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1.0- Introduction

1.1- The purpose of this statement is to outline the local and national planning policy context for the planning application for the extension of Isebrook SEN School. The site is located on Eastleigh Road, Kettering and lies within the administrative area of Kettering Borough Council.

The key documents reviewed for this project include: ·

North Northamptonshire Joint Core Strategy 2011-2031

National Planning Policy Framework, March 2012

Reference/guidance has also been drawn from the following documents to inform the design proposals (although not specifically referenced within this supporting statement): ·

Northamptonshire Strategic Plan for Schools 2010 – 2021
Building Bulletin 81: Design and Technology Accommodation in Secondary Schools
Building Bulletin 87: Guidelines for Environmental Design in Schools
Building Bulletin 89: Art Accommodation in Secondary Schools
Building Bulletin 93: Acoustic Design of Schools
Building Bulletin 100: Design for Fire Safety in Schools
Building Bulletin 101: Ventilation of School Buildings
Building Bulletin 102: Designing for Disabled Children and Children with Special Educational Needs
Building Bulletin 103: Area Guidelines for Mainstream Schools
Building Bulletin 104: Area Guidelines for S.E.N. Schools
The Building Regulations Approved Documents (latest editions)
BS 8300: Design of Buildings and Their Approaches to Meet the Needs of Disabled People – Code of Practice.

We have reviewed the above documents and highlighted the relevant policies/sections (using their references) which have informed the design basis for this project and added an explanation and commentary advising the specific reference to this project.

We have included a ‘Statement of Planning Need’ prepared by Northamptonshire County Council’s Strategic Planning department, within the Children, Families and Education Directorate to underpin the justification for the proposed school development. This is provided at the beginning of this Planning Support document, to explain the reasons and educational criteria which have generated the inception and scoping requirements for the project.

It is important to note that the College provides this as a Special Educational Needs provision for students aged 11 – 18 years. The pupils have Moderate Learning Difficulties, approximately 50% have some degree of Autistic spectrum disorder (ASD). Some pupils have mobility and disability issues. This results in a significant amount of minibus and taxi traffic to and from the school at drop-off and pick-up times together with parent/guardian vehicles. A limited number of pupils walk or cycle to school. The particular needs of S.E.N. pupils result in smaller class sizes, but increased spatial requirements throughout for behavioural, visibility and supervision needs with a high staff/pupil ratio (some pupils requiring one-to-one supervision and assistance). There is an increased demand to expand the capacity of the school due to a shortage of S.E.N provision in this part of the County.

In addition to teaching accommodation, the proposal includes a MUGA to provide additional sports and play areas suitable for use in all weathers and which would be accessible all round.

There is also a need to replace the existing mobile classroom temporary units which provide 6 classrooms and are reached via a ramped access network open to the elements, the whole of which is worn and provides a poor teaching environment for the pupils and staff.
1.2-Site

The proposed extension is will sit on land that is within the curtilage of the existing school site on the former location of the mobile classrooms. The six temporary mobile classrooms which were relocated under Planning Application NCC ref 16/00026/CCDFUL and KBC ref KET/2016/0472/NCC in order to vacate the site of the proposed new development.

1.3-Pre-Application Consultations and Community Involvement

A number of bodies have been consulted in developing the design proposals.

NCC Planning
Informal advice was sought regarding public consultation, Highways requirements and the trees in order that comments could be taken into consideration prior to the Planning Application

Public Consultation
A Public Consultation was held at the School on 18th May 2016. Invitations were issued to school parents, pupils, local residents and councilors. Questionnaire and feedback forms were available to allow comments and possible concerns to be expressed. Representatives from Northamptonshire County Council, the School and Lendlease were present to respond to queries raised and provide accurate information and clarification.

No-one objected to the principle of increasing the capacity of the school with almost everyone expressing support for the extension. A neighbour opposite the school entrance was opposed to the proposed expansion due to current issues with parking on the road and the “restricted” entrance. The proposed new lay-by and alterations to layout to increase the holding area for taxis and minibuses should reduce the likelihood of vehicles having to queue on Eastleigh Road. The proposed drop off/pick up should also improve flow rates of vehicles and avoid congestion.

