Kettering Buccleuch Academy
Design and Access Statement
incorporating Visual Impact Assessment

December 2009
1.0 Introduction

2.0 Design Statement

2.1 Assessment

- Background to Kettering Buccleuch
- Brief History of Academy Schools
- Opportunities for Kettering Buccleuch Academy
- Physical Context - History of Site
- Existing Context Site and Buildings
- Social Context
- Economic Context
- Planning Policy
- Development of an Academy
- Masterplanning
- Outline Business Case
- Weekley Glebe Option
- Programme of Development

2.2 Involvement

2.3 Design:

- Proposal
- Sponsors Vision
- Use
- Amount of Development
- Layout
- Scale
- Landscaping

3.0 Access Statement

- Public Transport & Routes
- Vehicle Approach & Parking
- Pedestrian Approach
- Inclusive Access

4.0 Materials

5.0 Sustainability

6.0 Visual Impact Assessment

- Introduction
- Visual Analysis
- Views 1-10 (descriptions)
- Boughton House
This Design and Access Statement has been prepared in support of the outline planning application for the following development:

Erection of up to 12,900 sq m of school accommodation (Use Class D1) for the Kettering Buccleuch Academy, inclusive of Primary School and 6th Form accommodation on a new campus adjacent to the current Montagu school site on the Weekley Glebe Playing Fields, Weekley Road, Kettering.

This application also includes the demolition of the existing Montagu school buildings, and change of use of the existing English Block into a community Sports Pavilion, as well as new playing/sports facilities.

This statement should be read alongside the submitted Planning Statement, Transport Assessment, Flood Risk Assessment and Extended Phase 1 Ecological Assessment, all of which form part of these outline proposals. The structure of this document will follow CABE guidance on Design and Access statements and covers Assessment, Involvement, Evaluation, Key Principles for Development, Design, Access, Materials, Sustainability and the Visual Impact Assessment.

Figure 1.1
Aerial photograph showing Kettering Buccleuch Academy (formerly the Montagu School) and Weekley Glebe Playing Fields
Figure 1.2
Map of Kettering showing the location of the Kettering Buccleuch Academy (in red)
2.0 Design Statement

2.1 Assessment

Background to Kettering Buccleuch Academy

The all age Academy is planned as a high quality learning environment designed to meet the needs of the pupils and families from the local area. When complete the Academy will provide 1770 places for pupils aged 4 to 19 years including a 250-place 6th form. By also offering learning and personal development opportunities to the community, the Academy hopes to play a part in raising the aspirations of the community, further contributing to an increased sense of pride and achievement within the area.

The proposed redevelopment is over two adjacent sites. There will be a new-build academy on part of the Weekley Glebe playing fields site, and remodelling of an existing teaching block to form a sports pavilion on the Montagu school site. The Sport Pavilion shall contain some of the areas needed for the timetabled curriculum as provided under Building Bulletin 98. The Montagu school site will be extensively remodelled to form new sports pitches for school and community use. The proposed new Academy is adjacent to the Montagu school site and will take secondary pupils from the former Montagu school as well as pupils from Avondale Infant and Junior schools.

The school has developed its vision for future development in conjunction with local authority educational advisors, and it is the key values and principles contained within this vision that will drive the school’s educational design brief.

Brief History of Academy Schools

The Academies programme was set up in 2000 by the then Secretary of State for Education, David Blunkett. Academies are all-ability, state-funded schools established and managed by sponsors from a wide range of backgrounds with backing from the local authority. There are currently 200 academies nationally in the UK.

Academies are a key element in the Government’s drive to raise standards in education; raising aspirations and creating opportunity in disadvantaged communities in the country. They have a mission to transform education where the status quo is simply not good enough, and to act as an engine of social mobility.

The overall aim of the programme is to provide more quality places where educational opportunity and attainment is inadequate - raising aspirations and transforming the life chances of children in communities that have been neglected for far too long. Most academies replace existing underperforming schools; others provide high quality places in areas that need the extra places (either as entirely new schools or as successful independent schools wishing to better serve their local community and broaden their intake), and a small number are high performing schools federating with weak schools as a school improvement strategy.

