

HAMPSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL

Officer Decision Record

Decision Maker:	Peter Colenutt
Title:	Head of Strategic Development
Reference:	6779

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1. The decision:

- 1.1. That unconditional approval be given to the following proposal; the publication of a public notice under Section 19 (1) of the Education and Inspections Act 2006:

To make a prescribed alteration to WHITCHURCH CHURCH OF ENGLAND (CONTROLLED) PRIMARY SCHOOL, Daniel Road, Whitchurch, Hampshire RG28 7LS (category of school – Controlled C of E) by enlarging the premises of the school, with effect from 1 September 2018.

2. Reason(s) for the decision:

- 2.1. Following local consultation, the County Council received 21 written comments regarding the proposal to enlarge the school. In considering the responses received the County Council felt that the provision of additional school places was necessary and that comments received did not represent sufficient concern to prevent proceeding with the enlargement. The proposal to enlarge Whitchurch CE (Controlled) Primary School from 420 to 525 places, with effect from 1 September 2018, should proceed to the next stage of the process.

3. Consultation

- 3.1. Formal consultation took place between 24 April and 5 June 2015. A letter was sent to consultees as detailed below and a drop-in session was held at Whitchurch CE (Controlled) Primary School on 13 May 2015. The proposal was also included on the County Council's consultation website. A copy of the consultation letter is attached.
- 3.2. Letters were sent to;
- Parents of children attending Whitchurch CE (Controlled) Primary School (via the school)

- Headteacher, school staff and Governing Body of Whitchurch CE (controlled) Primary School
- Headteachers and Chairs of Governors of neighbouring schools
- Basingstoke and Deane Borough Council – Chief Executive
- Trade union representatives
- Local Dioceses
- MP – Right Honourable Sir George Young
- HCC Elected Member – Councillor Tom Thacker
- Tracey Sanders – Manager, Services for Young Children
- Residents within 50 metres of the school boundary (134 letters sent)

4. Consultation responses received

4.1. A total of 21 written comments were received. The key issues raised by consultees can be summarised as follows;

- Concerns over significant congestion on the narrow roads around the schools at the beginning and end of the school day and whether there were any plans to include a drop-off and pick-up area.
- A section of Daniel Road is a cul-de-sac and frequently gets blocked by cars accessing the school so were there plans to increase the amount of car parking for parents and staff.
- In order to alleviate the traffic congestion and encourage alternate modes of travel, the proposals should include the construction of cycle paths.
- Children who currently cross Winchester Street opposite the Gill Nethercott Community Centre present a road safety risk, so consideration needs to be given to installing a pedestrian crossing in this area.
- Along with the additional classrooms are there plans to increase the size of the hall and increase the amount of playground provision as part of the expansion proposal.

5. Comments on consultation responses received

5.1. With respect to the comments received around traffic congestion there is a process that will be followed to identify issues and seek solutions. As part of the consultation process officers from Hampshire County Council attended the consultation drop-in session to explain the process in developing a School Travel Plan (STP), and to seek the community's views and concerns over parking, travel and transport that exist. These concerns have been captured through a feedback response form whereby consultees categorised their position within the community and the comments that they have.

- 5.2. The School Travel Plan is a long-term document produced by the whole school community and any other interested/affected parties. It looks at how children, parents, staff and visitors travel to and from school, and sets out measures to;
- Encourage and enable pupils, parents, guardians and staff to walk, scoot and cycle to school. Where this is not possible, consider public transport, car sharing or 'Park and Stride' to school.
 - Encourage and provide educational programmes relating to child travel and how this links to the environment, safety and health.
 - Improve safety.
- 5.3. Once the consultation forms have been collated and summarised, the school with the support of the School Travel Planning Team, will then survey pupils, parents and staff as to how they travel, the barriers that they may encounter, and suggestions as to improvements. Using the results of this along with responses from the principle to expand consultation the issues will be classified on behalf of the whole school community along with possible solutions.
- 5.4. The school and STP team will subsequently work with the various key stakeholders to develop an action plan to target the issues that are preventing pupils, parents and staff from using alternatives to the car. The initiatives identified will be a combination of physical measures such as scooter storage or crossing points, and 'soft' measures relating to education, promotion and enforcement. For those who have no alternative but to use the car, other options will be considered such as 'Park and Stride' sites.
- 5.5. The travel plan will link to a Transport Statement, undertaken by consultants, using additional data acquired from traffic surveys, accident data, parking beat surveys and so on. The outcomes of the Transport Statement will clearly define between measures that are essential to mitigate against the travel impact of the increase in numbers, and desirable measures that will provide a general improvement to routes to school, long term.
- 5.6. The suggested proposals will be taken back to the school community at the pre planning consultation event for further discussion, and possible adjustment, prior to submission of the planning application.
- 5.7. The headteacher and governors will be fully involved in the development of the design of the new accommodation and the accommodation to be provided will be agreed with the headteacher and governors.

6. Conclusion

- 6.1. Pupil forecasts for Whitchurch CE (C) Primary School show numbers growing as a result of increased demand for school places from within the school's catchment area. In order to meet the County Council's statutory duty to ensure sufficiency of school places this school need to be expanded.

6.2. The comments received during the consultation will be considered through the development of the school travel plan, the design process for the new school buildings and as part of the planning application process. In considering the responses received the County Council felt that the provision of additional school places was necessary and that comments received did not represent sufficient concern to prevent proceeding with the enlargement.

7. Other options considered and rejected:

7.1. Not to approve the proposal would mean that there are insufficient primary school places available in the school to meet the demand from within the catchment area.

8. Conflicts of interest:

8.1. Conflict of interest declared by an Executive Member who is consulted by the officer which relates to the decision:

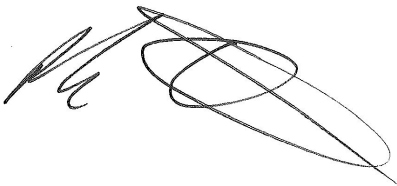
None

9. Dispensation granted by the Head of Paid Service:

None

Approved by:

Date:



9 July 2015

Peter Colenutt
Head of Strategic Development

On behalf of the Director of Children's Services