



Wokingham SEND Resource

St. Pauls Junior School ASD SEND Unit

Design & Access Statement

rivingtonstreetstudio

February 2026

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St Pauls DAS

Rev	Date	Suitability	Status	Initials
PL1	11./02/26	S3	For Planning	RT

This document has been prepared to be printed and read at A3.

The Site:

St Pauls Junior School

Oxford Rd, Wokingham RG41 2YJ

The Client and Applicant:

Wokingham Borough Council

This statement has been prepared on behalf of the client by:

Rivington Street Studio - Architects

1. Introduction

1.1 Overview

This Design and Access Statement has been prepared to support the RIBA Stage 3 developed design for the proposed ASD Resource Base Unit at St Paul’s Junior School, Wokingham. The project forms part of Wokingham Borough Council’s ongoing programme to expand and enhance SEND provision across its primary and secondary school estate, responding to increasing local demand for high-quality specialist support within mainstream educational settings.

The scheme proposes a self-contained, flexible and inclusive Resource Base designed to provide targeted support for pupils with Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD), while maintaining strong visual and physical connections with the wider school community to promote inclusion and integration.

The design has evolved from the approved Stage 2 concept through further site analysis, consultation and technical development. The proposals have been informed by site visits and ongoing engagement with St Paul’s Junior School leadership team and Wokingham Borough Council officers, and reflect feedback received to date.

2. Brief

ASD unit for 16 primary pupils.

Wokingham Borough Council commissioned Rivington Street Studio Architects to develop proposals for a new ASD Resource Base Unit at St Paul’s Junior School. The principal objectives of the brief are to:

Provide a dedicated, calm and structured learning environment for pupils with ASD, supporting a range of learning, sensory and social-communication needs.

Deliver a suite of appropriately scaled spaces in line with DfE SEND guidance and WBC’s standardised accommodation model for Additionally Resourced Provisions (ARPs), including:

- Entry space/ cloakroom
- 3No. flexible learning spaces (2 standard classroom and 1 small)
- Classroom storage
- Kitchenette/ staffroom
- 1No.Sensory room (medium)
- Small meeting room/ Office space
- Staff/ Pupil/ Accesible WCs to suit occupancy
- 1No. hygiene room
- Secure outdoor play area/ garden (with a canopy)

Ensure safe, legible and independent access for pupils, including separation from mainstream circulation routes where beneficial.

Maintain controlled access to outdoor learning space, with clear boundary definition and opportunities for small-group play.

Achieve a design that is cost-effective, robust, low-maintenance and compliant with current Building Regulations, BB103/BB104 guidance, and WBC standards.

The overarching ambition is to create an environment that promotes pupil confidence, reduces anxiety, supports sensory regulation, and integrates seamlessly with the existing school layout.

2. Existing

2.1 Existing Site and Context

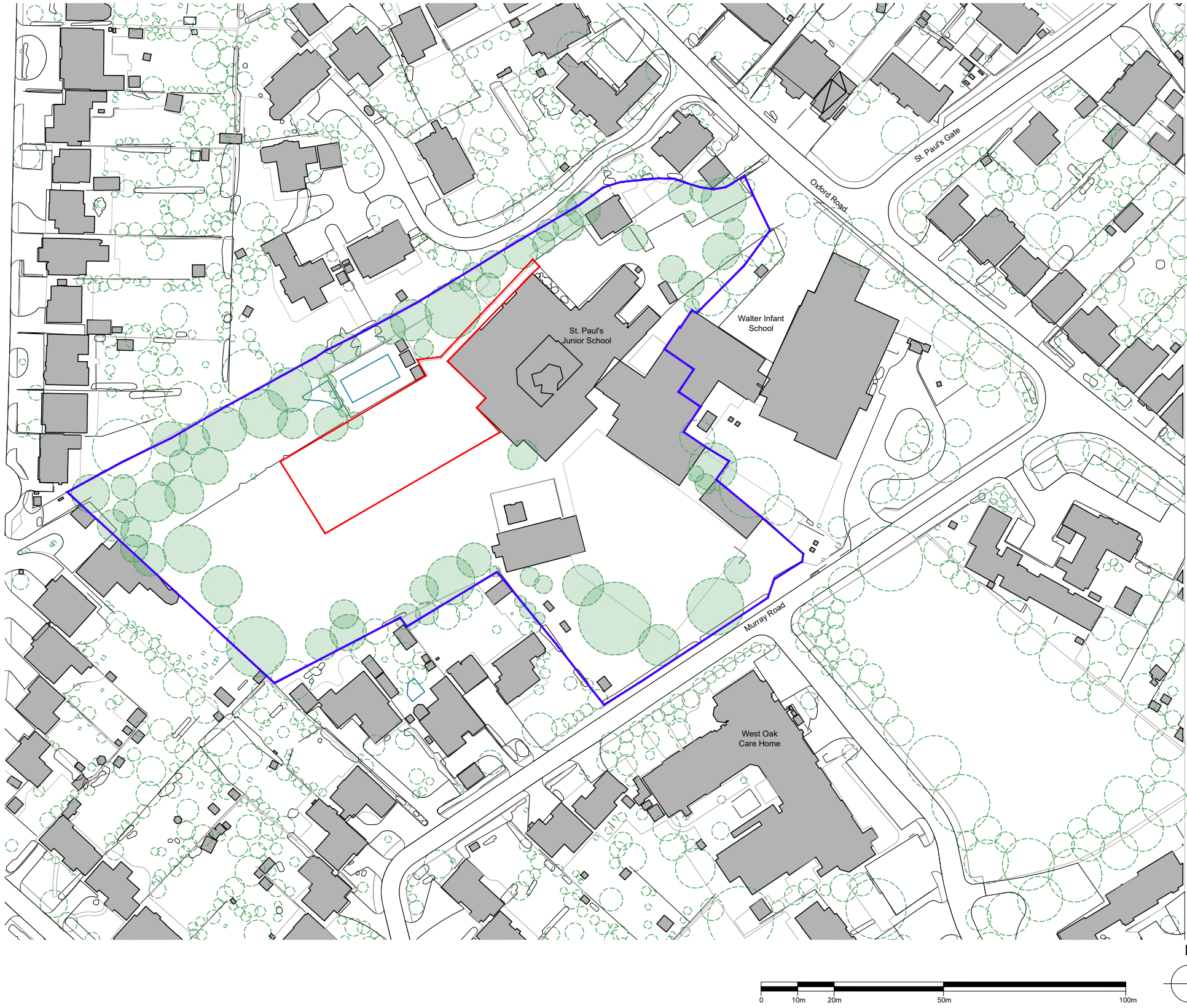
St Paul’s Junior School is located within a predominantly suburban residential area of Wokingham, characterised by two-storey housing, mature landscaping and open school playing fields. The school occupies an established site comprising a mix of traditional and more recent building forms arranged around hard-play courts, playing fields and parking areas.

