

Site Studies

The following surveys have been provided with this application and have been referenced in the development of proposals.

- Topographic site survey
- Tree Survey and constraints plans
- BIM survey of existing theatre
- Curriculum and peripatetic timetable analysis
- Acoustic Survey

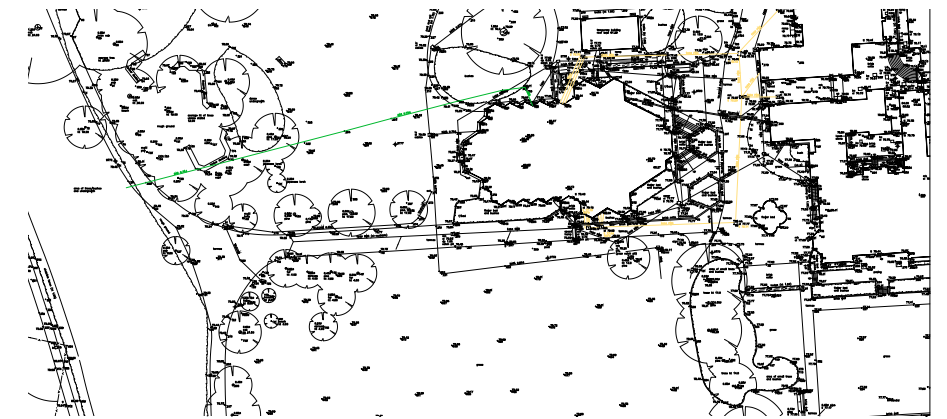
In addition to these surveys, the following is noted regarding the layout and qualities of the site.

Access and Parking

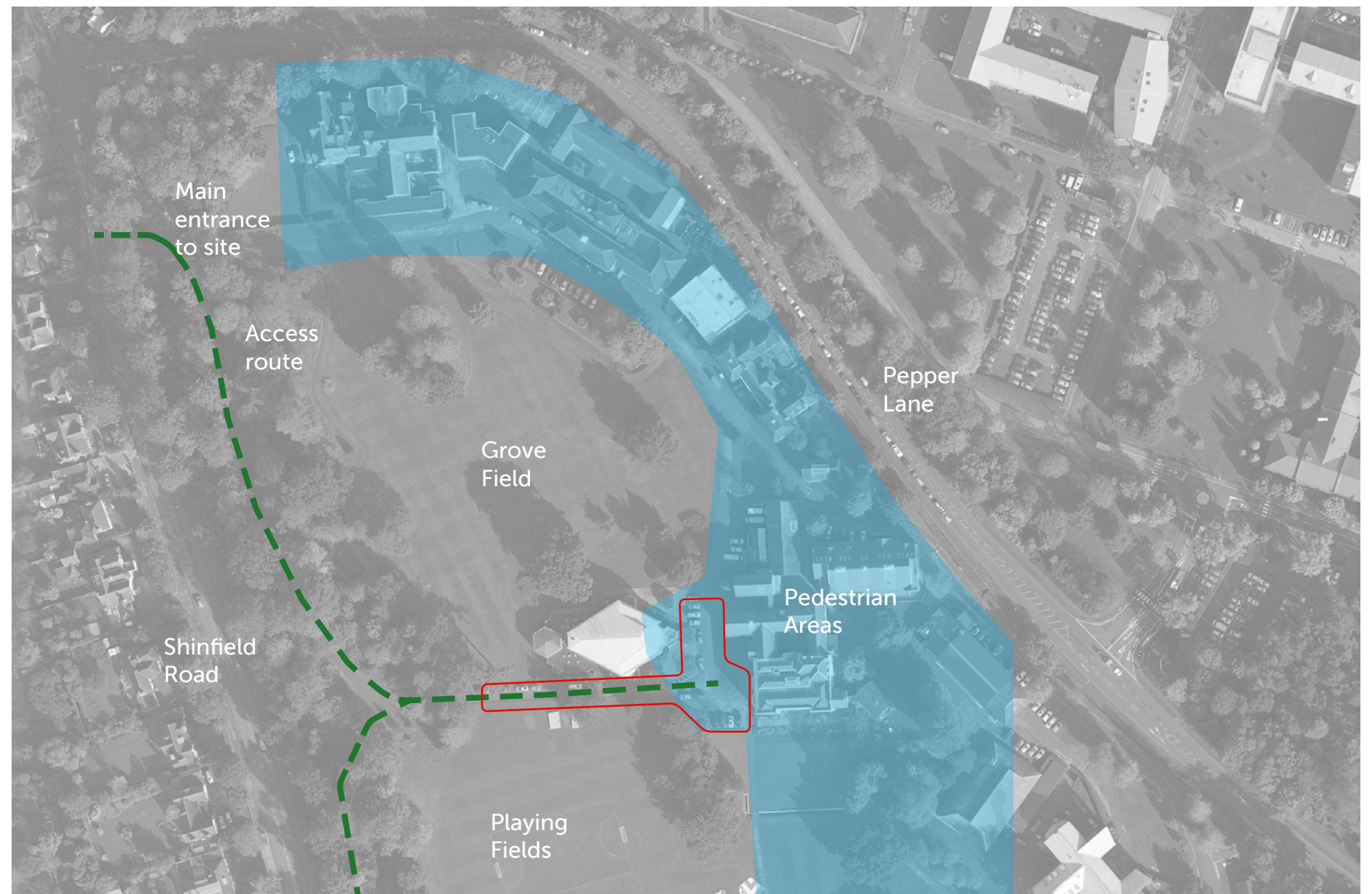
Access to the site is via two entrances on Shinfield Road and a single access from Pepper Lane.

General parking is provided at the perimeter of the site with visitor and accessible parking bays located close to the main reception in Old School. These spaces are located in areas which are frequently trafficked by pedestrians throughout the day resulting in a safety hazard.

Deliveries have also been via main school entrance with drop off in the same area. This is currently being managed with regular deliveries being redirected to the entrance on Pepper Lane.



Extract from topographic survey



Building Layouts

Theatre Building

The existing theatre was constructed in 1970s and is a combination of load-bearing brickwork and isolated areas of framed construction.

Primary access to the building is from the hard-standing in front of the building. Steps make this entrance very difficult for mobility impaired groups, although alternative level-access is provided at the sides of the building.

Seating is arranged over two storeys with staircases on either side of the building. Accommodation includes a range of music practice rooms, office space and a flexible green-room/ teaching space at the rear of the building.

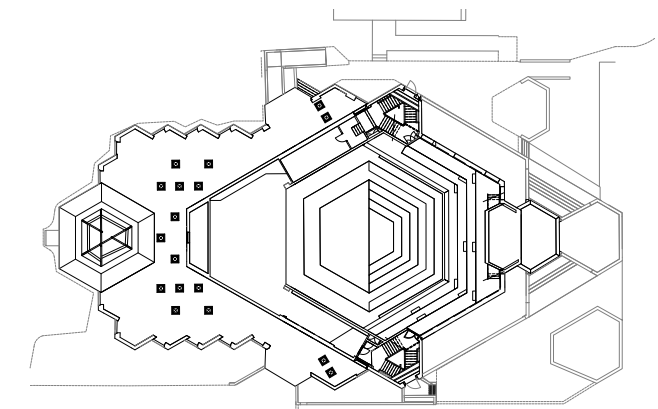
As a theatre it can be operated as traditional 'proscenium' venue or reconfigured using demountable staging to create an 'in-the-round' venue. It has a mixture of loose seating and benching giving a range of capacities from 250-350. The maximum capacity for performances is 300. This number has been used for design purposes.

Toilet numbers are severely limited and do not meet current standards set out in regulations (BS 6465). In addition, they are poorly located and do not provide access for the mobility impaired.

