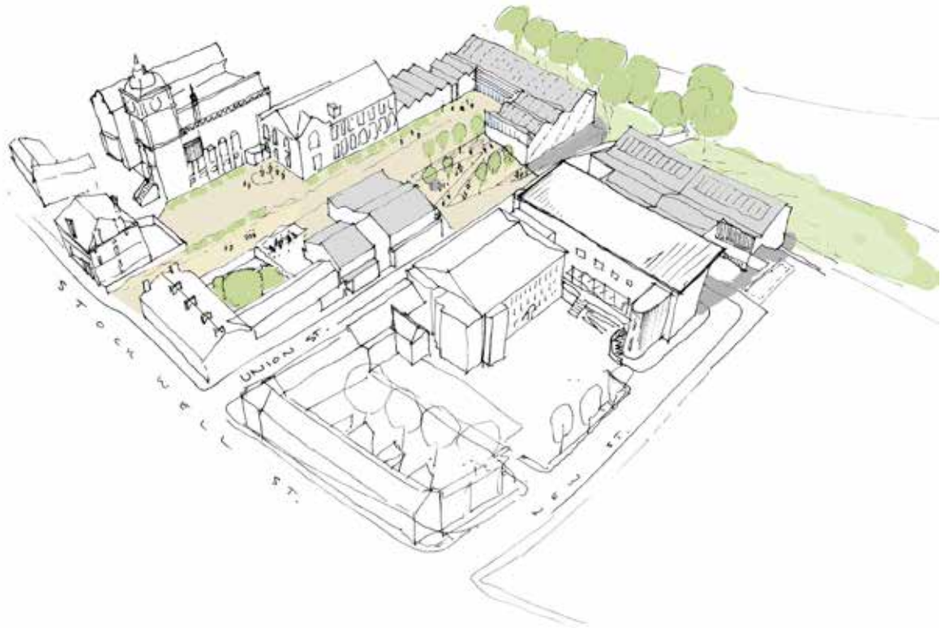


Campus Redevelopment
Buxton and Leek College

Design and Access Statement

July 2013

BUXTON & LEEK COLLEGE

Hunt Architects

TEAM & CONTENTS

Lead Consultant, Architecture

Hunt Architects Ltd
The Moseley Exchange
149-153 Alcester Road
Birmingham,
B13 8JP

Quantity Surveyors

Northcroft
1st Floor, Eleven Brindley Place
2 Brunswick Square
Birmingham
B1 2LP

Structural Engineers

Engenuiti
3b Maltings Place,
Tower Bridge Road
London, SE1 3JB

M&E, Sustainability, BREEAM

Couch Perry & Wilkes LLP
Interface 100
Arleston Way
Solihull
B90 4LH

CDM Coordinator

MDA Consulting Ltd
No.1 Museum Square
Leicester
LE1 6UF

Client

Buxton & Leek College
Stockwell Street
Leek
Staffs
ST13 6DP

Contact:

Len Tildsley
Principal

INTRODUCTION

This Design and Access statement has been prepared in support of a full planning application for the redevelopment of the Leek site of Buxton and Leek College, which comprises a series of demolitions, new pedestrian access and two new buildings.

The statement will be updated as required through the detailed design stage of the project.

The Design and Access Statement should be read in conjunction with the drawings and surveys that have been submitted. These are listed in the document schedule that accompanies the application and is attached as an appendix to this statement.

Buxton and Leek College is a recent merger of the former FE Colleges of Buxton and Leek both now working together as a single provider of high quality education and training to the communities of the Staffordshire Moorlands and the Peak District as part of the University of Derby.

Vision
Together the design team and Buxton and Leek College have developed the College's vision to improve its learning facilities. The vision is to demolish all of the poorest quality learning accommodation and replace it with modern, contemporary facilities that rationalise the estate, provide a sense of place and reconnect the College with the people of Leek.
The redesigned campus will create an exciting learning environment with sustainability at the core of its design and functionality. The new buildings would deliver an improvement of 25% over Building Regulation standards for carbon reduction.

Renewal, modernisation & rationalisation of estate
Demolition would remove six RICS category D buildings, and one RICS category C building. Rationalisation will allow complete departments to be zoned together.

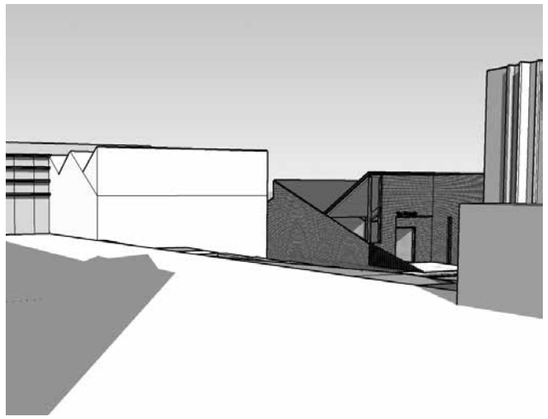
Benefits to learners
Quality of teaching and quality of facilities will be significantly enhanced through provision of dedicated and extended teaching provision. Flexible teaching space will cater for current and future curriculum.

