Planning Report

Wootton Hall Park
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1 Introduction

The Applicant

1.1 This planning application is submitted by JLL, on behalf of the Education Funding Agency (EFA) and Wootton Hall Park School, for a proposed development at Northampton Police Headquarters, Wootton Hall Park, Northampton, NN4 0JQ. The proposal is for the erection of a temporary modular building for Educational Use (Class D1) on the open green space opposite the Police Site.

1.2 This Planning Statement provides an assessment of the proposed development against the provisions of the Statutory Development Plan covering the site, National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) and other material considerations.

The Proposed Development

1.3 The proposed development comprises the erection of temporary modular buildings for a temporary period of 3 years. The modular buildings need to be ready for the first year’s intake in September 2016 with their removal planned no later August 2019.

1.4 The formal description of the development which is subject to the application for full planning permission is:

“Erection of a temporary modular units and associated external alterations for educational use (Use Class D1) for a temporary period of three years (September 2016 – August 2019)”

Wootton Hall Park

1.5 This application relates to the temporary accommodation for Wootton Hall Park School, comprising an all through school, 2 Form Entry Primary School and a 4 Form Entry Secondary School. At full capacity the temporary school accommodation will comprise 540 students. The proposed location for the permanent site for the school is Northamptonshire Police Headquarters, this will form part of a separate application to Northamptonshire County Council (NCC). However, to allow the school to open in September 2016 temporary accommodation is required.

1.6 During the period that the School is in temporary accommodation, the Police HQ will be vacated on a gradual basis in order to make way for the construction of the permanent School. The phasing of the relocation of the Police is subject to ongoing negotiation.

Pre-Application Advice

1.7 Prior to the submission of the application, there has been engagement with Northamptonshire County Council (NCC) regarding the submission of the proposed temporary modular units. Planning Officers have informally commented on the indicative location of the proposed temporary units. The transport consultants have also engaged with the transport officers to agree information requirements for submission.

Contents

1.8 The statement is set out as follows:

- Section 2 – provides a description of the site and the surroundings;
• Section 3 – describes the proposed development;
• Section 4 – summarises the relevant national and local planning policies;
• Section 5 – sets out the case for planning permission;
• Section 6 – presents the overall conclusions

Supporting Documents

1.9 In addition to this Planning Statement, the following are submitted as part of the planning application:
• Planning application forms (including ownership and agricultural certificates), signed and dated;
• Drawings of Proposed and Existing by Architecture Initiative;
• Design and Access Statement (DAS) by Architecture Initiative;
• Planning Statement by JLL;
• Transport Assessment by Robert West;
• Travel Plan by Robert West;
• Arboricultural Report by Lockhart Garratt;
• Ecological Report by Lockhart Garratt;
• Drainage Report by Mace; and
• External Lighting Report by Mace.
2 The Site and Surroundings

The Site

2.1 The proposed site comprises the location of the open green area at Wootton Hall Park to the northern edge of the Northamptonshire Police Headquarters. The site is currently a greenspace area used by the police for training purposes. We are also aware that NCC Sports & Social Club to the north of the ‘Site’ occasionally utilise the sports pitches marked out in this area. The market out cricket pitch to the east of the site is outside the site boundary and will not be affected by the temporary proposals.

2.2 Northamptonshire police headquarters lie adjacent to the site. The site is not within a conservation area, although Delapre Park and Hardingston conservation areas sit to the north and north east of the site. Trees found to the North West entrance of the development boundary are protected. The trees which line the access road to the site have TPOs.

2.3 Wootton Hall Park is recognised as NCC private recreational land, excluding the area of the park utilised and owned by the Police, where the temporary cabin is located.

2.4 The Local Plan describes Wootton Hall Park as the following; “The park comprises a mix of paddock, (principally in the north east corner), sports fields and mature trees, mostly around the boundary. It is the setting for Wootton Hall which is used as police headquarters. The park in its entirety provides an attractive landscape in contrast to the office, residential development and ring road which surrounds it”.

2.5 None of the buildings on site are listed and the site is not within an area of archaeological significance

2.6 Access to the site is taken from the main access road into Wootton Hall Park. Cars will then access the school through a separate access off the main access road. Wootton Hall Park is located south of Northampton town centre and is accessed via the A5076.
The Surrounding Area

2.7 The site is located within an area with a mix of uses. To the north of the site is Northamptonshire Record Office; to the east are residential dwellings and beyond a garden centre and supermarket. To the south and west are residential dwellings.

2.8 The site is located just outside of Northampton town centre in the East Hunsbury. The site is situated next to the A45 to the east which connects Milton Keynes and Northampton, and the A5076 to the north which runs along the south of Northampton.

