PLANNING SUPPORT STATEMENT

7 New Classrooms with Ancillary Facilities and Hall Extension
Greenfields Primary School
Highfields Road, Kettering, Northamptonshire, NN15 6HY

for

Northamptonshire County Council (c/o Lend Lease)

prepared by

Peter Haddon and Partners Architects

February 2013

Revision B
Planning Policy Framework

The purpose of this section is to outline the local, regional and national planning policy context for the planning application site. A summary of the relevant policy and guidance is provided below.

Regional and Local Plan Policy

Localised Policy and guidance is provided in the North Northamptonshire Core Spatial Strategy. We have taken reference from those we believe are relevant to the proposed development and the design of the building extensions and site works take this into account, which is outlined in greater detail further on in this document.

The proposed scheme and development, albeit in a small but significant way, meets some of the key criteria that have been highlighted within the Core Spatial Strategy. The vision for North Northamptonshire within the strategy expresses a number of objectives, which this scheme targets;

- **Objective One** – Green living. By enabling the school to have more pupils enrolling, the number of local residents who would be forced to drive their children to another school will be reduced. In addition, the new buildings will be constructed to meet and in many cases exceed the recommended standards for thermal elements, use of energy and construction methods. These approaches meet the criteria of Policy 5.
- **Objective Three** – Networks of Settlements. By upgrading Greenfields Primary School we are enriching the established Highfield Road Estate centre and community setting. The scheme also enables the public to use the facilities provided by the development, maintaining the position within the community and the wider area as a whole. This meets the targets set out in Policy 1 and Policy 9.
- **Objective Four** – Town Centre Focus. Having the increased local facility for the community will make the Greenfields School and Highfield Road Estate more self-sufficient and the heart of the community, as outlined in Policies 1 and 8.
- **Objective six** – Infrastructure and services. The additional facilities at the school will sustain and enhance the existing community.
- The extension to the Hall in particular, improves the provision for possible extended community use, maintaining the role of the school as a focus of the local area. This has been designed to enable it to become a stand-alone unit, securely segregated from the rest of the school for evening and weekend events. We believe that this addresses the needs of policy 13A and 13C of the North Northamptonshire Core Spatial Strategy (NNCSS) by providing space of community use that is both flexible in its nature, and creating an accessible local community resource for the Highfield Road Estate.
- **The Development addresses the requirements of policy 13E of the NNCSS**, by the inclusion within the development of a new zebra crossing adjacent to the existing entrance, giving clear priority to the pedestrians entering the site through the personnel gate. Dedicated cycle parking provision is to be installed to encourage staff and pupils to cycle to school by providing a secure facility for the storage of bicycles. As part of the works to increase safety of the school staff and pupils an automatic security barrier system forms part of the development to ensure that the site car park is secure and only accessed by authorised members of staff and visitors. We believe that these upgraded facilities will in part encourage a shift in the way that the school is accessed and will in part address policies 13D (through the provision of new car parking), 13J
and 13K of the NNCSS by promoting alternative means of transport as part of a healthy active lifestyle within the local community.

- We believe that the developments meets the requirements of policy 13G of the NNCSS, the area lost to the development to the south of the school are currently fenced off and are not used for recreation or play either by the school of the local community due to the gradient of the land and its enclosure by a security fence.

- We believe the design/location of the building extensions will not result in an unacceptable impact on the amenities of neighbouring properties or the wider area, by reasons of noise, vibration, smell, light or other pollution, loss of light or overlooking, meeting the requirements of policy 13I of the NNCSS.

- We have also included for increased security throughout the site in terms of new controlled access points both to the building and car park, secure windows and doors, low level external lighting to the exterior and to design the building in such a way as to reduce the numbers of recesses. This is in response to the need to design out anti-social behaviour, crime and reduce the fear of crime by applying the principles of the ‘Secured by Design’ scheme, meeting the requirements of policy 13B of the NNCSS.

National Policy Guidance

The Communities and Local Government National Planning Policy Framework and supporting guidance document sets out criteria for effective and appropriate developments which can be supported by the Local Planning Authority. We highlight some key aspects of the proposed scheme relative to the objectives and aims of the Framework noted above, in support of the proposed application.

