

**PLANNING, DESIGN
&
ACCESS STATEMENT**

**Leighton Park School,
Reading.**

Proposed New Sports Building Facility

July 2018

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1.0 Introduction.

This Design and Access Statement accompanies the detailed planning application for the erection of a new two storey sports and academic building to provide covered sports recreational facilities at the Leighton Park School, Reading.

The new facility will provide the following accommodation; -

- 6 no Badminton Courts.
- Fitness Suite
- 2 no Changing Rooms.
- DDA compliant Wc & shower / changing.
- Sports Storage.
- First Aid room.
- Reception Area.
- Staff Offices.
- Classrooms/ flexible spaces.

It is intended that the proposed building be built using materials sympathetic to those used on the adjacent educational & residential blocks in A327 Shinfield Road. It is suggested that the building will consist of a palette of familiar materials, being brick, PPC profiled metal cladding and PPC Aluminum windows and doors, with cedar cladding to the climbing wall.

2.0 Supporting Statement.

Leighton Park School – Sports Hall Planning – Statement of Need

The current school gymnasium is inadequate for numerous reasons. It was built in 1953 and due to its age and size is no longer able to accommodate the sporting requirements of the school curriculum, our boarders and local community who hire the facility or, in some cases, are given free access.

The number of pupils on roll is about 480 with a maximum number of 510. The current gymnasium is small by modern standards (one badminton court size compared with five or six badminton court for most similar schools). A modern, purpose-built hall will enable us to continue our delivery of outstanding sports provision for the pupils and wider community.

The school has acceptable outdoor sports provision (an astro pitch, netball/tennis courts, space for rugby/football/athletics). It also has an indoor swimming pool. Modernization to the indoor sports accommodation has not occurred for decades and the current accommodation is unable to meet the demands of the school. It is clear that the most efficient and effective strategy is to provide a new sports hall:

- The current gymnasium is undersized, and the equipment is old and outdated. A six-court sports hall designed to Sport England's specifications will meet specifications. We have no other indoor venues that are suitable for ball games.
- In wet weather/ice/snow PE and games lessons have to be moved indoors for safety reasons. With typical year groups of 80 students, it is very difficult to deliver high quality teaching within the confines of a very small gymnasium which becomes crowded – even if only one-year group is timetabled for games or PE.
- There is limited changing space for pupils when more than one class is timetabled for PE.
- A restricted range of sport is offered due to the inadequate facilities, which reduces pupils' opportunities to improve their skills and learn new sports. The following sports are not possible: badminton, full court volleyball, indoor hockey, futsal, indoor cricket and indoor netball.
- There is insufficient space for a cardio room in the current set up. This facility has had to be located within a boarding house some distance from the gymnasium and presents difficulties in timetabling given the presence of boarders.
- The school will offer BTEC Sport from September 2018. However, the delivery of the curriculum will be made more difficult because

classroom space is not located within the same building as the gymnasium space.

- There is currently insufficient space for extra-curricular activities for day students and boarders. A sports hall would allow a wider range of activities, appealing to a wider spectrum of pupils and widening participation.
- Most of our competitor schools have significantly better indoor sports provision. Indeed, many of our feeder schools also have better indoor sports provision than Leighton Park. This makes pupil recruitment and retention more difficult.
- Halls are required for purposes other than sport. There is a shortage of 'hall space' in the school for examinations. We have no exam venue that can accommodate an entire year group in the school. Exams in the current gymnasium are overcrowded.
- We let our facilities to local sports clubs and maintained schools. The small size of our gymnasium, limited changing facilities and dated fabric mean that it is not a very attractive venue.

Refurbishing the current gym would not be economic, nor would it address the fundamental problem of the building being undersized. The school has tried to be creative in addressing the deficiencies of the current provision (for example, locating a cardio room in a boarding house, adapting a small space for strength and conditioning equipment).

However, we do not have a main hall or other indoor space that lends itself to sports activities. We currently use Loddon Valley leisure centre as overflow space and for sports that we do not have the facilities to provide. This is not a sustainable approach as it is expensive, lesson time is taken up with travel and we cannot always guarantee securing the sessions that are required.

A new sports hall is essential for Leighton Park School, in order to provide a broader range of sports for our pupils, to meet current specifications, improve pupil recruitment and retention and provide a useable facility for local community clubs and groups.

3.0 The Site and its Location.

Location: The Sports Facility will be located within the Leighton Park School Campus, which enjoys a setting to the southeast of Reading. The Campus is surrounded by residential housing to the South and West and the University of Reading to the North and East. The site is bounded by A327 Shinfield Road to the West and Pepper Lane to the East. The new facility will sit to the South of the existing MUGA and provide viewing for matches from the proposed first floor gallery.

Site: The proposed site is within the campus of Leighton Park School, accessed off A327 Shinfield Road. and then through the school car park. Part of the area is used for overflow car parking when events are in progress and the need arises. Indeed, additional Disabled parking will be provided at the entrance to the new facility.

Context: Throughout the campus the architecture is generally brick facade with a window and solid panel interruption.

Trees: The West boundary is heavily planted with trees, whilst the East boundary backs onto Pepper Lane and the University of Reading.

Playing fields: The current playing fields / pitches, will not be affected by this proposal to build the new Sports Facility. The pitches used for sports games are laid out to the North & South of the proposed facility.

Vehicular access and Public Rights of way: Vehicular access into the School site is available through one gated principle point. This is accessed off A327 Shinfield Road. A further separate service entrance to the school boarding house off Shinfield Road will allow access to new parking for the facility and emergency services.

4.0 The Proposed Sports Facility.

4.1.0 Proposed Sports Facility.

The building has been designed to accommodate the requirements of the Leighton Park School sport's needs, and to be functional in appearance, and creates a gross internal floor area of 2216sqm.