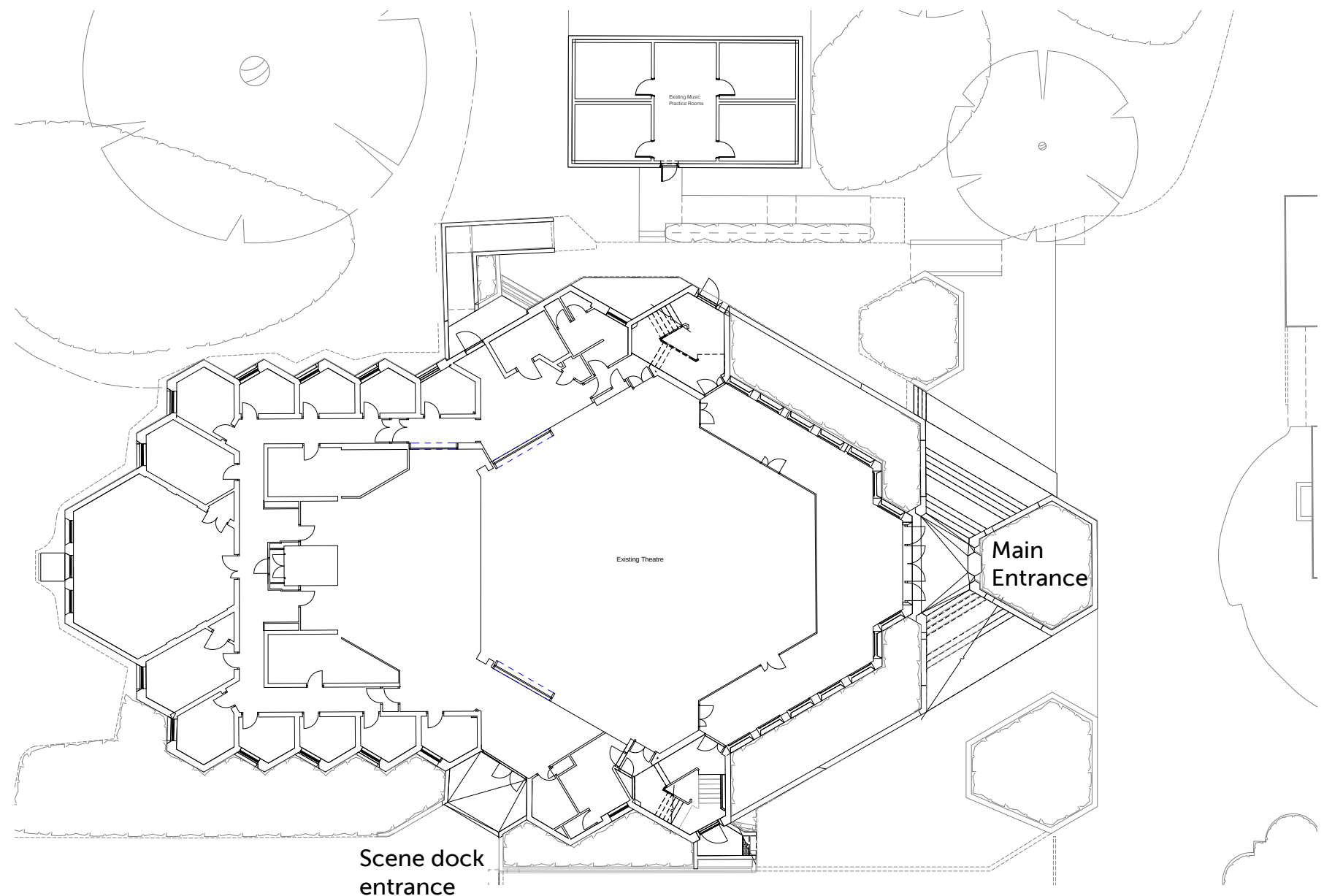
The building is serviced via a ground floor plant room at the rear of the building. This has access to a further space on the first floor, which in turn provides access to a flat roof at the rear of the building.

Portacabin accommodation

Additional teaching space has been provided in a demountable building located on the northern side of the theatre building. This provides larger group rooms, music practice and general teaching accommodation.



First Floor Plan



Ground Floor Plan

Record Photos

Old School is grade II listed structure. It provides main reception to school and a range of teaching and administrative offices. Visitor parking is visible to right of frame.



Old School

Waterhouse Extension

1. West Elevation of Old School from front of Theatre

Southern lawns of Old School. Visitor parking visible left.



2. South Elevation of Old School

Main Entrance to theatre viewed from entrance to Old School. The building has poor access as entry/ reception level is approximately 1.6m above external ground level.



Main entrance
Avenue approach

3. School Theatre from front of Old School

Rear view of theatre building (right) showing temporary teaching accommodation (centre).



School Oak
Temporary teaching accommodation

4. Rear view of Theatre from Grove Field

Southern lawns of Old School. Visitor parking visible left.



Old School visible behind trees.

Avenue approach

5. Avenue approach to Old School

Avenue approach. Front elevation of Old School compromised by location of theatre



Old School

6. Avenue approach to Old School

Southern lawns of Old School. Visitor parking visible left.



Old School

School Theatre

7. Southern views of Old School looking towards theatre

View from Grove Field looking towards Peckover Hall. The university of Reading is visible through a gap in the tree planting.



Peckover Hall

Grove Field

8. Buildings along Western edge of site

Pre-Application dialogue

The following is noted with regard to pre-application discussions with the local planning authority:

Planning application (14/1783/AJC) November 2014

A two storey proposal was submitted as a full application in November 2014. There was adverse feedback from planning officers relating to the lack of a heritage impact assessment, the impact of the proposals on the heritage setting of the listed buildings and to the loss of the purple maple tree adjacent to the existing building. The application was subsequently withdrawn.

Pre-application (150779/PRE) July 2015

The school entered into dialogue with the local planning authority, in order to ascertain the parameters which should be addressed in a future application. This dialogue confirmed that:

- A full heritage assessment was required to demonstrate the significance of the heritage assets.
- A heritage impact statement would be required to demonstrate/ justify the impact of the proposals.
- A predominantly single storey extension to the existing theatre would minimise the heritage impact to an acceptable level.
- The retention of the purple maple tree was preferable to any scheme which might require their removal.
- Retention of the large oak tree (sometimes referred to as the school oak) is preferable. It is however recognised that the tree is in very poor condition and that it has a limited life expectancy.

Key Parameters

The following Key parameters were identified through previous applications on this site and from engagement with the client group.

Improving appearance at heart of school

Improving the space between existing theatre and Old School (main entrance to school), and thereby improving the setting of the heritage asset.

Respect for heritage assets

Proposals should recognise and respect the significance of the heritage assets on the site, and that key views should be managed to limit visual intrusion.

Creating a single entrance for Music Media and Drama

Providing a shared entrance foyer space which will provide a hub for creative and performance subjects, and a focus for whole-school activities.

Pedestrian safety

Creation of pedestrian-centric hard landscaped areas with barrier protection to prevent general vehicle access to areas used frequently by pupils throughout the school day.

Sustainability

Creation of a highly energy efficient building with low carbon footprint.

Robust Construction

Creation of a simple, robust and easily maintainable building to reduce life-cycle costs.

Landscape Setting

To respect the landscape setting of the park, maintaining the views of woodland on western boundary of the site (Shinfield Road).

Proposals

Description and Amount

The proposals include the following accommodation:

Demolition of existing temporary teaching accommodation.

Modification of front entrance to existing theatre and creation of new foyer space to accommodate full capacity of theatre (circa 300 audience) and provide single entrance to the combined facility.

Provision of new teaching block (connected to new foyer) providing music and media facilities including: classrooms, group practice rooms, music recording facilities, office space,

Modifications to exterior landscaping to create high quality pedestrian spaces at the heart of the school (between theatre and Old School).