- We believe the proposal is to a high standard of architectural design, maximising the benefits of natural light and ventilation whilst respecting the scale, form and materials of the existing buildings. In Particular, following extensive debate with the school, local residents and school governors, we have proposed a design utilising similar materials and principles as the existing to maintain the current aesthetic.

- The extensions are a result of a specific requirement from increasing pupil numbers (as explained in more detail in a later section) and therefore it is critical to maintaining adequate school provision in the surrounding area.

- We have engaged with the local community by way of a public consultation and feedback process to ensure that the project moves forward to satisfy the needs of all, as far as practicable, and the submitted design takes account of all this previous development and refinement (refer to later section for further explanation).

- The location of the extensions have been carefully considered to minimise the impact on any loss of external playground space (refer to later section for further explanation), with any loss being replicated on the site.
Design Background

Greenfields Primary School is situated within the Highfield Road Estate, which is located approximately 1 mile south of Kettering Town Centre. The school was originally built in the post war era of red brick walls with ribbon glazing and flat felt roofs.

The community school is part of the post war development of the Highfield Road estate in Kettering. The estate is built along the Bryant Road, Highfiled Road and is comprised of a mix of 1950’s semi-detached housing and more modern Blocks of flats. The area is bordered by Victorian red brick terraced streets to the North, The Pytchley Road (A509) to the East, the Midland Main Line to the South. The school and its adjoining playing fields form the western border of the Highfield Road Estate.
The site (shown pink) of the Primary School is not within a Conservation area and the current buildings are not Listed, as indicated by the map image below (extracted from the Kettering Local Plan Map on the Kettering Borough Council Website).

Although the current site is not built on protected land, the new extension will encroach onto the existing playing fields (site - 88), however the intrusion in minimal and the new extension will be built over an existing area of the playing fields that is fenced off and is currently unsuitable for sports or recreation.
Proposed Area playing fields to be replaced by key stage 2 extension
The school is formed arranged in 3 distinct blocks, a large Assembly Hall and Staff Facilities to the North West of the site, the Key Stage 1 classrooms to the North East (linked to an autonomous Children’s Centre), and the Key Stage 2 Classrooms to the south of the site linked by a central administrative core and library area. The Hall, Administrative core and Key Stage 2 classrooms form 3 sides of a central courtyard, with hard standing play areas to the North and West of the building.

Much of the site is taken up by the existing school buildings and hard standing play areas. The Soft play area predominantly consists of a grassed playing field to the south of the site, with an area for the use of the reception classes and Children’s Centre to the sandwiched between the existing car park and the Key Stage 1 classrooms & Children’s Centre buildings to the west of the main school.

**Environment Agency**
The site is not located within an area of potential flood risk, as illustrated on the attached map extract taken from the Environment Agency website.
Greenfields Primary, Kettering (NN15 6HY): supporting planning statement
(Provided by NCC)

Introduction

Greenfields Primary School in Kettering (formerly called Highfields) is currently a one form of entry primary school (total of 210 pupils) adjacent to Bishop Stopford Secondary School in the south of the town. Like many parts of the county, there is a rising demand for primary school places from both an increasing birth rate and in-migration, plus, in this case, some local housing development. An extension is underway at Brambleside Primary School in the north of the town, there is currently consultation regarding expansion proposals at St Andrews nearer the town centre, and this proposal for Greenfields will provide additional capacity in the Highfields part of the town. The school organisation statutory consultation processes have already been completed and Cabinet has approved (4 September 2012) the expansion proposals and contract award subject to planning permission being granted. The expansion proposals were also supported by Kettering Borough Council.

Scope of scheme

The school has a very large site with ample playing-fields, so offers plenty of scope for extension. A scheme has been developed that provides sufficient accommodation for a two form entry primary school (total of 420 pupils):

- 7 new classrooms and associated toilets and storage
- extension to the hall to provide studio and kitchen
- additional car-parking capacity
- some re-organisation of existing accommodation

The total new build floor area is 741 sq m. The pupil roll is already increasing, as the school was asked to take additional numbers from September 2011. The total roll will increase gradually by 30 pupils per year. Over 75% of the pupils in Reception this term are either sibling links or from the NN15 6** postcode.

There is a growing confidence in the school and a new Headteacher was appointed for September 2012. The plans for the extension have been developed with her input and the support of the Governing Body. Pre-planning public consultation for parents and local residents took place on Wednesday 5 December 2012, but only two comments were received; one positive comment seeing it as moving the school forward and one comment regarding the extra parental traffic.

