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Whitley Park - Design & Access Statement

September 2026

475_REF_821_RevP4

Revision: P4

WHITLEY PARK DESIGN & ACCESS STATEMENT

REVISION SHEET

REPORT TITLE: WHITLEY PARK - DESIGN & ACCESS STATEMENT
REPORT NUMBER: 475_REF_821_RevP4

This report has been prepared for the sole benefit, use and information of **Reading Borough Council (RBC)** to support a planning application to Reading Borough Council.

This report, together with supplementary reports accompanying it, relates to the present design and may be subject to changes as the project progresses.

REVISION	DATE	STATUS	PURPOSE	PREPARED BY	CHECKED BY
P1	28/08/2026	FOR INFORMATION	FOR REVIEW	RK	GP
P2	07/09/2026	FOR INFORMATION	FOR PLANNING	RK	GP
P3	14/09/2026	FOR INFORMATION	FOR PLANNING	RK	GP
P4	22/09/2026	FOR INFORMATION	FOR PLANNING	RK	GP

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01 INTRODUCTION

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

KEY PROJECT INFORMATION

Ayre Chamberlain Gaunt have been commissioned as part of a multi-disciplinary team to prepare a planning application for works to facilitate the delivery of a Special Educational Needs (SEN) school at Whitley Park Primary & Nursery School as part of a growing demand for SEN places across the borough. It is a full planning application for a car park extension with reconfigured internal vehicular circulation, landscaping and play equipment (part-retrospective) and boundary treatment and an outline planning application for an extension forming a new teaching block/hall, additional car park extension and landscaping with all matters reserved except for access.

This document puts forward proposals for the creation of SEN provision on the following site:

Whitley Park Primary and Nursery School

Brixham Road, Reading, RG2 7RB

The existing primary school is underutilised and comprises of:

- 3FE (630 pupils) & Alternative Resourced Provision (ARP)
- 30-place Nursery (AM only)

The existing Nursery is retained and relocated in Block C. The proposal requires reducing the capacity of the primary school to 2FE (420 pupils) and provides spaces for:

Phase 1 (full planning application)

The works that form part of the full planning application (Phase 1) will facilitate the delivery of a new SEN secondary school. This is set out below:

- 56 secondary age SEN pupils

Total number of pupils at the completion of Phase 1 = 56 SEN pupils

Phase 2 (outline planning application)

The works that form part of the outline planning application (Phase 2) will facilitate additional SEN secondary school places. This is set out below:

- Additional 40 secondary age SEN pupils

Total number of pupils at the completion of Phase 2 = 96 SEN pupils

The existing surplus accommodation is proposed to be refurbished and supplemented with a new extension to ensure the SEN pupils are provided with appropriate facilities. Associated external landscaping works are to be proposed including fencing works, planting, play and learning areas, PE facilities, staff parking, and on-site SEN drop-off parking.

The following items form the contents of this planning application:

- External landscaping works and new play equipment.
- Re-configuration of internal vehicle circulation and extension of existing car parking provision to meet the needs of both Schools.
- New fencing

.

Some of the landscaping, play equipment and new canopies to facilitate the reduction of the existing primary school are currently commencing on site. These are minor works (either not development or permitted development). These are highlighted on the plans. The second phase of development is included in this application to be considered as an outline proposal.

A series of stakeholder workshops to develop the brief have been undertaken following which a set of option studies were presented to the client (Reading Borough Council) as well as the future end users (the current Whitley Park Primary and Nursery School and the new SEN School). The preferred option was developed into detailed proposals by the project team benefiting from client input throughout the concept and design development stages.

A public consultation event was held at Whitley Park Primary and Nursery School to give an opportunity to staff, parents and the wider public to give feedback which was incorporated in the proposals.

CURRENT CAPACITY:	630-PLACE MAINSTREAM PRIMARY (3FE) & ALTERNATIVE PROVISION, 30 PLACE NURSERY (AM)
PROPOSED CAPACITY (PHASE 1):	420-PLACE MAINSTREAM PRIMARY & ALTERNATIVE PROVISION, 26-PLACE NURSERY (AM & PM) 56-PLACE SEND SECONDARY

PROJECT TEAM

CLIENT	READING BOROUGH COUNCIL
LEAD CONSULTANT	AYRE CHAMBERLAIN GAUNT ARCHITECTS
ARCHITECT	AYRE CHAMBERLAIN GAUNT ARCHITECTS
PRINCIPAL DESIGNER	AYRE CHAMBERLAIN GAUNT ARCHITECTS
PLANNING CONSULTANT	SHRIMPLIN PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT LTD
PROJECT MANAGER	WARD WILLIAMS ASSOCIATES
COST CONSULTANT	WARD WILLIAMS ASSOCIATES
LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTS	TERRAFIRMA CONSULTANCY
STRUCTURAL & CIVILS ENGINEER	MARBAS GROUP LIMITED
MEP ENGINEER	RCDC
FIRE CONSULTANT	RLB
TRANSPORT CONSULTANT	SCOTT WHITE AND HOOKINS
ACOUSTIC CONSULTANT	SOUND ADVICE LTD
ECOLOGY CONSULTANT	JOHN WENMAN ECOLOGY
ACCESS & INCLUSION CONSULTANT	JANE SIMPSON ACCESS

KEY DRIVERS



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.



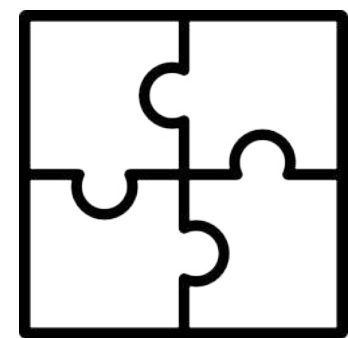
MAKING BEST USE OF EXISTING BUILDINGS

Thoughtfully re-configuring 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.

02

THE SITE

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THE SITE

This document puts forward proposals for the creation of SEND provision on the following site:

Whitley Park Primary and Nursery School, Brixham Rd, Reading, RG2 7RB

The site of Whitley Park Primary and Nursery School is situated in a predominantly residential area to the south of Reading, benefiting from multiple pedestrian links and vehicular access points, with the primary vehicular and pedestrian access from Brixham Road. The school sits at the heart of the Whitley community, surrounded by established housing and a generous landscape setting, with extensive playing fields and outdoor learning areas to the east and south.

The campus comprises a series of interconnected single-storey wings: the KS1 and KS2 teaching blocks, nursery and early years provision, and ancillary buildings arranged around a central courtyard. These main blocks are interspersed with a variety of dedicated outdoor play spaces, including early years playgrounds, a habitat area in the north, and an expansive playing field along the eastern boundary. The arrangement supports a clear progression and safeguarding strategy for different age groups, while maximising access to outdoor environments.

Access to the site is secure, with perimeter fencing and controlled points of entry serving both staff and visitors. Staff parking is provided to the north-east of the site, while key pedestrian approaches activate the site's boundaries and connect it to the surrounding neighbourhood. The layout also features a large forecourt, which currently lacks structured use, alongside other specialist areas such as a dining hall block. The site's context is defined by its proximity to local residential properties and its open green character, creating a pleasant, accessible, and welcoming environment for pupils, staff, and visitors. The landscape buffers and mature trees further contribute to the sense of enclosure and community integration, supporting both learning and recreation within a safe and vibrant school setting.

-  Site Ownership Boundary
-  Site Application Boundary

- 01** Aerial view of Whitley Park School showing indicative site boundary (image taken 6th July 2022).
- 02** Main entrance for Whitley Park School
- 03** Approach to main entrance
- 04** Courtyard looking north-west
- 05** Internal courtyard
- 06** Playground looking south east
- 07** Rear hard play area looking north-east towards southern wing of the school



01 Aerial view of Whitley Park Primary and Nursery School and its immediate context. Source: Google Earth.

EXTERNAL PHOTOGRAPHS



- 02 Main entrance for Whitley Park School
- 03 Approach to main entrance
- 04 Courtyard looking north-west
- 05 Internal courtyard
- 06 Playground looking south east
- 07 Rear hard play area looking north-east towards southern wing of the school

