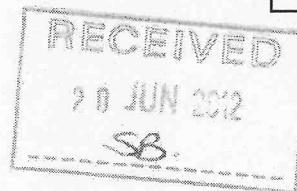


Attn: Edwina Grant
Central Bedfordshire Council,
Priory House,
Chicksands
Shefford
Beds
SG17 5TQ



11/6/2012

Re Proposal to expand Shefford Community Lower School.

While recognising the pressure of local numbers and the constraints on the educational budget I am concerned that this development will lead to an increase of vehicle traffic in the surrounding streets by a similar percentage to the increase in places ie 50% more cars attempting to park nearby.

At present School Lane seems to be at maximum capacity as does Bloomfield Drive – likewise Campton Road – consequently it seems likely that any additional traffic created by school enlargement will park on the Ampthill Road. There are already a significant number of cars parked on this busy road at school in/out times and I am concerned that the school expansion will encourage a dramatic increase of this practice with consequent added dangers to persons – eg doors being opened into the traffic stream, more people crossing, degrading of visibility etc

I therefore object to the plan in its present form and suggest that it be modified to accommodate the additional traffic which it may be expected to attract.

A number of options come to mind:

1. A purpose built drop off zone at the top of School Lane.
2. Widening of Bloomfield Drive to enable parking on what is presently a wide grass verge on the west side of the road.
3. Widening of Campton Road to facilitate additional parking, with safe turn-round area at the end eg roundabout.
4. A new Zebra crossing on the Ampthill Road adjacent to School Lane.
5. A new access road to the school.

Yours sincerely

A large rectangular area that has been redacted, obscuring the signature and any text that might have been present below it.

The logo for Central Bedfordshire, featuring the text "Central Bedfordshire" in a bold, sans-serif font. The text is white and set against a dark grey circular background.

Mr J Deavin
68 Amphil Road
Shefford
Bed:
SG17 5BB

Your ref:

Our ref: Shefford Lower

Date: 03/07/12

Dear Mr Deavin

Proposal to expand Shefford Community Lower School to provide new school places

Thank you for responding to the consultation currently underway on the proposal to expand Shefford Lower School. Your objection and this response will be reported to the Council's Executive on the 21st August 2012 to inform the final determination of the proposal.

As you may know, the current consultation is required by Education law and runs in parallel with the process required to determine the specific construction proposals by the Council's Development Management Committee. The Planning Application for the Shefford Lower proposal was heard by that Committee on the 27th June 2012 and following a significant amount of debate on the potential for transport implications, the application was formally approved.

I acknowledge however, the concerns of local residents and of parents and these have been heard throughout the consultation process which commenced in April.

In responding specifically to the points that you have put forward I have requested support from the Council's Sustainable Transport Officers. It is their view that the options you have outlined as numbers 1, 2 and 3 would further exacerbate the existing and any future travel issues by encouraging and providing for travel by car for the journey school. This is contrary to Central Bedfordshire's transport policy for school journeys.

Option 4 for a zebra crossing is not appropriate as there is currently no significant demand for crossing the Amphil Road at this point. The majority of pedestrians accessing the school use the Broomfield Drive entrance to the school and use either the School Crossing Patrol on Amphil Road or Zebra crossing adjacent to Bloomfield Drive.

Central Bedfordshire Council

High Street North
Dunstable Manor
Bedfordshire LU6 1LF

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Option 5 for a new school access road presents no benefits that School Lane doesn't already offer. In addition the development of this option would be a substantially lengthy process with the need to acquire additional land.

Central Bedfordshire's Sustainable Transport Officer has identified similar travel and transport issues related to this proposal and has requested that, should it be approved, the School's travel plan be updated to reflect the changes that will be made and outline the actions they will be taking to encourage more sustainable travel and to ensure any negative travel and transport issues are minimised. The development of the plan is the most appropriate means of co-ordinating access arrangements for the school, to encourage walking, scootering and cycling, and overall reducing the amount of car travel for the journey to school.

