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Reading
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Rivermead Leisure Centre, Reading

INTEGRATED PLANNING, DESIGN AND ACCESS STATEMENT

Greenwich Leisure Limited



SBA Job Number; 1790

Document Number: SBA-RM-XX-RP-A-001

Date; 09-11-2020



Reading
Borough Council
Working better with you

Integrated Planning, Design and Access Statement

for

Rivermead Leisure Centre

at

Richfield Avenue, Reading, RG1 8EQ

on behalf of

Greenwich Leisure Limited (GLL)

QA

Revision:	Purpose:	Prepared by:	Date:	Checked by:	Date:
P01	For information	CW	13.11.20	MNL	13.11.20
P02	For information	CW	18.11.20	MNL	19.11.20
P03	For information	CW	29.11.20	MNL	29.11.20
P04	Planning Submission	CW	04.12.20	MNL	04.12.20
P05	Planning Submission – amended front cover	CW	09.12.20	MNL	09.12.20

Note: The image to the front cover is an artistic rendering to indicate design intent only.

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1.0 EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This Integrated Planning, Design and Access Statement has been produced to support a Full Planning Application for a replacement Leisure Centre at Richfield Avenue, Reading.

The current leisure centre provides a range of activities including fitness gym, exercise studios, crèche, 10 court sports hall, indoor bowls hall, squash courts and external floodlit astro-turf 5-a-side football pitches. Swimming activities are provided by both a leisure pool with beach access and a demountable 5 lane 25m swimming pool housed in a new building to the rear of the existing Leisure Centre.

The leisure centre was opened in 1988 and has served the local community well for over 30 years. The centre has exceeded its anticipated lifespan and reached the end of its economic life, therefore a replacement leisure centre is proposed, rather than a refurbished solution. The new leisure centre will continue to provide the traditional community facilities such as swimming, sports hall, multi-function space, but will be combined with new amenities to reflect the changing nature of sports and leisure. It is intended that diving will also be reintroduced within the new centre.

In terms of Planning Class use, both the existing and proposed buildings are use class E(d) (Indoor sport and recreation).

The intent is to maintain continuity of leisure amenity of the site whilst the new leisure centre is constructed, providing the community with uninterrupted access to sports facilities. The existing leisure centre will be fully operational whilst the new centre is constructed on land / overflow car parking to the south and east of the existing centre. Once the new leisure centre is completed, the existing will be demolished making way for new car parking. The existing demountable pool will be retained, and a small entrance pavilion will be provided.

Accompanying this Integrated Planning, Design and Access Statement are architectural drawings describing the new leisure centre building, the proposed parking and indicative landscaping strategy for the centre and its immediate surroundings.

The site sits within the Public Open Space of Rivermead Park on the south bank of the River Thames. This Park lies to the north west of Reading town centre and has been designated as a Major Landscape Feature in Reading's Local Plan (adopted November 2019).

The Leisure Centre site lies to the north of Richfield Avenue, with commercial businesses on the opposite side of this major road access. To the east are two hotels, and to the west lies the main body of Rivermead Park which is used during August for Reading Festival.

Other adjacent facilities are a garden centre lying to the south west of the existing centre, off one of the overflow car park areas, and a future secondary school site to the west of the AGP. Detailed discussions have been held for the masterplanning of this part of Rivermead site between Department for Education (DfE), Hampshire County Council, Reading Borough Council, Festival Republic and GLL to ensure that there is a common approach to design of the new facilities (both education and leisure).

As noted, the existing site lies within designated Public Open Space. Care has been taken to minimise the loss of Open Space through careful siting of the new centre on mainly car parking. Demolition of the existing centre and subsequent landscaping will reprovide and increase Open Space available.

The land where the proposed leisure centre building is to be located is constrained to the south by a culvert, to the east by the need to maintain access to the wider parkland, to the north by existing landscaping features of footpaths and mounding, and to the west by the existing building and its car park.

Vehicular and pedestrian access to the new leisure centre will continue to be off Richfield Avenue, with the new car park accessed via the existing car park junction. The existing overflow car park areas along Richfield Avenue will be retained.

The proposed vehicle and cycle parking for the site has been discussed prior to submission with the Council's Transport Development Control Officer, and complies with the Council's Revised Parking Standards and Design Supplementary Planning Document (October 2011). Cycle parking exceeds this SPD with the intent of encouraging more of the community to cycle to the site, especially as the site lies on the Nation Cycle route R40. 10% of the overall car parking numbers will be electrical vehicle charging points.

The new building (planning use class E{d}) will provide the following accommodation:

- 25m, 8 lane competition pool with part moveable floor
- teaching and diving pool with moveable floor
- splash pad with elements of play features
- 250 spectator seats for the pool hall.
- six court sports hall with spectators seating (dry diving)
- fitness suite (120 stations)
- studio spaces
- spin studio
- café / seating area
- soft play area
- party rooms
- wet and dry changing areas

In support of this application the following surveys / statements have been undertaken to provide detail information about the site and to inform the proposed design:

- Air quality assessment
- BREEAM Pre-Assessment
- Contaminated land survey
- Ecological survey
- Energy efficiency statement
- Environmental impact assessment screening
- External lighting details
- Flood risk assessment
- Landscape strategy
- Materials details (included within this Statement)
- Noise & vibration impact assessment
- Open space statement (included within this Statement)
- Planning statement (integrated within this Statement)
- Statement of community involvement (included within this Statement)
- Sustainability statement
- Sustainable drainage strategy
- Townscape and visual impact assessment
- Transport assessment
- Tree survey / arboricultural impact assessment
- Utilities surveys and proposals
- Vehicle parking and waste collection details
- Vent, flue and ventilation details

2.0 PROJECT BACKGROUND

2.1 Project Contacts:

Applicant:

Greenwich Leisure Limited
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2.2 Project Address:

Rivermead Leisure Centre
Richfield Ave,
Reading RG1 8EQ

2.3 Planning Description:

Full Planning Application for proposed new replacement leisure centre at Rivermead, followed by demolition of existing centre. New centre will consist of:

- 25m, 8 lane competition pool with part moveable floor
- teaching and diving pool with moveable floor
- splash pad with elements of play features
- 250 spectator seats for the pool hall.
- six court sports hall with spectators seating (dry diving)
- fitness suite (120 stations)
- studio spaces
- spin studio
- café / seating area
- soft play area/ double activity zone
- party rooms
- wet and dry changing areas
- new entrance pavilion to retained training pool
- 188 new car parking spaces
- 40 new cycle spaces
- associated soft and hard landscaping

2.4 Project Brief:

2.4.1 Project Justification

This Integrated Planning, Design and Access Statement has been produced to support a full Planning Application for a replacement Leisure Centre of Rivermead within Rivermead Park south of the River Thames and off Richfield Avenue in Reading. Rivermead is north and west of Reading town centre.

Current facilities of Rivermead Leisure Complex include:

- 120 station gym
- Free Weights area
- Studios
- Leisure and training Swimming pool
- Baby pool
- Crèche
- Studios (Fitness Classes and events)
- Sports Hall (10 badminton courts, basketball, 2 volleyball courts)
- Bowls Hall
- Squash courts
- Floodlit astro-turf 5 a side pitches

The existing building was built in the 1980s and opened in 1988. It has served the local community well for over 30 years. The centre has exceeded its anticipated lifespan and reached the end of its economic life. Therefore, a replacement leisure centre is proposed rather than a refurbished solution.

The new leisure centre will continue providing the traditional community facilities such as swimming, sports hall and multi-function space but will be combined with new amenities such a double height activity zone, to reflect the changing nature of sports and leisure.

2.4.2 Project Vision

Key priorities for Reading Borough Council have been presented in the Council's Corporate Plan 2018 – 2021. These priorities include 'Promoting health, education, culture & wellbeing' and include 'Securing the economic success of Reading'.

It was identified that over 750,000 people use the Borough's sports and leisure facilities across the town each year, and so Reading needs a leisure offer that reflects its needs and that aligns with the Council's wider policies and priorities, including public health objectives and tackling inequality.

The Council subsequently procured Greenwich Leisure Limited (GLL) as the operator of their leisure facilities, with the joint aims of managing the existing facilities and to develop new facilities. These new facilities were identified through an assessment of local needs and delivery options, which confirmed that whilst there is sufficient pool space in the Borough the quality of provision needs upgrading. The options appraisal included in the assessment recommended the replacement of the most outdated facilities with more modern cost-effective leisure facilities that would also offer a much better service to residents and users. This included the recommendation for a new competition standard pool with diving provision at Rivermead.

Reading Borough Council's vision is to inspire the communities to lead healthier and more active lives. Their aim, through the replacement of the existing Rivermead Leisure Centre, is to motivate an increased participation in sports and physical activities to improve people's physical and mental well-being and ultimately their health. Improvements to the existing leisure provision will include:

- Increased participation in physical activity by residents, including disadvantaged and inactive groups
- An outreach and engagement service to help to secure the Council's objective to improve health and wellbeing by increased physical activity
- Physical activity development programmes covering a wide range of sports and activities, above and beyond key commercial areas
- Improved sport and physical activities and targeted Sports Club programme
- Improved opportunities to promote local employment including new apprenticeships
- Exercise referral as part of the service provision

Other strategic aims of the Council include the desire to achieve a carbon neutral Reading by 2030, and to encourage high levels of energy efficiency in new buildings. The proposed centre would be energy efficient using the latest technology and intelligent design, as well as aiming to achieve an "Excellent" standard for BREEAM (the recognised standard for sustainability assessment).

All of the above presents the Borough with an opportunity to create a step change in the quality and standard of the leisure offer available to residents and visitors to Reading and will support the Council's ambitions around public health and increasing participation in physical activity.

GLL intrinsically shares the Council's visions and will work in close partnership with the Council to transform the leisure offer and provide the required improvements to the service for the residents of the borough.

2.4.3 Accommodation Requirements:

The replacement facility needs to accommodate traditional sports and leisure activities, many of which are within the existing building. However it also needs to be able to encompass new activities for groups where participation is more challenging, thus providing a more comprehensive offering for the whole community.

The new leisure centre will provide the following main activities:

- 25m, 8 Lane Competition Pool
- Teaching and diving pool with moveable floor
- Splash pad with elements of play features
- 250 spectator seats into pool hall.
- Six court Sports Hall with spectators seating
- Fitness Suite (120 stations)
- Studio spaces
- Spin studio
- Café / seating area
- Soft Play area
- Party rooms
- Wet Changing Areas
- Dry Changing Areas

3.0 SITE AND CONTEXT INFORMATION

3.1 Site Location

- Rivermead Leisure Complex is located within Rivermead Park, on the south bank of the River Thames
- The leisure complex is located north and west of Reading city centre. The site is on the eastern part of the park.
- Richfield Avenue runs along the south boundary of the leisure complex. Both the leisure centre and car parking can be accessed from Richfield Avenue.
- The site lies within the ownership of Reading Borough Council.
- The immediate surrounding parkland around the north of the centre is designated Local Green and Public Open Space, with the overall park a designated Major Landscape Feature
- The riverside walk / grassed area, Thames Promenade, also has the same designations
- The proposed new replacement Leisure Centre will be located on the existing car parking zone in the east of the site.
- Previous uses of the land include floodplains / fields, printing works and landfill site



Figure 2: Wider Site Location Diagram



Figure 3: Site Location Diagram

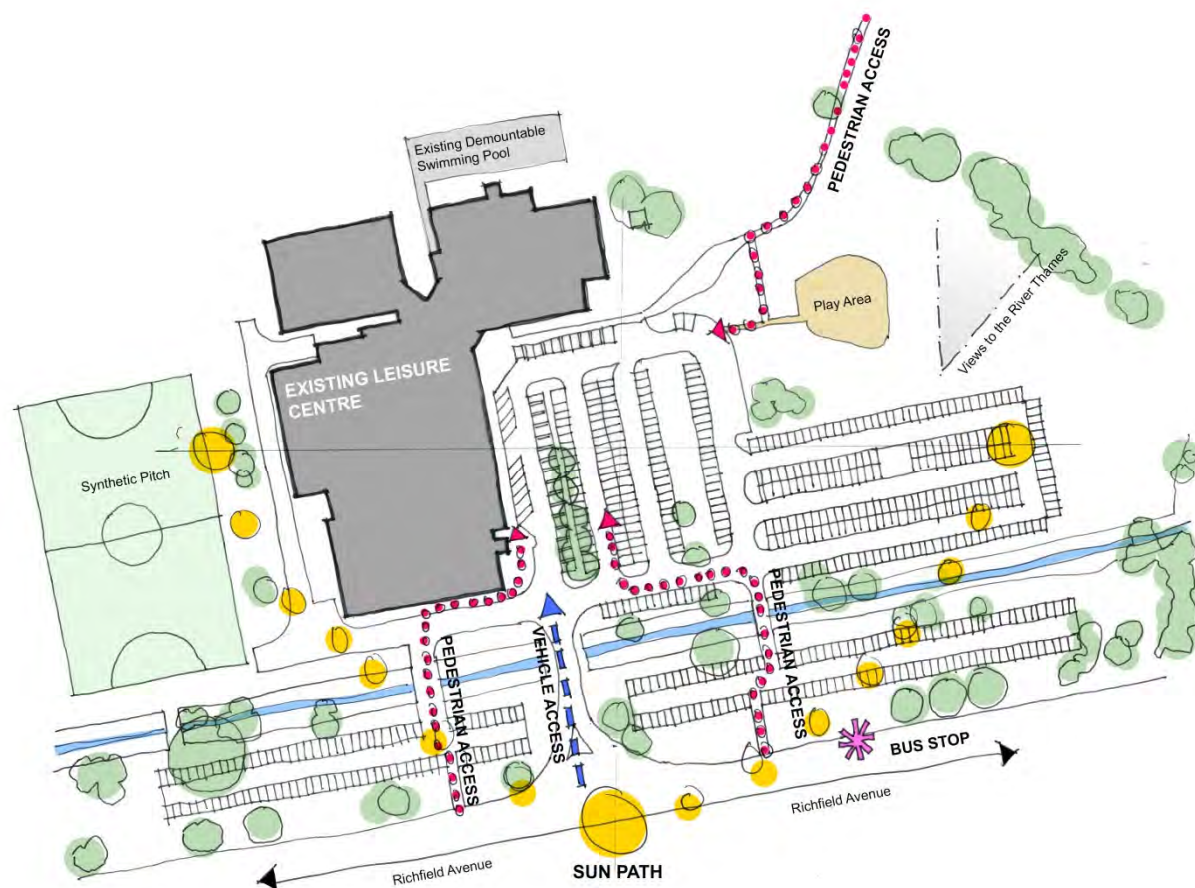


Figure 1: Site Analysis Diagram

3.2 Site Analysis

Boundaries/Description:

- North of the site is Rivermead Park with the River Thames running along its north boundary.
- The existing Rivermead Leisure Complex and the existing demountable swimming pool occupy the north side of the leisure complex site.
- To the north east of the site lies a play area, to be relocated. Further north and east of the site is Reading Rowing Club on the bank of the River Thames.
- East of the existing centre is the main car park. The east and south elevations of the existing Leisure complex are currently the main elevations, with the main entrance located at the north-east junction of the building masses.
- South of the site there are two more overflow parking zones. There is also a culvert running in parallel to Richfield Avenue, north of these overflow car parks.
- Richfield Avenue runs along the south boundary. The main access to the site is from the south. The leisure centre and the car parking can be accessed from Richfield Avenue.
- West of the site and the existing leisure centre, there is an artificial floodlit grass pitch.

Topography:

- The site is fairly level with a very slight incline from Richfield Avenue at 38.60m AOD to parkland to the north of the centre at 39.00m AOD.
- Bunding has been created around the demountable pool to the north as part of the flood defences for the area.
- Additional mounding is located in the area of the existing play area to the east.

Orientation:

- The site is orientated on an axis running slightly off from north to south.
- The leisure centre lies on the western side of this axis, with the leisure pool hall perpendicular to the north
- The main entrance lies at the junction of the leisure pool hall and the rest of the building.

Sun Path:

- The site orientation diagram demonstrated in the site analysis sketch (figure 5) indicates the sun path which runs from east to west, along the south of the site.

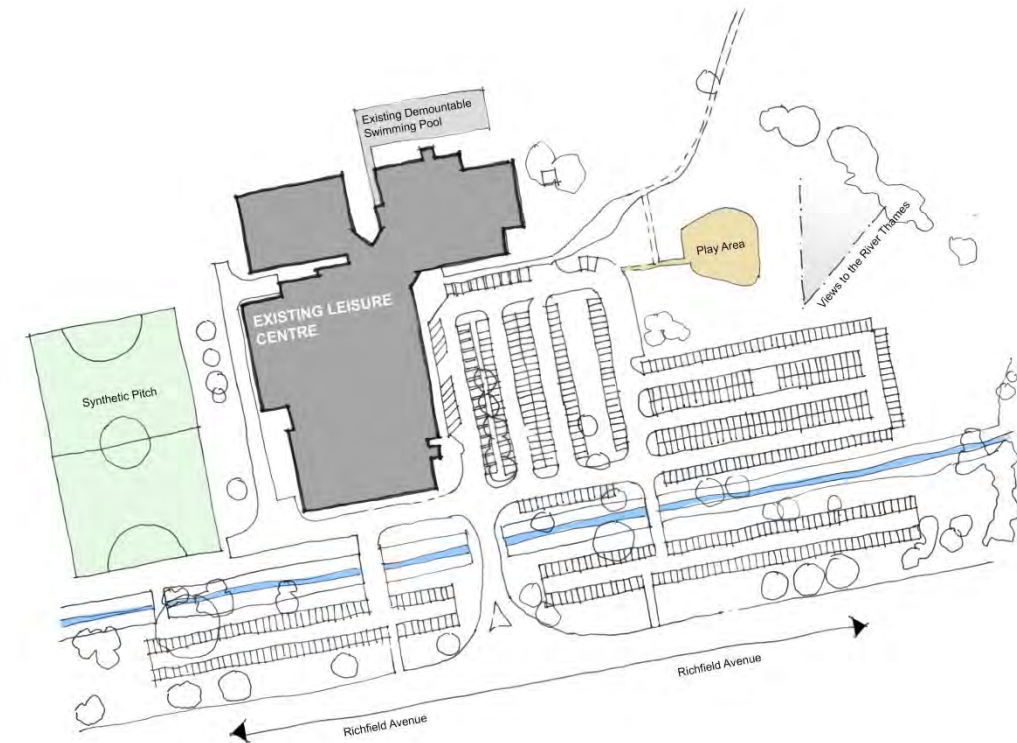


Figure 4: Sketch Analysis of Site Description

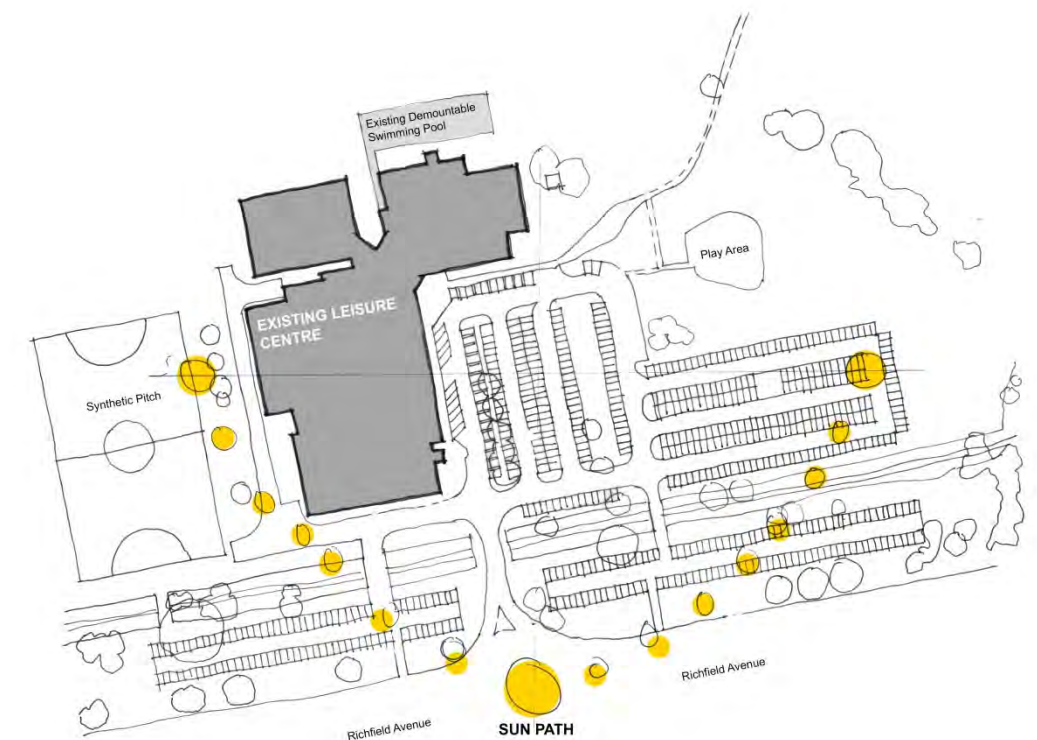


Figure 5: Sketch Analysis of Site Orientation

3.3 Site Access

The site can be well accessed with easy pedestrian, vehicular and public transport connections (bus stop) close to the site.

Roads/ Vehicular Access:

- The main road bordering the site is Richfield Avenue along the south boundary of the site.
- The main vehicular access into the site is off Richfield Avenue.

Pedestrian/ Cycle Access:

- There are pavements running along Richfield Avenue.
- The site and the existing leisure centre can be accessed by foot by these pavements running from Richfield Avenue.
- The pavement alongside Richfield Avenue is a shared path for pedestrians and cyclists.
- There are several public footpaths within Rivermead Park, and running along the perimeter of the park. There is also the Thames Path along the River Thames.
- These provide foot and cycle access to the centre and can be used for accessing the new leisure centre from both the surrounding residential neighbourhoods and Reading town centre.
- Rivermead Park is also connected to the Reading Cycle Network. It is part of the R40 Cycle Route Network of Reading (see figure 7).

Cycle Parking:

- There are currently 12 cycle racks providing with 24 cycle parking spaces at Rivermead Leisure Complex. These are located directly outside the main entrance.

Public Transport Access:

- The closest bus stop is the 'Rivermead Leisure Centre' which is located on Richfield Avenue, very close to the site (see figure 6). There is another bus stop, 'The Moderation' at the beginning of Richfield Avenue, along the A4155, on the roundabout which is 7 minutes' walk away. These bus stops connect the site and the leisure centre to public transport.
- Reading Readibus also serves the leisure centre. This is a dial-a-ride bus service allowing transport around Reading for people with restricted mobility.
- This means that there is the opportunity of easy access to the site by the wider community, through more sustainable means of transport.

