Proposed Extension and new build to establish a Children’s Centre and Pre-school provision at Upton Meadows Primary School.

Planning Statement

Address: Upton Meadows Primary School, The Square, Upton, Northampton NN5 4EZ

REASON FOR DEVELOPMENT:

National Overview
Sure Start Children’s Centres are key to the Governments Every Child Matters: Change for Children Programme. Children’s Centres will be the key to providing families with all the services that they might need. The Government has set the target that by April 2010 there will be a Children’s Centre in every community. This will total 3,500 centres nationally.

The Childcare Act 2006, is a key milestone for driving the improvement of services that will reduce inequalities and increase young children’s wellbeing. The Act set a requirement on the Local authority to deliver good quality integrated early childhood services, provide out reach and the inclusion and involvement of families. This work will be carried out in partnership with key partners such as the Primary Care Trusts and Job Centre Plus. Every Child Matters (ECM) focuses on the improvement of outcomes for children. Life chances for children are enhanced via making available families’ access to additional appropriate services. This has and will continue to be achieved through the development of Northamptonshire Children’s Centres.

The National Childcare Strategy links Children’s Centres to Extended Services, which continue to provide integrated services to children aged 5 plus and their families, through schools.

Northamptonshire Goals and Targets
The work being achieved by Children’s Centres now and in the future fits into many local strategies and targets:

The Councils corporate outcomes
Through working with the County Council internal teams and other professionals and agencies, Children’s Centres and the services associated with them will contribute towards the 4 corporate Outcomes, these being:

- A safer, freer and stronger communities.
- A secure, healthy and independent future for our children, our young people and our adults.
- A smaller more enabling council focussed on out customers.
- A cleaner, greener and more prosperous County.
The Sustainable Community Strategy for Northamptonshire

This consists of 4 headline aims, these being:

- To be successful through sustainable growth and regeneration
- To develop through having a growing economy with more skilled jobs
- To have safe and strong communities
- To have healthy people who enjoy a good quality of life

Under each of these aforementioned headline aims there are three key principles. Children’s Centres can contribute to a minimum of one of these principles under each aim

Within “To be successful through sustainable growth and regeneration” a key principle is to”....improve and preserve buildings.... for future generations” The Children’s Centre build programme contributes towards this

Within “To develop through having a growing economy with more skilled jobs” 2 key principles are “workers have the right skills to respond to the employment needs of a dynamic economy” and “residents have the opportunity to learn throughout their lives” The delivery of support by Job Centre plus and Family / Adult learning through Children’s Centres will support both of these

Within ““To have Safe and Strong Communities” two key principles are “residents have a shared identity and are involved in developing their communities” and “public services meet the needs of residents” Children’s Centres will contribute towards the former by members of the local community being involved in its governance and the latter by Centres being responsible for identifying and responding to need in the local economy. E.g. if there is a high rate of Reception year obesity, activity such as healthy eating courses would be provided

Within “To have healthy people who enjoy a good quality of life” all three principles will be supported through Children’s Centres. In relation to “supporting vulnerable people to help them lead fulfilling lives” Children’s Centres are tasked with prioritising support, through National Performance Indicators, for certain already defined excluded groups. In terms of “helping young people to have the best possible preparation to become adults” the driving ethos behind Children’s Centres is to develop early intervention and preventative services. In respect to “helping residents to make choices that improve their health and quality of life” Children’s Centres will offer easier access to a variety of health services such as midwifery and health visitors as well as providing family and employment support activity which will enhance quality of life.
Northamptonshire Children and Young People’s Plan – May 2009

The Plan identifies the five outcomes associated with Every Child Matters agenda. This agenda was embedded through the Children’s Act 2004.

The five outcomes are:
- Be healthy
- Stay Safe
- Enjoy and achieve
- Make a positive contribution
- Achieve economic well-being

The plan identifies priority outcomes and measures. Children’s Centres and the activities/services delivered under its umbrella will play a key part in achieving these. They will also adopt the ethos that runs throughout this plan. In particular they will
- Deliver integrated services through effective partnership working
- Adopt prevention and early Intervention principles
- Be a key delivery element of emerging area based working
- Support the development of the Children and Young peoples workforce
- Respond to identified needs by offering activities that will support communities to support families to support their children to achieve the five outcomes

Northamptonshire
How are we going to achieve this in our County?

During 2004 – 2008, Northamptonshire have developed Sure Start Children’s Centres to become a ‘one stop shop’, where children 0-5 years old and their families can have access to integrated services and information.

Over the 2008-10 development phase Children’s Centres will be more of a “first stop shop”, with greater emphasis on outreach provision at different locations. This reflects the roll out of this project into more rural areas.

