



Design and Access Statement

UXBRIDGE COLLEGE

Park Road, Uxbridge,
UB8 1NQ

Contents

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1. *Introduction*
2. *Justification of need*
3. *Current Uxbridge Construction Provision*
4. *Growth opportunity with the Construction Teaching Centre*
5. *Evidence of demand*
6. *Site in Context*
 - 6.1 *Site Location*
 - 6.2 *Site Photographs*
7. *Design Principles and Context*
 - 7.1 *Use*
 - 7.2 *Amount*
 - 7.3 *Layout*
 - 7.4 *Scale*
 - 7.5 *Landscaping*
 - 7.6 *Appearance*
 - 7.7 *Access*
 - 7.7.1 *Vehicle and Transport Links*
 - 7.7.2 *Access*
8. *Temporary Nature and Future Strategy*
9. *Accessibility*
10. *Conclusion*

1 - Introduction

The Portakabin logo consists of the word "Portakabin" in a white, sans-serif font, positioned on a solid red rectangular background.

This Design and Access Statement has been prepared in support of a full planning application for the demolition of an existing single-storey building and its replacement with a modern, modular three-storey Portakabin building (Construction Teaching Centre) at the Uxbridge Campus of HRUC.

HRUC, (formerly known as Uxbridge College) now operates under a combined institutional identity. The application relates specifically to the Uxbridge campus, which forms a key part of the College's educational provision within the Borough of Hillingdon.

The proposed development will deliver a modern Construction Teaching Centre designed to respond to a clearly identified and growing demand for construction-related education and training. This statement outlines the site context, design rationale, access arrangements, and the justification for the proposed development in accordance with relevant planning policy.

Uxbridge College currently delivers Construction provision to approximately 300 students across Plumbing and Electrical Installation programmes.

Demand for construction skills across West London continues to grow, driven by:

- strong employer demand for skilled trades
- major regional housing and infrastructure development
- priorities identified in the West London Local Skills Improvement Plan (LSIP)

However, the College's existing workshop facilities at Uxbridge are operating at maximum capacity, which significantly limits the College's ability to expand provision, particularly at Level 3, where labour market demand and progression opportunities are strongest.

To address this constraint, HRUC is exploring the development of a Construction Teaching Centre (CTC) through a modular building solution. The proposed building is required for a temporary period of 5 years which aligns with the proposed modular delivery model and allows the College to respond flexibly to demand.

This document should be read in conjunction with the accompanying drawings.

2– Justification of Need

The proposed Construction Teaching Centre is required to address a significant shortage of specialist teaching and workshop space at Uxbridge College. Existing construction facilities are currently operating at full capacity, with no scope for expansion within the current estate. This constraint is occurring at a time of clear and growing demand from both young people aged 16–18 and adults seeking to enter or upskill within the construction sector.

At a local level within Hillingdon, continued population growth has resulted in an increasing number of students progressing into post-16 education, alongside a rising cohort of adults seeking retraining and skills development. The College has experienced sustained increased demand for courses in plumbing, electrical installation and building services, which cannot currently be accommodated due to spatial limitations. The proposed development will directly address this deficit by providing additional capacity for full-time study, adult learning, and apprenticeship provision, thereby enabling more local residents to access education and employment opportunities.

At a wider West London scale, construction is identified as a priority sector within the Local Skills Improvement Plan, with well-documented shortages in skilled trades. Employers require a reliable pipeline of trained individuals across multiple levels. The proposed facility will support the expansion of provision across full-time courses in plumbing and electrical installation from Levels 1 to 3, apprenticeship delivery in key construction trades, adult training and retraining programmes, and higher education provision at Levels 4 and 5, including construction management, civil engineering and building services. This breadth of provision ensures that the facility supports learners at entry level as well as those progressing to higher technical qualifications.

At a London-wide and national level, there is a strong policy emphasis on increasing housing supply, delivering major infrastructure projects and achieving net zero carbon targets. These priorities are dependent upon the expansion of the construction workforce, particularly in skilled trades and low-carbon technologies. The proposed Construction Teaching Centre directly supports these objectives by increasing the College's capacity to train individuals in areas of national importance.

Overall, the proposed building will provide approximately 1,287 sqm. of high-quality teaching and workshop space, enabling the College to accommodate 90 additional students. The flexible design allows for a mix of full-time, part-time and employer-led training, ensuring efficient use of the facility and long-term value.

3– Current Uxbridge Construction Provision

Uxbridge College currently delivers a range of construction-related programmes focused on plumbing and electrical installation. These courses are offered across multiple qualification levels, enabling students to progress from introductory training through to more advanced study within these disciplines.

Total:

•16 teaching groups

Approximately 300 construction students

Despite strong demand, the College is unable to expand further due to limited workshop and teaching space.