Provision of new soft planting to offset trees lost as a result of development.

Creation of new accessible and visitor parking spaces to the rear of the existing theatre.

The total area of new development is 933m².

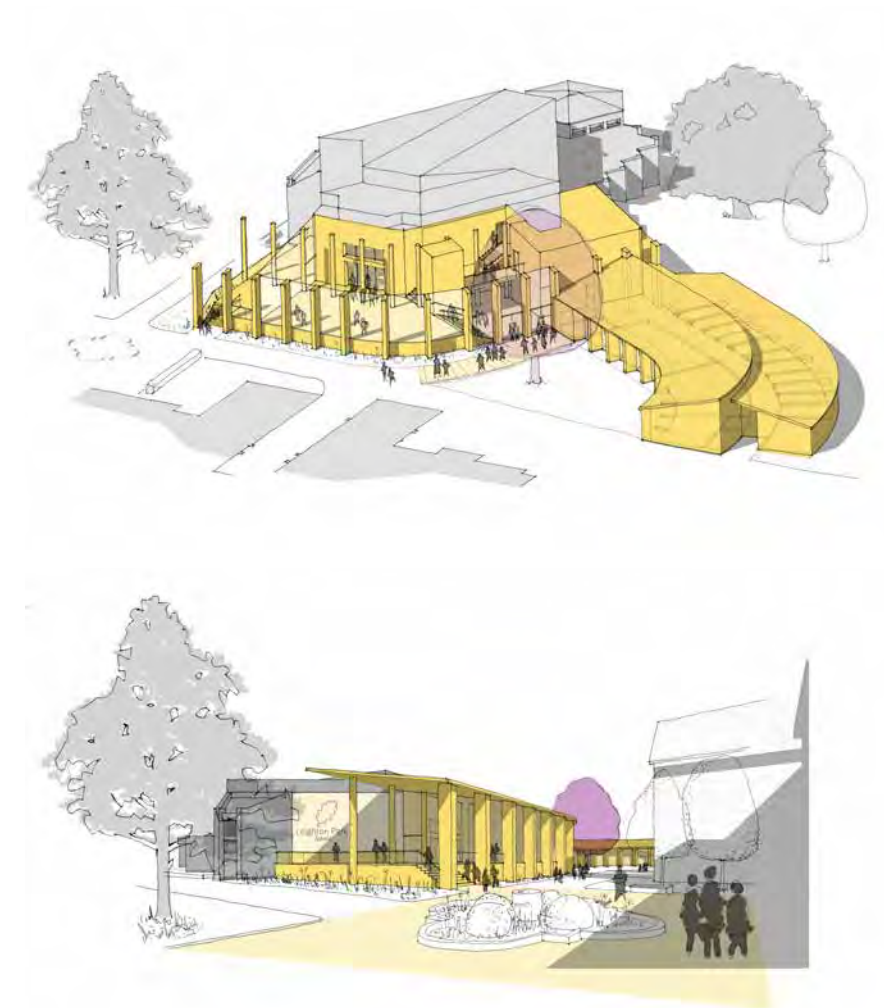
Concept

The primary design decision on this project was to create a single shared entrance and foyer area for music, media and the theatre. This has a number of key benefits to the client:

- Creation of a vibrant shared space which will unite the performing arts at the school
- Creating a multifunctional space which has uses beyond that of foyer or entrance
- Providing better building supervision through the location of department offices
- Providing a level of screening of the existing theatre building

The teaching block is located adjacent to the foyer, and arranged on a single storey. This has the following benefits:

- lower roof maintains views of upper storey of Waterhouse Extension (heritage asset).
- good internal circulation between range of teaching spaces.



Architectural sketches showing early concepts for foyer

Layout

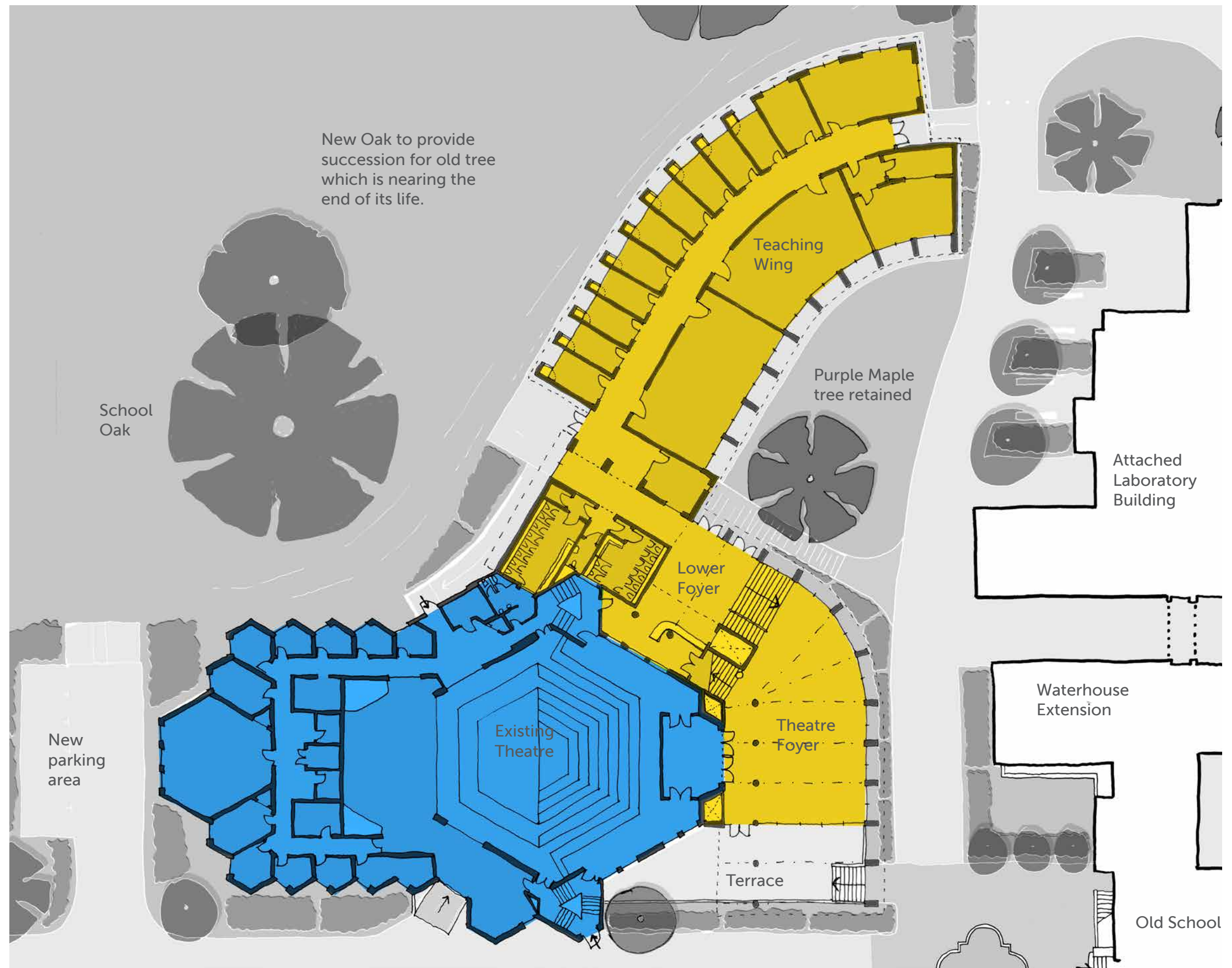
Ground Floor Plan

The building is designed around a single shared entrance provided at grade with existing ground level providing level access to the building.

The theatre foyer is split between a lower ground floor (entry level) and an upper ground floor (foyer level of existing theatre). These are connected via a stepped-seating area in the style of a 'grand staircase' which provides a space for informal teaching / performance.

