Isebrook S.E.N College
Eastleigh Road, Kettering, NN15 6PT

Design & Access Statement

October 2016
V.2 (Nov. 2016)
1.0 Introduction

Isebrook SEN College is located on the south east outskirts of Kettering, a short distance from the A14 major arterial road and close by the A6003. The site is located off Eastleigh Road and is bounded by the River Ise floodplain to the east, the A6003 (Barton Road) to the south and St Edward’s RC Primary School to the west. The school site slopes from high ground above the adjacent primary school down to the floodplain, with a change in level of approx. 6m.

Constraints and Opportunities

The position of the existing school buildings and the topography of the site have limited the opportunities for siting the proposed development.

West

The school is close to the boundary with the adjoining St Edwards RC Primary School and much of the site area between the main building and the boundary is the location for the horticultural classroom and outdoor classroom and garden area. This is a relatively narrow strip of land and would not accommodate the required accommodation.

South

The land between the existing sports hall and A6003 Barton Road is occupied by a hard play area and sloping land which rises steadily up to the boundary with the road.

The hard play area and adjacent land area are currently occupied by six temporary mobile classrooms which were relocated under Planning Application NCC ref 16/00026/CCDFUL and KBC ref KET/2016/0472/NCC in order to vacate the site of the proposed new development.

This area of land is somewhat remote from the main school.

East

As noted above, the whole site slopes from the west boundary down to the floodplain and wastelands along the east boundary. From the internal floor level of the main school building there is an approx. 1.8m drop to the level of the Sixth Form/Vocational Teaching Block and existing hard play/social area.

The area south of this hard play area is lower and forms a grassed plateau area which until recently was the site of the temporary mobile classrooms and network of access ramps. Part of this area further south is used for recreational football when ground conditions permit, as this area of the site can become waterlogged.

Beyond the plateau the site falls steeply to the east to the tree lined and fenced boundary along the River Ise washlands, whilst to the south the land rises up to the Barton Road boundary.

The benefits of developing this part of the site area as follows:

- The position of the plateau offers an appropriate location for the new Teaching Block and provides the opportunity for a convenient link to the core of the existing main building.
- The plateau, being some 1.8m lower than the ground floor level of the existing main teaching block, will help to reduce the visual impact / mass of the extension with the lower ground floor set ½ storey below the existing school GF level.
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- The site offers sufficient space to address daylight requirements in both existing and new classrooms.
- The available space and sloping nature of the site offer the opportunity to maintain space separation between the proposed building and the existing buildings.
- The plateau area is generally of sufficient size to allow the provision of a MUGA to provide an all-weather play area which will have greater all round accessibility and potential for use. It is considered that these benefits will outweigh the loss of the existing grassed area.
- The playfield area is currently estimated at approximately 5550m² (excluding steep embankments) of which approximately 4200m² is usable with some slope in areas. However, due to the topography of the site, ground conditions and, until recently, the temporary mobile classrooms the area of playing field available for formal play has been limited.
- Sport England considers proposals affecting playing fields by reference to the Playing Fields Policy: “A Sporting Future for the Playing Fields of England” and National Policy Framework (NPPF) in particular paragraph 74. Sport England have been consulted and appear broadly supportive of the proposal in their pre-application advice.
2.0 Facilities

The extension includes the following:

**Link and Learning Resources Centre**
- Covered link.
- Link, Foyer, Learning Resources Centre at the same FFL (GF datum) as the existing main building.
- Passenger lift.

**Teaching block**
- Accommodation within the new Teaching Block is split between two levels, Lower GF is at 1.8m below GF, First Floor is 1.8m above GF datum level.
- Passenger lift.
- 8nr classrooms.
- Group rooms.
- Quiet Rooms.
- Student and staff toilets including disabled provision at both levels.

**Creative Block**
- CDT facility.
- Art facility.
- Music Room incorporating a recording studio.
- Food technology.
- Break-Out/Multi-Use space.

Alterations in the existing school include:
- Existing Art Studio 32 and C.D.T. 35 will become general teaching spaces.
- Existing Library 62 to be converted to a Film & Media Studio by the school.
- ICT 58 to be converted to an intervention room by the school.