2.9 The immediate area is predominately rural in character comprising of semi-detached and detached dwellings.
## 3 Planning History

### 3.1 A review of the online statutory planning register provided by NCC has revealed a number of planning history records for the site, particularly regarding temporary accommodation.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Reference number</th>
<th>Proposal</th>
<th>Decision</th>
<th>Decision date</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>N/2009/0851</td>
<td>Retention of various temporary portacabin type office buildings.</td>
<td>APPROVAL - Full Planning Permission</td>
<td>04/01/2010</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>N/2006/0771</td>
<td>Retention of various temporary portacabin type office buildings.</td>
<td>APPROVAL - Full Planning Permission</td>
<td>05/09/2006</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>N/2004/0172</td>
<td>Footpath and cycleway link and vehicular exit only to Hardwick road and vehicular turning area</td>
<td>WITHDRAWN</td>
<td>05/04/2004</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>N/2004/0173</td>
<td>Demolition of existing and erection of new store building with link to Wootton Hall House - outline application</td>
<td>APPROVAL - Outline Planning Permission</td>
<td>23/07/2004</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>N/2003/1401</td>
<td>Extension to existing garage mv workshop</td>
<td>APPROVAL - Full Planning Permission</td>
<td>23/12/2003</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>N/2002/0001</td>
<td>Two storey modular building</td>
<td>APPROVAL - Full Planning Permission</td>
<td>13/02/2002</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>N/2001/1514</td>
<td>Variation of condition no. 1 of planning permission n/2001/511 for extension of time for removal of office units a and b (retrospective)</td>
<td>APPROVAL - Full Planning Permission</td>
<td>30/01/2002</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>N/2000/1317</td>
<td>Retention and erection of temporary office units (part retrospective) (as amended by revised drawings and photographs received 24 January 2001).</td>
<td>APPROVAL - Full Planning Permission</td>
<td>07/03/2001</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>N/2000/1318</td>
<td>Alterations and extension to car park (as amended by revised drawings received 24 January 2001).</td>
<td>APPROVAL - Full Planning Permission</td>
<td>07/03/2001</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>N/2000/244</td>
<td>Temporary office accommodation comprising 3no. Single storey and 1no. Two storey units.</td>
<td>APPROVAL - Full Planning Permission</td>
<td>26/04/2000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>N/1996/719</td>
<td>Firearms, public order training centre and car park to be used for training purposes, at Wootton Hall Park, Northampton</td>
<td>APPROVAL - Full Planning Permission</td>
<td>20/11/1996</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ref.</td>
<td>Description</td>
<td>Approval Type</td>
<td>Date</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>----------</td>
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<td>--------------------------------</td>
<td>------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>N/1996/580</td>
<td>Single-storey extension to existing sports hall to provide new fitness training room at police headquarters, Wootton Hall Park, Northampton.</td>
<td>APPROVAL - Full Planning Permission</td>
<td>18/09/1996</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
4  The Proposal

4.1  The following section outlines the details of the development proposal. Further details are set out in the Design and Access Statement.

4.2  The formal description of development which is subject to the application for full planning permission is:

“Erection of a temporary modular units and associated external alterations for educational use (Use Class D1) for a temporary period of three years (September 2016 – August 2019)”

4.3  Eventually, Wootton Hall Park School will be an all-through school, comprising of a 2 Form Entry Primary School and a 4 Form Entry Secondary School, with 1,290 students at full capacity (including a 240 pupil sixth form). The proposed location for the permanent site for the school is Northamptonshire Police Headquarters to the south of the temporary unit location, this will form part of a separate application to NCC. However, to allow the school to open in September 2016 temporary accommodation is required.

4.4  There is a strong driver in terms of timescale with the clock ticking on the need to find and provide temporary accommodation to allow opening of the school in September 2016. The ‘site’ of the temporary accommodation has been selected as it was available and deliverable under the constrained timescales.

4.5  The school will be located on the police site within the external open green area utilised by the police for training purposes. We are also aware that the marked out pitch is occasionally utilise by NCC Sports and Social Club. The units will be located on site for a temporary period of three years and will potentially accommodate up to 540 pupils at the end of the three year period. The school numbers will increase incrementally each academic year within the modular units. Table 1 shows the breakdown for the number of pupils over three years.

4.6  For the first year the school will employ 25 FT staff and this will increase to 63 FT staff by September 2018 (final academic year).

Table 1: Number of Pupils at Wootton Hall Park

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Primary School</th>
<th>Secondary School</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1st Year</td>
<td>60</td>
<td>120</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2nd Year</td>
<td>120</td>
<td>240</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3rd Year</td>
<td>180</td>
<td>360</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>540 pupils</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The site will be in operation from 08.00 to 17.00 on weekdays. The timings for the school day are as follows:

- Breakfast Club - 7.45 a.m – 8.40/8:15 a.m
- Primary School Day – 8:40am – 15:30pm
- Secondary School Day – 8:15am – 15:30pm
- After School Clubs - 15.00 p.m - 17:00 p.m.
Proposed Modular Buildings

4.7 The proposals seek to provide a temporary modular unit on site to accommodate the class rooms required by the school. The proposed temporary buildings have a GIA of approximately 1,916 sq.m and GEA of 2,090 sq.m.

4.8 The proposal comprises of one double storey modular building. The modular building accommodates classrooms required for the primary and secondary school, situated at ground floor and first floor level. The ground floor level accommodates a multi-purpose hall and kitchen. At first floor, in addition to class rooms, offices and staff areas are accommodated.

Design

4.9 Further information on the design of the temporary accommodation is included within the Design and Access Statement and on the application drawings.

4.10 The development is providing a two storey modular building to the north of the Northamptonshire Police site. The proposed building will not compromise the site’s ability to return to its current condition at the end of the temporary period. The proposals are temporary and of a high quality design and construction given the temporary nature of the proposals.