The need to expand lower school provision in the area is matched at both middle and upper phases and early design work is underway at Robert Bloomfield Academy, adjacent to Shefford Lower, to convert existing temporary accommodation into permanent build. This will not increase the total number of pupils attending the school but will itself be subject to consultation and a Planning application in due course.

I have instructed colleagues who are engaged in the early design work around this proposal to be mindful of the need to improve traffic management in the area and on the school site, not least because the two schools share a thoroughfare.

Thank you again for responding to the consultation.

Yours sincerely

Rob Parsons

Head of School Organisation, Admissions and Capital Planning

Direct telephone 0300 300 5572

rob.parsons@centralbedfordshire.gov.uk

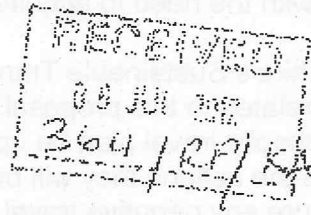
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11 Lomond Drive
Linslade
Leighton Buzzard
Beds LU7 2NX



Dated 2nd July 2012

Dear Sir or Madam,

I feel that I should comment upon the proposal to expand Greenleas Lower School due to the car parking problems which will inevitably arise.

I have been proud to have been involved with the School since it first opened, first as a parent and then as a Class Teacher, always holding the School in high regard. Whilst I do not have any objections to expansion, I feel I must bring to your attention, the major parking problems which are already occurring at the top of Lomond Drive.

These problems can only increase as the numbers at the Derwent Rd site increase, particularly in the school year 2012/2013. At present, some parents park with little regard to local residents, common sense, the Highway Code or the safety of their or other children.

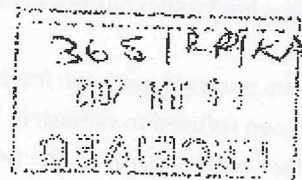
Indeed, during the morning and afternoon "school runs", the parking at the top of Lomond Drive is so bad, that at times, traffic cannot navigate the junction and has to wait until some cars move. Should the need arise, I am certain that an Emergency Services Vehicle would not be able to enter or depart Lomond Drive. The local newspaper would have a "field day".

I know that you are aware of the situation but ask that you work closely with the Council and Police to try and alleviate this dangerous situation. There is an accident waiting to happen and I have no wish to say "I told you so" as this situation worsens.

Yours sincerely,

Mrs E.A. Slater

Edwina Grant,
Deputy Chief Executive/Director of Children's Services,
Central Bedfordshire Council,
Priory House,
Chicksands,
Shefford,
Bed:
SG17 5RQ



6th July 2012

Dear Ms F Grant,

I am writing to express my concern over the proposal of Greenleas Lower School to manager an additional school located at Sandhills. This letter tries to articulate my concerns.

Advantages and Opportunities

The main advantages to this proposal is that it reduces Central Bedfordshire's burden in creating a teaching unit from scratch, it removes the difficulty in recruiting a new head teacher / governors and the salary for a single head teacher will lower that if Central Bedfordshire need to employ two head teachers.

There will also be increase potential for existing teachers at Greenleas School to move into new middle management structures or to increase their level of responsibility. The result of which will be the potential for individuals to increase their personal income. This in turn will lead to better job prospect in the future.

These are very good reason for the proposal to go ahead. However a School exists to provide the best education it can for its pupils and it have not been disputed that there will be a level of disruption and change at the school. It is well established that disruption and change lead to initial instability. Even if this instability only last 12 months (but probably a lot longer), it will affect children as they start their time in our education system. The fear is that the initial bad start will impact the whole of that child's education.

Leadership

There are statistically significant empirical and qualitatively robust associations between heads' educational values, qualities and their strategic actions and improvement in school conditions leading to improvements in pupil outcomes. It is also well know in the study of change management that a change in duties and responsibilities of staff and the introduction of new staff is known to cause interference, resentment and reduction in productivity. It is therefore important to have strong leadership for this venture to have a positive if not neutral effect on the pupils at the school.

