Delapre Primary School
Design + Access Statement
March 2013

Construction of a new single storey, two classroom teaching block, infill of existing covered play area to form a classroom and creation of a new covered play area and enlarged staff car park and adaption of existing school block to meet requirements to enable the school intake to increase from 420 to 630 places. Also the replacement of four adolescent trees and minor internal works to the existing building.
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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 Delapre Primary School in Northampton.

Full planning approval is sought for the construction of a new single storey, two classroom teaching block, infill of existing covered play area to form a classroom, enlarged staff car park and internal works to the existing building, to enable the school intake to increase from 420 to 630 places (2 to 3 form entry). The existing staff car park will also be enlarged. 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 420 pupils. This is based on 60 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 1624sqm. The proposal involves a single storey stand alone block located to the east of the existing school, with a gross internal floor area of 216sqm, as well as an infill of the existing covered play area to create a classroom of 62sqm. The existing school building has a gross internal floor area of 3060sqm.

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 Delapre 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 included a period of consultation with a final Cabinet Member decision in late 2012.

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

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.
Demand for pupil places: context

Like many parts of the country, there is an increasing demand for primary school places across Northamptonshire and in Northampton town in particular. The recent October schools census of Reception aged children starting school for the first time in September 2012 indicates that the actual number enrolled was 300 more than previous projections. This is equivalent to ten extra classes of children. Northamptonshire County Council had made provision for a level of growth, but also needed to add 150 extra places at five primary schools in Northampton over the summer of 2012 as an additional emergency measure. Delapre Primary School was one of the schools that took a mobile classroom in order to create capacity for a temporary increase in its numbers.

The county is experiencing a rise in the birth rate, a large increase in the number of in-migrations and, despite the economic downturn, some of the smaller housing developments coming forward. An analysis of the ‘In-Year’ applications highlights that the number of applications has increased sevenfold between 2007 / 08 and 2011 / 12. 60% of these in the last year involve a change of address where families are either moving to a different part of the county or are moving into the county for the first time. 30% of all move-ins between July 2011 and July 2012 were to Northampton town.

Northamptonshire County Council has a statutory duty to secure sufficient school places and is currently working on plans to add over 7,300 primary places across the county by September 2014 in permanent accommodation. This includes twenty forms of entry (600 Reception places) in Northampton town. Delapre is one of 25 primary schools where an expansion is either underway or proposed in order to meet the demand for places.

Demand for pupil places: the Delapre area

Northamptonshire County Council is required to follow a statutory process regarding the principle of expansion and this has involved two stages of consultation, including an evening for the public on 19 November 2012. Public Notices were published on 8 November 2012 followed by a four week period of representation. The Cabinet decision to approve the expansion (subject to planning processes) will be made on 15 January 2013. Responses in the first part of the consultation process queried why Delapre in particular had been selected for expansion and whether this would mean children would be attending the school from outside the local area. This is not the case, as the demand for additional places is from families living in the same postcode area as those children already attending the school.

A postcode analysis of the children who started school in September 2012 indicates this very clearly:

- There were 34 sibling links in the first 60 places offered at the school where younger brothers and sisters were applying for a place at the school. Of the remaining 26 children only two are not from NN4 8** postcodes.
- An additional 30 places were offered after arrangements had been made for temporary classrooms to be provided, so that the school could offer three forms of entry in September 2012. 29 of the 30 children who took these places also came from NN4 8** postcodes.
- There remain a further 13 children from NN4 8** postcodes who applied for a place at Delapre but were not successful.
The proposed expansion at Delapre is therefore required for children living in the immediate vicinity of the school, will not have a detrimental impact on the rolls at neighbouring schools and does not involve lengthy travel distances. Longer term, Northamptonshire County Council is also aware of proposed housing developments off Lancaster Way and also Nunn Mills / Ransome Road, so permanent capacity is required.

There has been a school at the Delapre Primary site in Rothersthorpe Road for a long time and there are many families in the local community who have had several generations of connection to the school. From September 2003 the school began the process of changing its status from a Middle School to a Primary School by admitting Reception age children for the first time. It should be noted that when Delapre was a Middle School, it had a standard number of 170 and a pupil roll of 680 pupils.

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 Delapre 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.

Delapre 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**

Delapre Primary School is currently a 2FE mixed primary school for children of 5-11yrs with a current intake of 450 pupils. It is located in the south west of Northampton in the Delapre Ward, the site is located in a mainly residential area, with a cluster of shops and a recreation ground near by.

The main school building is located directly on Rotherthorpe Road, but the site stretches longitudinally east and west, with a narrow access route at its western end between rear gardens to reach a generous school playing field.

A vehicular route providing access to garages at the rear of neighbouring houses borders the site to the east. A mixture of terraced, semi-detached and detached properties with long gardens border the school site on all other sides.

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 front of the existing school is visible from Rotherthorpe Road. The rest of the school is visible from the rear of the neighbouring houses located on Rotherthorpe Road, Briar Hill Road and Towchester Road. Care has been taken to ensure that the new development is sympathetic to views from these nearby residences.