However the overall vision, to ensure every child gets the best start in life and to give parents more choice about how to balance work and family life is maintained.

Each Centre will deliver a carefully planned range of integrated services, responding to locally identified needs. They will work with parents and service providers to deliver inclusive, accessible and child-friendly services that support children and their families, through early intervention at age and stage, to reach their full potential.

Centres will deliver to different degrees, dependant on local need and demand activities and services outlined below.
Furthermore additional services to this will be developed should feedback from consultation with the local community show that there is a need, for example baby massage, breastfeeding café or advice on money management.

**Family support and Outreach Services**

- Visits to parents within two months of birth informing them of how they can access services through Children’s Centres.
- Access to specialist health and education services.
- Drop-in sessions for parents and carers.
- Support and information to parents and carers about pre-birth, early days and childcare settings.
- Encouragement for parents, especially fathers, to get involved with and support their child’s learning and development.
- Help and advice on parenting skills.

**Child and Family Health Services**

- Antenatal help, advice and support from Health Visitors and Midwives.
- Information and guidance on breast feeding, hygiene, nutrition and safety.
- Identification, support and care for mothers suffering from depression before or after birth.
- Support with speech and language development.
- Help with giving up smoking.
Links with Families Information Service (FIS)

- Access through the Families Information Service (FIS) to comprehensive information on all local childcare options, as well as out of school groups and extended services available in schools.
- Information will also be available on local opportunities for family learning, sport and leisure, and community groups as well as signposting to national services for children and families.

Support for Training and Employment

- Access will be available to Jobcentre Plus in addition to local education and training providers.

EXISTING SITE/ PROPOSALS:
The site upon which the Children’s Centre and pre-school provision is to be built located on the Upton Meadows Primary School site. The site is within a predominantly residential area on the outskirts of Northampton. The school serves the community of Upton and Banbury Lane and is at the centre of a new housing development.

To create the new facility, it is proposed to construct a single storey building to accommodate the Children’s Centre and Pre-School. Provision will be made for external buggy storage and outside play areas. Four additional car parking spaces will be formed on the site of the Primary School’s existing External Games Store which is to be demolished and rebuilt in a new location as shown on the proposed plans.

Upton Meadows pre – school occupies one classroom within Upton Meadows Primary School. In September 2010 the school will be at full capacity and will require the classroom back. The pre – school will therefore be homeless.

The pre –school offers full day care and sessional day care for children aged 2 to 5 years and is registered for 40 children, due to lack of space can only accommodate 26 children. incorporated is a successful out of school club which operates a breakfast and afterschool club and is looking to offer holiday provision in the near future.

At the present time we have 50 children on the pre – school role and 40 children on the out of school clubs role. Eight staff are employed working full and part time hours.

Design approach:
The design approach to the project has been carefully considered in order to minimise the visual impact of the new build within the context of the local surroundings, whilst providing for the specific needs of the Children’s Centre/Pre-school. A large emphasis has been placed upon the creation of a “welcoming” environment.
The form and appearance of the new Children’s Centre and Pre-School building has been designed to follow the theme of the existing Primary School. The building will be provided with an overhanging pitched roof which reflects the Primary School and extends beyond the external walls to provide weather protection for external covered play areas. The main entrance is indented and set below a feature dormer window to provide a sense of arrival. An imperative design feature is that the Centre can be used and secured when the remainder of the building is not in use.

All relevant Disability Discrimination Act legislation has been taken account of during the design process within the areas affected by the construction works. The building itself is single storey with a floor level set to facilitate level access. In order to allow for differing times of occupation separate facilities for individuals with physical impairments will be provided in both the Children’s Centre and Pre-School accommodation.

The Children’s Centre property has been specifically designed to enable ease of access for people with disability. Access to and internal travel routes within the new extension and proposed Children’s Centre/Pre-school have been carefully planned to provide ease of access for visitors and can make use of essential facilities. The design of the property is considered to meet the spirit of the Disability Discrimination Act as well as meeting other regulatory and statutory requirements.

Separately, a covered play area is to be provided over part of the Children’s Centre/Pre-school playgrounds to protect children playing or receiving lessons outside.

**Staffing implications:**
The creation of the Children’s Centre will result in the employment of 1 additional Fixed term contract member of staff (Information officer). In addition it is anticipated there will be a further 4 staff (full time equivalent) who will use the site intermittently. As indicated previously a high proportion of these employees’ time is likely to be spent delivering outreach activity at other community buildings.

