DESIGN AND ACCESS STATEMENT

Polebrook CE Primary School

Main Street, Polebrook, Northamptonshire, PE8 5LN

For

Northamptonshire County Council (c/o Lend Lease)

Prepared by Peter Haddon and Partners Architects

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- First Issue P1 18/02/2015 PW
- A: Revised as requested by Planning Officer 27/02/2015 PW
**Introduction**

The following ‘Statement of Need’ prepared by Northamptonshire County Council by their Strategic Planning Department, within the Children, Families and Education Directorate to underpin the justification for the proposed School development. This is provided in this Planning Support document, to explain the reasons and educational criteria which has generated the inception and scoping requirements for the project.

In the case of Polebrook School, the School will change from a Lower School to a Primary School in September 2015, when the School will have a Year 5 Class for the first time. In September 2016 the school will accommodate the full Primary School age range, from Reception to Year 6 and an additional Classroom will be required.

This Planning Application for the above expansion, will allow the School to increase its capacity by 30 primary places and will allow the school to, as mentioned above, to increase its age range from 4 to 9 years to 4 to 11 years.

**ASSESSMENT AND USE**

**Physical Context**

The village of Polebrook lies two miles from the town of Oundle and contains, within its parish boundaries, the hamlets of Armston and Kingsthope. It derives its name from the brook that flows into the River Nene one mile to the west of the village. The linear village layout contains a village “square” and the road through the village is lined with attractive old houses built in local stone, with roofs of either thatch, Collyweston stone slates or tiles.
The most beautiful and dominate building in the village is All Saints Church, located in the centre of the village. The grandest house in the village is Polebrook Hall, located behind its imposing wrought iron gates. Just outside the village is Polebrook airfield, used by the American Air Force during World War Two.

Polebrook School, is located on Main Street to the far end of the village. The original Victorian building being of the local grey limestone, is located facing the road and more modern extensions have been added to the front and rear of the old building over the years.

The existing school is not Listed or located within a Conservation Area.

**Economic and Social Context**

Polebrook CE Primary School serves both the village and surrounding rural communities that do not have a primary school provision. The linked area for admissions include the villages of Armston, Hemington, Lutton, as well as Polebrook itself.

There is a need to ensure that the capacity of the building can accommodate the pupil numbers and provide the appropriate curriculum facilities for a Primary School that will eventually have 105 pupils on roll when full.

**Planning Policy**

Although the project is on a relatively minor scale and the main reason behind the proposal is to achieve the changes to the Education System in East Northamptonshire noted above, we have however still referred to various local and national planning polices when considering the location, scale, design and finishes of the proposed extension forming this application.

The key documents reviewed include the following:

- *North Northamptonshire Core Spatial Strategy, adopted June 2008.*
- *National Planning Policy Framework, March 2012*

Further details of these policies can be seen in the separate Planning Support Statement submitted with the Application.
**SCHEME DESIGN**

**Use and Amount**

The project will involve the creation of 1no. new build Classroom, resulting in a total of 4no. Classrooms, including the Reception Class, with mixed year group teaching.

As part of the project, other spaces have been reviewed in terms of size/provision and the proposals include for alteration/enhancement works, including the creation of new of a new Staff Room and a Staff/Visitor Toilet, the refurbishment of 2no. existing pupil Toilets, including installation of mechanical ventilation and roof lights (where windows lost due to new Classroom extension).

The proposals include the improvement of circulation routes around the building, in particular to provide improved access to the existing 2no. Classrooms at the rear, which will limit the disruption to activities within the main Hall.

The existing Hot School Meals Pod will be retained in its present location.

An existing ICT Suite will be altered to create a new Library/Group room. However this work will be carried out direct by the School.
The existing Library mobile building, located to the rear of the School, will be removed on completion of the new works, with the tarmac playground extended, to offset any loss of external, hard play area due to the building extensions. The existing trim trail/play equipment will be retained. The existing covered play structure located in the playground will be retained.

