

2035 – Alterations and Extensions to Friars School, Wellingborough, Northants

Design & Access Statement

Site Context

The School is situated in a residential area consisting largely of two storey houses with pitched roofs. The site itself rises from north to south and is also banked at the south and south/east boundaries.

The School buildings are generally single storey in height but include a two storey Block towards the south boundary. The School was originally constructed in the early 1960's and was extended significantly in the 1990's.

Use

The proposals are an extension to the current site use as a School for Special Needs Pupils between the ages of 11–16 Years. As a result of the project the School will provide facilities for students 16–19 Years of age plus sleeping accommodation for visiting pupils from other Special Needs Schools.

Amount

A new extension will be provided to the east end of the existing two storey block together with external works. An existing modular metal storage building will be re-sited.

Layout

The sleeping facilities for visiting pupils and the facilities for 16–19 Year Students will be created by internal adaptations to the existing two storey block. The proposed new extension will provide a dedicated new entrance to these facilities. Vehicle access for Minibuses will be provided to the location of the new entrance.

Scale

The new two storey entrance extension is approximately 5.4m in width x 7.2m in depth. The height will match that of the existing building. Single storey stores on the north side of the principal extension measure 5.3m x 2.8m on plan.

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Appearance

The appearance of the new two storey extension will follow the theme of the original building with a pitched roof and overhanging eaves which continues in the same plane as the existing roof. The single storey stores will have a lean-to pitched roof. The new entrance will be indented slightly to frame the new entrance and provide some modulation to the extended façade.

The materials for the walls, windows and roof will match those of the existing building as far as possible. This will also apply to the existing building where internal adaptations require modifications to the external envelope.

Landscaping

A combination of hard paving with a soft grassed area will be added to the area providing vehicle and pedestrian access to the new entrance. A new masonry faced retaining wall will be provided to the southern boundary to provide additional space for vehicle access and manoeuvring in the vicinity of the new entrance.

A 2.0m high close-boarded fence will be provided to screen the new entrance from other external areas of the School site.

Access

The access to the site for pedestrians and vehicles is from Friars Close. An existing car park is situated adjacent to the site entrance with provision for disabled parking and ramped pedestrian access to the principal entrance of the building.

The site rises towards the south boundary but a suitable level access will be available to the new dedicated entrance in the proposed extension. A lift in the new extension will provide access to the first floor accommodation for people with limited mobility.

Alterations & Extensions, Friars School, Wellingborough, Northants.

Scheme Justification Statement - March 2009

While Friars Special School in Wellingborough is currently designated for pupils aged 11 – 16 with significant learning difficulties (including autism and some pupils with additional physical difficulties), there are pupils at the school beyond 16 through exceptional arrangements. The Local Authority has a duty to offer post 16 special school education to pupils who are currently attending a special school. This capital scheme is part of the overall proposal to extend the age range of all secondary special schools in Northamptonshire in line with these statutory requirements.

The proposed alterations to the school include remodelling of existing under-utilised spaces, a new build extension and extensive landscaping, including a new retaining wall.

- 1) Re-modelling the existing ground floor (empty) caretaker's flat to create facilities for discrete post 16 provision: food technology room, 2 class bases and a shower room.
- 2) Minor alterations and re-fitting of the first floor accommodation (currently empty/storage) to create an Independent Living Suite – this will be an overnight facility with 9 bedrooms and activity bases for the use of all special schools to provide an extended curriculum for independent living skills.
- 3) New build extension required for satisfying mandatory DDA and fire escape/access requirements not practicable with the existing structure. New lift, stairs and storage rooms are also designed into the proposed new build.
- 4) External area of the building will see an area repaved to provide turning/parking area for a minibus, approximately 35 sq.m grass area and a 47 metre long retaining wall.