



Brick type: Thoresby Buff Multi  
Smooth Blue  
Location: Litherland, Liverpool

Project Architect: Sheppard Robson  
Contractor: Keir Construction

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## Litherland High School

Litherland High School is a new build School replacing an existing School dating from the 1950s on the same site. Located on the outskirts of Liverpool, the School sits in the centre of a learning village.

The School's approach to Education and the accommodation requirements lead to the development of a diagram with two distinct zones, linked by a glazed atrium. The two zones became known as The Ribbon and The Bar. The Ribbon holds the teaching accommodation and the Bar contains the large volume spaces.

The Ribbon is a fluid band of classroom accommodation that is wrapped around two central work areas; this further sub-division allows the two main educational branches of the School to be co-located but have their own identity. The subject areas surrounding the central spaces have access to flexible teaching space. Generous rooflights & lightwells allow light to spill deep into the floor plate making the central space a more viable work area. Colour is used for wayfinding here with the L3 (Living Learning Language) subject area in blue shades while the SMT (Science Maths Technology) subject area takes on a more green hue.

The Bar is a monumental block offering a powerful contrast to the fluidity of The Ribbon. This linear mass contains administration areas, main hall, kitchen & dining hall, ICT teaching space and sports facilities. As well as being spatially different, the wayfinding approach here is to use bright, vibrant reds, yellows and oranges, reinforcing the active nature of The Bar's contents.

The selection of brick has been as fundamental to the success of the building as the internal arrangement of spaces. The inherent robustness of brick was ideally used here as the original School bore the scars of many years of abuse. While the tough properties of brick were used rather overtly, we were able to soften the impact of this by careful choice of tone and detailing. As the School is split into two separate areas it made sense that they be visually distinctive but tied together through a unifying material. The contrast between a sleek engineering brick and the rippling tone of a multi tone sat well with the ethos of the scheme. The strong regular Bar was reinforced by the monolithic appearance of the blue sheen of the engineering brick; where as the undulating Ribbon was expressed softly and subtly with the buff background and purple highlights within the multi tone brick.

The detailing of the brick dealt with the difference at a more human experience level. The Bar has a raked joint in a dark coloured mortar, emphasising the linear robustness of its form. The Ribbon, on the other hand, has a curved bucket handle joint in a complementary natural colour mortar softening the curves of the form. The curved brickwork did not require the use of special brick shapes and where tight curves were required, perp ends were used to great effect.

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