As well as providing the best opportunities for their pupils, Academies have a key part to play in the regeneration of communities. A new Academy will be a significant focus for learning for its pupils, their families and other local people. Academies will help break the cycle of underachievement in areas of social and economic deprivation whether in inner cities, suburban or rural areas.

Opportunities for Kettering Buccleuch Academy

Supported by the Local Authority, the sponsor, United Learning Trust, would develop Kettering Academy as an all-age provision to meet the particular needs of children and families. A summary of the benefits of an all-through approach would be:

- A systematic and systemic approach to improving performance.
- Providing an enriched curriculum offer by making the best use of available resources through economies of scale and flexibility in the most effective deployment of staff.
- Integrated assessment and monitoring of performance.
- Coherent support, care, and personal development.
- Increased security and confidence of pupils in most need leading to increased attainment at each key stage, sustained learning between key stages, improved staying-on rates, and higher levels of participation and achievement post-16.
- Increased accountability for performance.
- Consistent leadership and governance.
Physical Context

History of Site

Kettering is a town centrally located in the north of Northamptonshire and has a predominantly white British population of around 86,000.

Kettering’s economy was built on the boot and shoe industry and is now largely based upon service and distribution industries due to its central location and excellent transport links. The town benefits from its “Heart of England” location and unemployment is amongst the lowest in the UK. It is home to a wide range of companies including Weetabix, Pegasus Software, RCI Europe, and many large distribution warehouses.

Kettering is part of the Milton Keynes & South Midlands sub-region and has been identified as one of four national ‘growth areas’ and will benefit from investment in the area’s infrastructure. Over 50,000 homes will be built in North Northamptonshire (Corby, Kettering, Wellingborough and East Northants) by 2021 with a further provisional 28,000 by 2031.

Whilst Kettering as a whole is thriving there are localized pockets of substantial deprivation in the town and the area which will be served by the proposed Academy is characterized by high levels of unemployment more than twice the national average of the working age population without any qualifications, 63% v 29%, and almost twice the national average of people of working age in receipt of benefits, 25% v 14%.
Existing Context, Site and Buildings

- Avondale Infants School,
- Avondale Junior School
- Montagu School,
- Weekley Glebe Playing Fields

Montagu School Site

The proposed Kettering Buccleuch Academy is to be sited on the former Montagu School site which sits on a rise on the outer edges of Kettering to the North East of the Borough. There are open fields to the North & East of the site, with a residential area to the South & West, interspersed with small retail outlets.

The Montagu School site consists largely of open playing fields, a large community sports hall operated by the school, and single story school buildings. The vast majority of the materials are brick and concrete tile roof, with metal roof cladding to the sports hall. The buildings sit on top of the rise, with the playing fields on two tiers of banked lower ground. There is a staff car park to the east of the site.

Weekley Glebe Playing Fields

The Weekley Glebe Playing Fields, also on a rise, consists of large expanses of open ground to the east of the Montagu School site on heavily undulating ground. Nine football pitches are laid out on the grounds: with earthen banking setting out the level pitches on the site. Four pitches sit on higher ground and five pitches on the lower ground. Of those five, the grounds have been shaped to accommodate each at varying levels. A small pavilion is located on the south side of the site, by the entrance and behind the houses on Weekley Glebe Road.

Avondale School

The existing Avondale Site currently houses the Infants and Junior Schools on two adjoining but separate plots. Until the formation of the academy both operated independently from contrasting buildings. The existing Infants school occupies a 1930’s red brick arts and crafts style single storey building. This has been adapted over the years to provide for the changing needs of the school and although the buildings have character, they are not ideally suited to their current use.

The existing Primary School occupies a two storey 1960’s concrete framed, brick and concrete panel building that retains it’s existing large expanses of metal curtain walled glazing. Although the buildings are generous in size and well served by daylight the fabric of the existing structures is in poor condition and the glazing creates serious issues due to high amounts of heat loss and unwanted solar gain. The Primary school site extends to the west of the buildings fronting the road and includes a playing field surrounded by housing development.

