

Nottingham City Council

Business Case

**Project Title: Fernwood Primary School
Expansion Works – Creation of two
additional infant classrooms**

Lead Department: Major Projects



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DOCUMENT CONTROL

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1.0 PURPOSE OF DOCUMENT

This document sets out the need, benefits and the justification for the addition of two infant classrooms to Fernwood Primary school.

2.0 EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Increasing demand has been identified in the Wollaton area of the city for primary school places and Fernwood Primary School was over subscribed for September 2015. It was agreed that the school would take a bulge year in 2015 to provide the opportunity to formally consult on the expansion of the school from an 840 place primary to a 1050 place primary. This consultation has now commenced and approval has been granted to issue the Statutory Notices. The outcome of the consultation and the final decision will not be known until later in the year, however, there is still anticipated to be further need for places for September 2016, so there needs to be consideration of options for a further bulge year. At present there is no further capacity within the school and so a two classroom extension is being planned attached to the existing Key Stage 1 building. Previously there was approval for some early design work and minor modifications to the Key Stage 1 block it has now been identified that further capacity is required .

3.0 STRATEGIC FIT

3.1 Background of Business Need

The national shortage of primary school places has been reflected across the City and extra capacity has been added in many schools. The Wollaton area is experiencing significant primary school place pressure with a continued upward trend for pupil growth in the coming years. The factors that contribute to this are increased birth rate, inward migration and increased house sales and housing developments in the area. Fernwood is an outstanding school and is always over subscribed with waiting lists across the year groups. The significant new housing development currently being constructed will result in further demand for new places.

While the expansion of the school has yet to be approved there is a need to provide sufficient accommodation to allow a continued expansion of the school if the Statutory Notices are approved. It will also allow for a further bulge year that will be required to provide sufficient school places for in catchment children as a temporary measure in the event of the formal expansion not being approved.

3.2 Strategic Objectives and Outcomes

The City Council has a Statutory duty to provide sufficient school places. One of 5 key objectives of the new Council Plan setting out the Council's ambitions for the next four years is to ensure that every child in Nottingham is taught in a school that is judged good or outstanding by Ofsted. The expansion of Fernwood Primary School also supports the Council priorities of providing access to a good school close to home for every young person in Nottingham and to guarantee a choice of places for every child at a local primary school.

Parents / carers quite rightly expect their children to be offered a local school place in their catchment area and the case for expanding a school which delivers a quality provision in an area where there are insufficient school places is a strong one. It is the duty and the desire of both the Council and the school to maximise opportunities to deliver a quality education to the community.

The provision of this additional capacity is the first stage in the potential expansion of Fernwood Primary School from its current capacity of 840 to a potential capacity of 1050. The provision of two new classrooms will allow the school to take a further 30 children in September 2016 and meet the catchment demand.

3.3 Scope and option appraisal

The proposal is to build two additional classrooms and to provide some breakout space and associated toilets adjoining the existing Key stage 1 building. If the formal proposal to expand Fernwood Primary school is agreed later in the year there will need to be further building works to the Key stage 2 building which consist of a further four classrooms and associated space to meet the full expansion of the primary school from 840 places to 1050 places.

The school are very supportive of the proposals to provide the two additional classrooms. Several meetings have been held with the school and various design options have been discussed

An option to provide a new block of 7 classrooms was considered in the early days of the project but it was discounted as it would mean that one class in each year group would have no connection with the rest of the year group. Educational it makes more sense to locate all the classes in the same year group adjacent as to allow them to share resources.

3.4 Constraints

The two additional classrooms are required for September 2016 to enable pupils to be admitted to the school. The school will need to function with building works on site. The Project Team will work closely with the Senior Management Team of the school to ensure that all works and operations are managed and supervised accordingly. The day to day running of the school will not be adversely affected.

3.5 Dependencies

The project contributes towards the Council Plan 2015-2019 as it meets the one of the Council's key objectives in ensuring that every child is taught in a school that is judged good or outstanding by Ofsted. It also supports the Council priority of providing access to a good school close to home for every young person in Nottingham.

3.6 Key Risks

The key risks are:

| Risk No. | Risk | Mitigation |
|----------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 1. | The project cannot be delivered within the allocated budget. | Early costings have demonstrated that the project is deliverable within the indicative amount allocated. |
| 2. | Risks to the project budget are not understood and the project cost may increase beyond the agreed budget. | Surveys to be undertaken to the site to confirm costs. Early discussions to take place with the successful contractor to ensure design is efficient and any savings are made. |
| 3. | The risk that planning is not agreed due to the need to take up green space for the two new classrooms. | Engagement has already taken place with 'Sport England'. They are in support of the option. |
| 4. | That the two classroom extension can't be delivered within the programme constraints. | There will be continued dialogue with the design team and the contractor. Which will flag up the concerns to the school and the project team will look to provide the most effective overall solution. |

3.7 Benefits

The benefits of this project are:

- The meeting of one of the 5 key objectives of the new Council Plan which sets out the Council's ambitions for the next four years which is to ensure that every

child in Nottingham is taught in a school that is judged good or outstanding by Ofsted. Fernwood Primary school is a recent amalgamation of Fernwood Infant and Junior schools both when last inspected by Ofsted were rated as outstanding.

- The proposal supports the Council's priorities of providing access to a good school close to home for every young person. There is presently a demand for places within the catchment area of Fernwood Primary. Expansion of a popular and successful school, Fernwood primary school is over subscribed.
- Creation of quality teaching and learning space this will be measured by agreeing that the new spaces are suitable in conjunction with the Head Teacher.
- Provision of energy efficient solutions for additional classrooms within the building. This will be measured based on the change of usage of both gas and electric over a period being proportionately lower than the overall area of the buildings increase.

4.0 FINANCE

Budget position

The scheme is presently in design and there have been some early cost estimates of the building works for this first phase of the expansion. It is anticipated that this work will cost £0.750 million and that the second phase of a four classroom extension adjacent to the Keystage 2 building will cost a further £1.250 million if it is approved later. Overall an allowance of £2.000 million has been made in the capital programme to procure the works. This funding requirement will come from the Basic Need grant provided by the Education Funding Agency.

| | Funding |
|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------|
| | £ million |
| Expansion of Key stage 1 building (included in this Business Case). | 0.750 |
| Expansion of Key Stage 2 building (not considered in this Business Case and subject to a separate business case at a later date). | 1.250 |
| Total overall funding | 2.0000 |

Other budget issues

The school will be entitled to an additional £8,000 per additional classroom to cover furniture and fittings and ICT requirements.

5.0 PROCUREMENT

The procurement route has been considered. Two options were reviewed, going out to the market place with a full set of tender documents or using an appropriate contractor off the East Midlands Property Alliance (EMPA) framework. Given the constraints of the programme, the requirement to hand the first two classrooms over for September 2016, it was felt that the most effective route to market would be to procure the contractor off the EMPA framework. The appropriate contractor is GF Tomlinson Group, who has completed a number of similar size projects in the last few years.

The design has been procured in house from Design Services, although they will be supported by specialist designers for aspects of the design. Design Services have previously been involved in the scheme to create a nursery on the school site and are therefore, aware of the school constraints and expectations.

6.0 DELIVERY

The project will be managed by the Major Projects team and Design Services on behalf of School Reorganisation team. The team have considerable experience in delivering schemes of this nature particularly in the last five years where a significant number of schools have been expanded. There is already an effectively working relationship on site with the school that has been developed during the previous scheme completed in January 2016 to provide a nursery for the school.

As the scheme develops a project plan will be produced and will set out how the project will be delivered and the key milestones that need to be achieved.