

09/07/2025	G1-OBC	Outline Business Case / Commit to Invest
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Project / Programme Name:	Mabel Prichard Special School, Oxford - Expansion
Total Capital Budget:	£1,900,000
Sponsoring Director:	Lisa Lyons – Director of Children’s Services
Strategic Professional Lead:	Jenny Seddon
Delivery Project Lead:	Jenny Seddon (working with The Gallery Trust - TGT)
Divisions Affected:	Leys
Project Approval No:	C.AE10099.01

Threshold Change Request (OOT)

Threshold(s) Exceeded:	Requires Approval from:
1. Cost	S151 Officer & Strategic Director Communities
2. Time	Within Threshold
3. Scope / Benefits	Within Threshold
4. Reputational / Political Risk	Within Threshold

Decision(s) required:

1. To release a further development budget of £0.184m to enable The Gallery Trust (TGT) to progress the expansion works at Mabel Prichard School through the planning stage, detailed design and procurement of the contractor. This is in addition to the £0.080m released at Gate 0.
2. To increase the overall budget provision by £0.576m to £1.9m with the increase being met from SEN Grant Funds.

Record of Decision / Final Approval [as per Financial Procedure Rules]

Decision	Approved by
APPROVED	Strategic Capital and Commercial Board 7 August 2025

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Sign-off

Sign-offs	Name	Date
Director / Assistant Director	Vic Kurzeja	18/07/25  Re_PCB - July 2025 - notes.msg
Service Manager: Strategy / Delivery	Henry White	14/07/25
Strategy / Delivery Professional Lead	Jenny Seddon	14/07/25
Finance Team (Capital)	Graham Clare	14/07/25
Finance Team	Drew Hodgson	20/07/25
Confirmation of Consultation with / Input from	Name	Date
Service Area / Key Stakeholder	Jane Maharry – CEF	14/07/2025
Operational Manager – Cost Management	Mark Padbury	09/07/2025
Estates Team	Mavis Morgan	11/07/2025

1. Executive Summary

- 1.1 Mabel Prichard Special School is co-located on the lower school site with Orchard Meadow Primary School. It is proposed to reduce the planned capacity of Orchard Meadow Primary School and relocate their Foundation Stage accommodation into surplus space elsewhere on the site (Phase 1). This would then allow the vacated space to be released for the purpose of expanding Mabel Prichard Special School (Phase 2).
- 1.2 Mabel Prichard Special School is an academy, under the management of The Gallery Trust (TGT). The Trust will self-deliver the design and delivery of the expansion project, using funding provided by OCC through a formal Funding Agreement.
- 1.3 The Initial Business Case (IBC) for this expansion project (Phase 1 and 2) was approved on the 27th of March 2024 with an estimated total budget of £2.230m, of which Phase 1 was estimated at £0.906m and Phase 2 at £1.324m. Note: This Business Case refers to the Phase 2 Expansion works ONLY.
- 1.4 The solution developed during the feasibility stage is as per OCC's brief, with the estimated project cost of £1.900m. This includes sufficient risk and contingency sums, and inflation calculated to the mid-point of the contract period to capture inflationary effects for the full period.
- 1.5 The cost build-up of the estimated budget has been reviewed and verified by OCC's Operational Manager - Cost Management.
- 1.6 The IBC included the release of £0.080m for the feasibility stage, and this report requests an additional £0.184m to enable the Trust to progress the project through to the Full Business Case submission.
- 1.7 The additional use of SEN High Needs grants puts a financial risk on the remaining funding sources for the second SEN New School that was expected to be funded from SEN Grant Funds.

2. Description & Objectives of the Desired Outcomes & Business Benefits

2.1 The desired outcomes & business benefits are unchanged from the Initial Business Case where further detailed information is provided. A link to the approved IBC is found in the appendix Section 9.

3. Results of Options Appraisal & Project Scope

3.1 The Trust have completed the feasibility stage which has determined the scope of works required to facilitate the expansion of the school.

3.2 This project will deliver circa 23 additional places. The additional capacity will allow the school to blend KS2/3 provision on the primary site avoiding the need for expansion on the secondary school site.

3.3 The feasibility concluded that the Trust within the funding available can create additional accommodation for the expansion of the school as follows:

- Remodelling and refurbishment of the vacated Orchard Meadow School - foundation stage accommodation for Mabel Prichard School. Creating 3no. classrooms, toilets, group room, ancillary accommodation, and internal ramp.
- Reconfiguration of the existing cramped Mabel Prichard main school entrance through internal alterations to create an improved main entrance, office accommodation, staff room and ancillary accommodation.
- Additional car parking to Mabel Prichard School and improved highway access works.