Sport England
We have consulted with Sport England on the proposed scheme and received their comments. As explained previously in designing the scheme we have sought to minimize the impact on the playing field area. The new MUGA has been included in the proposals to respond to the school’s need to provide greater all round access and use of the facility and provide an “all weather” area. This will ensure that all students have access to a sports and games area, overcoming the current limitations on use of a grassed play area which is restricted by poor weather conditions, has sloping grass embankment all round and can become water logged and unusable.

The school wishes to encourage students to participate in outdoor sports and games and so aid both their personal development.

The school currently use the playing field area for limited sporting activities. It is used during structured and unstructured times. The new MUGA will allow a variety of sports and games to be taught and enjoyed throughout the year.

Highways Authority
The Project Manager has consulted the Highways Authority regarding the proposed development and the temporary access and haul road off Barton Road.

A School Travel Plan has been prepared and will be submitted for inclusion in the planning application.

Ecology
The Project Manager has consulted the County Council’s Environmental Planner and an arboricultural survey report by an independent specialist is included in the planning application.

A Preliminary Bat Roost assessment has been carried out and is included in the planning application. External lighting on the new teaching block and covered link has been designed to respond to the recommendations of the report and will be on limited timed operation during evenings.
2.0- Site Context

2.1- Isebrook SEN College is located on the south east outskirts of Kettering, a short distance from the A14 major arterial road and close by the A6003. The site is located off Eastleigh Road and is bounded by the River Ise floodplain to the east, the A6003 (Barton Road) to the south and St Edward’s RC Primary School to the west. The school site slopes from high ground above the adjacent primary school down to the floodplain, with a change in level of approx. 6m.

2.2- The area of the application site is approximately 7,630 m²

2.3- To the west the school is close to the boundary with the adjoining St Edwards RC Primary School and much of the site area between the main building and the boundary is the location for the horticultural classroom and outdoor classroom and garden area. This is a relatively narrow strip of land and would not accommodate the required accommodation. To the south the land between the existing sports hall and A6003 Barton Road is occupied by a hard play area and sloping land which rises steadily up to the boundary with the road. The whole site slopes from the west boundary down to the floodplain and wastelands along the east boundary.

3.0- Planning History

3.1- The six temporary mobile classrooms which were relocated under Planning Application NCC ref 16/00026/CCDFUL and KBC ref KET/2016/0472/NCC in order to vacate the site of the proposed new development.

4.0- Proposed Development

4.1- Statement of Need
(prepared by Northamptonshire County Council)

Isebrook SEN Cognition & Learning College is located in Kettering. The school provides for students in the age range 11 to 18 with a range of educational needs. Most students have moderate learning difficulties and some have severe learning difficulties. Half of the students who attend the college have autistic spectrum conditions and many of the students have social, emotional and behavioural difficulties. Some students have very challenging behaviours. The mission of the school is to provide “a creative and caring environment for all learners.” The vision of the school is “being a leading light in specialist education, giving our learners the confidence to succeed in an ever changing world.” The mission and vision of the school are underpinned by four core values: Compassion, Achievement, Respect & Responsibility.

Between January 2014 and January 2016 there has been a 9.3% increase in the number of children attending SEND schools in Northamptonshire. The County Council’s Cabinet approved a new SEND Sufficiency Strategy in October 2016 as part of its review of the county’s School Organisation Plan 2016 – 2021. Apart from the rising pupil numbers overall, one of the key aims of the Sufficiency Strategy is to address the significant proportion of pupils placed in independent settings outside of Northamptonshire, which inevitably impacts upon family life and friendship networks, risking a longer term ‘disconnection’ from the county. The Strategy aims to encourage the development of sufficient local capacity such that placements outside the county are only made in cases of highly specialised need. Extra capacity at Isebrook is part of the Strategy, alongside proposals for four new Free Schools in the county to provide new pupil places for those with special needs and / or disabilities.
The school currently has three double mobile classrooms on site and in this academic year the total number of students (Year 7 to 11) is 115 with 32 post sixteen pupils. The school is currently running over capacity and has no further room for accommodating additional students. The college is highly successful and has shown a year on year five percent increase in numbers. This predicted growth will take the total student numbers to 190 in the year 2019 - 2020. Therefore this scheme provides for an increase in numbers from 115 to 190 which represents an additional seventy-five, (75) places. This increase will greatly improve Northamptonshire County Council's ability to meet the increasing demand for special school places. The existing mobiles, which are approaching the end of their effective life have been relocated to enable the new build, however the scheme should provide sufficient accommodation to enable their removal at the end of the project. Planning permission for the relocation of the mobiles was granted in August 2016 for application number NCC 16/00026/CCDFUL.