Supporting economic growth
The new facilities will provide a direct support to economic growth through improved assistance to those not in education or training, particular emphasis on apprentices in construction & engineering
and improved employer partnerships.

Current Condition
The condition and accessibility of some of the college's assets are very poor

SITE APPRAISAL

Existing Category C and D teaching and social facilities



Vision : New facilities starting with the ERG2 Engineering building

Organisation and Site Location

The site is a Further Education college located in the market town of Leek in the Staffordshire Moorlands. The College comprises a number of buildings, less than half a mile east from Leek Centre and Marketplace and approximately 11 miles from Stoke on Trent. The College has secured capital funding from the Skills Funding Agency to finance significant improvements to its learning provision.

The College is well served by local bus services operating on an identified primary route, although Leek has not had a local train service for over 40 years.

Leek College is adjacent to the Grade II* listed Nicholson Institute, just south of Brough Park, and close to the Town Centre.

The College has grown incrementally through adhoc development.

Condition of Leek College Estate

The condition and accessibility of some of the College's property assets are poor.

The proposed project will replace **all** of the existing estate categorised as RICS Grade C/D.

- Much of the College's older building stock is no longer fit for purpose.
- There has been a lack of maintenance over a sustained period of time.
- Some buildings are obsolete and in need of replacement.
- Teaching and social space is still housed in poor condition mobile classrooms
- Workshops are largely inaccessible and inflexible
- The RICS D Carr Gym is in poor condition and cannot accommodate teaching
- The heating system is inefficient and poorly maintained.
- There are uncomfortable thermal conditions.
- Uninspiring conditions for learning.

Renewal and Modernisation

The project would;

- Relocate all engineering teaching facilities into one, new Ground Floor facility. An inspirational, expose timber frame creation.
- Relocate carpentry & joinery into a new, enlarged facility that will also provide further construction subjects with direct improvements for apprenticeships and economic growth
- Relocate art & design into new and remodelled facilities with the construction of a new arts centre.
- Provide a dedicated team in an extended and remodelled facility that will focus on tackling unemployment in the Leek area; identification and flexible support of young people not in education or training (NEET)
- Provide a new sense of place for the College. The emphasis on ensuring that the whole estate is improved and not just isolated buildings will create and harness a new enthusiasm for entering education and for seeing Leek College as a stepping stone into employment.

Property Strategy

The Property Strategy is to increase investment in the College's estate in order for buildings in poor condition to be replaced with modern, sustainable buildings that would enable the College to utilise its accommodation more efficiently. The strategy would enable the College to rationalise the layout of its college buildings to accommodate future growth.

Regeneration

This significant investment on the College and in Leek would act as a catalyst for the regeneration of the site, a key area of Leek identified by the Local Authority in the Leek Town Centre Masterplan as suitable for educational use and key in improving access and use of Brough Park.

Observations and Objectives

- Enhancing the setting of historically important College buildings.
- Improving the college with a the new, well-designed, sustainable campus
- California Mill as a key regeneration site for College and Town.
- Future development identified for educational use.