Teaching accommodation is arranged in a curved plan building around the retained purple maple.

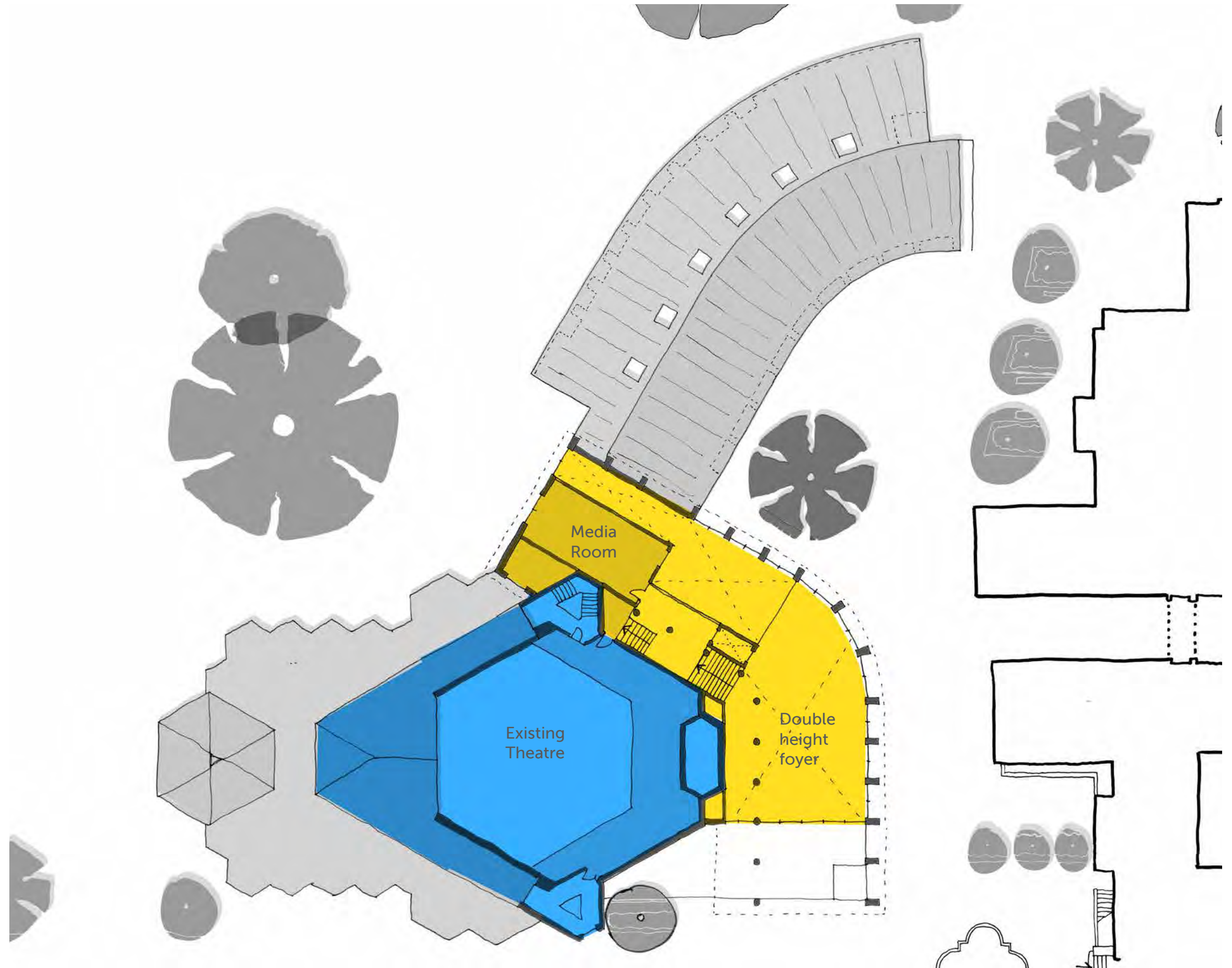
 New Construction
 Existing Building



Upper Floor Plan

The main foyer is contained under a single roof which wraps around the existing building.

A single teaching space is provided at the upper level, which provides a new and improved access to the upper theatre gallery.



Landscape

The proposals include the following:

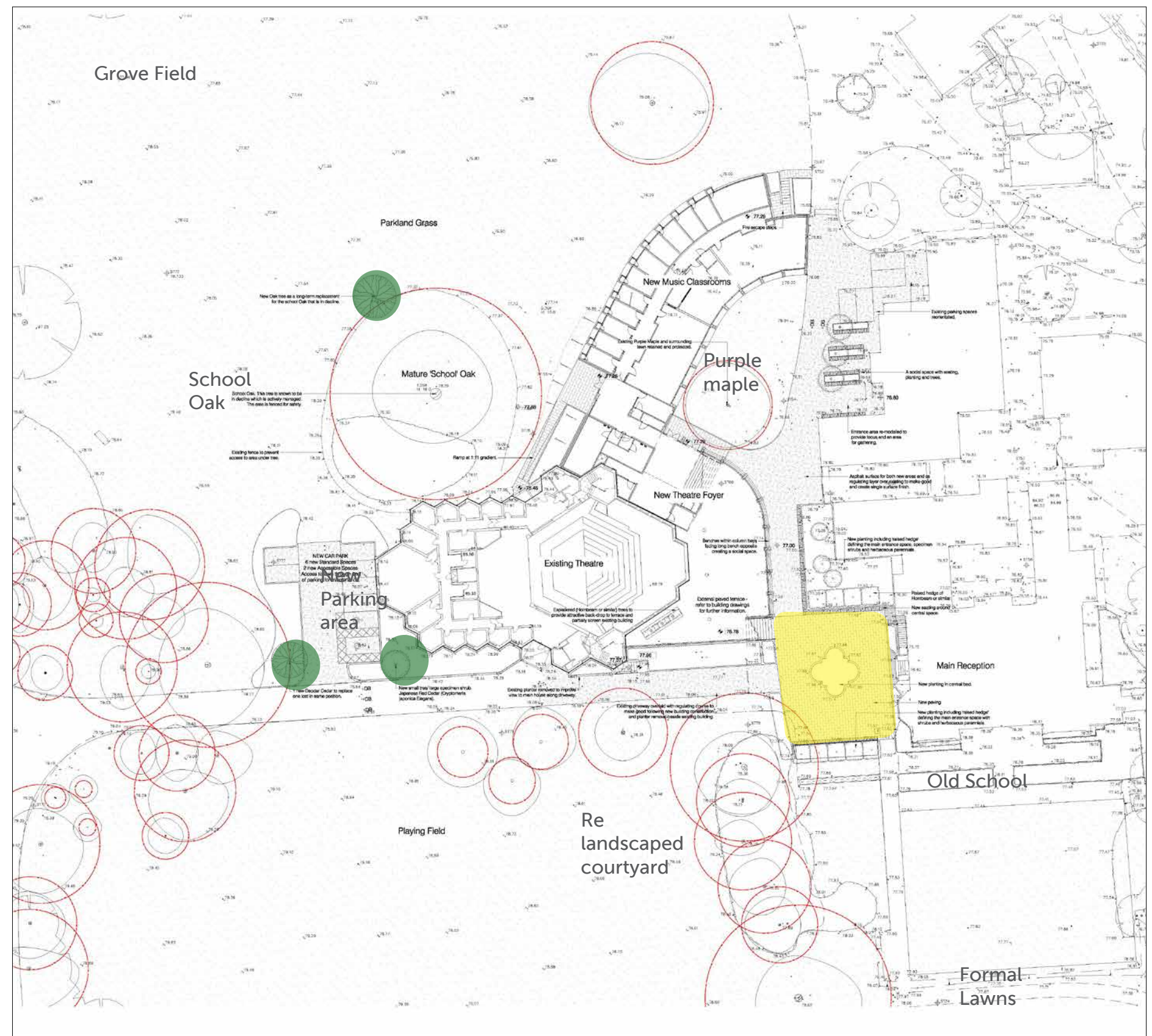
- Improved landscaping in front of Old School to create a more pedestrian/ pupil friendly space at the heart of the school.
- Retention of the purple maple and school oak.
- Loss of 5 no existing trees below footprint of new building.
- Planting of new trees to mitigate the loss of trees (above).
- new car park to the rear of the existing theatre.



