



expert in
sports hall
development

ST JOHN'S — NORTHWOOD

PROJECT OVERVIEW





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ST JOHN'S - NORTHWOOD

The St John's School Ball Hall was opened in Oct 2020. It is a 3 badminton court sports hall with 400 bleacher seats, changing rooms, an office and a first-aid room. Upstairs there are 2 flexible rooms that can be used for hospitality or breakfast clubs.

£2.5m

excl VAT

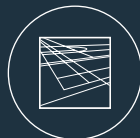
Northwood

London Borough of
Hillingdon

Oct 2020



FACILITIES AT THE ST JOHN'S SCHOOL, NORTHWOOD



SPORTS FLOORING



SPORTS HALL



SPORTS EQUIPMENT



OFFICES &
MEETING ROOMS



CHANGING ROOMS
& TOILETS





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PROJECT CHALLENGES

We have faced a variety of challenges throughout our time developing sports halls. Each project generally presents its own set of complications, sometimes relating to existing structures, surrounding areas or site conditions and in other cases, it's purely about budget, keeping numerous funding partners happy, or meeting a deadline.

Planning was a sensitive issue for this project and the school site had a long history of balancing the growing needs of a thriving school, with its position; sat within the greenbelt and part of a neighbourhood who take a very active role in trying to preserve the area and it's pleasant and leafy environment.

A further challenge was that it was located on the site of an existing, smaller sports hall. Therefore, our building was going to be built within a considerably tight space. It was going to be incredibly difficult for construction plant and machinery to gain entry, because it was on a hill and had very narrow access.





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PROJECT SOLUTION

In terms of the planning, we designed an especially sympathetic building which utilised natural materials such as cedar cladding and we included features such as a green roof. We were able to demonstrate to the local authority the very special circumstances as to why we had to build the larger sports hall on green belt. Explaining that the existing hall was not fit for purpose and to meet the criteria to make it fit for purpose, it would have to be larger.

We considered the construction and access at the outset of the design. Designing in, that from day one we would lay a temporary, stone access road to run across the field. The road would later be pulled out and the field reinstated and re-topsoiled. This provision was also included in our planning submissions.

During construction we liaised on the sequencing, with the contractor - for example we agreed to build the frame from front to back. We scheduled key activities such as drainage connections for the entire site, to happen during the school holidays when access could be gained through the school.





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BALL HALL ADDED VALUE

With all the difficulties of a project considered upfront and contingency built in for unforeseen events or conditions, Ball Hall deliver outstanding buildings for sport. A Ball Hall Sports Hall often exceeds expectation and consistently becomes a flag waving celebration for the organisation, with many further benefits that materialise over time.

The initial brief was just for a sports hall, but we were able to provide 400 retractable, upholstered seats, a lectern, a projector and a screen, so that it could also be used for other events such as whole school assemblies. In addition, large presentation events and speech days can be held in the hall. This resulted in saving the school the annual cost of marquee hire which effectively meant the draping would pay for itself within 2 years.

Initially, a more expensive scheme had been proposed by another architect. The design reflected surrounding roof styles with the aim of providing a sympathetic approach to the neighbouring buildings. The roof was complex and had a number of pitches and valleys to it. Sadly this complexity made the project unaffordable.

Our concept featured a simplified roof but none-the-less remained a stunning scheme, still sympathetic to the surrounding area and able to achieve endorsement by the planners. Crucially, the simplified curved roof also meant the risk from leaks was reduced. This is particularly important in sports halls where leaks can damage premium sprung floors.





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