

North Kingston Centre

Consultation on a Draft Planning Brief for the redevelopment of the North Kingston Centre site to provide a New Secondary School for 11-18 year olds



Background and Purpose of the Brief

We would like your views on the draft Planning and Urban Design Brief for the North Kingston Centre (NKC) site. The six week consultation period runs until 31 July 2010.

This leaflet summarises Brief. You can obtain a full version of the Brief:

- online www.kingston.gov.uk/planning/nkcbrief
- in person from the North Kingston Centre, the Council's Information and Advice Centre in Guildhall 2 in Kingston, Kingston Library and Tudor Drive Library
- by e-mailing planningpolicy@rbk.kingston.gov.uk
- by telephone 020 8547 5420

There will be an exhibition explaining the Brief at the North Kingston Centre, Kingston Library and the Guildhall during the consultation period. There will be drop-in sessions at the North Kingston Centre on Wednesday 14 July and Friday 16 July between 3pm - 7pm when Council officers will on hand to answer questions.

The Brief provides planning guidance for the redevelopment of the North Kingston Centre site for a new secondary school and covers all stages of the planning process. It will guide the preparation and assessment

of development proposals and supplement government planning policy and statutory development plan policies set out in the Council's Unitary Development Plan and the Mayor of London's London Plan.

The Brief sets out: the planning policy context; site constraints and opportunities; planning objectives and development principles against which development proposals will be assessed; and guidance on urban design, sustainability and transport, requirements to help ensure that the school fits in with its surroundings and to minimise any adverse impact on the local environment.

There is an increasing demand for places in Kingston's primary schools, resulting from a significant increase in the birth rate, new housing and economic factors, which the Council is meeting by expanding existing schools and providing a new primary school. From 2015 onwards, the current increase of primary school pupils will be at an age to transfer to secondary schools. To accommodate these pupils the Borough will need to increase the provision through the creation of a new secondary school and expansion of local non-selective schools that serve the Kingston area.



A land search for sites suitable for a new secondary school identified just two potential options - North Kingston Centre with some associated sports and post-16 facilities at the Hawker Centre. Subsequent consultation in 2009 revealed that 52% of responders supported the North Kingston Centre and 44% supported the Hawker Centre. Due to a number of site specific and planning constraints the Hawker Centre was subsequently discounted for use other than external sports facilities.

The provision of a new secondary school is part of the Transforming Kingston Schools (TKS) Programme and is scheduled to be substantially funded by the Government's national Building Schools for the Future (BSF) programme. Kingston was accepted on the BSF programme by the previous Government in December 2009 with the intention of transforming education right across the Borough. The ambitious programme includes providing additional school places, diversifying schools, improving education outcomes and narrowing differences in attainment.

In this first phase, the Council is looking to provide a new 'state of the art' secondary school and the Planning Brief states that it should:

- include high quality innovative design that enhances its surroundings; and
- encourage sustainable school journeys (walking, cycling, public transport) through robust site and travel planning to reduce car use and adverse impact on the local area and the highway network.

Subject to due process, including the need for planning permission, the school would be planned to open for year 7 pupils (11 year olds) in 2015 and would reach capacity in 2022. Sports pitches would be provided off site, possibilities include the Hawker Centre and Latchmere Recreation Ground. Detailed planning proposals for the new school are expected to come forward in 2011, when there will be further public consultation.

The Site and the Surrounding Area

The NKC is currently used as an adult education and training centre, accommodating an Adult Education facility with a crèche/nursery, Pupil Referral Unit, local history centre, borough archive, Disability Discrimination Act training centre and community transport base. The site forms part of a larger established education 'campus' with the adjoining Tiffin Girls' School and Fern Hill Primary Schools. Kingston Council intends to relocate all existing uses of NKC if planning permission is obtained for the proposed new school.

The NKC site extends from Richmond Road across to the rear of houses in Wolsey Drive and comprises a two storey teaching building, outbuildings, landscaped area, frontage parking and drop off area used by Fern Hill Primary School, rear parking area and hard tennis courts. There are mature trees along the Richmond Road frontage and smaller trees in the landscaped area. The site is in Low Risk Flood Zone 1, it is not within a conservation area, no buildings are Listed and no trees have Tree Preservation Orders (TPOs). The River Thames is 100m to the west and Richmond Park 700m to the east of the site.

