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DESIGN & ACCESS STATEMENT

Red Kite Academy, Sixth Form Block Development

180235-DGL-XX-XX-AS-A-8035

June 2020

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INTRODUCTION

Introduction:

This Design & Access Statement has been prepared by Darwin Group LTD on behalf of Northamptonshire County Council for a proposed teaching block development at Red Kite Special Academy.

This document seeks to outline the process of design development and illustration of how the site analysis, research, survey work and consultation processes have informed the final proposals. This document should be read in conjunction with the drawings submitted as appendices to the drawing submission.

The applicant:

Northamptonshire County Council

The proposal:

Erection of a single storey sixth form block, with provision for 3 teaching spaces, 1 group room, hygiene rooms and other ancillary accommodation, landscaping and access.

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INTRODUCTION

History of the School:

Red Kite Special Academy is a new free special school which opened in September 2018 in Corby, providing school spaces for children with PMLD / SLD, Autism and HFA from the ages of 4-18. The school provides a vibrant environment for learning suiting a variety of educational needs, allowing students to develop and achieve in an environment suited to them.

At present the school is open for 63 children, and the provision for spaces will grow to 110 over the next few years, which will be aided by the construction of a new sixth form block with the specialist facilities adequate to cater for the needs of the students.

Facilities at the school may also be used by other groups from the community. These include pupils from other special schools and mainstream schools who come to use the hydrotherapy pool and professional and parent led groups who use the school premises for meeting.

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SITE LOCATION

Site Location:

The school is located in Corby, Northamptonshire, and the site is bound by Chesil Walk and Bridgwater Close to the North, a new residential development off Purbeck Drive to the East, Maplefields Academy to the South, and the A6003 (Uppingham Road) to the West.

The Site is accessed via Purbeck Drive, which is accessed from Lulworth Walk off Glastonbury Road. Vehicles access and egress the site in the same manner, as the school site encompasses a large car park enabling turning, and a smaller turning circle allowing for drop off etc.

The site covers approximately 1.6 Hectares, and the area of development (including access) is approximately 0.3 Hectares.

Figure 1: Site Location

Figure 2: Wider site location

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SITE LOCATION

Site location (cont.):

The proposed development site sits in the east end of the site, and will be a freestanding development rather than linking to the existing school. The development area will be bounded by the new residential development to the North, the Beanfield Primary School grounds to the East, existing hardstanding landscaping on the Red Kite School Site to the South, and the existing Red Kite School Building to the West. Figure 3 shows a simple block plan to indicate the existing school building and the proposed Sixth Form Building. The site boundary is shown in red, the proposed building in light grey, and the existing school building in dark grey.

The wider site is relatively flat, which is to be expected of a new development as any previous level changes will have been designed out.

The existing site of the proposed building has very little level change across the footprint, with the highest existing point being 99.31 (from a local datum, rather than OS levels) and the lowest existing point being 98.94. The finished floor level is proposed at 99.30. All thresholds will be level to ensure access, and double ramp thresholds provided down to the tarmac. Further information will be provided later in the D&A statement under the heading **Landscaping Finishes**.

Figure 3: Simple proposed block plan

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SITE ASSESSMENT & PHOTOS

Character & Materials:

The existing Red Kite Academy Building to the west of the proposed new sixth form block is finished with white render on the external walls, extending down to the finished ground level. The fascia trim is a dark grey, slightly lighter than the window / door frame finish. The existing school also has an extensive canopy, the underside of which is clad in cedar, and trimmed in the same colour as the window / door frames. These finishes are shown in figure 4-7.