SITE APPRAISAL

Master Plan Strategy

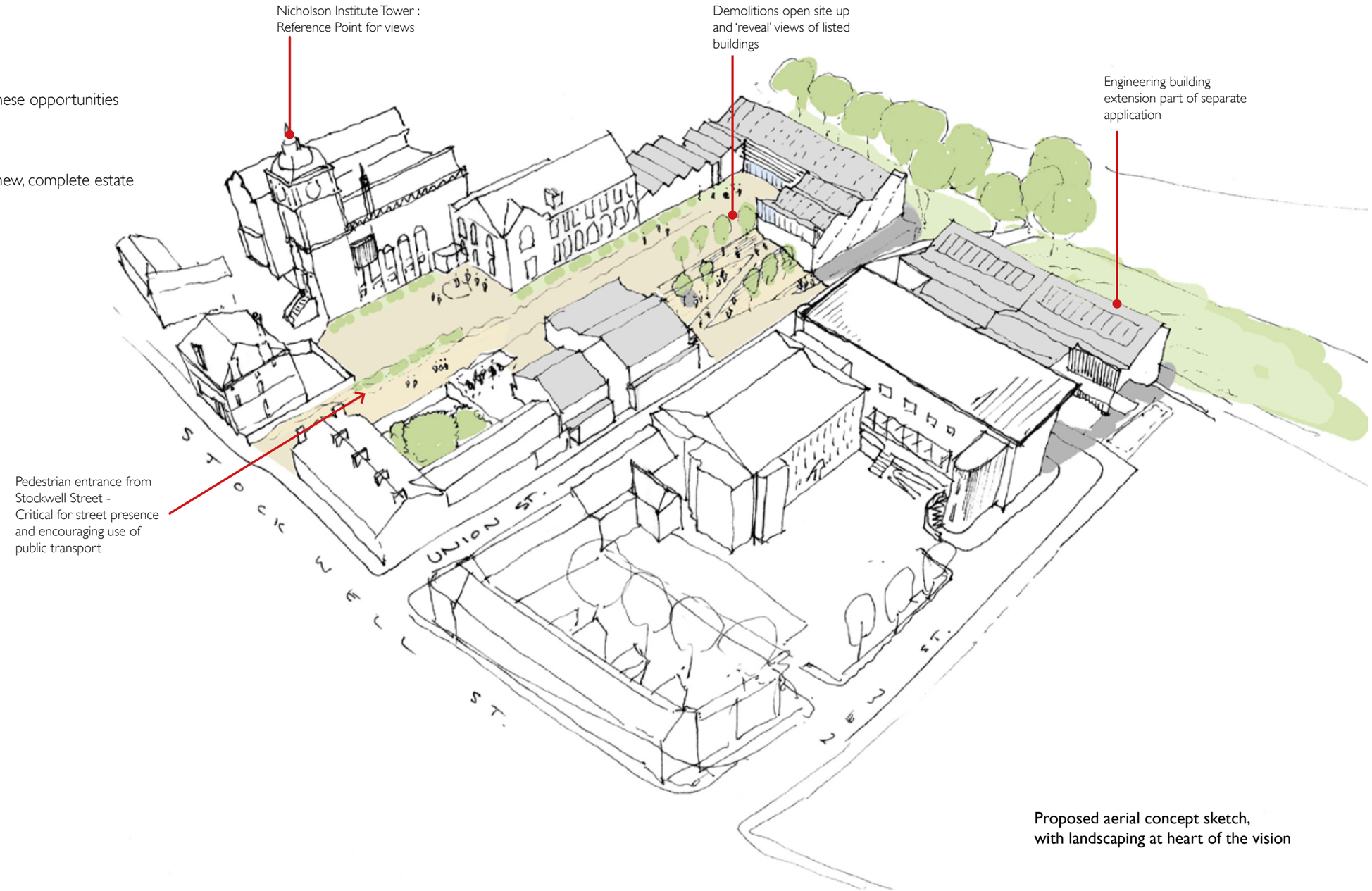
Identify key constraints and opportunities

Remove nil value assets and liabilities

Formulate a campus-wide strategy that embraces these opportunities

Create a sense of place, physically and emotionally.

Rationalise the departmental organisation into the new, complete estate



Proposed aerial concept sketch,
with landscaping at heart of the vision

SITE APPRAISAL

Landscaping vision in site context

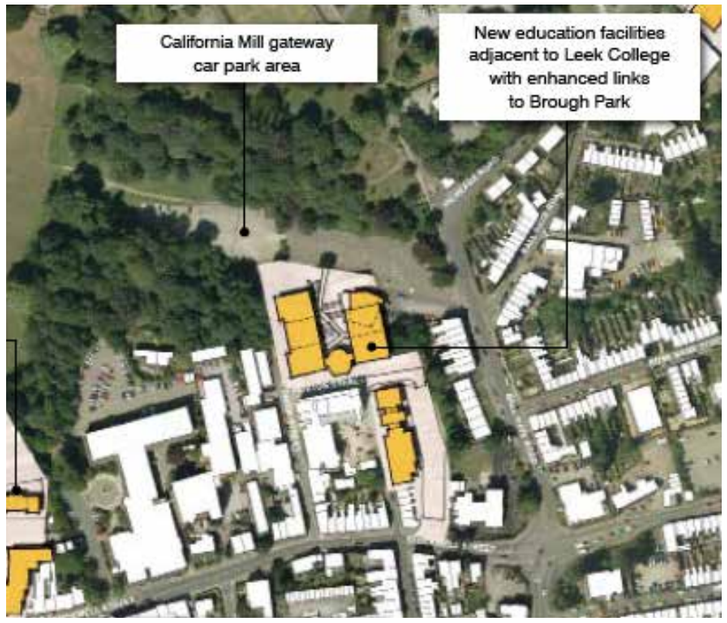
Campus Masterplan

As part of the site appraisal, we have outlined a wider vision for the campus. Key points are:

- Regenerating Leek College and the edge of the historic town.
- Improved entry to college buildings and external spaces.
- Improved accessibility and wayfinding.
- Future buildings with external cloister and internal circulation routes, encouraging interaction and revealing skilful and creative education.
- Improved streetscape : emphasising entrances, landscaping and meeting spaces, designed to improve safe interaction between pedestrians, bicycles and vehicles.
- Building heights of appropriate scale to the street and local vernacular.
- Building forms responding to a sloping site: terracing down a hillside, reducing over-shadowing and allowing views to the hills opposite.
- Improve surfaces and lighting to northern end of Union Street.
- Reinforcing existing routes and promoting site opportunity.
- Promoting car parking in the valley. Pedestrian friendly routes to the College and the town centre.
- A new landscape linking the original college building site to Horton Street and Union Street. via permeable buildings and spaces.
- Southern aspect spaces with views to the valley and elevated spaces with inspirational views to the Staffordshire Moors.
- The redevelopment of the California Mill site and the outline masterplan proposals described and illustrated within this summary support the Town Centre North vision published by Leek Staffordshire Moorlands District Council.
- Create a distinctive heart for the College
- Design a landscape that places the listed buildings as a focus
- Ensure that future development consolidates the campus

