STATEMENT OF COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT

THE RIDGEWAY PRIMARY SCHOOL, WILLOW GARDENS, READING, BERKSHIRE, RG2 8JD

ON BEHALF OF READING BOROUGH COUNCIL

SEPTEMBER 2026

Shrimplin
Planning & Development
www.shrimplin.co.uk

Title	Statement of Community Involvement
Project	The Ridgeway Primary School, Willow Gardens, Reading, Berkshire, RG2 8JD
Client	Reading Borough Council
Issue	Final
Job Number	25121
Document reference	RP202609015
Produced by	James Garside MRTPI
Authorised by	Robert Shrimplin MRTPI MPhil TP

CONTENTS

1. INTRODUCTION

2. CONSULTATION PROCESS

3. FEEDBACK

4. CONCLUSION

APPENDICES

APPENDIX 1: FLYER

APPENDIX 2: EXHIBITION BOARDS

1.0 INTRODUCTION

1.1 This Statement of Community Involvement (SCI) has been prepared by Shrimplin Planning and Development on behalf of Reading Borough Council in support of a planning application for a car park extension with reconfigured internal vehicular circulation, landscaping and play equipment (part retrospective), outdoor play space and boundary treatment (hereafter referred to as the "Application Proposal") at The Ridgeway Primary School, Willow Gardens, Reading, Berkshire, RG2 8JD (hereafter referred to as the "Application Site").

1.2 The Application Site currently contains a 3 form entry primary school, expanded in 2015 to accommodate 630 pupils to meet a rise in pupil numbers but now operating with spare capacity. It also includes a 26-place nursery and a satellite SEN school (Thames Valley School) with a capacity of 8 pupils. It has been identified, along with Whitley Park Primary and Nursery School, to provide a new 168-place Special Educational Needs (SEN) school for children aged 3–16 with Learning Difficulties, Autism, ADHD, Speech, Language and Communication needs, and dysregulated behaviours, addressing a shortfall in SEN provision within the Borough. The new SEN school will have an 72-place SEN primary school at the Ridgeway site and a 96-place SEN secondary school at the Whitley Park site. Ridgeway Primary School will be reduced to a two-form-entry school (420 pupils).

1.3 This SCI sets out the strategy of engagement with local residents, school staff and local politicians to notify them about the proposals and seek their feedback ahead of the submission of the planning submission to Reading Borough Council.

2.0 CONSULTATION PROCESS

2.1 The objective of the consultation process was to ensure that key information on the project was communicated clearly to stakeholders and local residents and to collect feedback on the plans for consideration ahead of the submission of the planning application.

2.2 The consultation process included:

- Distribution of letters to residential addresses around the site, with an invitation to the engagement exhibition.
- Drop-in exhibition for parents held at The Ridgeway Primary School on 21 July 2026, 1.00pm –1.30pm.
- A public engagement exhibition held at The Ridgeway Primary School on 21 July 2026, 3.15pm – 6.30pm.

2.3 The consultation process focussed on reaching out to neighbours within the vicinity of the site most affected by the Application Proposal. A letter (Appendix 1) was distributed to local residents which included key information on the Application Proposal, the date and time of the exhibition and an email address to send any comments or queries. It was distributed to 910 residents on the following roads.

- Hillbrow
- Lancaster Court
- Tamarisk Avenue
- Linden Road
- Laburnum Gardens
- Newstead Rise
- Hollydale Close
- Whitley Wood Road
- Hollydale Close
- Rushden Drive
- Cherry Grove
- Poplar Gardens
- Cedar Road
- Willow Gardens

- Hazel Crescent
- Blagdon Road
- Shinfield Road
- Sycamore Road
- Poplar Gardens
- Highmead Close
- Beech Road
- Hartland Road
- Wheatley Close
- Egerton Road
- Lacewood Gardens
- Cressingham Road
- Maple Gardens
- Hawthorn Gardens
- Litton Road
- Lower Meadow Road
- Upper Meadow Road

2.4 Parents were also notified ahead of the public exhibition. The school also sent a letter in April 2026 advising them of the changes to the school site , offering an afterschool drop in should any parents have concerns or questions about the plans. Ward councillors were also notified directly by email on 10 July.

2.5 A drop-in exhibition for parents was held at The Ridgeway Primary School on 21 July 2026, during the school pick up period (1.00pm –1.30pm). This enabled parents to find out about the proposals and the changes to the existing school and nursery.