Funding

A Feasibility Study has been completed by Lend Lease with an estimated budget requirement for the scheme of £2.5m. Topographical surveys have been completed and allowance has been made for an extended programme to allow for the phasing of the works. Several decants will be needed in order to keep the school safe and operational during construction, with a clear segregation of construction. The access and car-parking are also shared by the Children’s Centre and the Hospital & Outreach Service, and their operations will need to be considered throughout.
The capital funding arrangements for the scheme were approved at the Council’s Capital Investment Board in December 2012. The business case includes £49,000 of developer contributions from small housing developments in Thurston Drive, Dalkeith Place and Thornton House.
**Design Considerations**

The primary brief and *raison d'être* for the scheme is to provide the school with 7 new classrooms with associated storage, to BB99 standards, to allow the school to become a full 2 form entry Primary school. An expanded Hall and kitchen facilities will enable the school to provide hot school meals for the pupils, and also allow the lunchtimes to be organised more efficiently. The expanded Hall will also facilitate space for sports/drama/assemblies to suit the expanded size of the school.

Following site visits and discussions with the school, we have explored various options for siting and arrangement of the required new building elements, taking account of the need to reduce the impact of building on the existing playing areas, which is a very important principle of the design. The proposed developments were separated into 3 main elements; the expanded Hall and the 2 classroom extensions, one for key stage 1 with 3 classrooms and a second for key stage 2 with 4 classrooms new WC provision and a Teaching and Breakout Area.

As part of the design process, several options were explored to create the additional classrooms and Hall facilities that were required by the school. These included siting a new extensions 2 storey within the existing courtyard space or to the south of the existing school – but this would reduce the natural light to the existing corridors and classrooms, and detract from the established linear form of the school. As the scheme developed, it became clear that maintaining the single storey form of the existing buildings would reduce the impact on the school and would provide the opportunity to link the two parts.

The location of the new studio has been positioned to minimise the visual impact from the main entrance to the school, and the relocation of the existing staffroom to a central location within the school means that along with the new kitchen facilities a flexible facility will be created that can be segregated out for hours for use by the wider community.

The classroom extensions have been positioned to maintain the two distinct key stage areas within the school, separated by the central administrative core of the school, with the new staffroom created in the existing ICT to suite.

The Key Stage 1 classrooms are to be located to the north of the existing Reception and Key Stage 1 class provision, off the existing corridor linking the main school to the Multipurpose Room, as part of this extension, additional hard standing will be added to the playground to accommodate the increase in pupil numbers.

The key Stage 2 classrooms will be constructed to the south of the existing Key Stage 2 classrooms linked by a new corridor inserted through an existing oversized classroom. These classrooms will be served by their own WC provision off a breakout and teaching space.

A 2 mobile classroom block is proposed to be sited adjacent to the Key Stage 1 Playground to the North of the existing School to provide adequate classroom provision on site for the academic year commencing September 2013.
Above is the proposed and adopted scheme, showing the link corridor to the new Key Stage 2 extension.

Proposed view toward the new Hall Studio and dinning store extension.
Above is the proposed south elevation treatment for the key Stage 2 extension.

Above is the proposed north elevation treatment for the key Stage 1 extension.

Above is the proposed elevations with the new extensions (coloured) and the existing (grey)
The proposal retains the existing school external play facilities as much as practicable, with expanded hard play areas being provided for anticipated increase in pupil numbers. The areas of existing green space to the south of the school that are to be lost are currently unusable for sports and recreation due to existing hedges, fence and gradients. To the north of the Key Stage 1 extension additional hard standing is being created with the existing play equipment and benches being relocated. The school has ample playing fields to the south of the existing buildings, and therefore any loss of green space or soft play areas due to new the extensions will be minimal. All existing trees removed as part of this development will be replaced on a like for like basis.

The new classrooms have been designed to create bright and airy rooms, with both high and low level windows for cross ventilation. The new Hall Studio extension has been designed to link with the existing school to create a flexible multi use space that is suitable for the growing needs of the school and the local community.