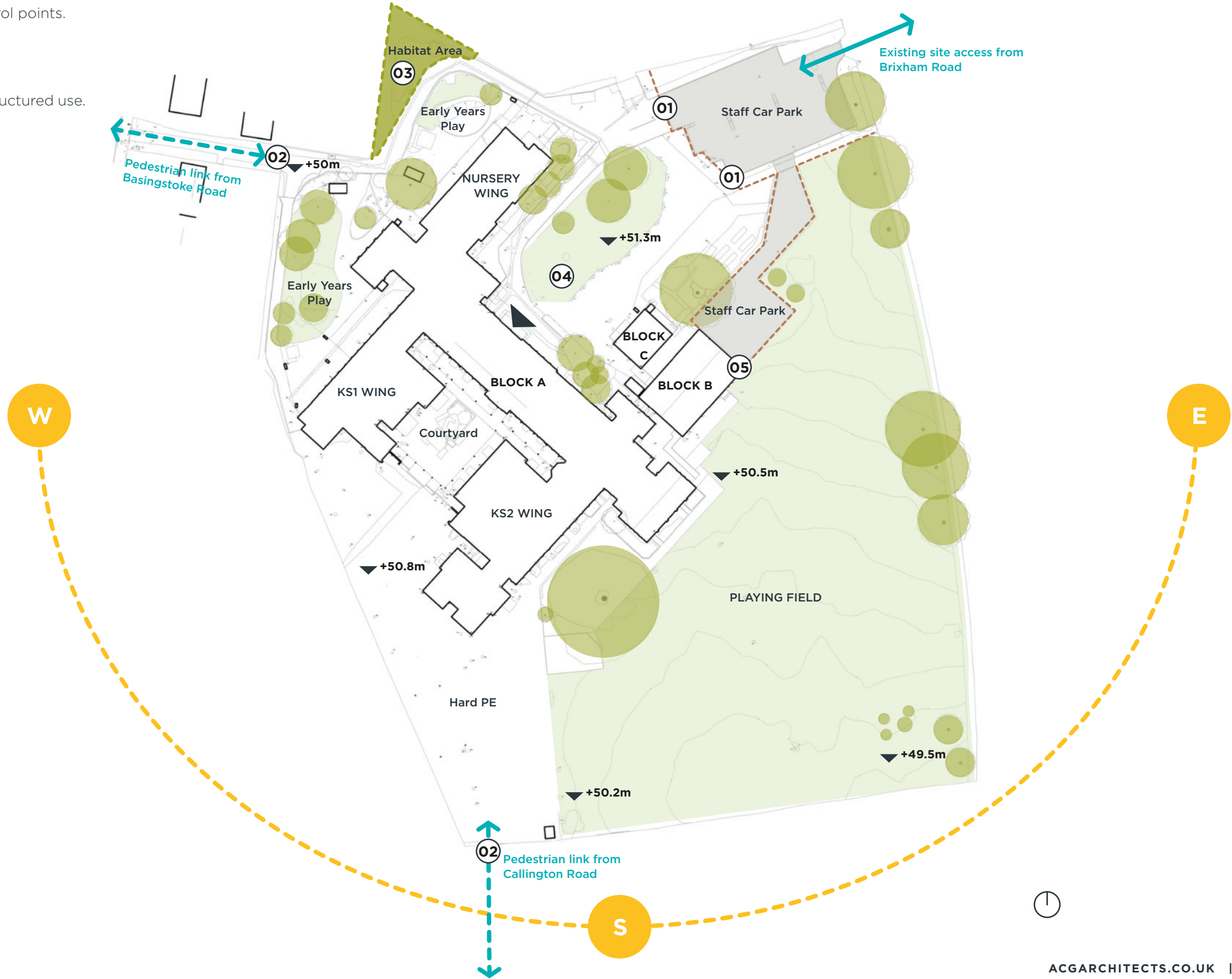
INTERNAL PHOTOGRAPHS



- 01 Existing typical general teaching space.
- 02 Existing secondary hall.
- 03 Existing library.
- 04 Existing nursery space.
- 05 Existing pupils' sanitary facilities.
- 06 Existing circulation space.

EXISTING SITE ANALYSIS

- 01 Secure line fencing and access control points.
- 02 Manually locked gates.
- 03 Overgrown pond area.
- 04 Very large forecourt area without structured use.
- 05 Dining hall has condition issues.



03

METHODOLOGY & REGULATORY FRAMEWORK

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METHODOLOGY

Whilst the planning application is for works to facilitate the new SEN school, for completeness, we have considered how the retained primary school and SEN school meet the area guidance set out by the Department for Education. Given the split nature of the project, both the Building Bulletin 103 (BB103) 'Area Guidelines for Mainstream Schools' and the Building Bulletin 104 (BB104) 'Area Guidelines for SEND and Alternative Provisions' were used in developing the proposals.

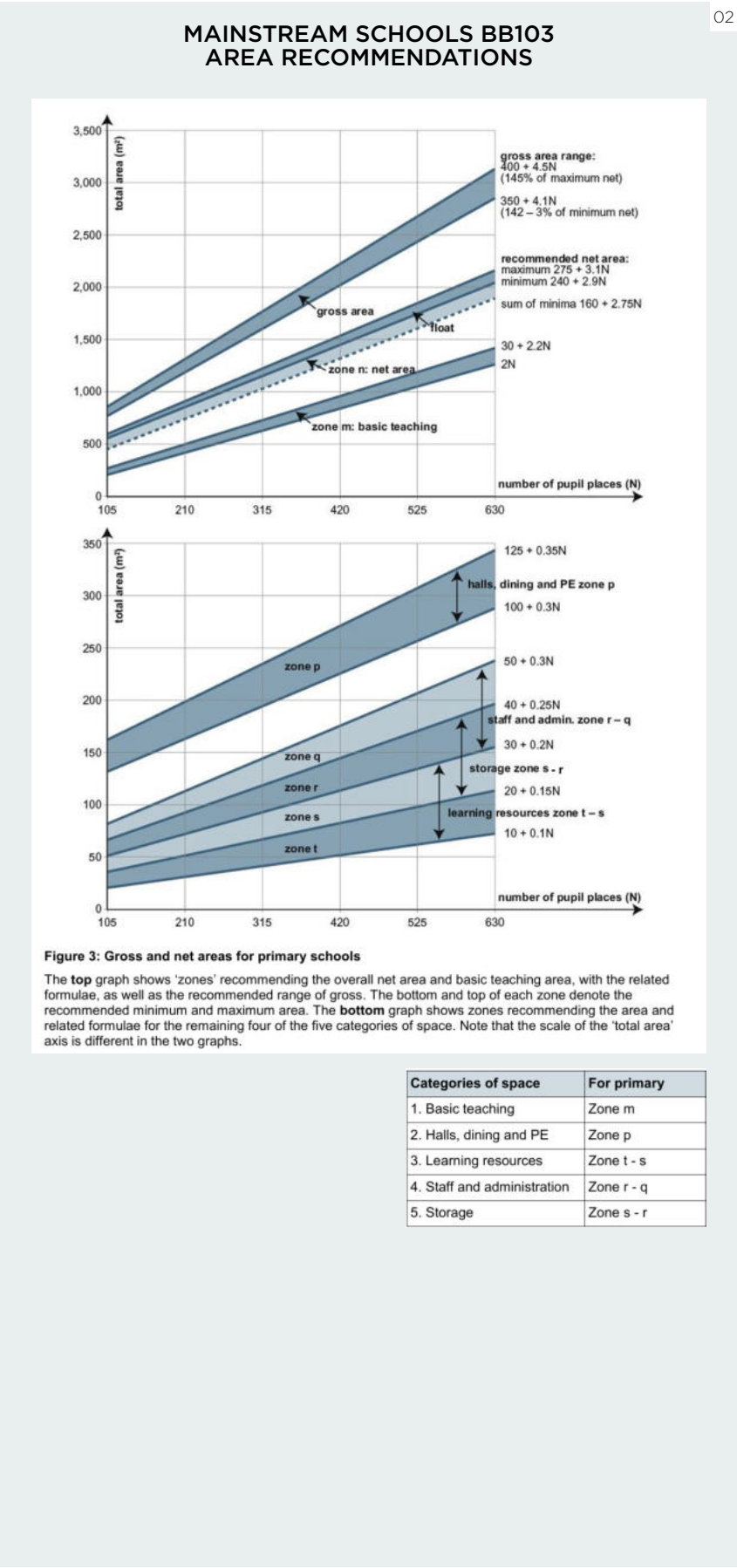
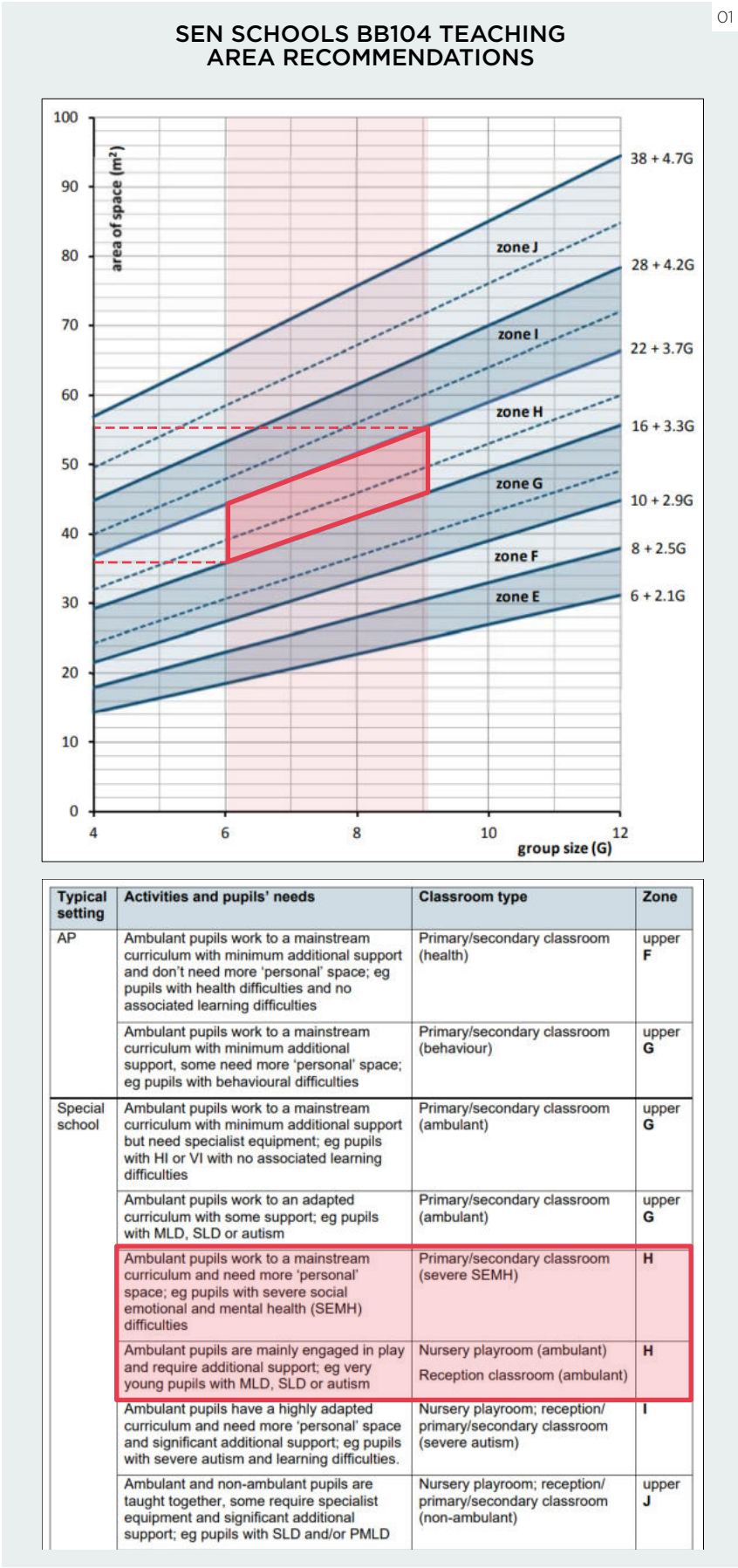
SEN PROVISION