The surrounding residential area is characterised by two and three storey houses, with a mix of houses and flats (up to four storeys) along Richmond Road.

Constraints and Opportunities

The site's development constraints and opportunities are summarised below:

- the site is already in education use within an 'education campus'
- the site is well located in relation to the new school's catchment area which will enable many pupils to walk or cycle to school, reduce the need for car use and reduce the distances currently travelled to secondary schools by pupils living locally
- the site is located on Richmond Road, a main road, a cycle route and a bus route (no. 65 service) which provide good accessibility
- the size of site (1.6ha) is constrained for a large secondary school, but allowing for sports pitches to be located off-site, it is within government guidelines
- the site is next to Tiffin Girls' and Fern Hill (which is due to expand) and the new school will put a strain on transport infrastructure (roads, buses, footways) which will need to be addressed by a range of measures
- the number of pupils will increase gradually from 2015 to 2022, allowing time to assess travel patterns and address any issues that may arise.



There are opportunities to:

- improve pedestrian/cycle routes and crossings, including the narrow path running from Richmond Road to Wolsey Drive, between NKC and Tiffin Girls'
- provide good cycle parking
- stagger school start and finishing times to reduce the impact of the three schools
- provide high quality innovative design that enhances the character of the surrounding area and safeguards residential amenity
- provide flexible accommodation suitable for school and community use
- to reinforce tree planting along the Richmond Road frontage and within the site, especially along the rear boundary with houses in Wolsey Drive.

Planning and Development Guidance

Design and Access

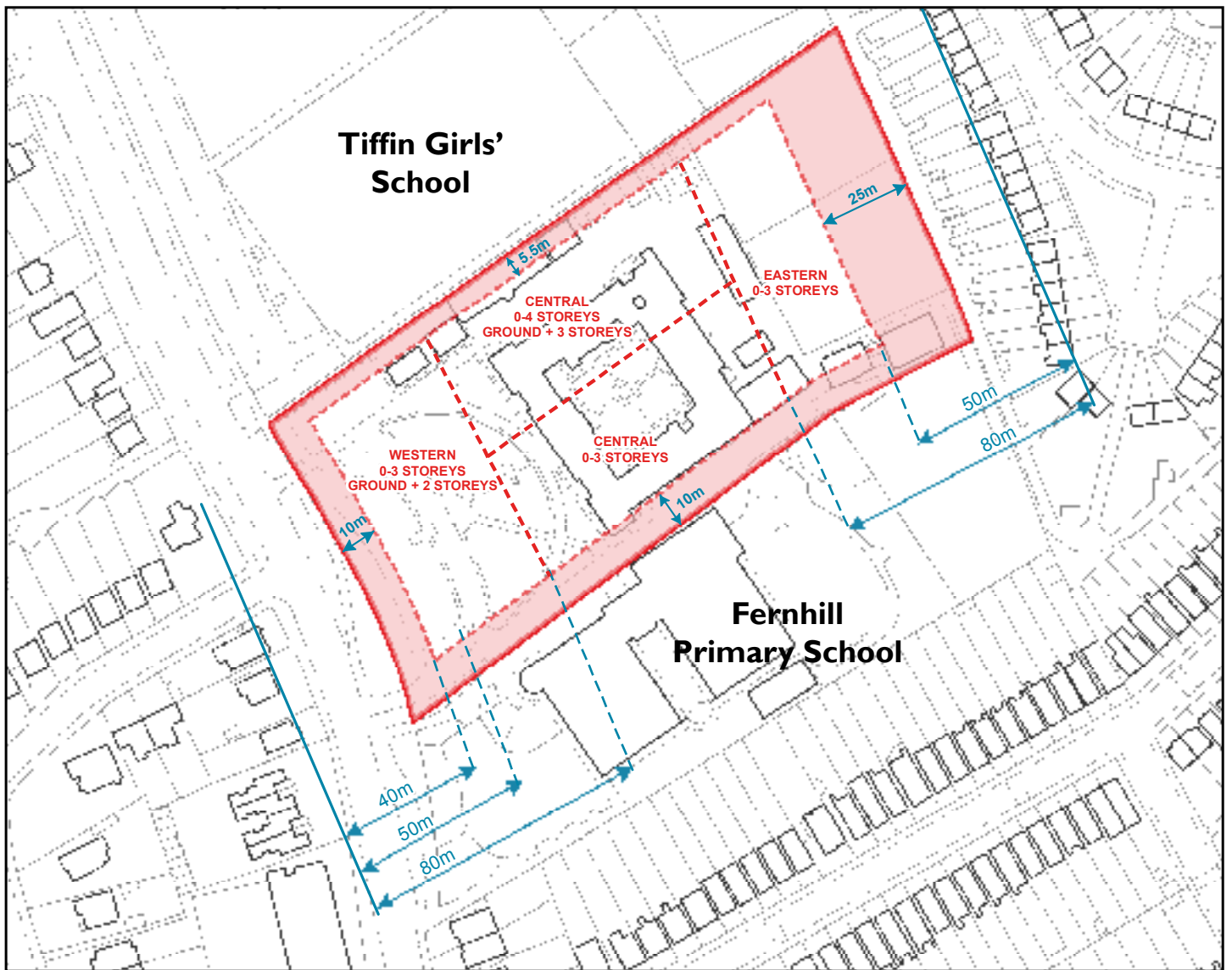
The main access to the site will remain from Richmond Road and the brief seeks a comprehensive approach to access from Richmond Road along the frontage to avoid congestion and maintain highway safety.

