PLANNING STATEMENT

EXPANSION TO 2 FORM ENTRY - VICTORIA PRIMARY SCHOOL, WELLINGBOROUGH
LEND LEASE CONSULTING (EMEA) LIMITED

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also at:

Eden Office Park
73 Macrae Road
Bristol  BS20 0DD
Tel:  (01275) 378310
Fax:  (01275) 373291
E-mail: gss@gotch.co.uk

The Tower Studio
Fourth Avenue
Hornbeam Park
Harrogate  HG2 8QT
Tel:  (01423) 815121
Email: gss@gotch.co.uk

2 Spencer Parade
Northampton
NN1 5AA
Tel:  (01604) 631919
Fax:  (01604) 624016
E-mail: gss@gotch.co.uk

www.gssarchitecture.com

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4th February 2013
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PLANNING STATEMENT

Site Address: Victoria Primary School
Finedon Road,
Wellingborough,
Northamptonshire
NN8 4NT

Grid Reference: Easting 489794
Northing 268573

Contact Details:

Applicant: Northamptonshire County Council,
Strategic Planning,
Customers, Communities & Learning,
John Dryden House,
8 - 10 The Lakes,
Bedford Road,
Northampton.
NN4 7DD

Contact: Kay Ringwood (Northamptonshire County Council), tel. 01604 366892

Agent: GSSArchitecture,
35 Headlands,
Kettering,
Northants.
NN15 7ES

Contact: Paul Harkin (Project Architect, GSSArchitecture), tel. (01536) 513165
1.0 INTRODUCTION

The town of Wellingborough has a long history, believed to date back to the 6th century, and it is mentioned in the Domesday Book in 1086. Originally a market town, it expanded steadily during the Victorian era and into the 20th century based on the Northamptonshire shoe manufacturing industry. In the 1960s and 70s it was expanded further, with many people moving to the town from London. Its population is currently increasing again, as central government has denoted it as a ‘growth town’.

Victoria Primary School is an existing local authority-run school, located approximately 1 mile north east of Wellingborough town centre, in a predominantly residential neighbourhood. It shares a site with Rowan Gate Primary School, and Highfields Nursery. It currently accommodates approximately 330 pupils aged 5-11. Each year group is comprised of an approximate average of 45 pupils. Based on a typical national standard class size of 30 children, it is therefore classed as a ‘1.5 form entry’ school.

This statement sets out the context and need for the proposed development. It reviews the national and local planning policy documents that are relevant to the application, along with notes on how the proposed design responds to each. Reference is made to the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) and the North Northamptonshire Core Spatial Strategy (adopted June 2008). Wellingborough Borough Council policies have not been noted as they are superseded by the above policies.

A separate Design and Access Statement has been prepared to describe the design and impact of the proposed development.

2.0 SITE CONTEXT

Victoria Primary School’s existing buildings were mostly built in the 1970s in a neighbourhood predominantly comprised of semi-detached and terraced housing. Since that time, various additions to the school have been built, with the last notable expansion being complete in approximately 2007. This comprised a new main hall, and a teaching block containing six full-size classrooms.
The site is bordered on two sides by housing, with an existing pathway leading into and through the site from its southern boundary. To the west is a scrapyard, and to the north is Finedon Road, along with the main site entrance and sole point of vehicle access.

The buildings within the confines of the site Victoria Primary School (VPS) shares with Rowan Gate Primary School and Highfields Nursery are mostly single storey, with the exception of the 2007 extension, which is two storey.

The building housing Rowan Gate Primary School was originally built in the 1970s, thought to coincide with the construction of the VPS buildings. It is similar in form and architectural massing, and shares the same red brick wall finishes.