Current Programme Structure

Construction Programme	Level	Current Groups	Students
Plumbing	Level 1	2	30
Plumbing	Level 2	5	89
Plumbing	Level 3 /	1	9
Electrical Installation	Level 1	2	33
Electrical Installation	Level 2	5	103
Electrical Installation	Level 3	1	8

4– Growth opportunity with the construction Teaching Centre

The proposed Construction Teaching Centre will provide additional workshop capacity to support expansion across all levels of construction training. The facility will enable the College to introduce six additional teaching groups, including expanded Level 3 provision .

Total growth

•+6 groups

+90 students

This expansion would increase total construction enrolment from 300 to approximately 390 students.

Proposed Programme Structure

Construction Programme	Level	Current Groups	Proposed Groups	Additional Groups	Additional Students
Plumbing	Level 1	2	3	1	15
Plumbing	Level 2	5	6	1	15
Plumbing	Level 3	1	2	1	15
Electrical Installation	Level 1	2	3	1	15
Electrical Installation	Level 2	5	6	1	15
Electrical Installation	Level 3	0	1	1	15

5– Evidence of Demand

HRUC’s growth projections are evidence-led and closely aligned with identified regional labour market demand. Population projections published by the Office for National Statistics indicate sustained growth in the 16–18 age cohort across West London through to 2031.

In parallel, local authority forecasts highlight increasing demand for post-16 education provision across the boroughs of Hillingdon, Harrow, Ealing and Hounslow. This continuing demographic expansion is expected to place additional pressure on further education capacity and will drive a sustained increase in demand for high-quality technical and vocational education, particularly within key sectors such as construction.

The West London Local Skills Improvement Plan identifies construction trades as priority areas experiencing significant skills shortages. Employers across the sector consistently report difficulties in recruiting appropriately qualified tradespeople, particularly at technician and intermediate levels.

The key areas of demand and identified skills gaps are summarised below:

Occupation	Demand Level	Skills Gap
Electricians	High	Shortage of Level 3 technicians
Plumbers	High	Strong demand for qualified installers
Construction technicians	Growing	Need for progression pathways

West London is currently experiencing a significant level of construction and infrastructure activity, driven by a range of major projects and long-term investment programmes. Key drivers of this growth include the expansion of Heathrow Airport and its associated infrastructure, the redevelopment of Hillingdon Hospital, and the delivery of substantial housing developments across the region.

In addition, national initiatives such as retrofit and decarbonisation programmes, alongside continued investment in transport networks and urban regeneration, are further contributing to construction demand. Collectively, these factors are expected to generate sustained and increasing demand for skilled construction trades over the coming decade.

6- Site in context

The application site is located to the south within the established campus and is currently occupied by a single-storey building that is no longer fit for purpose. The building is functionally outdated and fails to meet modern teaching and workshop standards, particularly for specialist construction disciplines. It also lacks the capacity and infrastructure required to support future demand.

The Uxbridge College campus of HRUC comprises a site area of 4.54 hectares. To the west, the surrounding context comprises individual residential properties together with a three-storey block of flats accessed from Brearley Close. The Uxbridge College campus itself can be accessed either via Gatting Way or from Park Road, where the principal entrance to the campus is located.

The wider campus comprises a mix of buildings of varying age, scale, and architectural character. The site benefits from established internal access routes, servicing arrangements, and connectivity to the surrounding area.

6.1 – Location of site

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Proposed site area

6.2 – Development site photographs



Photographs show the existing single storey modular building that is currently on site.



7 - Design Principles and Context

7.1 – Use

The application seeks full planning permission for the demolition of the existing building and the construction of a new three-storey Portakabin facility. The proposed building will provide approximately 1,287sqm of floorspace and will accommodate a range of specialist teaching, workshop, and ancillary spaces required for construction-related education.

The modular nature of the building allows for flexibility in its internal configuration and future adaptability. The increased height of the building reflects the need to maximise the efficient use of previously developed land within the campus whilst remaining appropriate to the surrounding built form.

7.2 – Amount

The building will have a combined total floor area of 1287sqm, across 3 storeys. The building will include 5 traditional classrooms, 4 workshop teaching spaces, toilets, and a staff room.

Please see the enclosed Plan and Elevations drawing attached to the application.

7.3 – Layout

The proposed development site has been carefully considered and identified as the most appropriate given the existing structure to be demolished.

The building will be three-storey to provide the teaching space necessary but remains akin to the scale of the surrounding structures.

The proposal will have no adverse impact on the existing buildings and the surrounding neighbourhood.

7.4 – Scale

The proposed *Portakabin* has overall dimensions of 10.5m height, (this may differ due to the FFL) 9.8m width and 50.9m length.

Please see plan and elevations attached.

