Proposed Extension to Existing Nursery To Form New Shared Reception With Ancillary Facilities for Children's Centre at Rothwell Victoria Infant School

Design & Access Statement

This statement should be read in conjunction with the associated building plans and elevations depicting detailed elements.

Assessment

- **Physical** – the Children's Centre extension to the existing Nursery will complement the surrounding Nursery buildings. One of the main priorities of the design and initial assessment of the site was to provide a 'welcoming' environment for the children and parents, trying to replicate the family environment as far as possible. It is seen as essential to encourage persons from their homes into the local community and the design of the extension with the new reception assist with this.

- **Social** – This Children's Centre is to be based upon the existing site of the Nursery School. This site is within a 70% area of need. To meet the core offer of a Children's Centre the Nursery will be working in partnership with other local Sure Start Children's Centres. The Centre will need to provide outreach work in Desborough. We envisage families attending for small group work or appointments to meet with the local Health Visitor, Midwife or Speech and Language Therapist. There may well also be drop in sessions with a representative from Job Centre Plus. If these services are already being delivered within the community elsewhere then the centre will act as an information point and will signpost families to these services rather than recreate additional ones.

- **Economic** – in line with the above, the development will have a positive economic impact on the area in its utilisation of a patch of underutilised space within the grounds of the Nursery.

- **Planning policy** – this development supports the planning policy of development of brown field sites for construction works.

Design

- **Use** – this Children's Centre extension makes use of an existing covered play area and existing area of land between the Nursery and boundary fence. The Sure Start Children's Centres will become a 'one stop shop' where children 0-5 years old and their families can have access to integrated services and information. The overall vision will be to ensure every child gets the best start in life and to give parents more choice about how to balance work and family life. The Centre will deliver a carefully planned range of integrated services and will work with parents and service providers to deliver inclusive, accessible and child-friendly services that respond to local need and help children reach their full potential. The Centre will also provide, or have links to, services which will enable them to meet the core offer for what is nationally recognised as a minimum service which should be available for families. In the future, the Centre will deliver additional services to this core offer should feedback from consultation with the local community show that there is a need for, for example baby massage, a breastfeeding café or advice on money management. The development sees the internal separation of the Children's Centre from the Nursery via secure doors so as to maintain the security of the Nursery when the Children's Centre is in
DESIGN AND ACCESS STATEMENT

use out of normal school hours, with both the Children's Centre and Nursery benefiting from the reception and entrance.

- **Amount** – the development sees the adaptation of an existing covered play area and the creation of an extension to link the existing Nursery with the Children's Centre to accommodate a new shared reception, meeting room, a consultation room, storage, kitchen and crèche, as well as an accessible toilet facility and baby changing. In addition to the physical building development, an external buggy store is to be provided adjacent to the new entrance doors.

- **Layout** – the extension layout orientation has been carefully designed in order to maximise natural light opportunities and complement the Nursery, so as not to provide conflicting access/egress points, especially considering the close proximity of the entrance door to the Nursery utilised by the children. As mentioned above, a separate internal entrance has been provided for the Nursery to prevent conflict with visitors while still attempting to preserve the 'welcoming' nature of the proposed shared reception. The limitations of the site in terms of existing access to the Nursery and existing below ground services have predetermined the size orientation somewhat, however the design has developed in order to minimise the impact on the surrounding properties.

- **Scale** – the development sees a single storey building be introduced to the site. To closely match in appearance the existing Nursery and school.

- **Landscaping** – landscaping of the external areas has been carefully integrated into the design. The boundary fence to the playing field will be moved back to provide additional external space and a new tree planting scheme will be introduced to replace those trees lost to allow construction of new extension.

- **Appearance** – The style and construction materials of the existing buildings are to be continued in the proposed extensions. The extension consists of roof tiles and single ply flat roofs, fair facing brickwork, powder coated aluminium windows and painted timber fascias and soffits. The rainwater goods will be black PVC. All external materials to match or be similar to existing Nursery building.

**Access**

The property design takes account of:

- **Approach** – The design of the extension sensitively reflects the need to create a welcoming environment for the visitors to the Children's Centre and Nursery, but also produces a design which complements both existing adjacent properties and the overall community ethos.

