The School

North ridge High School is a 110place, day-specialist support school for pupils with learning difficulties. The school admits pupils from the North District of Manchester covering the age range of 12 to 19 years. The school opened in September 2006. We meet the needs of pupils with a range of learning difficulties including moderate, severe and complex learning difficulties.

In 2007 the school moved to Higher Blackley Education Village into a brand new building shared with Our Lady's Roman Catholic High School. The new school was purpose built but after 5 years of operation, a few health and safety issues have become apparent.





Need for Improvement

This planning application is being made to address Health & Safety concerns and issues recently encountered at North Ridge. We are co located at Higher Blackley Education Village with Our Lady's RC High, a mainstream catholic high school. Although each school work predominantly within their individual areas of school, there are some 'shared' areas which have an impact upon pupil movement and safety.

Currently pupils, parents and visitors access school through the shared reception area moving into a large atrium. The volume of traffic generated by the mainstream high school has a significant impact upon safety in terms of pupil movement. North Ridge pupils, particularly those with mobility issues, find the area extremely daunting and difficult to negotiate during busy periods, an example of such arose quite recently with a male mainstream pupil being pushed by peers, resulting in him landing on one of our female wheelchair users; this caused great distress for the young lady concerned. Parents and visitors to North Ridge have continually raised their concerns regarding school access, perception and personal safety. North Ridge was recently audited by Henryk Adaszkiewicz, Senior Health & Safety Officer, Manchester City Council Internal Audit & Risk Management Team. Henryk raised his concerns regarding pupil safety in the main atrium. Henryk agreed with our proposal to develop a

separate entrance into school for North Ridge, on the basis of risk reduction and maintenance of independence and dignity for our young people.

Parking

The requirement for additional disabled parking bays is a direct response to a vehicular incident which occurred in the main school car park during the autumn term. North Ridge pupils are provided with transport at the beginning and end of the day, therefore the volume of traffic during these periods is significant, it is also worth mentioning that this coincides with Our Lady's end of day pupil movement. The vehicular incident which occurred involved pupil transport and a parent car, the lack of parking bays and restricted turning space being the main contributing factor. During the same week an Our Lady's pupil collided with a transport vehicle, knocking him from his bicycle and resulting in him being retained in hospital overnight for observation. Both incidents were reported directly to Henryk Adaszkiewicz, following investigation timed parking restrictions were put in place and parent parking permits issued to parents of students attending North Ridge who have been identified as having significant need. Transport vehicles have been issued with individual parking bays and parents issued with parking protocols, however there is currently insufficient space to accommodate all vehicles and the current layout leaves little turning space for reversing tail lift buses into the bays. The development of additional disabled parking bays will allow each bus to have an allocated bay and will give more flexibility when negotiating transport into the drop off/collection area. The whole development will reduce traffic congestion, keeping the road clear thus improving student visibility and subsequently safety for all users.



Proposals

The proposal contains two elements which address the health and safety issues highlighted earlier.

The first is to provide 3 additional disabled specification parking spaces adjacent to the existing spaces. The will replace a small area of soft landscaping and will be finished to match the existing spaces.

The second is to provide a new DDA compliant entrance lobby to the school and a separate access door for staff and visitors. This also involves the installation of 2 new windows to benefit the minor internal modifications to the room layouts required by the new entrance. The doors and windows will be glazed aluminium to match the existing ones; the external walls of the entrance lobby will be finished in white render to match the existing building. The roof will be a flat roof with a single ply membrane hidden behind a parapet. The footpath around the entrance will be lifted to form a gentle incline and flush threshold and will be finished in tarmac to match the existing paths.



Before

After

