

Project Title Heron Hall Academy, Enfield
Client Willmott Dixon / Cuckoo Hall Academies Trust (CHAT)
Completion September 2016
Contract Value £17m

Heron Hall Academy included the refurbishment and remodelling of unoccupied, partly derelict 1930's Grade II listed technical college building for new use as a secondary school.

Through careful and considered analysis of the existing buildings, ArchitecturePLB developed a design proposal that made the previously unaffordable project viable. Our alternative solution retained and restored the majority of the original listed building but identified poor quality buildings, including large single-storey engineering workshops not ideally suited for school use, for replacement with a new three-storey teaching wing. This proposal, while inherently more costly, released more land for residential development and was thus self-funding, allowing new, purpose-built accommodation for dining and specialist teaching.

The new wing is sensitively designed to reflect and respond to the original Scandinavian-influenced art-deco buildings. Materials including brick and ceramic tile were chosen to complement the original fabric, while ribbon windows were used to reflect the proportions and horizontal emphasis of the adjacent listed building.

A key element of our proposals was the removal of poor quality infill extensions, allowing the re-creation of the original southern courtyard and the reinstatement of the building's design 'parti' and plan arrangement. The new courtyard creates additional external play space and brings daylight and sunshine back into the heart of the building along with views to the outside and improved orientation.

The conversion has rescued a high quality listed building from dereliction and decay, providing a valuable new community facility which has a viable long term future.



"It was easy working with ArchitecturePLB, they took on the ideas we had as a school and made them fit with the Art Deco design of the existing building. This was a really important design element for us all. We now have a fantastic contrast between existing and new building that is beautifully designed. Visitors, parents, students and staff are so impressed with the final outcome. It allows us to offer a fantastic education to students in Enfield for years to come."

Sam Orsborne, Deputy Headteacher