2.6 A public engagement exhibition was held at the school on 21 July 2026, 1– 6.30pm to allow interested parties to come and find out more about the proposals and speak with members of the project team. The exhibition boards were left on display for parents to view following the engagement events.

2.7 The proposals were presented on exhibition boards, and members of the project team were available to discuss the plans and answer any questions that attendees had. Members of the project team in attendance at the public consultation event included the Applicant (Reading Borough Council), Architects (Ayre Chamberlain Gaunt),

Planning Consultant (Shrimplin Planning & Development) and Transport Consultant (Scott White and Hookins).

2.8 There were 16 adults and 9 children in attendees at the event, comprising a mix of staff and local residents. Attendees were able to share their feedback on the proposals through discussions with the team.

3.0 FEEDBACK

3.1 Feedback was broadly positive, with recognition of the need to provide SEN provision. Some concerns were raised in relation to existing highway, traffic and parking issues associated with the operation of the school. These included concerns regarding existing traffic congestion, parking, drop-off and pick-up arrangements and the general operation of the highway network around the school.

- General interest in the plans for the site, particularly around the SEN school access arrangements

  Response: noted.

- Path around back of site for pedestrians and vehicles is a great idea and will be a real improvement

  Response: welcomed.

- There are problems on residential roads at peak times with congestion and parents parking to drop off / pick up children, preventing residents from accessing / leaving their properties and disrupting the flow of traffic

  Response: The Applicant acknowledges the concerns raised by local residents and recognises that these are matters of importance to the local community. It is important to distinguish between matters that relate to the operation of the existing school and the impacts arising from the proposed development. The focus of the planning application is assessing and mitigating any impacts arising from the proposed development. The Application Proposal is supported by a Transport Statement which considers the transport impacts associated with the proposals and sets out arrangements to manage traffic associated with the SEN school within the site, rather issues being displaced on to the

public highway. The Application Proposal will therefore not worsen existing highway issues around the site.

The school will continue to engage with local residents on any concerns raised and work with the local authority in resolving existing highway issues.

- There are problems on Shinfield Road with parents doing dangerous manoeuvres (U-turns) which cannot be seen as cars approach from over the top of the hill.

  Response: The Applicant acknowledges the concerns raised by local residents and recognises that these are matters of importance to the local community. It is important to distinguish between matters that relate to the operation of the existing school and the impacts arising from the proposed development. The focus of the planning application is assessing and mitigating any impacts arising from the proposed development. The Application Proposal is supported by a Transport Statement which considers the transport impacts associated with the proposals and sets out arrangements to manage traffic associated with the SEN school within the site, rather issues being displaced on to the public highway. The Application Proposal will therefore not worsen existing highway issues around the site.

  The school will continue to engage with local residents on any concerns raised and work with the local authority in resolving existing highway issues.

4.0 CONCLUSION

4.1 The Applicant has sought to engage extensively with local residents and the school community on proposals for the site. A drop in exhibition for parents and a public exhibition for local residents took place on 21 July 2026. These events provided an opportunity for school parents and local residents and stakeholders to learn about the proposals from the project team and provide feedback.

4.2 Feedback on the proposals was broadly positive, with support for the new SEN school. Some concerns were raised in relation to existing highway, traffic and parking issues associated with the operation of the school. These included concerns regarding existing traffic congestion, parking, drop-off and pick-up arrangements and the general operation of the highway network around the school.

4.3 The feedback received has been carefully considered in finalising the proposals for the site.

4.4 The Applicant remains committed to engaging with residents and stakeholders throughout the determination of the application and thereafter.

APPENDIX 1

LETTER SENT TO RESIDENTS

Reading Borough Council
Civic Offices
Bridge Street, Reading, RG1 2LU

☎ 0118 937 3787

E-mail: educationpropertydevelopment@reading.gov.uk

Resident

Date: 9 July 2026

Your contact is: Helen Roberts, Principle Education Property Development Officer

Dear resident,

Creating schools for the future in line with the Government's Education Estate Strategy

As part of plans to revitalise our school estate, ensure our schools are fit for the future and deliver vital local education for children with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND), Reading Borough Council is developing The Ridgeway Primary School.

Falling pupil numbers in primary schools is a national trend, as is the increasing additional support children need to attend an appropriate school to meet their needs.

Work is being carried out to use the spare capacity of the school site to introduce much-needed local SEND provision.