The site layout should maximise the provision of outdoor space for: informal social space, games courts and habitat, and provide high quality school buildings within the building parameter guidelines.

The Brief clearly identifies areas that are suitable for building and 'no build' zones around the periphery of the site that are suitable for parking, access, landscaping and open space in order to safeguard residential amenity and local character and protect trees along the Richmond Road frontage. The brief sets guidelines for heights within the building zones. These are up to 3 storeys (ground + two floors above, up to 12m high) for most of the site, with a maximum of 4 storeys in the centre of the site (ground + 3 storeys above, up to 16m high), subject to detailed testing. For comparison, the buildings on the adjacent Tiffin Girls' School site are mainly 3 storeys (up to 12m) with parts of the buildings being 4 storeys (15m high).

Travel and Transport

The proposed secondary school with 8 forms of entry (1680 pupils and around 160 staff) would generate around 1,800+ trips at school start and finishing times, plus trips by school visitors. The Brief requires measures to manage travel to and from the site, maintain highway safety and minimise local impact. These include a comprehensive Transport Assessment and a School Travel Plan to be submitted with any planning application; improvements for pedestrians and cyclists; good cycle parking provision; a potential increase in bus capacity and staggered school start and finishing times.



Car Parking

On-site parking provision needs to balance a number of factors including the need:

- to maximise walking, cycling and use of public transport
- to provide sufficient parking for the school to operate, allow for community use and contain school related parking within the site
- to ensure that the school grounds are not dominated by parking
- to maximise outdoor space for games and informal social space

Taking account of these factors, the school's accessibility and proposed size, the Brief requires the provision of around 50 car parking spaces to serve the school.

Sustainable Design and Energy

The Brief requires a sustainable approach to design, construction and environmental servicing. It sets out guidelines for water use, drainage and sustainable energy, the latter based on the London Plan principles of Be Lean (use less energy), Be Clean (use clean energy) and Be Green (use renewable energy).

Next steps

The Brief will be reported to the Kingston Town Neighbourhood and the Development Control Committees for comment. Consultation responses, together with the finalised Brief for adoption will be reported to the Executive on 29 September 2010.



Director of Planning & Transportation
Royal Borough of Kingston upon Thames
Guildhall 2
Kingston upon Thames
Surrey KT1 1EU



INVESTOR IN PEOPLE

Printed on recycled paper
© Environmental Services, RBK
Published June 2010

