Science Block refurbishment scheme at Wollaston School, Wollaston, Northamptonshire

Design and Access Statement

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Appendix 1 Application Drawings
1.0 Introduction

Wollaston School provides secondary and further sixth form education to the local, and wider rural, community. The school accommodation has been developed over a period of time and reflects the school intake expansion and increase in subjects offered to pupils as part of the national curriculum. The site is relatively large for the school, and accessed predominately from Irchester Road, to the north of the site, where the school buildings are largely located.

The school has been under significant pressure in regard to providing suitable and sufficient teaching accommodation and facilities and subsequently the anticipated refurbishment of the existing ‘Old’ Science block is urgently required to maintain and ensure a suitable teaching environment. The existing ‘Old’ Science block is attached to a ‘New’ Science block which was constructed in the early 2000’s and provides a portion of the science teaching facilities, but the majority is housed within the ‘Old’ Science block. The existing ‘Old’ Science block is currently, internally and externally, in very poor condition and requires the substantial refurbishment works outlined. It also does not offer teaching facilities to the correct proportion to accommodate current class sizes and therefore this will be addressed as part of the works.

The school site has undergone many isolated internal refurbishment works within different departments and also externally addressing maintenance issues such as replacement roof covering and landscaping works. The roof refurbishment works to date have also included re-roofing the ‘Old’ Science block and therefore works to the roof are minimal within the application.

2.0 Location Plans

2.1 Location

Wollaston School is located within the rural village of Wollaston, to the south of Wellingborough and east of Northampton. The school site has vehicle and pedestrian access from Irchester Road.

Whilst the school is rurally located, it accessible from the major road A509 linking Wellingborough to Milton Keynes and by a network of local rural roads.
2.2 Aerial Photograph
2.3 Existing Site Plan
2.3 Existing Plan and ‘Old’ Science block photographs
2.3 Internal Photographs

Examples to show the internal condition of the ‘Old’ Science block and urgent nature of the refurbishment works required to bring the accommodation up to standard.
3.0 Links

3.1 Transport

*Pedestrian*

The site is located to the east side of the village of Wollaston and within a short walking distance of bus stops that serve the village to and from both Wellingborough and to other local village communities. The centre of Wollaston is a short 5 minute walking distance.

*By Public Transport*

Bus links to and from Wollaston connect the village to both Wellingborough and Olney, as well as connections onto Northampton and Bedford. Wellingborough offers the closest railway link offering Midland Mainline services to London St. Pancras / Kings Cross as well as more locally to Bedford and Kettering.

*By Road*

The site has good road links and is accessed from the B569, Irchester Road to the north which connects the village of Wollaston to the neighbouring village of Irchester. Irchester is adjacent to the small town of Rushden, to the north east of Wollaston which offers more substantial road links north and south. Wollaston is located off the A509, a major A road connecting Wellingborough to Olney and onto Milton Keynes. Milton Keynes and Northampton provide connections to the M1. Northampton is less than a half an hour drive to the west and Wellingborough within fifteen minutes to the north.

*By Air*

The nearest airport is London Luton, which can be located by railway from Wellingborough or Bedford stations, or located less than an hour away to the south east via the M1.

3.2 Community

The site serves as a local community secondary and sixth form school serving a rural catchment for pupils aged between 12 to 18. Due to the rural nature, the school accommodates the operation of a substantial number of bus transportation links. The school plays a vital part of the local community of Wollaston. The next nearest secondary school to Wollaston is located in Wellingborough or Sharnbrook, a village in Bedfordshire.

3.3 Leisure and Recreation

Wollaston school offers clubs and societies to pupils outside of school hours as extra curricula activities and the school facilities, such as hall spaces, can be hired by external clubs and organisations for community meetings and occasions.

Locally, the village provides additional leisure and recreation opportunities for both children and adults as well as on a wider scale, Wellingborough and Northampton providing a substantial network and variety of sport, art, music, museum and social opportunities.

3.4 Shops and Services
There are several local newsagents and grocery shops close to the school in the centre of the village. The nearest of which is a Cooperative Food store, located on Newton Road, a few minutes walk from the school site. There is also a pharmacy located on London Road, also a few minutes walk from the school site. Within Wellingborough, there is access to a wide range of retail outlets including a large Tesco supermarket.

The nearest doctor’s surgery is Wollaston Surgery on London Road in Wollaston, a short drive or walk to the south west of the school site.

There is a Post Office located within the Cooperative Food store, located on Newton Road which is a short walk from the school.

