

Design & Access Statement

New Music and Media Centre

for

Leighton Park School

Shinfield Road
Reading
RG27ED

December 2015
1353 2830 B
PLANNING SUBMISSION

Document Management

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Introduction

Purpose of Report

This Design and Access Statement has been prepared by NVB Architects on behalf of the governors of Leighton Park School. It is intended to supply supporting information for a full planning application for new facilities at the school. This document forms an integral part of the application and should be read in conjunction with the accompanying drawings and reports.

All drawings within this report are for illustrative purposes only; drawings which constitute the application itself should be referenced in all matters of record.

Overview

This full planning application is for a new music and media centre (MMC), located adjacent to the existing school theatre. The proposed works include:

- Removal of existing temporary practice rooms
- Creation of new foyer to front of existing theatre
- New music teaching facilities
- Creation of pedestrian friendly hard landscaping
- Provision of new parking area adjacent to existing building to replace visitor parking and informal parking on drive.

A similar scheme was approved by the planning office in 2007 (ref 07/00918/FUL) and was subsequently extended in 2010 (ref 10/00792/EXT). These proposals were not implemented and have now expired. A subsequent scheme was submitted for planning in November 2014 but was withdrawn following concerns from the conservation officer.

This scheme seeks to address these concerns and has received positive pre-app feedback.



Project Parameters

Briefing Requirements

Leighton Park School is a coeducational independent school for approximately 470 pupils, aged between 11 and 18, including both day and boarding pupils.

The school was founded in 1890 by members of the Religious Society of Friends, and follows the Quaker values of peace, integrity, equality and simplicity.

The school has expanded over the last 15 years from 360 pupils to around 470 pupils. This has placed significant pressures on all departments of the school.

The music department has also grown in popularity with in excess of 10% of all pupils opting for music GCSE, and 50% of pupils learning at least one instrument. The music department has therefore outgrown its existing facilities at the rear of the school hall, and has expanded into temporary accommodation, and other buildings throughout the campus, reducing the effectiveness of the department. This has been recognised by two school inspections which have noted the significant and increasing pressure on music facilities as the subject develops.

During the briefing process the school identified a range of project objectives relating to pupils, the school, the buildings and functionality. These have provided the core project objectives which this project is intended to meet.

Music and Media

- Provide new centralised teaching accommodation
- Single entrance to music / media / performance hub

Theatre

- Increase foyer and toilet capacity to meet current standards for entertainment licence purposes.
- Reduce negative visual impact of existing building

Landscape

- Improve setting of Main school entrance to create a high quality and welcoming approach.
- Improve vehicle management around main entrance
- Improve pedestrian safety

Building

- Provide low energy building
- Provide robust and maintainable building



Briefing trip to similar facilities completed by the Architects at Winchester College

Site Location

Leighton Park School is located approximately 2km south of Reading town centre. It is situated between Shinfield Road and Pepper Lane, immediately adjacent to the University of Reading.

School Layout

The school is set in 65 acres of parkland which forms an attractive setting to the school.

The school has 2 primary entrances on Shinfield Road, and service access from Pepper Lane.

Buildings are generally arranged along the eastern boundary of the site (Pepper Lane), with playing fields and open meadows running through the middle of the site and a woodland strip on the western boundary of the site (Shinfield Road).

School House

The main school reception is located in School House at the centre of the site, and is accessed via a perimeter road and axial avenue. The building and attached laboratories are Grade II listed (see designations for further information)

School Theatre

The school theatre is located immediately opposite the entrance to School House. The building was constructed in the 1970s and is two storeys of predominantly brickwork. This building has an auditorium for 300 and a range of music practice rooms, storage and green room at the rear.





