Hopping Hill Primary School
Design + Access Statement
March 2013

Construction of a new single storey, four classroom teaching block, enlarged car park and new hard surfaced all weather courts at Hopping Hill primary school, to enable the school intake to increase from 315 to 420 places. Also the removal of a temporary cabin which will become redundant.

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architecture initiative.com
3-5 Barrett Street, 3rd floor west, London W1U 1AY
T: 020 3657 7800   E: info@architectureinitiative.com

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Northamptonshire County Council
## Contents

**Design + Access Statement**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Section</th>
<th>Pages</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| 1.0              | Introduction | 03  
| 2.0              | Requirement for Primary Places | 04 |
| 3.0              | Context | 07  
| 3.1              | The School Site | 07  
| 3.2              | Site Photographs | 08  
| 4.0              | Developing the Brief | 11  
| 4.1              | Existing School Analysis | 12  
| 4.2              | Expansion Options | 13  
| 4.3              | Brief Requirements | 14  
| 5.0              | Design | 15  
| 5.1              | Layout | 16  
| 5.2              | Form & Scale | 18  
| 5.3              | Materiality | 20  
| 5.4              | Detail Design | 21  
| 5.5              | Daylight & Ventilation | 22  
| 5.6              | Play Space | 23  
| 6.0              | Access | 25  

1.0 Introduction

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

Full planning approval is sought for the construction of a new single storey, four classroom teaching block, enlarged car park and new hard surfaced all weather courts at Hopping Hill Primary School, to enable the school intake to increase from 315 to 420 places (1.5 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.

The school also includes a 78 place nursery on site, which will be retained in its current arrangement.

Summary of Proposal

The application site area is 1605sqm. The proposal involves a single storey stand alone block located to the east of the existing school building, with a gross internal floor area of 374sqm. The existing school building has a gross internal floor area of 2170sqm.

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 Hopping Hill 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, which includes a period of consultation with a final Cabinet Member decision in early 2013, with the proposed expansion being implemented from September 2014.

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 Hopping Hill Primary School. Refer to statement on the following page for further details.

Alternative solutions 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

Background

Hopping Hill is one of the primary schools in Northampton that changed from a lower school in 2002 by adding a year group in 2003 and 2004 to become a primary school for ages 4 - 11. The Standard Admission Number at that time was 50 children per year group, but that was amended to 45 as part of the review of places in the whole Northampton educational re-organisation. The school did not support the proposal to become 1.5 forms of entry (45 per year group), but demography analysis at the time indicated that surplus places would be created in the Duston area if 2 forms of entry was introduced. Ten years have passed since that decision was made by full Northamptonshire County Council in February 2002, and the latest projections for future Reception intakes are that two forms of entry will be sustained.

The table below indicates the growing numbers on roll (as of October 2012) and 60 children (two forms of entry) have been admitted to Reception for the last three years. In 3 of the 4 Key Stage 2 classes, there has been demand for the full 45 places or above.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year group</th>
<th>Published Admission Number (PAN)</th>
<th>Numbers on roll</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Reception</td>
<td>60</td>
<td>60</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Year 1</td>
<td>60</td>
<td>57</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Year 2</td>
<td>60</td>
<td>57</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Year 3</td>
<td>45</td>
<td>54</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Year 4</td>
<td>45</td>
<td>45</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Year 5</td>
<td>45</td>
<td>33</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Year 6</td>
<td>45</td>
<td>49</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Hopping Hill Primary

The school has always been against the mixed age classes that are the usual classroom organisation for 1.5 forms of entry, and has operated as two smaller classes per year group since the Northampton Review days. They have been able to do this by retaining a double mobile classroom on site and by compromising on the size of classrooms that were built as part of the PFI contract, so that extra could be provided. The increasing demand for pupil places in Duston, and the whole Northampton area, means that the opportunity is now being taken to regularise this arrangement and a permanent accommodation solution is now being sought.

The proposed extension will allow the school to operate with 14 classes, all at the recommended size, and with the appropriate level of supplementary facilities such as hall, studio, library, staff accommodation and playgrounds. The temporary mobile classrooms will be removed from site.

There are literally one or two Reception places available across the six primary schools serving Duston, which does not provide enough capacity in the system for new in-year admissions or allow for parental preferences. Pressure on primary places is due to a combination of factors: the rising birth rate, high levels of in-migration and also some new housing development in the Duston area.
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 Hopping Hill 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.

Hopping Hill 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

Hopping Hill Primary School is currently a 1.5FE mixed primary school with nursery, with a current intake of 355 pupils (aged 5-11yrs) with 57 pupils in the nursery. It is located in the north west of Northamptonshire in the Duston Ward, the site is located in a mainly residential area. The site is bound on three sides by public pedestrian rights of way, and beyond these 2-3 storey terraced properties. The site is accessed via Pendle Road, which terminates at the school entrance.

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 mainly visible from the public right of way and the rears of the neighbouring houses located off of Cotswold Avenue, Witton Road and Newton Road. Care has been taken to ensure that the new development is sympathetic to view from these nearby residences.

The main entrance is located at the north west of the site, where pedestrian and vehicular access occurs. There is an on-site car park for staff and disabled visitors in front of the school building, within the fenced ‘air-lock’. The refuse and recycling bins are also located in this area.