As part of the scheme, significant refurbishment is proposed to the existing buildings, a new IT suite will be created in the existing Teaching kitchen, a new staffroom in the now redundant IT suite. The existing teaching kitchen facilities will be re-provisioned in the existing multi-purpose room and servery. Also, the existing classrooms and corridor areas affected by the works will undergo some refurbishment. These works will have been designed to better match the available space to the facilities within the school to complement the new extensions and increase in pupil numbers, ensuring that the 2 distinct Key Stage remain separate and are linked by a central administrative core.

The building construction will be designed to exceed the requirements of the Building Regulations in terms of thermal performance and incorporate such environmentally sustainable elements as low energy light fittings and dual flush low water use toilets/taps.

The elevation design has been developed to be sympathetic to the scale of the existing buildings using a palette of robust and durable materials, to create a new dynamic contrast to the existing school buildings whilst retaining the essential; geometric form of the school.

The scale of the proposed extensions takes reference from the existing school. The new classroom blocks have similar parapet heights to the existing classroom wings to preserve the hierarchy with the building. The studio extension has been designed to extend the existing mass of the existing Hall with a new distinct visual style that will link the design of the new and existing school buildings.
Statement of Community Involvement and Consultations

A Public Consultation was held at the School on 05th December 2012. Invitations were issued to school parents, pupils, local residents and parish councillors.

Questionnaire and feedback forms were available to allow comments and possible concerns to be expressed, together with representatives from Northamptonshire County Council, Lend Lease, the School and pHp Architects being present to respond to queries raised and provide accurate information and clarification.

The response received both at the event and on the feedback forms was very positive, with no negative comments received at all, notably:

- The creation of additional shared teaching and break out spaces, was positively received by the parents, students and school staff who were excited with the possibility of these additional learning areas.

- The proposed Hall extension was seen as a very positive addition for the school. The extra space and possibility to be used by local inhabitants was commented very positively by parents, teacher and students who attended the consultation.

Sport England
We have consulted with Sport England on the proposed scheme. The Sport England have reviewed the scheme and we have received no significant comments.

The Highway Authority
We have consulted with the Highways Authority who have stated that there are no local Highway requirements associated with this scheme. A pedestrian survey was requested by the Highways Agency and forms part of this application. The survey was conducted on the 1st February 2013; the report states that due to the low volume of traffic, no additional pedestrian crossing will be required.
DESIGN & ACCESS STATEMENT

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Revision A
DESIGN BASIS

pHp Philosophy Statement:

Peter Haddon and Partners Architects are committed to a policy of equality, inclusion and accessibility achievable through good design. The basic right for access to and use of buildings for all is recognised as the most fundamental basis upon which the design should be established. The design process offers an opportunity to maximise individuals’ abilities to enjoy a safe and, wherever possible, independent participation. It is recognised that all individuals have a range of abilities which vary greatly and some of which may be impaired requiring consideration upon the Designer’s part to ensure that as wide a range of abilities as possible are accommodated. The design process is unique for each development as the distinctive requirements for a Client/End User will be specific to that project. For this reason we view the Client/End User as a part of the Design Team to ensure that the ‘inclusive design for all’ philosophy is adopted from the inception stage.

As Designers, we endeavour to work to the latest legislation and good practice guidance available at the time, also taking into account advice and comments received as a result of consultations with Access Consultants and Local Groups. It is the aim of the practice to adopt the guidance from these sources so far as is reasonably practical for the type and nature of the building, the restrictions of the site and the intended occupiers.

In accordance with advice published by the Commission for Architecture and the Built Environment (CABE) in connection with Design and Access Statements, the process has been fully informed by a consideration of issues, including:

- Use: what buildings and spaces will be used for;
- Amount: how much would be built on the site;
- Layout: how the buildings and spaces will be arranged on the site and the relationship between them and the buildings and spaces around the site;
- Scale: how big the buildings and spaces would be;
- Landscaping: how open spaces will be treated to enhance and protect the character of a place;
- Appearance: what the buildings and spaces will look like;
- Vehicular and Transport Links;
- Inclusive Access: how everyone can get to and move through the place on equal terms regardless of age, disability, ethnicity or social grouping.
USE / AMOUNT

This proposal is to construct three new elements for the school; A new studio extension to the existing hall with kitchen, stage & dining stores, and internal alterations to the existing welfare facilities. The second is a triple classroom extension with stores to the north of the key stage 1 corridor. The third extension of 4 classrooms with stores, WC’s and break out teaching area is linked to the south of the existing key stage 2 corridor by a new linking corridor.