4.11 The school layout is organised to meet the teaching requirements of Wootton Hall Park School whilst minimising its impact on open character of the open green area and Wootton Hall playing fields to the north.

4.12 The layout of the proposed units is arranged to address the surrounding environment, particularly the neighbouring properties and existing use of the open green area previously utilised by the police. Effort has been made to ensure the existing playing field in this area not compromised or existing sports pitches are not lost.

4.13 Materials for the proposed new school have been selected to create a sympathetic scheme which respects its open setting, and the character and appearance of the surrounding area.

Landscaping

4.14 It is proposed that temporary fencing will be erected around the temporary school site boundary. This is to ensure the safety of the school pupils.

4.15 The existing sports pitch currently on site is to be re-provided to the north of the site. Through arrangement with the School this could be made available outside school hours for community use. It is proposed that the area to the east of the ‘site’ will be converted into a hard standing play area with two marked out pitches proposed. Following the three year temporary period this will be removed and the area will be returned to its previous condition or improved through the main school application at the Police site.

4.16 To the west of the site adjacent to the access road into the main police site, there is currently an area of hard standing. These proposals seek to extend this area of hard standing to accommodate a parking area and drop-off/pick-up area for pupils and staff.

Access

4.17 It is intended that the main pedestrian and vehicle access will be taken from the main access road into the police site. Additionally a new vehicle egress will be created to the south of the existing access and north of the access to the Police HQ site. The position of the access has been carefully designed to minimise disruption to tree root protection zones.
4.18 The vehicle access strategy will be for vehicles to enter the car park using the existing access and exit the car park using the newly formed egress. These will be used by vehicles associated with staff and visitors using on-site car parking, parents conducting drop-off and collection movements on the internal access road through the car park and servicing vehicles.

4.19 Pedestrians are expected to approach using the footpath on the western side of Wootton Hall Park, having travelled through the Wootton Hall site from the footways on Mere Way. A pedestrian connection is envisaged to connect the footpath with the pedestrian access to the site and the building entrance.

4.20 On-site car parking will be provided for staff and visitors. A total of 63 full-time staff are anticipated by the time the School is fully occupied in temporary accommodation. Therefore 63 general car parking spaces are proposed in line with the maximum standards. Additionally, six disabled spaces are provided adjacent the building entrance.

4.21 A total of 38 cycle parking stands with capacity for 76 bicycles would be proposed for the temporary scheme. These are located within the site boundary.

4.22 Further information on transport matters is included within the Transport Statement and Travel Plan submitted with the application.
5 Planning Policy

5.1 The following section summarises the planning policy framework that is relevant to the determination of this application.

5.2 The Development Plan Section 38 (6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 states that applications for development must be determined in accordance with the development plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise.

5.3 In this context, the statutory development plan for the site comprises of the West Northamptonshire Joint Core Strategy Local Plan (Part 1; 2014), the Central and the adopted Local Plan (1997).

Designations

5.4 The council’s planning proposals map has identified that the application site has the following designations:

- Locally Important Landscape Area (E9)

Relevant Planning Policy

NPPF (2012)

Sustainable Development

5.5 The key driver within the NPPF “is a presumption in favour of sustainable development” (paragraph 14). It requires local planning authorities to:

- approve development proposals that accord with the development plan without delay; and
- grant permission where the plan is absent, silent, indeterminate or where relevant policies are out of date, unless:
any adverse impacts of doing so would significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits, when assessed against the policies in this Framework taken as a whole; or

specific policies in this Framework indicate development should be restricted.

5.6 The Core Principles of Planning (paragraph 17) reiterates this presumption in favour of sustainable development. Planning policies and decisions should proactively drive and support sustainable economic development, taking into account local circumstances. They should seek to enhance and protect environmental and heritage assets in a manner appropriate to their significance. Development should make effective use of land. Development should always seek to secure a high quality design and a good standard of amenity for existing and future occupiers.

Education

5.7 In regard to Education paragraph 72 states “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. Local planning authorities should take a proactive, positive and collaborative approach to meeting this requirement, and to development that will widen choice in education. They should:

- give great weight to the need to create, expand or alter schools; and;
- work with schools promoters to identify and resolve key planning issues before applications are submitted.”

5.8 The footnote to paragraph 47 of the NPPF states that “To be considered deliverable, sites should be available now, offer a suitable location for development now, and be achievable with a realistic prospect that housing will be delivered on the site within five years and in particular that development of the site is viable”.

Transport

5.9 Transport objectives seek to encourage solutions which support reductions in greenhouse gas emissions and reduce congestion (Paragraph 30).

5.10 All developments that generate significant amounts of movement should be supported by a Transport Statement or Transport Assessment. The NPPF further states that plans and decisions should take account of whether:

- The opportunities for sustainable transport modes have been taken up depending on the nature and location of the site, to reduce the need for major transport infrastructure;
- Safe and suitable access to the site can be achieved for all people; and
- Improvements can be undertaken within the transport network that cost effectively limits the significant impacts of the development. Development should only be prevented or refused on transport grounds where the residual cumulative impacts of development are severe (Paragraph 32).