Highfields Nursery is a more recent building, also finished with red brick walls, but with shallow-pitched roofs of white-painted metal profile sheets, and profile grey tiles.
3.0 NEED

There are eleven schools in Wellingborough that are part of the admissions process for Reception-aged children. It can be seen from the table below that the countywide scenario of a 10% rise in applications for Reception places is having an impact in Wellingborough and there are no surplus places in the town at all.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>School</th>
<th>Published Admission Number</th>
<th>Reception numbers on roll (January 2013)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Victoria Primary</td>
<td>60</td>
<td>60</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Warwick Primary</td>
<td>52</td>
<td>58</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Avenue Infant</td>
<td>60</td>
<td>61</td>
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<tr>
<td>St Barnabas CE School</td>
<td>60</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ruskin Infant</td>
<td>90</td>
<td>88</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Redwell Infant</td>
<td>60</td>
<td>60</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Our Lady’s Catholic Infant</td>
<td>60</td>
<td>60</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Olympic Primary</td>
<td>60</td>
<td>59</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Diamond Learning Community (Oakway)</td>
<td>90</td>
<td>90</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Croyland Primary</td>
<td>60</td>
<td>64</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>All Saints CEVA Primary</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>682</strong></td>
<td><strong>690</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The County Council is currently considering a number of proposals to provide approximately four forms of entry (120 places) of additional capacity in Wellingborough town: Croyland has already increased, plans have progressed for Victoria and Ruskin, and feasibility studies are just starting for Diamond and Redwell. There is also pressure on places in the wider area, so transporting pupils to other schools is neither feasible nor desirable. The statutory consultation processes regarding an increase in the published admission number at Victoria from 45 to 60 pupils per year group concluded with Cabinet approval for the expansion on 15th January 2013.

The feasibility study of how to extend Victoria Primary has considered five options, the favoured one being to build a first floor extension above the existing Year 1 and 2 classrooms and connecting through to the existing first floor. This minimises the impact on site from additional floor area, an important consideration when there is limited space. The site is shared with Rowan Gate Special School and the Highfield Nursery School/Children’s Centre and all three Headteachers and Chairs of Governors have been involved in stakeholder meetings about the impact of the proposed expansion. These meetings have considered site
aspects that affect all three schools, including vehicular and pedestrian movements, location for temporary mobile classrooms, contractor’s compound and access, and final layout of parking, playgrounds and external areas.

Pre-planning consultation for parents and residents was held on 21st November 2012 and it was suggested that increased capacity was also needed for special needs provision, as Rowan Gate was operating over capacity. This is being pursued as a separate piece of work that may result in Rowan Gate pupil numbers reducing in line with the capacity of the building.

The proposal to expand Victoria Primary will allow the school to expand from 315 pupils to 420 pupils (1.5 to 2FE). As well as the generally increasing demand for primary school places across Wellingborough, new housing has already been built at Burrows Bush and Paling Close very close to the school. There is also new housing development in Doddington Road, Nest Farm Crescent and Jackson Lane.

The school has already taken increased numbers into Reception for September 2012 and currently has a total roll of 329 pupils out of 330 places. The classroom organisation associated with two forms of entry also has the additional benefit of eliminating mixed age classes.

The scope of works includes a number of elements:
1) The serial build structural repairs that are required at Victoria Primary.
2) The extension to provide three new classrooms and a specialist room.
3) The serial build structural repairs that are required at Rowan Gate.

The outline timetable is:
April 2013 - June 2013: tender period.
August 2013: construction starts on site.
September 2014: completion of the building work.

The scheme is expected to cost £2.4m and is included in the Council's Capital Programme.
4.0 PLANNING POLICY

This section provides an assessment of the policies considered relevant to the application, along with a description of how the proposal meets those policies (sections of policy have been quoted where necessary):

4.1 National Planning Policy

The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF)

The National Planning Policy Framework published by the Government in March 2012 sets out the Government’s Planning policies for England and is weighted towards a presumption in favour of sustainable development. Under the first heading of the same name, paragraph 14 page 4, it states ‘local planning authorities should positively seek opportunities to meet the development needs of their area’. The NPPF supersedes the remaining PPS and PPG documents and is the government’s key policy document. We consider that the proposed provides an opportunity to meet with the needs of the local community and to generally improve the appearance of the existing school.