4.2- Proposed Facilities

The scheme will provide for a purpose built part 2 storey extension block which will accommodate the following facilities:
- Eight general classrooms accommodating circa eight students per class
- Dedicated classrooms for:
  - Food Technology
  - Craft Design Technology
  - Art
  - Music with a separate recording studio.
- A learning resource centre including ICT suite and library
- Provision of ancillary spaces including toilets, storage area and a number of Group rooms on both floors.
- Provision for a fully accessible hygiene room.
- An external MUGA (multi-use games area)

In addition to the new extension block, the scheme provides for:
- The refurbishment of the existing arts studio and CDT classroom to become two general classrooms.
- An additional parking spaces and a re-worked pick up and drop off zone.

4.3- Development Location

The location of the extension and the layout seeks to make best use of the existing slope and levels of the site and allow plenty of open space and views out to remain between the existing and proposed buildings.

Due to the constraints of the site the new extension has split level access with accommodation at existing school level, a lower ground floor and first floor accommodation. The extension is generally two-storey to minimise the footprint and it is positioned to the east of the existing building. The extension will be connected to the existing building with a single storey covered link. The location minimises the impact on the playing field area and provides reasonable space separation between the new block and the adjacent buildings and boundary. The extension is located in the area which until recently was occupied by the temporary classrooms and associated access ramp network. The mobiles have been relocated during summer 2016 prior to construction (separate planning application reference 1600026CCDFDL) and upon completion of the new extension, it is proposed these are removed from the school campus.
5.0- Planning Policy


The NPPF sets out those roles which the planning system is required to perform in order to ensure the delivery of sustainable development. The application will enable the improvement and continued supply of the education offer in Northamptonshire and will ensure that the school is able to offer an attractive local option to parents who are considering the educational needs of their children without the need to travel excessive distances. The proposal is clearly in line with the Core Planning Principles set out at Para 17 of the Framework.

The Government attaches great importance to ensuring that a sufficient choice of school places is available to meet the needs of existing communities. In addition, Para 72 of the framework encourages local planning authorities to take a pro-active, positive and collaborative approach to widening the choice of education. Para 72 also requires LPA’s to afford great weight to the need to expand, create or alter schools, the application is therefore in conformity with the Governments planning and education objectives.

Isebrook S.E.N. College is a key piece of local infrastructure which needs to remain an attractive place for students in the 11 – 18 years with complex educational needs: most have global learning difficulties and some have acute learning difficulties. The school provides a creative and caring environment for all the young people and aims to be a leading light in specialist education, giving learners the confidence to succeed in an ever changing world.

It is therefore considered that the application, which conforms to both national and local planning policy, should be seen favourably and approved in line with the presumption as set out at Para 14 of the Framework.

5.2- North Northamptonshire Joint Core Strategy Plan (Adopted July 2016)

Isebrook is within the administrative area of Kettering Borough Council, and is subject to the North Northamptonshire Joint Core Strategy Plan. As such this is a key document in planning terms for the proposed development.

Planning Justification:

Section 38(6) of the 2004 Act requires that planning applications be determined in accordance with the development plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise. Therefore, the enclosed proposal should be judged against those relevant policies from the Kettering Local Plan (1995) Saved Local Plan Policies June 2008, the North Northamptonshire Joint Core Strategy Local Plan as well as the content of the National Planning Policy Framework NPPF (2012) where applicable.

The Kettering Local Plan Map confirms that there are no designations relating to the element of the site where the proposed extension is to be located.

The school site does not sit within a conservation area.

5.3- Assessment Against The North Northamptonshire Joint Core Strategy

Policy 1 - Presumption in favour of sustainable development.