The future use of these sites once the new Academy is complete will be subject to separate applications for planning approval.
Social Context

Montagu School and Avondale Infant and Junior Schools are located approximately half a mile apart, and serve the same local communities, with the majority of pupils and students living within walking distance. Children attending the Infant and Junior schools are drawn from the bottom 30% and bottom 20%, respectively, most deprived areas nationally, and those attending Montagu School, from the bottom 40% most deprived areas. The proportion of primary aged pupils entitled to free school meals is extremely high at 40% (infants) and 33% (junior) and a high proportion of pupils have been identified as having learning difficulties and disabilities.

Montagu school has 247 surplus places. Despite the best endeavours of governors and staff Montagu School has been unable to sustain improvements in standards over the last 4 years. In 2007 just 30% of students attained 5 A*-C including English and maths and 38% 5 A*-C overall and whilst forecasts for 2008 indicate further improvement standards are well below national and Northamptonshire averages. Contextualised value added, KS2-4, remains low at 977.7 which is in the bottom 25% nationally, and attendance, at under 90%, also remains low. Student attainment in the very small sixth form at c600 and c173- average point score per pupil and per entry respectively, is lower than the Northamptonshire average, and the England average of c731 and c208 respectively.

The distinctive character of the Academy would be secured through a number of features, prominent among them:

- A commitment to high standards and levels of achievement in all areas of academic and personal development. Students would be challenged to achieve through a culture of high expectations and the construction of rigorous frameworks that would encourage positive attitudes
- Realising the potential of all learners through the development of learner skills and competencies and the use of high quality models of teaching and learning, strong and effective welfare and guidance, personal mentoring for each student, and a programme of enrichment activities and extra-curricular opportunities to develop and extend their skills, support their educational progress, and all-round development.
- The promotion of a positive learning partnership with parents to establish a strong basis for securing success for all students and with a high priority on student voice through engagement in curriculum and extra curricular planning, target setting and monitoring, , citizenship and community placements programmes and through a student council.
Development of an Academy

The Academies programme has a similar procurement method to Building Schools for the Future (BSF), such that relatively detailed feasibility work is undertaken by the County Council to establish the viability of the project. This assists in securing Government funding and lays the ground work for the tender process, detailed design and construction phases that follow. This initial work is known as the Outline Business Case or OBC. The main difference with the academies programme to the BSF is that there is no initial feasibility stage or SFC.

In order to produce the OBC the County Council rely upon technical advice from a range of sources and consultants including architects. These consultants undertake the feasibility work necessary to establish the Academy’s brief, the quantity and type of accommodation needed, establish site constraints and obtain any necessary approvals including outline planning where needed. Financial viability is also assessed at this stage by comparing the amount of building against standard cost rates plus likely cost of site constraints.

Procurement of the buildings and some contents is via a design and build contract with a consortium led by a large contractor. This consortium will be responsible for the actual design of the buildings as well as their construction and will bring with them their own team of consultants. The consultants involved in the OBC stage are retained by the County Council beyond the tender to monitor and advise. The consortium is chosen via a competitive tender process.

Usually several projects will be grouped together to make the proposition more attractive to the Contractors. In the case of the Northampton Academies programme there are initially 2 Academies (the other being the Kettering Science Academy at the former Ise Community College), but a further 2 may also enter the programme at a later date.

The Academies Programme funds only the secondary school element of the proposals. The primary phase will be funded directly by the County Council but will form part of a single seamless contract with the chosen construction partner.

Masterplanning

Because the OBC is a fairly detailed document it is not a good tool for testing out a range of options where there are a number of scenarios for the development of the academy. Generally at the OBC stage a single option is explored. With the Kettering Buccleuch Academy it was desirable from the outset to consider a range of opportunities in relation to the siting of the buildings that would allow possible benefits to the Academy and the community.

For this reason an initial exercise was undertaken that explored the following options:

1. Redevelopment of the existing Montagu Site within the current site boundaries
2. Development of the main academy buildings on the adjoining Weekley Glebe site with the Montagu site retained for school and community sports
3. The redevelopment of the nearby Avondale site for Infants and Junior (Foundation Phase)
4. Development of an ‘all age’ academy on the Montagu site by relocating the existing infants and primary schools from the nearby Avondale Site
5. Development of a ‘all age’ academy on the Weekley Glebe site by relocating the existing infants and primary schools from the nearby Avondale Site
6. Development of a ‘all age’ academy as options 4 and 5 but minus the infants school which would remain at Avondale

In some cases there were also a number of sub options. Samples drawings from this study can be seen in this section.