7.5 – Landscaping

The proposed Portakabin building will be located on the existing concrete slab with a small extension into the grassed area.

To enable installation, 3nr trees have been felled alongside limited crown lifting, please see enclosed Arboculturalist reports and plans.

The Portakabin logo consists of the word "Portakabin" in a white, sans-serif font, set against a solid red rectangular background.

7.6 – Appearance

The *Portakabin* buildings are manufactured and prefabricated at *Portakabin*, New Lane, Huntington, York.

External walls are of a durable one-piece Construction with high-performance, low-maintenance plastisol-coated galvanised steel cladding to offer protection against fire, extreme weather and accidental damage. The roof deck is of one-piece construction and is impact resistant.

To enhance the appearance of the Portakabin and blend into the campus, it's proposed a vinyl wrap applied which will mirror the adjacent building.

7.6 – Appearance continued

Internally, the polyester-coated galvanised steel ceiling is designed to prevent condensation problems and has a low-maintenance finish. The walls are of vinyl-faced plasterboard, providing a wipe-clean finish.

7.7 – Access

7.7.1 – Vehicle and Transport links

The site benefits from strong existing transport connectivity, including public transport links, pedestrian routes and cycle access. The proposed development does not materially alter existing access arrangements and will integrate with the established campus infrastructure. Servicing will also be accommodated within existing arrangements, ensuring safe and efficient operation

The campus is accessible by car from Gatting Way leading into existing car parking which is limited to staff and disabled/vulnerable students.

Pedestrian access remains unchanged by this proposal at Park Road which is serviced by bus stops and an underground station.

Cycle parking is also available across the campus with covered facilities.

Both staff and students will continue to be encouraged to travel via sustainable means.

7.7.2 – Access

This proposal will maintain the safe pedestrian access via existing pathways within the campus, additional pathway is proposed along the south elevation to the proposed ground floor access points.

The development has been designed to provide inclusive access for all users. Step-free access will be provided throughout, with appropriate vertical circulation including lift provision to all floors. Internal layouts will ensure that

teaching and support spaces are accessible and compliant with relevant standards.

8 - Temporary Nature and Future Strategy

The application seeks planning permission for a temporary period of five years, reflecting the modular nature of the proposed building and the need to respond flexibly to changing demand for construction education and training.

At the end of this period, the College will undertake a review of demand, utilisation and strategic priorities. Depending on the outcome of this assessment, the College may seek to retain the building for a longer duration or pursue the development of a permanent construction facility on site. This approach ensures that provision remains responsive to local need while supporting longer-term strategic object.

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9 - Accessibility

The proposed three-storey Portakabin building has been designed to provide an inclusive environment for all building users, in accordance with the requirements of Approved Document M and the Equality Act 2010.

Level access will be provided from the wider college campus via a new pedestrian pathway constructed in accordance with AD:M. The pathway will connect directly to the building's principal entrances located on the north and south elevations, ensuring convenient and accessible access for all users.

Internally, the each floor is arranged around a central circulation corridor extending the length of the building. The corridor has been designed with sufficient width to comfortably accommodate the anticipated occupancy levels and enable inclusive movement throughout the building, including for wheelchair users and those with mobility impairments. Access to the upper floors is provided by two enclosed staircases, strategically positioned to support efficient circulation and emergency evacuation. A passenger lift is incorporated at the southern point, providing access to all levels of the building and ensuring that teaching, learning and support facilities remain accessible to all users.

The building design will incorporate appropriate accessible sanitary accommodation, suitable door widths, level thresholds, manoeuvring spaces and wayfinding measures in accordance with current Building Regulations and best practice guidance. Collectively, these measures ensure that the proposed development promotes inclusive access, supports independent movement throughout the building and enables all students, staff and visitors to participate fully in activities at Uxbridge College

10– Conclusion

The proposed demolition and redevelopment of the site to provide a three-storey modular Construction Teaching Centre represents a sustainable and well-justified form of development. The scheme responds to a clearly evidenced and pressing need for additional specialist teaching space, supports established local and regional skills priorities, and aligns with wider national objectives relating to economic growth, infrastructure delivery and environmental sustainability.

The proposal makes efficient use of previously developed land within an established educational campus and will deliver a high-quality, flexible facility capable of supporting both current and future needs. As such, the development is considered appropriate in planning terms, and planning permission is respectfully sought.

More broadly, the proposed Construction Teaching Centre represents a strategic and financially viable investment that will enable HRUC to expand its construction training capacity and respond effectively to growing regional demand. The facility is expected to increase construction enrolment from approximately 300 to around 390 students, while generating an additional annual income in the region of £579,000 to £911,000.

The proposal presents a robust strategic, economic and financial case which doesn't give rise to negative long term impact to the surrounding area, accordingly permission is respectfully sought.