PLANNING OVERVIEW

Opportunities : California Mill Site Redevelopment.
Extract from Final Masterplan Report - January 2011
Leek Staffordshire Moorlands District Council



Extended and enhanced education uses together with gateway parking on the California Mill site : Encouraging route to Town Centre.
Extract from Final Masterplan Report - January 2011
Leek Staffordshire Moorlands District Council

"Planning policy clearly supports the principle of developing the Leek College facilities and campus as a whole"
Staffordshire Moorlands District Council 30 August 2012

Following the successful merger of Leek College with University of Derby Hunt Architects was appointed to carry out a campus-wide master plan to identify a sustainable strategy for the systematic replacement of all unsuitable and poor quality accommodation. The master plan seeks to set out a framework for redevelopment of the whole campus, to create order within the fragmented estate and to reconnect the College with the people of Leek.

Hunt Architects has led a multidisciplinary design team in developing the campus Master Plan proposals in line with the Town Centre Masterplan and Staffordshire Moorlands' Core Strategy. The Master Plan has been used to develop these outline design proposals for an extension of the soon to be constructed Pinnacle and the construction of a new Arts building.

Town Centre Masterplan

Staffordshire Moorlands are in the process of preparing a Town Centre Masterplan for Leek, which (when adopted) will take on the status of a Supplementary Planning Document and inform the Council's planning decisions in the town. At present the document is in draft form, however it signals the intentions and priorities of the Council, and is therefore a material consideration that can be afforded weight in planning decisions.

The California Mill site is identified as the principal opportunity site within the Town Centre Masterplan. A mixture of Arts, Education and a Business Incubator are considered suitable uses, with a total floor area of nearly 60,000sqft, accommodated within 2/3 storey buildings.

The Masterplan recognises the desire of the College to generate and enhance links with local business start-ups, to help them survive and grow.

The Masterplan seeks to deliver development in a holistic manner by making appropriate and sustainable land use connections between an expanded College and other development sites in the north of the town centre such as the Foxlowe site.

Much of the town centre is designated as a Conservation Area and part of the California Mill site is incorporated within this designation. The College redevelopment will therefore ensure preservation and enhancement of the historic assets, using the existing building grain to inform proposals.

- Development of California Mill site for education.
- Development should vary from 2-3 storeys in height and improve the public realm, creating attractive pedestrian links to Brough Park
- Preservation and enhancement of key, historic buildings.

Core Strategy (Revised Submission December 2011)

The preparation of the Core Strategy for Staffordshire Moorlands has been taking place since Sept 2007. Consequently the policies have evolved during the drafting and consultation process and have now reached the submission stage to the Secretary of State. Following which they will be examined, and (if found to be sound) will be adopted.

Improvements to education and the economy are outlined as key objectives within the Core Strategy. Policy SS1 'Development Principles' reflects these objectives.

Policy SS5a 'Leek Area Strategy' identifies Leek as the principal service centre within the Staffordshire Moorlands authority area. Consequently the Council supports the growth and regeneration of the town through a range of strategies including increasing and improving the provision of education facilities, and enabling further shared use of such facilities. The future campus improvements to Leek College as a new community arts and cultural facility are highlighted as key a component to strengthening Leek's role as a principal service centre.

Policy DC2 'The Historic Environment' outlines the Council's objectives in the preservation and enhancement of heritage assets. The Council will promote development which sustains, respects or enhances buildings and features which positively contribute to the character of an area. Regard will be had to these principles in the evolution of the Leek College design proposals.

PLANNING OVERVIEW

National Planning Policy Framework (March 2012)

The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) carries at its heart the presumption in favour of sustainable development. With regard to the planning and delivery of education facilities this means locating such land uses within existing settlements where journey lengths can be minimised and the benefits of public transport can be sought. The expansion of Leek College within the town centre reflects these land use principles.

Securing the future of heritage assets is also a recurring theme within the NPPF, and developments which respond positively to Conservation Areas and Listed Buildings will be supported by Local Planning Authorities.

Previous Applications

Staffordshire Moorlands District Council has in August 2012 granted detailed planning permission for the demolition of numbers 1 and 3 Horton Street and the erection of a new teaching facility building in their place. Within the reasons for granting permission the consent stated:

> "The proposal is considered to be an acceptable and appropriate form of development for this highly sustainable location. Planning policy clearly supports the principle of developing the Leek College facilities and campus as a whole. The design of the proposed building is considered to be acceptable; it is of a modern and contemporary design which will improve the appearance of this area and not have any adverse impact on surrounding trees."

The current proposals look to expand on the positive benefits established by this planning approval.