External works and landscape include:
- MUGA size 18m x 16m (288 sq.m.)
- Alterations to existing drop-off / pick-up, lay-by and new roadway.
- Ramped access between perimeter path (covered link) and existing hard play/social area.
- Localised ground modelling and paving around new teaching block.
- Temporary haul road and access off Barton Road for construction purposes.

3.0 Amount

The proposals include a gross additional floor areas of 1109m² at ground floor and lower ground floor levels and 435m² at first floor level.

The internal gross floor area of the main elements is as follows:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Floor Level</th>
<th>Area (m²)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Ground Floor</td>
<td>159m²</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lower Ground Floor</td>
<td>950m²</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
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First Floor 435m²
Covered Link 40m²
MUGA 545m²
Alterations to Drop-Off/Pick Up etc 394m²

Individual teaching, curriculum, activity and ancillary spaces in the new Teaching Block area sized based on guidance in the following documents:

BB102 Designing for Disabled Children and Children with Special Educational Needs.
BB103 Area Guidelines for Main Stream Schools.
BB104 Area Guidelines for SENS and Alternative Provision.
BB81 Design and Technology Accommodation in Secondary Schools.
BB89 Art Accommodation in Secondary Schools

It is noted that the pupils at Isebrook S.E.N. College generally have moderate learning difficulties, approx. 50% have some degree of autistic spectrum disorder (ASD). Some pupils have mobility and disability issues but there are no requirements for any provision exceeding normal DDA requirements.

4.0 Layout

4.1 Extensions

In developing the design the aim has been to:

- Make best use of the existing slope and levels of the site.
- Allow plenty of open space and views out to remain between the proposed building and the existing buildings.
- Maintain access for grounds maintenance vehicles.
- Allow adequate space and access for the construction of the proposed development with minimal impact on the existing school and seeking to minimise risk to pupils, staff and visitors to the school.
- Allow for removal of the temporary mobile classrooms upon completion of the new teaching accommodation.
- Simple form for ease of construction as a framed structure.
- Utilise largely dry, engineered construction methods to minimise construction period and provide the accommodation required within a very tight budget.
- Reflect the materials and colours used on the existing buildings (both the original building and more recent vocational block) to achieve some coherence of appearance.

Due to the amount of new and replacement accommodation required and the limitations of the site, the proposed development comprises a largely two storey teaching block and a single storey creative block. The design seeks to minimise the mass of the building.

4.2.1 New Teaching Block and Creative Block

Link and Learning Resources Centre.
- Link corridor within existing building utilises an existing route.
- The remainder of the access route to the new facility is a covered link; this could be enclosed with glazing / wall panels at a later date.
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- At the existing outside wall external doors will open onto the covered link which will incorporate barrier rails along most of its length. Access will remain open to the perimeter path along the east frontage of the existing building.
- Between this path and the existing hard play area in front of the Sixth Form (Vocational) Block, there is a levels difference of approximately 1.45m. New steps and a ramped access will be provided.
  The layout of steps and ramps is intended to minimize impact on the tree within the embankment, allowing this semi-mature specimen to be retained. One existing bench seat will require relocating a short distance.
- Link, Foyer, Library and ICT Suite are at the same FFL (GF datum) as the existing main building.
- Library and ICT Suite – i.e. Learning Resources Centre - are located centrally for ease of access from both the existing school and from within the new Teaching Block. The Library and ICT have been combined into an open plan space and incorporates a soundproof ‘booth’.

Teaching block

- Accommodation within the new Teaching Block is split between two levels:
  Lower GF is at 1.8m below GF datum which is close to the level of the existing hard play area (outside the Sixth Form [Vocational] Block) and hence suitable for a level escape route;
  First Floor is 1.8m above that GF datum level.
  The lift has through-flow access and exit for ease of use, doors will be glazed.
- Each pair of classrooms on the lower GF are separated by an acoustic moveable partition with stacking at each end of the opening to minimize obstruction within the space. This will add flexibility to the range of available teaching spaces.
- Group rooms are located to the south end of the main teaching block.
- A single Quiet Room is provided on each floor.
- A main toilet area has been provided centrally between the main teaching area and the Creative Block and has been sited to take cognisance of travel distance limitations from all areas.
  The male and female toilet layouts are designed to avoid bullying and also allow for discreet supervision from the corridor.
  A disabled unisex toilet is provided at each level.
  A fully accessible Hygiene Room has been provided at lower GF level off the entrance foyer.
  Staff toilets are located off the foyer at each level.