The NPPF also states under paragraph 37, page 10:

‘Planning policies should aim for a balance of land uses within their area so that people can be encouraged to minimise journey lengths for employment, shopping, leisure, education and other activities.’

The NPPF encourages the creation of vibrant sustainable local communities by providing a high quality built environment with accessible local services that reflect the community’s needs. The extended Victoria Primary School would allow for the continued use of the site, meeting demand. Due to its location within close proximity to many houses we consider that the application also satisfies the NPPF’s aim to encourage people to walk to school.
The NPPF also states under ‘Promoting Healthy Communities’, paragraph 72, page 17: ‘The Government attaches great importance to ensuring that a sufficient choice of school places is available to meet the needs of existing and new communities.’ and goes on to state that local authorities should ‘give great weight to the need to create, expand or alter schools ...’.

We consider that this application is a proactive and positive approach which meets the guidance provided within the NPPF. The school will provide much needed school places in a town which is earmarked for further residential development and, as we have already stated, will allow students to walk to school.

4.2 Local Planning Policy

North Northamptonshire Core Spatial Strategy (NNCSS) (adopted June 2008, but currently under review)

East Northamptonshire Council, Corby Council, Kettering Council and Wellingborough Council, along with Northamptonshire County Council, have worked together to create an overall town planning strategy for the area. Whilst concerned mostly with new major development, it has some text which is relevant to this application.

One of the key spatial themes stated in the NNCSS paragraph 3.6 A, page 23 is: ‘Establishing a strong network of settlements that make North Northamptonshire more self-sufficient in terms of access to jobs, shops, leisure, arts and culture, affordable homes and services such as education and training. The general approach will be to meet needs as locally as possible’.

Policy 1 on page 25, ‘Strengthening the Network of Settlements’ further emphasises this point that development will be directed at the urban core, this core being made up of the three growth towns, of which one is Wellingborough. This application allows for the continued use of the existing school and maintains self-sufficiency in terms of educational places available in Wellingborough.
Policy 6 on page 41 ‘Infrastructure Delivery and Developer Contributions’ is relevant to this application as primary and secondary schools are defined as local infrastructure in table 2, page 37 and are required to support new housing development. Policy 6 states ‘New development will be supported by the timely delivery of infrastructure, services and facilities necessary to provide balanced, more self-sufficient communities’. There is already a need for the extension of this primary school and with Wellingborough due to see further development (85,000 split over the three growth towns) there may be a further pressure on school spaces. We therefore consider that this application provides an opportunity to increase the capacity of an existing school without causing a detrimental impact on the neighbouring properties.

Policy 14, page 67, ‘Energy Efficiency and Sustainable Construction’ states under paragraph b.I, that ‘development proposals should demonstrate that ... The development incorporates techniques of sustainable construction and energy efficiency’. The proposed school building will be built to current Building Regulations, which require the building to meet current targets for sustainable construction and servicing. By adding a first floor to the existing building we are also minimising the carbon footprint of the school.

4.3 Other Relevant Planning Documentation

A search of the Wellingborough Borough Council website reveals a number of applications made on the application site. These are:

The Northamptonshire County Council website holds no further information about the development of the site.

5.0 SUITABILITY OF THE SITE AND IMPACT

The principle of developing the site is supported by planning policy at all levels as discussed above. The following sections demonstrate in more detail the site's suitability for extending the current primary school.

5.1 Accessibility

The site is well located next to existing housing areas of Finedon Road, Leys Road, Albert Road and others. The school is within an easy walking and cycling distance to the surrounding community and the south pedestrian access is well used. Regular bus services are located close by.