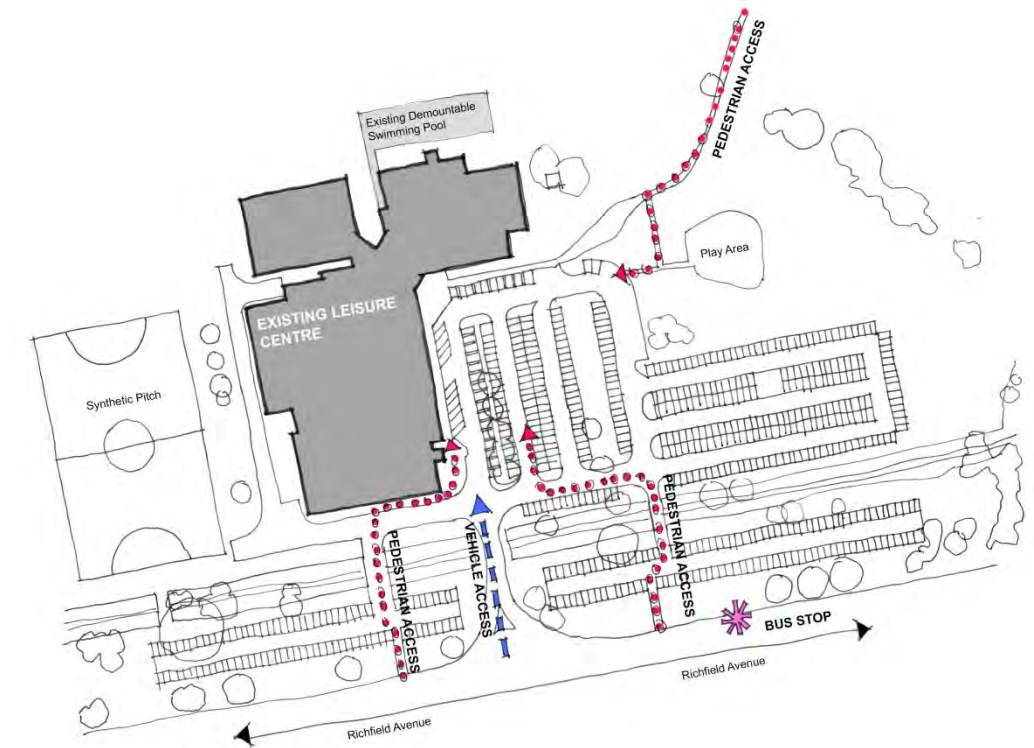


Figure 6: Sketch Analysis of Site Access

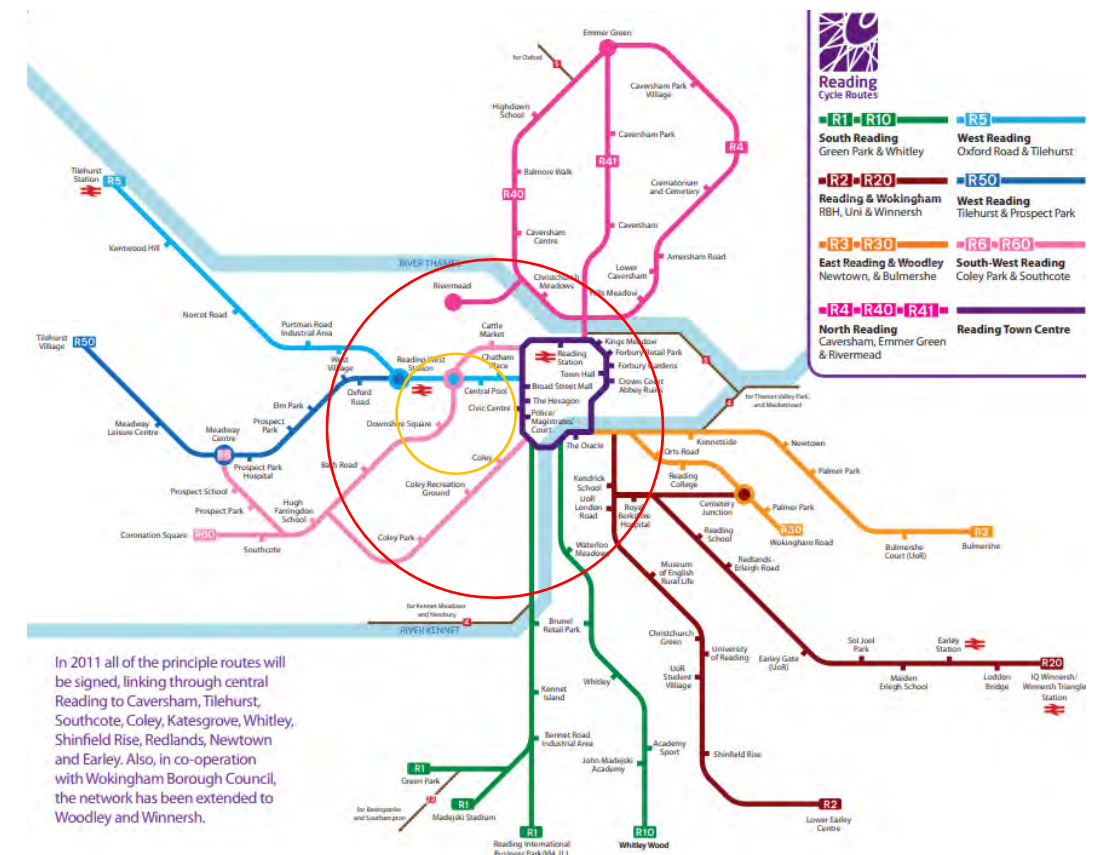


Figure 7: Cycle Routes Map

3.4 Landscape

Rivermead Leisure Complex is located in the setting of Rivermead Park. As mentioned above, Rivermead Park and Thameside Promenade are protected Local Green spaces according to the Reading Borough Local Plan.

Open Space/ Meadow:

To the west, north and north-east side of the site there is a large section of short amenity grass forming the parkland setting of Rivermead Park.

Most of the site to the south of the existing centre is hard landscaped, broken up with elements of soft landscaping within and at the perimeter of the car parking. There is also a tree belt running along the culvert and along Richfield Avenue to the south of the site.

Vegetation/ Tree Belts:

Vegetation and trees line the banks of the culvert south of the site, and along Richfield Avenue. There is a further tree belt to the east of the existing centre, screening the play area from the River Thames.

Watercourses:

There is a drainage culvert south of the site and the building. This runs parallel to Richfield Avenue. This is used as part of the flood defence scheme for the area, acting as a reservoir in times of heavy rain / flooding.

Ecology:

An ecological appraisal of the site was commissioned by Reading Borough Council, and produced by John Wenman Ecological Consultancy in August 2019. This appraisal notes that “the site is not designated for its wildlife interest and does not support UK Priority Habitat and predominantly comprises areas of hard standing and amenity grassland – habitats of no ecological importance.” However, there are opportunities to enhance the site’s bio-diversity value and recommendations have been included for protection of existing features such as retained shrubs and trees. The conclusions of this report are included in section 9.0 following, with the full report included separately with the Application.

Arboriculture:

A tree survey and arboricultural impact assessment has been produced in Nov. 2020. This identifies that eighteen category “C” trees are to be felled to achieve the proposed layout, with another 6 trees of low quality (potential health & safety risk) to be felled as part of the development. Mitigation of tree loss is to be offset through enhanced replacement tree planting, with root protection zones to be included during construction. Other conclusions of this report are included in section 9.0 following, with the full report included separately with the Application.



Figure 8: Sketch Analysis of **Landscape**

3.5 Historical Context

1896

Around 1896 the site was part of the rural area. The site lies north of the railway lines, south of Thames River and north-west of Reading city centre.



Figure 9: Historic Diagram, 1896

1912

The map below showing Reading around 1912 shows a greater development north and east of the park as well as south and east. North of the railway lines there is an evident residential development.

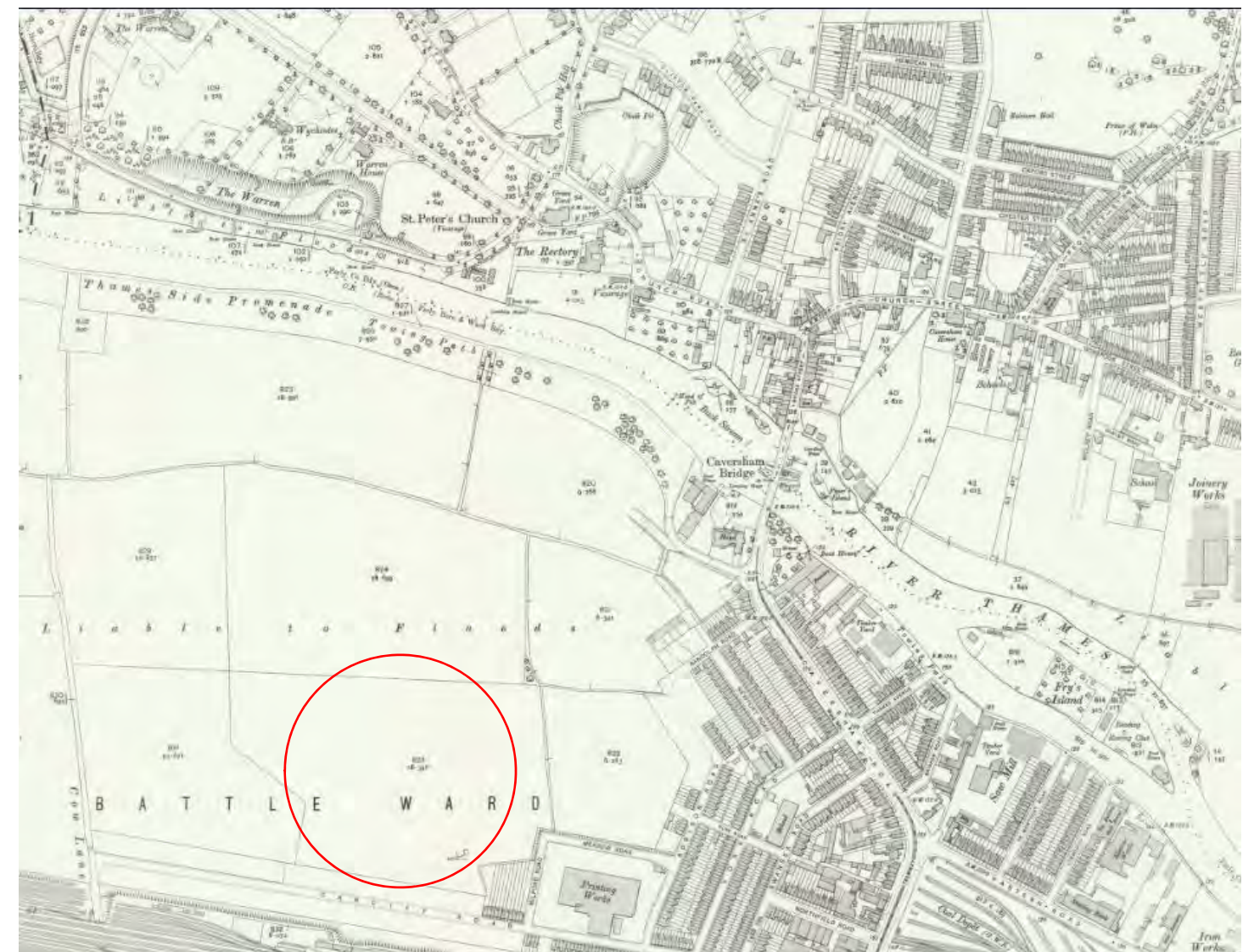


Figure 10: Historic Diagram, 1912

1932

In the map of 1932 more residential development can be seen northwest and north of the river Thames. There is also development of larger buildings north and east of the Fry's Island and north of the railway line.



Figure 11: Historic Diagram, 1932

1951

Around 1951 as can be seen from the map below the residential development continued north and west. The site of Rivermead continued remaining undeveloped. Rivermead Leisure Complex was built in 1980s and opened in 1988.

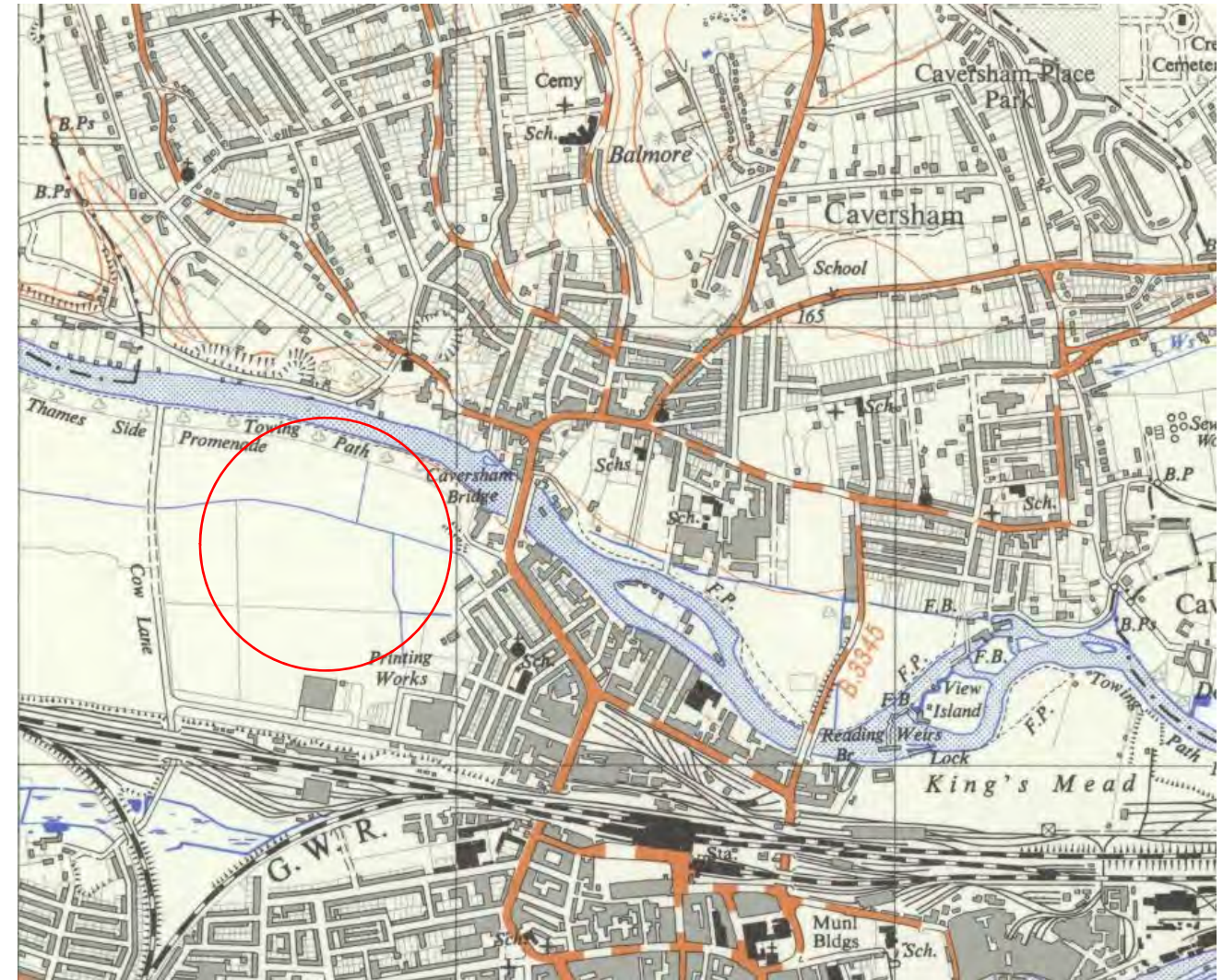


Figure 12: Historic Diagram, 1951

3.6 Existing Building

The existing leisure centre sits predominantly in the north and west part of the Rivermead leisure complex site with car parking to the east and south.

Rivermead Leisure Complex was constructed in 1980s and opened in 1988. A gym extension was added to the north west of the centre in 2007/2008, and a new demountable training pool and hall was constructed in 2017/2018.

The existing building has exceeded its anticipated lifespan and is over 30 years old. The demountable pool, being newly constructed, is of sound condition, provides useful water space for swimming and the intent is to retain this facility.

The existing building is formed from three distinct parts:

- Sports hall and bowls hall form the southern part of the centre, along with studios / squash courts and dry changing facilities
- The pool hall and wet changing area forms the eastern block, located perpendicular to the south block
- The junction of these two blocks forms the main entrance / reception area housing café, seating, toilets, and allowing access to the gym extension.
- The demountable pool building is also accessed from this central reception area via a ramped corridor
- Although being mainly a single storey building, all these sections have differing roof heights. The highest roof section is that over the 10 court sports hall.

The materials of the existing building are predominantly a red brick plinth and coloured metal cladding. There are green, dark green and orange colour elements in the metal cladding. Very limited openings are afforded within the cladding except for high level, limited vision strip windows, leading to the building being very inward-looking and appearing very monolithic from outside. Without the dominant signage tower, there would be very few visual clues of internal activities and functions.

The windows are located high, tight to internal ceiling lines. These offer neither views into or out of the leisure centre. As such, activities within the building cannot be seen and do not offer an attractor to use the centre. This also does not raise a strong awareness of the building as a leisure centre without existing signage located in a tower over the existing main entrance (see figure 13).

The main building entrance is not prominent, being hidden under the signage tower. It is also not very visible from Richfield Avenue, being located at some distance from the main vehicle access to the site.

The building itself has served the local community well, providing a range of sport and leisure facilities for around thirty years. However, leisure provision has changed and progressed during this period, and the form of the building is struggling to adapt to demands of modern leisure.

The building has exceeded its anticipated life span, and no longer meets current standards of construction and the need to improve energy efficiency. Insulation levels are substantially higher today and air tightness of the envelope is a key consideration in achieving this efficiency, which the current centre cannot realistically achieve.

Whilst the services within the building have been updated during the life of the building, they still do not meet either current standards required for leisure centres nor reflect the Council's requirement to make Reading carbon neutral by 2030.



Figure 13: Main Entrance of Existing Rivermead Leisure Complex



Figure 14: Approach to existing Rivermead Leisure Complex from Richfield Avenue

4.0 SCHEME DESIGN PROPOSALS

4.1 Design Development

A replacement leisure centre is proposed at Rivermead leisure complex in Reading. The new centre is to be located in designated Local Green and Public Open Space in the south-eastern corner of the Rivermead Park site, on the car park to the existing centre. This is in order to maintain continuity of leisure service provision, with the existing centre being kept open whilst the new one is constructed. The existing centre will then be demolished to form new car parking.

The existing leisure centre is set back approx. 140m from Richfield Avenue, and is separated from the road by overflow car parking zones and a drainage culvert. The existing elevations consist of mainly dark green cladding panels with little glazing, restricting views into / out of the centre, and do not actively encourage people into the building.

The new centre will be more visually prominent, being located closer to Richfield Avenue, only 80m from the access junction. The main entrance hub will be glazed over two storeys, allowing the general public to see activities within the centre, making the new centre much more attractive.

The new centre has also been deliberately designed with the main entrance hub facing onto the car park entrance from Richfield Avenue, and the pool hall running parallel with / facing onto Richfield Avenue. The sports hall, being an enclosed space, has been located perpendicular to the entrance hub, further into the site and away from Richfield Avenue. This allows those spaces with dynamic activities (swimming, diving, double height activity zone, first floor fitness suite) to be glimpsed from Richfield Avenue, creating active street frontage and acting as shop windows to the centre. This attracts people into the centre.

Consideration has also been given to the surrounding properties located to the north across the Thames, in St. Peter's Conservation Area. The new centre has been located to be screened from this conservation by firstly a tree belt running along the Thames path to the north, secondly a tree belt just to the north / east of the new centre. Between this second tree belt and the rear elevation of the building will be an existing mound which will be landscaped even higher with excavated material and new soft landscaping on top. The final consideration has been to include windows to the first floor (above the mound) giving views of activities within the exercise studios. Further consideration to these views has been given by breaking up the cladding to this elevation through creating angled sections and subtle variations in the cladding colours at high level.

The design has developed further through consideration of buildability and taking into account access requirements required for Reading Festival (organised by Festival Republic) and for other Thames Parks events. Through further discussion with Reading Borough Council and Festival Republic, the actual site of the new building has evolved with the building footprint relocated slightly north and east to allow suitable access to both overflow car parking and the existing substation to the north, during construction and during occupation when the new centre is complete and in use.

The proposed scheme respects both the existing centres and adjoining buildings' scale and form, and has been designed to provide a well-defined frontage and improved streetscape along Richfield Avenue.

The following exercises have contributed to a balanced design, addressing the street whilst respecting the location and neighbouring properties. The massing and contextual exercises demonstrate the new centre in relation to these neighbouring properties, and how respecting these properties has influenced the design. Investigations into materials, approaches and security have also influenced the design, as noted in the following.

4.2 Standards and Compliances

Saunders Boston have referenced a suite of design guidance which has informed the design. This guidance includes:

4.2.1 Planning Policy:

- Reading Borough Council's Local Plan and Proposals Map (adopted November 2019)
- Revised Parking Standards and Design Supplementary Planning Document (adopted October 2011)
- Sustainable Design and Construction Supplementary Planning Document (adopted July 2011)

4.2.2 Sport England Design Guidance:

- Accessible sports facilities design guide 2010
- Accessible Sports Facilities Audit Check List (October 2012)
- Swimming Pools Design Guidance Note 2013
- Swimming Pools Design Guidance Note - Appendices 1 to 5 inclusive
- Sports halls: Design and Layouts Design Guidance Note (Feb 2012)
- Developing the right sports hall (March 2012)
- Briefing Note: sizes of sport hall storage (October 2012)
- Fitness and Exercise Spaces (March 2008)
- Floors for Indoor Sports design guide (Sept 2007)
- Artificial Sports Lighting Design Guide (November 2012)
- Outdoor Sports Lighting Briefing Note (September 2010)
- Wayfinding and Signage for Sports Facilities (July 2013).
- Dementia-Friendly Sport and Physical Activity Guide from the Alzheimer's Society

4.2.3 British Swimming Guidance:

- <http://www.swimming.org/asa/facilities/swimming-pool-design/>
- <http://www.swimming.org/asa/facilities/management-advice-guidance/>
- <http://www.swimming.org/asa/facilities/management-advice-guidance/>
- Dementia Friendly – Environmental Assessment Tool. <http://www.swimming.org/>

4.2.4 Health and Safety Guidance:

- Managing health and safety in swimming pools - HSG 179

4.2.5 Legislation:

- The design is to comply with all relevant statutory obligations and requirements. This includes compliance with the current (as of November 2020) suite of Approved Documents within Building Regulations.

4.2.6 Hierarchy of Standards:

- Where there is any conflict between two or more standards, the Sport England standard is to be adopted, unless specifically agreed otherwise with the Council.
- BREEAM standards are also to be adopted in order to achieve the rating of "Excellent", unless specifically agreed otherwise with the Council.
- Where materials, goods or appliances or workmanship standards are covered by more than one standard and/or recommendation, the higher or more stringent shall be adopted.

4.3 Proposed Leisure Centre Building

4.3.1 Design Concepts

The proposed new leisure centre combines the functionality and performance required for modern sport and leisure, with a design that responds to the unique challenges of the site at Rivermead.

The performance sports spaces are very well defined by a combination of guidance from Sport England and design standards set by the National Governing Bodies (NGBs) – most of this leads to a design of large rectangular spaces with limited vistas either into or out of the facility.

The design concepts at Rivermead are:

- Create an entrance hub off which will lead the two large volumes of sports hall (dry sports) and pool hall (wet sports).
- The entrance hub is to have large glazed elements / double height activity zones, all visible from both the car park and from Richfield Avenue. This is designed to create visual attraction to the main entrance, allowing the general public views into the activity zone. The aim is to draw the public to the centre and into the main entrance.
- Place the inflexible rectangular volume of the sports hall to the rear of the site. There is limited opportunity to create active street frontage along Richfield Avenue with this large volume with no glazing (glare interferes with visibility of sports such as badminton). Associated dry changing areas associated with the sports hall will be included in this volume
- Place the large volume of the pool hall containing the dive and main pools running parallel to Richfield Avenue. This allows views out of the pool hall to the south, but affords glimpses of the activities within (swimming and diving). Highlighting the dive tower through glazing will also act as an attractor, allowing the elevation to have active street frontage. By including a service road and planting directly in front of the ground floor glazing, visual security of the swimmers in the pools is protected.
- To keep the footprint contained, spectator seating in the sports hall will be provided by bleacher seating, spectator seating to the pool hall will be located directly above the village change area (wet change), with a small element in the fitness suite.
- To have smaller flexible and less standardised spaces such as exercise studios that also desire natural light in a ribbon of spaces across the back of the building at first floor. This allows views out over the park to the River Thames, and allows glimpses of the activities within, creating a “shop window” effect, attracting people to the centre.
- Having the central hub at the junction of the two wet and dry wings, with the wings perpendicular to each other, allows the hub to face onto the car park and Richfield Avenue, and responds to the existing landscaping by wrapping around the existing mound to the north of the centre.
- Incorporation of passive design measures to make the project a low carbon and sustainable development. These include:
 - o Building orientation analysis
 - o Exceeding Building Regulations in terms of thermal performance and air-tightness of envelope
 - o Low energy usage and energy efficiency for building services
 - o Heat recovery from extract ventilation
- These measures are outlined in an accompanying Passive Design Report by Thornley Lumb.