The school site is shared by St Paul’s Church of England Junior School and Walter Infant School & Nursery, which together occupy adjoining areas of the wider education campus in Wokingham. Although they operate as separate schools—St Paul’s serving Key Stage 2 pupils and Walter Infant School serving Early Years and Key Stage 1—they form part of the same historic school community and maintain close functional links.

The proposed Resource Base is to be accommodated within a defined area on the St Pauls school site that offers proximity to the main school buildings while allowing the unit to operate self-sufficiently when required. The surrounding context includes:

- Existing single-storey elements of the school, providing a low-scale backdrop suitable for the addition of specialist accommodation.
- Hard-play surfaces and informal green space offering opportunities for enclosed external play areas.
- Established pedestrian routes that can be adapted to provide safe, independent arrival for ASD pupils.
- Existing services infrastructure and access points that inform the layout of the new accommodation.

Key considerations include safeguarding, minimising disruption during construction, maintaining good relationships with neighbouring properties, and ensuring the new unit integrates sensitively with the existing school architecture and external areas.



Site Location Plan

2. Existing

2.2 Site Access

Vehicular and visitor access for both St Paul’s Junior School and Walter Infant School is taken from Oxford Road, where the shared car park and main entrance are located.

The upper photographs on this page illustrate this Oxford Road entrance and parking area. The photograph beneath shows the proposed pedestrian route to the new ASD Resource Base on the east side of the school building.

The images at the bottom right show the existing pedestrian and service entrance on Murray Road, which serves the rear of the combined school campus.



Oxford Road Entrance



Car park at Oxford Road Entrance



Gated maintenance access to north west of school



Murray Road pupil access



Murray Road fire vehicle and maintenance access to playground

2. Existing

2.3 Existing School Buildings

The existing buildings across the shared St Paul's and Walter Infant School campus are predominantly single storey. The section of St Paul's closest to the proposed development comprises the original 1960s school block, constructed in yellow stock brick with white-boarded fascias, a flat roof profile and large white-framed windows typical of the period.

Subsequent additions include the 2001 prefabricated panel system building that accommodates Walter Infant School, and a later modular Art and Drama block located at the edge of the playing fields (on next page), clad in vertical timber boarding.

Collectively, these buildings create a varied but low-rise architectural context into which the proposed unit can be sensitively integrated.



Main entrance for visitors



Car park at entrance



Path to north west of school (proposed new pedestrian route to SEND unit)



Existing classrooms facing proposed SEND unit site



Playground with brick and prefabricated school buildings

2. Existing

2.4 Playing Field and Playground

The school benefits from extensive playing fields and hard-surfaced playgrounds that provide the main outdoor recreation and PE spaces for both St Paul's Junior School and Walter Infant School.

Adjacent to these is the heated outdoor swimming pool, used regularly from Easter through to October by St Paul's pupils as well as by other local schools as part of shared community provision.

Immediately beside the proposed site is the school's established wildlife and nature area, an important learning resource that supports outdoor exploration, ecology studies and quiet reflection; its proximity makes it ideally suited for integrated use with the new SEND unit.

The wider site is enclosed by mature boundary trees which offer strong visual screening and create a natural, green backdrop to the school site. It is also noted that sections of the playing field experience poor drainage, which will be a consideration in any development affecting adjacent areas

The play equipment next to the timber clad Arts and Drama building to the left is in disrepair and is due for replacement.