5.11 Paragraph 34 advises developments that generate significant movement to be located where the need to travel will be minimised and the use of sustainable transport modes can be maximised. Specifically, Paragraph 35 seeks developments to be located and designed where practical to:

- accommodate the efficient delivery of goods and supplies;
• Give priority to pedestrian and cycle movements, and have access to high quality public transport facilities;

• Create safe and secure layouts which minimise conflicts between traffic and cyclists or pedestrians, avoiding street clutter and where appropriate establishing home zones;

• Incorporate facilities for charging plug-in and other ultra-low emission vehicles; and

• Consider the needs of people with disabilities by all modes of transport.

Department for Communities and Local Government (DCLG) Policy Statement - Planning for Schools Development (E Pickles and M Gove - August 2011)

5.12 In August 2011, the DCLG published a policy statement on the role of the planning system in supporting schools. This statement demonstrates that the Government is firmly committed to ensuring that there is sufficient provision to meet growing demand for state-funded school places, increasing choice and opportunity in state-funded education and raising educational standards.

5.13 It is expected that all parties will work together proactively from an early stage to help plan for state-school development and to shape strong planning applications.

5.14 The document sets out that the planning system should operate in a positive manner when dealing with proposals for the creation, expansion and alteration of state-funded schools, and that the following principles should apply with immediate effect:

• There should be a presumption in favour of development of state-funded schools, as expressed in the NPPF.

• Local Authorities should give full and thorough consideration to the importance of enabling the development of state funded schools in their planning decisions.

• Local Authorities should make full use of their planning powers to support state-funded schools applications.

• Local authorities should only impose conditions that clearly and demonstrably meet the tests set out in Circular 11/95.

• Local authorities should ensure that the process for submitting and determining state-funded schools' applications is as streamlined as possible.

• A refusal of any application for a state-funded school, or the imposition of conditions, will have to be clearly justified by the local planning authority.

• Appeals against any refusals of planning permission for state-funded schools should be treated as a priority.

• Where a local planning authority refuses planning permission for a state-funded school, the Secretary of State will consider carefully whether to recover for his own determination appeals against the refusal of planning permission.
Local Planning Policy

West Northamptonshire Joint Core Strategy Local Plan (Part 1)

General

5.15 Policy SA ‘Presumption in favour of Sustainable Development’ states that when considering development proposals, the relevant council will take a positive approach that reflects the presumption in favour of sustainable development contained in the national planning policy framework.

5.16 Policy S1 ‘The Distribution of Development’ in terms of the site location, states that development and economic activity will be concentrated primarily in and adjoining the principal urban area of Northampton.

Site Specific

5.17 Policy E9 ‘Locally Important Landscape Area’ advises that when considering the impact of proposed development upon the landscape, special importance will be attached to its effect upon the character.

Infrastructure and Delivery

5.18 Policy RC2 ‘Community Needs’ advised that the loss of existing community facilities including built sport facilities and areas of open space will be resisted unless it can be demonstrated that:

- There is evidence that improvements can be made through the provision of a replacement of equal or better quality taking into account accessibility; or
- The proposal will bring about community benefits that outweigh the loss of the facility; or
- Having regard to the relevant open space study, the space is surplus or is little used.

5.19 Policy E6 ‘Education, skills and training’ supports the provision of educational facilities. Policy advised that new educational facilities will be encouraged and should be developed at sites which are accessible by sustainable transport modes.

5.20 Policy INF 1 ‘Approach to Infrastructure Delivery’ states that new development will be supported and provide good access to infrastructure, including physical, green and social elements. Infrastructure will need to integrate with and complement adjoining communities.

Environment

5.21 Policy BN2 ‘Biodiversity’ states that development that maintains and enhances existing designations and assets or deliver a net gain in biodiversity will be supported. Development that has the potential to harm sites of ecological importance will be subject to an ecological assessment and required to demonstrate:

- The methods used to conserve biodiversity in its design and construction and operation;
- How habitat conservation, enhancement and creation can be achieved through linking habitats;
- How designated sites, protected species and priority habitats will be safeguarded.

5.22 Planning decisions will reflect the hierarchy of biodiversity designations. Where it can be shown that there is no alternative to development that is likely to prejudice the integrity of an existing wildlife site or protected habitat mitigation measures will be expected in proportion of the asset lost.
5.23 **Policy BN3** ‘Woodlands’, advises that the protection of aged or veteran trees outside ancient woodlands will be supported.

**Transport**

5.24 **Policy C2** ‘New Developments’, advised that new developments are expected to maximise travel choice from non-car modes. Policy states that development will be required to mitigate its effects on the highway network and be supported by a transport assessment and travel plan prepared in accordance with current best practice guidelines as issued by the department for transport or the relevant local authority.

**Saved Policies from the Local Plan (1997)**

5.25 The Local Plan guides development across the borough. Following the introduction of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act (2004) some of the original Local Plan policies no longer apply. Those policies which remain relevant are known as ‘saved’ policies. The following ‘saved’ policies are of particular relevance to this application:

**General**

5.26 **Policy E20** ‘New Development’ advises that planning permission for new development will be granted subject to:

a) The design of any new building or extension adequately reflecting the character of its surroundings in terms of layout, siting, form scale and use of appropriate materials.

b) The development being designed, located and used in a manner that ensures adequate standards of privacy, daylight and sunlight.