Figure 15: Artist's Impression of approach to Rivermead Leisure Centre from Richfield Avenue

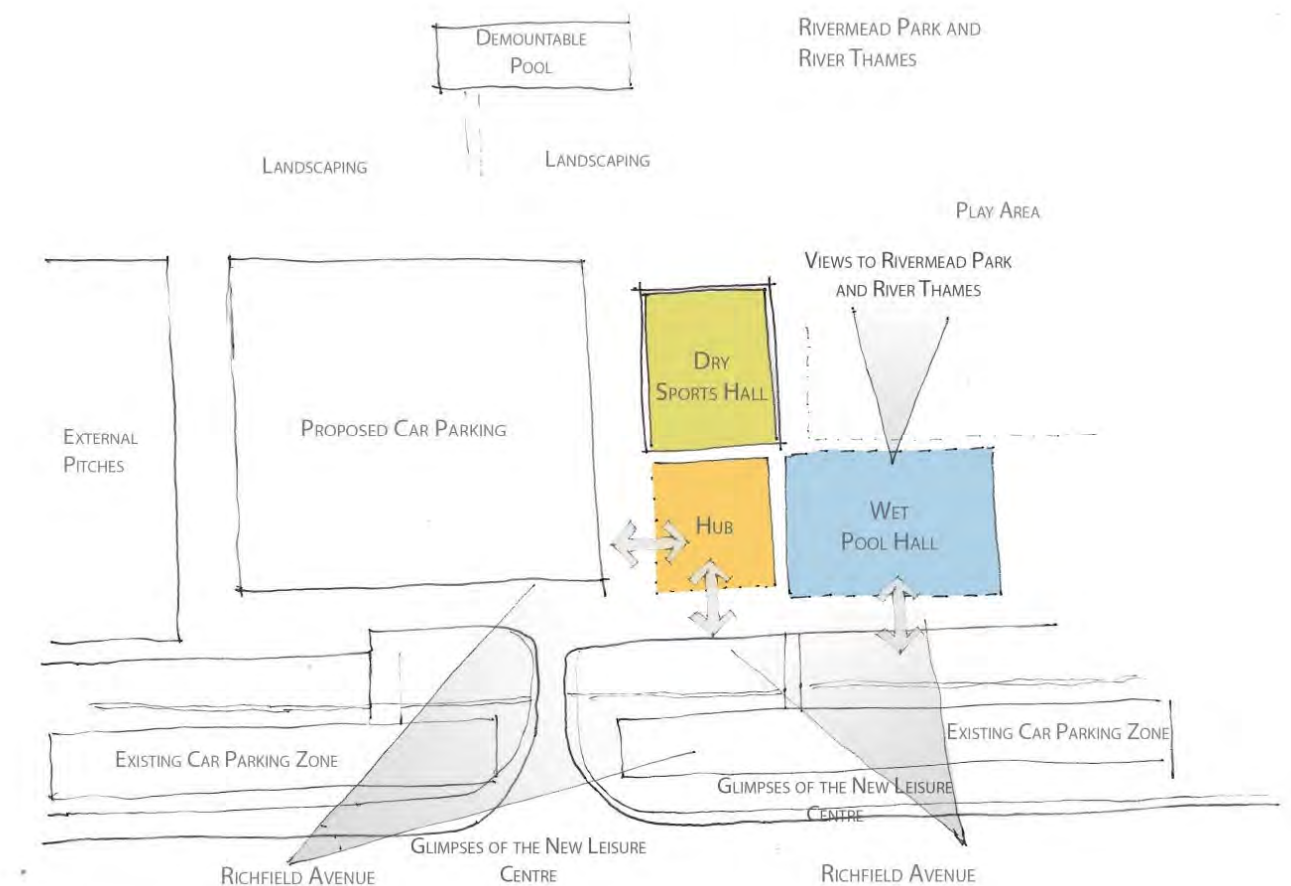


Figure 16: Concept Diagram during Design Process

4.3.2 Contextual Relationship, Massing and Scale

The proposed new Rivermead Leisure Centre will sit to the east of the access road leading north from Richfield Avenue. The leisure centre has been designed to have those volumes with active street frontage running parallel with Richfield Avenue providing a vista to and from some of the most prominent spaces within the building. The new centre will be located much near to the Avenue, making the building more visible and attractive than the existing centre.

The new leisure centre will not exceed the height of the highest part of the existing centre, this being the 10 court sports hall. The entrance hub is designed to be slightly higher than the two adjacent wings containing the sports and pool halls.

On the opposite side of Richfield Avenue are two storey high commercial properties of a similar height and mass, with one warehouse on the entrance roundabout being almost 4 storeys high. These buildings all front directly onto Richfield Avenue with small elements of car parking between the buildings and the Avenue.

To the east, over 150m away from the site, lie two hotels, the Premier Inn and the Crown Plaza. Both of these buildings are three storeys high with pitched roofs, slightly higher than the proposed leisure centre, and are set back in a similar fashion from Richfield Avenue. As the existing leisure centre will be demolished after the new is constructed, the new centre will stand alone, and set back, on the north side of the Avenue, following the existing pattern of development.

A new secondary school site is currently being designed to the west of the existing AGP. Anticipated access to this site will be via Cow Lane, a road leading off Richfield Avenue to the west. The new leisure centre will be set back in line with this new school site.

Demolition of the existing centre will also open up views through into the park, past the retained demountable pool and new entrance pavilion. This existing pool hall will frame the northern edge of the new car park area. However, vistas will open up from Richfield Avenue to either side of the pool hall to the Thames and the tree belt running along the Thames Promenade.

The leisure centre car park will be located on the demolished footprint of the existing leisure centre. Again, this opens up the site and associated views across Rivermead Park. The car park will be immediately in front of both the retained training pool hall and the new centre, and will retain the access into the two overflow car park areas running along Richfield Avenue.

As such, the relationship and massing of the new centre corresponds with both the hotels, the commercial properties on the opposite side of Richfield Avenue, and will not be overbearing to the new school project located to the west of the AGP.



4.3.3 Proposed Scheme

The leisure centre is accessed off Richfield Avenue, via an existing access road spanning over the drainage culvert. Existing pedestrian footpaths running along this road will be extended through into the new car park and will join to new footpaths via pedestrian crossings, connecting customers coming from the town centre by foot / cycle. The new leisure centre will be located to the right of this access road, with the main hub facing onto a pedestrian only plaza area linking through to the play area / demountable pool to the north.

The new building is divided into the entrance hub, with the dry sports and wet sports housed in perpendicular volumes off this hub. The hub contains the entrance foyer, information point, café area and double height activity zone. This 'Hub' part of the proposed building is the most social part of the proposed scheme and is at the centre of the L shape connecting the wet and dry activities.

The nature of the sports hall is more enclosed and therefore the 'Dry' part of the scheme is proposed on the north side of the hub, as it will not provide the required active street frontage to Richfield Avenue. This part will be facing mainly the new car parking. This is the reverse of the current centre, where the sports and indoor bowls hall face onto Richfield Avenue, creating a blank and unattractive elevation.

The 'Wet' part with the pool hall is located on the east side of the hub, with ground floor glazing allowing both natural light in (carefully controlled to mitigate glare on water surfaces) and views in / out. As the pool hall runs parallel to Richfield Avenue, this allows glimpses of the activities inside, including diving, but from a distance. Again, the intent is to provide a natural advert to the building, encouraging more people to use the facilities.

With the views in and out of the pool hall, the hub area and the fitness gym at first floor, an active street frontage along Richfield Avenue is created. This reinforces the aim of encouraging more people to use the building.

Facing onto the park at the rear, are a series of first floor studios. The design intent with these studios is to create attractive spaces for exercising in, with views out over the Park to the north and towards the River Thames. Large "picture" windows will also advertise activities to Park users, with the aim of acting as a shop window into the centre, further encouraging use.



Figure 18: Artist's Impression of internal café / seating area

Area adjacencies, relationships between public and staff spaces, activity areas and circulations spaces have been carefully considered and consist of the following:

Ground Floor:

Entrance:

- The main entrance is designed to be “sign-posted” from all parts of the new car parking in front of the centre.
- The entrance itself is defined by a sloping section of cladding to the sports hall, leading up to a projecting canopy over the main doors. This visually draws visitors to the entrance.
- The soffit of the canopy will be clad in a yellow / gold colour, contrasting with the background of dark blue-slate coloured cladding to the entrance hub itself. The intent is to welcome customers in through this highly visible slash of colour.
- The front of the entrance is fully glazed with automatic doors that take customers into a draught lobby forming a buffer between internal and external.

Draught Lobby:

- The glazed draught lobby will have a robust barrier matting finish to floor to enable most of the dirt and dust to be taken from shoes and boots before entering the centre.
- Care is to be taken over the colour of the matting to avoid confusing those visitors with dementia.

Reception:

- The reception area will consist of a self-sign in area, overseen by a manned concierge desk. This sign-in area will also have a dropped section for wheelchair users.
- The concierge will be a member of staff, welcoming and directing customers to the various facilities, answering questions, and aiding in the signing-in process.
- The concierge point will also serve as a means of visual security to the entrance, and to areas such as cycle parking directly outside the entrance.
- A duty manager’s office is located off the reception, for use by the concierge and duty managers.
- There will be an entrance barrier control system preventing unauthorised access to the centre but fast tracking those with membership cards.
- There will also be a buggy park which has a lockable rail so that parents can leave buggies and push chairs in a secure location over looked by the concierge.

Kitchen / Servery / Café / Seating Area:

- The café / servery sits at the heart of the centre, overlooking both the double height activity zone and into the pool hall.
- The intent is that this area will serve as the social hub to the centre, with access to all the main activity zones off this space.
- Children’s activities within the double height activity zone can be seen by parents sat in this area, along with any swimming lessons taking place in the teaching / diving pool.
- The kitchen has its own external door for deliveries / rubbish removal.

Vertical Circulation:

- 2 no. 8 person lifts and an open staircase have been deliberately located directly opposite the main reception area, making them highly visible.
- The stair is also intended to allow viewing into the pool hall.
- WCs and an accessible toilet have been included adjacent to the lifts for ease of use.

Double height activity zone:

- This zone has been deliberately located on the corner of the main entrance hub, with double height glazing.
- As this zone is fully glazed, it will act as an attractive and dynamic attractive feature to the centre, being visible from Richfield Avenue.
- A row of party rooms open onto this activity zone, with openable room dividers between them. This allows the rooms to be used for a number of groups (3 party rooms, or 1 large party room). These rooms will have controlled access for safe-guarding purposes.

Sports Hall:

- This hall has been designed for 6 badminton courts use, two basketball courts, or potentially a competition level basketball court with associated competitor / officials seating
- Bleacher seating has been designed to serve activities within the hall, either the single basketball court or other activities. These seats are designed to slot back under the first floor slab when not in use, allow full use of the hall.
- A full-width store has been included to the north, allowing sports equipment storage. Mobile dry-dive equipment will be stored here when not in use.
- It is intended that one of the badminton courts will be used for dry-dive (diving practice).
- Entrance into the sports hall will be via a crush zone off the main seating area of the hub. This allows space for changeover in activity / users of the hall, and also acts as a “lobby” into the hall from the hub when being used for functions
- This crush zone will also have space for secure wheelchair / sports wheelchair storage, along with potential views into the hall through glazed panels with impact-resistant glazing.

Dry Change (ground floor):

- Male and female change lead off this crush zone, laid out in accordance with Sport England’s Design Guidance Note for Sports Halls
- The capacity of these areas will accommodate 24 badminton players each, or wheelchair basketball teams (5+ players in each team).
- Drop-down seats will be included in the shower area and separate accessible changing rooms have also been included

Wet Change / Village Change:

- The village change area leads off the main seating area, directly opposite and highly visible from the reception area.
- Entrance into the village change area will be through a vanity area where people will be encourage to also take off their shoes to prevent dirt being tracked into the main changing area
- The village change will be laid to Sport England’s Design Guidance Note for Swimming Pools
- There will be a series of one person, two person and family change cubicles
- Toilets, pre- and post-swim showers have also been included.
- Accessible facilities include a Changing Places cubicle, accessible changing room, accessible toilets.
- The village change will open out onto the main pool hall at two points with family changing cubicles located closest to the shallow end of the main pool

Swimming Pool Hall:

- The main entrance into the pool hall will be at the junction of the main pool, teaching pool and splash pad.
- The splash pad will be accessed directly off the pre-swim shower area, and allows toddlers and parents to use this area without entering directly into the main hall for safety reasons. This area will be barriered off from the pool hall to prevent small children wandering into any deep water.
- The pool hall has a 25m eight lane competition pool and a separate teaching / diving pool.
- Both pools will have moveable floors to allow for flexible uses of the pools. The combination of these two pools and their associated depth provide a flexible offering for all types of swimming from learning to competition.
- The 25m pool has glazing opening out onto the south, directly onto a private service road. Landscaping will be included in the scheme by this glazing for visual security
- The teaching / diving pool will also have glazing to the south, along with a vertical glazing strip to the dive tower. The intent is to allow the public to see elements of diving from the 3m springboard and 5 m platform, adding to the active street frontage of the south elevation.
- Poolpod (or similar) access to pools has been included

Building Plant (ground floor):

- Ground floor plant servicing the pools will be located at the east end of the pool hall, accessed externally by a new service road.

First Floor:

The first floor is accessed via the main staircase which is ambulant accessible, and two lifts in the vertical circulation core. The stairs open out onto a central circulation area, giving access onto the fitness gym, spectator seating to the pool hall, and exercise studios.

Fitness suite:

- The first floor is dominated by the large fitness suite that opens up to the west and south of the circulation area.
- The fitness gym is over 540m² and reflects the layout of the floor below, which allows for breaking up the gym into smaller areas such as free weights, cardio-vascular areas etc.
- One of these areas will be an exercise area overlooking the dive pool, capable of being separated from the main body of the gym by moveable screens. This area can also be used for spectator viewing / seating, or for hospitality purpose during competitions
- There will also be views down into the sports hall along the north elevation of the gym
- Glazing will also be included directly above the main entrance / canopy, showcasing activity to people in the car park / Richfield Avenue and allowing views out across the site.
- Glazing is also include to the south elevation of the gym, acting as a “shop window” to the gym from Richfield Avenue.
- The double height activity zone will not be overlooked by gym users for visual security purposes, but there is potential to expand the gym over part of this zone if required.

Studios:

- Three exercise studios will be located off a spine corridor serving the spectator seating to the pool hall.
- These studios will have semi-sprung floors to accommodate most class based activity and with their own dedicated storage areas.
- One of the studios will be a spin studio.
- All of these studios will have views out over Rivermead Park towards the River Thames. These windows will also showcase the activities occurring within the studios, attracting people to use the centre.

Dry Changing Rooms (first floor):

- As users of the health and fitness services, such as gyms, tend to be individuals, the dry change areas are designed as separate male and female areas.
- These will have layouts in accordance with Sport England Design Guidance Note for Fitness and Exercise Spaces, will have individual changing cubicles and showers (with drop-down seats etc.)
- Two separate changing rooms have also been included, designated as unisex and gender neutral. These cubicles will also be laid as accessible changing cubicles.

Spectator Seating:

- 250 spectator seats are located off a spine corridor serving the exercise studios to the north
- These seats are located above the village change area below
- Accessible seating / wheelchair seating areas have also been included
- This allows spectator viewing into the pool hall, over both pools, from a high level

Staff Facilities:

- A staff room and manager’s office are also located at first floor.

Building Plant (first floor):

- An air handling plant room has been located at the east end of the pool hall, allowing for efficient servicing of the pool hall.
- This plantroom will be linked to the ground floor pool plantroom via an internal service staircase.

Roof:

- The roof area will be accessed via a dedicated staircase accessed from the first floor central circulation zone. This allows level access to the main hub roof.
- Secondary access will be via the escape stair located at the end of the spine corridor at first floor.
- There will be an element of rooftop plant screened off with mesh, located by the main roof access stair (central hub). This plant area will house the air handling plant, including air source heat pumps, for the central hub / sports hall zones.
- The pool hall roof will house a series of photo-voltaic panels.

Plant areas:

- Plant areas have been located along the east elevation of the building, and at roof level
- These areas consist of the following:
 - o External plant above the main reception hub on the south west corner of the building. This will be hidden behind a screen of galvanised metal mesh screens on a galvanised frame. The anticipation is that the cladding to this element will be Elephant Grating or equal approved.
 - o First floor air handling plantroom, which will have removable, acoustic louvres on the east elevation.
 - o Ground floor pool plantroom, accessible from the service road on the east side of the building.
- The intent for these areas is to minimise both the visual and acoustic impact and prevent noise breakout from this area towards the residences located across the River Thames to the north.

4.3.4 Appearance, Materials and Glare

The new leisure centre will consist of three main volumes in a perpendicular / rectangular form:

- Sports hall
- Pool hall
- Reception hub, with the other volumes linking to this hub at right angles, forming an “L” shape

The proposed building needs to accommodate these large volumes spaces. Therefore, the distribution of the masses and volumes has been carefully considered in order to break up and balance the overall mass of the building:

- The main entrance hub forms the tallest part of the centre, with the sports and pool hall being subservient in height, and acting as wings to the hub.
- The sports hall store has been deliberately located to the north, closest to the sensitive area of the Major Landscape Feature of the River Thames.
- This leads the centre to fall in height from the entrance hub down to the single storey sports hall store to the north.

The rectangular volumes of the building are constructed using a composite cladding material that provides:

- High levels of thermal performance without hot and cold spots or any areas of cold bridging
- High levels of air tightness to reduce heat loss and aid thermal performance
- A high speed of construction reducing cost and disruption to neighbours

This gives simplicity to these large, heavily serviced volumes. In order to avoid the elevations becoming overbearing, the cladding has been deliberately designed in two distinct zones:

- Lower cladding will consist of dark blue / slate coloured composite cladding. This reflects both the use within the leisure centre of the swimming / diving pools but provides a visual base colour, grounding the cladding.
- Upper cladding consisting of white composite cladding with intermittent grey panels in a random pattern, with the intent of visually breaking up the elevation from a distance

The material palette and elevations have been reconsidered and further developed, in order to address concerns raised during the Pre-Application on the building's sensitive setting, and so that the scheme would not have a detrimental effect on the character and appearance of the Major Landscape Feature (MLF) and on views into and across it from the St. Peter's Conservation Area. Please see section 4.4.3 Major Landscape Feature.

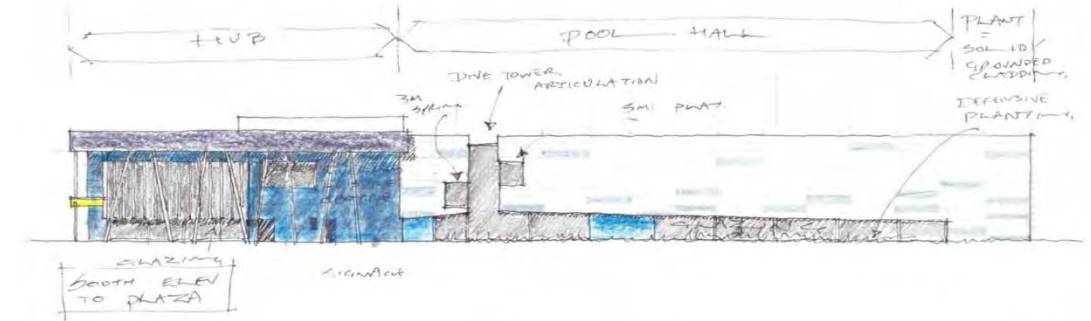


Figure 19: Design Exploration Sketch of the South Elevation

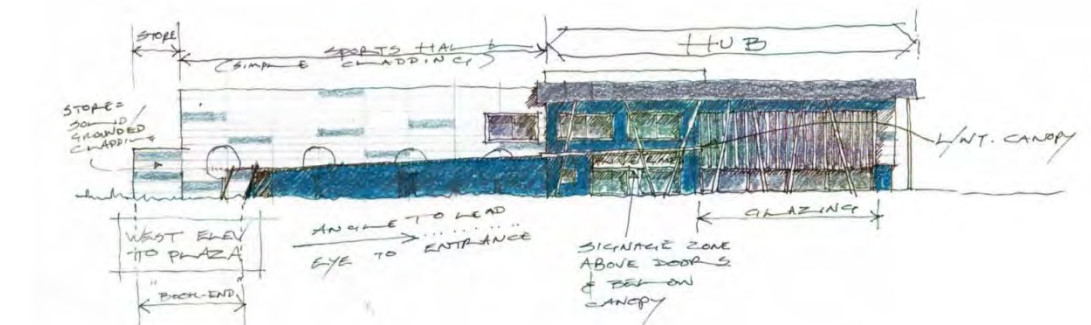


Figure 20: Design Exploration Sketch of the West Elevation

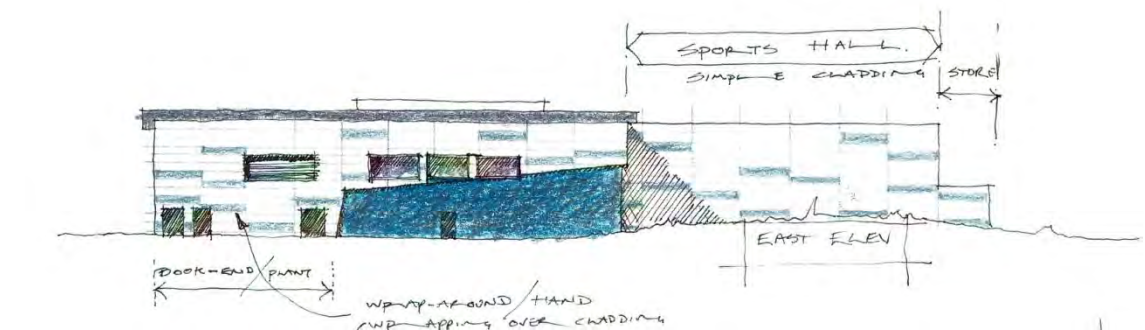


Figure 21: Design Exploration Sketch of the East Elevation

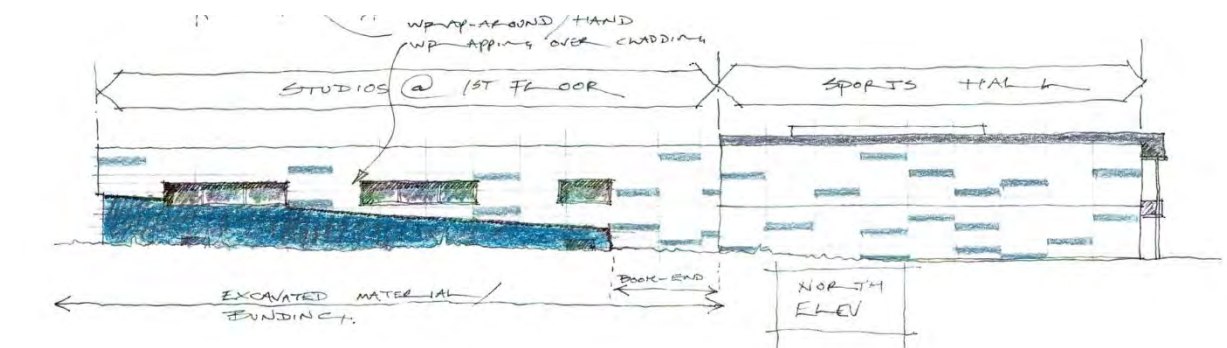


Figure 22: Design Exploration Sketch of the North Elevation

Entrance Hub:

- The entrance hub is a simple volume, located facing onto the car park and Richfield Avenue, closest to the main entrance road, providing visibility of the centre from the Avenue.
- In order to define this volume as the entrance, the design intent has been to open this volume up through the use of double height glazing on the corner. This allows views into the double height activity zone, acting as a shop window to the centre.
- The rest of the south and west elevations are to be clad in dark blue / slate coloured cladding. This ties in with the base cladding colour of the elevations to the other volumes (sports and pool halls).
- The entrance hub roof is raised over the other two volumes by a dark grey fascia, reinforcing its dominance over the two halls. This canopy will have a timber soffit and will be supported by randomly angled columns, replicating the trunks of the trees to the pedestrian plaza in front of the entrance.
- The glazing to the corner double height activity space will require an element of solar shading. This is proposed to be vertically mounted timber slats, tying in with the timber soffit to the high level canopy.
- The main entrance will be defined by a lightweight canopy in line with the angle of the sports hall cladding. This visually draws people to the main doors. The canopy will have strongly contrasting soffit cladding (yellow / gold). This will again frame the main entrance doors, creating an attractive main entrance into the new centre. This responds to the concerns of the Planning Officer on the visibility and attractiveness of the entrance raised in the Pre-Application.
- All of these elevation treatments contrast the entrance hub against the simpler volumes of the two halls

Sports Hall:

- The sports hall will be a simple volume, double height, with an associated storage area
- The west elevation of this hall faces onto the main car park area / entrance plaza. To articulate this elevation further, and to visually lead people to the main entrance, the two cladding zones are angled up towards the main entrance. The lighter cladding will then lead to the canopy over the entrance doors.
- The store will have the lighter cladding “wrapping” down to ground floor, forming a visual bookend to the sports hall
- The other elevations will have the lighter cladding, broken up by the random pattern of darker grey panels. This reflects the simple volume of the sports hall.