Creative Block

- Creative Block is at the Lower GF level and is single storey to allow for increased headroom / specific daylighting (e.g. north light) needs if required.
- The CDT facility is sized to accommodate a CAD-CAM area.
  The space allocated allows for a selection of desk top and larger mobile CAD-CAM machines (2m x 1m) with a dedicated PC alongside each machine. The area allocated and range of machines will be dependent on curriculum requirements.
  Woodworking machines will be located around the perimeter of the main teaching space.
- The Art facility incorporates a closed sterile (i.e. safe) area for dye sublimation on a worktop, approx 2.5m long.
  A small covered outdoor area is proposed on the east elevation to provide a space for outdoor art and creative activities.
The Break-Out/Multi-Use space within the Creative Block provides a useful area of approx 4.5m x 6m with direct access to a modest external paved area.

The Music Room incorporates a recording studio.

The Food Technology facility includes a range of workspaces together with ancillary stores and wash-up facilities.

**Internal Alterations to Existing Building**

The existing Art Studio 32 and C.D.T. 35 will become general teaching.

The existing Library 62 is to be refurbished and converted to a Film & Media Studio by the school.

ICT 58 is to be refurbished and converted to an intervention room by the school.

The Horticulture Studio is to remain in the current temporary mobile classroom for present. In the future existing classroom 79 could be converted to this use by the school.

**External Works and Landscaping**

Localised ground modelling will be undertaken around the immediate perimeter of the new accommodation to provide paving for access and maintenance purposes.

It is envisaged that the embankment between the new facility and the existing building could, if funds permit, have soft landscaping elements of ground cover, shrubs, small specimen trees and flower beds to provide a visually attractive setting and outlook from both the new and existing areas.

**MUGA**

Although there are longitudinal falls and cross falls on the site of the proposed main Teaching and Creative building, it is nevertheless a relatively sizeable plateau area. Beyond that plateau area the ground falls away steeply towards the eastern boundary and begins to rise again towards the southern boundary – as such this limits the space and scope for provision of an additional MUGA.

The MUGA is sized to accommodate a recreational size basketball court 30.1m x 18.1m which is the minimum size including run-off. This maintains the access margins for grounds maintenance and pedestrian circulation between the proposed MUGA location and adjacent existing and proposed buildings.

The MUGA is located and oriented to maximize the space between the MUGA and the new teaching facility. The level of the MUGA is approximately 1.2m below the FFL of the proposed new Lower Ground Floor accommodation; this may help to reduce the potential visual distraction that activities on the MUGA may have on teaching within the spaces along the east side of the new facility.

The existing ground levels will require building up locally to provide a level area for the MUGA and with the resultant deep embankment a retaining structure and will have a mesh fencing enclosure.

The retaining wall will minimise the likelihood of any rootball damage to the trees along this part of the site. The wall may be constructed using gabion baskets; this would offer a sustainable form of construction and could be planted with vegetation and plants, e.g. alpines, to encourage wildlife.

**Drop-off and Parking**

The existing drop-off and parking arrangement with bays radiating around a traffic island currently leads to significant manoeuvring difficulties (reversing in or out of bays), increased risk of vehicular clashes and delays in movement of minibuses, taxis and private cars which is
particularly pronounced when there is concentrated traffic in a short period of time at the end of the school day.

Drawing 91428-S-XX-A-180 shows the proposed drop-off and additional parking provision. This layout provides a flow and order to minibus and taxi drop-off and pick-up at the start and close of the school day.

In addition to the drop off and access zones both a lay-by near the entrance and a one way system of entry via the lower car park road are proposed which will further increase the capacity for an orderly queue of vehicles.

The layout with new and revised kerb lines takes account of the turning pattern of a typical minibus size (12 seater) vehicle and the space requirements for side and rear access. Dropped kerbs, marked pedestrian crossings and barrier railings are indicated to provide controlled safe access routes and pick-up/drop-off areas. Canopies for weather protection will be provided alongside the pick-up/drop-off bays.

