

DESIGN ACCESS & HERITAGE STATEMENT TO SUPPORT PLANNING APPLICATION

For

**Proposed Extension to Provide Integrated Specialist SEND Provision & Associated
Facilities**

At

**Edgar Wood Academy,
Heywood Old Road,
Heywood,
OL10 2QN.**



On behalf of

**Altus Education Partnership
Suite F4, No. 2 The Esplanade
Rochdale
OL16 1AE**

1.0 Introduction

This Design Access & Heritage Statement has been prepared to accompany a planning application for a proposed extension to provide an integrated specialised SEND provision (operated by Redwood School) along with associated facilities to provide dedicated inclusion provision and new student entrance for the wider Edgar Wood Academy school.

Reference should be made to drawings/supporting documents that accompany the Planning Application.

2.0 The Site

Edgar Wood Academy is a recently constructed 11–16 secondary school serving the Middleton and Heywood areas, which opened in September 2022 and established to provide 900 student places. The school forms part of the Altus Education Partnership multi-academy trust.

The site is located to the Southeast side of Heywood Old Road (A6045), just south of the junction with Whittle Lane, bounded by Bowlee Park to the South and playing fields to the West.

This application will provide an extension to the west side of the existing sport building, with the proposed extension to be constructed to an area of existing hardstanding/plaza fronting the site. In addition, a small area of the adjacent school field will be utilised to provide additional onsite parking provision and the relocation of an existing cycle shelter.

The existing vehicular and pedestrian access and egress routes to the site will remain unchanged.

3.0 Proposal

Redwood School currently operates a specialist SEND provision located/integrated at Edgar Wood Academy, operating from two classrooms within the main school building. This facility is a separate dedicated base for the Redwood School, but also enables use of shared space/facilities of the wider school, with access to dining provisions, specialist teaching facilities (cookery rooms) and sport facilities etc.

This arrangement has been possible due to the fact that the school is newly established and is yet to reach full capacity/occupancy levels, which is anticipated to be reached from September 2026, at which time the Redwood SEND school facility can no longer be accommodated within the current school accommodation.

This application is proposing an extension to the existing school buildings to accommodate the Redwood School and enable the facility to remain at the Edgar Wood site with a new purpose built SEND provision which will maintain the integration of Redwood School within Edgar Wood Academy and enable continued access to the shared facilities of the wider school site.

The extension will also provide associated facilities to form an inclusion provision for Edgar Wood alongside the Redwood School SEND to support the wider specialist needs of the student cohort.

Alongside the new extension, the proposal is for the new Redwood School SEND provision and Edgar Wood inclusion provision to have direct access to external secure space to provide an inclusive and accessible environment to accommodate different sensory needs, social development and development of physical/motor skills.

The proposal will also form a new separate dedicated secure student entrance for the main student intake of Edgar Wood Academy, to relieve the pressure around the main school entrance which during peak times at the start and end of the school day becomes congested and presents safeguarding/security issues with school visitors, parents, deliveries and pupils all mixing in the confined space of the main entrance which become difficult to manage safely. This issue will only exacerbate as the school reaches maximum occupancy numbers.

4.0 Design

Use

The new extension will provide approx. 495sq.m of additional floor space, comprising additional classrooms, breakout spaces/social areas, sensory room, and associated facilities/ancillary accommodation including kitchen, toilets, entrance reception/office etc. for the relocated Redwood School SEND provision. This will also provide a new student entrance and reception along with dedicated inclusion provision comprising two additional classrooms, breakout space and staff office/meeting room to serve the wider Edgar Wood Academy provision.

Scale

The proposed building will have a footprint approx. 31.5m in length x 15.5m in width to give an external floor area of 495sq.m. External canopies are to be formed at the Redwood School entrance and at the new Edgar Wood Academy student entrance, along with access areas to outdoor space.

The overall height of the building comprises an approx. eaves height of 4.0m with a flat roof design to match that of the existing buildings across the site.

Layout & Access

The proposed extension will be constructed on the existing hardstanding forecourt/plaza areas alongside the sport hall.

Existing vehicular/pedestrian access routes to and from the site will remain largely unchanged, with two new pedestrian entrances to the building formed. The Redwood School provision will have a new dedicated entrance to enable direct access for Redwood students, parent/visitors etc. whilst also maintaining an internal link/access the existing school enabling wider integration.

A separate dedicated secure student entrance/reception is proposed to enable the high volume/numbers of Edgar Wood students arriving and exiting the school during peak periods to do so, safely away from the existing main entrance which will be retained for parents, visitors, deliveries etc.), which will improve site security and safeguarding.

Remodelling of the external site areas, utilising a small section of the school field will provide a modest increase in car parking area to provide an additional 12 parking spaces to accommodate the extended provision.

Existing cycle shelters will also be relocated. The school are also in the process of implementing an outdoor repair/maintenance space for pedal cycles and promoting/encouraging cycle use for students.

Appearance

The proposal reflects the design details of the recently constructed school buildings in both design and materials.

Roof coverings will comprise a built up bitumen felt system concealed behind a parapet upstand detail.

Externally the extension will be clad with light grey external rainscreen cladding panels (Trespa Meteon – Belgian Bluestone – NA16 Matt), and aluminium fascia, gutter and rainwater pipe detailing to be anthracite grey (RAL 7016), all principally to match the existing school.

All windows and external doors are proposed to be aluminium or uPVC – colour anthracite grey (RAL 7016).

5.0 HERITAGE CONTEXT & SIGNIFICANCE

The site of Edgar Wood Academy is located 380m to the south of Birch Village Conservation Area. The north-western extremity of the Edgar Wood Site fronts the southern side of Heywood Old Road. Whilst this view of the site is possible on approach to the Conservation Area there are no views of the site from along Heywood Old Road or from the public realms located within the Conservation Area itself.

The architectural and historic significance of the Conservation Area is principally demonstrated through the aesthetic qualities of residential and industrial buildings located immediately adjacent to the street frontage of Heywood Old Road. The main road clearly acts as an anchor for built development interspersed with areas of green space. The setting of the Conservation Area is controlled by views (predominantly internal views) made possible by the winding nature of the road and the adjacent rising topography. Outward views are limited but are noted to the north of the Conservation Area.

The proposed siting of the existing school building, sports hall and proposed new extension are to the south of the site at a considerable distance from Heywood Old Road with grass playing fields to the north. This would retain the open space adjacent to the Conservation Area and ensure that the road retains its rural character.

Having considered the location of the site and proposed extension in respect to the Conservation Area and the contribution that setting makes towards an understanding and appreciation of this, it is anticipated that there would be little or no harm as a consequence of the proposals.

6.0 CONCLUSION

This statement has been prepared to accompany a Planning Submission for an extension alongside the existing school sport building to provide an integrated SEND provision (operated by Redwood School) along with an inclusion provision and secure student entrance for the wider Edgar Wood Academy.

The proposed building has been designed and will be constructed in materials to replicate those of the existing buildings, providing continuity to the visual scene thereby having minimal impact to the surrounding area. Modest addition of external parking and relocating/re-siting of cycle parking are incorporated within the scheme in accordance with requirements.

An assessment of the proposals on the context of the Birch Village Conservation Area has been undertaken and is considered to have minimal or no harm to the character of the conservation area and is in keeping with existing built development of the school site.

Although every effort has been made to provide a full account of the proposed development within this statement, the applicant would be happy to discuss the proposal with the planning authority and provide any additional information as required to assist with the consideration of the application.