Figure 4: existing finishes

Figure 5: existing finishes

Figure 6: existing finishes

Figure 7: existing finishes

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TRANSPORT & PARKING

Transport

- The school has a wide catchment area for children with special educational needs (covering the north of the county of Northamptonshire and some from outside the county). This, together with the needs of the children (physical, medical, learning difficulties), means that most SEN pupils require transport to school. 100% non-ambulant status and mitigating factors surrounding this means that children need to be escorted off the bus/car to the school, gates; this is factored in with the wide access and wide parking bays.
- Fewer parents than usual in a mainstream school context access the site (currently 38% of children come by car).
- Only up to 20 (by September 2022) more pupils to be admitted as part of new works
- Loss of car parking due to 6th form block will not impact due to increased number of parking bays over and above requirements for the main build - as requested by the EFA.
- The new sixth form unit is on the school site and will initially educate 10 additional pupils. The drop off and pick up system will remain the same as for the main school using the loop system and parking onsite in the disabled bays.

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LAYOUT & ORGANISATION

Proposed Building Layout:

- The proposals were developed in collaboration with the school to ensure that the schools, and in turn the pupils, needs were met. The new building is based around the teaching spaces to accommodate the planned increase in pupil numbers, with a group room included to facilitate learning and meet Red Kite's stated values. The design incorporates ancillary accommodation – above and beyond the typical designed in a small school building – to cater for the school's specific requirements. This includes large hygiene suites, a calm room, and a wheelchair store.
- The general arrangements are shown in figure 8 and the GIFA is 303m².

Figure 8: General arrangements

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LAYOUT & ORGANISATION

Elevational Treatments:

Blue Engineering Brick – to the plinth of the building. Brickwork will be constructed in a traditional stretcher bond method with a natural mortar between bricks, finished with recessed 'bucket handle' joints.

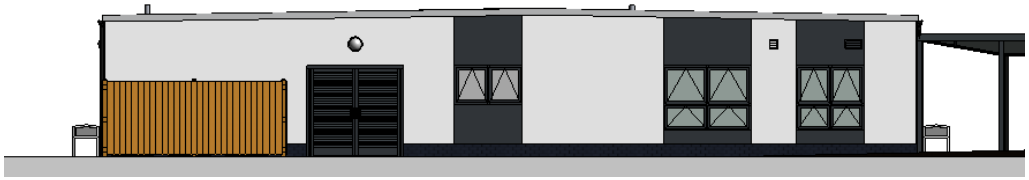
Textured Render – Finished in both 'white' and 'dark grey'. The render will be finished to have a minimal texture of approximately 1.5mm grain, providing an equal level of shading, texture and depth across the surface.

Windows – uPVC framed, anthracite grey (RAL 7016)

Doors – Aluminium framed, anthracite grey (RAL 7016)

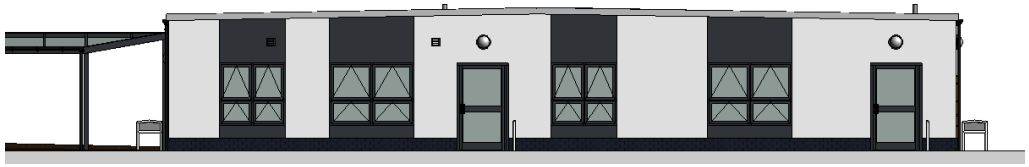
Rainwater Goods – External downpipes will be flush fitted coloured in black (RAL 9005)

Fascia Trims – Polyroof drip profiles to suit roof falls, coloured in chromite grey

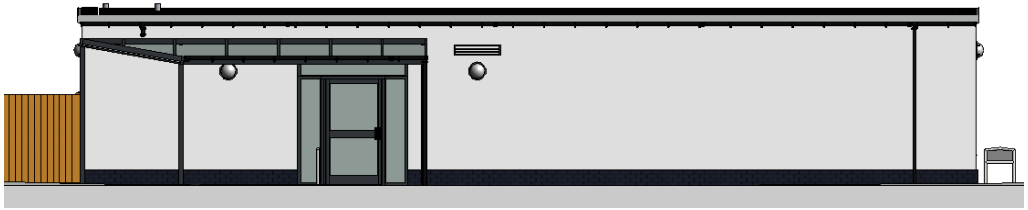


North

East



South



West

Figure 9: Elevations

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BUILDING DESIGN

Building Design:

The design has developed following comprehensive discussions and input from the school. The building work has been sited as to not directly impact any non-designated heritage assets, as per pre-application advice from the LPA. Please see 3D visual representations of the proposed teaching block and the complimentary landscaping proposals.