3.4 It is worth noting, the Trust's original scheme, developed per OCC's brief, presented in early June 2025 showed an estimated budget at around £2.6m. Through a thorough value engineering exercise, we have been able to reduce the build costs by over £600k and reduced the budget down to £1.9m.

3.5 The proposed solution for the remodelling of Mabel Prichard School remains unchanged from that presented at IBC in February 2024, except for a small extension to the main entrance to provide a visitor's toilet and interview room for safeguarding reasons.

4. Financials: Estimated Final Costs & Proposed Funding Plan

4.1 The capital cost of the Mabel Prichard expansion will be met from formulaic DfE capital grant allocated to Oxfordshire for investment in special education capacity (High Needs Provision Capital Allocation 2021/22 – 2023/24).

4.2 The budget at this stage is estimated as £1.900m, broken down as follows:

£1.315m	Construction (Cost Estimate 14th March 2025)
£0.060m	Feasibility
£0.196m	Consultant Fees (RIBA 3-6),
£0.018m	Statutory Charges, Surveys and Misc Costs
£0.062m	Costed Risks (Risk Register)
£0.159m	Client Contingency
£0.070m	OCC Staff Costs (Strategy, Estates and Legal)
£0.020m	FF&E and ICT Hardware funding
£1.900m	Total Project Cost

The total project cost to OCC for delivery of the project to be £1.900m

4.3 The total sum of £0.184m of funding is requested for release at this stage, made up as below:

£0.060m	TGT feasibility Study Fees and Surveys
£0.126m	Fees for Planning, Design, & Procurement (RIBA 3 & 4)
£0.018m	Surveys, Statutory Charges and Misc. Costs
£0.020m	Client Risk & Contingency
<u>£0.040m</u>	OCC Staff Costs (Strategy, Estates and Legal)

£0.264m Total

£0.080m Less Released at Gate 0

£0.184m Requested for Release at Gate 1



BUDGET	G0 (IBC)	G1 (OBC) (baseline)	G2 (FBC)	G3 (PC)	G4 (FC) Final Close	THRESHOLD CHANGE
Stage 0 Options Appraisal						
Stage 1 Concept Design	£32,125	£32,125				£0
Stage 2 Design & Procurement	£96,375	£149,730				£53,355
Stage 3 Delivery / Construction	£974,500	£1,496,745				£-522,245
Stage 4 Close Out	Incl above	Incl above				Incl above
<i>Contingency</i>	£110,500	£159,000				£48,500
<i>Financial Risk</i>	£110,500	£62,400				£-48,100
TOTAL	£1,324,000	£1,900,000				£576,000
THRESHOLD CHANGE						
Reported in Stage						
<i>Date of Change / Update</i>						

EXPENDITURE	G0 – IBC Budget	G1 – OBC baseline	G2 – FBC	G3 - PC	G4 - Final Close	THRESHOLD CHANGE
Previous Years						
2023/24		£208				£208
2024/25	£6,425	£51,030				£44,605
2025/26	£64,250	£1,083,000				£1,018,750
2026/27	£545,075	£492,292				£-52,783
2027/28	£487,250	£52,070				£-435,180
<i>Contingency</i>	£110,500	£159,000				£48,500
<i>Financial Risk</i>	£110,500	£62,400				£-48,100
TOTAL	£1,324,000	£1,900,000				£576,000

Revenue Implications

4.4 As an academy the school will be responsible for all revenue costs for staffing and repairs and maintenance of the new building. These costs will be funded from the school's delegated budget share.

5. Project Delivery Timetable & Procurement Plan

Below table indicates indicative start dates for each of the stages, reported on at each of the gateways, with target Approval Dates for each of the Gates.

	G0	G1 (baseline)	G2 (FBC)	G3 (PC)	G4	MOVEMENT
Stage 0 Options Appraisal						
IBC Approval	Feb 24	Feb 24				
Stage 1 Concept Design	March 24	March 24				
OBC Approval	March 24	July 25				
Stage 2 Design & Procurement	April 24	Aug 25				
FBC Approval	July 24	Dec 25				
Stage 3 Delivery/ Construction	Aug 24	Jan 26				
Handover	Aug 24	June 26				
Project Close	April 25	Sep 26				
Stage 4 Close Out	Aug 25	June 27				
Final Close	April 26	Sep 27				
Months deviation (PC)		+17 months				
Date reported						

- 5.1 Following completion of the Phase 1 works (anticipated October 2025), the existing space will be vacated by Orchard Meadow School and Phase 2 works will commence by The Gallery Trust (TGT) to undertake the internal alterations to facilitate the expansion of Mabel Prichard Special School. Both schools will need licences for alteration from OCC.
- 5.2 There will also be a need to manage the surrender of part of the Orchard Meadow site from United Learning Trust (ULT) to OCC and the simultaneous grant of a new lease to The Gallery Trust (TGT). ULT and TGT will need to seek Department for Education (DfE) approval to surrender/grant of their leases with OCC.