3.1 Sustainable development in North Northamptonshire is development that contributes to delivering the ‘Vision and Outcomes’ of the Plan and accords with its policies to balance the economic, social and environmental needs of the area. Sustainable communities are those that incorporate sustainable development. The goal of sustainable development is to enable all people to satisfy their basic needs and enjoy a better quality of life, without compromising the quality of life for future generations.
The proposals accord with this policy to make Isebrook more sustainable in terms of its education provision by providing facilities for a two form entry in line with the County Council’s Strategic Plan for Schools 2010-2021 to meet both changing educational needs and expanded capacity for intake to suit the expanding needs of this part of the County. The school has extensive community use and the aim is to continue and to develop this provision. The improved facilities for both the school and for use within the wider community will serve to improve the economic, social and environmental conditions in the area.

The proposal to expand Isebrook SEN College will meet the increased demand for SEN provision in this part of Northamptonshire and support the local workforce by providing further employment opportunities which will in turn benefit the local economy.

The expanded school will provide a total of approximately 88 full-time and 20 part-time jobs by 2020/2021 both securing the existing jobs for those already employed and allowing the opportunity for further employment – new teachers, teaching assistants, mid-day supervisors, etc.

Policy 4 – Biodiversity and Geodiversity

ii. Protecting key assets for wildlife and geology, in particular the Upper Nene Valley Gravel Pits Special Protection Area and Ramsar Site, from unacceptable levels of access and managing pressures for access to and disturbance of sensitive habitats;

It is proposed that the proposed short access roadway between trees 2, 3, 4 and 5 will be shallow dig construction, materials to be confirmed. Tree protection will be provided around the retained specimen trees during construction and measures will be included within the roadway build-up to protect the root systems of those trees.

The MUGA is to have a retaining wall along much of the east and south edges to minimise encroachment into the root area of trees along the east boundary. The retaining structure will be constructed using gabion baskets; this will offer a sustainable form of construction.

iii. Protecting the natural environment from adverse effects from noise, air and light pollution;

The design of the external lighting has been developed to limit its effects on the natural environment. Details on the external lighting design can be found in the supporting documentation of this application.

Policy 5 – Water Environment, Resources and Flood Risk Management

a) Development should, wherever possible, be avoided in high and medium flood risk areas through the application of a sequential approach considering all forms of flooding for the identification of sites and also the layout of development within site boundaries;

b) Development should meet a minimum 1% (1 in 100) annual probability standard of flood protection with allowances for climate change unless local studies indicate a higher annual probability, both in relation to development and the measures required to reduce the impact of any additional run off generated by that development to demonstrate that there is no increased risk of flooding to existing, surrounding properties;

The site is on high ground and the flood risk map on the Environment Agency’s interactive website shows that there is no risk of flooding. In addition to this JPP Consulting have undertaken a detailed flood risk assessment Ref: R-FRA-U8234PM-01-A for the site, which concludes that provided the strategies recommended within the report are adopted, the developed site will not contribute further to flood risk, thus satisfying the principles of the National Planning Policy Framework.
Adequate and appropriate water and drainage will be provided for the new extension and Anglian Water are being consulted on this matter.

As noted above storm water attenuation measures are included in the MUGA construction and will control discharge of surface water from the new building and the new MUGA.

The increase in surface areas for storm water drainage purposes will be lessened and partially offset by the eventual removal of the existing 6 Nr mobile classroom units upon completion of the extension.

Storm drainage for the extension will be connected to a storage system located under the proposed MUGA with a hydrobrake to control surface water discharge. It is likely, subject to agreement, that both storm and foul drainage will be served by pumps and rising mains to connect into the existing Authorities sewers.

Policy 8 - Presumption in favour of sustainable development.

e) Ensure quality of life and safer and healthier communities by:
   i. Protecting amenity by not resulting in an unacceptable impact on the amenities of future occupiers, neighbouring properties or the wider area, by reason of noise, vibration, smell, light or other pollution, loss of light or overlooking;
   ii. Preventing both new and existing development from contributing to or being adversely affected by unacceptable levels of soil, air, light, water or noise pollution or land instability;
   iii. Incorporate ecologically sensitive design and features for biodiversity to deliver ‘Biodiversity by Design’;
   iv. Seeking to design out antisocial behaviour and crime and reduce the fear of crime through the creation of safe environments that benefit from natural surveillance, defensible spaces and other security measures having regard to the principles of the ‘Secured by Design’;
   v. Proportionate and appropriate community and fire safety measures; and
   vi. Incorporating flexible and resilient designs for buildings and their settings, including access to amenity space.

