

## Notes of Public Consultation Meeting

### Primary School Expansion 2011 – Public Consultation Meeting New Primary School for Surbiton

29 March 2010, 19:00 – 21.02

#### Officers Present:

**Duncan Clark** – Director of Learning and Children’s Services (Interim)  
**Rosemary Hafeez** – Strategic Manager – Primary School Improvement  
**Anne Redparth** – Head of Resources and Commissioning

There were approximately 45 people present at the meeting.

#### Presentation

Duncan welcomed everyone to the meeting and explained that the purpose of the meeting was to outline the need for additional primary school places in the Borough and the Local Authority’s proposal to open a new 2 Form Entry Primary School on part of the Surbiton Hospital site which will be developed alongside a proposal for Polyclinic services.

Duncan, Anne and Rosemary gave a presentation outlining the need for a new school in the context of a rising demand for primary school places in the Kingston area. They highlighted what kind of school is preferred by the Local Authority and likely timescales for delivering the project including further consultation with residents on planning and design proposals. A copy of the presentation slides is provided on the RBK website at [www.kingston.gov.uk/school\\_expansion](http://www.kingston.gov.uk/school_expansion)

#### Comments and Questions

The table below outlines the main comments made and questions asked together with the response given by officers.

Comment/Question	Response
Is the Local Authority aware that there are restrictive covenants on the Surbiton Hospital site which would prevent its development for non-health related services? The PCT were unaware of this until they were informed by residents.	The Local Authority would not try to illegally build a school on any site and the legal advice we have is that a proposed school is not prevented by any covenants relating to the site.
Are the PCT in favour of this proposal?	The PCT are fully committed to the provision of Polyclinic services on the site and have identified land which is surplus to health requirements which could be used to develop a new primary school.  There is complexity in the nature of the proposal as two public bodies are working together to deliver one joint development. Our view is that a polyclinic and school will fit well together.
Concern about the loss of large Victorian villas within a conservation area and that the detailed design proposals are well advanced when the views of local people have not been sought yet.	No houses will be demolished without following the due planning process.  It has been necessary to work through a number of options as to how a school would be designed

	<p>on the site in order to ensure that it was feasible. We are guided by planning policy. The option of retaining a villa on the site was explored as part of the proposal but it has proved challenging to retain within a new school development.</p>
<p>I am not convinced that a school and polyclinic would be a good match being co-located.</p> <p>How would parents know what school to apply for when admission applications will be required in December 2010. Where would children be located for the first year? It also doesn't seem right that the first cohort would have no older peer group at the school.</p>	<p>We do believe that the two functions will complement each other and provide benefits to both. Safeguarding of children is at the heart of what we do and we would not be putting any proposal forward that compromised on this.</p> <p>When establishing new schools it is common practice to open the school with only one year group. For the first year the school would need to be located elsewhere whilst the building work was carried out for completion in September 2012.</p>
<p>What kind of school providers could come forward with bids?</p>	<p>The Local Authority will be able to put forward a bid for a community or foundation primary school. DCSF consultants will also support the competition process to maximise interest in the proposal so other types of provider could come forward. There are however far fewer potential promoters of primary schools than for secondary school competitions.</p>
<p>There are significant opportunities for delays to occur particularly with regard to the NHS timescales. Why are other sites not being examined and discussed?</p>	<p>We have looked at a number of other sites in the area and are aware of a variety of views on possible other options. Our view is that this is the most cost-effective proposal which is capable of delivering a new primary school within a short timescale. We are working closely with PCT colleagues to deliver what is a complex and challenging scheme, so are well aware of the potential risks involved.</p> <p>This is the only site within stated guidelines that is of sufficient size for a 2FE school.</p>
<p>It is vital that the area has a new Primary School but the LA must recognise the risks inherent in a proposal on land in NHS ownership which is still the subject of further discussion with local people</p>	<p>We recognise this but have clear indication from the PCT that a school proposal does not prevent them from delivering any health related services that are required on the site. We have the full commitment of the PCT Chief Executive.</p>
<p>The consultation document has not been received by residents in Claremont and Oakhill Roads.</p> <p>Only 11% of respondents to a PCT consultation supported the use of surplus land for a school. Do the PCT support this proposal? Senior figures have stated the provision of a school is a matter for RBK.</p>	<p>We apologise for difficulties experienced which was a result of mistakes made by the distributor contracted by the Local Authority.</p> <p>We do not believe there is a difference in view about the proposal. We would not be consulting if assurances that this proposal is one that is supported had not been received.</p>
<p>I understand that other sites have been explored but none have been able to have been taken forward.</p>	