As well as site issues the study examined educational and community benefits. The outcome of this study suggested that there were two strong options that should be explored further. These were options 4 and 5.

Both of these options include the possibility of relocating the Infants and Junior Schools from the Avondale site. This reflects a strong desire from the Academy Sponsor and the County Council to create an ‘all age’ school at this site in order to provide the best possible educational experience.
Outline Business Case

As stated above the OBC’s main purpose is to demonstrate the viability of the project before tender. There are three strands to this work. Firstly to establish the brief for the project and the create a set of initial area and adjacency schedules. Secondly to test these documents against the site constraints. And thirdly to establish economic viability in outline terms.

It is normal for only a single option to be explored at the OBC stage. Due to the outcome of the masterplanning study in this case the decision was taken to develop the two strongest options in parallel during the initial stages of the OBC and to take a decision closer to the conclusion of the exercise. These two options formed the basis of the two proposals shown at the public consultation.

Areas and Adjacencies work has now been undertaken in consultation with the sponsor and detailed layouts for the buildings have been produced in accordance with the requirements of the OBC. These layouts form the basis of the plans shown on the site schematic drawings included with this application. These are included for guidance only to give an indication of the likely size and massing of the new buildings. The development consortium will engage their own architects to develop an entirely independent design (that may or may not follow the principles established in the design shown) that will be submitted for detailed planning at a later stage as part of the Final Business Case (FBC).

This planning application is a requirement of the OBC and will along with a series of consultations establish the viability of the proposed development.

Weekley Glebe Option

There are a number of key reasons why the Weekley Glebe Option has now emerged as the favoured solution:

- Greater presence for the Academy within the community it serves
- Ability to create a clear, well defined set of buildings that have the appropriate relationships that are not compromised by the existing development
- More appropriate location for the lower school with better relationship to the main body of the Academy
- Enhanced community sports provision with improved access
- Replaces the existing dilapidated sports pavilion
- Reduced traffic issues related to school and community access
- Improved security for properties adjoining Weekley Glebe

Programme of Development

The proposed Academy is currently out to Tender with the preferred bidder due to be announced at the end of
This section contains the community involvement boards presented at the public consultation in September 2009.

As well as the community consultation a door knocking consultation was undertaken in the local vicinity to establish which of the options would be preferred. 138 questionnaires were completed. Of these 25% preferred the option for the Academy to remain on the existing Montagu School site, whilst an overwhelming 66% preferred the option of extending the site into the Weekley Glebe playing fields.

The main reasons stated for preferring the Weekley Glebe playing field were:
- Better access for the public
- The provision of an All Weather pitch
- Better visibility of the school
- Less disruption to pupils during building
- Better security
- As well as better school and sports facilities for the community overall.

Consultees within the Local Authority and Government organisations have included:
- Northamptonshire County Council
- Kettering Borough Council
- Sports England

Professional consultations have been carried out between:
- Mott MacDonald - Project Management and general Technical Advisor on Structure, Mechanical, Electrical and Transport Engineering
- Planning & Regeneration - Planning Consultant

Refer to the full consultation report included within this application.
Proposal

The aim of the proposals is to obtain approval for development parameters that will allow the designers flexibility to achieve a design that meets the schools vision.

These proposals seek agreement to the principle of development and address the strategic issues that affect the site and its surroundings but do not seek to determine layout, form or massing.

An exercise has been undertaken to assist with the process which attempts to demonstrate how a building of the size requirement might be designed and incorporated on site. These indicative layouts are not for approval and are merely massing options set within the broad development parameters.

The application seeks approval for the following parameters only.

- A maximum level of new floorspace proposed
- Location of build zones with specified maximum building heights within each of the zones
- Location of vehicle access onto the site

Sponsors Vision

As the Academy sponsor, the United Learning Trust (ULT) takes a 25 year lease from the County Council in order to run the Academy as a separate entity from the Local Education Authority. ULT is a subsidiary of the United Church Schools, a charity that has been running independent schools for 125 years.