- **Parking** – The design has taken into account the Supplementary Planning Guidance, based upon the fact that only 2 full-time equivalent additional members of staff will be employed once the Children's Centre is operational and that visitors will not be permitted to park on site as per the existing arrangements. Families and Professionals visiting the Children's Centre will be actively encouraged to park in the nearby Market Square in Rothwell Town Centre, a short walk away. All Children's Centre literature will promote this.
DESIGN AND ACCESS STATEMENT

- **Entrances** – Within the limits of the site the new entrance to the shared reception has been positioned to create ease of access while maintaining an aesthetically pleasing look, blending in with the adjacent buildings. The proposed pedestrian gate entrance from Leys Avenue is to be used only for access to the Children’s Centre and not to the Nursery, to further dissuade school parents from parking on Leys Avenue. The pedestrian entrance gate off Leys Avenue is required for the Children’s Centre to permit access during those times of the year when the school is closed, without compromising the overall security of the School site.

- **Horizontal and Vertical Circulation** – The horizontal circulation within the property has been carefully planned (refer above). Vertical circulation is not applicable for this single storey property.

- **Access to all Services** – Internally the new extension has been carefully laid-out to maximise use and management. All facilities for the security of the Nursery are appropriate, friendly and warm environment.

- **Emergency Egress/Alarm Systems and Evacuation Planning** – The design of the extension will ensure and assist evacuation should an emergency need occur. All travel routes have been carefully planned and existing emergency exit options are numerous. Evacuation planning will be recorded and regularly tested in line with regulatory residential homes requirements.

---

**Philosophy and Approach:**

The Children’s Centre property has been specifically designed to enable ease of access for people with disability. Access to, and internal travel routes within, the new extension and proposed Children’s Centre have been carefully planned to provide ease of access for visitors and can make use of essential facilities. The design of the property is considered to meet the spirit of the Disability Discrimination Act as well as meeting other regulatory and statutory requirements.

**Sources of advice and consultation**

- Planning advice from both Northamptonshire County Council and initial consultations with NCC Highways Department.
- Full consultation with the Rothwell Victoria Infant School Head Teacher, Bursar and Governors and parents to ensure the design of the property meets the safe and essential needs of the Nursery and School.
- Advice from a range of professional groups and bodies – particularly around disabled access and compliance with Building Regulations. During the design process key structural, mechanical/electrical and access professional advice has been sought to ensure the Children’s Centre operates as efficiently as possible.

**Natural and impact of environmental constraints**

No apparent environmental constraints identified.
DESIGN AND ACCESS STATEMENT

What steps have been taken to ensure this information is made available to building occupiers

Refer above. All key building occupiers have been regularly consulted with and are part of the overall design team. Information has been disseminated to all interested parties for comment and direction on a regularly basis.

Additional material information

We would expect the Children's Centre to be open every day of the week for 48 weeks of the year, providing services within the hours of 8am to 6pm. However, it is not envisaged that this Centre would need to operate for the duration of those hours and that main services will be primarily be provided from **9.30am to 2.30pm** thus avoiding the busy school drop-off times.

It is possible that some services may occasionally be available until later in the afternoon and possibly within school holidays on an ad-hoc basis, as required by local service users. The group room will offer access to parents/carers in small group numbers, from 1-20, and these may run on a daily/weekly or occasional basis. There will also be the opportunity for parents to drop-in to the one-stop shop facility to access information and numbers are more difficult to predict for this activity.

With regard to vehicular access to the Children's Centre, NCC would consider undertaking works to Leys Avenue within the vicinity of the existing vehicle entrance to the Children's Centre, if it was considered that the existing parking problems posed a potential risk to children and parents. This may include railings directly outside the new entrance gate, double yellow lines and bollards. Any such works would need to be agreed and instigated by NCC Highways Department.

Gotch, Saunders & Surridge, Chartered Architects, Project Managers, & Cost Managers, 35 Headlands, Kettering, Northants. NN15 7ES

NDR/DMV/Sch.124 R02

4th May 2007