3.5 Employment

The school provides employment to 88 full and part time teaching and managerial staff, 55 support and administration staff and 13 cleaning staff predominately from the local communities. The works to the ‘Old’ Science block will not increase the employment requirements at the school.
4.0 Planning Statement
4.1 National
The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) was published in March 2012 as a replacement for the previous Planning Policy Statements (PPS) and Planning Policy Guidance Notes (PGS). Some of the key considerations from that guidance are:
- Chapter 7: Requiring good design
- Chapter 8: Promoting healthy communities

4.2 The Development Plan
It is understood the Northampton Local Development Plan (LDP) is currently undergoing development and assessment, and whilst the Central Area Action Plan (CAAP) 2012 was adopted in January 2013, this is not wholly geographically relevant to Wollaston. Historically the Northampton Local Plan 1997 was adopted in 1997 but is largely considered out of date and therefore there is no current adopted guidance for the area of Wollaston in relation to the proposed works.

4.3 Site Details
The whole site is largely of a flat topography, although the site experiences construction of facilities on varying levels posing many small scale stepped changes in level to the site as a whole. Trees present on the site are predominately located to the entrance area and adjacent to the school perimeter, with the main vegetation on around the site and school buildings being shrubs and smaller scale planting. The site borders agricultural land to the east and south, and residential areas to the west and north.

4.4 Considerations
Heavy consideration has been made to the previous application made in respect to the refurbishment of the ‘Old’ Science block. This application follows the aesthetic and approach to the refurbishment works, albeit with additional items including the formation of step and ramped access to the front and rear escape exit, demolition of the existing Bio-Chemical Store with associated replacement in the form of a bunded Bio-Chemical unit and inclusion of an air conditioning unit to the rear elevation.

In regard to the elevational treatments for the external refurbishment works, these remain as the previous application to remove the existing timber cladding and brick infill and replace the external wall construction and cladding system to include coloured Trespa cladding as outlined on drawing P-08 and P09. The works also include the replacement of glazing due to the dilapidated existing condition and to correspond with the elevational cladding treatments and to coordinate with internal reconfiguration works. The addition of the step and ramped access is essential in ensuring accessible access to all pupils and staff as well as complying with Building Regulations. It is felt the amendments to the elevations are extremely minor in comparisons to the previous application granted permission in respect to the adjacent residential properties.

The demolition works associated with the Bio-Chemical Store and replacement of a bunded Bio-Chemical unit will have little to no impact on the adjacent residential properties and essential in order to provide rear access to
an appointed Principle Contractor to undertake the works to the ‘Old’ Science block.

The additional inclusion of the air conditioning unit is considered to also have little visual and acoustic impact to the adjacent residential properties. Careful consideration was taken over the location for the units, to ensure they are both accessible for maintenance purposes whilst out of general sight for the pupils. The positioning also allows for future expansion for the system into the ‘New’ Science block in the future.

The proposed location for the air conditioning unit is at ground floor level and will be located behind vegetation buffer to the school boundary perimeter and therefore over time the vegetation will provide natural screening between the residential properties and the unit. It is also proposed the unit will be housed within an maintenance mesh ‘cage’ to protect from tampering whilst providing controlled access as required. The positioning and scale of the proposed air conditioning unit can be found on drawings P08 and P09.
6.0 Proposals
The proposals for the refurbishment works to the ‘Old’ Science block at Wollaston School includes external reconstruction and re-cladding of the elevations of the ‘Old’ Science block, adjacent link to the Gym from the Gym Changing Facilities and partial re-cladding of the entrance area to the ‘New’ Science block. It includes the formation of a step and ramped entrance approach to both the main entrance to the ‘Old’ Science block and rear emergency escape exit to the rear of the building. The aesthetics and material use / design can be found on drawing P08 and P09 and relate partially to the internal reconfiguration works proposed found on drawing P06.

The proposal includes the demolition of the existing Bio-Chemical brick built store located to the rear of the Science block, and replacement, utilising the existing remaining concrete slab through the installation of a bunded Bio-Chemical unit. The positioning of the existing Bio-Chemical store can be found on drawing P02, P04 and P05 which will form the positioning for the new bunded store on completion of the refurbishment works which can be found on drawing P06.

Elevationally the works also include the inclusion of an air conditioning unit to the rear of the ‘New’ Science block as shown in positioning and scale on drawing P09.

6.1 Use
The use for the proposed development will be continued for secondary education at Wollaston School.

6.2 Amount
The proposed internal footprint of the scheme will not alter during the works as the external leaf will be replaced but not extended.