**Environment**

5.27 **Policy E12** advised that development on sites which include existing hedgerows or trees of significant environmental value will not be granted unless adequate provision is made to incorporate such features within the proposed development without significant detriment to the value or to the development proposed.

**Emerging Planning Policy**

**Northampton Local Plan Part 2**

5.28 Northampton Borough Council has produced a Local Development Scheme (LDS) that provides a timetable of which plans are to be produced and when. On 9 September 2015 Cabinet approved a new Local Development Scheme for Northampton Borough and brought it into immediate effect.

5.29 The LDS advises the following:

*The Northampton Local Plan Part 2 will set out site specific allocations for Northampton Borough including residential and employment uses. It will include policies against which planning applications for the development, management and use of land and buildings will be considered. It will include the identification, phasing and implementation of local infrastructure for sites.*

5.30 The LDS further advises that a Draft Plan is anticipated for publication in March/ April 2017 and a target adoption date of March 2018.
Material Considerations

Infrastructure Delivery Plan Update 2015

Education

5.31 Information on the number and sizes of schools required to meet the anticipated growth over the Joint Core Strategy (JCS) plan period is provided by Northamptonshire County Council (NCC) as education provider. NCC has taken a strategic approach to the delivery of education provision to make the best use of the existing resources, promote high quality education locally and to promote sustainable transport options. The infrastructure plan states in regard to school places:

5.32 ‘The provision of primary schools in the Sustainable Urban Extension will be linked to the delivery of development and the broad phasing provided in the Education Infrastructure Schedules is linked to the Housing Trajectory as an estimation of delivery. In the urban areas such as Northampton, where 3,500 dwellings are required in the planning period to 2029 to deliver the housing provision in the Joint Core Strategy, additional primary provision will be required in the areas the housing comes forward. This will become evident following the call for sites for the Part 2 Local Plans and the granting of planning permissions prior to 2029. Due to current pressures on school places, it may be pragmatic to deliver new primary schools earlier in the phasing of occupations’

5.33 For secondary schools, previously the approach by the NCC was to extend secondary schools to meet new demand from anticipated growth. However, due to higher levels of in-migration and higher than average birth rates the NCC will be unable to meet requirements at existing school locations in Northampton.

5.34 The Infrastructure Plan states that Northampton will now require at least five, possibly six, new secondary schools to serve the wider Northampton area. The document specifically states the following regarding the subject site;

‘A new Northampton based Free School has been approved at the current Wootton Hall Police Station HQ. This is scheduled to open in September 2016 and has the potential to accommodate 500 places for 11 to 19 year olds’.

Outdoor Sports

5.35 The study has not identified Wootton Hall Park as an area that should be retained for sport use. The Infrastructure Delivery Plan states in reference to sports facilities that:

‘It is assumed that growth will be catered for by extensions to existing facilities and by private investment in new facilities once market demand makes this viable. The Strategy reports that facilities in Northampton are largely adequate.’ The Northampton Playing Pitch Strategy (NPPS), (November 2011) largely concurs with this view. It identifies that at club level there are sufficient adult football pitches to meet current and future requirements for the borough and that improvements to existing facilities to account for growth are likely to be more appropriate than new provision. For cricket, the NPPS comments that there are only just enough cricket pitches of the right quality to meet demand for cricket in Northampton and a likely shortfall in appropriate provision once population grows and if participation increases’.

5.36 It is advised that Open Space, Sport and Recreation Studies have been commissioned by the partner Councils to inform the preparation of the Part 2 Local Plans. It is expected that the outcome of these studies will be available to inform the 2016 IDP update.
6 The Case for Planning Permission

6.1 The applicant seeks full planning permission for a temporary building at the ‘site’ for a temporary period of three years. These proposals would allow Wootton Hall Park School to open in September 2016, until their permanent building is ready to accommodate the school in September 2019.

6.2 The planning considerations in determining this application are as follows:

- Principle of proposed use;
- Temporary loss of amenity space;
- Neighbourly issues in terms of noise and amenity;
- Environmental implications; and
- Transport implications.

Principle of Proposed Use

6.3 The NPPF and the government Ministerial Statement attach significant weight to the development of schools and support additional places. Paragraph 72 of the NPPF states that:

“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. Local Authorities should take a proactive, positive and collaborative approach to meeting this requirement, and to development that widens the choice in education.”

6.4 It goes on to advise that local planning authorities should “give great weight to the need to create, expand or alter schools”.

6.5 Policy E6 supports the provision of community facilities, advising that such facilities should be developed at site accessible by sustainable modes of transport. The proposals seek to provide access through walking and cycling.

6.6 The Infrastructure Delivery Plan (2015) identifies a continuing growing need for primary school places. In regards to secondary schools, due to higher in-migration levels and a higher than average birth rate it is predicted that Northampton will require possibly six new secondary schools to be the demand. The document specifically identifies Wootton Hall Park Police HQ as a potential location for a new secondary school.

6.7 This application seeks to address Northampton’s significant need for primary and secondary school places due to the continued increase in birth rate and population in-migration within Northampton. Furthermore, the scheme offers parental choice in an area of high demand, where there is a shortfall of appropriate pupil places.

6.8 In light of the above it is considered that the proposed temporary education use meets an identified need and is acceptable in policy terms.