This is the only entry point onto the site, used by pedestrians, cyclists and motor vehicles.
3.1 The School Site

The 1.45ha school site is rectangular, with the school located at its north west end, facing the hard and soft play space/pitch that occupies the south east half of the school grounds. A hard play area is to the north east of the school building with the nursery and reception play area designated to the south west.

From the main entrance at the front of the school access through the ‘air-lock’ is either into the building or via access gates to either side of the building. The site is fenced but is also bordered by hedges and a variety of trees (none of which have TPOs).

As can be seen from the photographs on the following pages, the school building has been subject to a number of additions over the years in differing architectural styles. However the whole of the building has a unifying factor; it is all single storey and is all constructed in red brick.
3.2 Site Photographs
On Site

Key plan showing views
3.2 Site Photographs

Off Site

Key plan showing views

1

2

3

4
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 Hopping Hill Primary School to suit the specific constraints of the site and educational requirements of the school. To maintain external play space and deliver an exemplary, 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, Hopping Hill 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.
**4.1 Existing School Analysis**

There are three circulations routes located in the centre of the school and orientated around the hall and internal courtyards. The classrooms are currently positioned 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.

**Figure 4.1: Site plan showing existing layout of school**

**Figure 4.2: ADDITIONAL ACCOMMODATION REQUIRED FOR 2FE:**
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 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 site has the following constraints:

(i) A large proportion of the site is taken up by protected green sports pitches.
(ii) The south west of the site is close to residential properties.
(iii) Car parking that could only be located outside the existing site.

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 two possible locations were indicated for the new classroom development.

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

**Option B** is located within an uncomfortable proximity to the existing grass sports pitch and also creates an awkward relationship between the school and its grounds. It sits in the way of the current access route from the school to the pitch and soft play areas and is a long distance from an entry point into the existing building.

**Option A** is the most favourable site for the new classroom block as it sits comfortably within the existing site and is most considerate to the current building arrangement. Option A necessitates the relocation of the hard play space. Two new all weather sports pitches will be provided in a more suitable location, closer to the existing grass pitch.
4.3 **Brief Requirements**

In order for Hopping Hill 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.
5.0 Design

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 a single floor with shared support spaces in the core of the building and vertical circulation on either side. 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 to 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 hub room. A portion of the circulation space doubles up to provide a group area-break out space.

New Building Accommodation Schedule

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Rooms</th>
<th>Area per room (m²)</th>
<th>Number</th>
<th>Area (m²)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Classrooms</td>
<td>58</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>232</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Support Spaces</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WCs</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DWCs / Staff WCs</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cleaner’s Store</td>
<td>4.6</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>4.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Store</td>
<td>2.5</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Group Room</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hub/Server</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Plant Room</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Circulation</td>
<td>46</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>46</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Partitions</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total GIA</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td><strong>346</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
5.1 Layout

External Works

The external works include an extended car park, two new hard surfaced all weather courts, new cycle parking and a new vehicle access gate.

Note that there are currently no plans to relocate the removed play equipment.
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 being detrimental to 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 is brickwork with 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 a dark brown brick to match the existing tile cladding.

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 red brick elements of the existing elevations. The blue external doors of the existing building are also replicated in the new block. Thus helping to consolidate the existing materials and define the image of the school within its own context.

The windows for the proposed building will be grey aluminium. In contrast to the white windows of the existing school, which become dirty easily and require frequent cleaning, it was felt that grey would be easier to maintain and require less cleaning clean.

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

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

Example of proposed facing brickwork (colour to match existing building)
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.

Single storey height to match existing school building.

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).
In order to facilitate the expansion of the school to 2FE, due to the site constraints it is not possible to prevent loss of sports provision area when measured using Sport England guidance.

The only possible locations for siting the building are either on the hard games court to the east of the existing school building or on the grassed pitch area to the south.

Under the definition given by Sport England both these areas, the grassed area (in their entirety) and the hard court are current sports provision on the site and therefore building in either of these locations and therefore reducing the provision does not meet one of Sport England’s Exceptions, as detailed in the playing fields policy A Sporting Future for Playing Fields of England, which allow for loss of sports pitch provision without objection).

This being the situation, and considering the need for additional pupil places at the school, a solution is proposed which actually increases the sports pitch area in terms of actual usable space.

Currently there is a classroom cabin building and a number of pieces of permanent play equipment located along the portion of the grass pitch area nearest the school building (see photos below). This part of the pitch is therefore currently not usable for sport.
It is proposed that the new building be located in the location of the existing hard games court and that the play equipment and classroom cabin are removed as part of this application, to be replaced by two hard surfaced all weather courts.

Hard courts allow for greater sports usage, as they can be used all year round (unlike grass pitches which have seasonal use). It is proposed that the sports provision will be therefore be improved at Hopping Hill, in actual usable terms.

The new hard courts also ensure that play space requirements are met.

Refer to the diagram below for details.
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 via the main entrance located to the north west of the site at the end of Pendle Road.

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 securely 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 Hopping Hill 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

Six additional spaces are proposed in the staff car park increasing provision to 32 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 three disabled spaces to the entrance of the school.
Delivery access / parking
All delivery vehicles to the school or school kitchen enter the school site off Pendle Road. 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 Pendle Road site entrance. There is no change in location of refuse collection.

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

Emergency Access
To occur via the Pendle Road 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.