



Design & Access Statement

E04759

APPENDIX T

Design & Access Strategy

Design & Access Strategy

For Planning Application

Ranikhet Academy Primary School

Design & Access Strategy

For Planning & Building Control Applications

Site	Ranikhet Academy Primary School, Reading	TMS Code	E04759
Project Name	New 2FE School and Nursery		
Project Officer	Nick Collett		

Section One – Planning RIBA Stage D	Shona Forsyth	Date	15/02/21
Section Two - Building Control RIBA Stage F	ACCESS OFFICER Sign and date	Date	
Section Three - Final Design (only required if details are not fully agreed at Building Control stage) RIBA Stage J or K	ACCESS OFFICER Sign and date	Date	
Revision dates:			

Introduction (to be completed for ALL projects)

1) Project summary

Ranikhet Academy Primary School is a proposed new purpose-built replacement school and is a key component of the wider Dee Park Regeneration programme, located in the heart of Dee Park residential estate, to the West of central Reading.

The building and associated external work areas design is based on a brief set by Reading Borough Council for a Two Form Entry (2FE) Primary School (420 pupils) and to include a 26 place Nursery.

An integrated approach has been adopted, in which the design proposals have been developed to reflect the School's operational policies. This benefits the whole school community whilst prioritising the needs of people with disabilities. The objective is to develop an accessible design which is functional and sustainable in the longer term.

The approach adopted is intended to incorporate, where relevant, best practice principles and objectives for inclusive and accessible design in the education sector.

These are:

- To achieve optimum accessibility for all users of the building's facilities
- To respond to pupils with diverse learning and mobility needs
- To overcome barriers to learning for both individuals and groups of students
- To provide, where appropriate, for pupils with special educational needs (including those with sensory, learning and behavioural difficulties), alongside other pupils
- To create a secure and welcoming place
- To design the building and its external areas for the beneficial use and enjoyment of all users
- To provide spaces which vary in character and are reasonably flexible in use and adaptable to change
- To recognise that positive changes in pupil behaviour and approach to learning (and staff satisfaction) can result from well-designed environments
- Where appropriate, to make the facilities accessible for community use.

One of the schemes objectives which has broadly influenced the design, is the promotion of access, inclusion and security; To realise a building which is secure but, at the same time, welcoming, and is also inclusive and fully accessible to those with diverse learning and mobility needs.

2) Sources of advice and consultation (other than the access team)

A formal Pre-Planning Performance Agreement was entered into with Reading Borough Council planners to establish and agree certain points of detail. A draft submission report and consultant feasibility reports, covering typical planning topics were submitted. Feedback from this has been incorporated into the scheme.

A detailed presentation has been made to Reading's Design Review Panel, as part of the pre-planning consultation process, and was well received.

Consultation has also been undertaken with the Crime Prevention Officer for Berkshire Police to discuss security aspects of the design and in particular inclusive access, with comments being incorporated.

A series of regular, ongoing meetings are held with the School end user client, the School's Academy Trust (REAch2) and Reading departmental client, to go through the briefing process.

The layout of the proposed new school builds on work carried out by the DfE regarding baseline designs for 2FE Primary Schools and ongoing development by Hampshire County Council, where the baseline scheme has been enhanced to provide a fuller offer with additional shared teaching spaces included.

This design has been explored further with Ranikhet School and a new variant developed, taking into account the school's and REAch2 Academy's requirements within the brief, arriving at a more efficient plan with better shared areas and enhanced Learning Resource provision to suit Ranikhet's particular needs.

Additionally, as the school forms part of the overall Dee Park regeneration project, regular meetings are held with the main developer, including discussions on access and boundary treatments.

The project does not adversely impact or create any detrimental effects in terms of equality or diversity.

3) Design standards and guidance applied

As noted above, the scheme builds on the DfE's baseline design for a 2FE School with 26 place Nursery.

The core reference document for the base design proposal is Building Bulletin 103: Area guidelines for mainstream schools.

Further reference is also made to the following guidance documents amongst others:

- Building Bulletins 100: Design for Fire Safety in Schools
- Building Bulletins 93: Acoustic Design of Schools
- Building Bulletins 87: Environmental Design in Schools
- Building Bulletins 101: Ventilation in Schools
- School Premises Regulations
- Other Statutory guidance documents

Hampshire County Council's Access Team's pages and Approved Documents Part M and K are also a key point of reference.

Section One – Planning Application

4) Level approach to and around the site (Pedestrians and vehicles).

Refer also to General Arrangement Landscape plan E04759-HCC-XX-SK-L-1200

The existing site divides into 3 distinct areas / plateaus each with a sizeable level difference. To the North East side, at the lowest level, is the existing school building. The central zone includes a MUGA (Multi Use Games Area) c.1.8m higher than the lower school ground level, and a sloping grassed area. To the South West side of the site, the highest level, c.3m above the MUGA (and c.4.8m above existing school FFL), sits an STP (Synthetic Turf Pitch), enclosed by 3m fencing. A number of retaining walls, fences, ramps and steps divide the zones.

The existing site is extremely constrained and the new school building is limited to the middle plateau zone only. This, however, offers the opportunity to engage with the surrounding community by creating views and clear desire lines to the main school building. The upper level, containing the STP, will remain. The school is to remain in full operation, on the lower level, throughout all phases of the build. The final phase includes the car park and replacement MUGA, on the lower level.

The landscape proposals link all three levels via new hardstanding footpaths which are all greater than a 1:21 gradient and a minimum 1800mm wide. New external lighting is proposed to the car park and site footpaths.

The school will continue to support a number of community related functions, including out of hours use of the STP (rented out in evenings, weekends and holidays to local sports clubs) MUGA (managed free access for general play and recreation) and school hall for various indoor activities. Drawing E04759-HCC-Z0-DR-A-1512 indicates the areas of proposed community use and access routes.

5) Car-parking and setting down points

Drawing E04759-HCC-XX-SK-L-1200 indicates the new car park proposal. 46 parking bays are provided including 3no. accessible parking bays, all in accordance with Part M requirements. 2no. two-wheeled parking spaces are also provided. The car park will have controlled gated access, via an intercom system, managed by the school.

There are a number of existing lay-bys along the site frontage, which can be used as setting down points as required.

6) External ramps and steps

Drawing E04759-HCC-XX-SK-L-1200 indicates a stepped and seating landscape feature, linking the school building to the MUGA. Details of this will be developed, with reference to Part M requirements, during the next design stages.

7) External handrails

Drawing E04759-HCC-XX-SK-L-1200 indicates a central handrail to the stepped landscape feature. Details of this will be developed, with reference to Part M requirements, during the next design stages.

8) Hazards (on external access routes)

Access routes to and around the building are not anticipated to have any features that would cause a hazard, e.g. windows will be on restrictors/ planting zones in front. Provision of a guarding to classroom doors will be considered during the next design stages.