1. School Theatre
2. School Oak
3. Old School
4. Grove Field
5. Sports Pitches
6. Shinfield Road
7. Pepper Lane
8. Purple Maple

Planning Context

The following National and Local policies are noted as forming the planning context for this project:

National Planning Policy Framework

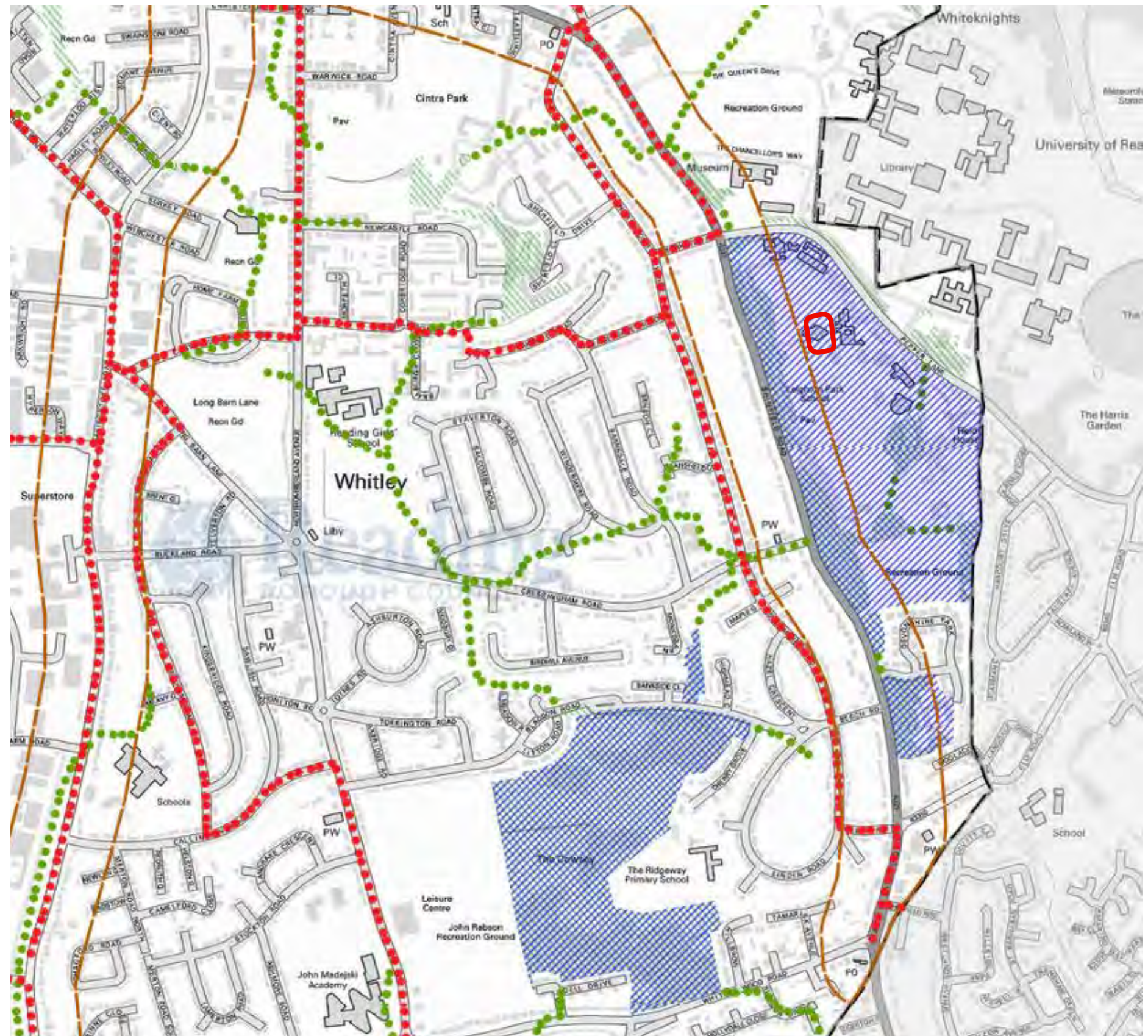
- Sustainable Development (para 14)
- Building a Strong, competitive economy (para 18-22)
- Requiring Good Design (para 56-68)
- Promoting healthy communities - cultural (para 70)
- Promoting healthy communities - schools (para 72)
- Conserving & enhancing historic environment (sect 12)

Reading Local Plan (adopted October 2012)

- Major Landscape Feature (CS37, SA17)
- Local Wildlife sites (Policies C536, DM17)
- Settlement Boundary (Policies SA11)
- Air Quality Management Area (DM19)
- Existing and Potential Green Links (DM17)

Other Local Policies

- Sustainable Construction and Design (CS1)
- Adaption to Climate Change (DM1)
- Decentralised Energy (DM2)



 Proposed Site

Heritage Matters

Please refer to the Heritage Statement by Armour Heritage (Report Reference AH344/1).