Other relevant permissions are set out below:

- 2000 - Parkside Trust planning permission for Community Arts Centre
- 2000 - Leek College planning permission for a teaching block
- 2002 - Permission for change of use for the California Mill site.
- 2003 - California Mill building destroyed by fire
- 2006 - Tovell Building completed,
- 2012 - Planning Permission for new Engineering building

Planning Consultation

Leek College and formerly its Governors have an excellent, ongoing relationship with the Local Authority and early discussions have enhanced the viability of the proposals, together with the excellent relationship between the local authority and University of Derby.

Positive feedback has been received regarding the principle of this development following initial conversations with Rachael Simpkin, Senior Planning Officer and Gill Bayliss, Conservation Officer.

Consultations have been undertaken with Staffordshire Moorlands District Council Planning Department in the development of the scheme from the feasibility studies prepared for the Engineering building through to the preparation of the master plan for the campus redevelopment including discussion held on site reviewing the relevant properties and proposed areas for redevelopment.

To date, the scheme has received good support from the local authority as can be seen with the planning approval and comments issued regarding the proposed Engineering Building.

OUTLINE PROPOSAL

Involvement

As part of the larger and long term development plans for the college, consultation has been held with the following stakeholders;

Skills Funding Agency
Governors
EMT/SMT
All staff
Staffordshire Moorlands District Council
Students and users of the College
Architectural Liaison Officer, Crime Reduction Unit Staffordshire Police

Use & Brief Requirements

The replacement teaching building is to provide flexible learning and teaching spaces fit for the curriculum requirements of the college and robust enough to meet the changing requirements of the Further Education sector in the region.

The specific requirements of the college are

Cafe and Social Area
Flexible to be used independently with possible tenancy

School of Art
Art Staff Office
3d Design & Print Studio
1st Year Diploma Base Room
2nd Year Diploma Base Room
Life Drawing Studio
Silkscreen & Darkroom
Storage Areas
Textiles Studio
Foundation Degree Student Studio
Pottery & Ceramics Studio
Slip Room and Clay Store

Skills Centre
Foyer ./ Social space / Reception
Office
Small Interview Room
Group Room / seminar room
Drinks making area
Toilets

Design Statement

It is fundamental to the ambitions of the educational sector to deliver design quality and the task of the College to insist on the very best from the design team.

We propose to create an attractive addition to Leek College that embraces all the key elements of good, sustainable educational building design.

Key drivers to architectural design:

- Clear entrance, set back to provide a simple gathering space.
- Visually open and accessible.
- Key areas of glazing and high, pitched ceilings for a light, open learning environment.
- Simple allocation of space and facilities.
- Efficient net:gross ratio.
- Imaginative workshop spaces.
- Flexibility in design and use to allow group study or small group work.
- Functional design with selected, robust materials.
- Building can be operated autonomously to college – weekend/ evenings.
- Naturally ventilated.
- Optimum use of daylight.
- Green Guide to Materials used in materials selection,
- Designing with future expansion and modification in mind.

Design Feasibility

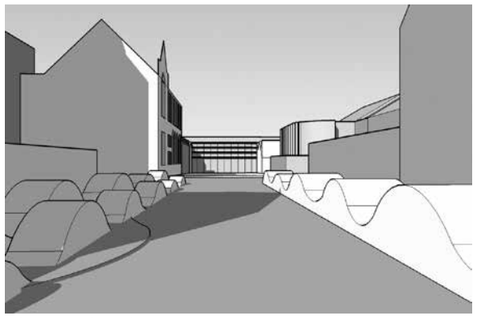
Conceptual designs were developed for an RIBA Stage C scheme and application for funding to the Learning Skills Council, submitted in February 2013.

The sketches indicated in this section are those feasibility studies and outline designs.

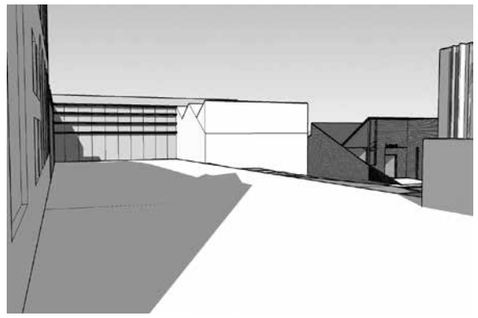
Current view of proposed pedestrian entrance

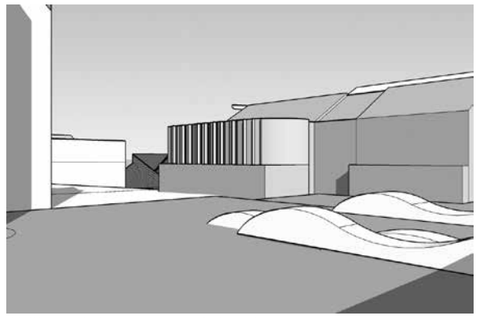
Concept sketch for new pedestrian entrance