**Statement of Community Involvement / Pre-application publicity:**
A public consultation period lasting for one week was arranged at Upton Meadows School from Monday 19th October, when the plans were available for viewing at the school. This was supplemented by a letter to parents, and also by a drop in session hosted at the school. An officer from NCC Early Years and Childcare (EYCC) Team was on hand to answer questions during this two hour session at the school which was held on Thursday 5th November 2009. Also in attendance was the Children’s centre Manager from “Provider Services” who will be managing the service delivery associated with this Children’s Centre “Reach Area”. Representatives of both “Provider Services” and “NCC EYCC” also attended a Residents Association Meeting on
Wednesday 18th November, to present the Children’s Centre plans, and take any questions. There were no issues raised at either event.

As this site continues to develop the lead body delivering the services (in this case Provider Services) will ensure consultation with the local residents in their community takes place. This will ensure services provided at the site and across the reach area respond to local need.

**Demolitions:**
The existing Primary School’s external games store is to be demolished and re-provided elsewhere on the site, as shown on the proposed plans.

**Trees to be felled:**
None

**Flood Risk Assessment:**
A Flood Risk Assessment will be undertaken in view of the BREEAM rating required for the project.

**Land Contaminants:**
All contaminant surveys are still to be completed.

**Transport:**
Due to the “reach area” for this Children’s Centre and the requirement to develop and deliver outreach activity it is expected that all staff working permanently or accessing the site intermittently will use a car. The site will also attract cars from families wishing to access the services offered on this site. However these services will be planned to ensure they do not take place at times of the day when there will be high volumes of traffic. E.g. on a school site at school dropping off and pick up times. In addition, the School Travel plan will be revised and amended to ensure that it takes account of the emerging Children’s Centre.

Also access to the facilities via the availability of more environmentally forms of transport is to be encouraged by the creation of an external buggy store. Parents will be encouraged by Centre staff to make full use of the facilities and to arrive on foot wherever possible.

**Site access during construction period:**
Construction access to the site will be via the the main school car park entrance which, in turn, is accessed via the local estate roads serving the whole Upton Meadows development. Consideration will be given to routes taken and access/delivery times to minimise disruption and maintain health and safety for all parties. Close liaison with the School and local residents will be undertaken.
**Services implications:**
New statutory mains services will be provided to the new development. Foul/surface water drainage will be connected to existing ground drainage systems.

**Design**
The design takes account of the following Planning Policies:

East Midlands Regional Plan Policy 2 (Promoting Better Design)
Northampton Borough Council Local Plan Policy E20
The Upton Design Code.

Environmentally a BREEAM rating of ‘Very Good’ is to be achieved through careful consideration of design criteria, materials sourcing, construction management and other site-wide issues.

Specifically the design provides measures to minimize energy use, improved water efficiency, sustainable surface water drainage, and includes sustainably sourced and recycled materials where this is possible.

With regard to crime prevention, the building is located within an existing securely fenced car-park. An Intruder Alarm system will also be installed in the building.

**Sources of advice and consultation**
- Planning advice from both Northamptonshire County Council and Northampton Borough Council.
- Security advice from the Crime Prevention Officer, Northamptonshire Police.
- Consultation opportunities have been explored with the pre-school, primary school, and with Upton Meadows community through the open event at the school, and links with the Residents Association. Plans have been displayed in school for 3 weeks allowing parents and local residents the time to come along and view them. Letters outlining the development were sent out to all school community via pupil post and the website.
- Advice from a range of professional groups and bodies – particularly around disabled access and compliance with Building Regulations. During the design process key structural, mechanical/electrical and access professional advice has been sought to ensure the Children’s Centre operates as efficiently as possible.

**Nature and impact of environmental constraints**
No apparent environmental constraints identified.
Proposed solutions for overcoming identified constraints
N/A

What steps have been taken to ensure this information is made available to building occupiers
Refer above. All key building occupiers have been regularly consulted with and are part of the overall design team. Information has been disseminated to all interested parties for comment and direction on a regularly basis.

Additional material information
N/A
DESIGN AND ACCESS STATEMENT

DESIGN

Process

The provision of the Children’s Centre will offer a universal provision to all children aged 0–5 years and their families in the local area. It is envisaged that families will attend the Children’s Centre for small group work or appointments to meet with local support agencies such as Health Visitors, Speech and Learning Therapists etc. The pre-School will offer full day-care and sessional day-care for children aged 2–5 years.

In line with the above, the development will have a positive economic impact locally providing employment opportunities for staff within the development and assistance for visitors to the Children’s Centre seeking employment in the wider community.

As the site is developing the lead body delivering the services/activities will ensure consultation takes place with local residents to ascertain views on the nature of services the community wish to see provided at the site. Evaluations will be drawn up from the results and plans introduced for the delivery of the appropriate services.