- As agreed with RBC, the BB104 space requirements for ambulant pupils (MLD/SLD/Autism/SEMH) in special school have been used for the purposes of this feasibility study.
- The SEN pupils are understood to be within **Zone H** for the activities and pupils needs
- The proposals based on the following pupils' numbers:
 - 56-place SEN Secondary;**
- The proposals are typically based on class sizes of **8 pupils** throughout the Primary and Secondary accommodation, in line with Reading Borough Council's brief.
- The proposed external works have been assessed against the BB104 space requirements. For further information on proposed external works, please refer to the Landscape Architect's information.

MAINSTREAM PROVISION

- Reduction of current capacity of the primary schools from 3FE (630 pupils) to 2FE (420 pupils).
- The proposals are based on the following pupils' numbers:
 - 420-place Mainstream Primary School at Whitley Park;**
- The current areas of the schools have been assessed against the BB103 area recommendations for 2FE Mainstream Primary schools, and proposals seek to address under-utilisation of space.
- The proposals are based on class sizes of **30 pupils**.

01 Extracts from the Building Bulletin 104 (BB104).
02 Extracts from the Building Bulletin 103 (BB103).



04

DESIGN DEVELOPMENT

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KEY SITE MOVES



MOVE 1 SPLIT SITE

Assessment of outside space and
adjacencies, high level conclusion of how
areas could be accommodated

SEN Secondary
2FE Primary



MOVE 2 IDENTIFY KEY RELATIONSHIPS

Assessment of successful relationships that
should be maintained in existing school



MOVE 3 IDENTIFY & APPRAISE AREAS WITH POTENTIAL FOR DEVELOPMENT

OPTIONS APPRAISAL

Options appraisal exercises were undertaken to test locations for new development to address the need for additional facilities in delivering the required SEND provision.

Factors taken into account while assessing the level of success of various options included the following:

- Ease of management as a result of the split nature of the sites
- Connectivity between spaces and connections with play areas
- Opportunities for creating inspiring school frontages
- Sensitivity to the existing buildings
- Ease of supervision of pupils
- Level of complexity with regards to the phasing strategy
- Sustainability strategy including orientation, natural ventilation and day lighting

NOTE: The proposed 2-storey new build is to be considered under an outline application at this stage.

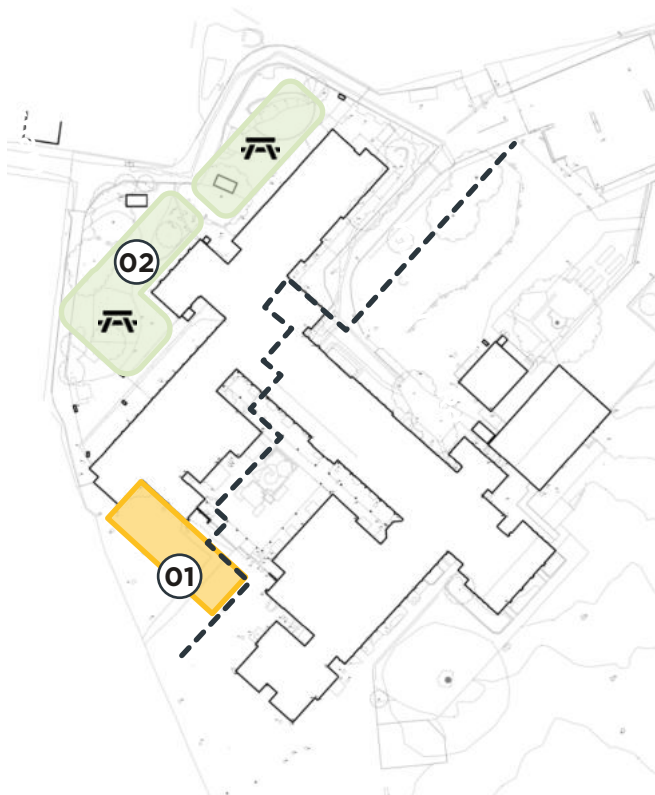
KEY

-  Proposed new build extension
-  Soft/hard play areas
-  Library / Learning Resources Space as 'heart' of school
-  Connectivity between indoor/outdoor spaces
-  Views out



OPTION 1

- 01** Opportunity to create an inspiring and modern frontage to SEN School and provide required hall facilities in line with BB104 recommendations
- 02** Opportunity to provide additional teaching spaces to meet BB104 requirements
- 03** Opportunity to retain a variety of soft and hard play areas
- +** Single storey new build extensions simplify accessibility strategy
- +** Sensitive approach in terms of massing and height
- Multiple new build extensions located across the site add complexity to enabling works and phasing strategy
- Loss of existing play area to the north-west of the school.



OPTION 2

- 01** Opportunity to provide additional teaching and hall facilities
- 02** Opportunity to retain a variety of soft and hard play areas
- +** Enabling works and phasing strategy simplified for a single new build
- Two storey new build extension will raise challenges in delivering a fully accessible building
- Loss of hard play area at the rear of site
- Underutilised external space to front of schools
- Risk of an extension which looks imposing and out of place in comparison to the surrounding buildings
- Courtyard becomes land-locked

PREFERRED OPTION



OPTION 3

- 01** Opportunity to create an inspiring and modern frontage to SEN School and provide required hall and teaching facilities in line with BB104 recommendations
- 02** Opportunity to retain a variety of soft and hard play areas
- 03** Opportunity to provide additional teaching spaces to meet BB104 requirements.
- +** Enabling works and phasing strategy simplified for a single new build
- +** Two storey block allows for delivery of 'cluster' of functions

KEY DESIGN MOVES

DESIGN PROPOSAL

- 1. Proposal enhances the school's frontage, creating a clearer and more welcoming entry point.
- 2. An enhanced central space becomes the heart of the school and serves as the library, improving flow and cohesion.
- 3. Classrooms offer direct access to outside, maintaining daylight and opportunity for outdoor learning.
- 4. Extended car park.
- 5. 2-storey new build extension sensitively linked to the existing building.

Existing Building

Proposed New Build Extension

External Play Area

Library

Demolition

Car Parking



PHASED DELIVERY APPROACH

The proposed development at Whitley Park Primary School is designed to be delivered through a carefully phased approach to ensure minimal disruption to the school's ongoing operations while responding to current and future needs:

PHASE 1 - FULL PLANNING APPLICATION

The Phase 1 planning application is for the external works to facilitate the new SEN school. Alongside this, there will be internal reconfiguration and refurbishment of the existing SEN wing. The aim is to deliver high-quality, inclusive facilities in accordance with current government guidance. The key proposals are as follows:

Internal works: Refurbishment and reorganisation of internal spaces to provide a range of flexible learning environments, including new learning resource areas such as a library, soft play, and group rooms. All finishes and building services will be upgraded to meet modern standards and enhance the learning environment.

