

Design & Access Statement

Version	1.1	Date	5 th January 2018
Project	Westwood First School Westwood Road Leek Staffordshire ST13 8DL	Project No.	WEFI/2018

1.00 INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 This Design & Access Statement is submitted in support of the Full Planning Application for the erection of a modular building built on an engineered tarmacadam base. The building is to be sited the north west side of the main school building known as Westwood First School, Westwood Road, Leek, Staffordshire.

2.00 CONTEXT

- 2.01 The current land to where it is proposed to form the tarmacadam base is a fenced grass enclosure which forms part of the playground area which accommodates a number of play structures which are intended to be relocated to an alternative location within the playground area. Unfortunately the grass area at certain times of the year can become muddy and hence restrictive to use only when the ground is relatively dry.
- 2.02 The area of land was subject to an application being made under the provision of Section 77 of the School Standards & Framework Act 1998 and Consent granted by The Secretary of State for the change of use of school playing fields. This was notified on 14th November 2017 by the Educations & Skills Funding Agency.
- 2.03 Due to the increased demands of providing sports facilities, the schools currently is unable to provide sufficient indoor space of a size where all the children can take place in physical activity all year round, regardless of how wet or cold the weather is. The Main Assembly Hall being the only sizable floor area which could provide this facility has restrictions due to the requirements of being a dining hall during lunch times. As the outdoor area is already used for recreation at break times no actual space will be lost as the children will continue to use the same amount of space for sporting activity and will have increased access as they will be able to use the area all year round regardless of weather conditions.

- 2.04 The area of the proposed building would allow the occupation of up to 110 children and with the scheduling of lunch breaks and lessons it is considered to be of sufficient space to meet the immediate requirements for indoor sporting activities and play area as required..
- 2.05 The ground levels in the area lend themselves to the building being sited with the length in a north-south orientation, with the entrance and main windows facing the main playground. The entrance being closest to the main school building.
- 2.06 Mains water, electricity and foul drainage services are available in the area and would be a provision of the new building.
- 2.07 The proposal would seek to construct a building which primarily will be used for indoor sports activity to, this will double up as an activity room and assembly area when the main assembly hall is being used for other purposes. Outside school hours it is thought that the local amateur dramatic society would use this facility, who currently rehearse productions in the main assembly hall.
- 2.08 There is one semi mature tree which would be affected by the development and it is proposed that a replacement tree will be planted in a position to be agreed.

3.00 DESIGN COMPONENT

- 3.01 The new building with a height of 3.65 m. and a footprint of 21 m. x 9.5 m. which would sit on a tarmac base of approximate dimensions of 22.5m x 12.5m.
- 3.02 The modular building is formed from composite panels which include high levels of insulation. The external finish is a light grey coloured plastic coated steel sheeting. The panels are manufactured to incorporate windows and doors again insulated to meet part L2A of the current Building Regulation Standards. Fascias and skirting panels are formed in the same plastic coated steel sheeting and form part of the integrated design of the building.
- 3.03 With regards to the impact of the proposal, the building would be sited behind Palisade fencing to the rear of the main school building, where it is considered visibly little would be seen from the lower areas of Westwood Road. The visual impact of the proposal from the residential property on the North Street Development across the open sports fields and play areas to the northern outlook of the school again would produce negligible impact. The distance between residential property and the school being a minimum of 150 m. together with undulating topography would make it difficult to clearly see the proposal.
- 3.04 The proposed building would be in a fenced area forming the separation between the outer school playing fields and the secure inner school area. The 2400 mm Palisade fencing is to be extended very slightly to accommodate the overall length of the building and existing fencing will be reused. The stripped top soil from the area to be surfaced with tarmac will be added to the northerly embankments which.

4.00 ACCESS STATEMENT

- 4.01 The building would be accessed by level access to the main building and playground area and ramped access will be provided at the entrance to meet the requirements of Part M of the Building Regulations.

- 4.02 Door widths and openings will would be sufficient to accommodate a wheelchair user and doors will be produced in a contrasting colour to aid partially sighted users of the building.
- 4.03 The toilet facility will meet the requirements of Part M of the Building Regulations.
- 4.04 An existing roadway provides vehicular access for emergency vehicles to the rear of the main school building. This access road will also allow access for vehicles to support disabled users should this be required.

5.00 Conclusion

- 5.01 The proposal lies within a designated school space and in an area which meets the requirements of the policy contained in the Development Plan.
- 5.02 The building is of single storey structure and will be seen against a backdrop of existing fencing and the main school building producing an impact of negligible proportion.
- 5.03 The benefits to the schools space management are considerable and support the policy of providing indoor sports facilities which would also double up as an indoor play area for children who would when there is adverse weather be accommodated in classrooms. Research suggests that children who do not move away from their classroom environment at such times may become restless and even lack concentration in their subsequent lessons.

