Bridgewater Primary School, Northampton

Planning Application
Supporting Statement

Address:
Bridgewater Drive
Northampton
NN3 3AF

Reason for development:
Northamptonshire County Council has committed to the Government’s agenda of Extended School Use. Part of the Extended School Use agenda is to provide facilities for children of pre school age in addition to before and after school care. In adopting the agenda, many schools in the County have facilitated the provision of pre school care on their site.

As part of the Northampton Review of Schools, and public consultations, the community was assured that all efforts would be made to ensure that no existing playgroup had to be discontinued as a result of any change in school premises.

The playgroup at Bridgewater Primary is currently using accommodation on the school site and although the accommodation is not ideal, the playgroup is very well supported and would like to be able to accommodate more children than the premises allow. The playgroup is the only facility of its type in the area and it is important to the users, the school and the community that the provision continues.

There is however a new school being provided for Bridgewater on the playing fields adjacent to the existing school and when this is available, all the existing school accommodation, including the area being used by the playgroup will have to be demolished.

Unfortunately, funding cannot be made available, either via PFI or the County Council’s capital funding sources, to provide a permanent building for playgroups. The Playgroup Management team have also explored all areas to try and identify funding for a permanent build but without any success. However, it has been possible to secure sufficient funding to provide a mobile for playgroups that may be forced to close by the changes resulting from building work as part of the PFI contract.

At Bridgewater the mobile would remain in the ownership of the County Council but would be leased to the playgroup who would take full financial responsibility for the building.

The school governors are fully supportive in offering part of the site of the new school to allow a mobile to be placed on site for use by the playgroup. This would ensure the provision continues and the close links with the school are maintained.
Proposed site

The site of the new school is owned by Northamptonshire County Council and the new school building is being completed as part of the NCC/PFI contract. The site has an area of 29738 sq mt and is within a predominantly residential area.

The site is above the statutory area required for the Primary School and the proposal to place the mobile on site will not prohibit any school activities. A small low fenced grass area will be provided adjacent to the mobile as part of the early year’s provision.

Staffing implications:

The staffing at the existing playgroup consists of 4 – 5 staff at each session. This can increase to a maximum of six. As the provision is for either a morning or an afternoon session, the maximum number of staff at any time will be six. There will be no need to increase the staffing levels at the new premises.

The hours that the playgroup operates are currently 9.30 am to 12 pm and the arrival of staff and parents is co-ordinated to avoid the times that are crucial to the school. These hours will continue at the new site and any increase in hours would be agreed with the school in order to ensure a coordinated approach that minimises the number of people arriving at the site at any one time.

Statement of Community Involvement / Consultation

The application is to relocate an existing playgroup. The playgroup has been operating on the school site for many years and is used by parents living in the immediate neighbourhood. At public meetings and consultations on the new Primary school, there was a clear expectation from people attending that the playgroup would be able to continue.

Demolitions:
No demolitions are required on site prior to the installation of the mobile

Trees to be felled:
No trees are required to be felled prior to the installation of the mobile.

Flood Risk Assessment:
A flood risk assessment was completed for the site prior to the submission of the planning application for the new school.

Land Contaminants:
All contaminant surveys were completed prior to the building of the submission of the planning application for the new school.

**Vehicle access:**
Access to the site will be via the access provided for the new school.

**Site access during construction period:**
Access for the delivery of the mobile will be via the access provided for the new school

**Car parking:**
The staff does not currently use any of the parking facilities at Bridgewater Primary. Some staff live locally and do not bring a vehicle to work other make alternative arrangements for parking off site. This practice would continue.

**Services implications:**
All necessary mains statutory services will be provided for the new school. Connections for the mobile services will be within the main school site

D. Farrell  
Buildings & capital Development  
Children & Young People's Service

6th November 2006

CYP Services for Children

1st November 2006
The Playgroup mobile will be positioned within the fenced airlock on the school site. It will be accessed via a pedestrian gate in the airlock fence. The gate will be open at the start of sessions to allow parents and pupils to gain access to the playgroup. The playgroup will manage pedestrian access through the gate during this period; from then on the gate will be locked. There will be a pedestrian pathway from the gate to the playgroup building.

No additional security fencing is to be installed surrounding the mobile as this would be undesirable.

Bridgewater Primary School will make one car parking space available for the playgroup within the school site. Most members of staff live locally and walk to work.

Ian Shanks
Children and Young Peoples Service
March 29th 2007