External works: A dedicated drop-off and pick-up zone will be established within the site to improve safety and traffic flow. Improvements to the existing car park to increase capacity and accessibility, alongside an enlargement to provide additional parking spaces. Upgrades to play surfaces and outdoor equipment will ensure they are safe, stimulating, and accessible for SEN pupils.

PHASE 2 - OUTLINE PLANNING APPLICATION

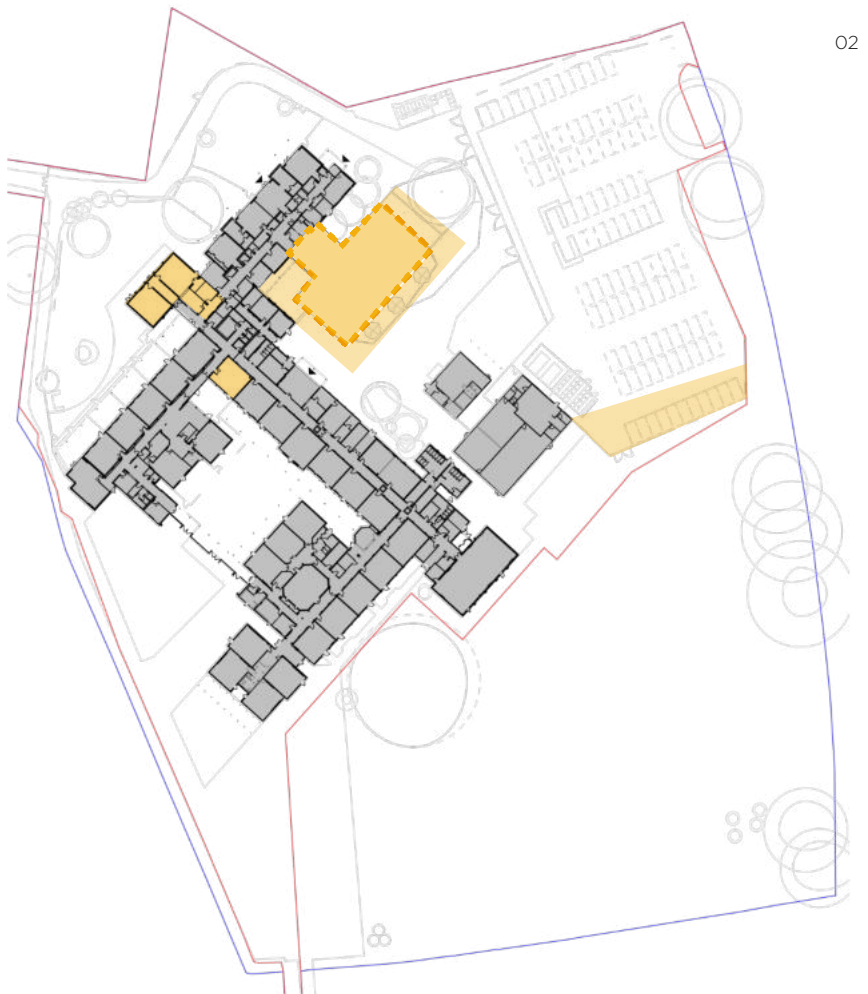
The Phase 2 planning application is for the construction of a two-storey extension to the SEN wing. This new building will provide:

- A multi-purpose hall
- Specialist teaching spaces
- Additional learning resources
- Sanitary facilities to meet the needs of an expanding pupil base

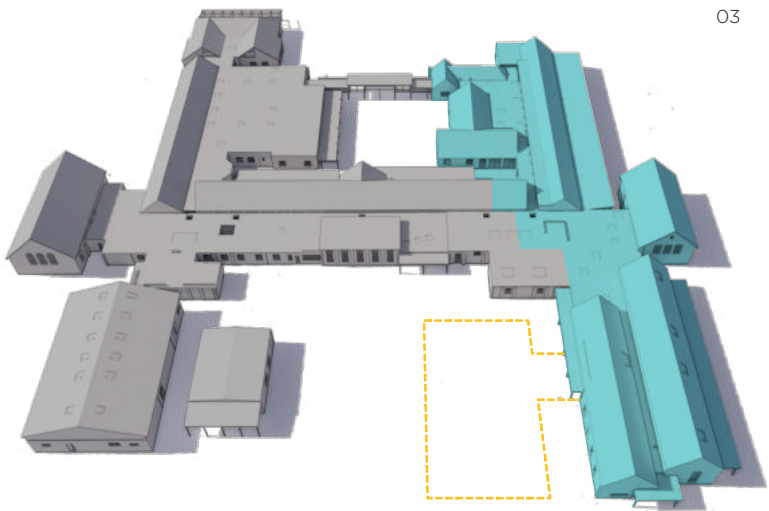
To support the anticipated increase in student numbers, an additional extension to the car park is also proposed, along with targeted external works to integrate the new accommodation with the existing school campus.



01



02



03

KEY

-  No works
-  Phase 1 (full planning application) Proposed SEND School external and internal works
-  Phase 2 (outline planning application) Proposed SEND School external and internal works
-  Phase 2 (outline planning application) Proposed SEND School new build extension (indicative footprint)

- 01 Diagrammatic site plan showing extent of works to be carried out during the Phase 1 of development (full planning application).
- 02 Diagrammatic site plan showing extent of works to be carried out during the Phase 2 of development (outline planning application).
- 03 Aerial view of the proposed split between the Schools indicating the approximate footprint of the Phase 2 extension.

05

ARCHITECTURAL WORKS

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PROPOSED PHASE 1 - GROUND FLOOR PLAN

01 Creation of a Dedicated Library/Learning Resource Centre (Not Part of Planning Application):

Creation of a library and Learning Resource Centre (LRC) with direct access to a newly reconfigured and refurbished outdoor space, supporting independent and group learning and facilitating indoor-outdoor connectivity for all pupils.

**02 Refurbishment and Reconfiguration of the Main Entrance
(Not Part of Planning Application):**

Refurbishment and reconfiguration of the main entrance to improve accessibility, wayfinding, and security, creating a welcoming and inclusive arrival point for pupils, staff, and visitors.

03 Provision of Boundary Treatments:

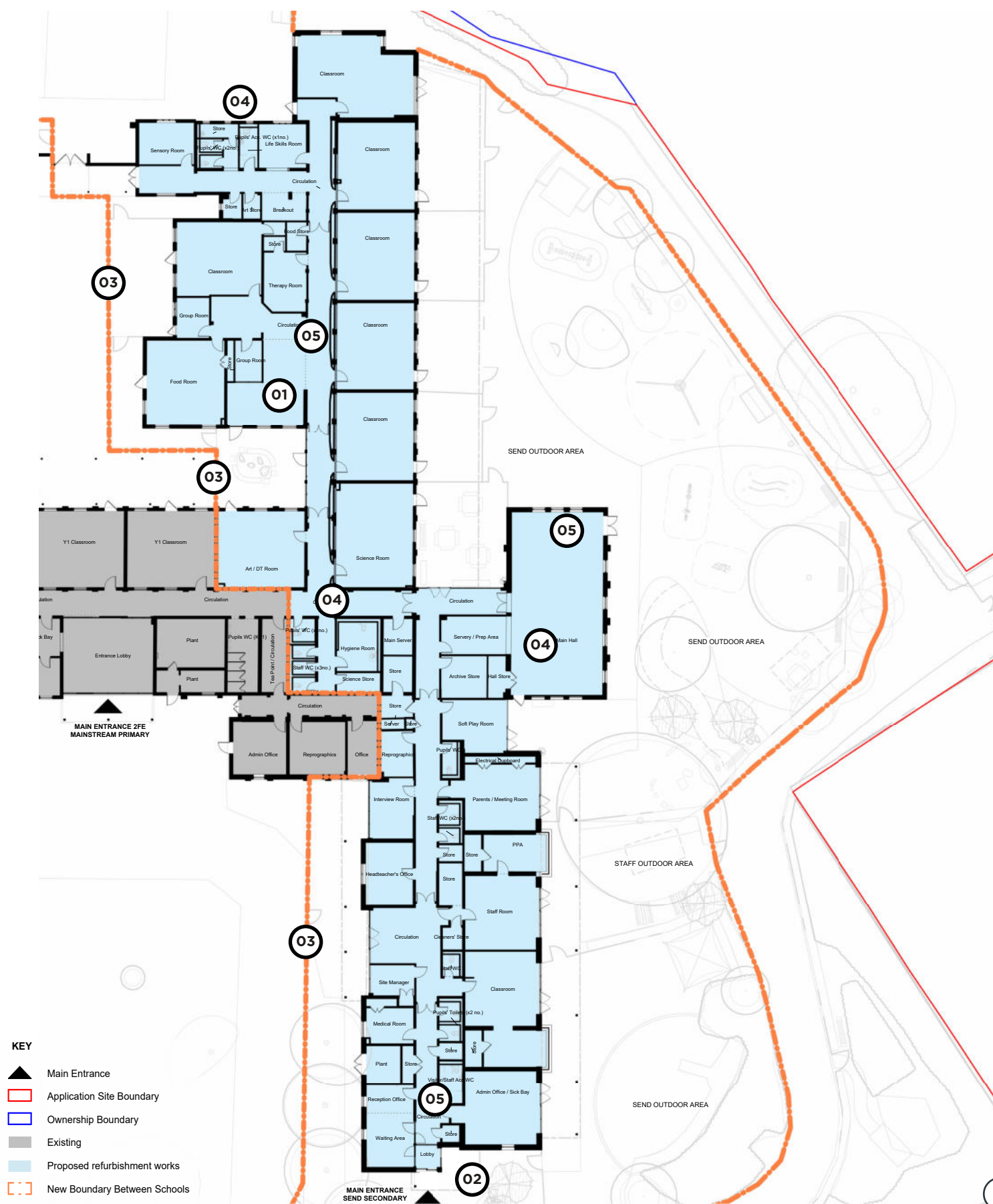
Provision of new boundary treatment to clearly define and securely separate the SEND School from Whitley Park Primary and Nursery School. Further details are available within the Landscape Architect's proposals.

