inspiration from natural forms and by featuring the Lindley Clocktower' (please see Appendices 3 and 4).

The installation of decorative screens is a completely reversible process, so would cause little or no harm to the existing fabric of the building.

Proposal 1b: Addition of Decorative Leaded Screens to Windows that are Currently Unleaded

Again, with the benefit of looking at historic architectural plans for Briarcourt at the West Yorkshire Archives Service and old photographs, we've been able to gain a more informed view on how the windows may have looked when the house was built and extended in the 1890s and 1900s.

Based on this, we believe that a number of leaded windows were replaced with unleaded glass or boarding during subsequent renovations. We are aware, for example, that the local council undertook major works to reconfigure stairways and accommodate a lift during the 1980s, and there is certainly a concentration of unleaded and boarded-over windows in the areas of the building included in those works.

As a result, there are areas where we consider that the use of unleaded glass or boarding interrupts the design flow of individual rooms and the reading of the building as a whole; and we would wish to address this.

We would like to propose using the opportunity created by the double-glazing installation outlined in LBC **2022/92434** to reinstate leaded glazing where we believe the original windows have been replaced or new unleaded windows have been introduced to the detriment of the overall aesthetic of the building.

This would be achieved by commissioning Touchstone Glazing to create appropriate replacement leaded glass panels based on the designs of the original windows that remain in situ today. These would then be installed outside the double-glazed units as decorative screens fixed to the stonework – the same process as is described for Touchstone Glazing conserving the original leaded windows in LBC **2022/92434**. The installation of the decorative screens is a completely reversible process.

Since the work outlined in LBC **2022/92434** includes re-leading the original leaded window panels which are in poor condition, any concerns about visual mismatches resulting from the integration of completely new leaded windows with the originals are minimised.

For more detail, please see Appendices 5, 6 and 7.

Proposal 2: Widening of Doors to the Ground Floor Workshop

The workshop is sited at the rear of the ground floor with the door built into the north elevation of the house. The door is not visible from other properties, roads, or footpaths.

Edgar Wood's original plan for Briarcourt labels this room as a washhouse and show a completely different configuration of windows and doors to that which exists today – in fact, at that time, there were no windows or doors planned for the north wall. Plans for extensions and reconfigurations in 1904, 1913 and 1921 do not include the introduction of doors in the north wall in the current position either, so it is clearly a more modern adaptation.

The run of windows and door that currently take up the north wall are different in style and materiality from the rest of the building in that they are wooden-framed and unleaded. This room was historically used as a servants' work area and is distanced from the ornate, formal rooms in the house.

To improve functionality, we would like to propose widening the doorway and replacing the single door with a pair of double doors. We value this space as a workshop area and would benefit from improving the access, especially as there is a car parking/unloading space outside, and the threshold is step-free.

We commissioned Tony Costello, a carpenter who has skilfully completed several projects as part of our Briarcourt renovations, to design a suitable scheme that integrates with the existing windows. Please see Appendix 8 for further details.

Proposal 3: Replacement of Modern Glass Pane in Kitchen Door

The door leading from the main kitchen into the garden (Appendix 9) is situated on the ground floor on the east elevation of the building. It is not visible from any street or other residence.

At present, it is glazed with a modern machine-rolled pane. We have found this 'arctic' glass design used where we have been able to evidence that a different glass design originally existed – for example in the front door (LBC **2015/91831**). And, indeed, consulting the records held at West Yorkshire Archive Services, a plan for modifications to the east side of Briarcourt submitted by Willie Cooper in 1913 illustrates the kitchen door with a simple leaded window to match the fanlight above it.

We believe that the replacement glass in the door detracts from the overall design of the building. We therefore propose removing it and commissioning the fabrication and installation of a new hand-leaded window in a simple square design to match the fanlight.