Sunnyside Primary School
Design + Access Statement
March 2013

Construction of a new single storey, four classroom teaching block and enlarged car park at Sunnyside Primary School, to enable the school intake to increase from 315 to 420 places. Also replacement of a number of adolescent trees and the removal of a temporary cabin.
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1.0 Introduction

Architecture Initiative, on behalf of Northampton Schools Limited Partnership, has been commissioned to develop a proposal for the expansion of Sunnyside Primary School in Northampton.

Full planning approval is sought for the construction of a new single storey, four classroom teaching block and enlarged car park at Sunnyside Primary School, to enable the school intake to increase from 315 to 420 places. 1.5 forms of entry to 2 form entry. The increase in pupil numbers is forecast to occur steadily over a seven year period to match demand.

It should be noted that the current school intake capacity is 315 pupils. This is based on 45 pupils per year, over 7 year groups. The current number of pupils on roll at the school differs from this school capacity figure.

Summary of Proposal

The application site area is 1200sqm. The proposal involves a single storey stand alone block located to the north west of the existing school, with a gross internal floor area of 346sqm. The existing school building has a gross internal floor area of 1764sqm.

This Design & Access Statement details the proposal as well as how the final design solution was reached.

The document has been arranged into six sections; starting with an explanation of the requirement for additional primary places at Abbey Primary, details of how the brief was developed and an final design solution was reached. The specifics of the proposal are described in the Design section. The final part of this document addresses access.
2.0 Requirement for Primary Places

Decision to Expand: Overview

It should be noted that this application specifically concerns the built accommodation and associated works required to house the additional intake of pupils at the school.

The decision to enlarge the school is covered via a formal process undertaken by Northamptonshire County Council included a period of consultation with a final Cabinet Member decision in early 2011.

The proposed expansion is related to the general rise in the population of primary aged pupils living in the area, which is the result of the higher birth rate and inward migration being experienced by the County as a whole and Northampton in particular.

Recent census data demonstrates a 19% increase in the County’s under-fives population. Northamptonshire County Council has a statutory obligation to provide sufficient school places for all pupils living in the area. Current projections forecast that additional capacity is required in the local area and therefore extra places are proposed at Sunnyside Primary School.

Alternative solutions to the need for additional places considered by Northamptonshire County Council included:

(i) Providing ‘Portakabin’ style accommodation to house the additional intake. - It was concluded that this would not provide a long-term conducive learning environment for children and would separate them from their peers.

(ii) Transporting children to alternative schools outside the town. - It was concluded that there would be a negative impact on the welfare and education of children for them to be spending considerable parts of their day on buses and this does not support the healthy schools agenda.

(iii) Reconfigure the starting ages for children to attend school. – It was concluded that this would not adequate to meet the levels of school place demand and does not ensure that every child in the county has the same opportunities as their peers.

(iv) Increase class sizes. – Legislation precludes this option.

Therefore NCC made the decision that the best solution is to construct additional long-term teaching accommodation on the school site to accommodate the enlarged pupil intake.
### Decision to Expand: Analysis by Northamptonshire County Council

The table below indicates the pupil numbers at Sunnyside Primary in February 2013. It can be seen that the school increased its published admission number in September 2012, to make the move from one form of entry (30 pupils per year group) to two forms of entry (60 pupils per year group). The formal Cabinet decision was made by Northamptonshire County Council on 13 September 2011 to increase the numbers.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Pupils</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Reception</td>
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<tr>
<td>Year 1</td>
<td>28</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Year 2</td>
<td>30</td>
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<tr>
<td>Year 3</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Year 4</td>
<td>29</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Year 5</td>
<td>29</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Year 6</td>
<td>21</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The school is part of the Northampton schools PFI contract and when the education re-organisation took place in the town in 2003 / 04, its buildings were upgraded to provide sufficient accommodation for a 1.5 form of entry primary school (11 classrooms). As can be seen from the pupil numbers above, the school has operated as a single form of entry for some years and has had surplus capacity. As well as increasing pupil numbers in Northampton, this school’s popularity is rising and it transferred to Academy status on 1st February 2013. The early growth in numbers can be accommodated within the existing building, but an additional 3 classrooms and extra curriculum space are required for a permanent increase to a total roll of 420 pupils on site. This extension will be delivered via a PFI contract variation. Pre-planning public consultation took place on 15 January 2013.