04 Reconfiguration of Internal Spaces to Support SEND Pupils (Not Part of Planning Application):

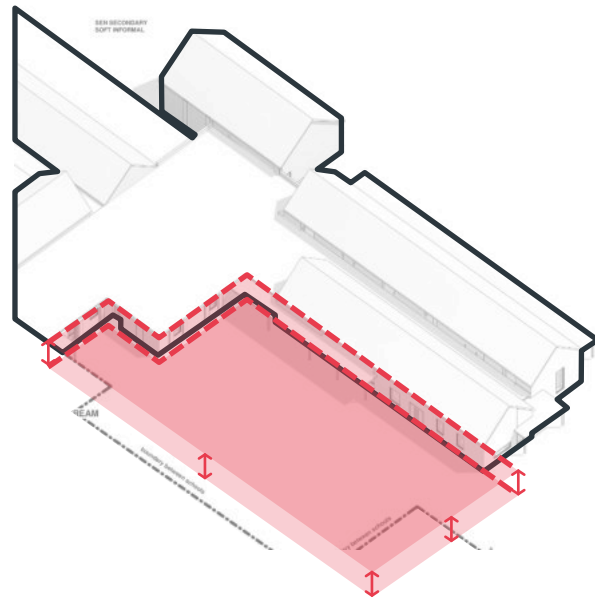
Localised reconfiguration of existing internal spaces to provide specialist teaching and learning resource areas, alongside new and fully accessible sanitary facilities tailored to the requirements of SEND pupils.

05 Upgrade of Interior Finishes Throughout (Not Part of Planning Application):

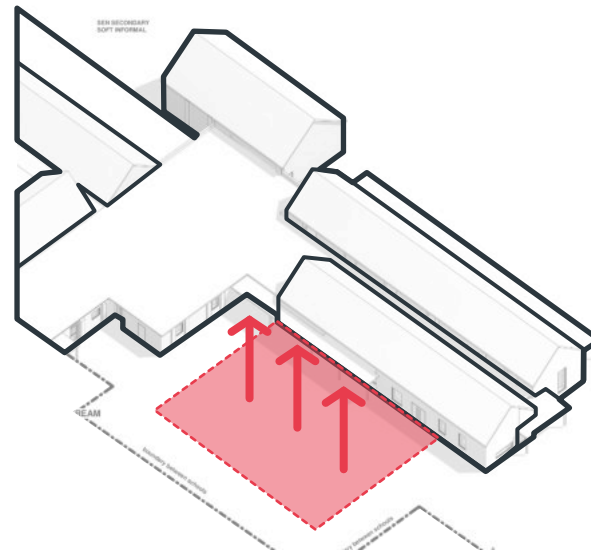
Upgrade of floor, wall, and ceiling finishes throughout the existing building to deliver safe, robust, and supportive environments appropriate for SEND learners.



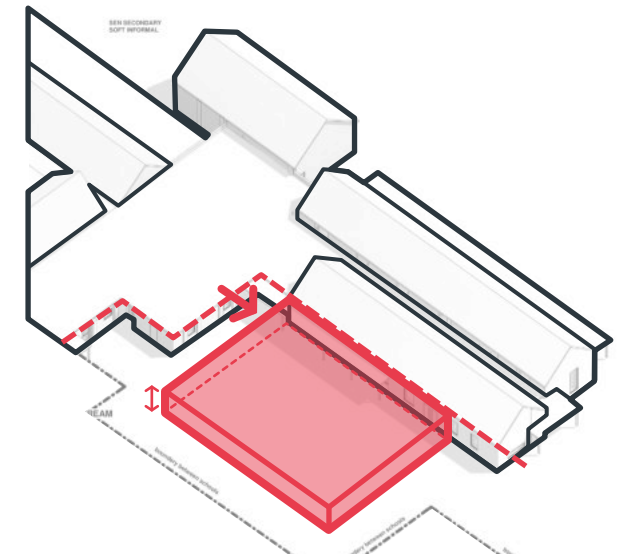
PROPOSED PHASE 2 - MASSING AND HEIGHT (OUTLINE PLANNING APPLICATION)



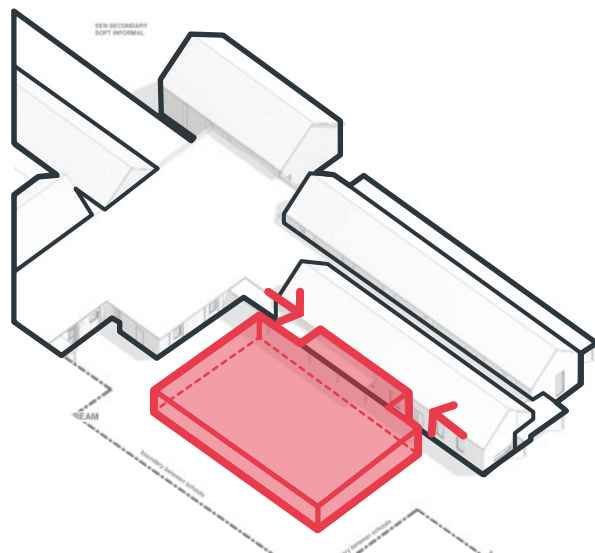
01 IDENTIFYING EXISTING DATUMS



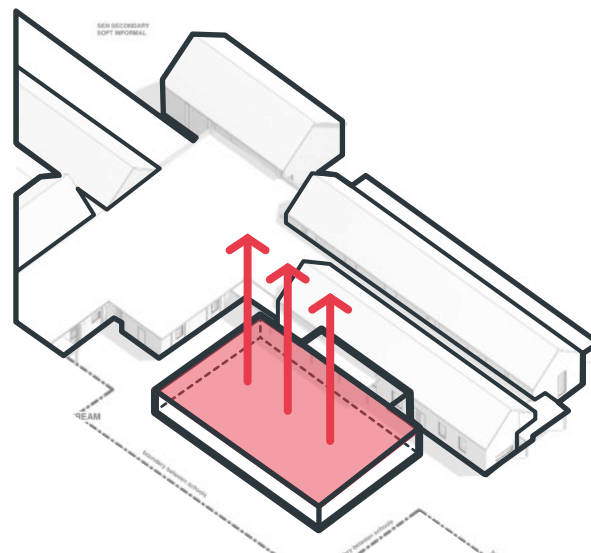
02 ESTABLISHING FOOTPRINT



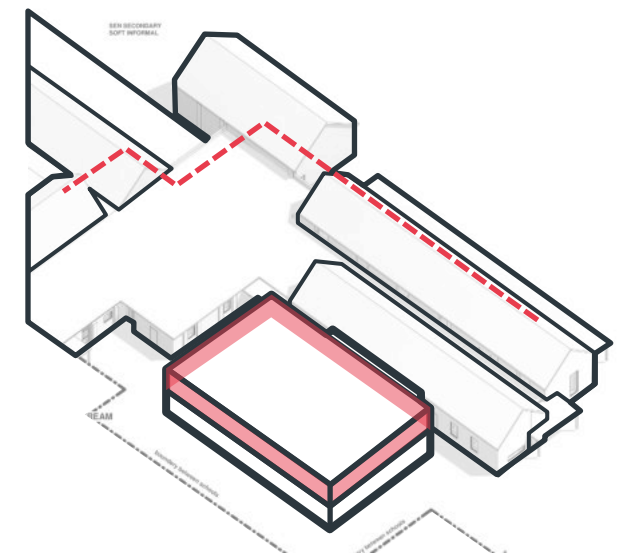
03 RESPONDING TO EXISTING DATUMS



04 SENSITIVE CONNECTION TO EXISTING FABRIC



05 ACHIEVING REQUIRED HALL HEIGHT



06 ALLOWING NATURAL LIGHT

PROPOSED PHASE 2 - GROUND FLOOR PLAN (OUTLINE PLANNING APPLICATION)

- 01

Two-Storey New Build Extension:
Construction of a two-storey extension designed to provide a diverse range of facilities, including a multi-use hall suitable for dining, assemblies, and PE, alongside catering facilities, changing and sanitary rooms, storage, dedicated teaching spaces, and learning resource areas.
- 02

Single-Storey Link Building:
Erection of a single-storey link, designed to create a sensitive and seamless connection between the proposed two-storey extension and the existing school building.
- 03

Boundary and Landscape Alterations:
Targeted alterations to boundary treatments between the schools, as well as selective landscaping modifications to accommodate the new extension. All external works are reserved matters except for access. For further detail, please refer to the Landscape Architect's proposals.