I am not in a position to judge the leadership at Greenleas School so I have to take it on trust that they have the ability to undergo this type of change programme. However a vital skill in any leadership team is the ability to communicate effectively and to engage with its stakeholders. I therefore would have expected that they would have involved parent in the development of their proposal. Engaged and show that they have understood and taken on board parent's uncertainties.

A strong leadership team would explain what it was doing to mitigate any potential issues. However the Greenleas leadership has not done this.

Not only have parents not been invited contribute to the Greenleas proposal, the School and governors have refused to publish it. This has resulted in parents and local residents being anxious about the lack of transparent. The two public meetings run by Central Bedfordshire focused mainly on the benefits for the residence of Sandhills in having a new School. It failed to offer any benefits to pupils of the existing Greenleas School. The best answer that was given is that the pupils of Greenleas will not be disadvantaged. That is not a very strong argument and it is something I do not believe.

I wonder what criteria Central Bedfordshire has used to assess the suitability of the Greenleas leadership team to undergo this change.

Geographic location

The two sites are separated by a car journey of approximately 10 minutes. This will result in lost time for the head teacher and specialist staff because of travel between sites. This will also have an additional cost associated with it.

Splitting a head teacher time can only reduce their visibility in either school. This has the potential for the head not to be involved in all aspects of the life and work of each of the schools. If this is realized teaching standards in the existing school will drop.

Educationally unviable

The governors at the public meetings presented the argument that pupil numbers will drop in future years making Greenleas educationally unviable and that managing two schools will help protect from this. However this is a weak argument. If one of the schools has such low numbers it is educationally unviable then it will have a negative effect on both schools making this proposal a bad idea.

However the statistics presented by Central Bedfordshire suggest that pupil numbers in the area will rise. Therefore to remain educationally viable all Greenleas needs to do is concentrate its efforts in building on its standards and not risk disruption resulting dropping of standards.

Resources

The increase pupils at the existing Greenleas School from an extra class intake will result in additional strain on resources such as specialist staff, dining hall, library and music room. Indications suggest that the extra intake could be present in the existing school for four year.

The new school will initial not have any resource and so could reduce what is available to existing Greenleas pupils.

Julian Holden - 11 Sibleford Green, Uxbridge, Wighton Bucks, U.K. Post: MK7 3PL
01295 253443

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page 7

Parking

There are currently issues with parking at the School. There are a large number of cars parked along the road and outside local residence homes. The extra intake of children can only add to this burden.

Conclusion

This may seem a very negative letter but in my defense I am worried about the proposal and the effect it will have on my two children. The scarcity of information from the school is only adding to my discomfort.

Regards

Julian Holden
Julian Holden

Handwritten notes and signatures at the bottom of the page, including a signature that appears to be "R. J. ...".

366/20/KA
08/07/20
GREENLEAS

Ms Margaret
Linnade,
Greenleas Lower School,
26 Sandhill, Ly7 2TL
Friday 6th July

Appendix
A - page 9

Dear Ms Grant,

I am writing to you to express my deep concern and huge disappointment about the proposed expansion of Greenleas Lower School. I totally understand the need for a new school to cater for the children on the Sandhills estate, but there is absolutely no reason why a so far outstanding school should be involved. When a new school is built, parents who wish to send their children to their local school will take them there, no matter what associations and names it has. Teachers employed at the new school can pool their knowledge, ideas, policies and experience to plan and develop a new, exciting school that stands on its own, with its own PTA, Governors, newsletters, and website.

However, if Greenleas is involved with this new school - four miles away, unnecessary disruption and instability will occur. This 'outstanding' school will be outstanding no more. The Headteacher will only be

present fifty per cent of her time, which often leads to discipline and communication problems within a school. Other members of staff involved with setting up the new school will not be teaching one hundred per cent of the time, so classes and learning will be disrupted due to the use of supply teachers.