The demand for primary school places in Northampton is expected to continue rising for the foreseeable future. Applications for September 2013 are already 500 more than the same time last year and there is likely to be a similar level of late applications between January and September 2013. Currently there are over 60 preferences expressed for Sunnyside Primary for the September 2013 Reception intake. Surplus capacity in the town at 2.7% is well below recommended levels and is concentrated in the upper year groups. The nearest primary schools to Sunnyside are All Saints, Whitehills, Green Oaks and Boughton village primary school, and these are all full in Reception and Year 1 classes.

Longer term projections suggest that capacity for increased pupil numbers is justified by the sustainable urban extensions planned for Northampton North and North of Whitehills, where capacity at Sunnyside will assist with the demand for school places arising from the early phases of housing before new educational provision is in place.
Consultation

This Design & Access Statement has been prepared by Architecture Initiative, who have been appointed by Northampton Schools Limited Partnership to develop a proposal for Sunnyside Primary School on behalf of Northamptonshire County Council.

Northamptonshire Schools Limited Partnership (NSLP) is a Special Purpose Vehicle (SPV) set up to run the Northampton Schools PFI Scheme. The scheme, which was set up in 2005 following the Review of Education in Northampton includes the operation and maintenance of five secondary schools and thirty-six primary schools in Northampton over a 32 year period.

Sunnyside Primary is one of the primary schools covered under the PFI scheme.

Consultation has occurred with Northamptonshire County Council, local authority, PFI SPV (NSLP), the School and governors as well as NCC planning department and other relevant consultees to the planning process.

Refer to the Consultation section of the Planning Statement for a summary of the consultation that has taken place.
3.0 Context

Sunnyside Primary School is currently a 1.5FE mixed primary school with nursery, for children of 5-11yrs with a current intake of 217.

Located in the northern parts of Northampton in the Boughton Green Ward, the site is bound by Holly Lodge Drive and a number of residential streets. Adjacent to the site is an open grassed recreation area.

The surrounding area is predominantly residential with semi-detached and terraced housing. The site does not lie within any areas of particular note, as shown in the map identifying zones of land use surrounding the school site. For full details of zones of land use surrounding the school site and other relevant planning policies please refer to the accompanying Planning Statement.

The existing school is mostly visible from the bordering housing estates located on Reynard Way and Hunters Close. Care has been taken to ensure that the new development is sympathetic to view from these nearby residences.

The main entrance is located to the north of the site and offers pedestrian access together with on-site parking for staff and disabled visitors. The refuse and recycling bins are also located in this area.

Pedestrians and cyclists are able to approach the school from the east from Reynard Way and a footpath connecting Holly Lodge Drive and Hunters Close.

A private nursery occupies a cabin building at the north of the site. This application will be a double classroom mobile cabin provided by NCC and leased to the private nursery. This will replace the current cabin like-for-like. The nursery currently has 30 pupils and 4 staff members. It operates from 8am to 6pm all year apart from holidays. Once relocated it will continue to operate as per its current arrangement. Note that the nursery staff take up no parking spaces.
The School Site

The 1.8ha school site is ‘L’ shaped, with the existing school located on the north corner of the site, facing the hard and soft play spaces and landscaped areas that occupy the southern parts of the school grounds.

The main entrance into the school and staff car park is located to the north of the site, off Reynard Way.

As can be seen from the photographs on the following pages, the bulk of the school building was constructed in the early 1970’s and is in the typical style of the period. It is single storey with a variety of elevational treatments in grey tiles, concrete corners and fascias and areas of red brick. The windows are white framed with areas of solid blue panels. External doors are also blue.
3.2 Site Photographs

On Site

Key plan showing views

1. On Site photographs

2. Key plan showing views

3. On Site photographs

4. Key plan showing views

5. On Site photographs

6. Key plan showing views

7. On Site photographs

8. Key plan showing views

9. On Site photographs
3.2 Site Photographs

Off Site
4.0 Developing the Brief

The overall brief for the project, set by Northamptonshire County Council, was to develop a proposal for housing the additional intake required at Sunnyside Primary School to suit the specific constraints of the site and educational requirements of the school. To maintain external play space and deliver an extemporary, cost-effective and sustainable construction solution, whilst minimising the impact on the running of the school during construction.

The specific brief for the expansion which forms this proposal, was then developed through site analysis and consultation and dialogue with NCC, NSLP, Sunnyside Primary School and other consultants listed in the Planning Statement.