Proposed trees



New paving



Proposed Landscape Plan

Trees

Overview

This section is to be read in conjunction with the Tree report and Arboricultural Impact Assessment provided with the application.

Tree management

Leighton Park School recognise the importance of trees to the setting of the Estate, and its contribution to the local planning context. The woodland on the estate has been under professional supervision and management since 2000 including annual inspections and tree management.

Context

The project is located close to woodland along the boundary of Shinfield Road which is part of a major landscape feature (as identified in the local plan). In addition to this many of the trees on the site are protected under tree preservation orders. These are identified in the Tree Constraints Plan provided with the application.

Building location / Avoiding Impacts

The project brief requires that a single entrance is created, connecting theatre foyer and new teaching facilities in a creative hub close to the centre of the school.

The single storey proposals have been developed to allow the retention of the purple maple, which was identified through the pre-application process to be the most important tree in the area of the proposed site.

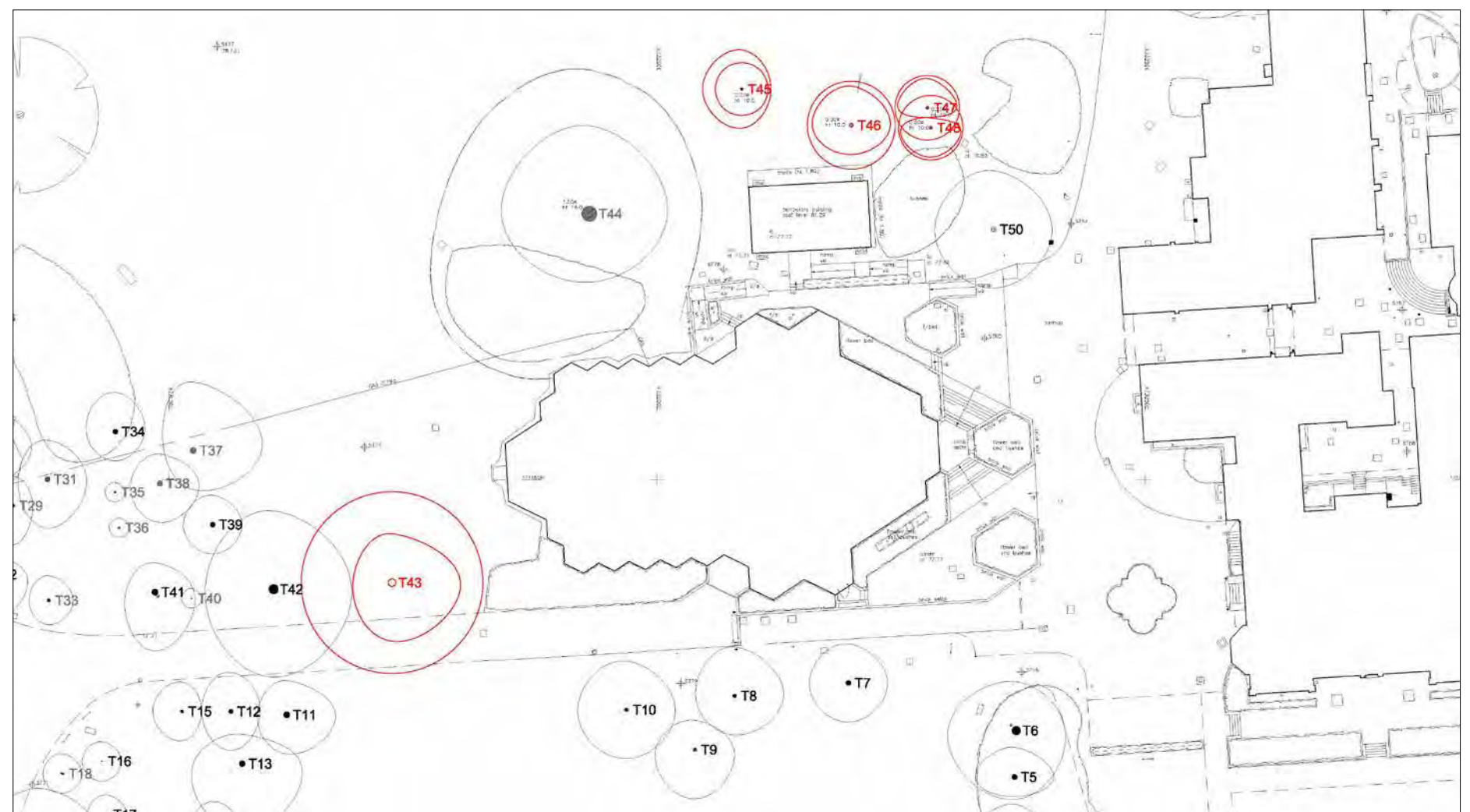
Impact on trees

The scheme has been significantly amended to allow the retention of the purple maple within the new proposals. The proposed design results in the loss of five TPO trees, as identified in the impact assessment.

Mitigation

Most of the trees lost through the proposals are juvenile trees with the exception of the Cedar adjacent to the main access road which is in relatively poor condition. Landscape proposals include the provision of three new trees. These will be located to respect the continued health of existing trees and provide succession planting - thereby maintaining the designed landscape and heritage setting for buildings in the future.

The school intend to continue a wider programme of succession planting outside the scope of this application. This is being undertaken with close collaboration of the council, with a view to ensuring good succession planting across the wider parkland.



Landscape plan showing trees lost through development

Scale and Appearance

Height

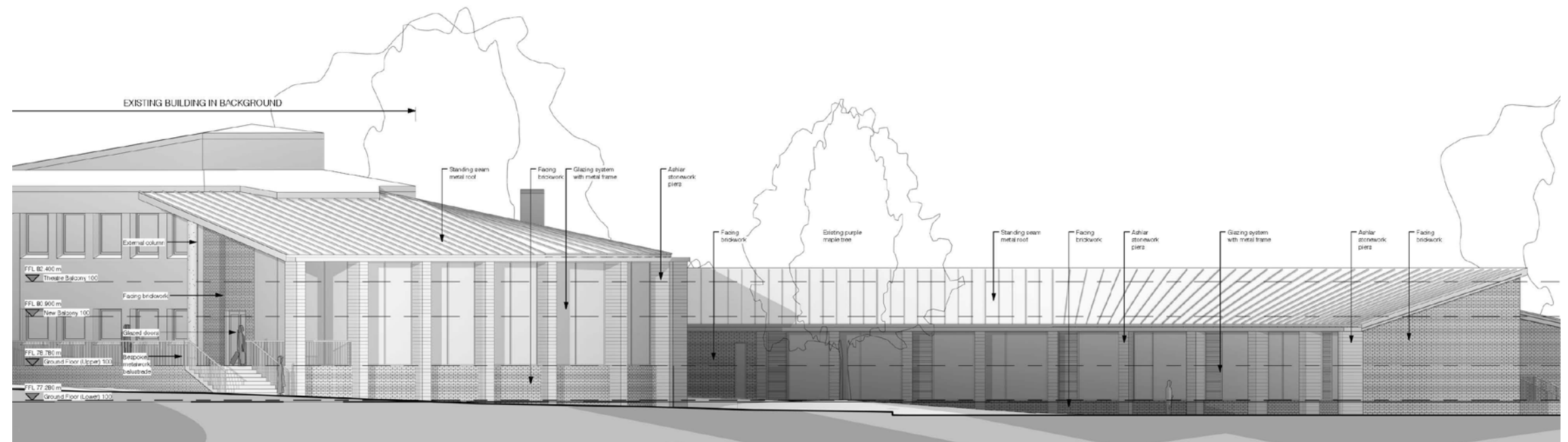
The main teaching accommodation is single storey.