5.2 Traffic Impact

The site is easily access from the Finedon Road. Discussions with the Highways Department (Mr. David Jones) were held on 18th December 2012. A subsequent e-mail from Mr Jones stated:

'Although a deficiency in parking accommodation is indicated when assessed in connection with Supplementary Parking Guidance the proposals to provide additional spaces are noted and, in connection with a satisfactorily revised School Travel Plan which should discuss the choice of travel modes rather than a reliance on single occupancy motor cars, it is considered that your proposals for dealing with the parking issue may be acceptable'.
5.3 Residential and Amenity Impact

The site is surrounded by residential housing, except on the west boundary, where a large scrap yard is situated. The proposal is located within the centre of the site and against the west (scrapyard) elevation. We therefore do not consider that there will be any impact on the residents which surround the site.

We do not anticipate the increase in pupils as having any noticeable effect on the amenities of the area. Local shops and bus routes, etc., would benefit from an increased number, however this proposal is to cater for those already housed within the area and is not intended to attract new residents.

5.4 Noise Impact

The increase in pupils will have a negligible impact on the levels of noise already created by the site. The existing boundaries, which are lined with trees, currently help to minimise noise levels leaving the site. An increase in noise generated by vehicular traffic is not anticipated.

5.5 Ground Conditions/Flood Risk

The ground/soil conditions around the site are thought to be suitable for surface water soakaway drains, indeed, record drawings show at least one on the site already. Due to the nature of the proposed development there will be a negligible increase in the amount of surface water run-off from the site as a whole. The site is also not within a recognised flood zone. Therefore, it has been agreed with Northamptonshire County Council Planning Department, in pre-application discussions, that a Flood Risk Assessment is not required to accompany the Planning application.
5.6 Utilities

The existing primary school has mains connections to serve the school’s current requirements. The proposed would connect into these existing services, subject to more detailed consultation with the utilities providers.

5.7 Intensification of Use

The proposed extension will allow the school to accommodate an increase in students. We anticipate that the school’s capacity will increase from 330 to 420. There is a need for this increase and it is calculated that the existing site is capable of accommodating it. As the proposal is to be constructed over one of the existing buildings, there is no increase in the footprint of the building.

6.0 CONSULTATIONS

The following organisations have been consulted by GSSArchitecture to seek their initial feedback on the proposed scheme:

- Sport England
  Response received via e mail on 19th December 2012 from Steve Beard.

- Northamptonshire Archaeology
  Response received via e mail on 21st December 2012 from Lesley-Ann Mather.

- Northamptonshire County Highways
  Response received via e mail on 24th December 2012 from David Jones.

Copies of the responses are enclosed with the application.
PLANNING STATEMENT

Public Consultation
A public consultation session took place at Victoria Primary School on 21st November 2012. This was attended by local residents, parents of pupils, staff from the two primary schools and the nursery, as well as representatives from Northamptonshire County Council, Lend Lease (NCC’s Project Managers) and GSSArchitecture.

The discussions at the public sessions ranged from strategic issues down to the finer details of the proposed design. In terms of the actual proposals for the extension, simply as a building, the general consensus seemed to be moderately positive. However, many respondents were concerned about parking capacity, and the parent drop-off/pick-up situation. Points were noted about how busy the site is at present, and how building an extension to VPS may worsen matters. Following this feedback, the scheme was updated, wherever possible, by increasing the number of parking spaces throughout the site.

Consultation with Northamptonshire County Council Planning Department
A meeting was held on 15th November 2012 between Northamptonshire County Council Planning Department, Project Managers Lend Lease and GSSArchitecture to discuss the proposed scheme and determine the requirements for any surveys/information that need to be submitted with the Planning application.

The proposals were generally accepted by the Planners as being appropriate for the site. GSSArchitecture issued notes to record the matters discussed at the meeting, which were issued to all attendees. A copy of the notes is included with this application (see document 'Planning Meeting 01.pdf').