The overall turning space around the central island and the direct access route to the hard play area outside the Sixth Form Block will allow access for a typical fire tender.

A Vehicle Tracking exercise has been carried out by the Design Team, the results of which are illustrated and included in the application and are based on a 12 seat minibus (the maximum size of vehicle used).

**The Existing Drop-Off/Pick Up Arrangement:**

JJP Consulting drawing U8170AA VT01 P2 illustrates the vehicle tracking for the existing drop-off/pick up arrangement and includes the addition of a pull-in lay-by to provide parking for 3 No additional minibuses/taxis. The plots illustrate the manoeuvres required by just one vehicle accessing a minibus/taxi drop-off/pick up bay. Currently 16 minibuses and taxis plus parents/guardians drop-off and pick up students, consequently there is an increased risk of vehicular clashes and delays with this current arrangement which is particularly pronounced when there is concentrated traffic in a short period of time during pick-up at the end of the school day. Concerns were raised by the school about this, primarily from a safety viewpoint, at the initial briefing for the project, and despite the recent introduction of active traffic management daily by some 4 or 5 members of staff which has helped bring some order and control, the concerns of the school about the current arrangement remain.

**Proposed Drop-Off and Pick Up Layout**

Refer to DarntonB3 drawing 91428-S-XX-A-180 for the proposed layout of drop-off and additional parking provisions.

JJP Consulting drawing U8170AA VT07 P2 illustrates the vehicle tracking for the proposed layouts. This layout provides a flow and order to minibus and taxi drop-off and pick up at the start and close of the school day. In additional to the drop-off and access zones, both a lay-by near the entrance - catering for 3 vehicles - and a one way system of entry via the lower car park access road, will further increase the capacity for an orderly queue of vehicles. This should minimise or obviate the need for vehicles to queue on Eastleigh Road which currently happens.

JJP Consulting drawing U8170AA VT05 P2 illustrates fire tender access with the proposed new layout. The layout allows adequate access for fire tenders should the need arise. It should be noted that the far drop-off/pick up bays should not normally be occupied by parked vehicles during normal school hours; if vehicles were in these bays during a fire brigade call-out to the school the vehicles would be moved to allow adequate access.
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Construction Access

The temporary access/haul road is proposed to be a minimum 6m wide and the access off Barton Road will have minibus radius kerb lines for entry and exit. This will be subject of design by a highways engineer.

It is expected that the turning radius and roadway width take cognisance of delivery vehicle width and tracking characteristics and the visibility requirements for this classification of road and the requirements for two-way HGV access. The access for the haul road falls within the 30mph speed limit zone on Barton Road (A6003) and has been located to maximise the separation from the entrance to Wicksteed Park.

5.0 Scale

The new extension comprises a number of elements, chiefly:

- Single storey Creative Block,
- Two-storey Classroom Block and
- Single storey Learning Resources Centre seated on a half-storey plinth

The link is a lightweight open structure with a roof to provide a covered route from the existing building to the new block.

The proposals include flat roofs to minimise the mass of the building, particularly the two-storey Classroom Block when viewed in context with the adjacent buildings and also as viewed from those buildings.

6.0 Materials

A lively and contemporary reflection of the existing buildings is achieved using a palette which provides contrasts in colour whilst displaying a continuity of both materials and choice of colours.

New Teaching Block and Creative Block

- Buff facing brickwork at ground floor level and lower ground floor level to the Learning Resources Centre;
- Blue brickwork to Entrance and Plant Room envelopes.
- Coloured render to the remainder of the Teaching Block and the whole of the Creative Block; generally a white render will be used on the main blocks with bright green and medium blue on the ancillary blocks and in panels on the Creative Block.
- Aluminium windows, external doors and curtain walling, polyester powder coated, mid/dark grey colour.
- Aluminium coping system, polyester powder coated, mid/dark grey;
- Metal barrier rail between parapet walls to the roof perimeter.
- Flat roof with single ply roof covering, eg Sarnafil or Bauder, on insulation cut to falls to all roof areas.
- Opening windows will be provided throughout, and will be top hung with restrictors.
- Ventilation stack units will be used to provide natural ventilation with terminals mounted on the roof.
Covered Link

- Flat roof as above on exposed lightweight steel structure.
- Metal balustrade, polyester powder coated.