6. Risks, Constraints, Dependencies & Exclusions

6.1 TGT have produce a risk register as part of their Feasibility Studies. Outside of the standard design and construction risks; the key project risks are:

:

Description of areas or sources of risk and impact on project	Mitigation	Owner
Approvals. Approval for Mabel Pritchard School to expand from the Regional Schools Director (RSD) – if not received prior to construction, the start date could be delayed.	TGT to approach the RSD to obtain a view as soon as possible.	TGT/Mabel Prichard
Lease variations. There will be a need to manage the surrender of part of the Orchard Meadow site from ULT to OCC and the consequential grant of a new lease to The Gallery Trust. ULT and Gallery will need to seek Department for Education (DfE) approval to vary their leases with OCC.	Both ULT and TGT to engage early with their legal teams and DfE to obtain approval. Once approved and final land registry compliant plans are drawn up, both trusts will need to work with OCC Estates team to request the changes to their documentation in a timely manner	OCC Estates, ULT/Orchard Meadow/OCC Estates
Landlords consent. This will be required for the works to alter the building.	TGT will need to engage with OCC estates as soon as possible to enable consents (licence for alteration) to be granted.	TGT/OCC Estates
Occupied Site and Phasing of works. Due to the site constraints, any works (in particular any internal works) will need to be phased to enable the school to operate in its current environment and without the need for temporary accommodation.	Early discussions with TGT and Mabel Prichard School to ensure that the school is not impacted by the works, and appropriate contractors access arrangements/phasing are determined.	OCC Project Lead, Mabel Prichard/TGT,
Cash Flow. Ensuring TGT have sufficient cash flow to enable them to procure services required, without causing a payment delay	Instruction to legal as soon as OBC approved to enable release of initial funding and to form the main Funding Agreement including payment tranches as agreed with TGT.	OCC Project lead, OCC Legal/Trust
S77 Approval. Proposed additional car parking for Mabel Prichard will be located on land previously owned by OCC.	Application to be submitted as soon as scope of works known and potential mitigation measures agreed.	OCC Project Lead, Mabel Prichard/TGT,
Programme: The delivery of Phase2 works is delayed which impacts on the proposed expansion of Mabel Prichard (Phase 2) and the delivery of 23 additional places.	Trust/School to accommodate additional pupils within existing accommodation in the short term.	Mabel Prichard/TGT





7. Communication & Consultation (Internal & External)

- 7.1 The accommodation requirements and proposed design solutions have been shared with the Trust, Headteacher and Governors of Mabel Prichard School and is fully supported.
- 7.2 The expansion of Mabel Prichard Special School by more than 20 places is considered a *significant change* will require the Trust to seek approval via the Regional Schools Director (*Making significant changes to an open academy Departmental guidance for all types of academy trust January 2022*).
- 7.3 The proposed building works at Mabel Prichard School will require a planning application to Oxford City Council, the district council will undertake the required consultation process and interested parties will have the opportunity to make their comments or objections.

8. Project Governance

- 8.1 The project will be delivered by the Trust (TGT) under the terms of a Funding Agreement with the Council.
- 8.2 The project will be included within the Capital Programme and will follow the necessary governance process for funding approvals and technical reviews, where necessary.
- 8.3 While day to day responsibility for each of the projects will rest with TGT the OCC Project Lead will report any out of tolerance working and key risks through the project life of the design and delivery.

9. Appendices

Item	Description	Link
Appendix A	Initial Business Case	 Mabel Prichard Special School, Oxford Mabel Prichard Special School, Oxford - Expansion IBC Approved
Appendix B	Cost Plan – TGT Consultants, Wainwrights	 Mabel Prichard Estimate - Elemental - Mabel Prichard Estimate - Elemental - July 2025.pdf
Appendix C	Costed Risk Register - TGT Consultants	 Mabel Prichard - Risk Register Reva.pdf Risk Register Reva.pdf
Appendix D	Capital Monitoring Report (position as of w/c 23/7/25)	 Mabel%20Pritchard% 20C.AE10099%20 -Capital Monitoring Report..xlsx