Following this meeting, the Planners consulted NCC’s Environmental Department, who advised that the Planning application should be accompanied by a full tree survey, and a bat survey.
7.0 CONCLUSION

We trust that this statement is sufficient to allow Northamptonshire County Council to approve our application for the extension of Victoria Primary School in Wellingborough. We have demonstrated that this application falls within all existing planning policy and will help to bridge the deficiency in need for available school places in the Northamptonshire area.

Approved and Authorised By:

Paul E. Harkin

Gotch, Saunders & Surridge LLP,
Chartered Architects, Lead Consultant
& Quantity Surveyors,
35 Headlands,
Kettering,
Northants.
NN15 7ES

PEH/dmv/Sch.104a
R01a
4th February 2013
DESIGN AND ACCESS STATEMENT

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LEND LEASE CONSULTING (EMEA) LIMITED

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also at:

GOTCH SAUNDERS & SURRIDGE LLP
Chartered Architects, Lead Consultant & Quantity Surveyors
35 Headlands
Kettering
Northants NN15 7ES
Tel: (01536) 513165
Fax: (01536) 410226
E-mail: gss@gotch.co.uk

Eden Office Park
73 Macrae Road
Bristol BS20 0DD
Tel: (01275) 378310
Fax: (01275) 373291
E-mail: gss@gotch.co.uk

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Fourth Avenue
Hornbeam Park
Harrogate HG2 8QT
Tel: (01423) 815121
Email: gss@gotch.co.uk

2 Spencer Parade
Northampton
NN1 5AA
Tel: (01604) 631919
Fax: (01604) 624016
E-mail: gss@gotch.co.uk

www.gssarchitecture.com

PEH/dmv/Sch.104a 21st January 2013
CONTENTS

INTRODUCTION

USE OF THE SITE

AMOUNT

LAYOUT

ACCESS

Appendix 1 - Consultation Feedback
Site Address: Victoria Primary School  
Finedon Road,  
Wellingborough,  
Northamptonshire  
NN8 4NT

Grid Reference: Easting 489794  
Northing 268573

Contact Details:

Applicant: Northamptonshire County Council,  
Strategic Planning,  
Customers, Communities & Learning,  
John Dryden House,  
8 - 10 The Lakes,  
Bedford Road,  
Northampton.  
NN4 7DD

Contact: Kay Ringwood (Northamptonshire County Council), tel. 01604 366892

Agent: GSSArchitecture,  
35 Headlands,  
Kettering,  
Northants.  
NN15 7ES

Contact: Paul Harkin (Project Architect, GSSArchitecture), tel. (01536) 513165
INTRODUCTION

Victoria Primary School is an existing local authority-run school, located approximately 1 mile north east of Wellingborough town centre in a predominantly residential neighbourhood. It shares a site with Rowan Gate Primary School and Highfields Nursery. It currently accommodates approximately 330 pupils aged 5-11. Each year group is composed of an approximate average of 45 pupils. Based on a typical national standard class size of 30 children, it is therefore classed as a ‘1.5 form entry’ school.

Studies by Northamptonshire County Council (NCC) have predicted a steady rise in demand for primary school places in this part of the town. To address this expected shortfall, based on the current provision of places, the County Council are proposing to increase the capacity of the existing school.

A ‘Statement of Need’ document has been prepared by the applicant, Northamptonshire County Council, a copy of which accompanies this application.

The project is centred on the enlargement of the school to ‘2 form entry’, i.e., 2 forms (classes) of 30 pupils = 60 pupils per year group. Based on 7 year groups, this gives an enlarged capacity of 7 x 60 pupils = 420 pupils total.