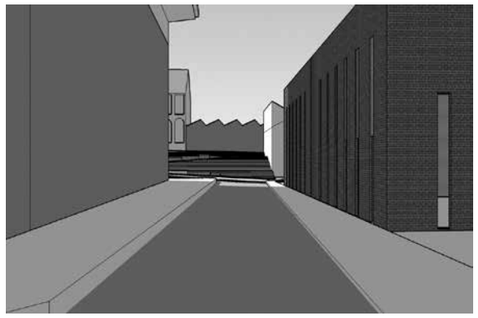
OUTLINE PROPOSAL

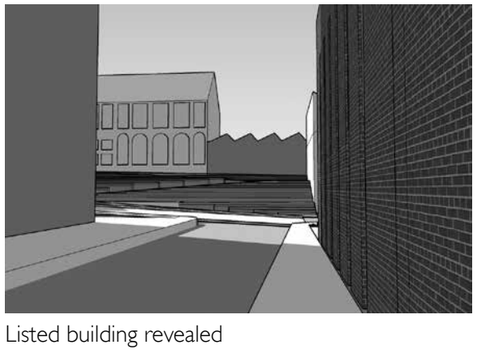

New pedestrian entrance

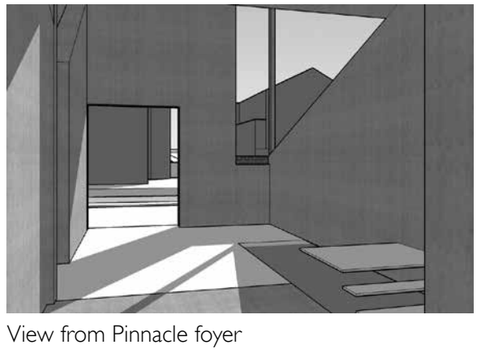

Art & design and skills training centre

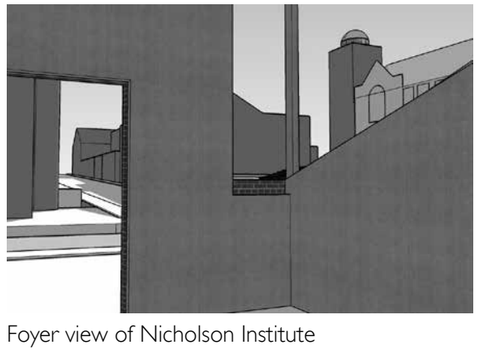

Art & design and Pinnacle

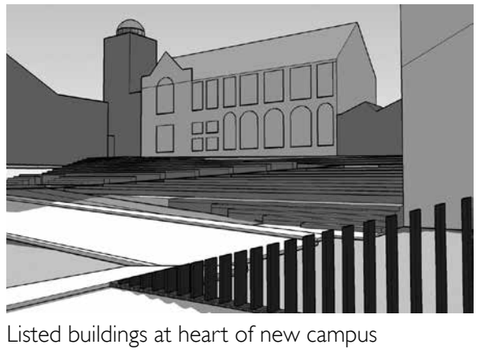

Skills training centre & landscape

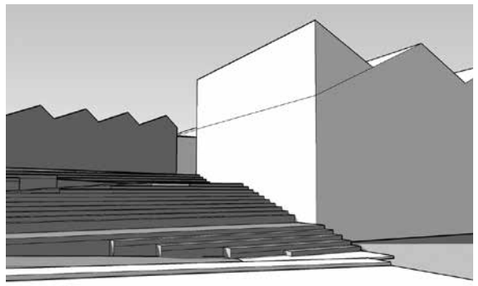

Horton Street view

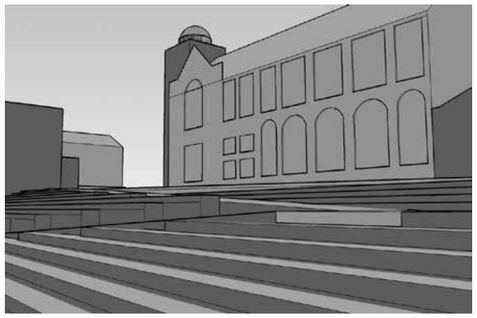

Listed building revealed

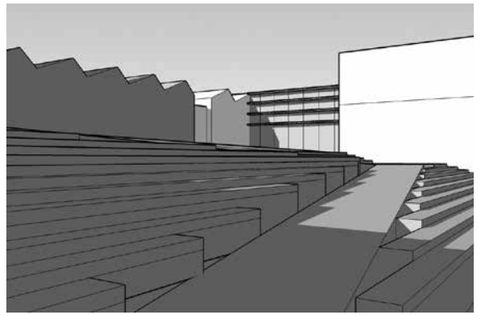

View from Pinnacle foyer


Foyer view of Nicholson Institute

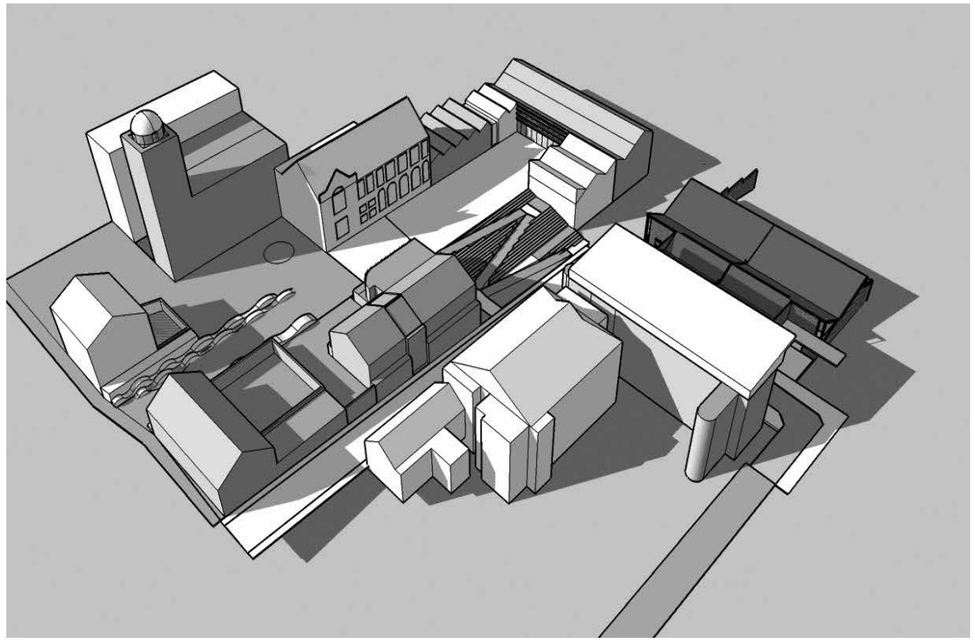

Listed buildings at heart of new campus


Terraced steps to courtyard


Terrace at heart of College


Accessible terrace bridges levels


Nicholson Institute & Grade II* building


Campus redevelopment with listed buildings and landscape at heart of design

SUSTAINABILITY & BREEAM

The redesigned campus for Leek College has been carefully arranged to embrace the opportunity for creating a true sense of place, to provide a visible and social heart to the College and to provide flexibility for the future of the campus as a whole.

We propose naturally ventilated and naturally day lit internal environments wherever possible. Each new building takes advantage of night-time cooling technologies and systems. In addition our proposal includes photovoltaic panel technology to convert the sun's energy into electricity.

Sustainable and Low Carbon Technologies:

General Philosophy including Renewables
The general construction design standards to be adopted must exceed the requirements of the current (2010 Edition) Part L Building Regulations. It is stipulated that all new buildings shall have a CO2 emission reduction exceeding the "TER" (target emission rating). A combination of improved building efficiency and the use of LZC technologies make up the overall minimum required improvement. The proposed design approach would consider:

- High performance thermal envelope (50% better than Building Regulations).
- Utilising thermal mass using concrete construction
- The use of natural daylight.
- The use of natural ventilation.
- Building orientation to maximise the benefits of solar gain.
- High efficiency low NOx boilers.
- Daylight linked dimmable light fittings.
- Low energy LED and fluorescent lights.
