

SPORTS ACADEMY AND SCUNTHORPE CENTRAL PARK

Design Statement

For North Lincolnshire Council with Yorkshire Forward, Andrew Wright Associates, leading an integrated design team that includes Buro Happold as multidisciplinary engineers, has won a 2-stage RIBA Competition to create a new Sports Academy and landscape strategy for Scunthorpe Central Park. The innovative scheme seeks to create a bold vision that will stimulate long-term regeneration.

The landscape design strategy is focused on opening access to the park and encouraging safe movement across it. A bold boulevard will be created through Central Park, linking the Town Centre to the Colleges and new wildlife areas in the east. A redesigned entrance with views towards the Sports Academy will engage with North Lincolnshire Council offices at Pittwood House. There will be imaginative new areas of landscape, such as wetland areas in the west to complement Brumby Wood, accompanied by repair and renewal where needed. Public landscaped walkways and greenways will interconnect the new habitats, providing ideal corridors for species on the local Biodiversity Action Plan. All main routes will be highly accessible with vistas, landscaping and walkways drawing users of Central Park towards the sports facilities of the Academy.

The vision for the Sports Academy is a series of unified spaces within an envelope of gently domed and partly vegetated shell structures that extend the landscape while providing a subtle human scale where they meet the ground. A climbing wall and café terraces are distinctly visible from the outside to entice visitors. A central structural spine links a series of individual shells with wet and dry activities either side. The structure separates the envelope from the installation of sports equipment allowing for the detailed layout of the spaces to change and adapt over time. The envelope flows over the individual spaces maintaining visual contact across the different activities to achieve a spacious, open feel inside.

The structure and services have been developed to create an inspirational and sustainable building. The shell roof forms have been optimised to assume rational forms and minimise the amount of structural material required with triangulated joint lines visually expressing the distribution of forces within the structure. Direct and diffused light and natural ventilation where possible will minimise the environmental impact while a comprehensive water conservation strategy integrating run-off, grey water, lakes and swales provides a top-up water supply for irrigation of the vegetated roofs and additional evaporative cooling. Local parkland wood chippings and ground-source heat pumps will be used to supplement additional heating and cooling requirements.

The Sports Academy will be an exemplary building using renewable resources, sustainable materials and structural efficiency giving a clear vision of how traditionally energy-intensive public buildings can work in harmony with our environment.