Timber clad arts and drama block (modular system)



Swimming pool



Proposed site to left and adjacent classrooms/ playing field canopies



Gate into nature garden



Playground looking towards Murray Road exit

2. Existing

2.5 Site Opportunities and Constraints

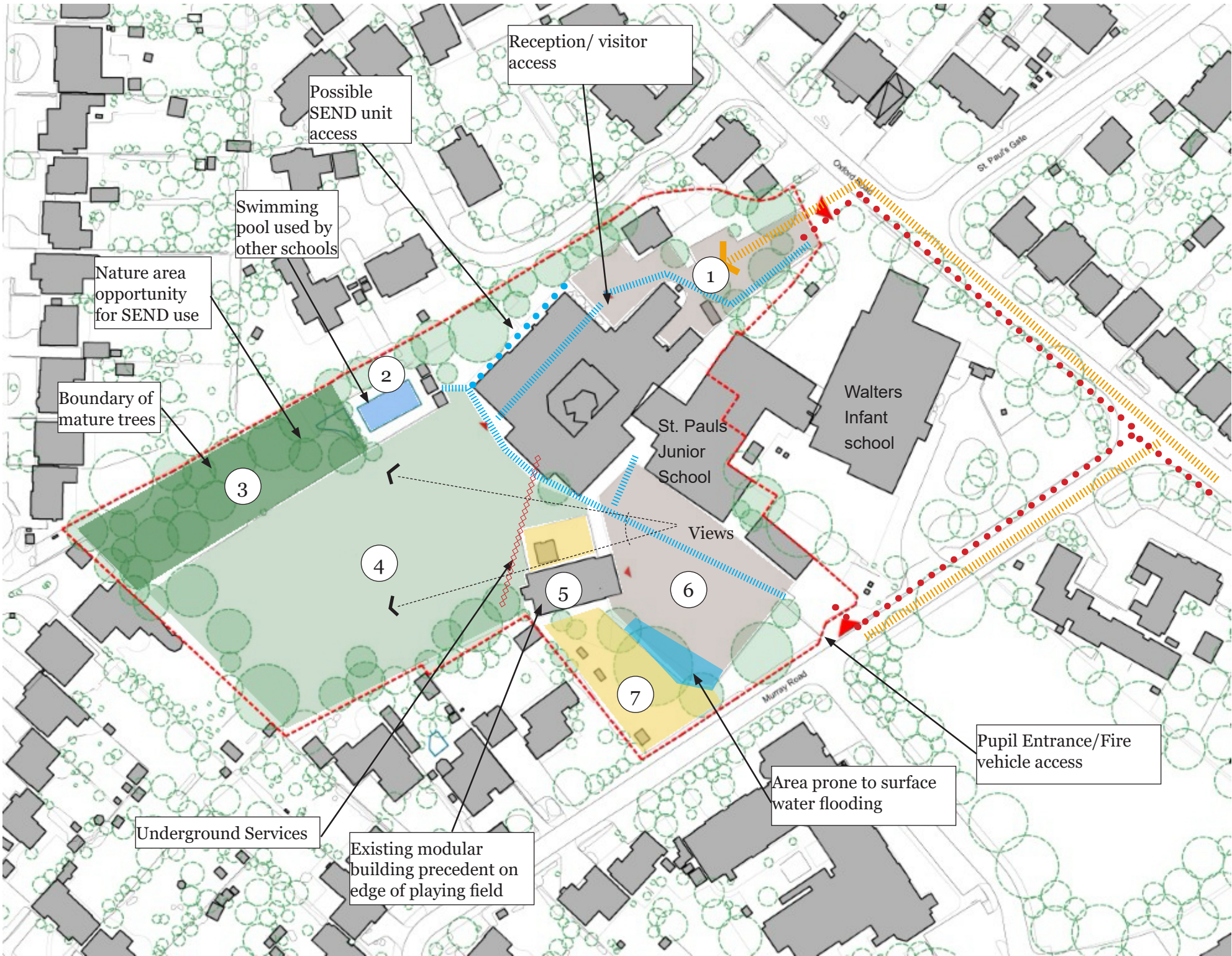
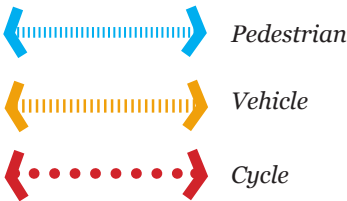
Opportunities

- SEND use of Nature Garden
- Locate next to school for inclusivity
- Connect to existing access routes
- Access options from Oxford or Murry Road

Constraints

- Neighbour issues/ avoid building onto boundary
- Surface water flooding playground
- Minimise reduction in existing external play
- Underground services

- 1. Staff/ Visitor Car park
- 2. Outdoor Swimming Pool
- 3. Nature Garden
- 4. Playing Field
- 5. Art and Drama Block
- 6. Playground
- 7. Play equipment Area



3. Proposed

3.1 Location Options Appraisal

This site plan illustrates the five locations considered for the new Resource Provision Unit. **Option 5** is the preferred location because it provides the strongest connection to existing school circulation routes, meets access requirements for pupils, staff and servicing, is positioned away from residential boundaries to reduce noise and visual impact, and occupies an under-used corner of the playing field, allowing the unit to operate semi-independently while remaining well linked to the main school.