As will be seen from the site plan (drawing SK25) the school’s own site is relatively small in comparison to its current occupancy levels, and also as part of the overall site it shares with both Rowan Gate Primary School and Highfields Nursery. This greatly limits the options for expansion, mainly as external areas are needed for playgrounds (‘hardplay’) and sports/P.E. (softplay) activities. To limit the footprint of the new building it is proposed to build a new block directly over/on top of an existing single storey classroom block. This extension is to house 3 new classrooms, a DT/specialist room, toilets and associated ancillary spaces (stores, etc.), along with a staircore to link to ground floor level and a link bridge to connect to the existing adjacent classroom block at first floor level. The project also entails various sections of external works, most of which are of a relatively small scale.
USE OF THE SITE

The town of Wellingborough has a long history, believed to date back to the 6th century, and it is mentioned in the Domesday Book in 1086. Originally a market town, it expanded steadily during the Victorian era and into the 20th century based on the Northamptonshire shoe manufacturing industry. In the 1960s and 70s it was expanded further, with many people moving to the town from London. Its population is currently increasing again, as central government has denoted it as a ‘growth town’.

Victoria Primary School’s existing buildings were mostly built in the 1970s, in a neighbourhood predominantly comprising semi-detached and terraced housing. Since that time, various additions to the school have been built, with the last notable expansion being complete c. 2007. This comprised a new main hall and a teaching block containing six full-size classrooms.
The site is bordered on two sides by housing, with an existing pathway leading into and through the site from its southern boundary. It is thought that this pathway is not a designated footpath. To the west is a scrapyard, and to the north is Finedon Road, along with the main site entrance and sole point of vehicle access.

The majority of nearby buildings are residential houses, with a mix of late-Victorian terraces, mid-20th century semi-detached, and more recent detached and semi-detached. Almost all are two storeys high, with tiled pitched roofs and either red/clay brick or white/cream/grey colour render-finish walls.

The buildings within the confines of the site Victoria Primary School (VPS) shares with Rowan Gate Primary School and Highfields Nursery are mostly single storey, with the exception of the 2007 extension to VPS, which is two storey. As noted above, the earlier VPS buildings mostly consist of a type of school building that was built throughout Northamptonshire in the 1970s, typically consisting
of blocks with four rooms arranged around a central open area. They mostly have red brick walls, with metal doors and window frames, many of which are finished in a mid-blue colour. Almost all of the original buildings have flat felt-finish roofs. The only exceptions are an octagonal-plan extension on the north façade, with a shallow-pitch tiled roof, and the 2007 extension, which features two sections of painted aluminium standing-seam roofing in large-radius barrel-vault forms.

The building housing Rowan Gate Primary School was originally built in the 1970s, thought to coincide with the construction of the VPS buildings. It is similar in form and architectural massing, and shares the same red brick wall finishes.

Highfields Nursery is a more recent building, also finished with red brick walls but with shallow-pitched roofs of white-painted metal profile sheets and profile grey tiles.
The overall site (with all three facilities) is rectangular in plan, and is approximately 2.2 hectares in area. The plot containing only Victoria Primary School is approximately 0.5 hectares in area. It is relatively level, although there are some external steps immediately to the south of the 2007 extension as the ground drops approximately 0.5 metres in level towards its southern boundary. The conjoined VPS buildings share the same flat ground floor level, with no internal steps or ramps.

The ground/soil conditions around the site are thought to be suitable for surface water soakaway drains, indeed, record drawings show at least one on the site already, south east of the VPS buildings, which is understood to take the rainwater from the adjacent Highfields Nursery. Apart from some minor localised cases, which may be related to partly-blocked drains, there does not appear to be a problem with flooding on the site. Due to the nature of the proposed development there will be a negligible increase in the amount of surface water run-off for the site as a whole. Therefore, it has been agreed with Northamptonshire County Council Planning Department, in pre-application discussions, that a Flood Risk Assessment is not required to accompany the Planning application.

Once vehicles have gained access to the site via the controlled vehicle barrier point from Finedon Road, they are free to use any of the parking spaces within the site, apart from those marked for disabled or taxi use only. An analysis of the parking arrangements is in the Amount section below.
The plot occupied by Victoria Primary School is approximately 0.5 ha in area, set within the larger site it shares with the other two facilities, which is approximately 2.2 ha total size. It is proposed that the new extension is located entirely within the VPS plot. In addition, throughout the duration of the construction period (approximately one year) a temporary block of three classrooms is proposed for location upon the existing grass play area, to the east of VPS, as shown on drawing SK25.