- Heat recovery on ventilation systems.
- Presence detection activated lights and ventilation systems.
- Variable speed pumps.
- Energy management system.
- Water saving devices.
- Rainwater harvesting to flush toilets.
- Renewable energy sources.

A number of different LZC technologies have been investigated and assessed against the load profile for the Engineering Building.

Daylighting
The building envelope and glazing has been designed to incorporate North lights to achieve high internal daylight levels, without creating obtrusive glare or overheating due to solar gain.

High daylight levels within the workshops and studios shall be targeted via the use of perimeter window and roof lights.

Building Regulations Part L2A Compliance
Compliance with the building regulations Part L2A compliance document must be proven using a calculation tools that is both capable of calculating the energy performance of buildings and be fully approved by the Secretary of State.

The building insulation has been enhanced; typically it will be up to 50% better than current building regulation targets. Targeted U-Values are:

Floor 0.12 W/m2K
Wall 0.15 W/m2K
Glazing 1.4 W/m2K
Roof 0.11 W/m2K

By increasing the building insulation levels this will reduce the heat losses from the fabric therefore minimising the heat demand and thus CO2 emissions. The air permeability leakage targeted level will be a maximum 3m3/m2 per hour; this is at least 70% lower than current building regulations and should reduce the air leakage rate and thus heat demand.

Ventilation
The main approach for the new Engineering Building will be natural ventilation wherever possible. Window design will encourage natural ventilation with the possibility of opening north lights will encourage cross flow and stack effect. Localised extract systems will be provided to all toilet cores with air transferred from adjacent spaces as make up air.

Lighting:

General
Internal and external lighting will be provided throughout the building in accordance with CIBSE lighting guides, BS EN 12464 Light and Lighting: workplaces, BS EN 12193

Light and Lighting:
Lighting throughout will generally consist of high efficient T5 fluorescent/ compact fluorescent/LED light sources. The lighting installation is to be designed to optimise the internal environment and appearance whilst minimising energy consumption.