<p>No parking arrangements have been made for parents to drop off children – only some parking for staff.</p> <p>Concern on who is making the decision on behalf of the NHS. Does the local PCT have the autonomy to declare the land surplus? What is the role of South East Chair of the regional health authority? More clarity is needed on governance arrangements of the PCT. No costs have been mentioned regarding purchase of the site.</p>	<p>The PCT have advised that the land is surplus to requirements and the LA will be advised of a valuation to purchase for the provision of a school. The Strategic Health Authority has an overall view on the development of Polysystems across the whole of South West London. Liaison locally has been through the PCT.</p>
<p>The Polysystems consultation is well underway and is pushing forward on a fast timetable and fits in with Primary Care Plans for services.</p>	
<p>How is the PCT able to specify the amount of land available that is surplus to health requirements? Use of any surplus land should be considered for Community Beds and sheltered housing.</p> <p>The brief for a new school on the site should be reviewed with a wider area examined for the provision of a new school.</p>	<p>We can't comment in detail on such a question which should be put to the PCT. The LA has been advised of surplus land on the site and the priority for us is providing a new primary school in Surbiton.</p> <p>A lot of work has been carried out to examine how additional places could be created. A lack of available sites has been a barrier and there is a need to add places on a geographical basis close to where rises in the school age population have occurred.</p>
<p>Health and Education consultations are being conducted separately and nobody is asking if the respective uses would work well together. Noise from a school would not be placed alongside many elderly and unwell people accessing health services.</p>	<p>The PCT and LA can do to work closely together on this scheme but there is more to do. All residents will be fully consulted on design proposals and issues such as traffic implications, access etc. The approach has been taken to seek to provide places close to pupils homes to minimise school trips by car.</p>
<p>Access to the proposed school is very limited with an accumulation of vehicular traffic likely. Many parents will drive their children to school despite what any traffic impact assessment might anticipate.</p> <p>Loss of villas which PCT have confirmed will happen will be a great loss – the development is too ambitious in its scope.</p>	<p>The detailed design proposals which will include such details have not been fully worked up yet. We want to reduce the number of children who are driven to school but recognise with a 26% increase in primary school aged children this could result in more traffic in the area.</p>
<p>Concern that the proposed school along with expansion proposals does not provide enough additional Forms of Entry in the Surbiton area. There has been a no school coverage area in North Berrylands recently with parents having to travel to Worcester Park/Old Malden for primary school places. More children are forecast in the area and only 3.5 extra Forms of Entry are proposed.</p>	<p>Our estimates and projections are constantly being reviewed to bring them in line with the latest data and evidence we have. It is very hard to know exactly how many primary places will be required in 5 years time but for Surbiton we believe that the plan to expand by 3.5 Forms of Entry is the right number of places.</p> <p>There is a need to balance the need for additional places with concern that if demand did fall there is not an oversupply of places in the area. Surplus places cost money to fund and are not helpful for</p>

