

DESIGN AND ACCESS STATEMENT

A New Pre School unit at Balliol Lower School, Balliol Road, Kempston, Bedford

K01-004_738054_011

DESIGN

PREAMBLE

The proposal is for construction of a new single storey Pre School Unit positioned close to the main school building.

There is a need for additional Pre School places in the area and at present there is insufficient accommodation for these additional places. A dedicated unit is required.

The unit aims to enable parents to develop the educational needs of their children before their children attend the lower school, and will be used mainly on a part time session basis.

Options for extending the existing nursery have been looked at but funding does not allow for this. A stand alone new unit is a quicker, cost effective solution, with minimal disruption to existing facilities and users.

USE

The New Pre School Unit will provide facilities for approximately 24 children under the statutory age for attending the lower school on a part time basis. It will hold short sessions. Full day care facilities are provided by the existing nursery. Basic baby care facilities will be provided to users within the unit. The part time facilities of the Pre school unit will enable more full time use of the main nursery unit.

The usual time for the formal activities to take place is between 10.00am and 3.00pm. The building will, however, be open from about 9.00am until 4.00pm, with staff being on site from about 8.45am. There will be up to 2 regular members of staff based at the unit -an Administrator and a Coordinator.

The main activities in the unit will concern children's play and learning development, and are aimed at meeting the needs of children within the local community. This proposal will provide additional flexibility and scope to the established educational resources provided by the school and nursery on site.

In previous years numbers of part time users of the Nursery have fluctuated but there is an overall trend indicating that more part time use has been catered for. The pre school unit will take the additional children and will allow the main nursery to provide more full time facilities. Below is a table showing approximate numbers over the years, with projected numbers for the next 2 years, on the existing nursery unit.

TIME	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008
PT	23	37	34	35	39
FT	24	20	27	25	30

The unit on will take up playing field area currently provided for the lower school use,. It will be next to the existing nursery unit. Appropriate enclosure provided by fencing will surround the unit, will allow proportional play space, and will leave necessary playing field requirements for the lower school. The table below provides a current breakdown of areas on the site and is displayed alongside current Primary School DFES guideline requirements:

AREAS	Extg School 210 Place	DFES 210 Place	With Pre School Unit	DFES 270 Place
Softplay Areas	9262m ²	4200m ²	8784m ²	5400m ²
Habitat Areas	1275m ²	410m ²	1275m ²	470m ²
Pitches	-	1325m ²	-	1475m ²
Float	-	1050m ²	-	1352m ²
TOTAL Softplay	10537m²	6985m²	10059m²	8695m²
Hardplay -Informal	-	715m ²		805m ²
Hardplay - Games	-	1020m ²		1140m ²
TOTAL Hardplay	2729m²	1735m²	2729m²	1945m²

From the above table it can be seen that there is adequate space for current and future needs of the school in terms of softplay and hard play areas for the lower school. Overall there will be a small reduction in the lower school softplay area, and no effect on hard play areas

AMOUNT

The Pre School unit is 96 square metres will be single storey. This is appropriate for the sizing of a main pre school room and the facilities it has around it. Its size lends itself for a flexible main activity space suited to the amount of children and staff intended to use it. The kitchenette, the store and the wc areas will also be big enough to accommodate the unit's users.

LAYOUT

The Pre School unit will have a simple layout with spaces linking off the main pre school room. Its internal layout is the most practical use of the space and usability of the building. The building itself sits adjacent to the existing nursery unit and residential areas on an area which is currently playing field.

The orientation of the unit is such that it sites comfortably within the site and follows existing building orientations. The south facing elevation looking over the playing field allows maximum light into the main room. The canopy which will provide shade. The north and west facades overlook the nursery area and playing field. The orientation allows for minimal disturbance from other users from within the site or from within the unit.

The layout allows the unit to be secure onsite as a stand alone building, and allows secure areas for children's play and viewing.

SCALE

The scale of the extension is considerate to its surrounding. It's a single story flat roof building that discreetly relates to the single storey buildings of the school and the existing nursery unit. The unit itself has a small footprint and does not encroach on the remainder of the site, and as its size is brief led. It is a subtle addition to the school site and local area.

The positioning of windows and doors gives a well balanced feel to the elevation and shows both direct and indirect relation to the existing buildings nearby.

Doors and windows are designed to suit the user's needs and have a direct relation to the building unit and spaces it contains. Doors are sized appropriately for the use of accessibility and security. Window units are sized to maximize on natural light for the space

and allow means of natural ventilation.

LANDSCAPING

Landscaping around the new development will be minimal with the aim of ease of maintenance. Leading up to the unit will be a path to allow users a direct visual context to the unit. Shrubs and planting on the existing boundary will help to soften this and give a balanced feel on approach to the unit. Adequate lighting will be provided to assist the users visually around the site, and its entrance.