- Option 1** – Adjacent to Art & Drama Building

Pros: Close to existing buildings.

Cons: Blocks the link between playground and playing fields; sits over an underground gas supply; creates a barrier across outdoor routes.
- Option 2** – Near Murray Road Entrance

Pros: Central campus position.

Cons: Conflicts with a mature tree; reduces key hard-play space; negatively affects access and visibility at Murray Road.
- Option 3** – Southern Boundary (Soft Informal Play Area)

Pros: Adjoins existing green edge.

Cons: Displaces a well-used informal soft-play area; reduces flexible outdoor learning space.
- Option 4** – Remote West boundary

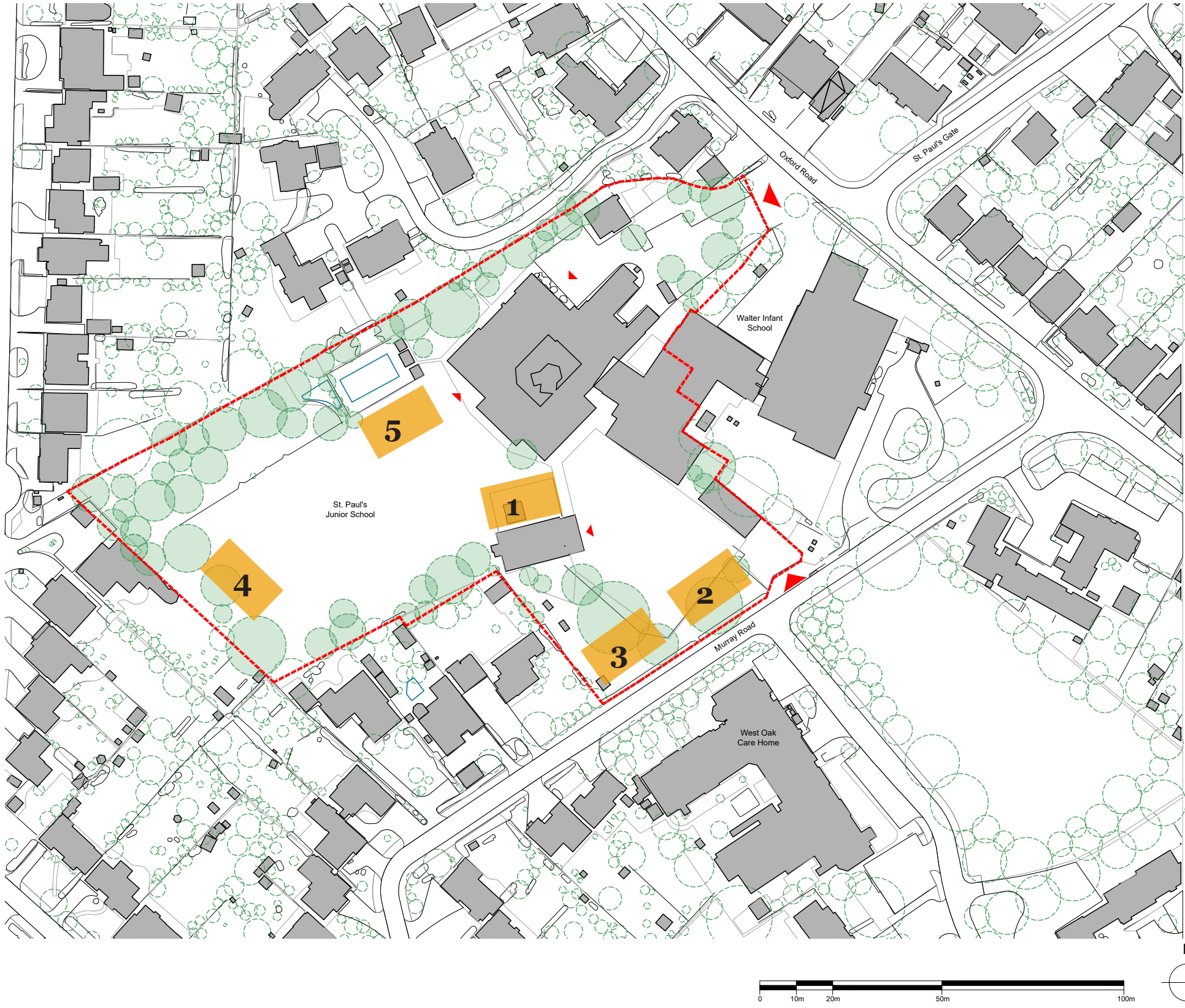
Pros: Does not impact on existing buildings

Cons: Too remote from the main school; weak operational integration; limited supervision and safeguarding.
- Option 5** – Adjacent to Swimming Pool (Preferred)

Pros: Best circulation link; meets access requirements; located away from residential boundaries; occupies an under-used part of the playing field.

Cons: Adjacent to the nature garden, requiring sensitive boundary and construction management.

The school does not have existing internal space suitable for conversion. All options would lead to some loss of external play space; however, Option 5 would have minimal impact on day-to-day outdoor activity.