The location of the new Children’s centre and Pre-School is in a developing residential area which consists predominantly of two/three storey dwellings with steeply pitched roofs. The site itself is situated at the north end of the grounds to Upton Meadows Primary School between the Schools car-park and playground. The school building itself is larger in scale, again with steeply pitched roofs to various parts.

The design of the proposed new building is guided by Local and Regional Planning Policy enshrined in the ‘Upton Design Code’. The Environmental requirements of the Code call for Public buildings within Upton to achieve an ‘Excellent’ rating under the Building Research Establishment Environmental Assessment method (BREEAM). The adjoining Primary School however has a ‘Very Good’ rating and during Pre-Application Consultation it has been established that the new Children’s Centre and Pre-School will be designed to also achieve a ‘Very Good Rating’.
**Use**

The proposed development has a dual use which includes a new Children’s Centre and a 40 place Pre-School Unit. The Children’s Centre and Pre-School will operate independently from the adjacent Upton Meadows Primary School.

Hours of operation for each facility will be as follows:

- Children’s Centre: 8.00am – 6.00pm according to need, Monday to Friday for 50 weeks of the year
- Pre-School Unit: 8.00am to 5.50pm

**Amount**

The new development occupies an area of approximately 0.1 Hectares on the north side of the Primary School Site facing the School’s existing Car Park.

The proposal is to construct a single storey building to accommodate the Children’s Centre and Pre-School. Provision will be made for external buggy storage and outside play areas. Four additional car parking spaces will be formed on the site of the Primary School’s existing External Games Store which is to be demolished and recreated in a new location.

**Layout**

Future proposals to extend Upton Meadows Primary School have dictated this development being designed to limit encroachment into the School site. A central entrance provides access to both the Children’s Centre and the Pre-School. External play areas are located at the east and west ends of the building and those spaces requiring external access positioned accordingly.

**Scale**

The Children’s Centre and Pre-School Unit has a maximum length of 32.0 metres, a depth of 16.0 metres, and a maximum height to the ridge of the Pre-School roof of 8.0 metres.

The Primary School’s reconstructed External Games Store has a length of 6.3 metres, a depth of 5.7 metres, and a maximum height to the ridge of the roof of 5.0 metres.

**Appearance**

The form and appearance of the new Children’s Centre and Pre-School building has been designed to follow the theme of the existing Primary School. The building will be provided with an overhanging pitched roof which reflects the Primary School and extends beyond the external walls to provide weather protection for external covered
play areas. The main entrance is indented and set below a feature dormer window to provide a sense of arrival.

Materials used for the external envelope will also be sympathetic to the adjoining Primary School. External walls will be a combination of facing brickwork which matches the existing School and panels of a contrast coloured render. Windows and external doors will be powder coated aluminium and plain clay tiles matching the existing school will form the covering to the pitched roofs.

**Landscaping**

Provision will be made for a hard paved pedestrian access route from the car park to the new building entrance. Shrub planting between the path and the face of the building will soften the extent of the hard surfaces and maintain internal privacy.

Masonry boundary walls separating the external play areas from the car park will provide security and visual privacy. Outside play areas are to be surfaced with a mixture of hard landscaping and grass and a demarcation fence 1.2m high will separate the outside play areas from the Primary School site.

The extended car park is to be paved with permeable block paving to match the existing surface.

**ACCESS**

Access for pedestrians and vehicles from the highway to the Children's Centre and Pre-School site will be through the existing Primary School Car Park. A segregated pedestrian route is not feasible throughout the car park but a demarcated route for pedestrians will be identified within the shared area. On the south side of the car park a dedicated path for pedestrian access will be provided to the main entrance of the building.

The existing School Car Park will become a shared facility serving the School, Children's Centre and Pre-School. The car park currently has provision for parking 46 cars and bicycle parking. The identified need for future car parking is as follows:

- Upton Meadows Primary School as extended – 37 spaces
- New Children's Centre and Pre-School - 13 spaces
  (Based on NCC Supplementary Planning Guidance with a Nett Usable Floor Area 320sqm for the Children’s centre and Pre-School).

The provision of four additional spaces will meet the combined requirements.

The site topography including the means of access is essentially level in character and other than overcoming kerb upstands at the perimeter of the car park presents no physical obstacles. Provision for two mobility parking bays will be made adjacent to the main entrance of the building.

The building itself is single storey with a floor level set to facilitate level access. In order to allow for differing times of occupation separate facilities for individuals with physical impairments will be provided in both the Children’s Centre and Pre-School accommodation.