The new foyer is double storey at the rear and 1.5 storeys at the front.

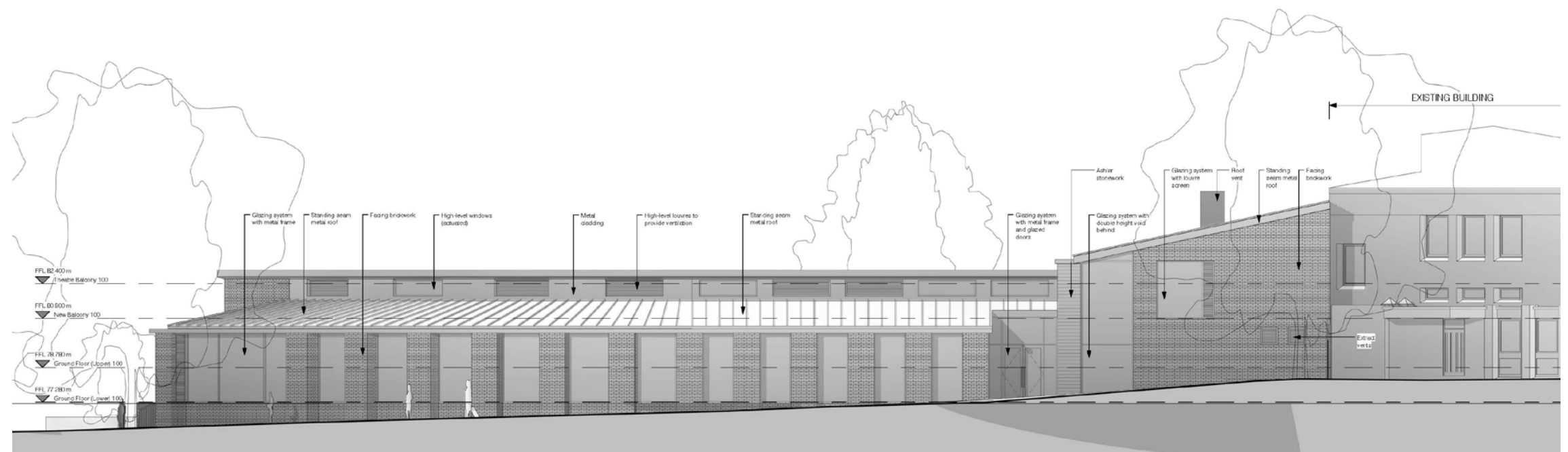
Appearance

The main foyer includes feature columns and large areas of recessed glazing creating an attractive well shaded elevation.

The teaching wing has a similar column arrangement arrayed around the purple maple. Large areas of glazing provide good views of internal activities.



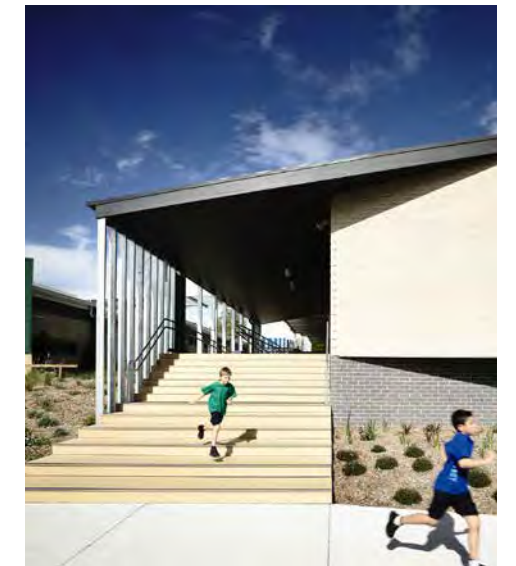
East Elevation (facing Old School) showing foyer (left) and teaching wing (right)



West Elevation (facing Grove Field) showing practice rooms (left) and media room (right)

Precedent Images

The inset images are of buildings and features which have influenced the design of the new building. They are to be read as informative only.



Access and Parking

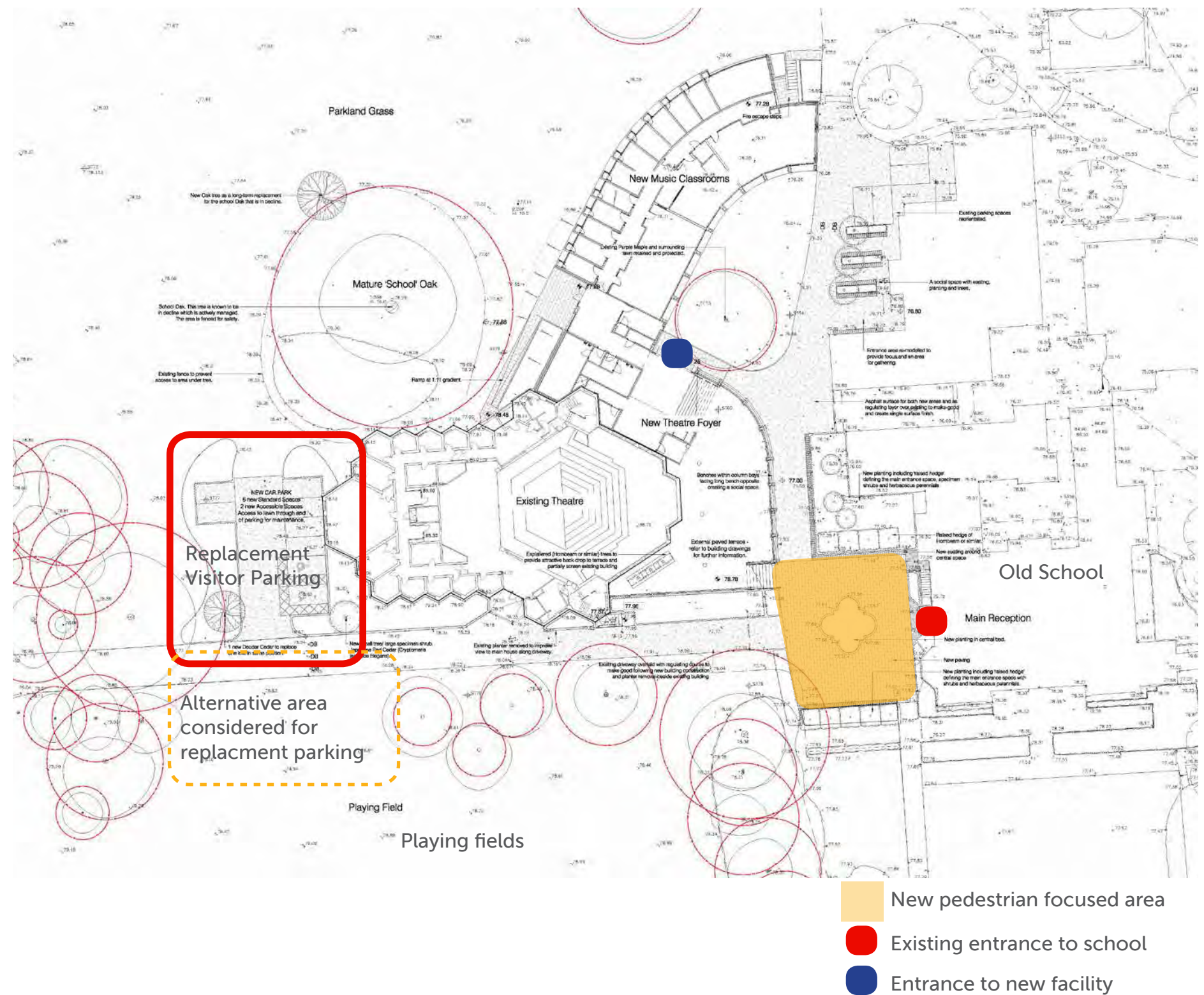
There are no changes to the existing patterns of usage of the theatre building. It will predominantly be for school use with very occasional visiting performers. It is not intended to become a commercial venue for outside (non school) performances.