3. Proposed

3.2 Proposed Layout Plan

The proposed layout is arranged on a modular grid of 3.3 m width by 11.5 m length. The use of modular construction minimises disruption within the live school environment and provides a consistent, standardised approach aligned with Wokingham Borough Council's wider SEND provision strategy. The photograph below illustrates a typical modular unit being craned into position during installation.

A central connecting corridor is incorporated to improve operational flexibility and to support the safe management of dysregulated pupils. Each classroom benefits from independent access, allowing spaces to function separately when required. A small calm room, accessed directly from the corridor, provides a discrete withdrawal space without interrupting teaching activity within the classrooms.

The office and meeting room are located adjacent to the main entrance, allowing clear and intuitive access for visitors while enabling passive supervision of arrivals and departures. Classrooms have direct access to an external covered area, facilitating all-weather outdoor learning and supporting a flexible and varied teaching approach.

Refer to the Schedule of Accommodation on the following page.



Example of modular unit being installed by crane



3. Proposed

3.3 Area Schedule and BB104 Comparison

The area schedule on this page sets out the full Option A accommodation, including teaching, support, hygiene and staff spaces. BB104 recommended areas and indicative occupancies are included to demonstrate compliance with guidance for a primary ASD Resource Base.

The third classroom, at 30.5 m², is smaller than a standard teaching space but is appropriate for targeted ASD support, structured small-group learning and intervention activities. Each classroom is supported by an adjacent store; however, additional integrated storage within the teaching spaces will be required, in line with BB104 expectations for ASD provision.

Overall, the accommodation provides a balanced and appropriate mix of spaces to support a 16-pupil ASD cohort.

Space	Typical Occupancy (16 pupils)	Area (m²)	BB104 guidance (m²)	Compliance / Comment
Classroom 1	8 pupils	49.0	45–50 m²	Main teaching space
Classroom 2	8 pupils	49.0	45–50 m²	Main teaching space
Classroom 3/ Group Room	4–6 pupils (small group)	30.5	25–35 m²	Suitable as small-group base/ group room
Classroom 1 Store		1.7	8-10% = 4-5m2	3m2 of additional in-room storage required
Classroom 2 Store		1.7	8-10% = 4-5m2	3m2 of additional in-room storage required
Classroom 3/ Group Room Store		0.8	8-10% = 2.5-3m2	2m2 of additional in-room storage required
Calm / Sensory Room	1–2 pupils	8.0	10–15 m²	Slightly below BB104 range; appropriate for short-stay calming and regulation use
Breakout Space	2–3 pupils	11.0	10–15 m²	Small-group and de-escalation space
Kitchen / Life Skills	Staff	14.0	10–12 m²	Includes kitchenette and storage
Office / Meeting Room	Staff + 1–2 pupils	12.0	10–12 m²	Staff workspace / parent meetings
Total Net Internal Area (NIA) 177.7				
Hygiene Room	1 pupil + staff	12.0	12–15 m²	Fully compliant
Pupil WCs (x2)	1 pupil per cubicle (2.7m2)	5.4	1 AWC + 2 WCs	Individual cubicles
Accessible WC / Staff WC	1 pupil or staff	3.4	Included in WC provision	Dual-use accessibility provision
Cleaner’s Store		1.9	Within 5–8% GIA	Adjacent to WC cluster
Plant Room		3.5	3–5 m²	Services / ASHP / AC
Circulation	Movement only	38.1	Part of GIA allowance	ASD-appropriate relief spaces
Partitions		18.0		7% within standard range for modular building)
Total Non Net 82.3				