Lighting will be daylight linked to automatically adjust the illuminance level depending upon the availability of daylight. In addition PIR detectors will only switch lights on when persons are present. The lighting controls will be developed to ensure safe working environment is maintained.

ACCESS STATEMENT

Access Statement
The access statement is a dynamic document, to be amended and updated as the project is being refined and resolved in greater detail. It sets out the objectives in the initial building approach for the proposed extension, the client and design team's decisions and solutions to take inclusive design seriously through to occupation. It may then become an effective building management tool ensuring long term accessibility.

The proposed campus redevelopment is to be part funded by the Skills Funding Agency and was subject to a grant application in February 2013, the Enhanced Renewal Grant. The grant application was successful on a number of grounds, including the site-wide strategy for enhancing and improving accessibility to all users of the site.

The new buildings and new site proposals are to be designed in accordance with the Building Regulations Approved Document Part M and the relevant sections of BS 8300.

Entrances
The new pedestrian entrance from Stockwell St will be level and fully accessible.
The new entrances to the new School of Art, Cafe and Skills Centre will be automated.

Horizontal and Vertical Movement
Corridors are kept to a minimum with the bench fitting area remaining open. Lobbies will be in accordance with BS8300.
The new School of Art building will have two 8 person platform lifts to accommodate wheelchair use and will be controlled by key access. These will provide full access to the new facilities but additionally will provide access to the existing art base rooms within a first floor mezzanine currently inaccessible to wheelchair users and users with mobility difficulties.

Finishes:
A colour scheme will be developed to ensure sufficient modelling of all interior spaces are achieved in particular wall and floor contrast, doors and wall contrast.
Fixtures and fittings will contrast with background colours in particular sanitary fittings.
Floor finishes will be non-slip and barrier matting will be provided at entrances to allow water to be removed from the soles of shoes effectively.

Internal Doors:
Doors will be provided with compliant vision panels and suitably specified clear opening widths and arrangements with adjacent and flank walls.
Main entrance doors will be designed to have a required opening force of less than 20N. The main entrance glass doors are provided with suitable manifestation and so the door can be distinguished from adjacent glazed screens specified.
The proposed surface materials will be considered for their suitability to the touch.

Furniture:
Furniture needs to be specified with ironmongery and other means for use by persons with limited dexterity and at various heights accessible for all.

Signage:
Compliant signage solutions will be required and a solution needs to be developed.

Fire & Panic Alarms & Visible Indicators:
Provide disabled refuges within escape stairs
The use of a public address and audible warnings within the fire alarm system together with flashing warning indication may be provided. Panic Alarms will be provided within all access WC's and changing rooms. Audible and visual signals are required to WC compartments in the event of fire.

Stairs:
There are two new stairs in the School of Art one functioning as the main vertical circulation in the building as it is located adjacent to the main entrance and the other providing access to the lower ground classes and fire escape stairs.

There is an existing staircase in the proposed Skills Centre (refurbishment) and measures will be taken to improve the accessibility where appropriate;.
All new stairs to meet the requirements for ambulant disabled
Nosings will be provided with sufficient 55mm contrasting on the horizontal and vertical face to clearly define the steps and handrails will be continuous around landings and have a horizontal projection 300mm beyond the last tread.
Communication provisions will be provided to the internal disabled refuges in staircases with appropriate signage.

Lighting, Power & Data:
A considered and appropriate lighting scheme will be developed that prevents sudden changes in lighting levels at entrances and across floor areas giving an even distribution of light. In normal circumstances, college users will generally not control light switches as passive detection will be used.
Where local control is required mounting heights will be 1000mm above floor levels.
Power and data outlets will be mounted at 450mm above floor level.
External lighting will improve the legibility of entrances and wayfinding, with overlighting avoided to reduce energy use.

Sanitary Provision:
An independent, accessible toilet is provided adjacent to the main entrance to the School of Art and readily accessible from the cafe.
A new accessible toilet will be provided within the Skills Centre (refurbishment)

External Circulation:
As this campus redevelopment will replace existing poor quality accommodation and not increase the site users, the existing visitor's car park will maintain accessible parking spaces; in addition to this though, a fully accessible drop-off zone is incorporated to the front of a new extension to the Engineering Building, set back from Horton Street as part of a separate application.

Parking:
The visitors car park provides 14 spaces including two accessible spaces.
The main site currently provides approximately 30 parking spaces for staff. This parking is hazardous for staff and students moving around the site and provides an unhealthy and unattractive outdoors space. The project proposes to relocate all staff and student parking to the Vicarage Road car park whilst maintaining the visitors and accessible parking provision.

Future Adaptation and Modifications:
We would encourage the College to consider the impact on accessibility of making future physical changes to the building or the furnishings within it including the location of activities.
We suggest the college monitor and review their services and access provisions annually in line with curriculum reviews. This will inform whether there are sufficient furniture types, staff management systems etc. to cope with changing needs and patterns of teaching.