

## Re: Brunel University Sports Centre Plant - Ref 74314/APP/2023/2733

vincent.gabbe@vrgplanning.co.uk <vincent.gabbe@vrgplanning.co.uk>

Wed 12/6/2023 9:15 PM

To: Karl Dafe <KDafe@Hillingdon.Gov.UK>

Cc: Christopher Brady <CBrady@Hillingdon.Gov.UK>

Hi Karl

I have passed the queries to the University and design team. They have provided the response below. The University team has given detailed consideration to the issues raised and potential alternatives, but feel that the alternatives are less desirable than what is being put forwards. It is worth noting that options had been considered before deciding on the location of the units and ductwork, for example to mount on the roof above the new gym space would involve both structural and waterproofing alterations to the flat roof as well as safe access via a hoop ladder (more visual impact than the current ducted option) and edge protection or a man safe system. The existing terrace that is not used is considered the best solution and due to the previous listed points regarding obscuring the existing glass and complexities of an alternative location on the other side we still feel the proposed solution is the way forward.

1. **HILLINGDON URBAN DESIGN COMMENTS:** "...The proposed ducts are large and very visible, both from (sic) internally and externally. The proposed siting would reduce the amount of clear view through the glazing by about half...."
- a. **UNIVERSITY TEAM RESPONSE:** The brief is to situate a gym exclusively for the ladies of Brunel University in order to be inclusive of their cultural and religious needs. The intention is to provide blackout film on all fixed glazing such that there would be no clear view through the glass panels. The double escape doors will have obscure film to the inside therefore none of the proposed ductwork or plant will be visible from the Gym side.
- b. The ducts are sized based on the size of the space and anticipated occupancy based upon design good practice and in accordance with The Chartered Institute of Building Services Engineers recommendations. To say the ducts are large is subjective as the ducts are correctly sized to transfer the level of ventilation required.
2. **HILLINGDON URBAN DESIGN COMMENTS:** "....This is largely avoidable and not acceptable. The proposals should be amended to reduce the visual impact. The following sketch indicates a potential option, as described below.."
- a. **UNIVERSITY TEAM RESPONSE:** The design is a mechanical services solution for the ventilation requirements to meet the Building Regulations. As it is a specialist field, D&K as architects, surveyors and designers have deferred to the expertise of mechanical services engineers who are best qualified to guide and advise as to possible solutions. The alternative solution put forward is not practical with commercially available equipment and any change from the proposed design would require two units to meet the ventilation requirements and highly likely to impart a greater level of visual impact.
3. **HILLINGDON URBAN DESIGN COMMENTS:** "... The horizontal duct should be located internally, or externally, but higher, above the windows, to retain the full unobstructed window height..."
- a. **UNIVERSITY TEAM RESPONSE:** The size of the duct has been given by the manufacturers of the air handling unit. It has been sized for its required performance. The ducts will have to pass under the lintels to the windows, and travel across to both ends, with as little bends in the path. As such, it will not be possible to retain the full unobstructed height as suggested as this requires cutting the ducts through the brickwork penetrating the roof structure.
4. **HILLINGDON URBAN DESIGN COMMENTS:** ".....the two vertical ducts could be placed in the other corner, ideally internally, or otherwise against the wall, where they could be hardly visible externally and obstructing the view to the outside...."
- a. **UNIVERSITY TEAM RESPONSE:** The AHU system requires outlets at low level to input fresh air and discharge extracted air. Ducts in the other corner will obstruct the path to the Fire Exit which will contravene Building Regulations and Fire Safety Regulations.  
If the ducts are relocated into the other corner, e.g same corner, the supply and extract ducts would need to run one above the other. This results in the ducts taking up considerable wall space which is undesirable but more importantly presents a short circuit between the supply and extract thus negating the best performance from the air provided.
- b. The Heat Recovery Unit will have to be split into two units to be situated vertically against the wall and the size will not be smaller, and it will still be visible, thereby defeating the purpose of embarking on such an exercise. Essentially doubling the size of the units that would have to be wall hung, resulting in a far more noticeable installation.

Hopefully this helps move things forwards.

Kind regards

**Vincent Gabbe MRTPI**  
**VRG Planning**

M (07799) 708148

**VRG Planning**

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**From:** Karl Dafe <KDafe@Hillingdon.Gov.UK>  
**Date:** Tuesday, 21 November 2023 at 14:23  
**To:** vincent.gabbe@vrgplanning.co.uk <vincent.gabbe@vrgplanning.co.uk>  
**Cc:** Christopher Brady <CBrady@Hillingdon.Gov.UK>  
**Subject:** Re: Brunel University Sports Centre Plant - Ref 74314/APP/2023/2733

Vincent

I hope you are well. May I apologise for the delay in responding to your e mails. This has been due to the pressure of case load, as I will be leaving the Council shortly.

With regards to the application, please find attached comments from the Council's Urban Design officer. I would be grateful if you would review and make the necessary suggested amendments to the scheme where feasible.

kind regards

*K Dafe*

Amechi Karl Dafe

Planning Case Manager

Planning, Regeneration and Environment  
Central Services

Hillingdon Council

Tel: 01895 250230

**Please note that the comments made in this email represent officer opinion and cannot be seen to prejudice the Local Planning Authority's formal determination in relation to any application or planning matter.**

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**From:** vincent.gabbe@vrgplanning.co.uk <vincent.gabbe@vrgplanning.co.uk>  
**Sent:** Tuesday, November 7, 2023 4:52 PM  
**To:** Karl Dafe <KDafe@Hillingdon.Gov.UK>  
**Subject:** Re: Brunel University Sports Centre Plant - Ref 74314/APP/2023/2733

Hi Karl

You don't often get email from vincent.gabbe@vrgplanning.co.uk. [Learn why this is important](#)

Further to my e-mails below, is there any news regarding the above planning application? I am being chased by the University, who are keen to implement the works. The target decision date is 13/11/23.

Any updates would be much appreciated.

Many thanks

Kind regards

**Vincent Gabbe MRTPI**  
**VRG Planning**

M (07799) 708148

**VRG Planning**

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**From:** Vincent Gabbe <vincent.gabbe@vrgplanning.co.uk>  
**Date:** Tuesday, 24 October 2023 at 09:12  
**To:** kdafe@hillingdon.gov.uk <kdafe@hillingdon.gov.uk>  
**Subject:** Re: Brunel University Sports Centre Plant - Ref 74314/APP/2023/2733

Hi Karl

Is there any news following my e-mail below? I am being chased by Brunel University who are keen to hear any news.

Many thanks

Kind regards

**Vincent Gabbe MRTPI**  
**VRG Planning**

M (07799) 708148

On 18/10/2023 11:37 BST vincent.gabbe@vrgplanning.co.uk  
<vincent.gabbe@vrgplanning.co.uk> wrote:

Hi Karl

I am the agent for the above planning application, submitted on behalf of Brunel University. I think the consultation period ended today. Please do let me know if there are any consultation responses that I should be aware of, or any queries you may have on the submission.

Many thanks

Kind regards

**Vincent Gabbe MRTPI**  
**VRG Planning**

M (07799) 708148

## VRG Planning

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