GIA 260.0

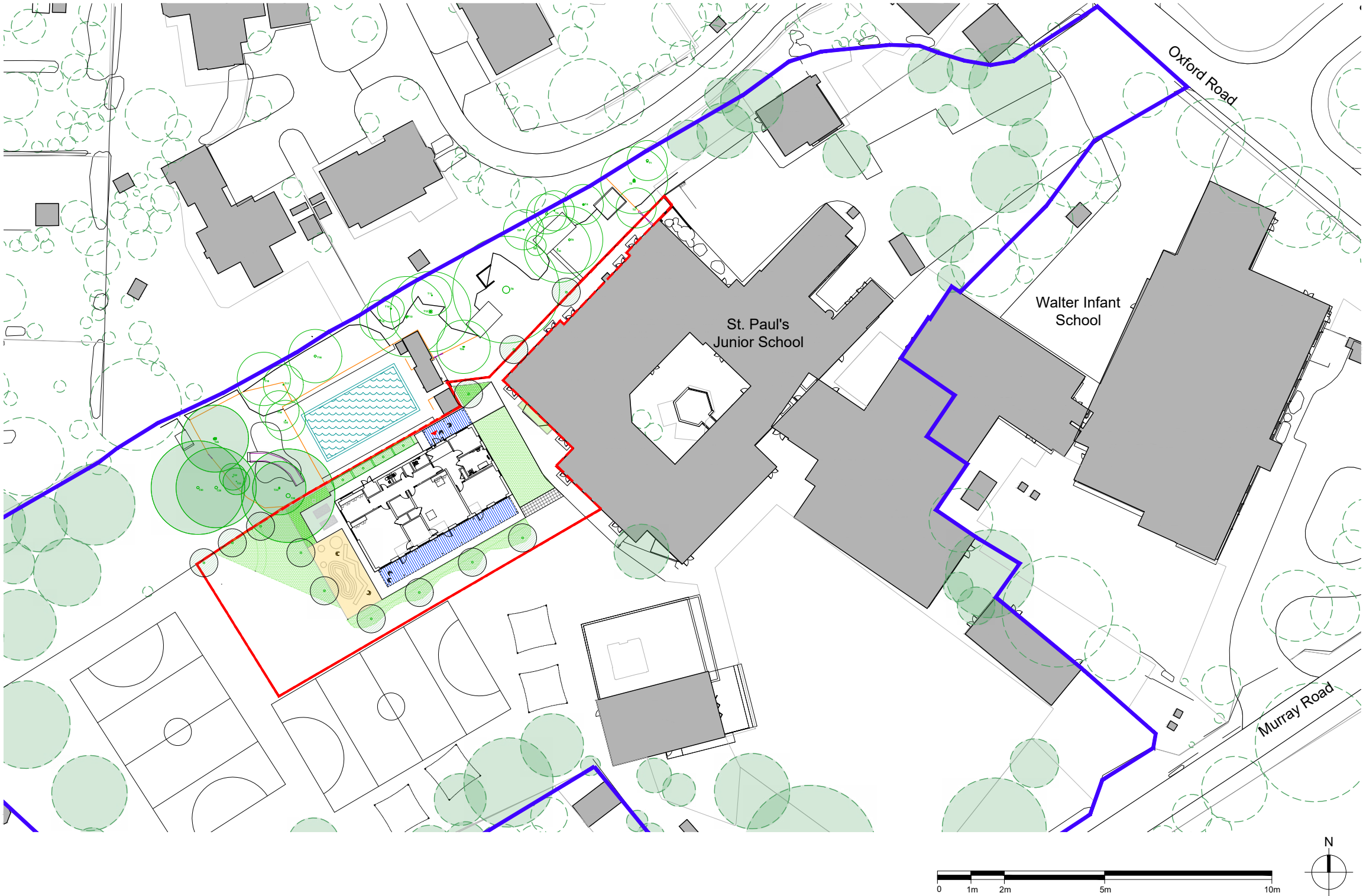
3. Proposed

3.5 Site Plan Proposed

The proposed site plan on this page shows the SEND unit set within the context of the existing school buildings. Drop-off will be accommodated within the existing parking spaces at the Oxford Road entrance, with the school managing arrival and departure arrangements to avoid peak times for the main school.

From the drop-off area, visitors and pupils will use the existing pedestrian route along the north-east side of the school, with a new secure gate providing controlled access to the unit.

Further detail is provided within the submitted Transport Assessment.