Most of the soft landscaping is grass as this was the previous use of the site. Paving around the entrance will provide level access and help define the principle approach. Reinstatement to suit the needs of the disturbed areas will allow the fenced area to be used as the pre school play area. Fencing around the unit will help tie it into the existing site and also visually separate it from the other buildings on site. It will also enable easier site navigation for users.

APPEARANCE

The architectural design, materials and siting are all intended to ensure that the new building sits comfortably within the existing building and its context, but still give the building its own identity. A mixture of facing brickwork, timber cladding and multicoloured coloured render will help to bring a new life onto the site.

Consideration has been given to the context in terms of colour and materials. As this is a standalone unit away from the main road and from the main school, overlooking a playing field, it lends itself to be a visual statement for the school in a discreet manner. The architectural design aims to portray the unit as a children's unit with vibrant colours, and an assortment of materials and textures.

The canopy entrance will act as a focal point to the entrance of the unit. The minimal use of landscaping will not overcrowd the site and give a smooth transition to the visual outlook of the unit that the site sits on.

ACCESS

ACCESS POLICY

It is County Council policy that all development is of inclusive design and will not create environmental barriers to employment, services, education or public transport. Therefore, all design will be informed by Approved Document M (2004), BS8300 and accredited service specific guidance.

DESIGN OBJECTIVES

People, regardless of disability, age or gender, will be able to reach the principal entrance to the building and other entrances as described by the Approved Document M, from the site boundary and from car parking within the site.

Elements of the building will not constitute a hazard to users, especially people with impaired sight, but rather assist in way-finding. People, regardless of disability, age or gender, will have access into, and within, the building and to the building's facilities. There will be aids to communication for people with an impairment of hearing or sight in meeting rooms, reception areas, and at information points. There will be appropriate sanitary accommodation for the users of the building.

ACCESS TO THE SITE

Access to the building and its surrounding area will be through designated paths off the main road and clearly defined with landscaping, and signage once within the site.

The approach to the site will have a surface width not less than 1.5m with passing places at least 1.8m wide. The gradient of the approach will not exceed 1:12. The route to the principal entrance will be well lit with a new low level lighting scheme and clearly identified with new signage.

The designated parking spaces will be sited as close as possible to the principal entrance on firm and level ground. Their dimensions will be in accordance with the Approved Document to Part M (2004).

Windows that open onto pathways or paved areas will be fitted with hinges to restrict the opening to not more than 100mm projection from the face of the building.

ACCESS TO THE BUILDING

Entrances will be clearly sign-posted, incorporating the International Symbol of Access, from the edge of the site.

Entrances will be clearly identified with new external lighting.

There will be a level area which is not smaller than 1500x1500mm, clear of the door swings, in front of each entrance.

The glazed entrance doors will be clearly defined with manifestation on the glass at two levels (between 850-1000mm and 1400-1600mm above the floor) which will contrast visually with the background seen through the glass.

The glazed entrance doors will be clearly differentiated from the glazed screens either side by the provision of a high contrast strip at the top and on both sides in addition to the window frame.

The door thresholds will be level. The internal floor finish of the entrance lobby and other entrances will be a barrier matting which will serve to remove rainwater from shoes and wheelchairs. This surface will not impede the access of a wheelchair or create a trip hazard.

INTERNAL CIRCULATION

All single leaf and one-and-a-half leaf doors will have a minimum clear width of 800mm.

There will be an unobstructed space not smaller than 300mm on the pull side of all push/pull doors (measured between the leading edge of the door and any return wall).

All door furniture will contrast visually with the surface of the door. Where latches have been specified, these will be activated by the lever handle, which can be operated by a closed

fist.

Where doors are not self-closing, the surface of the leading edge of the door will contrast visually with the other door surfaces and its surroundings.

Vision panels in doors will be provided in accordance with the requirements of the Approved Document to Part M (2004).

The building will be single storey so there will be no need for a lift, but to suit existing floor levels and ground levels there will be a ramped entrance to the building.

Projecting elements such as columns and radiators will be avoided where possible. Where these exist, a visually contrasting barrier will be provided to direct people around them.

FACILITIES

The new building will provide a suitable space for pre school children and adult staff, a small kitchenette area, a store, wc facilities and a lobby area. The pre school room will be usable by all users where furniture allows.

The kitchen will provide basic cooking and cleaning facilities for up to 2 people, and allow a wheelchair user for access also. Different height benching will also allow accessibility for all users adult and staff where required.

The wc facilities will be fully inclusive. Appropriate level sinks and also an ambulant cubicle will be provided.

Storage facilities will be accessed from within the pre school room for secure purposes and room use.

The lobby area will be large enough to accommodate a wheelchair user or a mother pushing a pram, therefore is accessible to all.