The ULT strive for state of the art education facilities that will help to 'bring learning alive'. They bring experience, expertise, and passion to create an Academy that would bring out the 'Best in Everyone', and seek to support the community's priorities. Tailoring the Academy to the needs of the local community they provide high quality education in a happy and safe environment.

ULT structure the academy around 3 development phases, Foundation, Development and Extension. Although these are related to Key Stages they allow the Sponsor to slightly move the boundaries between development stages. Where there is all age provision this allows the older pupils in the foundation stage to begin to take advantage of the specialist facilities in the upper school as they will enter the Development phase mid way between Key Stages 1 & 2.

The Kettering Buccleuch Academy will specialise in Computing, Maths, and Sport, symbolic of the high aspirations and expectations of the Academy and its
Figure 2.4
Adjacencies diagram for Buccluch Academy
Use

There are 3 elements to the outline planning application. These are:

1. New all through Academy Buildings, inclusive of 6th Form & Primary School for pupils aged 4 to 19 years

2. Remodelling of the existing single storey English teaching block N1 into a sports pavilion to serve the Academy and community, including changing and associated facilities to replace the existing sports pavilion on Weekley Globe Playing Fields.

3. New all weather football pitch and improvements to existing games courts provision.

There are no proposed changes to the existing sports block P1, which will be retained for use by the Academy and by the community.

Amount of Development

The total area for the redevelopment site within this outline planning application is 11.44 Ha comprising 8.24 Ha for the Montagu site and 3.20 Ha for the Weekley Globe site. In total the proposals are in the order of 12,900 sq.m. of development comprising buildings arranged over 2-3 storeys. Some parts of the Academy may be laid out as single storey.

The adjacent Figure 2.3 shows the proposed parameters of the proposals. The amount of development corresponds to GIA guidance given in Building Bulletins 98 and 99.

The purpose of these plans is to test affordability (through a sq m rate formula) as well as site constraints and opportunities. These are not the final design proposals for the school. Given the simplicity of the affordability calculations, the proposal needs to allow flexibility for the bidder, whose architects will eventually produce the design. This may result in an increase in the envelope of the buildings (within the constraints of the development parameters) should this provide a better solution for the Kettering Buccleuch Academy.

As part of the primary stage of the Academy, there will be a purpose built unit for children with hearing impairments.

The development will increase not only the amount of playing fields available but also the quality of the sports pitches and it is anticipated that these will be in use both during the school day and out-of-hours during the weekend.

Current proposals include sufficient parking provision for staff and visitors and community users to park wholly on site. The site has capacity to meet the Council’s recommended parking standards for cycle stands but initially 25% of the required number of stands will be provided. The provision will then be reviewed annually.

The indicative plans are based on the following existing & proposed areas:

- Existing Montagu Site Area: 83,220sqm
- Proposed Site Area: 116,400sqm
- Proposed Building Area (blue line): 12,900sqm
- Retained sports building P1: 1,225sqm
- Retained building N1: 1,110 sqm
- Proposed Parameter Area (red shade): 21,173sqm
- Existing Hard Games Area: 4,320sqm
- Proposed Hard Games Court Area: 4,824 sq m
- Proposed All Weather Pitch: 7,570sqm
- Existing Grass Sports Field Area: 32,960sqm
- Proposed Grass Sports Field Area: 37,086sqm
- Proposed Hard & Informal Spaces Area: 3,500sqm

Figure 2.5
Proposed Development Parameter Plan
Development on land adjacent to the existing Montagu school site allows pupils from the Montagu and Avondale schools to continue with their studies with minimum disruption to education. Pupils will move into the new Academy allowing demolition and remodelling of the existing Montagu school buildings and remodelling of the sports pitches.

The Weekley Glebe site is well positioned for increasing the presence of the Academy within the community and will reintroduce community access to the facility. The access road is formed within a gap in the houses and this space will give direct views of the Academy, thereby increasing visibility.

Access onto the new Academy site is from Weekley Glebe Road and is via an existing access road to Montagu School and Weekley Glebe Playing Fields. In addition there is an existing pedestrian route to the site, accessible from Weekley Glebe Road. Access to the Weekley Glebe Playing Fields from the existing site entrance at this location will be maintained.