NUMBER OF STOREYS: UP TO 2 STOREYS

NOTE: INDICATIVE 2-STOREY BUILDING. APPEARANCE, SCALE AND LAYOUT TO BE RESERVED MATTERS.

- ▲

MAIN ENTRANCE
- ▭

APPLICATION SITE BOUNDARY
- ▭

OWNERSHIP BOUNDARY
- ▭

EXISTING BUILDING
- ▭

PROPOSED 1-STOREY NEW BUILD EXTENSION
- ▭

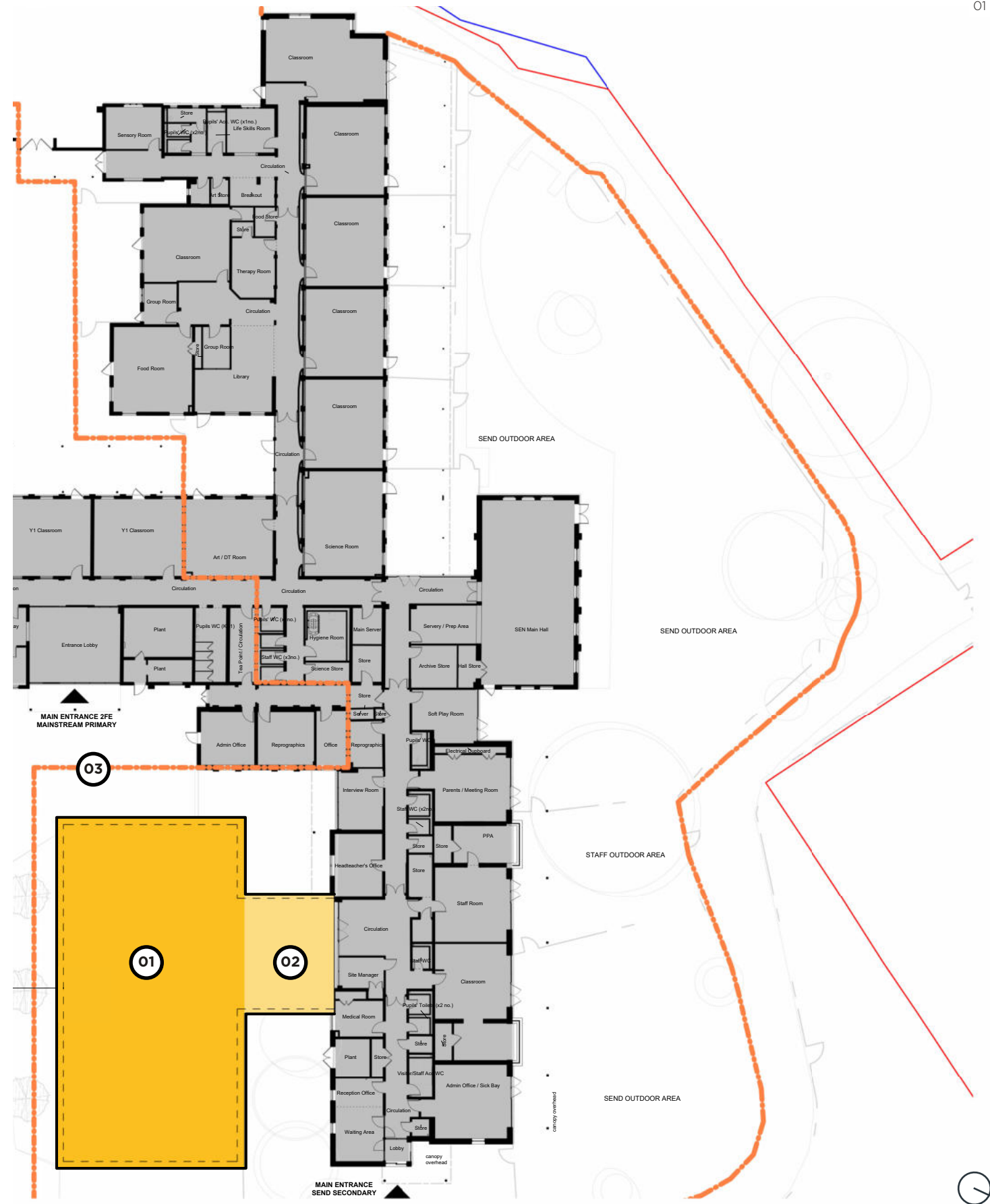
PROPOSED 2-STOREY NEW BUILD EXTENSION
- ▭

MINIMUM NEW BUILD FOOTPRINT: 470SQM
- ▭

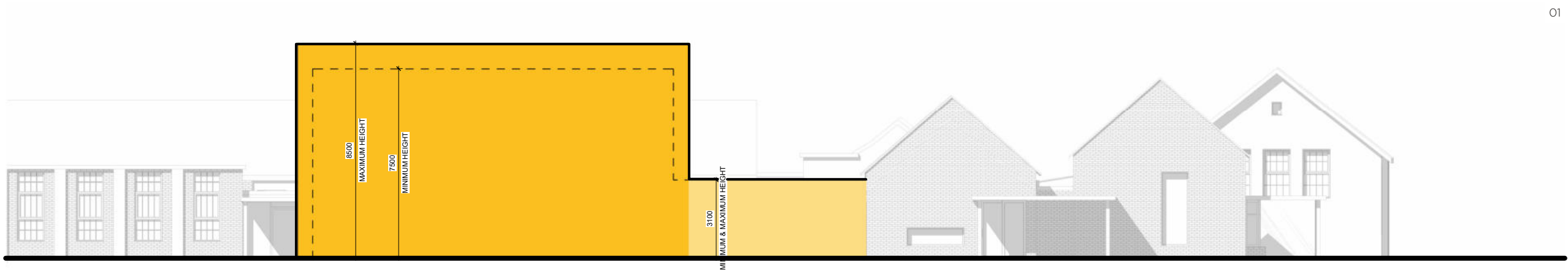
MAXIMUM NEW BUILD FOOTPRINT: 520SQM
- ▭

PROPOSED BOUNDARY BETWEEN SCHOOLS

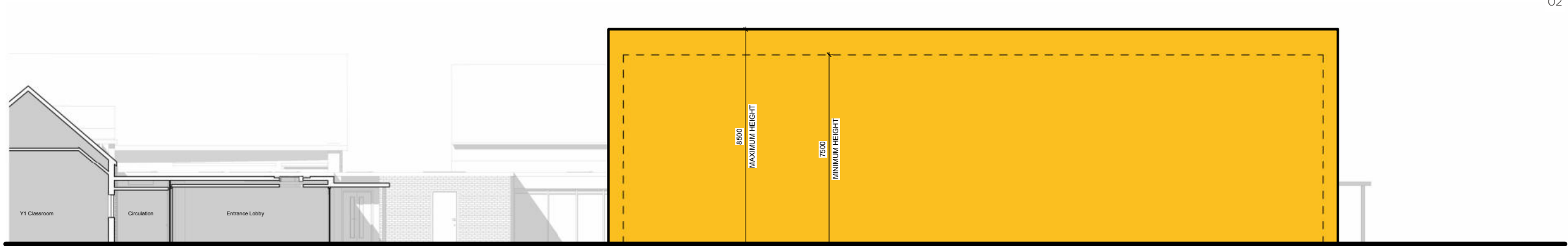
01 Proposed Ground Floor Plan - Phase 2 (Outline Planning Application)



PROPOSED PHASE 2 - INDICATIVE NEW BUILD MASSING (OUTLINE PLANNING APPLICATION)



01



02

- PROPOSED 1-STOREY NEW BUILD EXTENSION
- PROPOSED 2-STOREY NEW BUILD EXTENSION
- MINIMUM NEW BUILD EXTENSION HEIGHT
- MAXIMUM NEW BUILD EXTENSION HEIGHT

NUMBER OF STOREYS: UP TO 2 STOREYS

NOTE: INDICATIVE 2-STOREY BUILDING. APPEARANCE, SCALE AND LAYOUT TO BE RESERVED MATTERS.

