Proposed Extension to Form New Children's Centre – Oakway Infant School, Oakway, Wellingborough, Northants

Design & Access Statement

This statement should be read in conjunction with the associated building plans and elevations depicting detailed elements.

Assessment

- **Physical** – the new extension to facilitate the Children's Centre will compliment the surrounding buildings, especially the recent extension to the school. One of the main priorities of the design and initial assessment of the site was to provide a "welcoming" environment for the children and parents, trying to replicate the family environment as far as possible. It is seen as essential to encourage persons from their homes into the local community and the design of the extension with the new reception assists with this.

- **Social** – This Children's Centre is to be developed upon the existing site of Oakway Infant School. This site is within a 30% area of disadvantage as defined by 2004 Multiple Indices of Deprivation. To meet the core offer of a Children's Centre the Nursery will be working in partnership with other emerging initiatives such as the HOPE Centre as well as the current Wellingborough Sure Start Local Programme. The Centre will provide out reach work within the community the school currently serves. We envisage families attending the Centre for small group work or appointments to meet with the Local health Visitor, Midwife or Speech and language Therapist. There may also be drop in sessions with a representative from Job Centre Plus. If these services are already being delivered within the community elsewhere then the centre will act as an information point and will signpost families to these services rather than recreate additional ones. The School already provides some of these services for parents within the local community.

- **Economic** – in line with the above, the development will have a positive economic impact on the area in its utilisation of a patch of underutilised space within the grounds of the Nursery.

- **Planning policy** – this development supports the planning policy of development of brown field sites for construction works.

Involvement

During December 2005 local residents were invited to attend a consultation evening in the town centre to look at the proposed plans for Children's Centres. Positive feedback was given and a good understanding was taken away as to why there was a need for 2 more sites to be developed in Wellingborough.
Public questionnaires were given out and the local residents were given a 6 week period to respond to the proposed site. There were no objections to the proposed site being built.

As this site is developing the Children’s Centre Manager and the Centre lead will have the responsibility to ensure that a piece of consultation with the local residents in their community takes place to find out peoples understanding of the building work and about peoples knowledge of what will be provided and the services they would like to see from this site. Evaluations will be drawn up from the results and plans will be made.

Evaluation
In the evaluation process, a number of elements had to be incorporated into the detailed design process, outlined below:-

The design of the extension had to be altered resulting in a small reduction in footprint size and relocation in order to take into account of existing drainage constraints. A tree re-planting scheme has also been introduced to meet the requirements of the County Tree Conservation Officer.

Design

- **Use** – The construction of an extension to provide a new Children’s Centre attached to the existing School. The extension consists of a Large and Small Meeting Rooms with Storage off these rooms. A new Reception Area links to the Children’s Toilets / Disabled Toilet / Cleaners Cupboard and Kitchen. Externally the extension provides a Buggy and Bin Stores adjacent the Main Entrance with an External Store for use by the Nursery. The extension is located off 2no. existing classrooms, the existing Nursery and After School Clubs will be re-located into these Classrooms. Both rooms will be refurbished. This will provide additional facilities available to the Children’s Centre. The re-located Nursery is also provided with an external covered play area and fenced off play area. The Sure Start Children’s Centres will become a ‘one stop shop’, where children 0-5 years old and their families can have access to integrated services and information. The overall vision will be to ensure every child gets the best start in life and to give parents more choice about how to balance work and family life. The Centre will deliver a carefully planned range of integrated services and will work with parents and service providers to deliver inclusive, accessible and child-friendly services that respond to local need and help children reach their full potential. The Centre will also provide or have links to services which will enable them to meet the core offer for what is nationally recognised as a minimum service which should be available for families. In the future, the Centre will deliver additional services to this core offer should feedback from consultation with the local community show that there is a
need, for example baby massage, breastfeeding café or advice on money management. The development sees the internal separation of the Children's Centre from the Nursery via secure doors, so as to maintain the security of the Nursery when the Children's Centre is in use out of normal school hours, with both the Children's Centre and Nursery benefiting from the shared reception and entrance.