3. Proposed

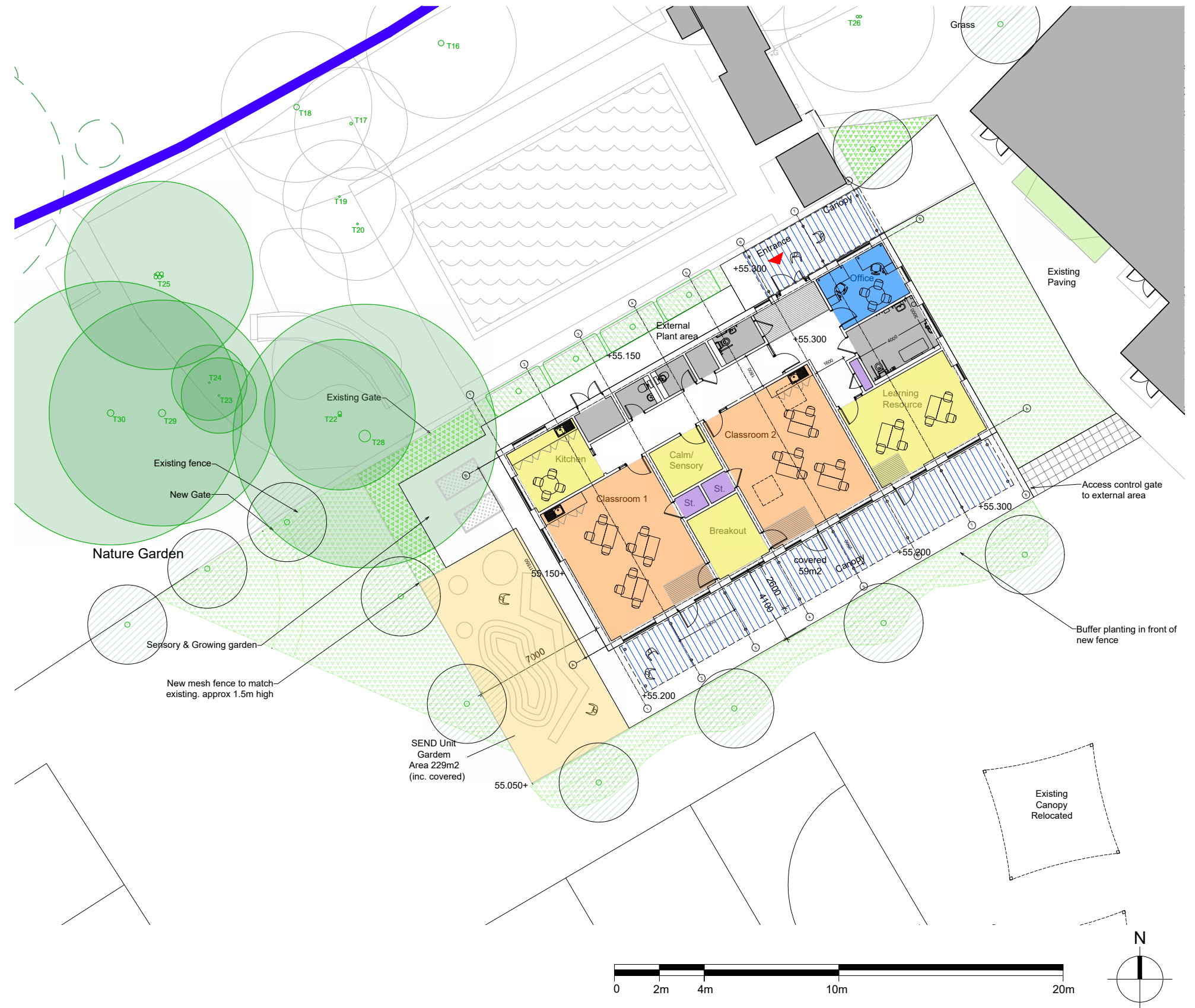
3.6 Landscape Design

The external area is designed to provide a range of outdoor learning and activity opportunities, including an outdoor gym, trampoline zone, small growing garden and sensory planting, together with a direct connection to the adjacent nature garden. This varied provision supports different modes of learning, play and sensory engagement appropriate to an ASD cohort.

The detailed layout, equipment selection and planting strategy will be developed at the next stage in consultation with the school, ensuring the external environment supports learning, sensory needs and pupil wellbeing.

The L-shaped configuration of the external space and the inclusion of necessary circulation areas mean that a reduced footprint would limit flexibility and the effective use of the space for small-group learning and sensory activities.

The proposed extent therefore achieves an appropriate balance between providing a functional and inclusive outdoor environment for a 16-pupil ASD cohort and minimising impact on the wider playing field.



3. Proposed

3.7 Architectural Approach

The architectural language of the proposed modular building reflects the simple, low-rise, rectilinear character of the existing school, while providing opportunities to enhance build quality and environmental performance. The design prioritises robustness, an essential consideration for school environments and particularly important for SEND provision.

Generous, well-proportioned windows provide good levels of natural daylight and visual connection to the wider school grounds, supporting a sense of openness and inclusion. The external cladding allows the modular form to be clearly expressed while offering durable, low-maintenance finishes appropriate to a school setting.

Boundaries, thresholds and access points are designed to provide appropriate levels of security and controlled movement without the unit feeling isolated or overly enclosed, resulting in a calm, legible and welcoming environment for pupils.

The new building is designed to sit comfortably within its existing context and is positioned away from the main school building to create a suitably scaled entrance space, forming a clear and legible arrival point for the new SEND unit.

When viewed from the playing field, the building is softened by new planting and is set against the backdrop of the existing green boundary.



View of new SEND unit entrance area



View from playing field looking back at SEND unit

3. Proposed

3.8 External Materials & Colour



CLASSROOM ELEVATION WITH CANOPY



CLASSROOM ELEVATION



CLADDING
Metal Green



WINDOWS/DOORS/COPING/RWP
RAL 7045



GRILLS
RAL 7026



BASE/ RETAINING WALLS
Blue Engineering brick



CANOPY
RAL 7024

4. Access and H&S

4.1 Accessibility

The proposed development will be designed to comply with the Equality Act 2010 and will be informed by Approved Document Part M and BS 8300, which provide guidance on inclusive design and access to buildings and their approaches. The scheme seeks to ensure that the new SEND unit is fully accessible for pupils, staff and visitors.

4.2 Fire Safety

Fire tender access is via the existing playground. Escape routes from the new unit discharge directly into this space, which will also act as the assembly area. The stand-alone single-storey building is sufficiently separated from existing school blocks to avoid affecting current escape strategies.

Sprinklers are not considered necessary, subject to confirmation that neither the school nor their insurers require them, as there is no property protection requirement and insurance cover does not mandate their inclusion.

4.3 Principal Designer (CDM)

To ensure a safe and efficient construction phase, careful planning and coordination will be required with the existing school and surrounding residential neighbours.

Key risks identified at RIBA Stage 3 include:

- Underground services and obstructions: Existing utilities and unknown sub-surface features pose a risk to excavation and foundations. Early surveys and coordination are required to avoid accidental damage or contamination.
- Construction activity risks: Works adjacent to live school buildings present a personal safety risk to students and staff. A detailed construction phase plan and robust segregation strategies will be essential.
- Access and maintenance: Future risks relating to roof access and cleaning of canopies and external façades must be addressed through integrated design solutions (e.g. safe access points).

These risks are all currently open and will be actively monitored and updated as the project progresses through detailed design and into construction.