The proposal is to relocate existing car parking spaces in order to create a safer and more attractive setting for Old School. These are required to be comparatively close to the main school reception which is located in Old School.

Options for the relocated parking were considered. The alternative area would have had a significant negative impact on the key view of Old School and caused disruption to the sporting activities on the playing fields. The proposed location results in the loss of a Cedar tree but the arboricultural report suggests that this tree is not in the best condition and that a replacment should be acceptable.

The main entrance to the school is clearly visible from the newly created parking areas and will be signposted. Demountable bollards will be provided to restrict access to this area.

The entrance to the new facility is provided at-grade with the existing ground level giving improved access to all groups. An internal lift provides access to all new levels of the building.



Utilities and Drainage

Heating/ Gas

Preliminary energy reports have identified the base loading associated with this project. It is currently envisaged that the new building will be fed from spare capacity within the existing theatre.

Electricity

A PV array of 80m2 is to be provided with this project on the roof of the existing theatre. Windows are large (40% of external wall area) reducing the need for artificial lighting, and daylight linked/ automatic controls will be provided so that the building 'defaults' to a low energy state.

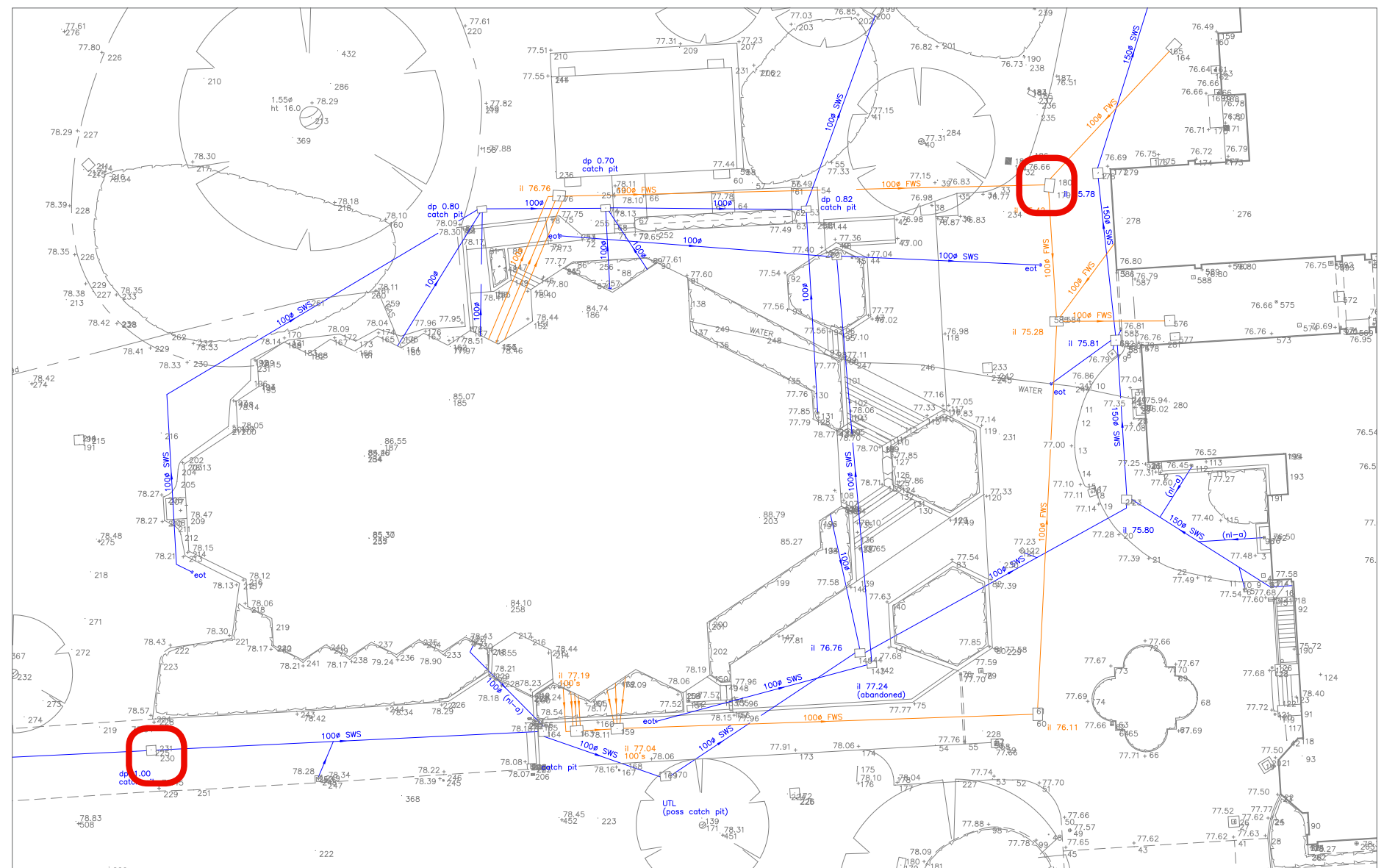
Water / Foul Drainage

There is no increase in the total number of staff/ students on the site associated with this project, and so the base load will remain unchanged

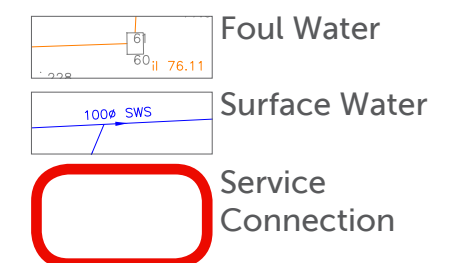
The primary load is associated with toilet usage during performances. This is potentially 300 flushes in a 20-30 minute period. These events however occur outside of the normal usage of the school, and so will not put any increased demand on the local infrastructure. The supply pipe diameter to the building will be increased to eliminate the need for water storage.

A drainage report is included in the application. Location of all drainage has been identified on the topographic survey and the engineer has undertaken an inspection of the likely points of connection to confirm suitability. Surface water drainage.

New areas of replacement parking will be provided with appropriate petrol interceptors to prevent introduction of hydrocarbons to surface water system.



Topographic survey showing location of existing surface water and foul drainage. Connection points are indicated in Red.



Summary

Impacts and Mitigation

Trees

The project retains the two most significant trees (school oak and purple maple) which were identified through the pre-application process to be of particular importance. A number of trees are lost as a result of the proposals. Some replacement tree planting is provided within the proposals although reference is drawn to the continuing programme of tree care and planting across the estate which will secure the health of the tree belt along Shinfield road and the parkland setting of the heritage assets.

Traffic / Parking

No change to existing numbers of people or cars using the site. Existing space relocated to improve setting of listed building and pedestrian safety for the school.

Heritage

A heritage statement is included in the application. The proposals have a beneficial effect on the setting of Old School through the relocation of visitor parking. The proposals have been significantly altered to respect the Waterhouse Extension and Laboratories resulting in less than substantial impacts which are mitigated through careful design, including limitation on building height.

Client Statement

A client statement is included in the application, which sets out the benefits that the project will provide to the school and extended community.

Planning Statement

This project is provided in accordance with policy set out in the following sections of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF).