Figure 23: Artist's impression of the approach to the entrance in front of the Double Height Activity Zone



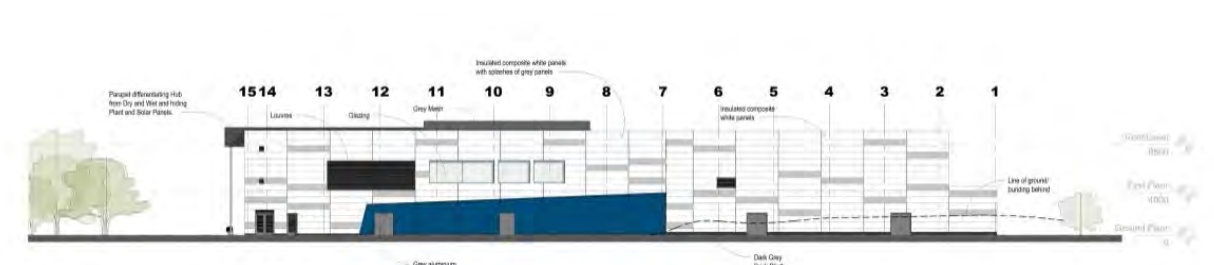
Proposed South Elevation

Figure 24: Proposed South Elevation



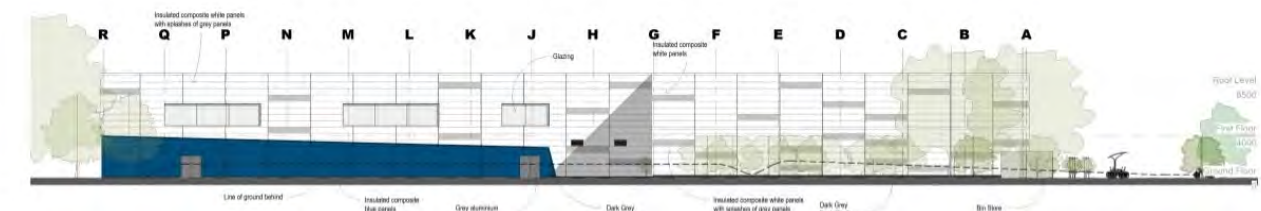
Proposed West Elevation

Figure 25: Proposed West Elevation



Proposed East Elevation

Figure 26: Proposed East Elevation



Proposed North Elevation

Figure 27: Proposed North Elevation

Pool Hall:

- The pool hall will be again a simple volume, double height, but containing more diverse activity zones such as exercise studios, plantrooms and diving tower.
- South elevation:
 - o The south elevation of this hall faces onto Richfield Avenue. In order to provide dynamic street frontage on this elevation, glazing has been included at ground floor, rising up towards the dive tower. This allows glimpses of both the swimming, and leads the eye to divers using the diving boards / platform.
 - o Along this elevation, the ground floor glazing will be separated by blue cladding panels, reflecting the split between the diving and main pools.
 - o The plantroom to the east of the pool hall will have the lighter cladding “wrapping” down to ground floor, forming a visual bookend to the pool hall.
- East elevation:
 - o The east elevation of this hall faces towards the two hotels located to the east along Richfield Avenue.
 - o To provide definition to this elevation, and to reflect the uses of the activity zones within the building, the village change area at ground floor will be clad in the darker composite cladding panels. The lighter cladding to plantrooms / staff areas will be installed at the higher level, “wrapping” over the darker base cladding
 - o The plantroom to the south of this elevation will have the lighter cladding “wrapping” down to ground floor over the darker cladding, again forming a visual bookend.
 - o Simple glazing panels are “punched” into the lighter cladding at first floor level, providing natural lighting of staff areas (for BREAAAM purposes).
- North elevation:
 - o The north elevation of this volume faces directly into Rivermead Park, and the River Thames, and houses the village change area at ground floor, with exercise studios at first floor.
 - o Excavated material from the new centre will be added to the existing mound to the north of this elevation, and will be landscaped.
 - o Once again, to provide definition to this elevation, and to reflect the uses of the activity zones within the building, the village change area at ground floor will be clad in the darker composite cladding panels. The lighter cladding to the exercise studios will be installed at the higher level, “wrapping” over the darker base cladding.
 - o Glazing to the studios is “punched” into the lighter cladding at first floor level, allowing views out to the park over the mound. This glazing will also act as shop windows to the centre, showing the exercise activities happening inside.
 - o The lighter cladding will wrap down to ground floor at the junction with the sports hall, repeating the “book-end” detail.

Glare:

- Good natural lighting provision of the pool hall is essential to provide an attractive swimming environment. The intent is provide users with natural light, and allowing glimpses of the external landscape for swimmers and views in from a distance for the general public, all the while aiming to reduce energy consumption. Solar gain (and the need for ventilation demand to increase) comes with larger extents of glazing, which is to be avoided.
- However, there is also a balance between natural lighting provision and avoiding glare on the water surface (this prevents lifeguards seeing people in trouble under the water, and is considered a major health and safety risk).
- Natural lighting is therefore controlled through limiting the amount of glazing at ground floor level. A vertical slot of glazing will also be included to highlight the dive tower.
- A sun path analysis will be carried out at the next stage to determine the solar gain and glare levels.
- Some soft landscaping will be included directly outside of the main pool hall, in order to limit visual access to the interior of the main pool hall as well as providing a visual interest from the swimming pools, and offering additional solar shading.
- To conclude, visual security and glare have been addressed by:
 - o Limited amount of glazing both in length and height
 - o Reduced visibility and increased shade by the use of soft landscaping



Figure 28: Precedent Images for Rivermead Leisure Centre

4.3.5 Passive Design

The proposed Rivermead Leisure Centre on Richfield Avenue in Reading has been designed to be a low carbon sustainable development, to reflect current Council Policy. Elements of Passive Design measures have been incorporated to ensure the proposed development is a low energy, comfortable sustainable building.

Various Passive Design elements of the scheme have been included as follows:

- Climate analysis (including site location, weather / climate, building orientation and layout)
- Passive design (building envelope, fixed building services including ventilation and lighting)
- Ventilation strategy

Dynamic simulation modelling has been undertaken to confirm that the orientation of the building has been designed to provide adequate daylight whilst minimising solar gains. For example, the restaurant area of the building is located to face south, therefore taking advantage of solar gains, thereby passively reducing the energy usage for heating in the restaurant.

When assessing the efficiency of the building envelope, the following percentage improvement rates were determined in how efficient the current internal building environment is, over baseline Limiting Fabric Parameters:

Roof	-	60%
External Walls	-	57%
Ground / Exposed Floor	-	40%
External Glazing	-	46%

The design also uses a Metsec structure, which in turn allows a cost-effective yet flexible building.

Airtightness of the building is also improved over and above that rate used in current Building Regulations, achieving a 70% improvement.

Building services are also to be designed to incorporate heat recovery in ventilation units where possible along with low energy lighting and passive lighting controls.

All of these factors are contributing to a comfortable, low energy and sustainable building. The low design u-values, stringent lighting design and high heat recovery rates all help to reduce the energy usage of the building passively. The dynamic simulation has shown that carbon emissions from the proposed development have been reduced through the inclusion of passive design measures, and furthermore the energy demand of the proposed development has been reduced.

4.4 Proposed Development of the Leisure Complex Site

4.4.1 Approaches

The key approach to the site is from Richfield Avenue, with the majority of customers coming from the direction of the town centre to the south east. The existing road bridge access over the drainage culvert running parallel to Richfield Avenue will be retained. The pedestrian pavements either side of this bridge will be extended into the new car park area to link up with a new foot path through the car park running to the main entrance.

Pedestrian paths to the north and east of the new centre will link the centre to the Thames path and Rivermead Park. Please see following drawing for existing building location plan in its setting.

Building directional signage and advertising to the new centre on Richfield Avenue will be the subject of a future separate Planning Application.

4.4.2 Public Realm & Public “Face”

The demountable building to the rear (north) of the complex will be retained when the existing centre has been demolished. This existing building will frame the new car park on its north side.

The new centre will be separated from the new car park on its east side by a public space / plaza. This space, and the leisure centre behind, will frame the car park to the east.

The new centre is intended to have two public “faces”:

- The west elevation containing the main entrance
- The south elevation facing onto Richfield Avenue,

The glazed reception hub sits at the junction of these two elevations, with the double height activity zone deliberately located here to act as a visual attraction to passing traffic and customers on Richfield Avenue.

An extended canopy will sit over this hub section, supported by angled columns replicating trunks of trees, and with a timber soffit. The visual impact of these columns will be reinforced by new trees to be planted in the plaza in front.

The west elevation will also have angled cladding rising up from the sports hall to link in with a light weight entrance canopy over the main access doors. The intent is to visually draw customers along the face of the building to the main entrance.

The south elevation has been design to have active street frontage, advertising the building and its activities to passing traffic and customers on Richfield Avenue. Glazing is to be installed at ground floor level to the pool, allowing views out and glimpses of activities within. To maintain visual security care has been taken to set this glazing away from pedestrian zones, with low level planting and a service road laid out in front of the glazing. The location of the building away from car parking areas and Richfield Avenue will also keep people away from this elevation.

Further interest to this elevation has been created through expressing the diving area by a vertical strip of glazing. Divers using the dive tower will be able to be glimpsed from Richfield Avenue, reinforcing this elevation’s active frontage.

Floor to ceiling glazing will also be included to the fitness suite at first floor, allowing more views into / out of the building on the south elevation.

The new plaza is intended to link the two buildings on the site, the new leisure centre and the existing demountable pool. This plaza will be a pedestrian zone, with drop-off points for disabled people just outside the main entrance. New trees will be planted along this plaza, linking mature trees planted along Richfield Avenue / drainage culvert with the mature tree group around an existing sub-station located just to the north of the new centre. Cycle parking will be included in this plaza, overseen from the reception area. External café seating will also be included within this plaza, served from the south elevation of the central kitchen.

The plaza will lead to the relocated children’s play area in front of the demountable pool. The entrance to the demountable pool sits at over 1m above surrounding ground levels. New landscaping mounding will be installed leading to this entrance, and creating natural viewing into the playground. At the top of this mound, adjacent to the demountable pool entrance, will be a small modular pavilion. This will provide a secure entrance into the building, allow removal of outdoor shoes before entering directly into the changing area, and is to have vending machines serving external seating / social area linked with the playground.

Overall the plaza has been designed for both centre and park users to use (for cycle parking and external café seating), will link the two buildings on site, will reflect and link various tree belts / groups and will provide an active public realm to the site.



Figure 29: Artist's impression of the approach to the entrance

Larger site plan

4.4.3 Major Landscape Feature

- The new leisure centre sits within the environs of Rivermead Park, a designated Major Landscape Feature
- The site of the new centre will be capable of being viewed from the north across the River Thames, particularly Caversham Court Gardens and St. Peter's Conservation Areas.
- The design of the new centre, and in particular its massing and elevational treatment facing towards the River Thames, will need to reflect the sensitive nature of its location
- This has been dealt with in a number of ways as follows:
 - o **Screening:**
 - It is intended that there will be a number of screening measures to break up the visual impact of the mass and elevation of the rear elevations to the building
 - Firstly, natural screening of the site occurs through tree belts running along the both banks of the River Thames. Figure 30 opposite shows the new building in the centre of the image, with the Caversham Bridge Premier Inn to the left.
 - Secondly, a tree belt of mature trees currently screens the existing playground located on the mound to the north of the proposed site. These trees are to be retained, with the playground relocated to the south side of the demountable pool hall (hidden from the River Thames)
 - Thirdly, the excavated material will be used to enhance the mound to the north of the centre. This will have the visual impact of “sinking” the building into the landscape, minimising the height it projects above “ground” level
 - o **Massing:**
 - The reception hub will be slightly higher than the two adjacent halls
 - This hub is located away from the views to the north, allowing the entrance hub to be read as the dominant volume from Richfield Avenue only
 - The volumes of the sports hall and store decrease in height, progressing towards the north, breaking up the impact of the volumes
 - The new centre itself has been pulled further away from the River Thames, closer to Richfield Avenue, contributing to minimising visual impact
 - o **Elevational Treatment:**
 - The lighter cladding to the exercise studios will be installed at the higher level, with the darker cladding hidden behind the enhanced mound. This lighter cladding will have less of a visual impact from a distance, than the darker base cladding.
 - The lighter cladding will also be broken up even further by the additional of random pattern intermittent grey panels.
 - Full height glazing to the studios will also act as shop windows to the centre, showing the exercise activities happening inside. This is intended to break up the elevation even further.
 - Extensive design exercises for the design of this elevation have been undertaken, with some of these included in this Statement (see following pages)
- All of the above measures have been included to address the visual sensitivity of the site, and are a vast improvement on the elevations and massing of the existing centre



Figure 30: Artist's Impression of the view of the Rivermead Leisure Centre across River Thames

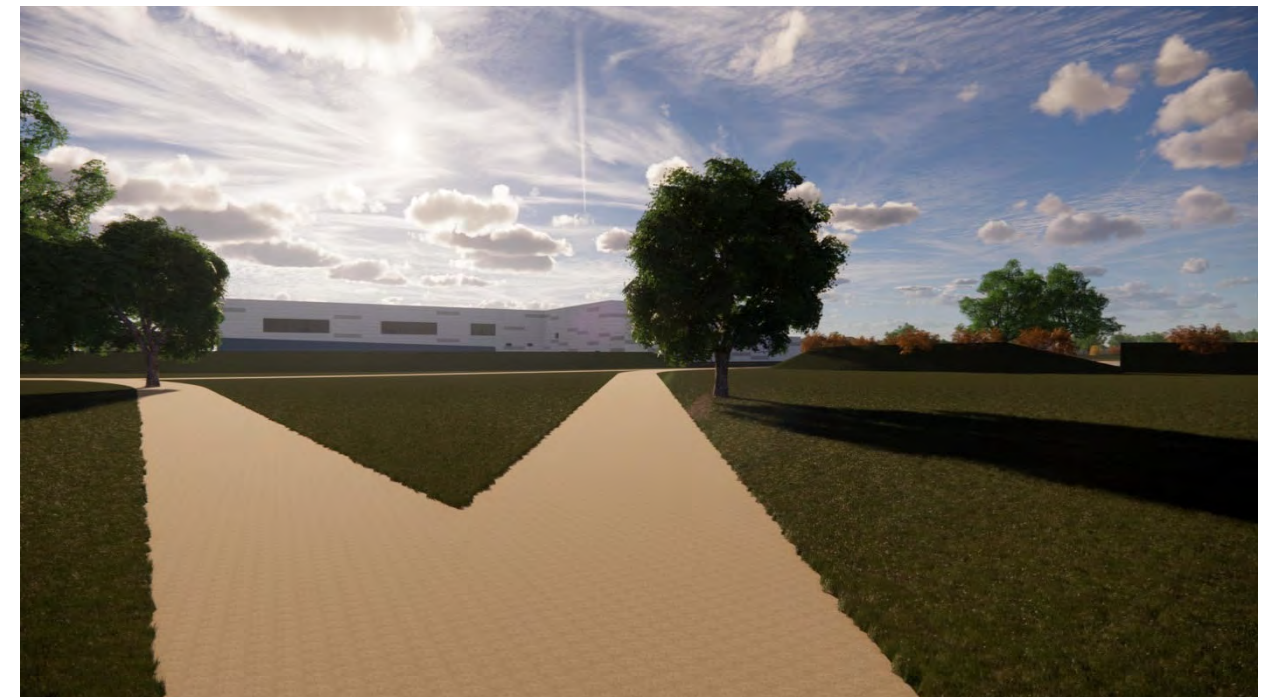


Figure 31: Artist's Impression of approaching the leisure centre from the Thames Path

Insert Rear Elevation Drawings as PDF (images for DAS)

4.4.4 Parking

Once the new building is in operation, the existing leisure centre is to be demolished. New car parking will be installed on the footprint of the demolished centre.

This car parking will be framed on three sides by:

- The 3G floodlit pitch to the west, along with existing bunding / viewing
- The demountable pool / new playground to the north
- Public plaza and new leisure centre to the east.

The main access road to the complex, new car parking and existing overflow car parking remains unchanged, off a roundabout on Richfield Avenue. The flow from this access point will be laid out as follows:

- Straight-on access for coaches, with a drop-off point for four coaches located on the western edge of the car park. Coaches will be kept away from the main body of the car park through being directed towards the north (no reversing required)
- Family parking spaces will also be off this straight-on access
- Left turn into the main car park body
- Right turn to the main entrance drop-off points, Blue Badge parking, and Readibus drop-off point
- The above arrangements should keep the access road from Richfield Avenue as clear as possible, minimising the risk of traffic backing up on to the Avenue

The existing centre parking numbers are as follows:

- Main car park = 369 standard no. bays including 25 disabled parking bays
- Overflow car park to the west of the access road = 88 no. bays
- Overflow car park to the east of the access road = 114 no. bays

The new leisure centre parking numbers are as follows:

- New car park:
 - o 112 no. standard bays
 - o 22 no. Blue Badge holder bays located closest to the main entrance
 - o 14 no. family parking bays located behind the Blue Badge bays
 - o 40 no. electrical vehicle charging bays in the next row out from the entrance
- Overflow car park to the west of the access road = 88 no. spaces (retained unchanged)
- Overflow car park to the east of the access road = 114 no. spaces (retained unchanged)
- There will be space for 4 coaches to park / drop-off along the western edge of the car park. Further coach / HGV parking during the Reading Festival will be available in the main body of the car park which will be closed to the general public at that time.

Two main footpaths have been created through the new car park, to direct people to the main entrance. Both of these will also link the existing bunded area to the west used as informal spectator viewing to the floodlit AGP. Both of these routes will be landscaped, with resting benches every 50m distance. All rows of Blue Badge and family parking bays will be linked either directly or indirectly to these paths, creating safe routes to the main entrance. The existing pedestrian footpaths running either side of the existing access road will be extended to the southern footpath, allowing direct pedestrian access from Richfield Avenue to the main entrance.

Cycle parking will be provided directly outside the main entrance hub, monitored from the reception area. This parking will be on the pedestrian plaza with space for future parking available, if demand should dictate the need. New cycle parking numbers will be for 40 bicycles on 20 Sheffield stands. All of these stands will be covered.



Figure 32: Artist's Impression of approaching the leisure centre from the car parking

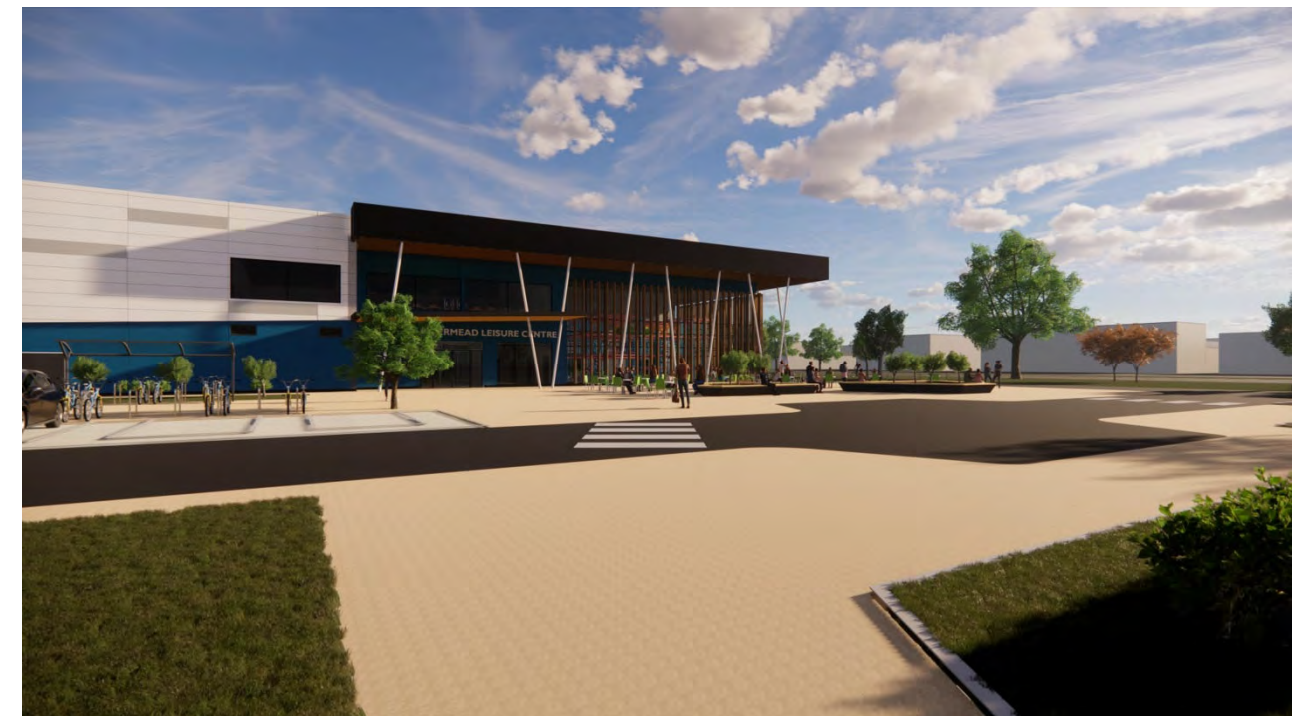


Figure 33: Artist's Impression of approaching the leisure centre from the car parking

4.4.5 External Lighting

Thornley and Lumb have produced both a lighting impact statement and a site external lighting layout to support the Application for the new centre. These will be submitted separately in support of the Application. The external lighting scheme will consist of the following:

- Lux Levels:
 - o Designed to 10 lux average (Max 56lux – min 3lux) with an overall average uniformity of 0.4U_o which is out-performing the recommendations of BS EN 12464-2 of 0.25 uniformity for parking areas. Please see figure 34
 - o Individual areas colour coded and identified on drawing E801 with an overview of the average / min / max & Uniformity levels.
- Luminaire selection:
 - o Directional optics minimising the impact of nuisance glare, overspill lighting, haze reduction & zero upward light.
- Back Spill:
 - o Choice of luminaires, optics & backlight spill shields reduces back spill with consideration and minimal impact on surrounding properties.
 - o Lighting layout identifies contour lines at 1 and 2.5lux respectively.
- Column Heights:
 - o 6m as standard
- Wall mounted Lights where required:
 - o 2/3m AFFL
- Rivermead Column Height reduction:
 - o Overall column height reduced to minimise upward glare / sky glow impacting on the surrounding environment, without compromising on column quantities and locations.
- Extent Of lighting:
 - o Coverage of car park, overspill car parks, DDA, Family & EV spaces, cycle racks, new seating areas, new walkways, new play area to front of demountable pool, service yard. Access road.
- NB: Existing 12m column lighting to external pitch retained.
- Avoidance of UV lamps:
 - o Low intensity, Low UV emitting LED lamps (Warm White LED 3000k)
- Consideration of species such as bats:
 - o Yes, Designed in accordance with Preliminary Ecological Appraisal (produced by John Wenman see section 9 References)
- Design Overview:
 - o Careful consideration has been given to the immediate & surrounding environment. The external lighting scheme has been designed in accordance with Preliminary Ecological Appraisal, the relevant CIBSE Lighting Guide LG6 - (2016) The Exterior Environment, current British Standards, Guidance Notes for the Reduction of Obtrusive Light GN01 (2020) and Society of Lighting Institute (SSL)
- Design Standards:
 - o The proposed external lighting installation shall be designed in accordance with the environmental zone classification E3 that is set out within ILE guidance for reduction of light pollution. The table below is an extract from the ILE guidance notes and sets out the environmental zone classifications for different environmental conditions. We have adopted the obtrusive light limitations for this external lighting installation as prescribed for an E3 classification. (See Figure 35)

- Control Measures:
 - o Central time controlled to ensure that the lighting installation only operates within the specified operating hours & Photo cell override controlled to prevent the lighting installation operating during the hours of daylight, thus conserving energy and minimizing carbon emissions.
 - o The external lighting design will not incorporate any luminaires that have aiming angles beyond the horizontal working plane.
 - o The design shall incorporate measures to prevent light spillage onto adjacent land - backlight spill shields.
- Compliance:
 - o Full compliance with Reading Borough Council Local Plan Policies:
 - CC8 Safeguarding Amenity
 - EN9 Provision of Open Space

Table 5.9 — Parking areas

Ref. no.	Type of area, task or activity	$\bar{E}_{av}$ lx	U_o –	GR_L –	R_a –	Remarks
5.9.1	Light traffic, e.g. parking areas of shops, terraced and apartment houses; cycle parks	5	0.25	55	20	
5.9.2	Medium traffic, e.g. parking areas of department stores, office buildings, plants, sports and multipurpose building complexes	10	0.25	50	20	
5.9.3	Heavy traffic, e.g. parking areas of schools, churches, major shopping centres, major sports and multipurpose building complexes	20	0.25	50	20	

Figure 34: Extract from BS EN 12464-2

TABLE 1 – OBTRUSIVE LIGHT LIMITATIONS FOR EXTERIOR LIGHTING INSTALLATIONS							
Environmental Zone	Sky Glow U _{LR} [Max %]	Light into Windows E _i [Lux] (1)		Source Intensity I [kcd] (2)		Building Luminance Before curfew (3)	
		Before curfew	After curfew	Before curfew	After curfew	Average L [cd/m ²]	Maximum L [cd/m ²]
E1	0	2	1*	0	0	0	0
E2	2.5	5	1	20	0.5	5	10
E3	5.0	10	2	30	1.0	10	60
E4	15.0	25	5	30	2.5	25	150

Figure 35: Environmental Zone Classification

4.4.6 Landscaping Statement

The proposed new leisure centre development has rejuvenated its landscaping surrounds to provide an opportunity for a diverse and varied landscape within the grounds of the former sports complex.

