



New Paston College. From left to right: View of College building from Station road / Winter Afternoon; Computer Visual of the Atrium Space and Social Area; Cross Section east-west through Learning Resource Centre, Atrium and General Teaching. All images credited to LSI Architects LLP. Copyright Designs and Patents Act 1988: Reproduction is permitted providing authorship is credited.

News Release

24 September 2008

For immediate release

LSI Architects Announces Planning Submission for New Paston Sixth Form College

A full planning application has been submitted to North Norfolk District Council by Paston College to build new Sixth Form College facilities on the Station Road site in North Walsham, Norfolk. The new £20m College development will replace its existing, split-site facilities and provide a single site, purpose-built, high-quality learning environment for 16 - 19 year old students in North Norfolk. If planning permission is granted, construction is planned to commence in 2010 and the new college is expected to open in September 2011.

The College currently operates from older accommodation across two sites in North Walsham, utilising former school buildings which are no longer fit-for-purpose for providing a modern 16-19 curriculum. While the majority of Paston students study for A levels, there is a substantial vocational provision and as the College prepares for the introduction of the new Diplomas, better facilities are required. The recent Ofsted inspection of the College graded a number of areas as “outstanding” including English, languages, visual and performing arts and media while recognising that existing College buildings

placed “constraints on achieving an outstanding environment for teaching and learning.”

The Station Road site in North Walsham, owned by the Paston Foundation and which is to be redeveloped for the new College facilities, is 3.02 hectares (7.5 acres) in size. The new building has been designed to provide teaching accommodation over two and three storeys with the main College entrance and classroom wing along Station Road and staff and administration spaces to the south east corner. A three storey internal atrium ‘street’ of further learning spaces, containing a two storey Learning Resource Centre (library and study area), forms the central ‘heart’ of the college and leads from the entrance to the Theatre and Sports Hall.

The proposed new building will have a gross internal footprint of approximately 7,300 square metres. This single location new-build education campus is designed to provide a secure and purpose-designed first-class learning environment, including social and recreational areas with sports and catering facilities to the latest Learning & Skills Council space standards. The new facilities will include:

- General teaching classrooms
- Integrated I.T. network to latest educational standards
- Dedicated computer suites
- Modern Learning Resource Centre with zoned activity areas
- Performing arts and music specialist teaching facilities including a studio theatre and recording studio
- Art workshops with an enhanced daylight design
- Digital photography and media suites
- New laboratories within a dedicated science floor
- Sports hall and changing rooms with links to a new full-size sports pitch for football / rugby with pitch drainage and a new floodlit all-weather Multi Use Games Area
- Social / dining area with integrated Student Services and café with direct links to external social and performance spaces
- Full accessibility to staff and students with limited mobility.

The new facilities have been designed with a contemporary architectural style to represent a new chapter of educational provision in North Norfolk. The materials selected for the project are durable, of high quality and require low maintenance. They introduce scale and texture to the building, reinforcing the overall strategic building design concept and modern appearance of this new 21st century learning environment.

The interior design will create a high quality and stimulating learning space, integrating the latest education and workplace standards of space planning, material finishes, furniture and equipment.

The new facilities have also been developed with a holistic sustainable design approach. It provides the new College with an integrated design that enhances the site environment, reduces energy consumption, reduces maintenance costs, encourages sustainable travel, provides the highest quality internal environment to enhance learning and assists the future economic viability of the Paston College.

Sustainable design features of the new facility include:

- compact plan and building orientation;
- optimisation of levels of natural daylight;
- high thermal massing and high levels of insulation;
- maximised use of natural ventilation and cross ventilation;
- ground source heat pumps to serve underfloor heating; and
- solar roof panels for hot water generation.

The landscaping will enhance the natural ecology and increase biodiversity of the site and a variety of water management strategies such as Sustainable Drainage Systems (SuDS) and a wildlife pond as a learning resource, will be implemented.

The new College has been designed to achieve a 'Very Good' rating for the Building Research Establishment Environment Assessment (BREEAM) national standard for Further Education Colleges.

Lead Architect John Thornberry, Associate Member of LSI Architects, commented: “A Redevelopment Feasibility Study was initially carried out to assess options for providing new facilities for updating and enlarging the existing Paston College. Disposal and reuse options were appraised for two existing historic sites. Strategies were developed with the College, Local Authority, LSC, Sport England and Town Regeneration Network. The study concluded that a new build college was the best option for redevelopment providing a new ‘learning village’ containing purpose built Sixth Form College facilities.”

The Principal of Paston College, Peter Mayne, said: “We are delighted to submit the plans for a new College. Paston has a long and proud history in North Walsham; the Paston School was founded in 1606 by Sir William Paston and the Paston Foundation has supported education in the town and the surrounding area for over 400 years. The Paston Foundation has a strong community focus, providing land both for the Victory Swim and Fitness Centre as well as the proposed College development.

“Extensive consultation has taken place with the public and community, giving everyone an insight into the College’s plans and an opportunity to comment on the draft proposals that form the basis of the planning application. As a result of comments from the public and other consultees gained in the public consultation exhibition in June 2008, the design proposals have been revised to set the new college building a further 10 metres back into the site from the frontage to Station Road. Following consultation with Sport England the sports facilities have been increased to provide a larger 4-court sports hall and increased changing rooms to facilitate greater use of the excellent facilities.

Mr Mayne continued: “The redevelopment of Paston College will give the opportunity for the College to continue providing a leading sixth form college facility in North Walsham serving the town and North Norfolk. The proposals will deliver a site and building to the latest standards of accessible design with potential for future community use of the College facilities. The new College will provide excellent educational facilities and resources to reflect current and future curriculum developments and it will allow for the expected student

growth in North Norfolk by being able to accommodate up to 1,000 16 -19 year old students.”

A funding application has recently been submitted to the Government's Learning and Skills Council.

Project Team

Client:	Paston College
Architect and Lead Designer:	LSI Architects
Project Managers and Quantity Surveyor:	Davis Langdon
Structural, Civils and Transportation Engineer:	Scott Wilson
Environmental Services, Acoustics and Fire Engineer:	White Young Green
Soft Landscape:	The Landscape Partnership
CDM Co-ordinator:	DMA
Planning Consultant:	Bidwells

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Notes to the Editor

1. For high resolution images, further project information, quotations or an interview, please contact Carri Crook, Press Consultant, Carisma Communications on 01842 815910 or email carri@carismacommunications.co.uk
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