- The project is an important part of business case for the continued financial health of Leighton Park School - providing replacement facilities which meet the requirements of the existing department, and will attract the next cohort of student and staff. This is in accordance with para 18-22 of the NPPF.
- The improvements in access to the existing theatre will assist in the access to cultural events / activities both within the school community and outside it. This promotes a healthy community as NPPF section 8.
- This project will strengthen Leighton Park thereby ensuring a continued choice of schools in the area - NPPF para 72.

In addition to the NPPF compliance with the following local policies are noted:

- The project is highly sustainable in accordance with policy CS1, and provides a level of decentralised energy through the provision of PV in accordance with policy DM2.
- The site is within a major landscape feature. Although there is some loss of existing trees, the mitigation features (replacement trees) and continued stewardship of the estates will provide a positive contribution to the landscape and secure succession planting.

Conclusions

The client has undertaken a thorough pre-application engagement with the LPA. The proposals have been amended to address concerns with regard to heritage setting and loss of specific trees. The following is noted by way of conclusion. The proposals will:

- Ensure the continued business success of Leighton Park School which needs to maintain high quality facilities in order to attract pupils and staff.
- Ensure the continued success of the school which contributes to the education provision in the region,
- Replacement of temporary and dispersed facilities with a single facility at the heart of the school.
- Improving access to existing cultural facilities (school theatre) through provision of new foyer and toilet provision.
- Improve the setting of the Grade II listed Old School through the relocation of parking spaces and relandscaping of the forecourt to the building.
- Improve pedestrian safety in front of Old School during the school day through the relocation of visitor parking.
- Will retain important mature trees which will make a positive contribution to the natural environment for a significant period of time.

Appendices

A National Heritage List Entry

List Entry Summary

This building is listed under the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 as amended for its special architectural or historic interest.

Name: SCHOOL HOUSE AND ATTACHED LABORATORIES AT LEIGHTON PARK SCHOOL

List Entry Number: 1113577

Location

SCHOOL HOUSE AND ATTACHED LABORATORIES AT LEIGHTON PARK SCHOOL, SHINFIELD ROAD

The building may lie within the boundary of more than one authority.

County:
District: Reading
District Type: Unitary Authority
Parish:

National Park: Not applicable to this List entry.

Grade: II

Date first listed: 14-Dec-1978

Date of most recent amendment: Not applicable to this List entry.

Legacy System Information

The contents of this record have been generated from a legacy data system.

Legacy System: LBS

UID: 39165

Asset Groupings

This List entry does not comprise part of an Asset Grouping. Asset Groupings are not part of the official record but are added later for information.

List Entry Description

Summary of Building

Legacy Record - This information may be included in the List Entry Details.

Reasons for Designation

Legacy Record - This information may be included in the List Entry Details.

History

Legacy Record - This information may be included in the List Entry Details.

Details

SHINFIELD ROAD 1. 5128 School House and attached Laboratories at Leighton Park School SU 77 SW 17/567 II 2. Formerly Pepper House 1830. Belonged to the Cobham family. Extended 1891 by Alfred Waterhouse for School. School House: 2 storeys and basement. Painted brick on plinth. Flanking corner piers. Stone architraves and bracket cills, Moulded string at 1st floor level. Cornice and blocking course. 6 windows on 1st floor with panels below. 2 on ground floor, left hand tripartite with bracket cornice, right hand an angled bay with pilasters and cornice. Cross glazed sash windows. Central circa 1840s large Tuscan porch. Recessed doorway with flanking niches. Shaped border in front for former fountain. South front 1:5:1 bays, outer bays break forward with corner piers and tripartite windows. Central half glazed door. Terrace in front with small ha-ha and retaining wall. School laboratories extension: Facing west a slight gabled break and a 3 bay deep break linked to further block to north by arch with passage. Tall 2 storey and basement. Grey brick with red brick quoins, dressings and lacing bands. Red brick plinth capping and stepped verge to gables. Segmental headed plate glass sash windows. Slate roof. Small extension to east with tile-hung lavatory oriel.

Listing NGR: SU7327471438

Selected Sources

Legacy Record - This information may be included in the List Entry Details

Map

National Grid Reference: SU 73274 71438

The below map is for quick reference purposes only and may not be to scale. For a copy of the full scale map, please see the attached PDF - [1113577.pdf](#) - Please be aware that it may take a few minutes for the download to complete.



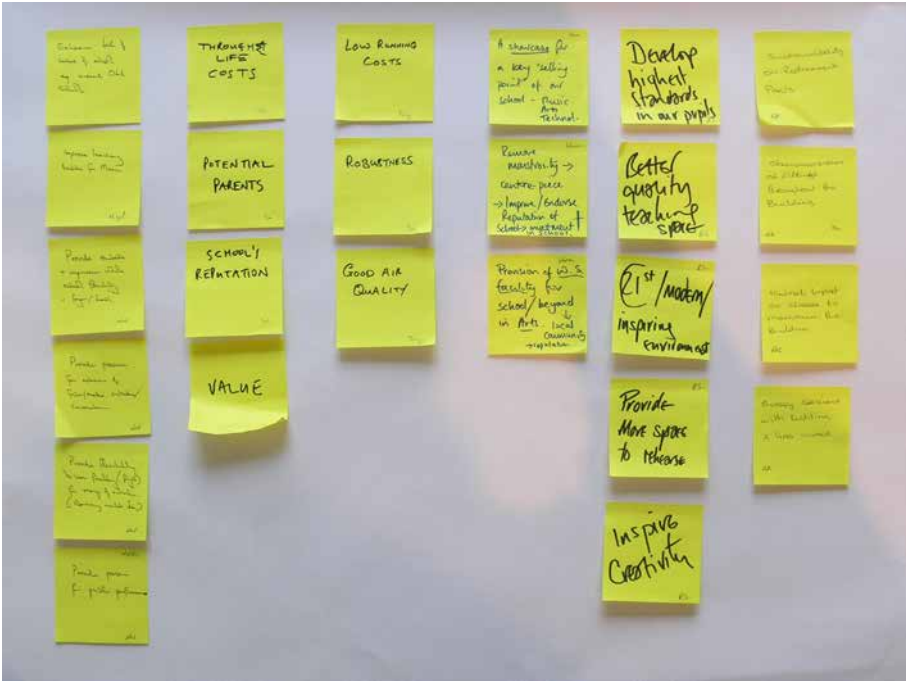
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B Selected briefing studies

Briefing study with school and governing body



Study to assess correct area for theatre foyer

Population	Density (m2/person)			250	300	350	400	450	500	550	600
dance floor	0.5	A		125	150	175	200	225	250	275	300
Shopping Mall	0.7	B		175	210	245	280	315	350	385	420
meeting room	1	C		250	300	350	400	450	500	550	600
If using extg theatre foyer (50m2)	50	A		75	100	125	150	175	200	225	250
		B		125	160	195	230	265	300	335	370
		C		200	250	300	350	400	450	500	550
If using extg foyer and music classroom (50+80m2)	130	A		-5	20	45	70	95	120	145	170
		B		45	80	115	150	185	220	255	290
		C		120	170	220	270	320	370	420	470

Decisions as of meeting dated 01-04-2014
Selected occupancy 350
selected density 0.7m2/p
Design as if using existing foyer yes
Total foyer area 245m2

Project Objectives (from briefing study)

Pupils	Develop highest standards in pupils
	Provide showcase for pupil endeavours (music art and technology)
	Create modern and inspiring teaching environments
	Improved Teaching facilities
	Improved media and film facilities
School	Suitable and impressive whole school facility
	Enhance appearance to centre of school
	Attract Potential parents
	Improve reputation of school
	Provide facility for both school and local community
Building	Low running costs
	Robust construction
	Provide good value
	Minimise through-life costs
	To be easily maintainable
Functionality	Good internal environments
	Good space utilisation
	Flexibility of space (especially foyer)
	Accommodate public performances comfortably
	Provide adequate rehearsal space