The new leisure centre's footprint has re-orientated the existing landscaping layout with emphasis on the entrances and access to the leisure centre, existing demountable pool and sports pitches driving the form of its new landscape layout.

The proposed areas of landscaping have sympathetically retained existing key landscape features and trees/vegetation where reasonably possible and created opportunities for significant enhancements both visually and ecologically to its surrounding boundaries and parking areas.

The principle of the landscaping proposals will focus on integrating with the surrounding Rivermead Park setting. The aim of the landscaping is to improve the existing screening views from the park to the Northern boundary and improving the existing/proposed landscape with a modern environmental approach, providing future social and ecological benefits to the public.

Primary Objectives:

- Provide a visually softened landscaped approach to the building incorporating its facade within the new landscape setting and providing environmental enhancements to its surrounds
- Retain key landscape feature trees, and vegetation to soften its impact on the surrounding landscape.
- Retain and improve access to major events or grounds maintenance vehicles to the site and Rivermead Park.
- Provide low maintenance seasonally interesting landscaping features integrated around car and coach parking areas.
- Retain and improve views with additional screening from boundaries where necessary.
- Retain and improve pedestrian connectivity throughout the site.
- Provide access to cyclists with secure parking.
- New relocated play area to replace existing play area.
- Provision of external cafe adjacent to new play area.



Figure 36: Artist's Impression of approaching the leisure centre from the north/west

Landscape Strategy:

- The northern boundary features consist of an existing de-mountable swimming pool building, surrounded by some raised bunds for screening purposes. The proposals will extend and improve upon the existing raised bund to further screen views from Rivermead Park and the Thames pathway, without impacting on the areas required for the Reading Festival. Planting and any additions to the bund will be kept within the outermost line of bunding to ensure that there is no impact.
- The northern and north-eastern mound will be planted with native species trees of local provenance, to extend the existing tree belt to the northeast. This will provide a green corridor along the adjacent park, creating a soft landscaped boundary, dividing the two areas, and providing ecological enhancement to both.
- The existing demountable pool situated north of the site, will benefit from a cafe area, and play area. These three features will be enclosed with low level shrub species landscaping to provide clear site lines around the play area. Timber knee rail will be installed to guide any pedestrians along pathways at the northeast and northwest boundaries.
- The proposed pathway between the new leisure centre and demountable pool area will benefit from large species fastigiated trees in hard paving, softening the building structure from westerly views.
- The front of the main building will benefit from large planting beds and small specimen trees to provide a lower eye level softening and screening.
- Outdoor seating with planters along the main promenade west of the building, will soften the divide between the building and car park leading towards the main entrance where large planters will provide gathering and seating to pedestrians who are waiting by the pickup and drop off point.
- Low maintenance street trees and hedges will create an avenue walkway through the car park footpath and low level planting will soften the ends of the parking bays, guide pedestrian access and create a green corridor between surrounding areas of landscaping.
- The area of landscaping between the sports pitches and western end of the car park will retain existing mature trees and incorporate new tree planting, along with species rich lawn and seasonal bulbs for ease of maintenance and seasonal interest.
- The landscaping to the southern elevation of the building consists of evergreen shrubs with a Grasscrete pathway to provide softening for this elevation and an informal hard standing access area.
- The existing areas of landscaping along the southern boundary water course will be pruned and rationalised. This will improve the growth of the existing shrubs retained and create a tidier maintainable water course for future maintenance access requirements.

4.4.7 Landscaping Proposals:

Parkland North & East of development:

Existing established tree planting belt to the north of the current playground to be extended towards the north-west along the proposed mounding to provide enhanced screening of the development from views from the north / Thames Path

Mounding Feature:

- Interface of proposed spoil mounding to be coordinated with existing spoil mounding
- Severity of the existing soil mounding to be lessened by addition of additional material as cannot currently be mown (angle currently circa 40 degrees +)
- Proposed slopes to not exceed 1:3 to allow for safe mowing and ease of maintenance ongoing

Top Soil + Sub Soil:

- Available volumes of both sub soil and topsoil to be confirmed by contractor in order that proposed footprint and height of the mounds can be established
- Topsoil to be tested and confirmed to be BS3882 parameters / suitable for re use prior to re-use
- Topsoil and sub soil to be segregated and appropriately stored prior to forming of mounds in accordance with BS3882
- Site won sub soil to be used to form main body of mounds (Subject to soil report regarding contamination)
- Site won topsoil to be laid to upper 300mm to allow planting / seeding

Planting:

- British native tree species proposed standards 10-12cm girth
- Low maintenance amenity seed will be used on the embankments.
- Low maintenance wildflower seed to the top of the mounds.

Grass Seeding:

- All mounds and ground disturbed during construction to receive grass or wildflower seed finish
- Low maintenance amenity seed will be used on the embankments.

Wildflower Seed Low Maintenance:

- Low maintenance seed mix, species rich lawn type T.B.C

Area (south of demountable pool):

Proposed new play and cafe area

- Proposed new play area with new cafe to have seating and landscaping to suit play specialists' proposals.
- The play area boundaries will consist of low growing shrubs and multi-stem specimens to provide some screening of the bin store & sub-station, but not restrict views of the proposed play area.

Car park areas - soft landscaping:

Expanse of hard landscaping to large car park to be softened

- Suitable 'standard form trees' 16-18cm girth planted to locations shown.
- Single species hedges to car park perimeter: 10ltr stock, 60-80cm high, with protective line wire support system.
- Low level ornamental ground cover planting: 3ltr stock at high density of 6 no. plants per m².
- Ornamental bark mulch finish to all planting areas.
- Lawn margin to areas as shown.

Ecological considerations:

As described in John Wenman Ecological Appraisal August 2019, allowances given to:

- Use British Native woody tree species
- Dismiss use of invasive snowberry

Pedestrian area to south east of proposed play area:

Planting & fencing to be installed to prevent vehicle access to parks:

Outline proposals as follows:

- To have steel de-mountable bollards to prevent vehicle access and provide vehicle access for maintenance vehicles.
- Planting beds to soften and obscure bin store area.
- Timber knee rail to guide pedestrian to pathway entrances and prevent vehicle access.

Pedestrian area to west of proposed building:

Planting Proposals to soften appearance of building and hard landscaped areas
Outline proposals as follows:

Trees in Paved Areas:

- Double avenue of trees
- Trees with upright fastigate form proposed
- Individual tree pits in paving to be sufficient to provide mature growth of proposed trees.

Planting to Either Side of Paved Area:

- Low level ornamental ground cover planting: 5ltr stock at high density of 4 no. plants per m²
- Larger specimen plants at intervals: 10ltr 60-80cm height
- Compact multi stem trees to planting beds 2-2.5m height
- Raised shrub planters with seating for walkway adjacent to disabled parking bays.
- Raised shrub planters to main entrance to provide seating for pedestrians.

Seating & Planters to front entrance and promenade:

- Proposed large planters with incorporated seating to be positioned to the front entrance. To soften the approach to the building and provide gathering and seating to pedestrians who are waiting at the pickup and drop off point.
- Proposed linear planters with seating incorporated to provide a physical barrier for the adjacent car park and rest locations for pedestrians walking to and from the northern facilities.
- The linear planters will have low maintenance shrubs 5ltr stock at high density of 4 no. plants per m² with spot planted 10L specimens
- The larger planters to have 5ltr stock at high density of 6 no. plants per m² with large 2-2.5m multistem specimens.

Existing watercourse to Richfield Avenue:

Watercourse beyond development boundary to be improved as impacts the presentation of the proposed development.
Outline proposals as follows:

Japanese Knotweed

- Ongoing maintenance / treatment regime to be commissioned
- Location to be confirmed by specialist contractor
- Known areas to be fenced off and appropriate signage erected

Initial Vegetation Maintenance

- Trees scheduled for retention to be identified
- Overgrown sloped embankments to be mown and arisings removed initially
- Sloped to be mown annually ongoing

4.4.8 Compensatory Tree Planting:

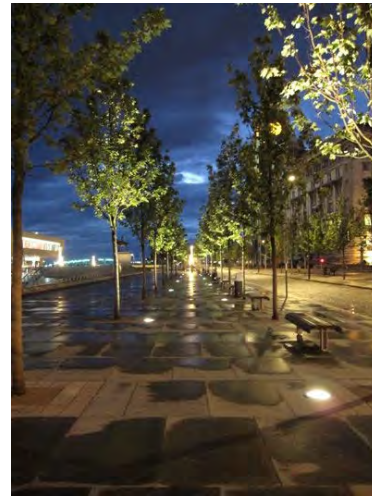
The loss of 24 no. trees, as highlighted in the tree survey and arboricultural impact assessment, to allow the construction of the new building will impact on biodiversity of the site. However, the intention is to plant trees at over a 2:1 replacement planting strategy which will link the existing northern belt of trees around the substation, wrap around the new centre and connect with the existing planting to the south along the drainage culvert. Please refer to the landscaping proposals for details. This will also provide a continuation of the landscape corridor and assist in providing a new landscape setting for the leisure centre. Exact tree numbers will be confirmed in a planting schedule to be produced at the next design stage.

It is intended that the new leisure centre will be visible to park users and encourage people to use the building – the new tree planting will frame the western elevation and provide a new pedestrian plaza. A tree-lined avenue will lead to the main entrance.

Suitable fastigated species will be specified for all new trees to ensure the building is not screened from view. Further planting has been proposed within the proposed car park planting beds to give this area a lift, allow existing and new planting to connect with each other.

4.4.9 Landscape Precedent Images

Avenue Tree Planting



Main Entrance & Avenue Planters with Seating



Woodland, Wildflower & Ecology



4.4.10 Hard Landscaping

Hard landscaping has also been included as follows:

- The access junctions and internal access roads
- Car parking bays and pedestrian footpaths / public plaza are to be in concrete paving as part of the sustainable drainage strategy (SUDs), and for BREEAM.
- There is potential for certain parts of this surfacing to be substituted with open cell type pavers as part of the SUDS strategy for the site. This will be the south service road running along pool hall, from the overflow car park to the plantrooms on the east side of the building. This will be dependent on further investigation on deliveries, plant replacement and the subsequent loading to the road surface.
- There is also the potential of using coloured tarmac within the car parking areas to distinguish certain sections of footpaths from the rest of the car parking zone and consequently raise the awareness of the drivers and the safety of the pedestrians. These will be mainly for pedestrian crossings
- Paved areas are included around the perimeter of the building for both pedestrian access and for maintenance.
- Outdoor paved area for staff will be included along the service road to the east, directly outside of the escape stair. This will allow access for staff in the building, using the eastern staffroom and offices to use this seating.

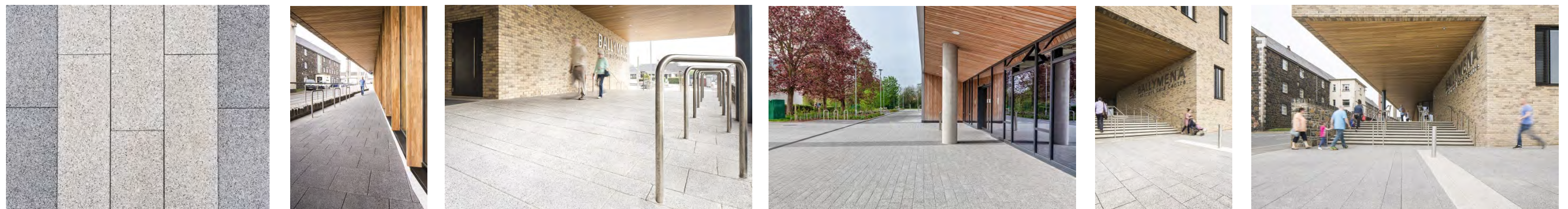


Figure 37: Precedents for hard landscaping and paving by AG

4.5 Drainage

Surface Water Drainage:

The surface water discharge from the new leisure centre will be made up from run-off from the following elements of the development:

- Building roof area
- Paved areas around new development (permeable concrete paving)
- Access roads (tarmac)
- Car parking bays (permeable concrete paving)

Furness Partnership, in their accompanying drainage strategy, have considered discharge of surface water in accordance with the Ciria SuDS Manual discharge hierarchy as follows:

- A soil investigation report by Soils Ltd advises against use of soakaways on site due to the high water table and its historic use as a landfill
- Discharge to the nearest watercourse was then considered and deemed to be suitable to the existing minor watercourse running along the south of the site, which discharges into the Thames.
- The existing surface water discharges into this ditch via an outfall just south of the existing building.
- New surface water drainage system will discharge to the existing outfall at a reduced flow rate via a flow control device.
- The condition of existing outfall is to be assessed and any required remedial works to be carried out prior to connection.
- A significant betterment on the existing site drainage will be achieved through the use of attenuation tanks
- Prior to discharge to the watercourse surface water from the new car park will discharge to a fuel interceptor, to be class I and compliant with Environment Agency requirements BS EN 858-2002 AAI 2004 and BS EN 858-2:2003.
- Adequate ventilation to be provided and separator to be leak tight.
- Exact locations of the fuel interceptor and attenuation tanks will be determined at the next design stage.
- Furness Partnership have confirmed that the design criteria for the surface water drainage design will be:
 - o 1 in 100 yr. + 40% climate change

Foul Drainage:

New foul drains will be provided to serve all foul producing appliances within the proposed leisure centre. These foul drains will be designed in accordance with BS EN 752:2008, to discharge into Thames Water sewer running along Richfield Avenue, via a rising main (as the existing foul drainage), subject to Thames Water approval.

The swimming pools within the proposed leisure centre will contain a suitably sized backwashing facility which will have a separate foul network prior to connecting to the main building foul drainage. It is proposed that the trade effluent network flow will be limited to 6 l/s subject to a Trade Effluent Notice being agreed with the chosen retailer and Thames Water. Any excess trade effluent will be stored within a backwash tank prior to making a connection to the foul network.

4.6 Accessibility

The proposed New Leisure Centre will be DDA Compliant. The intention is for all users and staff alike to be able to use this facility irrespective of their age or ability. Presentation of the scheme, and measures below, was held with Reading's Access and Disabilities Working Group on 5th March 2020.

All areas of the new building will be designed to meet the requirements of Building Regulations, in compliance with Approved Document Part M Volume 2 2015 (Access and use of buildings other than dwellings), with the design also referencing:

- BS 8300 (design of buildings and their approaches to meet the needs of disabled people)
- Sport England's Design Guidance Note, Accessible Sports Facilities 2010
- Dementia Friendly – Environmental Assessment Tool (from Swim England).
<http://www.swimming.org/>

An accessibility strategy has been produced for the scheme, described as follows:

- Well-lit level footpaths through to the main entrance, with dropped kerbs and blister paving where required. Resting benches will be provided no more than 50m apart along these routes to the entrance.
- 22 dedicated accessible car parking spaces
- Drop-off points with dropped kerbs right outside the main entrance
- Readibus drop-off point with dropped kerbs right outside the main entrance
- Level access into the building through the main reception
- Level access from fire escape routes around the building
- Highly contrasting colour cladding framing the main entrance / dark cladding of the reception hub. This will provide visual contrast to the entrance and will provide a welcoming entrance design to the centre.
- Automatic entry doors within the lobby area
- Clear circulation widths suitable for wheelchair users, with sports wheelchairs being considered at the ground floor.
- Induction hearing loops and dropped counter sections will be included at the reception and serving counters
- Accessible toilets are included for off the main café area at ground floor, and within the circulation hub at first floor.
- 2 no. 8 person minimum lifts are included in the scheme
- Wheelchair storage space will be included within the main reception area, with further chair storage to be included within the village change, and the two dry change areas serving the sports hall.
- Pool water access will be a mixture of shallow accessible steps into the main pool, with handrails either side, and via Poolpod wet side wheelchair lifts
- Poolpods will also be used to access the teaching pool
- All stairs (access and escape) will be designed to be accessible for ambulant disabled, with wheelchair refuges to be included at the head of each fire escape stair.
- Visual contrast will be allowed for in terms of wall / floor finishes and leading edges of doors and ironmongery
- A detailed review of Swim England's Dementia Friendly design guidance will be undertaken at the next workstage to ensure that the new Leisure Centre is Dementia Friendly
- Brail Signage will also be allowed throughout the scheme.

- Accessible changing facilities (all detailed to Sport England Accessible Facilities Design Guidance note) include:
 - o Village change (wet area):
 - a Changing Places room
 - accessible changing cubicle
 - accessible WC cubicle
 - ambulant disabled WC cubicles within toilet blocks
 - ambulant disabled shower cubicle within shower block
 - drop down seat to pre-swim shower area
 - o Dry change:
 - 2 nos. accessible changing cubicles (ground floor)
 - drop down seats to shower areas (ground floor and first floor)
 - unisex and gender neutral changing cubicles (first floor)

Special attention will also be made to:

- Floor finish specification
- Proposed colours
- Tactile surfaces

4.7 Site Access

4.7.1 Cars

Cars will access the site off Richfield Avenue retaining current access arrangements to the site.

4.7.2 Servicing Access

Service access for the new centre will continue to be via the existing access road off Richfield Avenue.

A new service road will extend south, along the building, parallel to Richfield Avenue towards the east side of the site. It is intended that this will be for service vehicles only, with the potential to pave the road with open cell pavements, subject to delivery load confirmations. This will provide access for chemical deliveries, plant replacement / lay down areas, and ambulance access to the pool hall first aid room. There will be a lockable access gate closing off the service road / yard. The ground floor plantroom opens out to this service yard.

Consumable deliveries to the new centre (e.g. food etc.) will also be along this new service road to the kitchen which opens onto the road.

The existing substation to the north of the new centre will be retained. The existing hammerhead, turning point for this substation will be kept, also allowing a servicing route to the demountable pool hall to the north. This hammerhead will also allow access to a new bin store to be located just north of the new sports hall store building.

4.7.3 Emergency Access

Fire tender (pump) access will be available along 15% of the new centre's perimeter, along the west and south elevations. Pump access will also be made available to the other elevations by allowing pumps to the north elevation of the sports hall store, and into the eastern service yard (allows access along the rear / north elevation).

Demolition of the existing centre will open up fire tender access to the demountable pool and new entrance pavilion.

The pool hall first aid opens out onto the south service road. Ambulance access will also be maintained to the southern gate to the 3G AGP.

4.7.4 Pedestrian / Cycle routes

A shared pedestrian and cycle route runs along Richfield Avenue. This will be extended into the site by creating pedestrian crossings to one of the new car park paths from the existing pavements running either side of the access road.

Covered cycle parking will be provided close to the entrance of the building, on the pedestrian plaza.

4.8 Waste Disposal Strategy

4.8.1 Bin Store

The bin store for the new leisure centre is proposed to be located at the rear of the building, north of the sports hall store. This has been deliberately sited away from the drainage culvert to the south of the building to minimise rodent ingress.

The bin store for the centre is located by an existing hammerhead / turning circle for ease of access for refuse lorries.

It is anticipated that there will be a rear door on the south elevation to the café kitchen. Waste can then be taken directly around the building, along the pedestrian plaza, to the bin store, avoiding taking this through the building.

The bin store has also been located away from the main building for fire precaution purposes (minimum 5m separation from any adjacent building).

This bin store will be enclosed in a robust enclosure and roofed over to further minimise vermin access to the bins, and for security purposes.

The minimal size of this store will be 15m² and will have space for separate recycling bins.

This store will also be provided with a tap for wash-down purposes.

4.8.2 Refuse Lorry Route / Tracking

The bin store for the new leisure centre will be accessed by a refuse lorry. Hydrock, as transport consultants, have produced a route through the new car parking to avoid clashing with family and Blue Badge users of the car park. Tracking diagrams have also been produced to show how this lorry will manoeuvre by the bin store for collections. Both of these are included within the accompanying Transport Assessment.

4.9 Building In Operation

4.9.1 Staffing

Staffing levels (existing and proposed) are as follows:

- Existing:
 - o 25 full time
 - o Approximately 60 flexible workers with hours dictated by season, activity programming and business needs
- Proposed:
 - o 22 full time
 - o Approximately 60 flexible workers with hours dictated by season, activity programming and business needs

Staff deployment will be reviewed regularly in line with industry trends & guidance and changing technology.

4.9.2 Hours of Operation

Proposed hours of operation will be as per existing which is as follows:

- Monday to Thursday: 06.30 to 22.30
- Friday: 06.30 to 21.00
- Saturday and Sunday: 07.30 to 21.00

GLL and Reading Borough Council will review opening hours on an annual basis (or more frequently if required) based on industry trends and changes in demand. In addition, both seasonal and activity specific opening hours will be reviewed as and when required.

4.9.3 AGP Operation

The AGP will continue to operate on existing protocols – teams coordinate bookings via a third party agent, who allocate specific playing time slots, which are communicated to the centre management team to supervise locally. Players generally arrive for their activity appropriately attired and go straight to the pitches, but changing provision/toilets will be available within the leisure centre if required. Floodlights will be controlled within the leisure centre by local staff.

4.9.4 Demountable Pool Operation

The demountable pool use will have flexible use but will predominantly be used for local swimming clubs, and local school swimming sessions.

4.10 Security

Final exit / entry doors have deliberately been limited within the design, in order to improve security of the external elevations. The following are the anticipated doorsets within the external elevations:

- Main entrance doors
- Fire escape doors from:
 - o Main pool
 - o Ground floor circulation
 - o Village change
 - o Sports hall
 - o Escape stairs

Other external doors include:

- First aid room access
- Chemical store access doors
- Plantroom access doors
- Kitchen

Proposed CCTV coverage will cover the following areas:

- Building Entrances
- Circulation routes (internally)
- Building Perimeter
- AGP
- Demountable pool
- Car Park (also replicating existing regime of automatic number plate recognition and free use for a set period of time)

This CCTV installation will be monitored from the manager's office, with the ability for remote connection to also monitor the system offsite. Switches, hard drives etc. will be located within a dedicated CCTV rack located in the first floor plantroom.

5.0 CONSTRUCTION

Minimising disruption and ensuring continuity of leisure provision is an important driver for Reading Borough Council. It is often the case where if a leisure centre is closed for development that members will go to other facilities and not return.

5.1 Phasing

The proposed scheme is designed to allow the existing leisure centre to remain in operation throughout the build period. To achieve this there are a number of compromises such as closure of most of the main car park, these are temporary but ensure no loss of leisure provision in the area.

The existing leisure centre is to remain open and operational during the construction of the new Leisure Centre. This is achieved by locating the new building onto existing parking in the south east of the site. Construction of this new centre will form phase 1 of the project.

Phase 2 will consist of demolition of the existing leisure centre once the new centre is constructed, open and operational. This will ensure continuity of provision of leisure facilities for the local community.

Construction of the new car park will form phase 3 of the project.

5.2 Site Set-Up

Phase 1:

Phase 1 will consist of hoarding off the east side of the main car park as shown in Appendix C. This will enclose the main site of the works. Site cabins will be located behind this hoarding, on a section of the existing car park.

Access (both pedestrian and vehicular) into the site will be controlled at the south west corner of this compound.

Existing access routes into the overflow car parking to the south, and to the substation to the north, will be retained / protected. This will also allow fire brigade access to the demountable pool to the north of the site compound.

Contractor parking during day time will be in the overflow car parking zone to the south (approx. half of this zone).

Phase 2:

Phase 2 will consist of the new centre being opened and in operation, along with the demolition of the existing centre. The existing building will need to be hoarded off as shown in Appendix C. The main access into this compound will then be in the south hoarding line.

Site cabins will be relocated to the western overflow car park.

Safe access will be maintained around this hoarding to the following:

- Demountable pool
- Substation
- New leisure centre
- Existing AGP
- Delivery / contractor access to the school site located to the west.

Phase 3:

Phase 3 consists of resurfacing the footprint of the demolished centre to create new car parking. Soft landscaping will also be completed during this phase. The site will be hoarded as Appendix C. Access to this hoarding will be opposite the main access road off Richfield Avenue.

Site cabins will remain in the western overflow car park.

Safe access will be maintained around this hoarding to the following:

- Demountable pool
- Substation
- New leisure centre
- Existing AGP
- Delivery / contractor access to the school site located to the west.

5.3 Construction Access

For phase 1, the contractor will need to utilise the main car park adjacent to the existing centre throughout the Construction Phase to allow access to building, storage, craneage, and welfare. Further contractors' parking / storage will be located on the eastern side of the overflow car park lying to the east of the access road from Richfield Avenue.