We will be holding a drop-in session at the school on Tuesday 21st July between 15.15 – 18.30pm. Here, you will be able to see the proposals, and our design team will be on hand to answer any questions and hear your thoughts. There will be further opportunities to submit formal comments on the planning application later in the year.

The Ridgeway Primary School site has been identified as one of the best locations to deliver the proposals, which include:

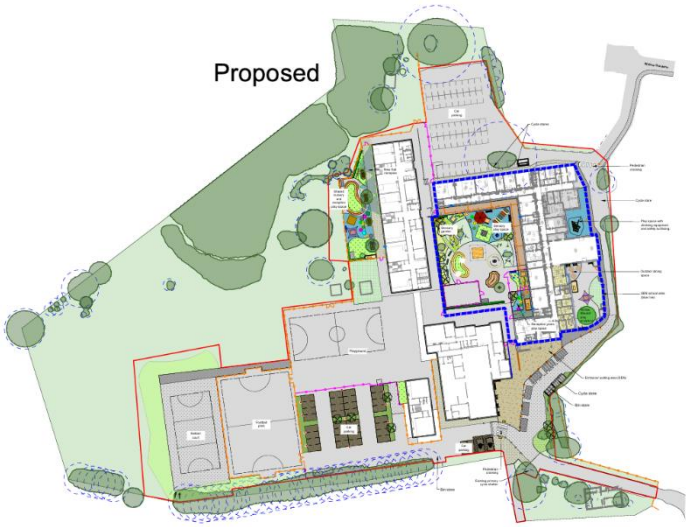
- Retaining and improving the current 2FE mainstream primary school and nursery, with the addition of:
  - An improved play area for early years pupils
  - New toilets
  - New netball court.
- A new provision for primary SEND pupils using the spare capacity on site, via:
  - A refurbishment of the existing spare classrooms, making them suitable for SEND teaching
  - Demolition of a life expired modular building
  - New extensions to create space for SEND teaching and ancillary spaces
  - Redesigned external outdoor spaces allowing for SEND external play
  - Improved site access and partitioning between the two school provisions

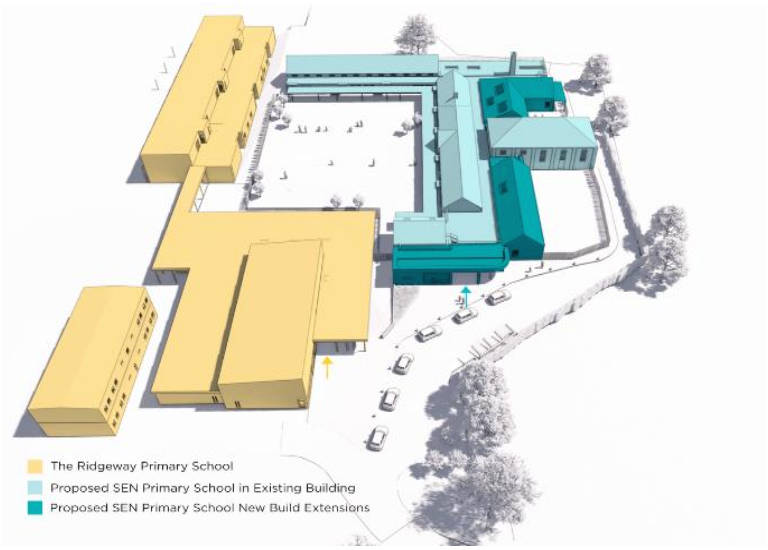
- New car park and drop-off area.

The improvement works to the mainstream primary school site is expected to be completed in summer 2026, with works to create SEND places, extensions and external works to be carried out in 2027.