Layout

From the following plans it can be seen that the scheme consists of two separate extensions to the School, with the additional Classroom located to the rear of the old School Building, making use of the existing Pupil Toilets (to be refurbished) as a shared facility with the existing Classroom, situated in the old School Building. To allow for the construction of the new Classroom the existing Staffroom will have to be replaced and the existing Staff Toilet removed to create a new Corridor and Cloaks Area and to improve circulation and access to both the new and existing Classrooms. The new Classroom extension has been designed to allow for the retention of the Hot School Meals Pod to be retained in its present location, as requested by the School.

The new larger Staffroom and Staff/Visitor Toilet extension is shown located to the rear of the existing School entrance lobby, adjacent to the existing more modern Classrooms built to the rear of the main Hall. A new short Corridor will be constructed from the rear of the existing School Entrance Lobby, to the new Staffroom and linked
to the existing Corridor at the rear of the Hall. This will allow access to the new Staffroom but also allow access to the 2no. existing Classrooms located to the rear of the Hall, without going through the Hall (which is the only access to the Classrooms at present).

Appearance and Scale
The existing School consists of a number of different age and styles of buildings, from the old original brick built School building, with a high steep pitched tiled roof to the front of the site, a more modern pyramid pitched roof main Hall and flat roofed, brick built Classrooms to the rear and side of the main Hall. The existing Head Teachers Office and School Office form part of the old School building and the adjacent Staffroom and Toilets, located to the rear of the old School Building are located under a visually poor low pitched flat roof badly constructed into the main pitched roof of the old building.
As there is such a varied type and style of building on the existing site, it was decided not to try and match any of the styles but to propose a building form, with finishes, that are different but will “pull together” all the other building types and existing finishes. We have also taken into account the School’s eco-friendly policy and their Forest School status, together with the very difficult access for deliveries and construction (with everything having to be man handled off the road in front of the School).

Both the new Classroom and Staffroom extensions are designed as timber farmed structure, to be constructed on site, finished externally with horizontal larch cladding, which is maintenance free and will weather to a silver grey colour. Internal beams will be exposed laminated timber. The roofs to both buildings will be low pitched mono-pitch finished in single ply roofing membrane, with decor trims. New windows and external doors will be grey powder coated aluminium. The mono-pitch roof to the Classroom will also allow for the installation of opening high level windows and cross ventilation to the Classroom.
The existing ugly low pitched flat roof over the existing Staffroom and Toilets will be removed and replaced with a new flat roof finished in single ply roofing membrane and with roof lights to allow natural daylight and ventilation into the rooms below.

The new Corridor between the existing School Entrance Lobby and the new Staffroom extension will have fully glazed screens and new double doors allowing access to the rear playgrounds and for the Hot School Meals trollies. The flat roof will be finished in single ply roofing membrane.

**External Works and Landscaping**

As noted above, the School have requested the tarmac playground area will be extended to the rear of the School, to offset any loss of external, hard play area due to the building extensions. Therefore, on completion of the extensions the existing Library mobile building will be removed and the area taken up by the building and the footpaths to it, laid to tarmac to form the additional playground area requested.
**Arboricultural Report**

An Arboricultural Survey, in the form of a Pre-Development Survey, Impact Assessment and Method Statement, was commissioned and carried out by Middlemarch Environmental Limited and this Report, together with any recommendations resulting from this survey, are submitted separately with this Planning Application.

Whilst the proposed works do not affect the existing trees directly, the proposals have been carefully considered to ensure that routes for drainage/services, extent of replacement tarmac, installation of temporary site cabins, etc. do not cause damage to the existing trees.

**Ecological Report**

A Habitat Survey, in the form of a Day Time Bat Survey, was commissioned and carried out by Middlemarch Environmental Limited and this Report, together with any recommendations resulting from this survey, are submitted separately with this Planning Application.

**External Lighting**

The only additional lighting proposed will be building mounted bulkhead fittings, to match the existing, for emergency escape purposes and located adjacent to new fire escape doors. These lights will only be used during hours that the School building is occupied.