Additional numbers of children within the school resulting in a whole extra class will place huge pressure on music room and library resources/lessons, hall space - for P.E, lunchtime, assemblies, concerts and so on. A mobile classroom would give the feeling of being separate from the school both mentally and physically, and occupy some of the outdoor space used by the current children. If the new class is accommodated within the school building, that space eg music room/library would not be available for current pupils any more. A mobile classroom would not be nearly so useful as a room within the school - much more difficult for individuals to access. Additional toilet facilities and outside doors would need to be built at extra cost and yet more disruption if a current room is to be used.

These losses, instability and general disruption to the whole school, and the Reception year in particular,

could be for the foreseeable future, as once new children have moved to the Greenleas site, they are under no obligation to leave after a year. This could result in a bulge of extra children moving through the school for many years - yet more classroom re-organization. Once children are in and settled, they are quite unlikely to be moved to the new site. However, if children do leave, all the new friendships that have been made will be ripped apart resulting in local Greenleas children becoming sad and dispondent towards school. Already, the Early Years children have suffered in this way as their classes have been split three ways to accommodate new children. They have been left with fewer of their friends than they would have been in previous years when classes were split two ways.

There seem to be absolutely no benefits to the current children of Greenleas Lower School in this proposal, just lots of disadvantages and disruption. Apparently, the only reason for continuing with this scheme is to protect the numbers in Greenleas in case all future children go to the new school, and no new children move into the local area. However, if

Greenleas Staff and Governors focussed on Greenleas, it would continue to be a popular, outstanding school with an excellent reputation that parents from Hinslade and Houghton Buzzard would be desperate to send their children to. There would be 'no' competition!

I have been very shocked and disappointed by the lack of transparency and communication throughout this whole process. Right at the beginning parents were not consulted before the original proposal from Greenleas was put forward. We were only told after the proposal had been submitted and were then not shown what was written. It's our children who will be affected. We should have had a say from the start. When this proposal was requested before the second public meeting, it was still not shown, so parents were basically attending meetings blind. When questions were asked at these meetings, they were not always answered adequately, and many parents did not have chance to speak, or were even cut off as it was time for the meeting to end. This is not consultation.

I think that the involvement of Greenleas over School in the setting up of a new school on an estate miles away is a huge mistake and has no benefits whatsoever for the current pupils of the school.

I think that the disadvantages and damage that could be done far outweigh someones guesswork and projected numbers of pupils in the future. Childrens experiences at School should be happy, stable and productive, not sad, unstable and disrupted.

Yours sincerely,


MRS A.M. HOLDEN

Response to representations received regarding Greenleas Lower School

Decision to bid and submission document

Governors decided to respond to the invitation offered to local schools to submit their expression of interest to manage the new school provision. There was lengthy debate especially around the issues of maintaining and growing our excellent provision without diluting what we have. The Sandhills development has been seen as a potential threat to pupil numbers at Greenleas for many years, which is partly why we have marketed and continued to develop our provision. The Greenleas community includes many Sandhills families already and so we decided that we should make a submission. The bid was written and Greenleas was selected in March by the Council's Executive as preferred provider for the new site. A consultation process has followed, and in response to specific queries raised at the public meetings it was suggested by CBC Officers that we could share this submission with our parents, if we chose. We decided against this as the document was not in the public domain, consent had not been secured to see the other 2 submissions and we did not feel that the document actually answered the queries raised at the meetings having been written for a very different purpose and audience.

Leadership team

For September 2012 we have established a larger management team to distribute and strengthen leadership. This is something we have been aiming to do for the last 2 years to meet the needs of this large Group 3 school. All year groups are full and we now manage the on-site pre-school. This senior team will consist of the Head Teacher, Deputy / Key Stage 1 Phase Leader, SENCO, Key Stage 2 Phase Leader and Early Years Foundation Stage Leader.