A new pedestrian route to the east of the proposed Academy Buildings will allow access at all times whilst an additional pedestrian access route is proposed from the Montagu site through to the Weekley Glebe playing Fields to the North east of the site. This shall be for community use out of school hours and will tie in with the community use of the sports facilities on the former Montagu site, including the new pavilion. The existing access to the Weekley Glebe playing fields from the eastern extent is not affected by these proposals. There is space on the remaining Weekley Glebe playing Fields to keep the nine number pitches currently in use. The proposals result in the loss of one pitch only.

The pavilion on the existing Weekley Glebe Playing Fields will be demolished and reprovided on the Montagu site with improved facilities. The facility will be used by the school during its opening hours and will be available for community use outside these times. The new pavilion will provide facilities for users of a new all weather pitch and the existing grass pitches on the Weekley Glebe playing fields. Trees between the houses that back onto the Weekley Glebe site and on the site itself, will be maintained. It is anticipated that the new academy will improve security for the houses in the area.

There will be some visitor parking at the front of the new Academy Buildings. During the school day access to parking on the Montagu site will be gated and for the sole use of Academy staff. Out-of-hours, this parking will be made available to community users of the sports provision.

On the Montagu site the pitches will be laid out to make use of existing changes in level. The series of terraces are ideal for an All Weather Pitch and grass pitches. Key features are (on the Montagu Site):
- New all weather pitch
- Additional MUGA
- Existing grass pitches retained.
Pitches on the Montagu site will be for the exclusive use of Academy students during the school day. At other times, the community will have access to the Montagu site provision. Community use of Weekley Glebe playing fields will remain as current and access to the fields will be retained. During the school day, access to the Academy buildings and site will be security controlled.

![Figure 2.6 Indicative layout plan showing Access Routes.](image-url)
Scale

The proposed scale of future development will be set by the development parameters shown in this application. Within the development zone, proposals will be limited to 8m eaves height and 12m ridge height above ground level.

These levels define the maximum height of future development within the development zone. For reference, the indicative school section is shown within the development envelope.

The impact of the proposed development zones and the indicative school is described within the Visual Impact assessment, included as part of this Design and Access statement.

Landscaping

Existing trees on the site shall be retained as far as possible. Landscape design will be an integral part of the design process. Trees on the boundary between the new Academy site on the Weekley Glebe Playing Fields and the Montagu School site will be thinned out to create new pedestrian routes between the Academy building and the sports site. External teaching spaces throughout the site will be identified and designed to link appropriately with internal teaching areas. This will be particularly important in the primary phase.

Landscaping around parking areas will be designed so as to provide surveillance for users at the same time providing a plated buffer zone against the road surface treatment.

All hard landscaping will be designed to be accessible to all users.
3.0 Access

Public Transport and Routes

A full Transport Assessment is included elsewhere within the Planning Application.

Vehicle Approach and Parking

Vehicular access points at the Academy will not change to those currently in place and will continue to be accessed via Weekely Glebe Road.

Once off Weekely Glebe Road traffic management systems shall be put in place for distribution of staff and visitor parking, access to the playing fields, and access to the community wide spaces available at the school after school hours. This shall include a circular route drop off point on the site to encourage parents not to drop off and collect on Weekley Glebe Road avoiding any congestion concerns with an increase in student numbers. There shall be 8no. five minute drop off/pick-up bays that shall double as bus/coach parking and drop-off for school trips etc.

There shall be 41 visitor parking spaces, including 10 disabled parking bays at the front of the proposed Academy Building. Staff will continue to use the existing parking area on the Montagu School site which shall be restricted during school hours, but opened after hours to the community, where the community will then have access to parking facilities. This shall contain 117 parking spaces. Total car parking spaces shall be 166 against the current 142. Access shall be provided for deliveries also.

Pedestrain Approach

Access by foot is currently off Weekley Glebe Road into the school grounds. This shall remain. There is also access from Weekley Glebe Road into the Weekley Glebe Playing Fields. This provision shall remain via an access around the fenced school area as part of the local amenity, as shown on drawing NCC7-5000. Foot access between Weekley Glebe Playing Fields and the school shall also be provided, although this controlled access will be closed during school hours and opened after hours to the community to provide access to the proposed Sports Pavilion. An access from Kipling Road shall also remain unaffected.

