Design and Access Statement for
Thorplands Primary School.
Proposal:
to relocate the existing Reception base and provide a new Outside Covered Play Area
and associated ramp and external works.

Property Address
Farm Field Court, Thorplands
Northampton
NN3 1AQ.

Description and Use of the Development.
The present School was built by the Development Corporation in 1972 and extended
in 2006, with a Children’s Centre being constructed on the North side of the school.
The school proposes the following remodelling and extensions:

- The relocation of the present Reception base facing the access road, to Room
  37 at the rear.
- The provision of an Outside Covered Play Area [OCPA] for the Reception
  base, with tarmacadam playground.
- The provision of a ramped timber boardwalk from the OCPA serving the
  Children’s Centre down to the level of the Reception Base to allow interaction
  between the different age groups. The two parts of the building have a floor
  difference of 1.8m. This will allow access for disabled users between the
  school and the Children’s Centre.
- The provision of a sand pit and climbing frames / play equipment subject to
  budget restraints.
- Associated planting.

Effect on Surrounding Properties.
This part of the school site is bounded on the East by Billing Brook Rd. with no
houses close by.
Consultation.
As there are no immediate neighbours, no consultations have taken place.

Effect on the Site.
The area shown on the accompanying plans is presently grassed, and is part fenced off
to denote previous use by the Pre-School Group when the temporary classroom was in
place.
The area is also used for external play for the Children’s Centre.
The location of the new OCPA is a three-sided open courtyard, currently being a steep
grassed bank.
This will be dug out to the lower depth, and a tarmacadam play area laid.
No trees or established planting will be affected.
As the relocation of the Reception Base is solely a swapping of rooms, there are no
implications on staffing levels or parking numbers.
The proposal has no effect on the current access routes for emergency vehicles.

Scale and Appearance.
The present open sided courtyard is 7x19m. on plan, formed by the OCPA to the
Children’s Centre, the Assembly Hall and associated external platform, and the wing
of the school where the relocated Reception base will be.
Due to the present layout, and changes in floor levels, the actual new Outside Covered
Play Area will not occupy all of this, being in total 114 sq.m.
In section, the lower end of the proposed curved roof will over sail the roof of the school building, with the higher point of the roof meeting up with the roof of the OCPA to the Children’s Centre. This will mitigate the effect of driving rain and also reduced the likely hood of access to the play area over the roofs.
The lower end of the roof will therefore be 3.3m with the highest part being 4.8m. The frame of the OCPA will be in powder coated steel using circular columns. Roofing will be with opal polycarbonate sheeting to curve. The open gable wall of the OCPA will have powder coated security fencing and gate, 3.0m high, the appearance to match that existing to the Children’s Centre. Both gable ends of the OCPA will have vertical polycarbonate sheeting set into powder coated framing to prevent ingress at high level.

Landscaping.
It is proposed, subject to the available budget, to provide a landscaped area as a garden within the space formed by the ramped, curved boardwalk.

Construction Issues.
It was recognised during the Contract in 2006 that the access to the site was a problem both for the Contractor and for staff, pupils and parents.
As part of the Contract to provide the Children’s Centre, permission was granted for additional parking spaces at the higher ground level on part of the playing field. Additionally, the access road has been marked out to clarify turning/unloading zones. It is still acknowledged however, that the part of the site set aside for this application can only be reached by driving around the South and East sides of the school across the playgrounds as the accompanying site plan. It is envisaged that the Contractor will establish a compound for materials and welfare facilities adjacent to the existing storage facility next to the area, which is the subject of this Planning Application.
Access.
Works carried out to the school in 2006 ensured compliance externally with the DDA by the provision of a dropping off bay, designated parking bays for disabled users and a ramped access from the car park down to the redesigned Main Entrance. Similarly, equal access to the Children’s Centre has been provided. The Client requires that the children in the Reception Base of the school are able to interact with the pupils in the adjacent Children’s Centre, and are able to share outdoor equipment. The site levels have therefore dictated the layout of the new provision. The sweeping timber ramped boardwalk is at a slope to link movement through the site by wheelchair users between the Administration area, Assembly Hall, Children’s Centre and external spaces and by children using wheeled toys. It will also allow wheelchair users using these new outside facilities to gain access to the toilets for disabled users in the Children’s Centre. This will overcome the problem which currently exists due to internal steps in the original part of the School. A set of steps is also incorporated on the inner line of the ramp for children and staff to access what will become a Garden Area.