This will require possible relocation of Blue Badge parking bays to outside of this compound, along with dedicated (protected) pedestrian routes to the existing leisure centre. The existing overflow car parking to the east and west of the access road will be kept in operation, and existing fire escape routes from the centre maintained.

Vehicle access to the construction compound will be from Richfield Avenue.

The actual building site will require a secure perimeter line (hoarding). This hoarding line will be kept as close as possible to the building footprint at the north. This is to maintain access to the existing substation located to the east of the existing centre.

During phase 2, the existing building will be closed, and hoarded off from the general public. This hoarding line will need carefully siting to the south of the existing building as access will be required to the AGP, garden centre and future school site, all lying to the west of the site. Vehicle access to the construction compound will be from Richfield Avenue. Overflow car parking will be retained.

With phase 3, the new car park and associated landscaping will be installed. Careful consideration will be given to maintaining pedestrian access to the new centre and vehicle routes to the overflow car parking.

5.4 Construction Waste

The separation and disposal of waste during the construction phase will be the responsibility of the contractor. They will be required to produce a CSWMP (contractors site waste management plan) highlighting how they control and segregate the different types of construction wastes and how they intend to dispose of it.

It is intended to minimise off-site disposal of excavated material through using this material for landscaping / bunding purposes, particularly to the mound just north of the new centre, and creating a ramped access to the demountable pool.

Cut and fill exercise. This is currently being reviewed and will be implemented in detail at the next design stage. The construction of the centre itself will generate a volume of excavated spoil (piling, foundations, and pool tanks). The intent is to re-use this spoil (subject to contamination tests – see below) elsewhere on the site, mainly in increasing the existing mound height to the north of the pool hall.

Furness Partnership, in their Contamination Statement, note the following for contamination testing:

- A Discovery Strategy should be implemented by the contractor for the proposed development during demolition and excavation phases. In the event of finding contaminated soil the contractor needs to report this to the Local Authority and notify a third party environmental consultant. All members of the workforce on site needs to be aware of this strategy.
- Re-use of excavated material on site needs to follow EPR guidelines or follow the CL:AIRE voluntary code of practice

6.0 SUSTAINABILITY

6.1 General Strategy and Sustainability Statement

One of the key aims of Reading Borough Council is to deliver sustainable development within the borough. The proposed leisure centre has been specifically designed to address this aim.

Ecoteric have been appointed as BREEAM and Energy Consultants for the project, and have produced both a Sustainability Statement and a Pre-Assessment Certificate showing “Excellent” rating is achieved, which accompany this Application. This Statement references Local Plan Policies and Reading’s Sustainable Design and Construction Supplementary Planning Document. This Pre-Assessment and Sustainability Statement are included in Appendices D and E respectively.

The scheme uses the BREEAM Excellent requirement as a framework to deliver the required outcomes as outlined in these Policies and within the SPD. A Life Cycle Costing exercise has been undertaken allied to a Life Cycle Analysis model which looks at the Whole Life Cost of the construction options.

The Sustainability Statement covers a number of topics such as Energy Efficiency, Water Conservation and Flood Risk, sets out the measures included within the design to address these topics, and how these measures relate to the Local Plan Policies. Please refer to the Sustainability Statement for details.

6.2 Low Zero Carbon (LZC) Feasibility Study

A Low Zero Carbon (LZC) Feasibility has been produced by Thornley Lumb, incorporated into their Energy Strategy and within the Sustainability Statement by Ecoteric Consulting, in support of the proposals. This Energy Strategy is included in Appendix F.

The LZC Study details low energy design relating to energy and carbon emissions of the proposed development in Reading. This has been done through consideration of items such as sustainable low-carbon design, building envelope and fabric, analyses of decentralized energy and the use of renewable technology, and carbon emissions reductions energy.

The study concludes that the leisure centre development is a sufficiently low energy use sustainable development. The study also discusses the use of LZC equipment to obtain a 31% carbon reduction using dynamic simulation modelling (DSM).

The design has been assessed as having a 31% reduction in emissions from the Target Emissions Rate of 110.4 kgCO₂.m⁻² to 76.2 Building Emissions Rate kgCO₂.m⁻².

6.3 Energy Strategy

Thornley and Lumb have produced an Energy Strategy to support the Application for the new centre. This strategy is included in Appendix F.

The Energy Strategy details aspects of sustainable building design relating to energy and carbon emissions of the proposed leisure centre. The building fabric first design philosophy and efficient building services analysis are combined with the available Low and Zero Carbon LZC technology to achieve a sustainable low energy use development and to exceed a BREEAM rating of ‘Excellent’. Please see the Strategy for details of the methodology to achieve this.

The proposed Leisure Centre has followed the Greater London Authority’s (GLA) energy hierarchy to qualify the carbon emissions reduction targets have been met and has shown that the design is exceeding the target of a BREEAM rating of ‘Excellent’.

The following measures have been incorporated within the design to achieve this rating:

- Low external element u-values
- Low air permeability
- Low energy LED lighting with lighting controls
- Metering of operational energy via BMS
- Mechanical ventilation with heat recovery
- Air Source Heat Pump ASHP space heating to Gym, Studios, Offices, Café, and associated areas
- High efficiency Air to Water CO₂ Air Source Heat Pump ASHP hot water services
- Solar Photovoltaic panels generating on site zero carbon electricity

The Strategy concludes that the overall development’s carbon emissions will be reduced 45% below the Part L 2013 baseline, and when assessing the development using current electricity grid SAP 10 carbon factors a carbon reduction of 72% is achieved. This confirms the effect of electrification of building services.

The energy hierarchy carbon reduction methodology has minimised energy usage, exceeding the target of a BREEAM rating of ‘Excellent’, with reduced carbon emissions of the proposed leisure centre to provide a sustainable low energy building. Inclusion of 40 electric vehicle charging bays will also contribute to reducing carbon emissions.

7.0 PLANNING

7.1 Planning Considerations

This section considers the planning policies and legislative framework, which together, provides the context against which the Application for the proposed leisure centre will be considered. A snapshot of the Local Planning Policies Map has also been included to illustrate those identified policies specific to the site and area. A summary of the relevant Planning History for the site has been included for information purposes.

Reading Borough Council's Local Plan was adopted by Full Council on 4th November 2019 and provides the detailed policies shaping development in the Borough in the period up to 2036. This Plan contains Local Plan Policies applicable to this site and project. These relevant policies have been separated into five main groups which are applicable to the design as follows and are explored in detail further on:

- Cross Cutting Policies
- Built and Natural Environment
- Transport
- Retail, Leisure and Culture
- Area Specific Policies (West Reading and Tilehurst)

Reading UK, the economic development and marketing company for Reading, has also launched a 2050 vision for the town as a smart and sustainable city by 2050. It is not a statutory document but provides a vision for all in the town to participate in and a context for the Local Plan and its policies. It will be the basis for influencing Government, stakeholders, investors and funders to support the Vision, and has informed both the design of the new centre and this Design and Access Statement.

It is also appropriate to consider Government guidance that will be a material consideration in the decision process.

7.2 Local Planning Policies Map

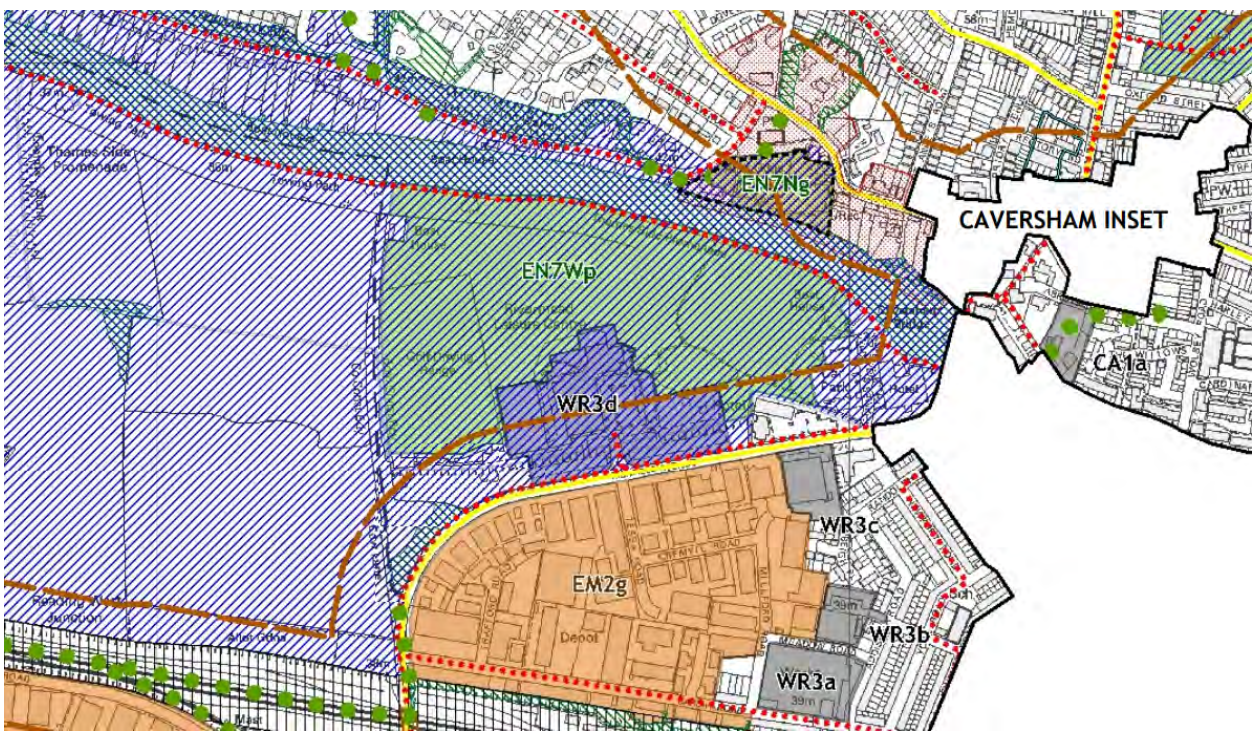


Figure 38: Planning Policies Map Extract

PROPOSALS MAP KEY

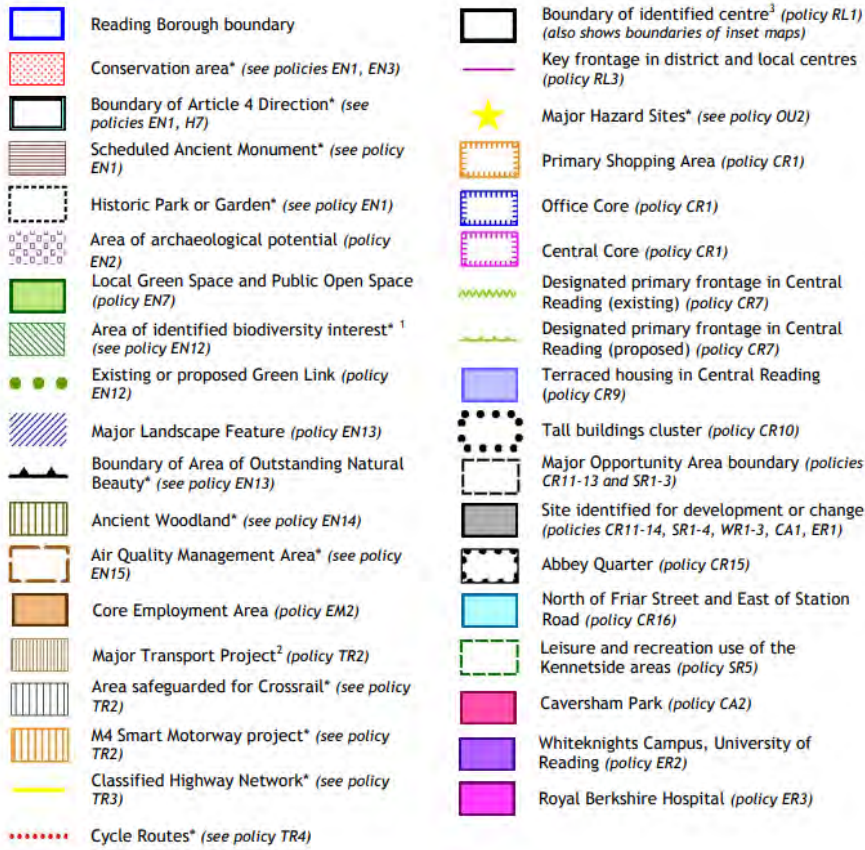


Figure 39: Planning Policies Map Key

7.3 Relevant Planning History

Following are the recent and relevant applications made for the site:

- **161069/PRE-APP** - A single storey extension (900m²) to the existing leisure centre comprising of a demountable swimming pool encompassing a five lane 25msq 10m teaching pool, 10msq 13m leaner pool, pool plant filtration and ancillary changing space – Observations sent 15/12/2016
- **162323/FUL** - Northern extension of the existing Rivermead Leisure Centre to accommodate a new, permanent building for leisure purposes (D2 use), with an associated changing village and associated plant, to house a temporary 'demountable' swimming pool – Approved 21/2/2017
- **170486/APPCON** - Application for approval of details reserved by condition. (162323) – Discharged 1/7/2017
- **170808/APPCON** - Application for approval of details reserved by condition. (162323) – Discharged 23/8/2017
- **170809/APPCON** - Application for approval of details reserved by condition 14 of 162323 - Habitat protection/Mitigation – Discharged 15/6/2017
- **171331/NMA** - Non-Material Amendment to planning permission 162323 (northern extension to Rivermead Leisure Centre) to: substitute glazed walling system and polycarbonate corridor glazing with aluminium frame windows; alterations to rainwater goods specification; adjustments to louvre and high level window positions and base/cill lines and level of corridor glazing – Agreed 2/10/2017

7.4 National Planning Policy Framework (2019)

National planning guidance is available through the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) and National Planning Policy Guidance (NPPG). These documents aim to encourage high quality design and sustainable development.

The NPPF illustrates the Government's vision of sustainable development which should be interpreted and applied locally. The NPPF contains a number of general policies, which are relevant to the proposed development and introduces a presumption in favour of sustainable development.

Certain National Policies as noted within the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF February 2019) are also relevant to these proposals. Some of those are included below:

7.4.1 NPPF 2 Achieving Sustainable Development

8. The purpose of the planning system is to contribute to the achievement of 'sustainable development', and sustainable development has a social role to provide accessible local services that reflect the community's needs.

- The proposed design of the new leisure centre will achieve two of the three objectives under para 8 NPPF, these being the social and environmental objectives. The design incorporates the principle that sustainable development has a social role to provide accessible local services that reflect community needs. Leisure services will continue to be provided for the local community in the new centre.
- The proposals sit on the site of the existing car park, with replacement car parking to be provided on the footprint of the existing leisure centre which will be demolished, and will provide fit-for-purpose leisure facilities for the local community for over 15 years. As such, minimal Open Space land will be required, as the proposals have been sited on the location of the existing centre and car parking. Through this well-designed and environmentally sustainable proposal, the design will meet these two objectives of para 8 NPPF.

7.4.2 NPPF 8 Promoting Healthy and Safe Communities

92. The NPPF seeks to promote healthy communities with paragraph 92 emphasising the importance of the planning system “...to provide the social, recreational and cultural facilities and services the community needs...”

97. In paragraph 97 the NPPF states that “Existing open space, sports and recreational buildings and land, including playing fields, should not be built on unless;

- a) an assessment has been undertaken which has clearly shown the open space, buildings or land to be surplus to requirements; or
- b) the loss resulting from the proposed development would be replaced by equivalent or better provision in terms of quantity and quality in a suitable location; or
- c) the development is for alternative sports and recreation provision, the benefits for which clearly outweighs the loss of the current or former use.”

- Whilst the proposed footprint is in a different location from the existing, there should be no overall loss of amenity in terms of building or land. Better designed facilities, incorporating flexible use of space, and an overall improved and efficient layout of these facilities, will result in an overall increase of amenity within the building. A wider range of activities will be provided from the leisure centre, which will be smaller in footprint than the existing. This centre will encourage the local community to participate in physical exercise and sports and therefore increase health and wellbeing and promote a healthier community, and will remain flexible enough to change for future leisure provision.

7.4.3 NPPF 9 Promoting Sustainable Transport

Section 9 of the NPPF notes that Planning Decisions should take account of whether opportunities for sustainable transport modes have been taken up depending on the nature and location of the site; safe and suitable access to the site can be achieved for all people; improvements can be undertaken within the transport network that cost effectively limit the significant impacts of the development; and development should be prevented or refused on transport grounds where the residual cumulative impacts of development are severe.

- The current centre is located on the outskirts of Reading town centre, and is easily accessible by foot, cycle paths and public transport routes (close to train station, bus station and stop). As a leisure centre already exists within the parkland of Rivermead Park, these methods of transport are already well-established.

7.4.4 NPPF 11 Making Effective Use of Land

Under section 11 of the NPPF, local planning authorities are encouraged to support proposals that make more effective use of sites that provide community services, providing this maintains or improves the quality of service provision and access to open space.

- Creating a new leisure centre with a greater range of leisure provision will broaden the number of activities available at Rivermead, improving overall service provision.
- Through building on existing car parking, access to the surrounding open space is not impeded.
- Demolition of the existing centre also opens up vistas and paths through to the surrounding parkland
- The scheme has substantial improvements to access routes to the parkland through the creation of the new pedestrian avenue in front of the new centre.

7.4.5 NPPF 12 Achieving Well-Designed Places

124. Paragraph 124 states that “Good design is a key aspect of sustainable development...” and recognises the importance of planning positively for the achievement of high quality and inclusive design for all development. Decisions should aim to ensure that projects will; function well and add to the overall quality of an area, not just for the short term but over the lifetime of the development; are visually attractive as a result of good architecture and appropriate landscaping; are sympathetic to local character and history, including the surrounding built environment and landscape setting, while not preventing or discouraging appropriate innovation or change (such as increased densities); establish or maintain a strong sense of place, using the arrangements of streets, spaces, building types and materials to create attractive, welcoming and distinctive places to live, work and visit; optimise site potential, create and sustain uses and support local facilities and transport networks; and create places that are safe, inclusive and accessible and which promote health and wellbeing, with a high standard of amenity for existing and future users, and where crime and disorder, and the fear of crime, do not undermine the quality of life or community cohesion and resilience.

- The new leisure centre is to be located on a section of the existing car park, with replacement car parking on the footprint of the demolished building. The architectural language, detailing and materials have been used to create an exemplar project, sympathetic to its parkland setting.
- Care has been taken to link all buildings on the site (new centre and retained demountable pool) through a pedestrianised plaza area.
- Demolition of the existing centre will open views out to the park east and west of the retained demountable pool. This pool itself will be “dressed” with a new entrance pavilion, linking onto the plaza and play area in front of the demountable pool.
- The proposed centre will be of high quality design, providing a landmark building in the park. Flexibility of use is a core theme within the building, allowing certain spaces to be adapted for a multitude of uses (moveable walls between playrooms, multi-uses within the sports hall, bleacher seating). This is also echoed in the pool water use, through the incorporation of moveable floors, allowing swimming teaching lessons with the floor at a shallow level, and competition swimming / diving with a deeper level floor.
- Visual links through to the surroundings from the dry side activity zones, and through the building, linking internal spaces, have been deliberately introduced to make the scheme attractive and to encourage the general public to use the facilities by offering glimpses of the activities inside.
- Visual links are also created to the pool hall, allowing views into the hall from the central hub / seating area, and giving glimpses from a distance of swimming / diving activities within.
- Outdoor seating areas are also included, creating active zones around the building. The outdoor play area has also been relocated to lie off the main pedestrian plaza, in front of the demountable pool. This will create an activity zone to the north of the new car park. New footpaths within the new car park will also allow more links to the informal spectator viewing of the AGP to the west of the car park.
- The proposed centre has been designed for all the members of the community, creating an inclusive environment. It promotes health and wellbeing and will encourage a healthier community.
- The building will be easily accessible by foot, cycling or public transport, encouraging the use of more sustainable means of transport.
- The proposed centre has also been designed to integrate with the parkland setting of Rivermead Park with a well-thought through landscape strategy.
- Through exemplar design and use of sympathetic materials, and by keeping the massing to a two-storey building, the argument exists that the new proposals will meet the objectives of para 124 NPPF 12.

7.4.6 NPPF 14 Meeting the Challenge of Climate Change

Flooding and Coastal Change

155. Paragraph 155 of the NPPF directs inappropriate development away from areas at the highest risk of flooding, and that local Planning Authorities should not increase flood risk elsewhere.

- A flood risk assessment has been completed and will accompany and support this Planning Application.
- According to the report, the site is identified as having a low-risk susceptibility to flood from fluvial, tidal and surface water sources, and is located within Flood Zone 2.
- The development is classified as “less vulnerable” with respect to flood risk using Table 2 of the NPPF, without the need for an Exception Test.
- Less vulnerable developments are considered acceptable within Flood Zone 2, and the proposals are in accordance with the principles of the Sequential Test.
- The finished floor level has also been well over the flood levels to protect the asset from flooding.

7.4.7 NPPF 15 Conserving and Enhancing the Natural Environment

170. Paragraph 170 of NPPF states that the planning system should contribute to and enhance the natural and local environment.

- The landscape strategy and proposals have been designed to both preserve and enhance the natural environment.
- Various areas of new planting have been identified within the landscape strategy. These include:
 - o The existing bunding around the demountable pool (to be extended eastwards)
 - o Planting beds within the new car park along footpaths
 - o Soft landscaping to the bunding behind the new centre
 - o Soft landscaping to the western edge of the new car park
- Please see previous landscape section for details of these enhancements.

7.5 Other National Policies and Guidance:

7.5.1 Sport England Strategy 2016-2021 and Onwards:

Sport England's vision for everyone in England regardless of age, background or level of ability is to feel able to engage in sport and physical activity. Some will be young, fit and talented, but most will not. Sport England recognises the need for a sport sector that welcomes everyone – meets their needs, treats them as individuals and values them as customers.

This strategy is in the process of being revised, to be published early in 2021. This strategy will focus on the following major themes, all of which the design of the new centre will address:

Recover and reinvent

- o Recovering from the biggest shock to the status quo in a lifetime, Covid-19, and reinventing as a vibrant and sustainable network of organisations providing sport and physical activity opportunities that meet the needs of different people.

An active life for a healthy life

- o Strengthening the connection between sport and physical activity and health and wellbeing, to enable more people to live an active life so they can live and age well.

Positive experiences for children and young people

- o Unrelenting focus on positive experiences as the foundations for an active life.

Strengthening communities

- o Focusing on sport and physical activity's ability to create greater community development and social integration.

Active environments

- o Creating the places and spaces that make it easier for people to be active.

7.5.2 Department of Culture, Media and Sport (DCMS) Single Departmental Plan (2019):

DCMS published their Single Departmental Plan June 2019. This plan acknowledges that culture, media and sport enriches community lives and helps make Britain unique. Wherever people live in the country and whatever their background, DCMS promotes the want to be able to enjoy and participate in these sectors.

The driving remit of DCMS is the government's long-term economic plan to build a stronger, more competitive economy and secure a better future for Britain. DCMS accounts for just 0.18% of total central government spending yet the above sectors contribute 16% of the total Gross Value Added to the UK economy. Central to this will be the DCMS work throughout the country to support the creative industries, digital economy, intellectual property rights, soft power, sport and tourism. This is reflected in their following objectives:

- Support people of all ages to thrive, connect with each other, and give back to their communities, including a commitment to using Office for National Statistics' recommended measurement package as government's standard way of measuring loneliness (contributes to SDG 10)
- Increase participation in, engagement with and access to sport and physical activity (contributes to SDG 10)

The new leisure centre at Rivermead will align with both the wider Sport England and DCMS strategies to promote wider participation in sport and healthy lifestyles, and will start addressing the growing priority of loneliness. The location and accessibility of the new centre to all (embedded throughout the design) supports these objectives within an area historically recognized as being for sport and leisure, and which is intended as the same use for the local community for years to come.

7.6 Reading Borough Council Local Plan Policies:

Relevant policies to the site and proposed development can be split into those found within the various chapters of Reading Borough Council Local Plan published in November 2019.

7.6.1 Cross-Cutting Policies:

The first set of policies applicable to the site are those applicable to the whole of Reading. These include the following:

CC1: Presumption in favour of sustainable development:

- o The Council will take a reasonable and positive approach to any development proposals that reflect the resumption in favour of sustainable development as outlined in the National Planning Policy Framework.
- o As noted in section 6.4 National Planning Policy Framework above (item 6.4.1), the proposals meet two of the three key objectives for sustainable development, namely the social and environmental objectives. This is through continuing to provide accessible local leisure services to the local community, on a site currently in the same use.