Kind regards

Helen Roberts
Principal Education Property Development Officer





APPENDIX 2

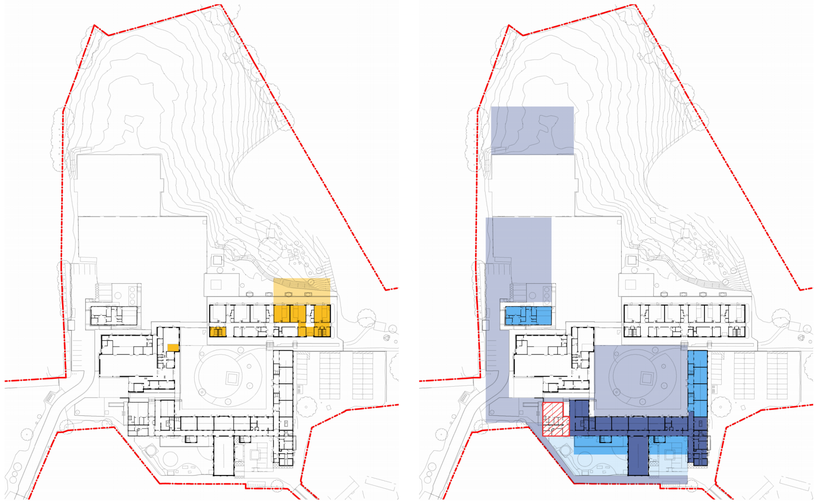
PRESENTATION BOARDS

THE RIDGEWAY SCHOOLS PROJECT

This project is an exciting opportunity to create a stronger, more inclusive school site, with improvements to the mainstream primary school alongside the delivery of a new specialist SEND school.

Our proposals focus on creating the right learning environments for both schools, making best use of the existing buildings on site, and delivering improvements that will support pupils, staff, and families into the future. By carefully planning the changes, the project aims to meet growing educational needs while enhancing the overall quality, functionality, and long-term sustainability of the site.

- **Designing for Diverse Needs:** creating learning environments that are tailored to the needs of both schools. This means providing high-quality, inclusive spaces that support a broad range of learners, while ensuring each school has accommodation that is appropriate, effective, and welcoming.
- **Making Best Use of Existing Buildings:** thoughtfully reconfiguring the existing school estate to create two well-functioning educational settings on one site. By adapting and improving existing buildings, the proposals make efficient use of available space while delivering long-term value and purpose.
- **Creating Social Value:** supporting more children and families through a broader offer of educational provision. Alongside creating a new SEND school, the project will also invest in the mainstream school environment, helping the site continue to serve as an important community asset with benefits for the wider area.
- **Minimising Disruption:** ensuring that the day-to-day life of the existing school is carefully considered throughout design and delivery. The proposals will be developed with a strong focus on safe access, clear phasing, and maintaining a positive learning environment during the transition.
- **Delivering at the Right Time:** delivering the project in line with the need for school places in the 2027 and 2028 school years. A clear and carefully coordinated programme will help ensure both schools are ready to support pupils at the right time.
- **A Truly Sustainable Development:** creating a site that is sustainable in educational, social, and environmental terms. By reusing and improving existing buildings, investing in long-term school infrastructure, and planning for future needs, the project aims to deliver lasting value for both schools and their communities.



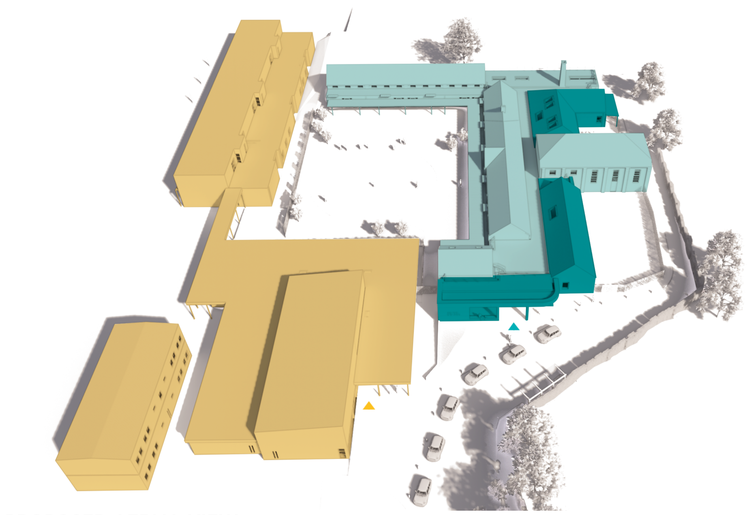
The Ridgeway Primary School Works - Summer 2026