7.0 Appearance

The elemental design and palette of materials reflect the design vocabulary of the existing school buildings to provide a coherence of appearance. Flat roofs have been employed to minimise the mass of the building, particularly the two-storey block.

The link block at the existing GF level reads as a single storey / one-and-a-half storey buff brick mass with a blue brick enclosure to the one-and-a-half storey height foyer, circulation space and lower GF plantroom.

The two storey Teaching Block is largely read as a generally white rendered block punctuated with window openings. The single storey Creative Block is also a white rendered block featuring some blocks of colour. The circulation and sanitary block separating between the two teaching blocks has blue brick cladding at ground floor level and coloured render at first floor level.

The link corridor is intended to be lightweight in appearance to maintain the apparent separation of the new block from the existing building.

The new entrance to the existing school building has been designed to ensure it is recognisable and inviting. The entrance is protected by the projecting canopy above.

8.0 Access

The Disabled Discrimination Act (DDA) requires all service providers, building owners/managements and designers to accommodate the needs of people with disabilities or impairments and guarantee that services are available to them on an equal basis. The new facilities will comply with the requirements of the Equality Act 2010, Code of Practice BS 8300 and the requirements of Part M of the Building Regulations.

At the external doors used to exit/access the existing building the circulation route will open onto the covered link which will incorporate barrier rails along most of its length. Access will remain open to the perimeter path along the east frontage of the existing building.

Between this path and the existing hard play in front of the Sixth Form (Vocational) Block, there is a level difference of approximately 1.45m. A new ramped access route will be provided to maintain this link; this route will also provide an access route between the P.E. changing rooms and the new MUGA. The ramped access will comprise two upper ramps each 1.8m wide x 8m long x 1:18 gradient and two lower ramps 1.8m wide x 1:15 gradient approximately 4.275m and 5m long respectively.

Entrance

The covered link provides a level access between the existing (main) school building and the entrance to the new facilities. The entrance will have semi-automated access doors with push pad control.
Stairs

Both the main stair flights and the secondary stairs are designed to meet ambulant disabled standards; each flight will be 1800mm high divided into 12 equal risers of 150mm, treads are 300mm. The width of each flight of stairs is 1600mm to allow free flow in both directions.

A space for waiting/refuge area is included at ground and first floor levels.

Lift

The lift has through-flow access and exit for ease of use, doors will be glazed.

Corridors

The corridors at both levels within the Teaching Block and at ground floor level within the Creative Block will be 2250mm wide. The corridor at ground floor level provides level exit to outside for means of escape purposes.

Doors

Generally all doors within the new building have a clear opening of at least 865mm and are located so that there is at least 300mm clear to the leading edge.

Door furniture, closers and vision panels on new doors will be of a style and type that meets the requirements of APD Part M and the recommendations of BS 8300.

Toilets

A new toilet area will be provided centrally between the main Teaching Block and the Creative Block and has been located to take cognisance of travel distance limitations from all areas. Toilet provision has been calculated on basis of 1 per 10 pupils assuming 8-10 pupils per class.

A single Unisex Accessible WC is to be provided on each floor of the new Teaching Block. These will be designed to comply with the recommendations of BS 8300.

A fully accessible Hygiene Room is provided at lower ground floor level off the entrance foyer.

Finishes

The surfaces throughout the facility will be suitable for wheelchair users and ambulant disabled people, junctions between different floor finishes will be level and well defined.

Contrast in colour and tone will be achieved between floor and wall finishes and in addition, doors and their frames will also contrast with the walls in which they are fitted.

Means of Escape

An evacuation strategy will be put in place for the new facilities with responsibility allocated to certain staff for the assisted evacuation of pupils and staff with disabilities.

Refuges complying with BS 9999 will be provided where disabled persons may await rescue from the upper floor in the event of an emergency evacuation.

The existing school fire procedures will be developed to include the new facilities.