	<p>schools in terms of school organisation. We have confidence that the current plan provides the right number of places for this area; but will keep this under review.</p> <p>There was an issue in 2008 for North Berrylands prior to bulge classes being added. This has not been the case for the past 2 years admissions processes where bulge classes have been added and on the whole announced in advance of the application deadlines. The permanent expansion strategy addresses the needs of children in all geographical areas throughout the Borough.</p>
<p>Reiterated concerns that consultation documents had not been received by many residents in the Oakhill area and a further consultation meeting should be considered.</p> <p>Whilst a school is required as there is a major shortage of places, am concerned that there are so many issues to resolve with this proposal that we may end up with no new school. The Development Control Committee will look seriously at any planning application and one should not assume that approval of the plans will happen. An alternative plan needs to be formulated in case the hospital site cannot be utilised for a school.</p>	<p>We are sorry about this and will review what has happened and take appropriate action.</p> <p>The experience surrounding the Tolworth Children's Centre highlighted the independence of the Local Authority's Development Control function.</p> <p>This is our proposal for a new school and has been formulated in consultation with the PCT. We are confident that the plans are workable and the two distinct functions complement each other and work together.</p>
<p>The impact on the Oakhill Conservation Area will be huge with congestion from the two uses greatly impacting on residents</p> <p>Is this proposal already approved? Is this really genuine consultation?</p>	<p>Implications for the community in terms of the new buildings and transport will be fully assessed as part of the planning process with full consultation with residents.</p> <p>We have tried to be as open as possible that this is the Local Authority's proposal for a new primary school which we are required to conduct a statutory consultation process on. The style of pre-competition consultation is pre-determined by the DCSF and we must follow this format. We are required to consult on our proposal and the statutory process precludes the consultation including a range of other options.</p>
<p>Analysis of why other sites are unsuitable and cannot be taken forward should be shared. Land adjacent to St Andrews and St Marks could be considered as well as the King Charles Centre as other options for new schools.</p> <p>What guidelines are followed for the size of site required for a new school?</p>	<p>A full search of possible sites was made and it concluded that there were no other sites that met the Local Authority's needs for a new primary school. Alternative sites mentioned this evening do not meet the minimum site requirements for a 2 Form Entry Primary School.</p> <p>The LA follows government guidelines on sizes of site required. There are two types of site, one with the normal site requirements and one for built up areas where the site size is more restricted. For Surbiton Hospital this falls under the more restricted site size and playing fields for Key Stage 2 pupils will be located off site. King Charles Centre is a smaller site than this. An</p>

	<p>initial options appraisal concluded that it would not be appropriate to expand Maple Infant School to 3FE due to the site size constraints. We do not want to establish a school on a site that does not meet the more restrictive site size guidelines.</p>
<p>The PCT Chief Executive is not liaising closely with local people so it is good the LA is able to liaise closely with him.</p> <p>The war memorial should be protected. I have been told it could be placed in the new school.</p>	
<p>As MP have been involved in debates about Surbiton Hospital since 1998. The War Memorial plaque will be looked after, residents can be assured of that.</p> <p>My main concern is that the surplus land on the site is not sold off for housing which the PCT could be proposing. I have also been clear that the surplus land should be put to community use and with the number of additional places required a school is an option that should be considered. I am concerned about over-expanding existing schools, therefore it is important not to dismiss other potential sites at this stage in the process. This site should be seriously considered if it meets the size guidelines for a 2FE school.</p> <p>This proposal is not 'done and dusted'. There are many legal and planning hurdles to overcome and we must recognise that we look after the interests of all members of the community.</p>	<p>The Local Authority is very concerned to ensure that it takes account of the needs of all local people. The PCT proposal for the site is to modernise the way in which health services are delivered.</p>
<p>If the focus is on teaching children with SEN in mainstream schools could this free up the Dysart site for possible use as a primary school?</p> <p>There is room on St Matthews site to build an additional school.</p> <p>My adopted daughter received an excellent education at St Philips and our Special Schools must be protected.</p>	<p>No. Whilst there will be more places available in mainstream schools for children with SEN there will be many children who will continue to require a special school placement to meet their individual needs.</p>

Duncan Clark, Director of Children's Services (Interim), thanked everyone for attending the meeting and encouraged all to provide their views during the consultation.