

Walthamstow School for Girls,  
Waltham Forest  
Completion Date 2009  
Contract Value £17m  
Client Bouygues UK

Walthamstow School for Girls is the third project to be completed by the Bouygues Partnership for Education and Community' as part of Waltham Forest 'Building Schools for the Future'. The school is located in the Walthamstow Village Conservation Area, sitting amongst a rich cross-section of buildings covering a period of nearly 900 years. The original Grade II Listed Edwardian buildings and more recent additions sit within a mature landscape.

The ad hoc nature of various extensions over the decades had resulted in an inefficient campus that lacked cohesion and clarity, with much of the campus inaccessible for disabled staff or students.

A considered study revealed all but one building to be at the end of their lifespan, with many of the buildings in poor condition or inadequate to meet the requirements of 21st century learning. It was concluded that the best solution would be to remove the rest to make way for new buildings.

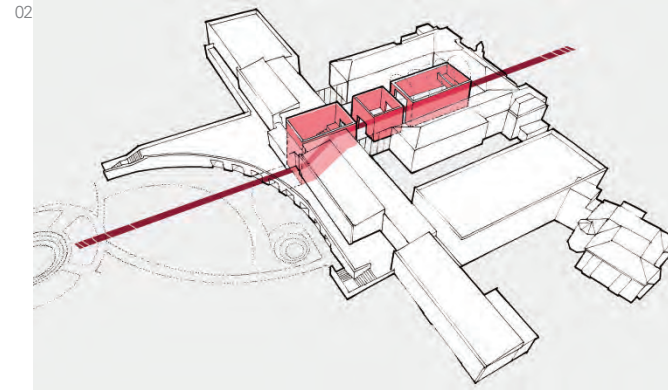
The Listed buildings have been sensitively refurbished and a significant new extension added to provide modern, specialist teaching accommodation.

In designing the new build, care was taken to respect the form and massing of the original Listed buildings and minimise impact on the gardens. The design achieved BREEAM 'Very Good' and won the 2011 BCSE Best of British Schools 'Excellence in Design for Teaching & Learning: Refurbishment' Award.

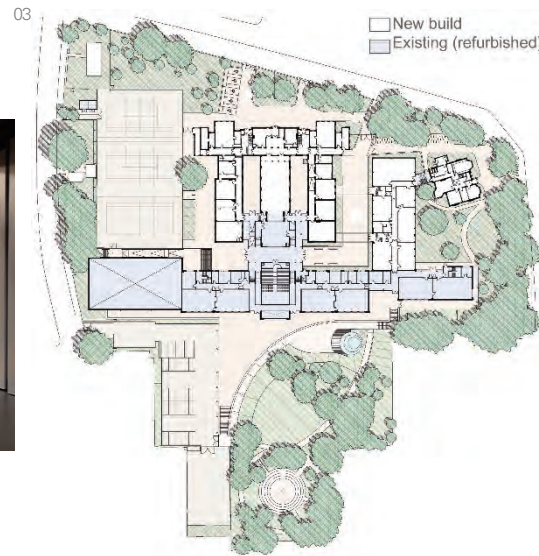
An early, key design decision was to locate the new building to the south of the site and at the rear of the existing buildings, preserving the setting of the principal Edwardian façade. By taking advantage of a slight fall across the site, extensive new facilities have been accommodated in what appears from the north to be a two-storey structure.

The design sets the three storey new building partially into the ground making it more appropriate in scale next to the original two storey buildings. Facilities such as the sports and assembly halls are set at lower ground level to minimise the bulk of the larger volumes.

The design of the new building responds to the strong formal composition of the main Edwardian building.



01 Original Edwardian facade  
02 Axo showing central axis  
03 New build dining space



Beyond the original timber-panelled assembly hall, a series of new inter-linked spaces extend the strong central axis of the Listed building through to a new drama room, double height student foyer, activity studio and dining, and out to the landscape beyond.

The student foyer is a multi-level glazed space that connects old and new. Folding screens allow the drama and assembly spaces to link together, creating an exciting sequence of flexible learning spaces at the heart of the building.

- 01 Glazed student foyer
- 02 Interior of student foyer
- 03 Site plan
- 04 Assembly hall / drama studio
- 05 Longitudinal section