Temporary loss of amenity space

6.9 It is proposed that the temporary building will be located on the external grassland space utilised by the police and adjacent the Wootton Hall Park playing fields for a period of three years. The open space the modular units are proposed to be located on the external area currently utilised by the police for training purposes. We are also aware that NCC Sports and Social Club to the north of the site occasionally utilise the marked out football
pitch through agreement with the Police. The police are gradually relocating off the main site and therefore will
no longer require use of this area. The proposals would not affect the use of the playing fields to the north of the
site used by NCC Sports and Social Club. Effort has also been made to ensure the cricket pitch to the east is
retained as this is utilised by a local club and such facilities are limited within the area.

6.10 It is recognised that the Local Plan considers that Wootton Hall Park provides an attractive landscape in contrast
to the office, residential development and ring road which surrounds it. The ‘site’ is situated in an area that has
been de-classified as playing fields due to how the site is utilised by the Police. However, despite this the
marked out football pitch has been utilised occasionally by NCC Sports and Social Club. Due to this the
proposals have sought to locate the proposed modular accommodation to the corner of the site to minimise the
potential impact on the character of the area. The proposals have also sought to re-provide the existing marked
out football pitch to the north of the site. Through agreement with the school this sports pitch can be made
available for the community outside school hours. The applicant has sought to engage with NCC Sports and
Social Club prior to submission of the application.

6.11 It should also be recognised that following the removal of the temporary unit, and as part of the application for
the permanent site, it is intended that the ‘site’ will be used by the school as playing fields. This would return the
area to an open green area and improve the area in the future for recreational and sport use. It should also be
noted that the cricket pitch to the east of the site is to be retained in its current use, therefore allowing its
continued use by the local cricket club.

6.12 Polices E9 and RC2 seek to protect against the loss of greenspace and open recreational activities. As
demonstrated above, the proposals are temporary in nature and every effort has been made to reduce any
impact on the immediate open environment. Additionally, it is intended that the ‘site’ will be returned back to its
existing use and will improve amenity / leisure space though the permanent application. It is therefore
considered that the proposals meet the tests of these policies.

Noise and Amenity

6.13 The site is situated directly adjacent the police site, bordered by the existing access road and the police
buildings. The nearest residential properties are to the west of the site on the other side of the main access road
into the site. There are further residential properties further east of the site. The proposed buildings have been
orientated to minimise the impact on residential properties and the surrounding area.

6.14 A comprehensive noise assessment has been undertaken for the proposed development. The report assessed
the potential impact on the nearest residential receptors and the internal requirements of the temporary building.
The report demonstrates that noise from children and school traffic has been assessed and is unlikely to be
significant.

6.15 The report further demonstrates that the proposals will meet the internal noise requirements for schools.

6.16 In light of the above it is considered that the proposals will not cause unacceptable harm to the amenity and
environment of the immediate and surrounding area.

Environmental

6.17 The ecological report identifies the ‘site’ as of low ecological value. The scattered trees to the west of the site are
to be retained as they offer potential foraging, breeding and sheltering opportunities for a range of species. The
trees identified as having bat potential are proposed to be retained. The proposals therefore meet the
requirements of Policy BN2.

6.18 The development will require the removal of one tree to allow a new entrance to be constructed. The submitted
arboretural report demonstrates that the tree loss has been limited to that which is necessary to enable the
development to take place. The report further demonstrates that the tree being removed is considered to be in poor condition and the removal of the tree would not significantly impact the existing avenue of trees.

6.19 Replacement tree planting has not been provided as part of the landscape plan. This is due to the temporary nature of the proposal and the requirement for the removal after a relatively short time period.

Transport and Highways

6.20 A Transport Statement and Travel Plan prepared by Robert West are provided in support of this application, and together they assess the access and parking considerations relevant to the proposal, and the steps to be taken to mitigate any concerns. Both documents reach conclusions based on the temporary building accommodating 540 pupils on site over a three year period.

6.21 Car and cycle parking has been provided in accordance with NCC standards. The site is accessible by walking, cycling and public transport. It is acknowledged improvements are required to the existing narrow access road to ensure the site can be accessed by foot, bicycle and car safely. Proposed junction improvement schemes through NCC will improve the accessibility and concerns currently experienced with network congestion during peak times.

6.22 The school will have a local catchment area, with currently a number of students in close proximity to the site. This is expected to increase.

6.23 Mitigation measures have been incorporated, such as a Car Parking Management Plan, staggered school time table and a Travel Plan to alleviate potential concerns as a result of the proposed temporary use.

6.24 In light of all the above, it is considered the proposed accords with relevant transport polices, therefore there are no grounds to raise objection to the temporary proposals in highways terms.
7 Conclusions

7.1 The only purpose of this planning application is to provide temporary buildings for Wootton Hall Park School, to allow the primary and secondary school to become operational from September 2016. The proposed school would meet an identified significant educational need within Northampton, as highlighted within the Infrastructure Delivery Plan (2015). There is strong planning policy support for new educational facilities within Northampton and this is endorsed through the National Planning Policy Framework.

7.2 The proposed structures are temporary and lightweight and will be used until a permanent building is ready in September 2019. The permanent site at Northampton Police HQ will be brought forward in a separate planning application to NCC.