Northamptonshire County Council gave specific request that the accommodation provided should adhere to the Department for Education’s Building Bulletins. The bulletins set out the types of spaces that school of a particular size should have and the areas of those spaces.

Northamptonshire County Council is also acutely aware of the potential traffic and car parking impacts that increasing school places can incur and in developing the brief Northamptonshire County Council has engaged with the highways authority and the school to insure where possible impacts are limited by additional facilities provided on the school site.

Setting the Brief

In order to keep the impact on the day-to-day running of the school during construction as small as possible it was decided from the outset that all additional accommodation required be provided in a new stand-alone building and any works to the existing school building are minimised. This is also the best way to ensure that the expansion of the school can occur in the most cost effective manner (the budget for expansion is finite).

With this starting point, analysis of the existing spaces within the school was undertaken in order to identify the additional accommodation required to enlarge the school from 1.5 to 2 forms of entry. This was completed in conjunction with the school in order to ensure that the best educational solution was reached.

In order to achieve the new build accommodation Northamptonshire County Council will need to relocate the existing nursery first. Northamptonshire County Council is working with the nursery to secure the relocation.
4.1 Existing School Analysis

The main circulation route runs around the hall located in the centre of the school. The classrooms are currently orientated around the perimeter of the building with views out onto the landscape.

A main consideration in a 2FE school is that the two classrooms in each year group are kept as a pair, so with this in mind 14 pairs of classrooms are required in the enlarged 2FE school (as well as other support and shared accommodation).

Northamptonshire County Council use area and space standards as set out in the 2003 document *Building Bulletin 99: Briefing Framework for Primary School Projects* as a guide for primary school provisions in the County. It was against these space standards that analysis of the existing building was undertaken in order to determine the additional spaces required.

The conclusion of this analysis was that four additional classrooms and associated accommodation (such as WC’s and stores) would be required for the school to enlarge to a 2FE intake of 420 pupils.
4.2 Expansion Options

The new building could potentially be situated in a number of locations. However creating a successful circulation link back to the new building will provide the best possible solution of the proposed location as the link needs to run off the existing central circulation routes.

The next step was to analyse the most desired locations on the site for locating the new stand-alone block. This would ideally be as near to the existing school building as possible, whilst minimising the impact on sports and play space. Through discussion with NCC and the school three possible locations were indicated for the new classroom development.

The following principles and practises were employed in the analysis of location options for the additional accommodation:

(i) The location that would have the least impact on the private amenity of surrounding neighbours.
(ii) The location best suited due to site constraints e.g. protection of green spaces for sports, construction access, protection of the environment.
(iii) The location best suited to support the circulation of pupils within their year groups and key stages.

The diagram below illustrates the potential locations that were identified for siting the building. Two of these options (shown in blue) were deemed less appropriate:

Option B does not provide the circulation linkages and would require loss of space which the school would rather retain as it supports both curricular and play activities.

Option C has a detrimental ecological and private amenity impact.

Option A is the most favourable site for the new classroom block as it is sympathetic to the adjacent houses (being mainly hidden behind an existing hedge), sits comfortably within the existing site and is most considerate to the current building arrangement. Option A necessitates the removal of adolescent trees, however replacement trees will be planted in a more suitable location within the school grounds. There is also an existing temporary classroom cabin, not currently used by the school, in this area which would require relocation.
4.3 Brief Requirements

In order for Sunnyside Primary School to become a 2FE school, four new classrooms and associated support spaces are required within the new teaching block. The diagrams below display the rooms necessary for this expansion, and how they have been arranged to generate the new building.

**Ingredients**

- Classrooms
- Support Spaces (W.C’s, Stores etc)
- Plant Room
- Group Area

**Combination**

This diagram shows the arrangement of the spaces required by the school over one floor of the new build block. The classrooms are in pairs with communal and support spaces between.

**Proposed Plan**

This drawing represents how the diagram has been translated into a material form. The plan form is compact so as to minimise its footprint which reduces its impact on the school site. The group space is open to circulation to enable maximum use of space in the building.
The basis of the concept revolves around the rationalisation of spaces, as previously discussed in section 4.3.