CC2: Sustainable design and construction:

- o This Local Plan policy calls for sustainable design and construction to reduce climate change, and trying to achieve zero carbon development by the Council's target date of 2030.
- o Whilst E(d) (Indoor sport and recreation) planning class use facilities are not explicitly stated within this policy, GLL are committed to achieve BREEAM Excellent for the new leisure centre.
- o This intent is also reflected in the Pre-Application Report for this leisure centre, where it has been noted that an initial pre-assessment document has already been submitted for obtaining BREEAM Excellent accreditation.

CC3: Adaptation to climate change

- o This policy dictates that all developments will demonstrate how they have been designed to incorporate measures to adapt to climate change. With the new development these measures will include:
 - use of renewable forms of energy such as solar thermal for heating water and photovoltaic panels
 - energy saving measures such as CHP, fabric upgrades to improve environmental performance (including triple glazing), use of LED lighting
- o The proposals have also been designed in order to utilise natural ventilation for the sports hall and main reception hub
- o Solar shading has been provided for large areas of glazing through the use of external brise soleil and the use of high level canopies
- o Careful selection and location of planting along the face of the main building to link the isolated tree group by the substation in the north to the tree belt running along the corridor. This will provide shading of external amenity areas and help to connect habitats.
- o A surface water drainage scheme has been designed to minimise surface water run-off
- o Further details are included in the Energy Strategy by Thornley Lumb and the Sustainability Statement by Ecoteric, accompanying this Application.

CC4: Decentralised energy

- o With any non-residential development of over 1,000m², the inclusion of decentralised energy provision should be considered within the site, unless it can be demonstrated that the scheme is not suitable, feasible or viable for this form of energy provision.
- o The opportunity to investigate decentralised energy, especially given the future school site adjacent to the leisure complex to the west, has also been encouraged in the Pre-Application Report.
- o As noted in the accompanying Energy Strategy, Reading Borough Council has commissioned studies for decentralised energy schemes within the borough and has identified the most suitable locations.
- o The leisure centre is not in one of these areas and hence will not be able to connect to a district energy centre.
- o The Energy Strategy recommends that on-site LZC is the best method of reducing carbon emission from the leisure centre, with the proviso that this decision is to be made once a heat network is available, and the annual carbon emission of the network can be calculated.
- o This analysis should take the form of a lifecycle cost analysis and balance the lifecycle costs with the annual carbon emission calculations to determine the most sustainable method of providing hot water services

CC5: Waste Minimisation and Storage

- o This policy calls for demonstration of measures to minimise the generation of waste in the construction, use and life of buildings
- o Cut and fill analysis of excavated spoil (depending on contamination testing) will minimise the amount of spoil taken off-site and disposed of.
- o Detailed analysis of the functional adaptability of the new extension is currently being undertaken through section Wst 06 of BREEAM.
- o This highlights items such as the following:
 - the building can be adapted for future uses
 - ability or expansion of the building
 - replacement of major plant
 - recycling of structure and cladding
- o The target is to achieve a BREEAM rating of "Excellent"
- o As such, careful consideration has been, and will continue to be given to, minimising waste.

CC6: Accessibility and the Intensity of Development

- o The Local Plan dictates, in this policy, that any new development must be at a scale, density and intensity appropriate to that level of accessibility.
- o The replacement leisure centre will be smaller in footprint, will be located within the site of the existing centre, and will provide a better, more flexible leisure offering to the local community.
- o Therefore, the new centre can be considered as a like for like replacement, although smaller in scale and massing, meeting the requirements of this policy.

CC7: Design and the Public Realm

- o This policy calls for high quality design of all new developments, responding to the local character of the areas in which it is situated.
- o New development should contribute to an improvement in the quality of the environment, being safe, inclusive and attractive and incorporating principles of sustainable development.
- o Due to the standalone nature of a leisure centre, the design of the new replacement leisure centre creates a landmark building with active street frontage, encouraging views of the activities within the building.
- o This principle, along with the closer location to Richfield Avenue, creates a place with its own identity and sense of place.
- o Locating the building closer to the Avenue also allows public legibility of the building, with the main entrance hub located closest to the access road, and with double height glazing. The main entrance itself is highlighted by building cladding and contrasting colour.
- o The design is also fully accessible to users.
- o Locating the building to one side of the existing complex allows views out into the surrounding parkland from Richfield Avenue.
- o The new centre itself is also of a smaller height and mass than the existing building.
- o Including flexibility of internal spaces and pool water, will allow the building to change and adapt over time, to reflect the leisure needs of the local community.

CC8: Safeguarding Amenity

- o This policy is included within the Local Plan to ensure that any new development does not reduce the quality of the environment for others, particularly where it would affect residential properties.
- o A noise assessment of the proposals accompanies this Application, and assesses sound levels of the proposed plant.
- o It should be noted that main louvres have been designed away from the north elevation, facing towards across the River Thames and onto St. Peter's Conservation Area.
- o This assessment concludes that plant noise at the site would not be expected to cause any adverse impacts on the health or quality of life of the nearest noise sensitive receptors (the neighbouring hotel to the east and Reading Canoe Club to the north), meeting the requirements of this policy.
- o A Construction Method Statement to highlight the measures to be taken to control the following during demolition and construction:
 - Dust, dirt and airborne pollutants
 - Noise breakout from the site
 - Pest control measures
- o As the new centre will be visible from St. Peter's Conservation Area, and from Caversham Court Gardens, a Grade II Listed Registered Park and Garden, both on the north bank of the River Thames, care has been taken over massing, scale and elevational treatment to ensure that the scheme will not have a detrimental impact on views from this area.
- o This same principle applies to the impact on the surrounding Rivermead Park, being a Major Landscape Feature.
- o This has been achieved through three principles outlined in 4.4.3 Major Landscape Feature previously, namely:
 - Screening by existing tree belts / groups and enhanced mounding to the rear of the new leisure centre
 - Massing, with the new leisure centre being pulled further away from the River Thames and the MLF, and by decreasing the volumes in height the closer they get to the Thames
 - Elevational treatment, with lighter cladding to the upper levels of the centre, broken up by light grey panels, creating less of a visual impact from a distance

- o As the complex site is in a sensitive location, a Townscape and Visual Impact Assessment / Heritage Statement is submitted in support of the Application.

CC9: Securing Infrastructure

- o As the new centre will be constructed on the site of the existing leisure complex, there will be "minimal damage, loss and impact upon existing infrastructure and environmental assets."
- o However, there will be certain commitments made by GLL to Reading Borough Council through the use of a section 106 agreement.
- o Discussions have been initiated with the Planning Authority on the heads of terms for the s106 agreement.

7.6.2 Built and Natural Environment:

EN1: Protection and Enhancement of the Historic Environment

- o The new centre will be located in the Major Landscape Feature of the Thames Valley, and will be visible from St. Peter's Conservation Area, Caversham Court Gardens, and Caversham Bridge.
- o Care has been taken over the massing, location, scale and elevational treatment to the new centre, as described elsewhere within this Design and Access Statement.
- o A Townscape and Visual Impact Assessment / Heritage Statement will be submitted in support of the Application.

EN7Wp: Local Green Space and Public Open Space

- o As the proposed Leisure Centre will be located on designated Local Green and Public Open Space, this policy has to be taken into account, with any loss of space mitigated by equivalent replacement provision (in terms of quality, quantity and accessibility)
- o Minimal land has been lost to the development of the new centre, being strips of service road to the east and a bin store to the north. This loss has been mitigated through the demolition of the existing centre, and subsequent landscaping scheme including a new pedestrian plaza.

EN10: Access to Open Space

- o This policy is concerned with creating / improving access to parks and open spaces.
- o Current pedestrian access from Richfield Avenue is limited, and terminates on the edge of the existing car park.
- o The new arrangements involve extending the pavements either side of the access road into the site through footpaths and pedestrian crossings. These will then link into a new footpath leading to the pedestrian plaza, and on to the centre and the surrounding park.
- o This creates safe routes to the parkland for both pedestrians and cyclists.
- o A Transport Assessment has been carried out by Hydrock in support of the Application. This demonstrates further connectivity of the site in terms of car and cycle access.

EN11: Waterspaces

- o This policy calls for improving the quality of watercourse environments.
- o The landscape to the drainage culvert in front of the new centre is to be managed, to allow for some visual screening to the swimming pool glazing at ground level.
- o However, a new landscaping scheme / strategy is being proposed to cover other areas of the site, and will enhance tree numbers / habitat creation through planting in areas such as the new car park, and along the pedestrian plaza.

EN12: Biodiversity and the Green Network

- o Opportunities to conserve and enhance are required through this clause to ensure that there is no loss of biodiversity, and to support the Green Network of Local Green Spaces and open green spaces.
- o An accompanying Ecological Appraisal supports this Design and Access Statement. This Appraisal notes key mitigation measures for the proposals will include vegetation protection/management, sensitive lighting, and sensitive removal of vegetation, fox dens and buildings. Key compensation measures will be the inclusion of bird, bat and bee provisions around the centre in the surrounding soft landscape. Landscape planting for the new leisure centre will consist of wildlife attracting native broad-leaved hedge and/or tree species.
- o Please refer to the landscaping layout and strategy for the site.

EN13: Major Landscape Features and Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty

- o No development should be allowed that will detract from the character of appearance of the Thames Valley, designated as a Major Landscape Feature
- o The supporting text to this policy allows developments in or close to these Features so long as it "can preserve or enhance the character or appearance of the feature."
- o With the new centre being relocated closer to Richfield Avenue and the subsequent demolition of the existing, views will be opened up into the MLF, enhancing its appearance.
- o Careful design of massing, volumes and elevational treatment of this relocated centre (as described previously) will also aid in preserving the character of the MLF

EN14: Trees, Hedges and Woodland

- o This policy covers existing tree protection, retention and enhancement.
- o The new centre will involve the removal of a group of willows (6 no.) within the existing car park due to their poor condition. This is confirmed in the accompanying tree survey.
- o The new landscaping scheme will involve the planting of over 2:1 replacement new trees, enhancing tree numbers on the site.

EN15: Air Quality

- o This policy states that proposed developments should "have regard to the need to improve air quality and reduce the effects of poor air quality".
- o As the front half of the site closest to Richfield Avenue lies within the Air Quality Management Area, an Air Quality Assessment is required.
- o This Air Quality Assessment has been carried out by Syntegra, along with a Transport Assessment carried out by Hydrock. Both of these will be submitted in support of the Application.
- o The TA concludes that the new proposals, being a like-for-like replacement, should not generate any additional vehicle movements to and from the site.
- o The Air Quality Assessment concludes that there is a risk of:
 - Dust emissions during construction
 - Road traffic exhaust emissions from vehicles travelling to and from the site during operation
- o However, with good practice dust control measures, the risk of dust emissions during construction was predicted to be not significant.
- o An air quality assessment of road traffic emissions during operation is not required, using the IAQM indicative criteria. Therefore impacts on air quality are considered not significant.

EN16: Pollution and Water Resources

- o This policy is concerned with development of land affected by contamination.
- o The Environment Agency were consulted during the Pre-Application process, and noted that the site is a "former landfill site over a Principal Aquifer".
- o Furness Partnership have produced a Contamination Statement, outlining the gas protection measures, potential reduction in the source of groundwater contamination, and testing / re-use of excavated material.

EN17: Noise Generating Equipment

- o Noise control from a site which is faced by residential properties to the north, and in such a sensitive location as the MLF of the River Thames, is vital. This policy highlights those developments that will be permitted having careful consideration and control / mitigation of noise impacts.
- o Noise breakout from the centre will be minimised through detailed design of the main elevational enclosure, and by locating plant away from facing directly onto residential properties.
- o A noise assessment has been carried out by Syntegra and accompanies the Application.
- o This assessment concludes that plant noise at the site would not be expected to cause any adverse impacts on the health or quality of life of the nearest noise sensitive receptors (the neighbouring hotel to the east and Reading Canoe Club to the north), meeting the requirements of this policy.
- o The change in road traffic will result in no change to noise levels.

EN18: Flooding and Drainage

- o The site sits within Flood Zone 2 and a Flood Risk Assessment will therefore be required.
- o This Flood Risk Assessment has been carried out by Furness Partnership who have also produced a drainage strategy for the site.
- o Please see accompanying Assessment for details.

7.6.3 Transport:**TR4: Cycle Routes and Facilities**

- o The proposed development site is surrounded by a network of local on and off-road cycle routes which provide a link to local residential areas.
- o The R40 route is a locally signed cycle route connecting Emmer Green and Caversham Heights to the Rivermead Leisure Complex.
- o Other local cycleways (including the R4 and the R41) provide connections to other parts of Reading.
- o NCN Route 5 is provided adjacent to the River Thames approximately 660m east of the site and is directly linked to the site by the R40 cycle route.
- o As such there are continuous cycle connections provided from the site to the various surrounding residential areas.
- o All of these routes will be maintained and unaffected by the proposed development

TR5: Car and Cycle Parking and Electric Vehicle Charging

- o This policy, in combination with Reading Borough Council's Revised Parking Standards and Design Supplementary Planning Document, guides developments in terms of parking provision and charging points.
- o The following are the car parking numbers to be provided in the new car park at Rivermead, and as assessed by Hydrock in their Transport Assessment:
 - 112 standard car parking bays
 - 22 dedicated Blue Badge parking bays
 - 14 family / toddler spaces
 - 40 electric vehicle charging points. 20 of these are located in the next row after the dedicated Blue Badge parking bays and the Family spaces. 20 more electric vehicle charging points are located to the north of the new angled footpath through the car park.
- o Existing overflow car parking will be retained, in the two car parks closest to Richfield Avenue, at 88 no. and 114 no. standard parking bays respectively.
- o Hydrock, in their Transport Assessment, have assessed levels of additional cycle parking at Rivermead to be 20 hoops, providing parking for 40 bicycles. All of the 20 hoops are proposed to be covered. This number also complies with the BREEAM standards.

7.6.4 Retail, Leisure and Culture:**RL2: Scale and Location of Retail, Leisure and Culture Development**

- o This policy provides for up to 34,900 sq m of retail and related facilities in Reading to 2036, together with new leisure facilities.
- o The supporting text to this policy also identifies the need for replacement swimming facilities in Reading, expected to be met at Rivermead
- o As such, the new leisure centre containing replacement swimming pools complies with this policy.

RL6: Protection of leisure facilities and public houses

- o This policy supports the retention of existing leisure facilities.
- o As the new development at Rivermead is for the replacement of the existing leisure centre, on the same leisure complex site, the proposals comply with this policy.

7.6.5 Area Specific Policies (West Reading and Tilehurst):**WR3d: Other Sites for Development in West Reading and Tilehurst**

- o This policy notes the need for improving Reading's leisure offer at Rivermead, so long as the proposals address any contamination on site and any flood issues noted from a Flood Risk Assessment

8.0 CONSULTATIONS

During the process to develop these proposals a number of consultation events have been held. These are listed out as follows.

8.1 Pre-Application Council Engagement

A Pre-Application submission was made to Reading Borough Council on 3rd February 2020. Three subsequent Pre-Application meetings were held on the following dates:

- 12th February 2020
- 26th February 2020
- 19th March 2020 (held by video conferencing)

Feedback from these meetings included:

- The principle of the development and use is acceptable
- Further development of the design would be required in the context of the project's setting within the Major Landscape Feature, wider open space, and the Conservation Area to the north of the River Thames.
- High quality landscaping and a bio-diversity scheme would also be required, along with a means of some screening of the site from more sensitive areas, and to enable biodiversity enhancements

The current proposals have been amended in accordance with this feedback as follows:

- Detailed design exercises have been carried out on the rear elevations facing towards the Major Landscape Feature of the River Thames and St. Peters Conservation Area
- A strategy for screening and reducing the visual impact of the rear elevations has been carried out through use of enhanced bunding and careful location of the building.
- A detailed landscaping strategy has been produced which addresses the sensitivity of the site
- Bio-diversity of the site and surroundings has been assessed in the Ecological Appraisal Report produced by John Wenman Ecological Consultancy and which accompanies this Application.
- Biodiversity enhancements to be introduced to the project include:
 - o Making use of native plant species of local provenance
 - o Introduction of bird and bat boxes
- Please refer to separate Ecological Appraisal which accompanies this Application.

Pre-Application minutes are included in Appendix B.

8.2 Stakeholder Consultation

8.2.1 NGB and Sports Club Engagement:

Needs Assessment and Options Appraisal:

In 2015 the Council produced an Indoor Sports facilities strategy (Needs Assessment). This highlighted local strategic outcomes that will be delivered through a partnership with leisure providers and other key stakeholders. This strategy involved, and took into account, consultation with 89 individuals and organisations, including facility users, clubs, facility operators, council officers and National Governing Bodies of Sport (NGBs).

The strategy aims to deliver the following key objectives which have been identified as common themes following research and stakeholders consultation:

- Protect and maintain strategically important existing facilities;
- Improve access to meet demand;
- Provide new facilities;
- Improve viability of facilities.

Accompanying the needs assessment, an Options Appraisal was undertaken which identified the mix and locations that facilities should be provided. In addition to the needs assessment, support was provided by Sport England and information identifying levels of sporting/leisure provision was determined through their Facilities Plan Model which informed the 2015 options appraisal.

Following the report to RBC's Policy Committee in November 2016, clearly setting out the Council's intentions to upgrade the Borough's leisure facilities, a number of stakeholders communicated their aspirations for the quality and specification of new provision, including swimming, diving and basketball clubs. The aspirations of local clubs formed part of the information that bidders for the leisure provision contract received and subsequently considered in developing proposals.

Emerging Strategic Outcomes Planning Model:

Following on from this needs assessment and options appraisal, a Sport England Strategic Outcomes Planning Model was commissioned by RBC to set out exactly what outcomes the Council requires from letting of the leisure services contract in late 2020. As part of this strategic review, a number of NGBs and local sports clubs have been consulted. A list of these is included in Appendix G.

Consultation:

In addition to designing facilities to encourage participation in physical activity generally, to best meet formal sporting need, consultation was undertaken with individual NGBs as summarised below.

RBC has been in contact with Swim England whose clubs make substantial use of the facilities which are being re-provided. RBC has also contacted those whose facilities are changing, including Badminton England, Basketball England, Squash England and English Indoor Bowls Association. Feedback has been received from Swim England on diving pool dimensions, which have now been adjusted accordingly. A barrier has also been included between the splash pad and diving pool. The moveable floor in the main pool will be developed further at the next design stage, and it is anticipated that Sport England / Swim England will be involved in further reviews of the developed designs.

Badminton England's initial concerns raised were the reduction of court space within the hall, from 10 courts down to 6 courts. However, this is being addressed thorough an Academy School being built next door, with a minimum of a 4-court sports hall. Reading Borough Council are in discussions with the School over a Community Use Agreement to provide public access.

Basketball England raised early concerns that the new development may not meet the required standard for Division 1 Men's League which is the level at which Reading Rockets currently play. However, in recent discussions, Basketball England have confirmed that the plans do meet the requirements for this level, along with associated facilities such as the appropriate level of spectator seating for competition matches (250) . Facilities will be designed to meet both elite and community level needs.

Squash England has stated there are around 200,000 players participating in squash per week 2019 (pre-Covid). This is a significant decline since 2016, where weekly participation was around 425,000. The demand within Reading reflects the national picture, with 70% of court slots being used at peak times at Meadway. Following the development of the replacement Rivermead leisure centre, RBC will continue to offer two squash courts at Meadway. Additionally, according to England Squash' website there are over 10 courts within a 5-mile radius of Reading.

England Indoor Bowls Association have yet to formally respond to RBC approaches on Rivermead leisure centre, and the loss of the indoor bowls centre. RBC have therefore sought information from local clubs. Participation in bowls nationally is declining. The Rivermead Bowls club has a declining membership; it now has 100 members during the Covid pandemic, compared to over 300 members in previous years. The other indoor facility in Reading, Whiteknights Bowls Club, has a capacity of 1000 members and their membership has reduced to 700. As such there currently is adequate capacity elsewhere in Reading to accommodate all current indoor bowls members. Should the demand for Bowls recover and local clubs be unable to meet this, RBC has identified the ability to provide bowls matts at South Reading Leisure Centre.

8.2.2 Access and Disability Working Group:

Designs of Rivermead and Palmer Park leisure centres were physically presented to the Access and Disability Working Group on 5th March 2020. These designs were reflective of the schemes at that time, it should be noted that these projects have been developed further and have taken on board a number of items that were discussed at the presentation.

The accessibility strategy reflecting these discussions is described in detail in section 4.6 Accessibility and include items such as the following:

- Well-lit level footpaths through to the main entrance
- 22 dedicated accessible car parking spaces
- Drop-off points with dropped kerbs right outside the main entrance
- Readibus drop-off point with dropped kerbs right outside the main entrance
- Automatic entry doors within the lobby area
- Clear circulation widths suitable for wheelchair users, with sports wheelchairs being considered at the ground floor.
- Induction hearing loops and dropped counter sections will be included at the reception and servery counters
- Accessible toilets are included for off the main café area at ground floor, and within the circulation hub at first floor.
- 2 no. 8 person minimum lifts are included in the scheme
- Pool water access will be a mixture of shallow accessible steps into the main pool, with handrails either side, and via Poolpod wet side wheelchair lifts
- Poolpods will also be used to access the teaching pool
- All stairs (access and escape) will be designed to be accessible for ambulant disabled, with wheelchair refuges to be included at the head of each fire escape stair.
- Visual contrast will be allowed for in terms of wall / floor finishes and leading edges of doors and ironmongery
- Brail Signage will also be allowed throughout the scheme.
- Accessible changing facilities (all detailed to Sport England Accessible Facilities Design Guidance note)

8.2.3 Statutory Consultees:

Statutory Consultees including Thames Water and the Environment Agency have been engaged during the Pre-Application process to ensure the principle of the proposed development is acceptable and to confirm compliance with the technical requirements that will be required on this site.

Details of their comments are included within the Pre-Application Report contained in Appendix B.

8.3 Statement of Community Involvement

As noted previously, in 2019 the Council commissioned the production of a Strategic Outcome Planning Model (SOPM). This Planning Model reinforces and updates the research and findings of the 2015 Facilities Strategy. The development of the SOPM involves three elements of consultation, online questionnaire, face to face interviews and focus groups and reflects the standards identified in the leisure service specification.

An on-line leisure survey was conducted in July and August 2019 to which there were 628 online survey completions. This research was designed to investigate attitudes and behaviour around physical activity and exercise in general. Further and more specifically, to find out the barriers to being active and what would encourage them to use Reading Borough Council leisure facilities in the future.

Interviews were also conducted within the centre of Reading. The sample was chosen to reflect the age, gender and occupational profile of the district as closely as possible and was selected as “those who have lived / worked in the area for at least 6 months”. These were conducted concurrently with the online survey.