Staff changes

We have 1 member of teaching staff leaving in July to move to a special school, and another teacher moving to a part time post. We advertised for 3 teaching posts in the spring term and had our best ever response with a field of over 30 applicants. We have appointed 3 experienced teachers for the autumn term and they have already been into school to attend planning meetings, transition day and induction for new Reception pupils, forming bonds and relationships with future colleagues and parents. We anticipate 1 teacher returning from maternity leave and 1 starting maternity leave in the upcoming academic year. We have increased the number of teaching assistants so that all Early Years Foundation Stage and Key Stage 1 classes have Teaching Assistant cover all day. We have strengthened the support for intervention groups and aim to increase the specialist support offered within classroom time whilst maintaining support offered during afternoon withdrawal sessions.

PPA cover

For many years we have covered PPA time with specialist teachers of music and PE and from September will include PHSE into this carousel of specialism taught by our own experienced staff. This will provide the increased amount of PPA coverage and underline our commitment to values education and citizenship which underpin the excellent behaviour we expect at our school.

Supply cover

On the rare occasions we need to cover teacher absence this is done by experienced ex-members of staff who are well known to the staff and children.

Staffing for new school

We intend to recruit for the new school from the spring term 2013. In the autumn term we will begin to acquire data for admissions to the new school, much of this will be provided by the local authority as children are established in a number of schools not just Greenleas. We intend to establish the leadership arrangements and staffing complement based on this information. We anticipate that there will be high demand for Early Years Foundation Stage and Key Stage 1 with less demand for Key Stage 2. Once we are able to establish teaching groups we will be able to appoint suitable candidates. We will strengthen the leadership team appropriately to provide management expertise for the new school.

Setting up the new school

We will have a budget to resource the new school which is additional to the existing Greenleas' budget. The leadership team will be responsible, with governors, for allocating this and placing the necessary orders. This will not disrupt teaching and learning at Greenleas. The existing provision will be mirrored at the new school; we do not need to reinvent the wheel with policies and procedures.

Provision for September 2012 at Greenleas

Along with other schools in the area, we will have an additional Reception class in September 2012. "Wagtails" will be located in Room 9, more recently music / library. We will reinstate the room as a classroom, which sits in the Early Years Foundation Stage block. Last year was the first time that schools have been required to admit reception children full time from September. This was a culture change nationally and we have modified our practice to ensure that in September these children have the best possible start to full time education. Class groups have been carefully considered and the facilities both in class and for external play are well developed. Break and lunchtime arrangements are well thought out so that these children are very well cared for throughout the day. Fencing and gates are being repositioned to cope with additional numbers. The music and library facilities are being accommodated in a new building being sited on the spare ground at the rear of the pre-school building with a separate entrance. The back gate entrance is being widened and we hope to install an additional canopy.

Consistency of approach, policies and procedures

We have very consistent policies and procedures and appropriate staffing in classrooms and for playtimes. Safeguarding, health and safety and welfare are given high priority by staff who know the children well. Reception children will be in smaller class groups than last year will have dedicated support, welfare and lunchtime staff. We do acknowledge that some parents may have mixed emotions as children come to school all day for the first time. The induction evening for all new Reception parents on 9th July was well attended and more sessions will be provided for parents during the year to support learning.

Communication

We now have text messaging in place for all parents and we intend to improve weekly newsletters. Our new website has just been launched and we see this as a Communication Centre. Phase Leaders will be reviewing and improving the information provided to parents and comments in the recent parent questionnaire will be addressed.

Parking

We have, and will continue to, liaised with Police Community Support Officers (PCSOs) to visit at 'rush hour' to speak to inconsiderate parkers - this is often very effective when pupils themselves are involved in ticking off the offenders and our School Council continue to have 'parking' as an agenda item for discussion and action i.e. through designing posters. Governors have set up a 'Parking' Committee and have investigated 'Park and Stride' as a way to ease congestion around the school gates. They continue to research if there is a local business, such as a pub or supermarket, with a car park five minutes' walk away from the school, who would allow parents to park there at drop off and pick up times. This way children who are driven to school get a bit of exercise too. We are reviewing our School Travel Plan and have contacted CBC's road safety team to discuss any infrastructural changes that might improve the situation.