7.3 The proposed loss of the greenspace that the site occupies will only be for a temporary period of three years, with effort being made to ensure there is minimal impact on the character of the open area and the existing marked out football pitch is re-provided where possible and the cricket pitch to the east is retained. Additionally, though the permanent application it is intended that the ‘site’ will be improved providing a recreational area that will be utilised by the school incorporating sports pitches.

7.4 There will be no serious impacts on pedestrian, cycle and public transport networks. There will be no unacceptable harm to the amenity and environment of the surrounding area.

7.5 There are no technical planning reasons (highways, daylighting/ sunlighting, noise) as to why the application should not proceed. The proposals comply with planning policy and therefore should be granted permission.
Temporary planning application (3 years) for installation of a two storey temporary modular building to provide 18 classrooms and support accommodation for up to 450 pupils, and associated temporary external works, to house the first three years intake for Wootton Park School prior to a move into a permanent location on the Northamptonshire Police Headquarters site.
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This Design and Access Statement has been prepared by Architecture Initiative on behalf of Education Funding Agency. It accompanies a temporary (Three year) planning application for the installation of temporary teaching accommodation to house up to 120 Year 7 pupils, 270 Secondary pupils and 60 Reception Year pupils, who will form the first intake at Wootton Hall Park when it opens in September 2016. The application also includes some minor associated temporary external works. The site will be returned to its original condition when the temporary cabins are removed.

The permanent Wootton Hall Park school building is due for completion in September 2019. The existing playing fields to the north of this building form are being used for temporary accommodation for the first three years of school intake during the construction period. Wootton Park Hall is a newly established all-through-school for pupils aged 4 - 19 years.

The proposed temporary cabins will also utilise the existing car park to the sports pavilion which will increase in size to accommodate the parking requirement of the school.

Northamptonshire County Council is responsible for delivering the school building on behalf of the Education Funding Agency. The EFA have, and will continue to be, fully involved in the design, development and delivery of the project.

The full planning application relating to the conversion and extension of the building at Wootton Hall Park will be covered in a separate application.

This application boundary for this application sits adjacent to the existing Police Headquarters and will operate throughout the construction process as shown on the aerial view adjacent. This includes ensuring the services to the police station are not impacted by construction works or traffic.
This application is for a temporary planning application (3 years) for the installation of a two-storey temporary modular building to provide 18 classrooms and support accommodation for up to 450 pupils, and associated temporary external works, to house the first three years of intake for Wootton Park School prior to a move into a permanent location on the Northamptonshire Police Headquarters site.

A separate planning application will be submitted in the future for the redevelopment and associated alterations to the Northamptonshire Police Headquarters main site for a school offering 450 primary school places, 600 secondary school places and 240 sixth form places. The building is now owned by the EFA, but is still occupied by Northamptonshire Police Authority. It will be handed over in phases to the Education Funding Agency (EFA), an executive agency of the Department for Education (DfE) responsible for state education funding, for the purpose of its reuse to create a new through-school (5-18yr) to serve the local need for school places in Northampton. The new permanent facility would be due to open in September 2019, with the proposed temporary classrooms allowing the school to accept three forms of entry from September 2016.

As with the majority of secondary schools in Northampton, the school will be set up as an academy; an independent state-funded school. Wootton Park School is a brand new non-fee paying 4-19 year olds all-through school which aims to deliver first-rate education to all of their pupils and the surrounding community and will be run by the Northampton Free School Trust. The school will be underpinned by three distinctive principles – attainment for all, public service and stronger society. Applied Crime Science will be the school specialism and will feature across a broad and balanced curriculum delivered by fully qualified and talented staff. The school’s curriculum will reflect the best of well-recognised and successful Cambridge courses. The new school will be unique by offering close working relationships with public services including the emergency services.

The site is a locally important landscaped area in the local plan however it is de-classified as players fields though it is used by the Police for training purposes. The cabins will only be temporarily located on the green area utilised by the police, being that they be returned to their existing condition when the school has decanted into the converted Northamptonshire Police Headquarters. The expanded car park for the sports pavilion will also be returned to the existing condition when the temporary cabins are removed.
3.0 Site Context

The site is located to the south of Northampton and to the north of Wootton, on the western side of New Valley Way / London Road, the A45. The application boundary line for the temporary accommodation is adjacent to land occupied by the Northamptonshire Police and includes the redundant sports pavilion and car park facilities.

The site is accessed via Wootton Hall Park, a road running adjacent to the park where the temporary cabins are located south of the NCC playing fields to the north.

Please note that tree references are from Northamptonshire Council’s online interactive map. The Arboricultural report has different references and should be referred to in conjunction with this document.
3.0 Site Context

1. View toward the entrance of the main building at Wootton Hall Park.
2. View of the main road leading toward Wootton Hall Park.
3. View of entrance to the existing car park on site.
4. View towards the rear of the existing Victorian Manor House.
5. View of playing grounds part shared by Northampton Police Headquarters.
6. View from NCC sports and social club.
7. View looking East towards potential pedestrian route into the site.
8. View towards playing fields and area of temporary accommodation.