- **Amount** – the main Children's Centre Extension is 132m² with Buggy / Bin Store at 13m² and External Store at 13m². The Nursery Covered Play Area is 50m².

- **Layout** – the extension layout orientation has been carefully designed in order to maximise natural light opportunities and compliment and the School, so as not to provide conflicting access/egress points. The Children's Centre main access has been located adjacent the Main School Entrance to provide a focal point of access for both facilities. The limitations of the site in terms of existing access to the School and existing below ground services have predetermined the size orientation somewhat, however the design has developed in order to minimise the impact on the surrounding properties.

- **Scale** – the proposed extension consists of a mono-pitched tiled roof with buff-grey brickwork to highlight the main entrance as a focal point against the flat roof – brown brick existing buildings either side. All to match the previous extension, adjacent to main vehicular entrance to site.

- **Landscaping** – the Main Entrance approach will be re-defined with a new tarmac footpath. Planting beds have also been positioned around the building. Additional tree planting has been provided to replace the tree lost due to the position of the extension.

- **Appearance** – The existing building consists of brown main brickwork with recessed buff-grey bricks as detail panels under windows and a grey felt flat roof.
  - The proposed extension will reverse this with the main brick in the Buff-grey and detail brickwork in the brown brick.
  - A new mono pitched roof with Brown roofing tiles covers the majority of the extension with a grey flat roof link.
  - Windows will be powder coated aluminium windows cream to match existing.
  - The fascias, soffits and rainwater goods will be cream powder coated aluminium to match existing.
  - The new Covered Play Area has clear plastic sheet covering supported on a powder coated metal framework.
  - The appearance is to match the previous extension constructed approx 3 years ago which is located at the front of the site.
Access

The property design takes account of:-

- **Approach** – The design of the extension sensitively reflects the need to create a welcoming environment for the visitors to the Children's Centre and Nursery but also produces a design which compliments both existing adjacent properties and the overall community ethos.

- **Parking** – There is only Staff Parking within the existing site. One existing space has been designated Disabled parking closest to the Main Entrance. This arrangement will not alter.

- ** Entrances** - within the limits of the site the new entrance to the shared reception has been positioned to create ease of access whilst maintaining an aesthetically pleasing look, blending in with the adjacent buildings.

- **Horizontal and Vertical circulation** – the horizontal circulation within the property has been carefully planned (refer above). Vertical circulation is not applicable for this single storey property.

- **Access to all services** – Internally the new extension has been carefully laid-out to maximise use and management. All facilities for the security of the Nursery an appropriate, friendly and warm environment.

- **Emergency Egress/Alarm Systems and Evacuation Planning** – the design of the extension will ensure and assist evacuation should an emergency need occur. All travel routes have been carefully planned and existing emergency exit options are numerous. Evacuation planning will be recorded, and regularly tested in line with regulatory residential homes requirements.

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

**Sources of advice and consultation**
- Planning advice from both Northamptonshire County Council and Northampton Borough Council.
- Full consultation with the Oakway Infant Head teacher, Bursar, Governors and Pre-School Club to ensure the design of the property meets the safe and essential needs of the Nursery.
• Early consultation with local residents, during consultation evening held in December 2005.
• Public questionnaires were given out and the local residents were given a 6 week period to respond to the proposed site. There were no objections to the proposed site being built.
• Advice from a range of professional groups and bodies – particularly around disabled access and compliance with Building Regulations. During the design process key structural, mechanical/electrical and access professional advice has been sought to ensure the Children’s Centre operates as efficiently as possible.

Nature and impact of environmental constraints
No apparent environmental constraints identified.