These works coincide with internal alterations that will provide a new IT suite in the existing Teaching kitchen, a new staffroom in the now redundant IT suite. The existing teaching kitchen facilities will be re-provisioned in the existing multi-purpose room and servery. Also, the existing classrooms and corridor areas affected by the works will undergo some refurbishment.

The studio extension is to be built to the west of the existing hall; the studio will be linked to the existing hall via a full height acoustic screen, creating a flexible assembly, dining and multiuse space adequate for the needs of the expanding school and local community. The existing staffroom will be reconfigured to form a new kitchen area to serve the schools increased occupancy, with 2 secure storage areas for stage and dining equipment.

The key stage 1 extension will be accessed from the existing corridor serving the existing reception and year 1 classrooms. The new extension will link directly onto the corridor with additional access from the tarmac playground to the north. To maintain the existing access from the corridor to the playground a new access door will be added to the east end of the corridor. The existing link corridor will be redecorated with new coat pegs and shoe racks added.

The key stage 2 extension will be accessed through a new corridor inserted through an existing classroom (still exceeding the minimum space standards). The 4 new classrooms with stores will be accessed from a common teaching and breakout space. The new classrooms will be provided with their own WC provision and coat pegs.

The new extensions to the hall and key stage 1 are to be built on areas of existing hard standing; the areas of playground lost will be replicated with extension to the playgrounds to the north and east.

The key stage 2 extension is to be built over an existing area of stepped landscaping adjacent to the existing playing fields, the ground drops away from the level of the existing school making the landscaping lost unsuitable for sports or recreational use.

The existing floor level of the original school buildings is to be maintained throughout the new extensions ensuring accessibility throughout the school is retained, with the new extension all providing or maintaining level accesses throughout the teaching areas of the school.

LAYOUT

The primary brief for the scheme is to expand the school from 1FE to 2 FE which results in the requirement to provide 7no additional classrooms, stores, toilets, expanded staff room, Kitchen and Studio/hall. Following site visits and a review of the existing building and potential areas on the site for expansion, various schemes were prepared to illustrate a range of different options that were available for expansion/re-configuration of the existing buildings.

These scheme options have been reviewed with the school and NCC/Lend Lease project team, with the preferred arrangement drawing on the benefits of different layouts. A topographical site survey has been undertaken and the scheme design has now been prepared on the basis of this detailed information.
The proposal involves single storey extensions arranged around the existing school complex to create 7no. additional classrooms with associated stores (to best suit the Key Stage 1 and 2 areas).

A new Studio/Hall will be provided adjacent to the existing Hall with associated storage for PE equipment, staging and dining furniture. A new Kitchen will be constructed to allow the school to provide Hot School Meals (via an established Catering provider).

The layout has been formulated to locate the new Kitchen adjacent to the Hall (maximising benefit in terms of distance but also utilising the existing windows/service connections of the existing Staff room), with the stage and dining furniture store being provided towards the end of this new ‘wing’ extension.

We have carefully considered the location of the new extensions on the site, respecting the existing levels, retaining functional external areas and the arrangement of existing buildings. In particular, the design takes account significant level difference to the south of the site, with the new key stage 2 extension being built out of the ground to ensure a level transition between the new and existing school is maintained.

A temporary 2 classroom mobile block is to be positioned on the north of the site adjacent to the new KS1 playground extension to accommodate the projected increased intake for the academic year 2013-2014 and will be used during construction of the new permanent classrooms due for occupation for the 2014-2015 academic year. The position classroom block has been carefully considered to minimise the disruption for pupils during construction and landscaping of the site.

As part of the design process, several options were explored to create the additional classrooms and Hall facilities that were required by the school. These included siting a new extensions 2 storey within the existing courtyard space or to the south of the existing school – but this would reduce the natural light to the existing corridors and classrooms, and detract from the established linear form of the school. As the scheme developed, it became clear that maintaining the single storey form of the existing buildings would reduce the impact on the school and would provide the opportunity to link the two parts.

The location of the new studio has been positioned to minimise the visual impact from the main entrance to the school, and the relocation of the existing staffroom to a central location within the school means that along with the new kitchen facilities a flexible facility will be created that can be segregated for out 0f hours use by the wider community.