Key plan showing views

Application boundary line
The proposed building is located to the north of the existing Northamptonshire Police Headquarters. On the ground floor the building houses two reception classrooms, four KS1 classrooms, a KS3 science classroom, hall and kitchen area along with staff and admin areas. On the first floor the building accommodates nine KS3 classrooms along with staff and admin areas. This teaching accommodation includes associated stores, group rooms and WC’s.

GEA of temporary accommodation = 2090 m²
GIA for temporary accommodation = 1916 m²

The site will have pedestrian and cycle access via a proposed pedestrian route over Wootton Hall Park playing fields road providing a safe crossing to the main entrance to the west of the building (marked with an E). This will be returned to the existing site condition when the school has decanted to the Northamptonshire Police Headquarters. The existing car park (marked with an A) will accommodate disabled parking bays and staff parking. The student drop off point as well as parking spaces for the parents and the rest of the staff are situated near the disused sports club house (marked with a D). There is a route across the sports field to the school site connecting the drop off point (marked with an H).

There is also provision for a temporary construction route across the playing fields (marked with a F). This avoids damage to the existing trees adjacent to the temporary cabins site and prevents disruption to the Police Headquarters during the construction period. This will be returned to the existing site condition when the school has decanted to the Police Headquarters.

Admin and staff areas are located at the western end of building, situated next to the main entrance, providing a secure lobby, staff office, staff room and storage.

The reception year classrooms which are located to the south of the site adjacent with direct access to external play spaces. The application also proposes associated external works to re-provide two smaller games courts and a grass sports pitch for KS1 and KS3 pupils.

Temporary bicycle parking spaces are to be provided to the north of the main entrance.
5.0 Form, Scale & Materials

All proposed accommodation is temporary for a period of three years. The buildings are two storey with plant room at roof level and do not exceed the ridge-line of the nearby Northamptonshire Police Headquarters. The temporary buildings will not pose any impact on the amenity of the nearby residential properties as they are hidden from view. The materiality is dictated by the nature of the temporary cabins. The steel frame cabins have timber cladding to the East elevation and a section of the north elevation. All other elevations are clad in grey external wall panels and flat roofs. All cabins have open-able windows (on request).

Once the new school has been completed, the buildings will be taken down. It is envisaged that the cabins will only be required by the school on the site for 3 years.

The internal classrooms within the cabins are fully equipped and fitted out to a high standard.
Access

Pedestrian Access
At the beginning and end of the school day gates, monitored by members of staff, will be open for pupil access into the site. For pupils arriving or leaving the school outside of the designated start/end of the school day, all access will be via the main visitor entrances. Access for all years will be via the main entrance located from the existing car park to Wootton Hall Park, off of Wootton Hall Park Road.

The main entrance door to school is unlocked, however all visitors are kept in a secure holding area and must be allowed through a secure door before gaining access into the school building.

Vehicular Access
The proposal will provide comprehensive car parking facilities on site comprising the total of 92 spaces (83 general parking spaces and 9 accessible spaces).

The Transport assessment SPG document calls for staff parking to be provided at a ratio of 1:1 and 10% disabled parking spaces. It is envisaged that 61 full time and 12 part time members of teaching and admin staff will be employed at the temporary set up after 3 years of intake (teachers & admin staff).

In the existing car park (adjacent to the temporary cabins) there will be:
- 9 accessible parking bays
- 19 parking bays (senior staff)
- 4 parking bays (visitors)

In the extended sports pavilion car park there will be:
- 60 parking bays
- drop off / pick up bays

This is a total of 83 general parking spaces and 9 accessible spaces.

Pupil drop-off and pick up will occur at the sports club house car park, with a pedestrian route across the sports field.

Cycle Parking
The application provides 73 cycle parking spaces for the Wootton Hall Park through school temporary accommodation, at full capacity 450 pupils.

Pupil Cycle Spaces = 1:10 spaces for pupils = 45 cycle spaces
1 space per 4 staff (full time/part time) = 19 spaces
Visitor Parking is 4 spaces outside the main entrance

Emergency Site Access
Emergency site access can be gained via the school car parks or via vehicular access gates onto the school site.
Northamptonshire Police Headquarters.

The temporary cabins will be situated on the sports field, which is part of the undeveloped part of Wootton Hall Park. The creation of the Wootton Hall complex will have resulted in ground disturbance although areas of survival may be present in the landscaped areas.

The application site lies within an area of potential archaeological interest. However, as the development of the playing fields will not involve any foundations, only an extension of the tarmac hard-standing to accommodate the cabins and play areas / MUGA, there will be minimal excavations.

The County Archaeological Advisor has reviewed the Historic Environment Records and did not find many records within the study area. The study area is within Wootton Hall Park, a landscaped park. The most relevant records relate to the prehistoric finds presumably discovered during building works in 1962. To the south west of the site in Thames Road two skeletons were identified in 1985 during construction works. They were undated but were not part of an archaeological investigation and as such were probably not found in the best of archaeological condition. A possible Iron Age settlement was identified during works in association with the construction of the County Record Office in 1999. These records indicate that the area has a potential for archaeological activity, most likely prehistoric in nature.

The temporary cabins will be situated on the sports field, which is part of the undeveloped part of Wootton Hall Park. The creation of the Wootton Hall complex will have resulted in ground disturbance although areas of survival may be present in the landscaped areas.
View of main entrance