By utilising land within the existing site curtilage of the school, the development limits its impact on the amenity of neighbouring buildings in terms of noise, limiting light loss, and pollution. The works to re-grade the topography of the site to provide a MUGA mitigates against the loss of school amenity space.

As part of the design process, arboricultural and ecological investigations have been undertaken. Root protection areas have been proposed to ensure the longevity of the trees within the site. Recommendations have also been made to manage the impact of the development on ecology of the site and surrounding areas.

The design limits dead ends and areas of limited surveillance. Surveillance of the site is achieved by ensuring that there are views out of the building from each elevation. All windows and doors will be in compliance with secure by design standards. It is also proposed that the sites CCTV stems is reconfigured to supplement the passive means of surveillance and security on site.

The design allows access to amenity space in a number of location. However should the needs of the users change over time, as the building is steel framed it is inherently adaptable and flexible and changes could be made.
Policy 9 – Sustainable Buildings

1. **Subject to economic viability, developments of 1000+ square metres of nonresidential floorspace should, as a minimum meet BREEAM very good or equivalent nationally recognised standards;**

Although BREEAM is not being pursued on this scheme, the aim of the project is to deliver a building which is energy efficient and makes best use of passive design where possible. Details on how this is achieved are highlighted in the following statement.

2. **The layout and design of sites, buildings and associated landscaping should:**

   a. **Maximise the use of passive solar design to address heating and cooling; and**
   
   b. **Where technically feasible, enable access to or provision of decentralised energy networks, or safeguard future opportunities to do so without major disruption.**

The construction will provide an envelope which will exceed the minimum statutory requirements for thermal insulation and will utilise energy efficient heating, lighting, ventilation and control systems. Each of the eight standard classrooms will have a proprietary natural mixing stack ventilation system to provide appropriate levels of natural ventilation and temperature throughout the year. This may be supplemented by opening windows when required. Each stack ventilation unit will have a roof mounted terminal incorporating supply and exhaust ports incorporating sound attenuation and the fans are located within the rooms so there should be no noise break-out issues.

The four special teaching spaces within the single storey Creative Block will have ventilation system suited to the specific uses. The Learning Resources Centre will have comfort cooling and mechanical ventilation supply and extract system with heat recovery.

The building will be heated by gas boilers located within the ground floor plant room. Cooling will be limited to the Learning Resources Centre.

The building will incorporate water saving measures such as dual flush toilets and non-concussive taps.

Policy 10 – Provision Of infrastructure

b) **Development should seek to minimise increases in the demand for infrastructure and services including through measures to encourage a reduction in car use, measures to limit the need for additional/expanded water and waste infrastructure and to create safe, healthy environments;**

Prior to construction of the extension, a haul road with access off Barton Road will be formed to enable construction traffic to be completely segregated from the school – this will have obvious safety benefits for the school and residents and users of Eastleigh Road (including the adjacent St. Edwards R.C. Primary school), and will also reduce environmental, visual and noise disturbance for the pupils. The haul road and access is included in this application and will be subject to detailed design by consulting highways engineers.

The scheme includes improvements to the drop-off/pick-up layout and provision of additional holding areas for minibus and taxi transport to enable a managed controlled one-way arrival and departure system to be developed and to reduce the likelihood of vehicles having to queue on Eastleigh Road to gain access to the school.

As noted in the Schools Travel Plan the School actively try to encourage parents and students to commute to school via walking, cycling and public transport, but the Special Needs of the students require that the majority require transport to and from school by minibus or taxi, and for a lesser number by parents/guardian. A study around the school at peak times to review current and future traffic flows and management within the vicinity of the school. (Please refer to specialist report prepared by JPP Consulting for further details/information).
6.0- Conclusion

6.1- The information within this report has served to demonstrate the following:

- There is a need for the expansion of Isebrook SEN school and that the additional accommodation required can be provided on the existing site in a way that is not detrimental to the amenity of the existing developments.

- The scheme has been developed in line with relevant principals of the North Northamptonshire Joint Core Strategy, where these policies have not been directly followed justifications have been made.

- The development serve the local community by providing facilities which will improved the learning environment for children with special educational needs.

- The development will create additional jobs.