Refurbishment of existing building and associated landscaping - Summer 2027

Further refurbishment and extensions to be completed following the above

Proposed Demolition - Summer 2027

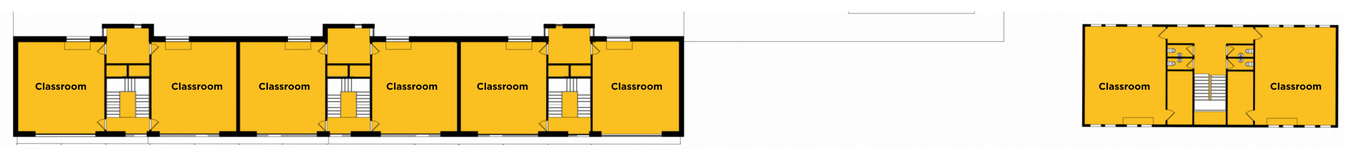
SEQUENCE OF PROPOSED WORKS



PROPOSED AERIAL VIEW



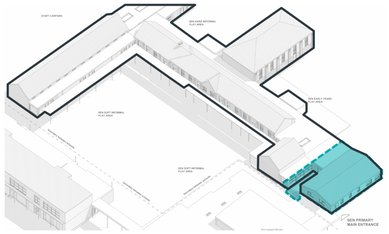
PROPOSED GROUND FLOOR PLAN



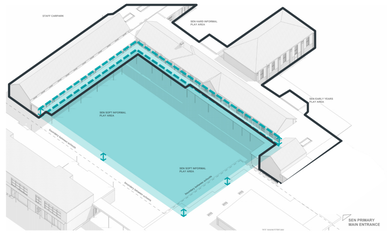
PROPOSED FIRST FLOOR PLAN

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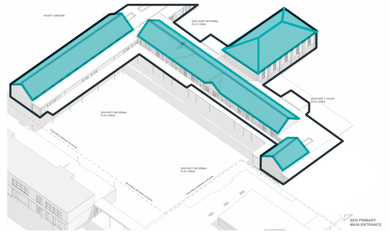
AYRE CHAMBERLAIN GAUNT