From this point the building layout was developed through an iterative process of consultation, design and redesign. The opportunity for the school to gain brand new teaching spaces gave the opportunity for the proposal to be designed to meet the aspirations of a modern teaching environment: to maximise natural lighting and natural ventilation; to reduce solar gains and energy use; and to create inspirational teaching and learning environments.
5.1 Layout

The new teaching block is arranged as four pairs of classrooms over one floor with shared support spaces in the core of the building. The design consolidates the relationship of the classrooms with the shared amenities core into a rational layout that is efficient both in terms of general use and construction. The classrooms have windows on two external walls to maximise natural daylight. Internally each space meets the requirements of a modern teaching environment as set out in the DfE ‘Building Bulletin’ guidance.

The classrooms all have external doors to allow direct access outdoors. The service core consists of boys and girls WCs, a disabled WC (also for use of staff), a curriculum and cleaner’s store, a small plant room and IT hub room. A portion of the circulation space doubles up to provide a group area/break out space.
5.1 Layout

External Works

External works to the site will include the removal of a number of existing trees to make room for the proposed building. New trees will be planted to replace the ones removed. The existing staff car park will be extended.
5.2 Form & Scale

Form of the Proposal

The form of the proposed new teaching block is designed to respond to and was directly inspired by the existing school building.

The scale and rhythm of the existing elevations have been emulated in the proposed teaching block. However, contemporary details have been added so that the teaching block is read as a modern addition to the school site.

The overall result is one that sits lightly within the landscape while providing a valuable and sensitive addition to the existing built fabric.
5.2 **Form & Scale**

**Scale within the Existing Context**

The proposal is designed to sit comfortably in relation to its surroundings and the existing school.

The single storey building is of an appropriate bulk and mass and is situated ideally away from the school site boundary and within appropriate proximity to the existing school building to allow easy access to the new classrooms whilst not detrimenting daylighting or views from the classrooms in the main building.

The overall affect of the new build block on the existing context is minimal. The proposal sits lightly within its surroundings and compliments the landscape through carefully considered detailing and contemporary design.
5.3 Materiality

The materiality of the new teaching block has been carefully considered to respond to the existing school building, creating a link between the two buildings and helping to consolidate the existing materials and therefore defining the image of the school within its context.

The existing school building has areas of brick and tile cladding. The existing roof is flat throughout. The proposed new building relates to and directly responds to this design and as such is to be constructed from both a grey brick to match the existing tile cladding and red brick to match the brick of the existing building. The blue window panels and external doors of the existing building are also replicated in the proposal.

Rather than using tile cladding as on the existing school, which requires regular maintenance, facing brickwork was chosen as it was felt these would best fit in with the context as well as being durable and secure. The brick colour will be chosen to compliment the tiles while becoming a feature elevation and complementary to the surrounding landscape.

The main body of the proposed material palette is designed to create a link to the predominant grey tiled and red brick elements of the existing elevations. Thus helping to consolidate the existing materials and define the image of the school within its own context.

The flat roof of the proposal will be finished in a single ply membrane or asphalt. With a thin profiled, powder coated aluminium coping.

The windows and glazed external doors are aluminium framed, powder coated to provide an attractive a durable finish.

Example of proposed facing brickwork (grey to match tiles on existing building)

Example of proposed facing brickwork (colour matched to the red brick of the existing school building)

Sample of elevational view
5.4 Detail Design

The suspended ceiling is set back from the internal wall to let more daylight penetrate deeper into the classrooms. The one brick return helps to control daylighting inside the classrooms whilst also reducing cleaning and maintenance.

Windows at eye level allow for surveillance of the external play areas. Windows are raised from ground level and together with the one brick return help to reduce cleaning and maintenance.

Floor to ceiling windows allow for full height views out onto the surrounding landscape and natural light to reach deeper into the classroom. South facing windows utilise solar control glazing. Mid-level slide open windows provide easy access for natural ventilation. The windows open within the recessed opening.

The internal skirting visually aligns with the external window finish and also reduces maintenance.
5.5 **Daylight & Ventilation**

**Natural Daylighting**

The principles of natural lighting and ventilation are realised throughout the design of the classroom spaces.

The classrooms have full height windows with the suspended ceilings set back to allow natural light to penetrate into the rear of the spaces during the winter.

In summer months, solar control is used to prevent over heating within the classrooms. The proposal utilises solar control glass, which is both cost effective and easier to maintain than alternate forms of solar shading such as canopies or bries soleil. All windows have internal blinds for user control of light levels.

**Natural Ventilation**

The classrooms are naturally cross ventilated via mid-level opening windows situated on each of the adjacent external walls.