LANDSCAPING

Landscaping:

The landscaping alterations will be fairly limited, the levels will be kept as close as possible to the existing, with alterations made to suit the building finished floor level and the level access.

To the overall site boundary, a hedgerow is proposed to increase the green space and provide a clear boundary between the school / the residential area. The hedgerow was chosen as it as a soft boundary, reducing the hard landscaping required, but also provides security for both sides, and as mentioned, increases the green space in the area which in turn delivers biodiversity. There is no pupil access to the hedgerow, as it is secured behind the 1.8m weldmesh fence enclosing the 'pupil area'.

To separate the sixth form block from the car park a 1.8m weldmesh fence is proposed, with access-controlled gates to maintain security.

There is a timber fence required around the condenser enclosure (located away from housing whilst still not being accessible to pupils or blocking access routes) and it is proposed that this is accessed via a gravel path. A canopy between the new and existing is proposed to provide weather protection for pupils and staff moving between the new and existing blocks.

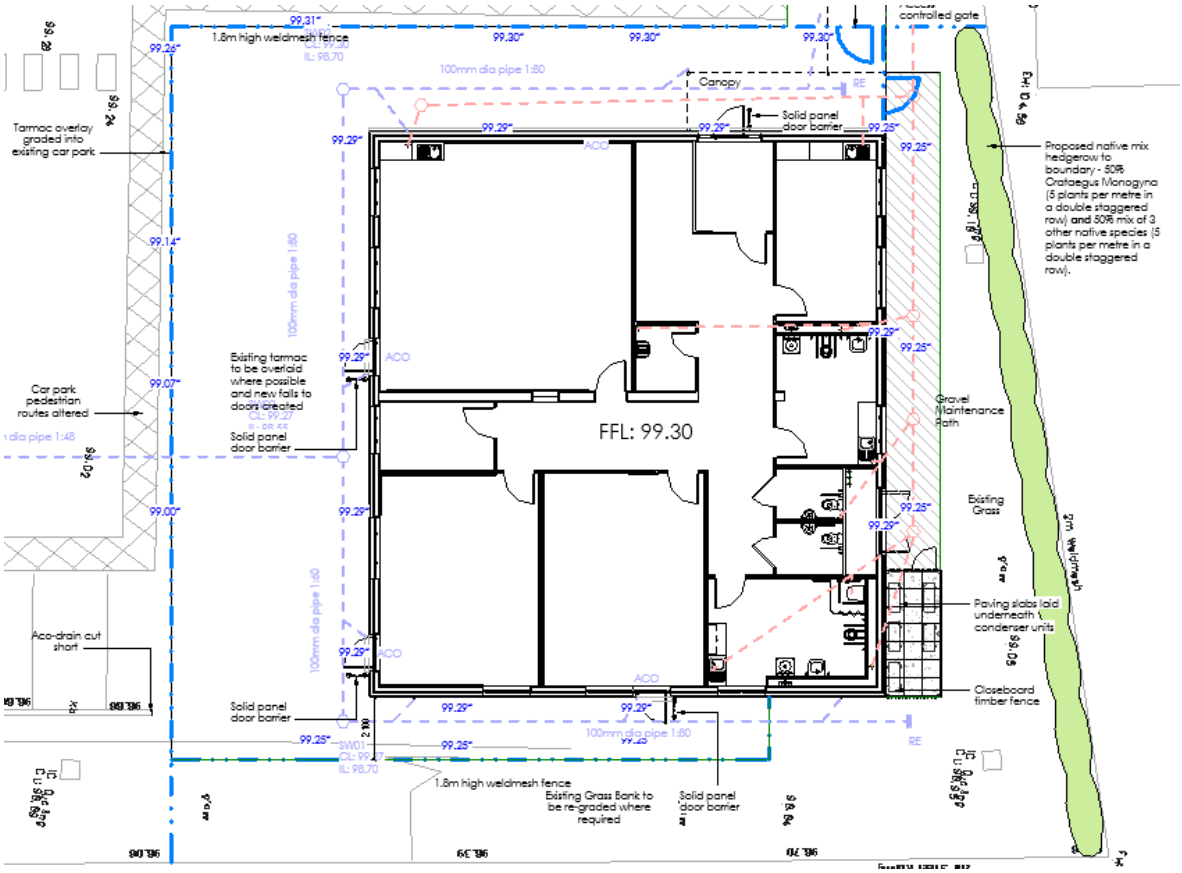

Figure 10: Landscaping

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SUSTAINABILITY

Sustainability:

The new teaching block is proposed to be constructed using offsite modular construction techniques.

The environmental benefits of offsite factory produced building are generally well understood and documented in authoritative published reports

Environmental Benefits are:

- Reduced material waste (Typical good factory <1.5% compared with 10% for construction sector generally Source WRAP)
- More efficient factory labour which has been shown to be 300% more efficient than the same operation on site (Source WRAP)
- Lower embodied energy compared to traditional build methods
- Better thermal performance of the building with elemental U values better than 0.15 W/m²K at comparatively lower cost than traditional build
- Better air tightness; factory assemble can readily achieve an air tightness of better than 3 m3/m²/hr, compared with 5 or greater for traditional construction (Source NHBC)

Reduction for the need of Building Services & Energy Use:

- Carefully designed glazing to allow both air movement and good daylight, where possible reducing the need for artificial lighting and mechanical ventilation
- Artificial lighting with good lumen efficiency
- Energy efficient HVAC plant & controls
- Lowe water use measures throughout the building