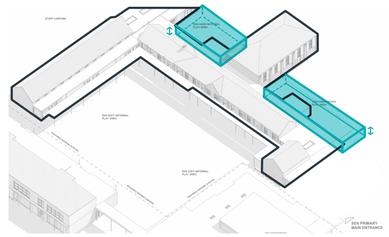
01 REMOVAL OF MODULAR BUILDING



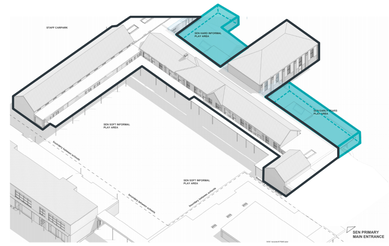
02 IDENTIFYING EXISTING DATUMS



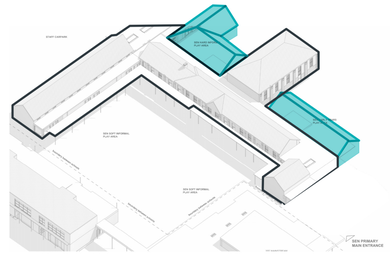
03 IDENTIFYING PITCHED ROOFS AS A PREDOMINANT SITE FEATURE



04 RESPONDING TO EXISTING DATUMS

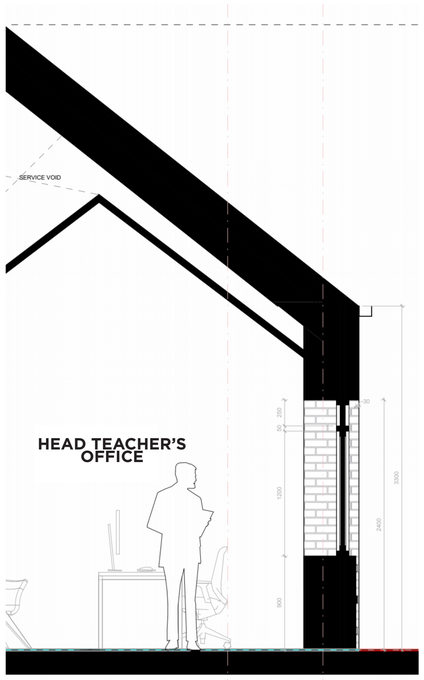


05 REFINING LAYOUTS

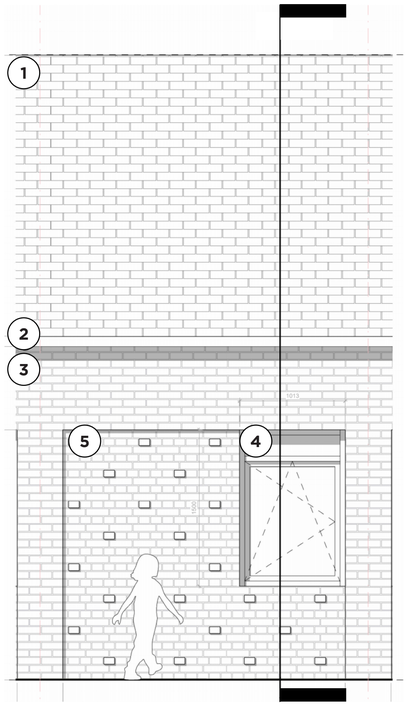


06 RESPONDING TO ROOF TYPOLOGIES

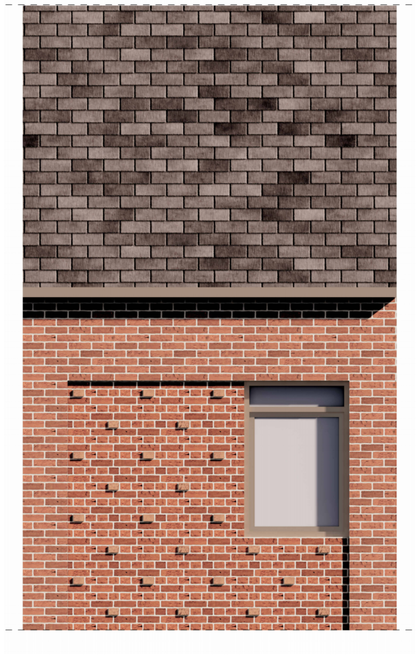
MASSING DIAGRAMS



PROPOSED BAY SECTION



PROPOSED BAY ELEVATION



PROPOSED MATERIALITY



WORKING WITH THE EXISTING MATERIALS

MATERIALS KEY:

1. Slate tile roof

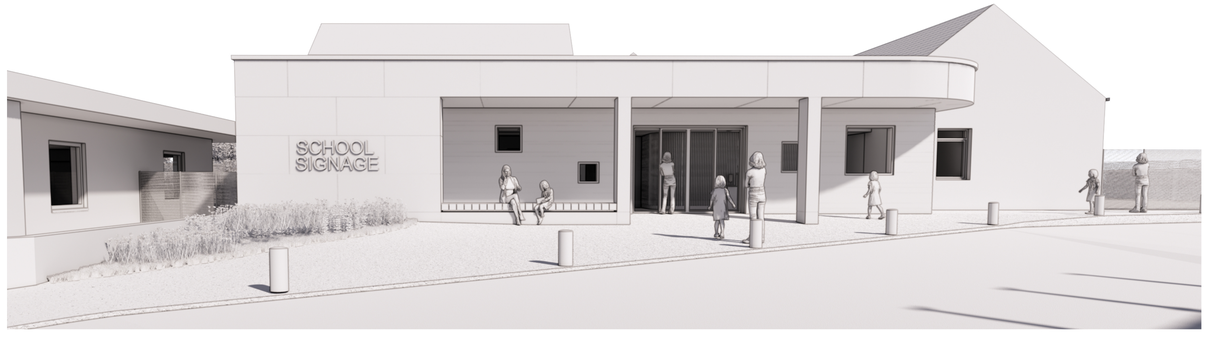
2. Rainwater goods to be colour-matched to Rockpanel cladding proposed for main entrance

3. Projecting brickwork colonnade in stretcher bond using brick matching existing

4. Window frames to be colour-matched to Rockpanel cladding proposed for main entrance

5. Brickwork bays to match existing brickwork in bond and colour, with every 6th brick in header rows projecting out by 15mm





CONCEPT VIEWS OF THE APPROACH TO THE SCHOOLS

Reading Borough Council
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AYRE CHAMBERLAIN GAUNT



0m 10m 20m

north

- All dimensions in millimetres unless otherwise indicated. All levels in metres relative to Ordnance Datum and are positive (AOD) unless otherwise indicated.
- Figure dimensions only to be taken from this drawing. Dimensions and levels to be checked on site.
- Scaling suitable for planning purposes only, when drawing is reproduced at indicated size.
- All civil/structural matters including existing and proposed services, sub-base construction, site structures and retaining walls are subject to design/confirmation by an appropriately qualified Engineer. Refer to information by others.
- The original version of this drawing was produced in colour - monochrome copies should not be relied upon to accurately reflect all drawing elements.
- This drawing has been prepared for planning purposes only and should not be used for quantification, tender or construction.