The Pre-Construction Information (PCI) is being collated as more site and survey information is becoming available.

4.4 Principal Designer (Building Regulations)

Introduced through the Building Safety Act 2022, the Principal Designer (Building Regulations) is responsible for ensuring that building designs comply with the Building Regulations. This role is required for any project involving design work subject to Building Regulations approval.

The client (Wokingham Borough Council) has;

- Made suitable arrangements for managing the project's health and safety from the start.
- Has appointed the key duty holders.
- Has ensured that there is enough time and money allocated for the work to be done safely
- Has provided/ or will provide, essential background information about the site (surveys and existing hazards)

At RIBA Work Stage 3, the Principal Designer (Building Regulations) has determined the following;

- That the Concept Design is compliant with all relevant parts of the Building Regulations in principle. The design is not yet sufficiently detailed to assess compliance in full.
- That the project designers have managed and coordinated the work satisfactorily.
- That the project designers are technically competent to undertake this project.
- That the project designers have kept a record of design decisions and any relevant regulatory documentation.

The Principal Designer (Building Regulations) has had sufficient influence over the project design at this stage.

5. Environmental Impact

5.1 Sustainability

The sustainability approach focuses on practical, low-maintenance solutions compatible with modular construction. The strategy includes the use of Air Source Heat Pumps (ASHPs), enhanced fabric performance, hybrid ventilation, solar control measures and low-energy lighting. These measures are intended to reduce operational energy demand while remaining robust and straightforward to maintain in a school environment.

Further detail is provided within the submitted Sustainability Statement and Energy Assessment, which set out the proposed measures and anticipated performance of the development.

5.2 Ecology and Biodiversity Net Gain

An Ecological Assessment and Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG) assessment have been undertaken to inform the proposed development.

The emerging proposals include enhanced planting within the application site boundary, including additional tree planting, in order to achieve the required minimum 10% biodiversity net gain in accordance with current legislation.

The proposed landscape strategy and planting types are illustrated on the submitted Soft Landscape Plan.

Refer to the submitted Ecological Assessment, Biodiversity Net Gain Report and Soft Landscape Plan.

5.3 Arboricultural

The proposed location of the building is set away from existing trees within the site. Any potential interaction with root protection areas has been assessed through specialist arboricultural input.

Further detail is provided within the submitted Arboricultural Survey and Impact Assessment.

5.4 Transport

The proposed SEND Resource Base will result in a limited increase in pupil and staff movements. Access arrangements, including drop-off and pick-up activity at the Oxford Road entrance, staff parking provision and pedestrian routes around the site, have been considered as part of the transport assessment process.

Further detail is provided within the submitted Transport Assessment, which reviews anticipated trip generation, access arrangements and the relationship with existing school peak times.

5.5 Flood Risk

The Environment Agency Flood Map for Planning confirms that the school site lies within Flood Zone 1, indicating a low probability of fluvial or tidal flooding. Surface water flood mapping has also been reviewed as part of the assessment process.

Further detail is provided within the submitted Drainage Strategy.

5.6 Ground Conditions

Ground conditions and potential land contamination have been assessed through a desk study and preliminary risk assessment.

Refer to the submitted Desk Study and Preliminary Risk Assessment Report.

5.7 Noise and Acoustics

Noise considerations, including the assessment of proposed plant and background noise conditions, have been reviewed as part of the design process.

Refer to the submitted Noise Impact Assessment prepared by Anderson Acoustics.

5.8 Construction Management

Construction management will be carefully planned to ensure health and safety and to minimise disruption to the operational school and surrounding residential area. Key considerations include site set-up, materials storage, vehicle movements and maintaining effective segregation from pupils and staff.

The modular construction methodology will inform delivery routes, craneage requirements and timing constraints. A detailed, contractor-specific Construction Management Plan will be prepared following procurement, building on the overarching principles set out within this Design and Access Statement.

6. Planning Context and Next Steps

6.1 Design development and co-ordination

The design proposals have been developed to planning stage to establish the siting, scale, layout and access arrangements for the SEND Resource Base. Further detailed design development will be undertaken following the appointment of the modular contractor, who will be responsible for progressing the technical design in coordination with statutory and specialist requirements.

This Design and Access Statement therefore focuses on the planning principles of the scheme rather than detailed technical coordination.

6.2 Planning Considerations

Planning policy compliance, transport impacts, residential amenity considerations, ecology, trees, drainage and other material planning matters are addressed in detail within the submitted Planning Statement and supporting technical reports.

6.3 Relevant Planning History

In 2012, planning permission was granted for a single-storey modular Art and Drama facility under application reference F/2012/1956. The approved building replaced an existing modular classroom and was modest in scale, with limited impact on surrounding uses due to its single-storey form and the presence of existing boundary screening.

The development resulted in a small loss of soft play space, which was considered acceptable given the strong policy support for investment in state-funded school infrastructure. The permission included conditions relating to materials, tree protection, drainage and construction management.

This consent establishes a precedent for small-scale modular development within the school grounds. While the proposed ASD unit differs in that it accommodates an increase in pupil numbers, it follows a similar approach in terms of scale, form and siting within the campus.

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