Proposed solutions for overcoming identified constraints
N/A

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

Additional material information
N/A

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February 2007
Proposed Extension to Form New Children’s Centre – Oakway Infant School, Oakway, Wellingborough, Northants

Supporting Statement

Address:
Oakway Infant School
Off Oakway
Wellingborough
NN8 4SD

REASON FOR DEVELOPMENT:

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

The Childcare Bill, is a key milestone for driving the improvement of services that will reduce inequalities for children living in areas of disadvantage and also increase young children’s wellbeing. The Bill sets a requirement on the Local authority to deliver good quality integrated early childhood services, provide outreach and the inclusion and involvement of families. This work will be carried out in partnership with key partners such as the Primary Care Trusts and Job Centre Plus. Every Child Matters (ECM) focuses on the improvement of outcomes for children particularly living in areas of disadvantage. Life chances for children are strongly related to poverty and deprivation and enhancing families’ access to additional appropriate services will help long-term to reduce this poverty. This will be achieved through the development of Northamptonshire Children’s Centres.

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

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

The Council Strategic Goals and Priorities
Through working with the County Council internal teams and other professionals and agencies, Children’s Centre services which are provided can enhance the knowledge and development of the local communities and can enhance the development of the County Councils following goals
- A healthier more active & independent life for adults
- A safer, freer and more prosperous county
- A cleaner and greener county
- A secure and independent future for our children

The Community Strategy for Northamptonshire 2004/2013

Enhancing the quality of life for people and communities in Northamptonshire

Children's Centres meets the key priorities which are:
- To improve health and access to appropriate services and the quality of life of most vulnerable and all who are at risk
- To help create and sustain local communities and neighbourhoods where people feel safe and secure and have access to services and support when they need them

Ensuring economic prosperity for Northamptonshire Communities

Children's Centres meets the key priorities which are:
- To promote economic vitality and raise the prosperity of all localities in the county so that everyone can gain from this success
- To raise relevant education standards and skills and the qualifications of people living in the county

Northamptonshire Children and Young People's Plan – April 2006

The Plan covers the five outcomes for Every Child Matters and states how as a county we will meet these outcomes. As the base for the creation of Children's Centres is focused strongly around Every Child Matters, Northamptonshire Children's Centres will adopt this Plan. The vision for the this plan is to 'ensure that all children and young people in Northamptonshire are healthy, safe and able to enjoy and achieve, so that they will make a positive contribution throughout their lives and achieve economic well-being'.

The Plan has 10 priorities spread across the five outcomes, which are:
- Be healthy
- Stay Safe
- Enjoy and achieve
- Make a positive contribution
- Achieve economic well-being

To enable the plan to work, it will need a high level of integrated work to happen. This is happening at present and there is already a lot of good practice and Children's Centres along with Family Resource Centres and Extended services will extend multi agency teams and integrated working further.

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

As a local authority we are developing Sure Start Children's Centres to become a 'one stop shop', where children 0-5 years old and their families can have access to integrated services and information. The overall vision will be to ensure every child gets the best start in life and to give parents more choice about how to balance work and family life.
Each Centre will deliver a carefully planned range of integrated services and will work with parents and service providers to deliver inclusive, accessible and child-friendly services that respond to local need and help children reach their full potential.

Children's Centres will need to provide or have links to services which will enable them to meet the core offer for what is nationally recognised as a minimum service which should be available for families. The diagram and the following list illustrates what this should look like. Some Centres will deliver additional services to this core offer should feedback from consultation with the local community show that there is a need, for example baby massage, breastfeeding café or advice on money management.

Integrated Education and Childcare

- In the areas of most identified need using national statistics, full day care with integrated early years education will be available. This will be offered for a minimum of 10 hours a day, 5 days a week, 50 weeks a year with access to funded places for 3 and 4 year olds.
- If the centre does not offer this service directly, it can provide local information on day-care.
- Support to childminders and / or a local network which might offer wraparound care.
- Links to local providers and out of schools clubs.
- Childcare provision as required to reflect the diverse needs of local communities.
Family support and Outreach Services

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

Child and Family Health Services

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

Links with Children’s Information Service (CIS)

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

Support for Training and Employment

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

EXISTING SITE/ PROPOSALS:
The site, upon which Oakway Infant School is located, is owned by Northamptonshire County Council. Oakway Infant School is co-located with Oakway Junior School. The site is within a predominantly residential area though playing fields are evident on one side of the site.