In-depth focus groups were held with under-represented groups during October/November 2019 to identify particular service/ facility requirements that the preferred leisure service bidder will be expected to address. The results of these in-depth focus groups are listed out as follows:

8.3.1 Inactive Adults:

- Multi Sports Area – consider astro turf and MUGAs that could be used for multi-sport
- Incentives – The research shows that inactive Reading residents would be receptive and respond well to incentives to encourage them to use the leisure facilities e.g. focused discounts / price reduction
- Loneliness – the research revealed that loneliness and social isolation is often a factor preventing residents from being active. Help reduce loneliness and social isolation by introducing community activities
- Competition – the participants talked positively about how a limited amount of competitiveness in a physical activity would encourage and motivate them
- Volunteer Buddy scheme – a common theme in the research was that those questioned are inactive because they don’t have somebody to exercise with. Consider a volunteer buddy scheme to help residents become more active. This has worked well in other areas for 50- age group
- Mixed Age Groups – the research indicated that some residents feel they get stuck in one age group e.g. 60+. Opportunity to mix age groups and not pigeon hole people into one category

8.3.2 Older People:

- As the number of “older people” and lifespan increases it will be necessary to differentiate between different age groups within the 50 plus population, not just because of the age differences but also a variety of attitudes towards life and different levels of fitness/health
- Transport to leisure centres and other places where people can be active needs to be reviewed as the perception is that this is a strong barrier
- The perception of quality of provision needs to be addressed as this is currently putting people off even visiting and trying
- The whole experience needs to be considered when programming/planning for this group, for example how can we make it more social rather than functional

8.3.3 Disability:

- The reasons for inactivity in this group are even more complex than the general population, as transport, accessibility on site and personal support are quite often critical.
- A more specific approach to design and building in opportunities for people with disabilities is required
- The wide range of disabilities and special needs must always be born in mind.
- Consultation with and involvement by this group at an early stage could address many issues, for example, outdoor gyms being positioned in inappropriate places within parks
- There is a lack of awareness which means sometimes mainstream initiatives are introduced without thinking about how they could include people with disabilities e.g. walk a mile at school
- You Reading card – although a great scheme it has significant restrictions which inflict on its effectiveness; it can only be brought at the central library, heavily benefits those wanting to swim versus other activities (e.g. gym) and Rivermead is not suitable
- Cost – due to the requirements for assistance, financing an activity for both a child and their carer can be difficult, subsidies need to be available as specialist activities can be expensive
- Accessibility is one of the biggest factors which prevents involvement from disabled children as they are unable to enter the venue easily or find suitable parking facilities
- Parents of autistic children need safe and secure areas; for example, slide catchers on play area gates, fenced in areas are important to ensure safety of children and allow parents to relax
- Visual disabilities are often overlooked e.g. lots of bright colours used to engage children are ineffective, alternatives are not well explored

8.3.4 Physical Disability and Sensory Needs Network (PDSN):

- Support – need a lot of personal support to go places
- Accessibility at centres is very poor, more equipment needs to be adapted
- Cost – used to be more support available
- YRP – 75% awareness
- Cuts have defiantly had an effect
- Transport is always key
- Being on benefits related to my disability – I am worried about being seen as active as it may affect my benefits
- Need to find activity that I can build into everyday life
- Lack of interpreters for deaf people that want to use the leisure centres
- Need to be more signposted activities
- Need to allow for different levels of motivation
- Swimming – Changing rooms are bad & toilets as well, Pools have closed - Council boundaries things like YPR need to work across boundaries
- Communication has to be better between groups
- Lack of Gym staff
- Music – need to be appropriate
- Interpreters for classes with deaf people

8.3.5 Feedback and Design Development:

Following on from the initial design brief and design development site and building plans have been developed. These plans are to meet the key leisure outcomes, and address items from the public consultations / in-depth focus groups such as:

- improved transport links to the centre (better disabled parking bay layouts and drop-off points)
- making the building more attractive and fit-for-purpose, addressing and improving quality of service provision
- including a large social area to encourage older users
- care has been taken to ensure that the centre is easily accessible, legible and easy to use for those with disabilities

An on-line planning exhibition is to be initiated due to current restrictions as a result of the Covid-19 pandemic on access to those buildings where normally the exhibitions would be displayed i.e. the leisure centres. Once the leisure centres are able to re-open, displays of the design will be on view for users.

This will include a planning exhibition video on both GLL and RBC webpages with direct links to the planning portal for residents to leave comments on the design. A review of these comments will then be undertaken, with results fed back to the Council.

The Council and GLL are also intending to hold a club user group on-line session to brief clubs on the design detail to help explain the new facilities specific to their individual sports.

To ensure wide information of the designs, established social media channels will also be used (Twitter, Facebook) to engage with residents and again providing the link to the planning documents to leave their comments.

It is anticipated that further consultation will occur with user and focus groups, such as the PDSN, the Access and Disability Working Group, and various NGBs / Sport England, as the design progresses through to the next, detailed design stage. The ultimate aim is to create a well-designed, attractive building, supporting the needs of the various stakeholders.

8.4 Conclusions

In conclusion, consultation with key stakeholders has been carried out as part of the work to develop the indoor sports facilities strategy, including a range of sports clubs and operators. This consultation has also involved the Amateur Swimming Association (ASA, now Swim England) and Sport England to ensure that lead governing bodies for a variety of sports have been able to directly influence the strategy and is confident that it reflects their interests and input.

The design of the new centre reflects this strategy, and further consultation has occurred with the National Governing Bodies and Clubs over the design. The design has subsequently been revised to suit this feedback (for example, increasing the diving pool dimensions on recommendations received from Swim England).

The results from the online consultation will also be reviewed, and discussed in detail with the Council to reflect feedback received from the general public.

The new development at Rivermead will secure significant improvements to the current leisure provision and will be a key driver in delivering a number of Council priorities and community outcomes. These include:

- Increased participation in physical activity by residents, including disadvantaged and inactive groups
- An outreach and engagement service to help to secure the Council's objective to improve health and wellbeing by increased physical activity
- Physical activity development programmes covering a wide range of sports and activities, above and beyond key commercial areas
- Improved sport and physical activities and targeted Sports Club programme
- Improved opportunities to promote local employment including new apprenticeships
- Exercise referral as part of the base specification for the service

This presents the Borough Council with an opportunity to create a step change in the quality and standard of the leisure offer available to residents and visitors to Reading and will support the Council's ambitions around public health and increasing participation in physical activity.

9.0 SUPPORTING SURVEYS, ASSESSMENTS & REPORTS

The following are surveys, assessments and reports produced to support the Planning Application for the demolition and new replacement Rivermead Leisure Centre. These will be submitted as separate documents to this Integrated Planning, Design and Access Statement.

9.1 Air quality assessment:

- An Air Quality Assessment has been produced by Syntegra Consulting.
- The Air Quality Assessment concludes that there is a risk of:
 - o Dust emissions during construction
 - o Road traffic exhaust emissions from vehicles travelling to and from the site during operation
- However, with good practice dust control measures, the risk of dust emissions during construction was predicted to be not significant.
- These measures will be set out in the Construction Method Statement
- An air quality assessment of road traffic emissions during operation is not required, using the IAQM indicative criteria. Therefore impacts on air quality are considered not significant.

9.2 Contaminated land survey:

- An intrusive ground investigation has been carried out by Soils Limited.
- This has, in turn, been assessed by Furness Partnership as Structural and Civil Engineers by Ecoteric Consultants who have produced a Contamination Assessment.
- Both of these documents accompany the Application.
- The Contamination Assessment notes the following:
 - o Soil:
 - The results show no exceedances from guideline values in soil samples for a Commercial or Public Open Space land use scenario
 - o Gas:
 - Gas monitoring of the site shows that it falls under the CS3 category.
 - Gas protection measures for the proposed development (sub-floor membranes, etc.) will conform to a CS3 level.
 - o Groundwater:
 - Two PAHs (polycyclic aromatic hydrocarbons: anthracene and fluoranthene) were found to exceed guideline values
 - However, the general public is considered unlikely to come into contact with groundwater, so protection measures are not deemed necessary.
 - The proposed development is considered to have a beneficial effect by potentially reducing the source of contamination to groundwater
 - The Environment Agency will need to be consulted for proposed construction methods of foundations and swimming pools to mitigate mobilisation of contaminants to groundwater. This will be ongoing through the next design stage.
 - o Waste Disposal:
 - A Discovery Strategy is to be implemented by the contractor. On finding any contaminated soil the contractor will report this to the Local Authority and notify a third party environmental consultant.
 - Re-use of excavated material on site needs to follow EPR guidelines or follow the CL:AIRE voluntary code of practice

9.3 Ecological survey:

- A Preliminary Ecological Assessment has been produced by John Wenman Ecological Consulting.
- The Assessment recommends the following:
 - o Minimise tree and shrub removal where possible
 - o Any tree / shrub removal necessary for the development to be completed outside of bird nesting season (March to August incl.)
 - o Shrub clearance to be cleared using hand tools, to minimise impacts on mammals and reptiles
 - o Prevention of silt and pollution entering the drainage culvert, all to Environment Agency guidelines
 - o Action required to prevent spread of Japanese Knotweed through construction activities.
 - o Cotoneaster weeds to be removed from car park planting beds
 - o Retained tree and shrubs to be adequately protected during construction
 - o External lighting period to be controlled, light fittings to be directed downwards and bulbs to be low or non-UV type
 - o Encourage planting of native woody planting to enhance site bio-diversity
 - o Inclusion of bird and bat boxes
- A Preliminary Bat Roost Assessment of the existing leisure centre was also requested as part of the Pre-Application discussions. This has been produced by John Wenman Ecological Consulting. Both this, and the Ecological Assessment, will be submitted separately.
- The Bat Roost Assessment concluded the following:
 - o No evidence of roosting bats was visible during the inspection
 - o Few features were identified as being suitable for roosting bats
 - o These features are to be re-surveyed prior to demolition to ensure that no bats have roosted.
 - o Demolition to be carried out either outside of bird nesting season (March to August incl.) or the building re-surveyed to ensure there are no nesting birds.

9.4 Energy efficiency statement:

- An Energy Strategy has been produced by Thornley and Lumb.
- This Strategy concludes the following:
- The building fabric first design philosophy and efficient building services analysis are combined with the available Low and Zero Carbon LZC technology to achieve a sustainable low energy use development and to exceed a BREEAM rating of 'Excellent'.
- The following measures have been incorporated within the design:
 - o Low external element u-values
 - o Low air permeability
 - o Low energy LED lighting with lighting controls
 - o Metering connected to BMS with auto monitoring and targeting of energy
 - o Mechanical ventilation with passive heat recovery MVHR
 - o Air Source Heat Pump ASHP space heating to Gym, Studios, Offices, Café, and associated areas
 - o High efficiency Air to Water CO₂ Air Source Heat Pump ASHP hot water services
 - o Solar Photovoltaic panels generating on site zero carbon electricity
- The Strategy concludes that the overall development's carbon emissions will be reduced 45% below the Part L 2013 baseline
- When assessing the development using current electricity grid SAP 10 carbon factors a carbon reduction of 71% is achieved

9.5 Environmental impact assessment screening:

- Gillings Planning have produced a Screening Opinion for an Environmental Impact Assessment for the new centre.
- The Screening Opinion analyses the proposals as follows:
 - o Characteristics of development:
 - The proposed development is of an appropriate scale in relation to the site and the surrounding area and would not give rise to significant environmental effects.
 - o Vehicle and cycle parking:
 - The proposals reflects a more sustainable modal shift away from the use of the private petrol/diesel motor vehicle and reflects the greater use of more sustainable travel options
 - The characteristics of the development are not considered to be likely to give rise to significant environmental effects.
 - o Location of development:
 - As the site lies within an established urban area and comprises a previously developed site, it is not considered that the site is sensitive and the location of the development is not likely to give rise to significant environmental effects.
 - o Types and characteristics of the potential impact:
 - The effects of the proposed development are not considered likely to extend beyond the immediate environs or be of a scale or complexity likely to give rise to significant effects on the environment.
 - o Conclusion:
 - The likely impacts of the replacement leisure centre on the same site are not considered to be significant and so it concludes that the proposal is not EIA development.

9.6 External lighting details:

- Thornley and Lumb have produced both a lighting impact statement and a site external lighting layout to support the Application for the new centre.
- This report confirms that the impact of the external lighting has been carefully assessed to ensure that the existing environment can coexist with the proposed new build.
- The external lighting installation for the development has been designed to ensure minimal impact on the immediate, neighbouring surroundings and beyond the boundary of the site.
- The proposed external lighting will consist of:
 - o 6m columns with LED luminaires
 - o LED wall mounted luminaires
- The external lighting, will be controlled via a time clock & Photo Cell daylight sensor
- Precautions have been undertaken at all stages of the design to mitigate the effect of the lighting installation.

9.7 Flood risk assessment:

- A Flood Risk Assessment has been completed by Furness Partnership.
- This Assessment's findings are as follows:
 - o The site is within a Flood Zone 2 and Flood Zone 3a
The site is also identified as having a low-risk to flood from fluvial, tidal and surface water sources
 - o Based on Table 2 of the NPPF, the development is classified as 'less vulnerable' with respect to flood risk without the need for an Exception Test
 - o The proposed drainage strategy will use the existing surface water drainage outfall which discharges into a local land drain:
 - Attenuation structures will be sized to attenuate the 1 in 100 year storm event with a 40% allowance for climate change.

9.8 Noise & vibration impact assessment:

- A Noise Impact Assessment has been carried out by Syntegra Consulting.
- This assessment concludes that:
 - o Plant noise at the site would not be expected to cause any adverse impacts on the health or quality of life of the nearest noise sensitive receptors (the neighbouring hotel to the east and Reading Canoe Club to the north), meeting the requirements of this policy.
 - o The change in road traffic will result in no change to noise levels.

9.9 Open space statement:

- As a pre-condition of entering into a Lease with the appointed Leisure Operator, Reading Borough will advertise the Lease as a disposal of open space under S123 of the Local Government Act 1972 in a local paper for two consecutive weeks. Any objections will be considered by a future meeting of Policy Committee for final decision.
- It is anticipated that the notices for this will be advertised in December 2020 on two separate occasions, after the Planning Application has been submitted.

9.10 BREEAM Pre-Application / Sustainability statement:

- A combined Sustainability Statement and BREEAM Pre-Assessment have been carried out by Ecoteric Consulting.
- The Statement analyses the design to date in terms of items including the following:
 - o The need to build the project and its location
 - o Energy efficiency and carbon emissions
 - o Water conservation
 - o Community impacts
 - o Transport
 - o Health and Wellbeing including daylighting analysis and thermal comfort
 - o Visual comfort
 - o Indoor Air Quality
 - o Life Cycle Analysis
 - o Design for Disassembly and Adaptability
 - o Pollution issues
 - o Best practice management of the site

This assesses that the scheme has a target BREEAM rating of "Excellent" achieved through a number of measures

9.11 Sustainable drainage strategy:

- A Sustainable Drainage Strategy and Proposed Drainage Layout have been produced by Furness Partnership.
- The surface water discharge from the new leisure centre will be made up from run-off from the following elements of the development:
 - o Building roof area
 - o Paved areas around new development (permeable concrete paving)
 - o Access roads (tarmac)
 - o Car parking bays (permeable concrete paving)
- The proposed drainage strategy will utilise the existing surface water drainage outfall which discharges into a local land drain. Attenuation structures will be sized to attenuate the 1 in 100 year storm event with a 40% allowance for climate change.

9.12 Townscape and visual impact assessment:

- A Built Heritage, Townscape and Visual Impact Appraisal (HTVIA) has been produced by Neaves Urbanism.
- The Appraisal assesses the potential effects of the proposed development on historical assets (HAs), townscape character assets (TCAs) and visual amenity
- The Appraisal concludes the following:
 - o Heritage Assets (HAs):
 - There are no HAs on the site itself, but there are a number of HAs around the site
 - It assesses that there would be no harmful effect on the setting or significance of any heritage asset in the surrounding area, when regarding the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 and that the Proposed Development is in line with the policy set out in Section 16 of the National Planning Policy Framework (2019) and the guidance in the national PPG (2019).
 - o Townscape Character Assets (TCAs):
 - Four TCA receptors have been established as part of this appraisal. These are based on a combination of the dominant land use, built form, layout and vegetation
 - The proposals would result in a new leisure centre that positively addresses Richfield Avenue.
 - The Appraisal concludes that there would be minor beneficial effects on two of these TCAs from these proposals
 - o Visual amenity:
 - The Appraisal considers that the visibility would broadly remain the same.
 - The views from some of the visual receptors (River Thames, Caversham Court etc.) would change, ranging from moderate and beneficial, through to having a neutral effect.
 - The proposals would not affect the key features identified within RBC's Reading Tall Building Strategy for the view from Caversham Bridge and from the Thames Path.
 - The scheme has been analysed and is considered that it would not detract from the character or appearance of the Major Landscape Feature of the Thames Valley.
 - o The Appraisal concludes that the proposals would be visually appreciated at a local scale.

9.13 Transport assessment:

- A Transport Assessment and Travel Plan have been produced by Hydrock Consultants
- The Transport Assessment provides the necessary information for the local planning authority to consider the merits of the development in terms of accessibility, sustainability, highway safety, and the impact of the new facility on the local road network.
- The Transport Assessment concludes that:
 - o The site is considered to be situated in a highly sustainable location benefiting from bus and rail services within walking/cycling distance.
 - o The site is also within walking and cycling distance to large residential areas.
 - o The site is well connected by a network of existing pedestrian and cycle infrastructure, and consequently offers a wide range of non-car transport opportunities for both patrons and staff.
 - o A new area of public realm and a new footpath connection are also proposed as part of the development, further enhancing the sustainable transport connections.
 - o A review of Personal Injury Accident data over the last five years has not identified any overriding highway safety issues which would be exacerbated by the proposals
 - o The development proposals are to provide a site wide total of 390 car parking spaces which is sufficient to accommodate worst-case peak parking demand of circa. 369 spaces.
 - o Disabled, family/toddler, EV charging bays and cycle parking spaces are provided in line with Reading Borough Council's Local Plan policies.
 - o Swept path analysis confirms that the development site can be serviced appropriately by a refuse vehicle and leave the site in a forward gear.
- The main conclusion of the Assessment is that there are no significant highways or transportation matters that should preclude the Local Planning Authority from approving this planning application.
- The Travel Plan has been prepared to set out a strategy for informing future employees for accessing the site using sustainable transport choices and to meet the requirements of BREEAM Assessment of "Excellent".
- The objective of the Travel Plan is to achieve the following outcomes:
 - o Minimise single occupancy car travel to and from the development
 - o Identify which measures are needed to maximise the use of non-car travel
 - o Lead to a change in the travel behaviour of individuals to a sustainable mode of travel and then maintain that change
 - o Identify ways of reducing the need to travel to and from the development
- This corresponds with one of Reading Borough Council's strategic aims of achieving a carbon neutral Reading by 2030.

9.14 Tree survey / arboricultural impact assessment:

- A Tree Survey and Arboricultural Impact Assessment has been produced by Hayden's Arboricultural Consultants.
- This Assessment recommends the following:
 - o eighteen category "C" trees are to be felled to achieve the proposed layout
 - o another 6 trees of low quality (potential health & safety risk) to be felled as part of the development
 - o Mitigation of tree loss is to be offset through enhanced replacement tree planting
 - o Root protection zones to be included during construction
 - o A detailed Arboricultural Method Statement & Tree Protection Plan should be provided at the next design stage, to include:
 - fencing type
 - project phasing
 - an auditable monitoring schedule
 - o All trees and landscape features that are to remain as part of the development should suffer no structural damage
 - o The structural engineer is to be consulted over foundation design to ensure that retained trees and landscape features do not suffer this structural damage.

9.15 Utilities surveys and proposals:

- A Utility Assessment, A New Service Connections Layout and a Service Diversions Layout have been produced by Thornley and Lumb.
- The Assessment notes that pre-development enquiries were submitted to the following statutory undertakers:
 - o Electricity - Scottish & Southern Electricity (SSE)
 - o Gas - Scotia Gas Networks (SGN)
 - o Water - Thames Water (TW)
 - o Telecoms - BT / Virgin
- The following summarises the current utilities and proposed works:
 - o Electricity:
 - There is an existing substation on the Richfield Avenue Leisure Centre site
 - Associated cabling works
 - Dismantling overhead span and pole and underground LV mains cable, install a new pole, reconnect the overhead mains cable to the new pole which feeds neighbouring property.
 - o Gas:
 - An existing gas supply is located on site and is to be adapted as below
 - Making some LP gas pipework redundant
 - Divert some existing pipework fouling the footprint of the proposed new centre
 - New gas main to be installed
 - o Water:
 - Thames Water have confirmed there is a 125mm private distribution main within the site emanating from Richfield Avenue.
 - Thames Water have confirmed there is enough capacity for the existing leisure centre and to supply the new 4,300m² leisure centre requiring a flow of 30,000lts / 30m³ per day.
 - The water meter will be located below ground within the boundary of the site. Final location TBA.
 - o Fire Hydrant:
 - 2 no. existing single fire hydrants serve the existing site. These will be retained and will serve the new centre.

9.16 Vent, flue and ventilation details:

- A Ventilation and Extract Statement, along with ventilation, heating and cooling layouts and plantrooms layouts, have been produced by Thornley and Lumb.
- The Statement notes that there will be 12 no. systems serving the new centre. These are broken down as follows:
 - o Pool Hall
 - o Village Change, Male Change & Female Change
 - o Sports Hall
 - o Café / Seating
 - o Activity Zone & Party Rooms
 - o Kitchen & Served
 - o Lobby, Reception Area & Circulation
 - o Gym
 - o 1F Male Change, Female Change & Toilets
 - o Spin Studios (3No.)
 - o Main Office
 - o Staff Room
- The accompanying drawings show these systems in detail, and will be submitted separately, to support the Application.

9.17 Odour Assessment:

- o It should be noted that the anticipated food offerings will be limited to warm-up of light meals such as paninis and jacket potatoes.
- o As such, with kitchen louvres discharging towards the south and Richfield Avenue, there will be very limited odours emanating from the site. Odours will discharge towards Richfield Avenue and should have no impact on the nearest residences across the River Thames.

APPENDICES

Appendix A:

Planning Validation Requirements Lists:

NATIONAL VALIDATION LIST FOR PLANNING		
Item	Included separately in Application (Yes/No)	Notes
Application Form and ownership certificates	Yes	
Site Location Plan	Yes	
Site Block Plan	Yes	
Application fee (if applicable)	N/A	
Design and Access Statement (DAS)	Yes	Integrated with Planning Statement within this Statement (section 7.0)
Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) Form	Yes	No CIL applicable as project is for community use, form submitted separately
Sustainable Drainage System Proposals (SUDs)	Yes	By Furness Partnership. Combined with Flood Risk Assessment. Submitted separately.
Any particulars or evidence required by the Authority under the published local list (see below)	Yes	See below
Any other plans (with scale bars and north points), drawings and information necessary to describe the development	Yes	
Design and Access Statement (DAS)	Yes	Integrated with Planning Statement

LOCAL VALIDATION REQUIREMENTS FOR PLANNING		
Item	Included separately in Application (Yes/No)	Notes
Any other plans (with scale bars and north points), drawings and information necessary to describe the development	Yes	By Saunders Boston Architects. Submitted separately.
Air Quality Assessment	Yes	By Syntegra Consulting. Submitted separately.
Contaminated Land Survey & Report	Yes	Intrusive ground investigation by Soils Limited. Contamination Assessment by Furness Partnership. Both submitted separately.
Ecology Survey and Report	Yes	Preliminary Ecological Assessment and Preliminary Bat Roost Assessment by John Wenman. Both submitted separately.
Energy Efficiency Statement	No – included in DAS	Energy Strategy by Thornley and Lumb. Included within this Statement (Appendix F).
EIA Screening Opinion	Yes	EIA Screening Opinion by Gillings Planning. Submitted separately.
External Lighting Details	Yes	External Lighting Impact Statement and External Lighting Layout by Thornley and Lumb. Both submitted separately.
Flood Risk Assessment	Yes	Flood Risk Assessment and Drainage Strategy by Furness Partnership Engineers. Both submitted separately.
Heads of Terms Proposals	No	GLL and Pellikaan Construction have engaged with Reading Borough Council and UKCIC on s106 requirements. It is anticipated that this will be mainly on Employment, but there may be other obligations worked through during the Planning consultation and dependent on consultee responses. S106 requirements to be agreed by March 2021.
Landscaping Strategy	Yes	Landscaping Strategy and Proposals by East Midlands Landscaping. Strategy included within this Statement. Outline Landscaping Proposal submitted separately.

LOCAL VALIDATION REQUIREMENTS FOR PLANNING		
Item	Included separately in Application (Yes/No)	Notes
Noise Assessment	Yes	Noise Impact Assessment by Syntegra Consulting. Submitted separately.
Odour Assessment	No – included in DAS	Statement included within this Statement. See item 9.
Open Space Statement	No – included in DAS	Statement included within this Statement. See item 9.
Planning Statement	No – included in DAS	Included within this Statement (see section 7.0).
Sustainability Statement	Yes	By Ecoteric Consulting. Submitted separately and included within this Statement (Appendix E).
Townscape and Visual Impact Assessment (re MLF) /Heritage Statement	Yes	Built Heritage, Townscape and Visual Impact Appraisal by Neaves Urbanism. Submitted separately.
Transport Assessments & Travel Plan	Yes	Transport Assessment and Travel Plan by Hydrock Consulting. Submitted separately.
Tree Survey/ Arboricultural Method Statement	Yes	Tree Survey And Arboricultural Impact Assessment by Hayden's Arboricultural Consultants. Submitted separately.
Utilities Statement	Yes	Utility Assessment, A New Service Connections Layout and a Service Diversions Layout by Thornley and Lumb. All submitted separately.
Vehicle Parking and Servicing Details	Yes	Car parking layout by Saunders Boston Architects. Tracking diagrams by Hydrock Consultants. Both submitted separately. Servicing arrangements described in section 4.8 of this Statement
Vent, Flue and Ventilation Details	Yes	A Ventilation and Extract Statement, ventilation, heating and cooling layouts and plantrooms layouts, by Thornley and Lumb. All submitted separately.

Appendix B:

Pre-Application Report

Appendix C:

Site Set-Up Phasing Drawings

Appendix D:

BREEAM Pre-Assessment

Appendix E:

Sustainability Statement

Appendix F:

Energy Strategy

Appendix G:

NGB and Stakeholder List