- 01 Proposed North Parameter Elevation - New Build Extension Phase 2 (Outline Planning Application)
- 02 Proposed East Parameter Elevation - New Build Extension Phase 2 (Outline Planning Application)

06 PROPOSED EXTERNAL WORKS

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LANDSCAPE PROPOSALS

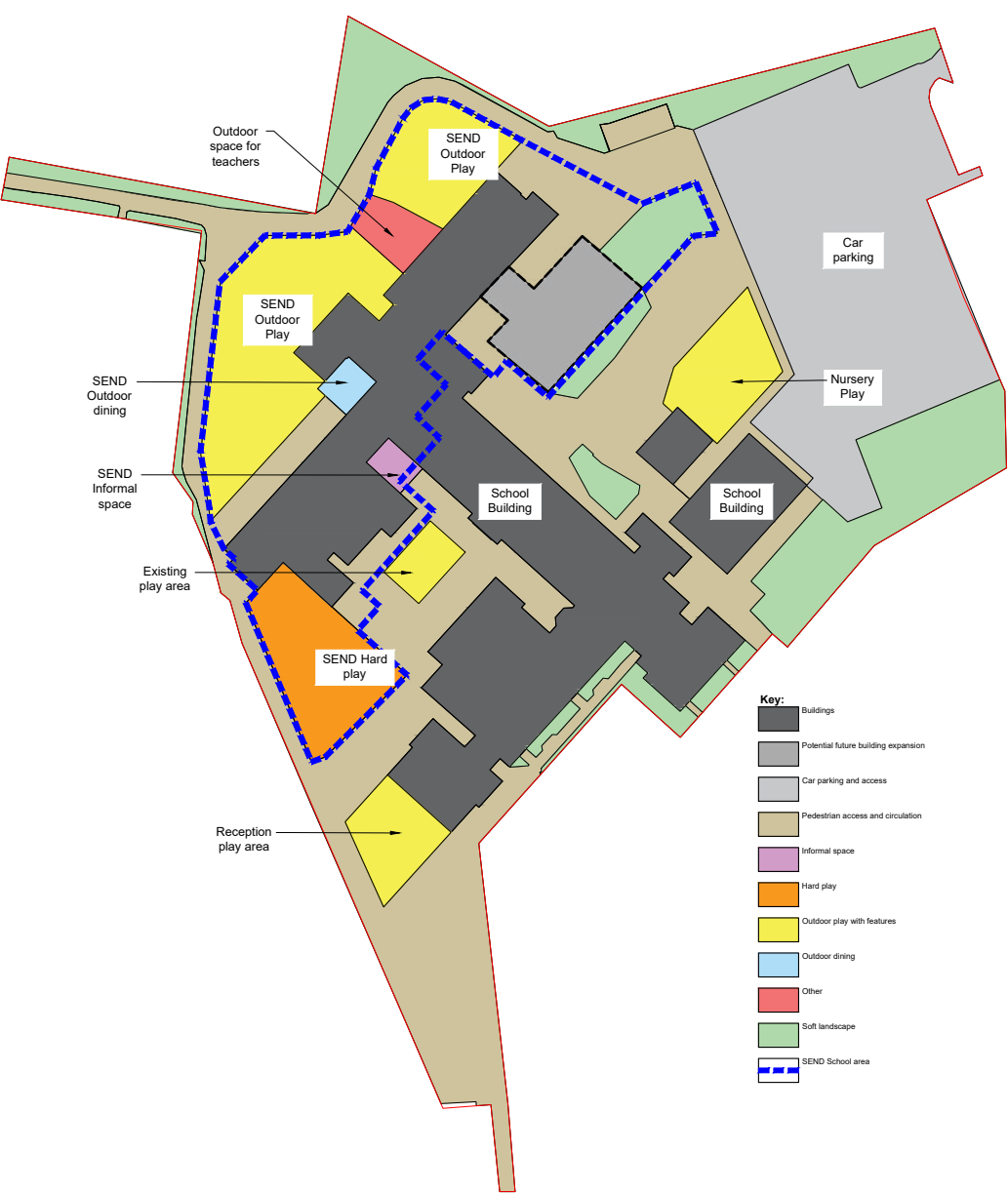
The landscape strategy supports the educational and operational needs of both the primary pupils, and the SEND students to create an integrated indoor-outdoor learning environment for both schools.

The school benefits from its setting adjacent within a large site with plentiful open space and a beneficial green infrastructure setting with the largely tree or hedge lined boundaries to the site; these will remain as such in the proposed scheme and are untouched. A full arboricultural survey has been undertaken in accordance with BS 5837 ‘Trees in relation to design, demolition and construction – Recommendations’ and forms part of the submission documents.

The reconfigured site layout retains the majority of trees, with the removal of Category U grade trees in the central entrance courtyard, north-western play area and the eastern boundary, and two small Category C trees to facilitate the extended car parking facility. All retained trees impacted by the development area will be fully protected to BS recommendations throughout construction.

The car parking facility is extended and shared between the SEND and primary schools, with the introduction of a new drop off and pick up facility for the SEND pupils with a dedicated one-way route. Details of the management of this are set out in other submission documents. Refuse store and secure cycle parking for the SEND school are provided adjacent to the main entrance, with the primary school refuse and cycle facilities relocated in the layout.

To facilitate the increased requirements for parking, the existing car park has been extended to the south into the existing grass field which is overspill space that does not overlap with marked playing pitches. Fencing is realigned and gated access re provided for emergency and maintenance access to the wider primary school field. Electric vehicle charging facilities are provided within the car park.



01



02



03

01 Proposed diagrammatic site plan produced by Terra Firma showing the proposed external works at Whitley Park.
02, 03 Photos of canopy retained above enclosed classroom spaces below; and existing playground to be upgraded

LANDSCAPE PROPOSALS

The SEND facilities include play spaces to the west of the SEND buildings and smaller courtyards in the central space between the SEND and primary schools. These spaces utilise existing features and complement these with new play equipment and sensory planting.

The proposals for the SEND school include the following play equipment: trim trail ladder walk, trim trail pole climb, mega swing, adventure trail - shuffle bars, play panels, pull up gym equipment and upright bike gym equipment.

An area of existing hard surfaced space to the south of the SEND buildings is provided as a small, enclosed games court. Classrooms opening into the larger western play space have enclosed associated outdoor spaces under the existing canopy that in turn open onto the wider space.

The primary school retains the majority of the central courtyard space, which will include play space, and benefits from provision of new outdoor play spaces with covered space and new equipment for the relocated reception and nursery classrooms.

For further detail regarding the landscape proposals, please refer to the Landscape Architect's information submitted as part of this application.



01, 02 Examples of play equipment proposed for the secondary age SEND play areas.

03, 04, 05 Sensory planting species: texture, movement and smell (Achillea, Verbena and Oregano)

TRANSPORT PROPOSALS

ACCESS STRATEGY & SITE CIRCULATION

Vehicular access: Retained vehicular access point off Brixham Road, forming the main entry and exit for staff and pupil vehicles for both the Primary and SEND schools.

Drop-off and pick-up: Introduces a dedicated, managed drop-off/pick-up area within the new/expanded car park for SEND provision, designed to accommodate up to 6 vehicles at once for active drop-off, plus queuing/holding capacity for up to 26 vehicles at peak times entirely within the site boundary (see tracking and site plans).

Traffic management: The scheme prevents vehicle queuing or parking on local streets at peak times. On-site marshals and clear communication with drivers will ensure smooth operations and safeguarding, with all dropping and queuing carried out within the school site.

CAR PARKING PROVISION

Phase 1: Provides 47 spaces for mainstream staff (including disabled parking) plus additional new parking for SEND staff (40 spaces), meeting Reading Borough’s zonal parking policy while keeping below car-dominated thresholds.

Phase 2/Full Build: An additional 25 spaces provided for SEN school staff vehicles allowing flexibility for visiting specialists, increased staff mobility, and operational requirements.

Electric vehicle (EV) charging: New and adapted car park layouts will include a number of EV charging bays, in line with current local planning policy for new school/education developments.

SUSTAINABLE AND ACTIVE TRAVEL

Pedestrian access: Retained, secure, and enhanced entrances at Brixham Road, Callington Road, Basingstoke Road, and through residential routes, with segregated pedestrian pathways from both the east and west.

Cycle access/parking: Segregated and well-signed cycle routes and secure cycle parking provided at the site, supporting active staff travel and student use over the long term. Improved cycle and pedestrian pathways, including bollard protection along pick-up/drop-off corridors, further enhance safety and accessibility.

Public transport: The site benefits from very frequent bus services connecting it to the main Reading rail hub, with travel plan targets and information provided to staff and, where appropriate, students and families.

SERVICE, EMERGENCY, AND REFUSE ACCESS

Refuse vehicle tracking: Full swept-path analysis confirms refuse vehicles can safely access both general and kitchen bin stores in all phases—details ensure adequate turning areas, gates, and routes for service vehicles.

Fire and emergency access: A dedicated, tracked route for fire tender vehicles is provided to all parts of the SEND development for both Phase 1 and 2, with strategic (gated) access points and route improvements included in the layout.