The classroom extensions have been positioned to maintain the two distinct key stage areas within the school, separated by the central administrative core of the school, with the new staffroom created in the existing ICT to suite.

We believe that the layout serves to improve facilities for both the school and the wider community. The additional facilities for the school will enable them to increase their intake of students to the required levels and provide use of their expanded facilities to the local community in Kettering.

**SCALE**

The scale of the new extensions has been designed to reflect the existing Red brick and flat roof of the existing original mid-century school built in the late 1940’s. The new classrooms are to be constructed to echo the linear form and scale of the existing school. The new link corridor and teaching and break out space to the new key stage 2 classroom extension is to be a lower flat roof mirroring the lower roof heights of the over the circulation spaces in the existing school, keeping the mass of the extension to a minimum whilst retaining the essential scales and character of the original school. The new extensions will faced with high performance render and curtain walling to contrast with the existing red buildings, with bold geometric designs; respecting the scale and form of the existing buildings, whilst
simultaneously looking forward with the use of modern materials and techniques to create light, modern sympathetic extensions to the existing buildings that retain their essential character.

The new studio has been designed to match the existing parapet height of the Hall, creating a visual continuation of the hall; however, the new studio extension will be differentiated from the existing hall by the use of modern high performance render panels and glazed elements framed in brickwork (to closely match the existing school). The new dining store extension to the rear of the hall will maintain the subservient parapet height of the existing staffroom and welfare facilities, with a render and brickwork construction to mirror the larger extension to the hall.

The scale and height of the buildings satisfy the requirements for each space within and the building elements are designed using plan widths/roof pitches appropriate with the scale and form of the existing building on the site.

**LANDSCAPE**

As part of the application: an Arboricultural Impact Assessment has been undertaken, the report has identified that there are several mature trees on the site which are respected by the design proposal; however, 19No. trees and 2 sections of hedge and 1 section of bush are required to be removed to allow for the construction of the new extensions.

The construction of the key stage 2 extension and linking corridor will require the removal of 9No. trees and an existing Leyland Cyprus hedge.

1no. tree is to be removed to allow for the construction of the new car park extension.

5no. existing trees are to be removed for the expansion of the playground to the north of the key stage 1 extension.

4no. existing trees and a section of low bushes are to be removed to allow the siting of the temporary classrooms required due to the schools expansion.

The Arboricultural Impact Assessment states that the trees to be removed are ‘predominantly small and recently planted’, and that to offset this loss in existing landscaping replacement trees will be planted on a like for like basis as part of this project, and as a result of this there will be ‘little loss net loss in terms of biomass or amenity value’.

The locations of the new planting are indicated on the plans submitted as part of this application.

**VEHICULAR AND TRANSPORT LINKS**

The existing car park is accessed from Highfield Road. As part of the works, the existing car park is to be expanded to accommodate the increase in staffing numbers with a new automatic barrier entrance system being installed to improve site security.

To service the new kitchen at the rear of the school a new access road is to be constructed to the south of the key stage 2 extension for occasional delivery access.
INCLUSIVE ACCESS

All building extensions are located and designed to achieve mostly level approach from existing adjoining pathways with maximum 1:20 gradients to localised areas. External lighting will be provided at 10-50 lux to all approach paths.

The entrances will be fully DDA compliant with level threshold. The entrance area flooring will be carpet style barrier matting which is inherently slip resistant.

The internal corridors and passageways are generally a minimum of 1.8m wide. All internal floors are level. Collision hazards are avoided and passing places provided by utilising corridors of these widths.

Colour contrast of at least 20 points Light Reflectance Value (LRV) will be provided between walls and floors, floors and ceilings. Colour contrast of at least 20 points Light Reflectance Value (LRV) is to be provided between door/door frames and surrounding walls, door face and leading edge of non self closing doors and between ironmongery and doors.

Ironmongery door handles will be selected to meet the requirements of BS8300 to be operable with one hand using closed fist. All doors are designed to provide minimum clear opening widths, measured to the face of any protruding Ironmongery, to comply with Building Regulations AD part M table 2. Doors on access routes are fitted with vision panels towards the leading edge to provide minimum zone of vision between 500mm and 1500mm from floor level.