The main entrance is located at the north of the site, where pedestrian and vehicular access occurs. There is a small on-site car park for staff to the west of the school building as well as a nursery (which is not part of the school), within the fenced ‘air-lock’. The buildings are maintained via access from Rotherthorpe Road alongside the Coop shop.
3.1 The School Site

The 2.2ha school site is split into two parts with the school buildings and adjacent hard play forming one part, with playing field the second to the west. The site is fenced and it contains a number of trees (none of which have TPOs).

It is worth noting that not all the buildings on the school site are currently used solely for school curriculum activity. Some spaces in the building at the south of the site are currently leased to local community groups, although still used by the primary school. The community group will be vacating these spaces and relocating to a new facility nearby.

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 differing styles. The school building is all of a similar architectural language, all with a bright red brick finish and rectilinear in form 1-2 storeys in height with either flat or pitched and tiled roofs. Parts of the building are over 80 years old and these are of a deep red brick, which is common across Northampton, with distinctive exposed lintels above windows openings.
3.2 Site Photographs

On Site

Key plan showing views
3.2 Site Photographs

Off Site

Key plan showing views
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 Delapre 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, Delapre 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 as much of the additional accommodation required as possible 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 2 to 3 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

The main circulation route runs in two parallel lengths joined by a north south access route. The classrooms are currently orientated around the perimeter of the school building with the hall and support spaces in the centre.

A main consideration in a 3FE school is that the three classrooms in each year group are kept as a group, so with this in mind 14 groups of classrooms are required in the enlarged 3FE 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 building at the south of the school site is currently not used as circulation area. The community group, which currently uses these spaces is moving to an alternative site nearby. NCC proposed that this building be utilised in the expansion, and therefore the amount of new build accommodation required would be reduced.

The conclusion of this analysis was that three additional classrooms and associated accommodation (such as WC’s and stores) would be required for the school to enlarge to a 3FE intake of 630 pupils. One classroom would be from the reception, formed by infilling an existing covered play area. Therefore only a 2 classroom stand-alone block would be required as new build.

EXISTING SCHOOL BUILDING ANALYSED:

Site plan showing existing layout of school
4.2 **Expansion Options**

The new building could potentially be located 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, etc.
(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** is situated on an area of soft landscaping and is awkwardly positioned between the main school building and a temporary classroom cabin. **Option C** takes up a large amount of hard play area and would require pupils to travel an unnecessary distance from the existing school building.

Delapre is a highly constrained site. Hard play space is already limited, therefore options which looked at constructing a 2 storey, 8 classroom block (in areas A and B in the diagram below), were discussed with the planners and the school and it was decided this option was untenable due to the impact on play space and private amenity. A single storey classroom block was felt to be more appropriate.

**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 is located predominantly on a steeply sloping grassy border area, and has only a small impact on the area of existing hard play space.
4.3 Brief Requirements

In order for Delapre Primary School to become a 3FE school, two 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 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 for the new block 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.
Layout

The new teaching block is arranged as a pair of classrooms on a single storey with shared support spaces. 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.

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.
5.1 Layout

The existing school block to the south of the site has been reconfigured internally to provide additional classroom and teaching space.

A number of internal partitions are to be removed and new partitions created to form teaching spaces. The new rooms will be fitted out to meet the requirements of modern teaching environments.
5.1 Layout

External Works

The existing staff car park extended. The classroom in the playground will be removed.
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

Form of the Proposal

The existing reception classroom is extended and a new covered play area canopy will be added. Existing stair access from the walkway above will be removed.
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 buildings on site and helping to consolidate the existing materials and therefore defining the image of the school within its context.

The existing school building is brickwork. 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 red brick to match the existing school building.

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 brickwork while becoming a feature elevation and complementary to the surrounding landscape.

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

Example of proposed facing brickwork (colour to match existing brickwork)
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).
The external spaces at Delapre Primary are a great asset to the school and although a small site, the school has a wide variety of play spaces.

It is paramount that the construction of the new teaching accommodation not impact negativity 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.

Although the new build teaching block is positioned to the edge of an existing hard play area, it does not impact on the two hard courts.

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 west of the site and any trees that necessitate removing will be replaced elsewhere within the school grounds.
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 off of Rothersthorpe Road to the north.

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 Delapre Primary School this adds up to 105 cycle parking spaces, 5 for each of the 21 classes. NCC planners advised that additional spaces can be added incrementally, as and when they are required by the school. At its current 2 form entry size (420 pupils) very few pupils currently cycle to school. It is hoped that as they expand to 3 form entry, pupils will be encouraged to cycle to school. Therefore it is proposed that 10 additional cycle spaces be provided, to meet current requirements.

Car parking
The staff car park will be extended and 6 additional spaces will be provided, bringing the total to 22.

Disabled Spaces / Mobility Standard Spaces
There are no disabled/mobility standards parking spaces provided within the staff car park due to the level changes of the site and distance from the main entrance. Disabled parking occurs on the street adjacent to the main entrance.
Delivery access / parking
All delivery vehicles to the school or school kitchen enter the school site off Rothersthorpe 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 Rothersthorpe Road site entrance. There is no change in location of refuse collection.

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

Emergency Access
To occur via the Rothersthorpe 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.

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