As noted above, it is proposed to enlarge the capacity of the school to 2 form entry, i.e., 420 pupils. Staff numbers are predicted to increase by taking on 3 full-time and 2 part-time employees. Based on areas recommended in national guideline document Building Bulletin 99, the 3 classrooms in the proposed extension are approximately 60 m² each in area. The existing floor area of the school is approximately 1,782 m²; the area of the proposed extension is 347 m², giving a new proposed total gross internal area of 2,129 m².

At present the whole site has 75 standard parking spaces, 2 disabled parking bays, and 7 minibus spaces. Based on the guidance given in the document ‘Parking - Supplementary Planning Guidance’ from March 2003, adopted by Northamptonshire County Council and applicable to Corby, guidance note D1 (C) (1) stipulates a maximum provision of 1 space/1 full-time staff member and 1 space/2 part-time staff members. Cycle parking is based on 1 space per classroom. Based on the staff numbers of all 3 facilities on the site, this gives:
Parking Arrangements - Recommended Spaces in Accordance with Guidelines
(based on current occupancy levels)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Staff numbers</th>
<th>Car Parking spaces</th>
<th>Cycle spaces</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Victoria Primary School</td>
<td>Full-time = 48</td>
<td>48</td>
<td>55</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Part-time = 9</td>
<td>5</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rowan Gate Primary</td>
<td>Full-time = 85</td>
<td>85</td>
<td>n/a</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Part-time = 20</td>
<td>10</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Visiting professionals = 12</td>
<td>12</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Parent parking / 115 pupils (1:2)</td>
<td>58</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Highfield Nursery</td>
<td>Full-time = 12</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Part-time = 10</td>
<td>5</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td><strong>235</strong></td>
<td><strong>62</strong></td>
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</tbody>
</table>

As is evident, with the current number of spaces at 75, and the recommended requirement for 235, there is an under provision of parking spaces on the site as a whole. However, the barrier on the vehicle entrance point restricts entry into the site, thus preventing parents with children at VPS driving into the site and parking whilst dropping-off/picking-up pupils. This may be expected to cause congestion on the roads approaching the site, but due to the high proportion of pupils who live in the immediate vicinity, and the relatively good pedestrian access routes, many children walk to school with their parents/carers instead of being driven. This is in accordance with the school’s Travel Plan, a copy of which accompanies this application.

Due to the unavoidable restrictions on space available for additional parking spaces, we have included 29 additional parking spaces as part of the current proposals, as shown on site plan drawing SK25, taking the total to (77 + 29) = 106 spaces. This was discussed with Northamptonshire County Council Highways Department during a pre-application consultation, and the initial response was that the proposals “may be acceptable”.
In accordance with the above-mentioned parking guidance document, 10% (11 no.) of the total number of spaces would be for disabled use. However, following consultation with all three establishments who share the site, the priority appears to be to maximise the number of parking spaces above the current level. As there are numerous locations on the site at present where disabled people are permitted to park by the site management, providing additional disabled parking spaces does not appear to be a priority. Given the constraints on site area, and the greater area required for disabled versus standard parking spaces (i.e., 3.6 metres width versus 2.4 metres) it is proposed to designate only one.

**Cycle Parking**

Following the guidelines given in the aforementioned ‘Parking - Supplementary Planning Guidance’ document, a primary school should have 5 spaces/classroom. VPS currently has 11 classrooms, so 5 spaces x 11 classrooms = 55 cycle spaces. With 3 additional classrooms the number would increase to 5 spaces x 14 classrooms = 70 cycle spaces.

However, it is thought that this would be a large over-provision. This is primarily due to the young age of most of the pupils, meaning relatively few of them cycle to school (the school’s Travel Plan notes only 5 do so at present).