- Site boundary
- Boundary showing extent of enabling works
- Boundary showing extent of Phase Ib works
- Existing tree to be retained and protected in accordance with BS 5837:2012
- Existing tree to be removed
- Existing vegetation retained
- Asphalt
- Grass
- Shrub planting
- Artificial grass
- Coloured play surfacing
- Concrete slab paving
- Canopy to be retained

rev.	date	by	chk	notes
P02	25/06/26	DB	RB	Updated following comments.
P01	09/06/26	DB	RB	First issue.

project
Reading SEN

dwg no
RDW-TFC- XX-XX-DR- L- 1000

title
Existing site plan

suitability
For Information

stage	scale @ A1
Stage 3	1:500

terrafirma
LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTS
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Tel: +44 (0)1730 262 040
Web: www.terrafirmaconsultancy.com
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P:\PROJECTS\23352 Reading SEN School\RB\23352 CAD\23352 For public consultation\RDW-TFC-XX-XX-DR-L-1000 existing site plan for public consultation



Outdoor Spaces Plan (not to scale)

Key:

- Site boundary (suggested) (17695.20 sqm)
- Existing tree to be retained and protected in accordance with BS 5837:2012

Hard Landscape

- Existing asphalt (vehicular + pedestrian) to be retained
- Proposed buff coloured resin bound paving to entrance
- Proposed asphalt
- Existing pedestrian asphalt
- Proposed pedestrian asphalt
- Proposed vehicular permeable block paving
- Concrete paving slabs-existing to be retained
- Existing turf to be retained
- Proposed safety surface- rubber crumb
- Proposed artificial grass

Fences and walls

- Existing fence retained
- Proposed fences with matching gates
- Existing retaining wall
- Proposed retaining wall

Furniture

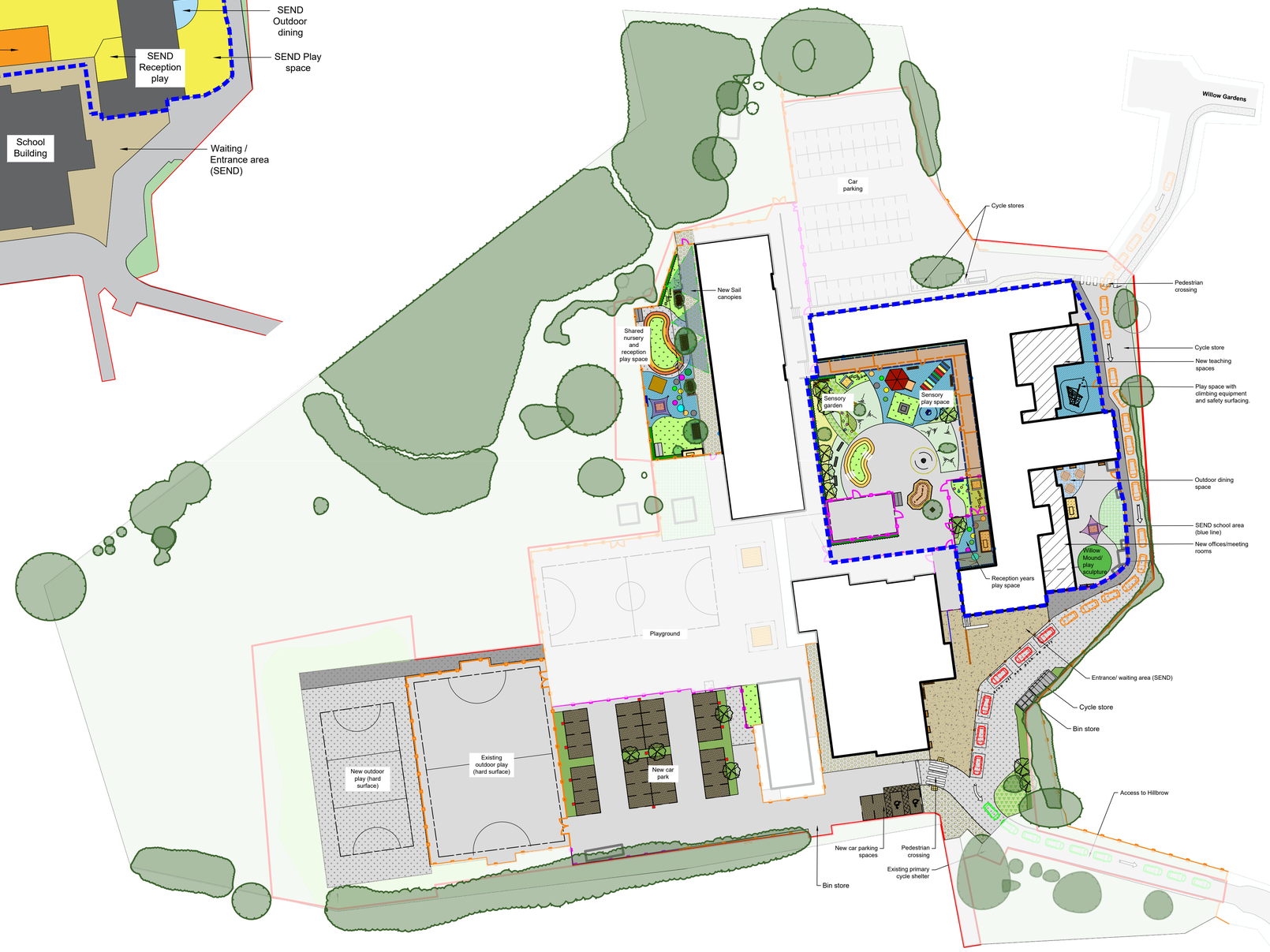
- Existing shed to be retained
- Proposed 1.85x2.29m sized shed to play area
- Proposed tables and chair
- Proposed benches
- Proposed colourful timber coated stepping stones on mown grass path to sensory garden
- Proposed EV charging points
- Proposed raised planters
- Proposed bib taps
- Existing bollards
- Proposed bollards
- Existing canopy to be retained
- Proposed canopy; refer to architects drawings for additional details