**INVolvement**

**Planning Consultation**

Pre-Application advice on the scheme design, building forms and external materials was discussed with NCC Planning Officers on 21st November 2014 during which the Planning Officer, in principle agreed with the preliminary proposals shown to them.

**Public Consultation**

The Design Team undertook a detailed process to meet with the local public/community and consult with them on the scheme. We have met with the school, governors and village residents and a Pre-Application Public Consultation event was held at the school on 22nd January 2015, which was attended by a number of village residents and School parents, who completed feedback forms presented on the evening. The majority of comments were in strong support of the proposals, both in terms of good design and improved school facilities.

**Design Development**

A number of meetings have been held with the School, Project Manager and Design Team throughout the design process and all details discussed/agreed with the School to confirm the requirements for each space prior to progressing with the final detailed design stage.
ACCESS

Existing Vehicular and Pedestrian Access

The existing vehicular and pedestrian access to the School off Main Street will be unaffected by the developments. However the secondary pedestrian access off Main Street, to the side of the School will form a temporary separate access for contractors during the works and then re-instated on completion.

Existing car parking at the School will be unaffected by the developments.

Inclusive Access

Access Policy

As Architects, Peter Haddon and Partners work to achieve compliance with the Building Regulations Part M ‘Access To And Use of Buildings’ and recommendations found within BS 8300:2009 and other industry guidance publications. We fully understand the requirements of the Disabled Discrimination Act and we undertake regular consultations with Local Authority Access Officers and Access Groups in order to maintain a high level of awareness in designing for inclusive access.

Peter Haddon and Partners are committed to a policy of equality, inclusion and accessibility achievable through good design. The basic right for access to and use of buildings for all is recognised as the most fundamental basis upon which the design should be established. It is recognised that all individuals have a range of abilities which vary greatly and some of which may be impaired, requiring consideration upon the Designer’s part to ensure that as wide a range of abilities as possible are accommodated.

In the case of the proposed works to the School Peter Haddon and Partners have included the following to ensure, in this case, the new building and internal alterations are fully accessible and the design and construction of the building will fully achieve compliance with Building Regulations AD Part M or the Disability Discrimination Act 1995:

Car Parking:

As noted above, the existing car parking at the School will be unaffected by the developments, including the designated disabled parking space located in the existing car park, adjacent to the main entrance to the School building.

Approach and Entrances:

The existing front entrance to the School Reception is presently fitted with fully accessible entrance doors, including accessible friendly thresholds and with external disabled ramped access. Other external doors are also fitted with doors that have accessible friendly thresholds and external access and all new external doors will be similar.
Circulation:

The new buildings and internal alterations have been designed in accordance with the following as standard (where possible):

- Corridors and passageways will be a minimum of 1800mm wide (or 1500mm wide with passing places), with either level floors or ramps (no steps).
- Colour contrast of at least 20 points Light Reflectance Value (LRV) is to be provided between walls and floors, floors and ceilings.
- Colour contrast of at least 20 points Light Reflectance Value (LRV) is to be provided between door/door frames and surrounding walls, door face and leading edge to non-self-closing doors and between ironmongery and doors.
- Ironmongery door handles are selected to meet the requirements of BS8300 to be operable with one hand using closed fist.
- All doors are designed to provide minimum clear opening widths, measured to the face of any protruding Ironmongery, to comply with Building Regulations AD part M table 2.
- Doors on access routes are fitted with vision panels towards the leading edge to provide minimum zone of vision between 500mm and 1500mm from floor level.

Sanitary Accommodation:

- We confirm fully accessible sanitary accommodation exists in the School, so there will be no requirement for the proposed development to add to these existing facilities.

Refreshment Facilities:

- The new Staffroom will have fully fitted refreshment facilities in the form of fitted cupboards, worktops, sink and associated services. We confirm a suitable area of the Staffroom kitchenette area will be fitted with units and worktop, as required in Part M of the Building Regulations, at a suitable height to allow for fully accessible use.