6.3 Scale
The proposal scale for the proposal will not alter during the works as the external leaf will be replace but not extended. The Bio-Chemical store will reduce in size following the demolition works.

6.4 Landscaping
The landscaping works associated with the proposal are extremely minimal. It is anticipated hard standing external replacement works will be undertaken to the rear of the building to the existing footpath following the completion of the external cladding to the rear. It is also envisaged some replacement hard standing resurfacing will be required to the entrance area to the site and possibly to the existing playground area adjacent to the Science Block following the works. It is also assumed there will be a degree of hard standing resurfacing adjacent to the works associated in forming the new step and ramped access to the front and rear entrances.

The soft vegetation to the rear of the Science block will be heavily pruned to ensure suitable access for the Principle Contractor to practically undertake the works however, this will be left to replenish naturally following completion.

6.5 Appearance
The proposed refurbishment development appearance and aesthetic is largely based on the previous application granted full permission. In appearance the scheme consists of re-cladding the existing ‘Old’ Science block, adjacent link to the Gym from the Gym Changing Facilities and part of the entrance area to the ‘New’ Science block in blue / turquoise coloured Trespa cladding panels as outlined on drawing P08. The replacement aluminium windows will be to a dark grey (RAL 7015) and associated aluminium pressings and finished required, including to the step and ramped entrances will be PPC to a dark grey finish.

The replacement bunded Bio-Chemical unit will be finished to a dark grey colour in appearance and the associated mesh ‘cage’ maintenance housing to the air conditioning unit will be to a dark grey colour. The roof will receive only minor works as it benefited from a re-roofing scheme recently and therefore it will only the junction between the new cladding and the existing roof which will require attention which will be finished to correspond with the existing dark grey roof finish.

7.0 Consultation

No direct consultation has taken place with the wider community as this application follows swiftly on from the previously granted full application for an extremely similar scheme in nature, colour, approach, scale and extent. The school has made contact with the neighbouring residential properties in respect to the imminent construction works to undertake this works next year and has received no comments or queries in regard to this or the proposal works in general.

It is considered that the development will assist in providing suitable teaching facilities for the local community and help in improving the visual appearance of the Science facilities to the site from the existing poor visual and physical condition of the ‘Old’ Science block.

Consultation has taken place extensively within the school environment and particularly in the Science department, senior management team, governors and teaching staff as a whole and of course the pupils. The refurbishment works are eagerly anticipated!
8.0 Accessibility
Accessibility to the ‘Old’ Science block is to be addressed through the inclusion of the step and ramped access to the main entrance and rear emergency escape exit. This is seen as a vital inclusion to coordinate with the internal reconfiguration works and to comply with Building Regulations. In addition, the ramped entry and exit is also of high importance to the school to ensure inclusion for all pupils at the school. The ‘New’ Science block already offers level access to the ground floor.

It is considered the facilities do not require lift access as the teaching facilities to the ground and first floor have been carefully considered to accommodate the nature of all science subjects taught to all as well as offering staff facilities to the ground as well as first floor.

9.0 Sustainability
The specification and detailing for the proposal ensure the overall thermal performance of the existing ‘Old’ Science block are improved to meet Building Regulations. Efforts have been made as far as possible within the constraints of a refurbishment scheme and include environmentally friendly products, materials and construction methods to decrease the environmental impact of the scheme where possible.

In regard to energy efficiency and usage, every effort will be made to incorporate sustainable means to practically reduce energy consumption within the scheme. In regard to maintenance and practicalities of usage of the scheme it is hoped through careful specification and detailing the scheme will be sustainable for the school to maintain and manage into the future.
10.0 Conclusion

It is felt the proposals achieve the aim of providing a refurbished, refreshed and remodelled scheme to the 'Old' Science block at Wollaston School. The scheme sets out to improve the facilities for teaching science and meeting the needs internally to accommodate the number of pupils and teaching requirements whilst both internally and externally addressing the dilapidated condition of the building.

It is also felt the proposals will provide a recognised aesthetic to the Science Block as a whole and assist in portraying the subject as exciting and fresh to the pupils and in a hope to improve enthusiasm across the year groups.

It is not anticipated there will be any increased noise or light pollution from the scheme in addition to the existing and hope the appearance will be of a considerable improvement for the over-looking neighbouring residential properties.

In conclusion, it is our belief that the proposals adhere to the planning guidelines currently in place and based on the previously granted full application for an extremely similar scheme to the 'Old Science block, the design submitted adheres to the demands of all interested parties.
Appendix A

Selected Application Drawings