To create the Children’s Centre, it is proposed to relocate the current Pre-School facility to another room within the current building and build an extension of approximately 160m² directly adjacent, that will incorporate a large multi purpose meeting room, consultation room (small meeting room), kitchen, children’s and disabled toilets with baby change facilities and storage internally as well as buggy and equipment store outside.
Design approach:

The design approach to the project has been carefully considered in order to minimise the visual impact of the new build within the context of the local surroundings, whilst providing for the specific needs of the Children’s Centre (refer to Design & Access Statement attached). A large emphasis has been placed upon the creation of a “welcoming” environment and integration of Children’s Centre facilities with those of the existing Pre-School Breakfast/After School Clubs. The new building is designed to imitate a recently constructed extension to the front of the school as viewed from the main vehicle entrance gates.

All relevant Disability Discrimination Act legislation has been taken account of during the design process within the areas affected by the construction works.

Staffing implications:
The creation of the Children’s Centre will result in the employment of 2 additional full time equivalent member of staff (Information officer and Family Support worker). Therefore the number of staff employed through the school will rise from 41 to 43, of which 14 will be full time.

Statement of Community Involvement / Pre-application publicity:
During December 2005 local residents were invited to attend a consultation evening in the town centre to look at the proposed plans for Children’s Centres. Positive feedback was given and a good understanding was taken away as to why there was a need for further development of Children’s Centres within Wellingborough.

Public questionnaires were given out and the local residents were given a 6 week period to respond to the proposed site. There were no objections to the proposed site being built.

As this site is developing the Children’s Centre Manager and the Centre lead will have the responsibility to ensure consultation with the local residents in their community takes place to find out peoples understanding of the building work and about peoples knowledge of what will be provided and the services they would like to see from this site. Evaluations will be drawn up from the results and plans will be made

Demolitions:
No demolitions are required on site prior to development.

Trees to be felled:

8no. early mature trees are to be removed to facilitate the construction of the new Children’s Centre as identified upon drawing no4209/60. The trees have been inspected and identified by the County Tree Officer and a replacement tree planting scheme has been agreed, as indicated upon drawing 4209/HSP600.
Flood Risk Assessment:
As the area of land does not fall within the flood plain, therefore no risk assessment is required.

Land Contaminants:
A Waste Acceptance Criteria (WAC) has been undertaken which indicates that the soil on this site is likely to be classified as Inert Waste.

Vehicle access:
Access to the site is via Oakway, via a set of double entrance gates

At present vehicular access is only possible for staff, with parents encouraged to walk with their child/children to school. The existing wide staff car parking for the site offers 16 designated spaces on site which will be maintained following the completion of these capital works. It is intended that 1 car parking space is specifically allocated to the Children’s Centre within the current car park.

Of the full staff compliment at Oakway Infant School, there are varying methods of travelling to the site. Whilst the majority use a car, however 19 members of staff either walk or cycle to work. This pattern is expected to continue once the Children’s Centre becomes operational.

Site access during construction period:
Construction access to the site will be via Oakway and it is expected that no deliveries will be accepted to site during School start/finish periods or before 9.00am in the morning or after 5.00pm at night. Weekend construction work is not proposed at this stage to limit the impact to the local area.

Car parking:
Once works are complete and Children’s Centre opens, the equivalent of 2 No. full time members of staff are likely to be employed. As per the car and cycle parking, standards stated in the Supplementary Planning Guidance - Parking document (March 2003), the available allowance for the Infant School is up to 28 car parking spaces (inclusive of disabled provision). Although only 16 car parking spaces are designated, additional hardstanding space is available for parking and 19 staff currently do not drive to work.

As per the existing arrangements, it is not proposed that visitors will be able to access the site by vehicle once the works to create the Children’s Centre are complete. The ‘centre’ is designed for use by persons within the immediate surrounding areas and access to the facilities available by more environmentally friendly forms of transport is to be encouraged by the availability of an external buggy store.

Services implications:
All necessary mains statutory services exist upon the site. It is not anticipated at this stage that any of the incoming services will need to be upgraded.