It will not impact on the existing skyline as it will be set at a Finished Floor Level such that the ridge of the facility will still sit lower than the adjacent residential / boarding building and screened by the existing trees.

The building will provide 6 Badminton courts, or 1 full sized Basketball court and a Fitness Suite. It will have 2 changing rooms with shower and Wc. Facilities, Office space and First Aid room.

The main Sports Hall stands 7.6m to the underside of the structural frame from finished floor level.

There are two main entry points to access the building, A small reception / control point offers the choice of entering the corridor which leads to the changing rooms or taking the lift or stairs to the first-floor classrooms and Fitness Suite.

An external viewing gallery is situated on the North Elevation, accessible from rooms M1 & M2, and via a stair from the ground floor footpath.

The building is to be constructed by means of a steel portal framed structure, clad with brickwork (multi stock) at ground floor level up to the head of the ground floor windows and doors. Timber cladding (Larch), applied in a vertical pattern will be applied to the upper elements of the building.

The roof will be of profiled metal cladding will be of a colour that responds to the surrounding landscape (suitable for recycling as set out in sustainability in construction guidelines) and will be finished with a colour coat to an agreed RAL or BS colour ref. All metal windows and entrance door screens to match.

Punched windows allow natural ventilation into the changing rooms, shower and Wc. areas, as well as all the Fitness Suite.

The brickwork will be of a multi stock to match that of the existing buildings adjacent.

5.0 Access Statement:

5.1.0 Purpose of the Report.

The DDA requires that disabled people should not be treated less favorably in connection with employment, the provision of goods, facilities or services, to the public, or by those selling, letting, or managing premises.

Where a physical barrier makes use of any service which is offered to the public impossible, or unreasonably difficult, a service provider must take reasonable steps to:

- Remove the feature.
- Alter the feature so that it no longer has an effect.
- Provide a reasonable means of avoiding the feature.

This report is prepared to demonstrate the conformance of the design of the proposals to the Disability Discrimination Act 1995, and that they are in accordance with BS8300 and Part M of the Building Regulations.

5.2.0 Introduction.

Leighton Park School have given instructions for a detailed design to allow the provision of a new 2 storey Sports Facility that provides 6 badminton courts, 2 changing rooms and a Fitness Suite.

This new Sports Facility is situated within the site confines of the Leighton Park School Campus.

The site is of a varied topography with changes in level apparent. Vehicular and pedestrian access is available from the boundary off A327 Shinfield Road, through the main campus and to the main entrance of the new facility. Pedestrian access can also be made via the school entrance along Shinfield Road.

5.3.0 General Design Considerations.

The new sports facility has direct access at ground floor level, with a constant floor level and provision of a unisex disabled Wc / changing room, male and female Wc's and changing facilities.

A unisex disabled Wc. is positioned within the main entrance corridor and an ambulant disabled cubicle is positioned in each of the male and female Wc provisions.

5.4.0 Meeting the requirements of DDA, BS8300 & Sport England Guidance.

5.4.1 Approach to and circulation within the Building.

All of the ground floor circulation in and around the new building will be of a perceived similar level, any changes or deviations in compliance with the relevant regulations.

The main entrance doors will have a level landing and a level threshold. The main entrance door widths will provide a clear opening of minimum 1200mm and will be fitted with automatic opening devices.

All corridors have minimum width of 1500mm or 2700mm if lockers are provided within that corridor and turning circles of 1500mm can be achieved in all accessible areas. Within new areas, there are no steps or changes in level.

All new door openings will be designed to allow the appropriate minimum clear widths.

Where fitted, self-closing devices will have an opening force no greater than 20 Newtons.

5.4.2 Facilities.

By the provision of a disabled Wc. and ambulant provisions at ground floor. The new sports facility satisfies the requirement for providing a disabled toilet at each level, or within a 40m total travel distance.

5.4.3 Visual Impairment.

Contrasting nosing will be fitted to all steps as described in the Building Regulations approved Doc.M.

Lighting in the new accommodation will be maintained at a minimum level to satisfy the requirements of the visually impaired. The detailed specification will incorporate the requirements of BS 8300

Internal decorations will be designed to ensure that there is sufficient contrast between floor, walls and ceilings. Doors, door sets, and door furniture will similarly be designed with contrast suitable for the visually impaired.

5.4.4 External facilities.

4 new Disabled car parking bays are provided within this application and are located close to the main entrance of the new facility. Tactile paving and hazard warning surfacing will be provided where necessary.

6.0 Conclusions.

The proposals provide for an appropriately designed new sports building that is located in a position on the Leighton Park School campus which would have the minimum impact to the “openness” of this area that is achievable in practical terms.

The building will have minimum impact on the surrounding views into and out of the site as it will be screened by the existing trees to the West.

Pedestrian access remains unchanged.

Vehicular access to the site remains unchanged. This will allow for the construction of the building and future emergency access of either fire or ambulance vehicles, including routine maintenance of the external envelope of the building.

- ✧ Existing screens of mature trees prevent complete views of the building from the neighbouring residential developments to the West boundary.
- ✧ No loss of mature trees providing screening is required.
- ✧ No loss of playing field provision will occur.
- ✧ A building that meets contemporary sports requirements in terms of height, volume, flexibility, changing rooms etc.
- ✧ A location that does not impact adversely on local visual amenity in terms of loss of “openness”.
- ✧ The provision of new covered space for ancillary purposes via local sports groups in the nearby community.
- ✧ No adverse traffic highways safety impact.

7.0 Appendices

Appendix A – Flood Risk Assessment.

Appendix B – Ecology.

**Appendix C – Energy Statement.
C1 – BREEAM Statement.**

Appendix D – Soil Investigation

Appendix E – Arboricultural Impact Assessment.