ROAD SAFETY & TRAFFIC IMPACT

Minimised on-street impact: The scheme and the queued drop-off design mean there will be no additional drop-off/collection pressures on Brixham Road or other local streets, with predicted increases in vehicle activity easily absorbed (less than half a percent of daily flows on Basingstoke Road).

Monitoring and Travel Plan: Updated Travel Plans for mainstream and SEND provision, supported by annual monitoring, will ensure mode share targets and inclusive travel options are delivered and refined into the future.

Safety enhancements: All new works are specified to prioritise safe, step-free, and logical movement for all users, with careful boundary and gate upgrades, improved pedestrian crossings on/access from Brixham Road, and realignment of fences for sight-lines and safeguarded pupil movement.

All new transport works combine to offer safe, inclusive, efficient, and sustainable access for all users, minimising the local highway and environmental impact while supporting Reading Borough Council’s wider sustainability, air quality, and road safety goals.

The proposals future-proof on-site management for specialist and mainstream staff, non-car users, and service vehicles, enabling Whitley Park to function effectively as a shared SEND/mainstream campus.

This fully integrated access and transport response ensures all new activity from the Whitley Park expansion will be effectively managed within site, meeting all local and national transport planning/regulatory requirements.



01 Proposed site plan showing transport proposals at the Whitley Park site.

07

PROJECT STRATEGIES

AYRE
CHAMBERLAIN
GAUNT

ACCESS STRATEGY

ACCESS STRATEGY

Access to and within the proposed Whitley Park SEND School has been developed in line with Approved Document M (and related Parts K, B, T and S), BS 8300-1 and 2, PAS 6463 (neurodiversity), relevant Building Bulletins (BB100, BB102, BB104) and current best practice for inclusive education environments.

EXTERNAL ACCESS

The site layout provides clear, step-free routes from the site boundary, parking and drop-off areas to all principal entrances. External paths, lighting and tactile paving are designed to support safe, legible movement for pupils, staff and visitors, including those with mobility, sensory and cognitive impairments. Accessible car parking and drop-off arrangements are located close to entrances and are linked by safe, step-free routes. Provision is made for enlarged bays, accessible EV charging and adapted cycles in line with current guidance.

BUILDING ACCESS AND CIRCULATION

Principal entrances are designed as level, clearly identifiable access points with doors and lobbies sized and detailed to suit wheelchair users and people who require assistance. Internal circulation routes are arranged to be straightforward and uncluttered, with doors, columns and services positioned so that they do not obstruct movement. Stairs and any ramps are designed to comply with current guidance on proportions, handrails, guarding and visual contrast, and to support managed evacuation where required.

FACILITIES, WAYFINDING AND CONTROLS

Sanitary provision includes accessible WCs and ambulant cubicles distributed across the building so that they are convenient to teaching and staff areas, supplemented by larger WC/changing facilities in SEND areas. Fixtures such as radiators, drinking fountains and furniture are arranged to avoid narrowing circulation or compromising manoeuvring spaces. Wayfinding is supported by clear signage, colour and tonal contrast, and simple, consistent layouts, with particular regard to visual impairment and neurodiversity. Controls, switches and window operations are positioned and specified for inclusive use.

FIRE SAFETY AND INCLUSIVE EVACUATION

The fire and evacuation strategy will be coordinated with the access strategy and developed in line with BS 9999 and BB100. It will address refuges, alarm and communication systems, use of lifts where appropriate, and stair and landing arrangements to support assisted evacuation, including pupils who may need to be evacuated in their own wheelchairs.

The project involves refurbishment, reconfiguration and extension of existing school buildings. While the design intent is to meet, and where practicable exceed, current access standards and best-practice guidance, there are inherent constraints arising from existing structure, levels and retained fabric. In locations where full compliance with current guidance cannot reasonably be achieved, proportionate design solutions and management measures will be adopted to deliver the highest achievable level of accessibility within these physical limitations

ACOUSTIC & SUSTAINABILITY STRATEGIES

SUSTAINABILITY & ENERGY STRATEGY

The proposals at Whitley Park Primary School have been developed to align with Reading Borough Council's Local Plan, Sustainable Design and Construction SPD and School Development Sustainability Strategy. The approach recognises that this is a predominantly refurbishment-led project on an operational school site, and seeks a proportionate but meaningful improvement in environmental performance.

The overarching strategy is “fabric-first”:

- The existing buildings are retained and upgraded where practical, for example through improved roof insulation and selective window replacement.
- The new SEN extension is designed with enhanced building fabric and airtightness, reducing heat loss and the overall energy demand of the school.

Building services for both refurbished and new spaces follow an efficient, largely all-electric approach.

- Teaching and staff areas are served by modern electric systems that can provide both heating and limited cooling, improving comfort for SEN pupils and staff as the climate warms.
- Ventilation is based on a mixed-mode strategy, combining natural ventilation with mechanical heat-recovery units where appropriate, to deliver good air quality and thermal comfort in line with current school guidance.

On-site renewables have been reviewed, with roof-mounted solar photovoltaic panels identified as the most suitable option.

Additional PV is not proposed to existing roofs at this stage, but potential PV provision on the new extension will be explored further as the design develops, to help offset a proportion of the school's electricity use.

Water efficiency is addressed through the specification of low-flow sanitary fittings in refurbished and new areas, reflecting the constrained plant and storage space on site.

The project also considers embodied carbon by:

- Maximising reuse of the existing building structure and finishes; and
- Avoiding unnecessary material layers and favouring durable, responsibly sourced products in the new works.

Wider sustainability measures include:

- Cycle parking and electric vehicle charging infrastructure in line with local policy; and
- Provision for energy monitoring and future post-occupancy review, so that the school's performance can be understood and optimised in use.

Taken together, these measures provide a balanced sustainability strategy that improves energy efficiency, reduces carbon emissions and supports a healthy, comfortable environment for SEN pupils and staff, while respecting the constraints of the existing school site.

ACOUSTIC STRATEGY

The acoustic design for the new SEN accommodation at Whitley Park Primary School follows Building Bulletin 93, Approved Document E, BS 8233:2014, BS 4142:2014+A1:2019 and national planning guidance (NPPF/NPSE).

Baseline monitoring confirms a typical suburban noise climate. The external envelope of the new and refurbished spaces – including standard double glazing and acoustically rated trickle ventilators – is designed so that internal noise levels in classrooms, group rooms and the hall meet BB93 / BS 8233 criteria, ensuring good speech intelligibility for SEN teaching.

Within the building, a combination of acoustic ceiling tiles, suitable floor finishes and localised acoustic wall treatments is used so that reverberation times in classrooms, specialist rooms, the hall and SEN spaces comply with BB93. Wall and floor constructions provide adequate sound insulation between teaching areas, circulation and quieter rooms, limiting disturbance between uses.

New mechanical plant will be controlled and located so that noise at nearby residential façades does not exceed measured background levels; the BS 4142 assessment therefore classifies the impact as “low”.

Overall, the scheme is demonstrated to provide appropriate internal acoustic conditions for learning while avoiding significant noise effects on neighbouring properties.

STRUCTURAL, CIVIL ENGINEERING AND DRAINAGE STRATEGIES

STRUCTURAL STRATEGY

The structural strategy has been developed to combine targeted interventions to the existing buildings with simple, robust new-build construction.

Across the refurbishment areas, the proposal includes localised alterations such as infilling redundant openings with masonry to match the existing construction, introducing new lintels and steel members where openings are formed or modified, and retaining existing structural elements where these remain suitable.

The structural strategy for the new build extension proposed as part of the second phase of works is currently to be confirmed.

CIVILS STRATEGY

The civil engineering strategy has been developed primarily around the rationalisation, retention and selective upgrade of the existing below-ground drainage infrastructure, while accommodating the new school layouts and external works.

The proposal identify and retain suitable existing foul and surface water drainage runs where possible, introduce new foul and surface water pipework, manholes, gullies, channel drains and associated connections where required, and remove or abandon redundant drainage once confirmed as no longer live.

FLOOD RISK ASSESSMENT AND DRAINAGE STRATEGY

A Flood Risk Assessment and Drainage Strategy has been prepared in support of the proposed refurbishment and extensions at Whitley Park Primary and Nursery School. The site lies wholly within Flood Zone 1 and is at low risk of flooding from rivers, the sea, surface water, groundwater, sewers, reservoirs and other artificial sources. Residual flood risk from extreme events and infrastructure failure has been assessed and can be safely managed through the design and mitigation measures proposed.

The scheme reconfigures the existing school layout. Overall pupil numbers and foul water demand are not expected to increase compared with existing conditions, and foul flows will continue to discharge to the existing on-site foul drainage network.

Surface water drainage will be delivered in two phases and follows the drainage hierarchy. It includes positively drained permeable paving, attenuation, proprietary water-quality treatment, controlled discharge (restricted to 2.0 l/s) and exceedance routing, with capacity designed for the 1 in 100-year storm plus 40% climate change. The strategy provides betterment over the existing situation in terms of runoff control and infrastructure verification, ensures flood risk is not increased elsewhere, and is compliant with national, regional and local planning policy.

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