



St Augustine's Priory Building Development Programme Q & A

Why is St Augustine's Priory embarking on a Building Development Programme?

- In line with its vision for excellence in learning and teaching, St Augustine's Priory has engaged architects to audit our space in the light of current and projected curriculum needs. We have also assessed the fitness of the school's current buildings to adapt to and meet the evolving needs of the school community.
- In the light of those findings, we have assessed the opportunities and constraints of our existing buildings (a number of which have developed organically rather than strategically) as well as those of our unique grounds and of our Arts and Crafts heritage.
- The last building project in the school, the Juniors' Clock House and Nursery block, was completed in 2011. Prior to this, the school invested in its science provision.
- The outdoor sports provision was last updated by means of the renovation of the full size astro turf pitch in 2014.

The school has now identified a number of areas which require investment in a balanced programme of conservation, adaptation, renovation and development.

1. The immediate need for a whole school assembly/gathering space and for the short to medium term enhancement of its indoor sporting and performance facilities.
2. The requirement to fully update the entrance to the school and to its 13 acres of grounds, together with improving the flow and safety of access from Hillcrest Road, given increasing pedestrian and vehicular traffic.
3. The requirement for an indoor Sports facility.
4. The requirement for a Performing Arts Centre.
5. The requirement for additional curriculum teaching space.
6. An enhanced rolling maintenance programme (including the Library).

How is the school delivering this programme?

- The Governors have approved a Ten Year Building Development Master Plan developed, in line with our Mission and Values, by the Headteacher and Senior Leadership Team after consultation with staff and pupils and on the advice of experts. The plan works in sympathy with our existing buildings and heritage, prioritising the requirements listed above over three phases. It is recognized that successful Master Plans should be flexible and able to adapt to changing educational needs – as such, the exact nature of each of these phases may continue to evolve over time. They are all subject to planning permission.
- The Trustees of the school are in support of the plan and are assisting with funding.
- BHM Architects, under the direction of John Cahill, Managing Director, have been commissioned to deliver the overall vision for the Development Plan.



What considerations did the school take into account when deciding on prioritising the elements of the programme?

- The prioritisation of the phasing has been in part driven by the needs of the school and in part by the constraints of building on Metropolitan Open Land (MOL) and a Site of Importance for Nature Conservation (SINC). The first phase is therefore adaptations to the current building to achieve a whole school assembly space quickly and to enhance the school's entrance. The second phase is a new build of a Sports Hall which can be built partially on the current building footprint, and the final phase is a new build of a Performing Arts Centre.
- In order to seek planning permissions to build, the school has had to demonstrate Very Special Circumstances (VSC) for the Master Plan in its entirety to the Ealing Planning Authorities and then to the Greater London Authority. The final decision is made by Planning Committee.

Will school fees be raised to finance this programme or will parents be asked to contribute?

No.

- The project will not be funded by rises in school fees, nor will parents be under pressure to contribute. The school is funding the programme through support from the Trust, loans and operational surplus.

Has the school considered the impact on the environment?

- This is an important issue which the school takes very seriously. We have worked closely with ecology consultants, tree specialists and transport consultants to ensure this project reflects sustainability goals and has the minimal environmental impact possible, whilst at the same time answering the needs of the pupils and staff. Additional consultants (such as Energy, Sustainability, Hydrology etc) will be appointed shortly to assist BHM with sustainable design.
- We have also worked within the strict guidelines imposed by Ealing Council with respect to the building on Metropolitan Open Land, demonstrating Very Special Circumstances (VSC).

How is the programme phased?

Phase 1: Enhanced Hall and School Entrance/Reception

- In order to meet the pressing and immediate need for a fit-for-purpose whole school assembly space, appropriate for the gathering of the community as a whole, for the smooth running of professional events and to meet the short term needs of the burgeoning Sports and Drama departments, significant alterations to enhance, modernise and expand the existing Hall will take place.
- At a stroke this initiative will provide an impressive whole school space with a discrete external entrance/ foyer, which can be acoustically partitioned to run more than one event/class simultaneously, a dance studio space, a stage area as well as



modern changing rooms, storage facilities etc. In many ways the hall's heritage as a key part of St Augustine's life and recreation will be restored.

- In order to meet the pressing and immediate need to reconfigure and improve the safety aspects of the school entrance for both girls, visitors and vehicles, as well as provide a more suitable, enlarged reception area, and showcase our beautiful grounds, the fencing (which in any event requires urgent works) will be replaced by railings allowing greater visibility of the school buildings. As a consequence of the reconfiguration of the entrance and car park, we also propose to relocate the reception area to the rear of the school to allow better internal space planning.

Phase 2: Sports Hall

- The second phase is the building of the Sports Hall. This facility will bring to St Augustine's a state-of-the-art sports provision which, together with our existing on-site outdoor and astro-turf facilities, will provide one of the top sports facilities packages in London.
- The restrictions imposed on us with respect to, as far as possible, not increasing the footprint of the buildings and being faithful to the MOL requirements, means that the optimum position of the Sports Hall is on the site of the current Academy. This building is in any event ready for significant review given its condition and it may now be demolished. This location also means that the Sports Hall can be accessed from the main building, is close to the Hall and to the netball courts.
- Additional classrooms are factored into the new Sports Hall by means of compensation for the teaching space previously sited in the Academy.
- The Sports Hall will consist of: Full size indoor Sports Hall suitable for all indoor sports, a gallery, dance studio, multi-gym, six classrooms, changing rooms for Home and Away teams as well as staff offices.

Phase 3: Performing Arts Centre

- The third phase is the building of a Performing Arts Centre. This will be located on the area to the west of the Chapel. The building is sited close to the front gates to both comply with the MOL requirements to maintain a vista on the site and to allow easy access from the school entrance for performances and lettings.
- The facility will allow us to stage professional productions on site, as well as significantly enhance the learning and teaching environments for all Performing Arts, reflecting the calibre of students and staff. It will also provide an outstanding venue for events.

The PAC will consist of: Foyer and servery, Music office and Drama office, classrooms, Drama workshop, changing rooms, stage and seating, practice rooms and drum room.



Has the school considered the impact on residents?

- Our neighbours form part of our community and, indeed, many of them are parents. We are consulting with them on our plans.
- We are committed to a considerate building process.

What is the community benefit of these projects?

- St Augustine's Priory already operates a lettings programme. Our buildings and astro turf pitch are let out year round to schools, local teams and community groups. We also invite state schools in to the school to use our grounds and facilities for retreats or taster days.
- The building programme will significantly enhance the scope and quality of the buildings we will be able to further offer for local community use.

When will the works commence?

- We are currently making good progress with Ealing Council planners with respect to planning permission for the entire Ten Year Masterplan. We intend to complete Phase 1 works over the academic year 2016-2017, subject to planning approvals. Timings for Phase 2 and 3 will be announced subject to further discussions on funding and planning.