A diagram of access points is shown on Figure 2.6

Please refer to Mott Macdonald’s Transport Assessment report for further information.
Inclusive Access

The Sponsor recognises that every child irrespective of age, gender, ethnicity, or disability has the right to be included as a valued, respected and equal member of the learning community and to go to the same school as their friends whenever possible.

The Academy would meet the requirements of the SEN code and the new/remodelled building would fully comply with the DDA and SENDA. The Academy would be fully accessible to all pupils including those with physical, sensory, and learning disabilities and would seek to meet the needs of all pupils through the development of a broad curriculum offer, flexibility in teaching and learning styles and high levels of support.

Avondale Infant and Junior schools are currently part of a continuum of specialist provision serving the north of the county for oral/aural pupils with a hearing impairment and occasionally signing pupils. The specialist units in the Avondale schools comprise 14 places. In addition the schools’ Qualified Teachers of the Deaf (TOD) provide advice and direct teaching to children attending Ronald Tree Nursery and mainstream pupils not in the provision in liaison with the L.A.

The Sponsor has agreed that the local authority will fund additional accommodation as part of the new Academy to reprovide the Hearing Impairment Unit, as part of the Foundation Phase.

Buildings are required to be fully accessible throughout and to ensure equality of education and experience for all pupils regardless of statement of need. Some pupils’ needs are physical and therefore all school and college buildings have to not only meet but exceed requirements under the Disability Discrimination Act. Proposals will be designed to meet current Building Regulations and in many cases provision will exceed guidance.

All relevant legislation and guidance will be used for the proposals including guidance such as:

- Designing for Accessibility by the Centre for Accessible Environments
- BS8300 – Design of Buildings and Their Approaches to Meet the Needs of Disabled People
- Building Bulletin 77 - Designing for Pupils with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities in Schools
- Building Bulletin 93 – Acoustic Design of Schools
4.0 Materials

The Academy programme offers a lifetime opportunity for schools to not only consider the way in which education is taught but also to bring the school environment into line with modern 21st century teaching. New education requires architecture of the highest quality, both in terms of the design of the building and the materials, finishes and detailing.

Materials should be robust and able to meet the daily demands of the school community whilst remaining easy to maintain, all without compromising on visual attractiveness and quality.

Schools are of a different typology and scale to the adjacent housing and proposals should respond to this difference. Materials should be bold and expressive where this is appropriate to the function, but softer natural materials (such as timber) should be considered for areas where they are in close proximity to students. Colour should form a key part of the design approach.

The surrounding architecture is post-war red brick and concrete roof tile housing with metal and/or UPVC windows with protruding concrete balconies with metal balustrading, some of which have had their brickwork painted over with shades of cream and yellow. This is not considered to be a suitable precedent for the new buildings, but the design and materials chosen should be sensitive to the nature of the surrounding open spaces and long views from the North.

Figure 4.1
Natural materials used to create a calm environment
Photo Credit
Greenhill Jenner – Architects4Education
5.0 Sustainability

A requirement of the Academy programme is that the school will be designed and built with sustainability in mind. From the start the school will have to achieve at least a BREEAM rating of Very Good and to reduce its carbon footprint by 60% compared to 2002 values. The Bidders will also need to consider the whole-life cost of the building. The building and grounds will also provide environments for educating pupils on issues such as biodiversity and this will be a key part of the brief the Bidders will work to.

It is important that sustainability is considered at the earliest stage and that the school is consulted on future sustainability. Flexibility and building ownership are key to the future success of how ‘green’ the school is. The following key sustainable design principles will be considered at all stages of the design:

- Optimised energy – high insulation, thermal mass, natural light, natural ventilation
- Embodied energy – minimising the carbon content of materials, promoting the use of recycled materials and locally sourced materials
- Water – harvesting grey water and rainwater for WCs, minimising hard areas to reduce run-off
- Biodiversity

![Figure 5.1: Photo-voltaic cells](image1)

![Figure 5.2: Biodiversity in schools](image2)

![Figure 5.3: Natural daylit spaces](image3)