The support spaces are also all naturally ventilated (with the obvious exception to the required extract to all WC’s).
5.6 Play Space

The external spaces at Sunnyside Primary are a great asset to the school and local area; large grassed pitches to the south east of the site and a MUGA court to the south.

It is paramount that the construction of the new teaching accommodation does not impact negatively on the play and sports provisions of the school. This has been addressed in the design layout of the new block to minimise its footprint.

The position of the building also assisted - it is located in the north of the site in keeping with the current layout; building and hard landscaping to the north, play areas to the south. This successfully reduces its impact on loss of soft landscaped areas.

Sport England have a statutory obligation to protect sports pitches, therefore building on a pitch will be opposed by Sport England unless the net overall sports pitch usable area on-site be maintained and improved.

The proposal does not affect the grass pitches or play areas located to the south of the site. The environmental area on which the proposal is located does not possess any trees that are protected by the tree protection order and therefore replacement trees will be replanted in a more suitable location.
6.0 **Access**

Proposed site access is detailed below. Please refer to the Transport Statement, School Travel Plan and access drawing for further details.

**Entering the Site**

All access arrangements are as existing condition.

**Pedestrian / bicycle access**

The site can be accessed by pedestrians from both the east (off Reynard Way) and the north west from a foot path connecting Holly Lodge Drive and Hunters Close. The main access is located to the north of the site.

**Pick up/Drop off**

As is the current arrangement, during the peak times when parents gather to drop off or pick up their children at the beginning or end of each academic day, the entrance gates will be open and monitored by members of staff. Pupils and parents will be able to congregate on the hard play area.

**Teaching hours**

During teaching hours, all access gates to the secure part of the site are secured. Visitors can still access the car park area. Any visitors must enter the site via the secure entrance/reception area, with access into the school through an electromagnetically locked door.

**Non-teaching hours**

Subject to out of hours uses or holiday use the main entrance gates will be locked closed. All visitors will have to wait off-site for the facilities manager to allow them access.

**Parking**

For this section the Northamptonshire County Council’s Supplementary Planning Guidance (March 2003) was consulted with regards to parking standards.

**Cycling provision**

NCC Planning guidance asks for 5 cycle parking spaces to be provided for every class at a primary school. Therefore in the case of Sunnyside Primary School this adds up to 70 cycle parking spaces, 5 for each of the 14 classes. NCC planners advised that additional spaces can be added incrementally, as required by the school. At its current 1.5 form entry size (365 pupils) no pupils currently cycle to school. It is hoped that as they expand to 2 form entry, pupils will be encouraged to cycle to school. Therefore it is proposed that 10 cycle spaces be provided, to meet current requirements.

**Car parking**

Four additional spaces are proposed in the staff car park increasing provision to 22 spaces, to allow for the increase in staff came from the client brief from NCC. It is hoped that staff will be encouraged to car share, use public transport, cycle or walk to work.

**Disabled Spaces / Mobility Standard Spaces**

There are disabled/mobility standards parking spaces provided on site to meet the standards set out in NCC’s Parking: Supplementary Planning Guidance (March 2003). There are currently two disabled spaces to the entrance of the school. The proposals include providing two additional spaces.
Delivery access / parking
All delivery vehicles to the school or school kitchen enter the school site off Reynard Way. There is a ‘hammer head’ end to the car park for vehicles to turn around in order to exit in forward gear.

Maintenance
Refuse collection
The bin store is located adjacent to the Main site entrance (including for recycling bins). Refuse collection will occur via the Reynard Way site entrance. There is no change in location of refuse collection: The refuse vehicle reverses onto the school site and exists in forward gear.

Service/maintenance access
The site is to be accessed via the Reynard Way entrance, managed by the facilities manager.

Emergency Access
To occur via the Reynard Way site entrance, with vehicular access gates into the secure part of the school site.

Inclusive Access
The new building has been designed to provide an inclusive environment, in accordance with current legislation that provides for the need of all users. Guidance referred to:

- The Building Regulations of England & Wales (most specifically Part M)
- Building Bulletin 91: Access for Disabled People to School Buildings (published by DCFS)
- Building Bulletin 94: Inclusive School Design (published by DCFS)

The building is designed to be fully accessible to all members of society, the design of the building is inclusive for children who may be dependent upon wheelchairs or have varying degrees of visual or aural impairment. All visitors access the building via the same entrance; no segregation occurs. The new building is fully accessible a disabled WC provided.

Please refer to the Transport Statement, School Travel Plan and access drawing for further details.