Therefore, it is proposed that a lower number of 12 spaces would be more appropriate. If, through use, it emerged that this number was too low, the layout of the site would allow for further spaces to be added at a later date.

**Travel Plan**

Travel Plans from all three facilities that share the site accompany this application.
Site Access Strategy

The proposed site constraints are shown on GSSArchitecture drawing SK24. This indicates in approximate terms the site layout during the construction phase. Due to the extremely constricted layout of the site as a whole, with the presence of the two primary schools and the nursery, the construction phase layout has been discussed at length with staff from all 3 facilities to attempt to minimise disruption due to the building works.

Earlier in the design process it was proposed to use the site’s main entrance from Finedon Road as the access/egress for all construction vehicles and deliveries. After due consideration, it has been proposed that this access is impractical in terms of size. It also potentially creates greater congestion and potential health and safety risks as main site traffic, pedestrians and school traffic will share the same circulation space. Instead, it is proposed that the majority of construction vehicles enter the site via a temporary access point from Paling Close, from the east of the site. It should be noted that this is subject to negotiations and a formal agreement with East Midlands Housing Association, who own the section of car park over which the site access route would pass.

The site compound would be on the existing grass area adjacent to the MUGA. Access to the works area would be via a separated route around the edge of the playground, with other access across the main playground outside of school use times. Any very large vehicle (such as a crane) would still need to access the site via the main school entrance as Paling Close is not thought to be sufficiently wide to accommodate them.
LAYOUT

Elevations – External Finishes

Please refer to the elevation drawings SK22 and SK31. After consultation with the school, it was established that the timber cladding on the extension completed in 2007 is well-liked. Therefore, sections of this material have been incorporated into the more prominent parts of the façade, such as those facing north towards the main entrance. Smaller sections of timber have been added to other more visible areas, such as the corner of the staircore, to act as accents to balance the more utilitarian render areas in less prominent areas.

Selected areas are finished in coloured resin boards, such as those manufactured by Trespa. This is located in small sections on the most prominent parts of the facades. The various shades of blue reference the colour of parts of the extension completed in 2007, which features blue colour door and window frames. Similarly, the windows of the proposed extension feature some sections of ‘spandrel’ panels (solid metal infill sections) normally where there are workbenches located behind, inside the building. These are in a similar blue colour to the resin boards.

The overall height of the proposed extension is intended to match as close as possible the top level of the adjacent two-storey classroom block.
Landscape Proposals – Existing Trees

There are a large number of existing mature trees within the school site, most of which are located close to the site boundary. As far as is known, none of the trees have tree protection orders (TPOs) associated with them. There is a large tree adjacent to the proposed extension. As the canopy of this tree clashes with the volume of the proposed staircore, at the very least this tree will have to be cut back to allow the construction of the staircore. However, it is currently proposed to remove the tree completely as it is thought that the cut-back tree will appear quite unsightly. In addition, when it grows back, it may grow directly up against the staircore. This will obstruct access to the staircore in terms of general building maintenance, hence the proposal to remove the tree.

A tree survey has been carried out by an arboriculturalist. Upon publication of the survey report GSS consulted NCC Planning Department to discuss how to proceed in respect of the trees. The pre-application view of the Planners was that the proposed removal of the tree may be acceptable, pending full consideration as part of the planning application assessment. The tree survey is enclosed with this Planning application.
ACCESS

The existing extent of the school is entirely on one ground floor level. The ground floor level of the proposed staircore that forms part of the proposed extension is set at the same level. Similarly, the first floor level of the proposed extension matches that of the extension built in 2007. This allows the link bridge between the two structures to be level. The link bridge also provides a means of access for disabled people up to the first floor level of the proposed extension, via the lift in the 2007 extension. This maximises accessibility throughout the interior.

Widths and configurations of corridors, lobbies and door openings have all been set up accordingly to comply with Building Regulations Part M. This methodology will also apply to the exterior approach and general use and circulation throughout the site, wherever proposed works will take place.