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ACCESS

Access Statement:

The purpose of this section is to set out the measures than have been employed to ensure inclusive access throughout the proposed development. We have adopted an approach that will ensure access and successful usage of the building by all persons, regardless of any mobility, sensory or cognitive impairments.

Accessibility:

Key objectives in developing the scheme have been to ensure that the building is fully accessible to all potential users, regardless of age, gender or any disabilities they may have.

Building Entrances:

The proposals also ensure that the external building environment, including location and orientation of entrances, will be legible and not act as an impediment to any potential users. All thresholds between the building and external spaces will be flush, with visually contrasting materials to highlight the threshold for those with visual impairments. It will be completely accessible to users with mobility, hearing and visual impairments as well as those with learning disabilities. They will also be assisted by the choice of lighting and colours with the development.

ACCESS

Policy & Approach:

The building is designed to comply with the Disability Discrimination Act 2004 and meet the requirements of the Building Regulations and relevant British Standards including BS 8300 (2001) 'Design of buildings and their approaches to meet the needs of disabled people'. The design of the building interior will be fully DDA compliant and in accordance with Approved Document M of the Building Regulations and BB104: Area Guidelines for SEND and alternative provision

Accessible toilets have been incorporated into the building. The interior has been designed with highly legible circulation routes.

Emergency Service Access:

Emergency and maintenance access is unaffected by the design.

Finishes:

A colour scheme will be developed to ensure sufficient modelling of interior spaces is achieved, particularly focusing on the wall and floor contrast and door and wall contrast for example. Fixtures and fittings will contrast with background colours.

Internal Doors:

Doors will be provided with compliment vision panels and suitably specified clear opening widths and arrangements with adjacent and flank walls.

Ironmongery (Door Furniture):

Ironmongery will provide suitable contrast to the door veneer background. Where glass sidelights to doors are provided suitable manifestation will be included and ironmongery bold enough to identify the door from the adjacent glazed screens specified will be included for.

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