Soft Landscape

- Existing shrub planting
- Proposed shrub planting
- Proposed sensory planting
- Existing grass to be retained
- Proposed grassed area
- Proposed mown path in grass
- Proposed bark mulch to mud kitchen and play features
- Proposed tree
- Drop off/pick up - vehicles moving
- Drop off/pick up - vehicles queuing to drop off / pick up
- Drop off/pick up - vehicles dropping off/picking up

Key

- Buildings
- Car parking and access
- Pedestrian access and circulation
- Hard informal space
- Hard play
- Outdoor play with features
- Outdoor dining
- Soft landscape
- SEND School area



Landscape General Arrangement Plan

0m 10m 20m

north

- All dimensions in millimetres unless otherwise indicated. All levels in metres relative to Ordnance Datum and are positive (AOD) unless otherwise indicated.
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- This drawing has been prepared for public consultation only and should not be used for construction.

rev.	date	by	chk	notes
P03	10/07/26	JM	RB	Updated with vehicular movement.
P02	25/06/26	DB	RB	Updated following comments.
P01	09/06/26	DB	RB	First issue.

project
Reading SEND

dwg no
RDW-TFC- XX-XX-DR- L- 1010

title
Landscape General Arrangement

suitability
For Public Consultation

stage
Stage 3

scale @ A1
1:500

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Notes

GENERAL

- This drawing is to be read in conjunction with all relevant Engineers and Architects drawings and with the Specification.
- For setting out refer to Architects drawings.
- All dimensions are in millimetres and levels are in metres unless noted otherwise.
- Contractor to take all relevant dimensions on site. Any discrepancies to be advised to the Engineer.
- Contractor to check/scan for services prior to construction to avoid any damage during works.

PRELIMINARY - NOT FOR CONSTRUCTION

Rev.	Amendment	Drn.	Chkd.	Appd.	Date
P02	Further Details Added	JH	JH	JH	08.07.2026
P01	For Information	JH	JH	JH	07.07.2026

DO NOT SCALE FROM THIS DRAWING

Existing Retained
Car Parking
(42 spaces including
1 Disabled accessible space)

Proposed New
Car Parking
(42 spaces including
2 Disabled accessible spaces)

As shown in the drawing above, during morning drop-off and afternoon pick-up, vehicles will enter the site from Willow Gardens, and exit through Hillbrow.

The proposed layout allows six vehicles to drop off or pick up at a time, with a queuing lane for a further 19 vehicles. This means all vehicle traffic during peak times is managed within the site, and no congestion will occur on roads in the surrounding area.

The school will manage traffic on site using marshals and by communicating with the vehicle drivers.

Project

Ridgeway Primary School and proposed Primary SEND School Development

Drawing

Whole Site General Arrangement showing proposed car parking facilities

Client

Reading Borough Council

Scott White and Hookins

Structural Engineering | Civil Engineering | Sustainability and BREEAM | CDM Consultancy

Scale at A1 - 1:250

304906_SWH_ZZ_XX_D_H_5906 P02

Project | Originator | Zone | Level | Type | Role | Number | Rev.

CP004-01_FM_ST_008_D