

Appendix 2: Feedback from Consultation - Oughtibridge

Governors

Meeting 23rd June 2014 (Finance and Premises Sub Committee)

The overall tone of the meeting was positive, with Governors supportive of the proposal. Governors raised two points that they felt were important if the scheme was to proceed. These were:

- The capital process needs to be fast moving
- Governors would like a guarantee that any capital work would be completed by July 2015.

Parents

School Gates 1st July (around 30 parents spoken to)

The overall tone of responses was positive, with many parents accepting that the expansion was needed and some knowing other local people who have had difficulty securing a place at the school. The following comments were received:

- Had a child refused last year – now at Hillsborough. Non-catchment but do have a sibling who is at Oughtibridge and would much prefer them to be together. The expansion is necessary due to the amount of new housing in the village – all spaces are being taken up but people will always choose to come to this school because it is successful. Expansion needs to be properly funded.
- Great idea to expand the school but the existing building feels tight, especially in the Junior classrooms. It would be great to get more children in, including demand from outside the catchment area, but even better if existing accommodation could also be improved. Everyone here knows someone who has had problems getting their child into the school.
- Catchment resident with a sibling already in the school so would be extremely unhappy if the younger child did not get in. On that basis I support the expansion and clearly there's a need to do it – but careful thoughts need to go into how to deliver the accommodation so as not to reduce the open space and play areas on the site. It would be helpful to have ramped access from the lower entrances as they currently both have steps which is very difficult for parents with pushchairs etc.
- Question – clarify timescales for the buildings? Concerned that there is not sufficient space but the school have said that additional children will be accommodated from September (happy with explanation that buildings will be in place before these children move into Year 1).
- It's a good idea – there are definitely more children living in the area now and demand is growing.
- Only response would be to ask why the Council has waited so long to do this? We had issues with our son's year group, now in Y4, and predicted at that time that the rising birth rate would result in more places being needed. At appeals we were told it wasn't necessary to expand the school but then needed a bulge year in our daughter's year group (now Y1 – the bulge class of 60). All the new housing developments have been allowed to happen with no money being paid for school places from the private developers but the Council is now proposing an expansion –

no doubt this will be paid for from taxpayers' money. We think it should have been tackled years ago with developer contributions. Lots of parents here now have children split across two schools.

- Question – are other schools across the area also being expanded? (Happy with the rationale for Oughtibridge based on demand from within catchment)
- My concern is that the existing classrooms are very small, particularly in the Junior block. Could the capital project address this?
- Question – childminder who looks after a family with older child at Oughtibridge but younger sibling due to start in 2015 – the family have moved and are now not in catchment. Are they likely to be refused? (Advised that there is a risk of this and family may need to contact Admissions to find out distance of last allocation/number of non-catchment who are offered Oughtibridge in 2014)
- I'm a resident of the nearby road and am supportive of the proposal but concerned about traffic. Parking is not too much of an issue although it's very busy at pick-up and drop-off times – more concerned about the speed of cars on the residential roads where children are dropped off. A few years ago a petition was started to campaign for a 20mph zone around the school but this wasn't implemented. Can the Planning process consider this as part of the expansion proposals?
- Main concern is around the potential impact on the educational experience for children already in the school. The site is already coping with a bulge year moving through the school and the buildings are not efficient in terms of space taken up. Would not want to see play space or field lost for new buildings. Also concerned about potential impact on neighbouring schools – governor at Wharnccliffe Side as well as a parent here and concerned that additional places might attract more preferences from Wharnccliffe Side catchment residents or reduce the number of Oughtibridge residents who end up at Wharnccliffe Side. Understand that Council has a difficult balance to achieve in terms of meeting demand from Oughtibridge but also managing the impact on other schools. (Happy that further meetings with Wharnccliffe Side are planned; I also explained that few pupils are allocated WS from Oughtibridge with most referrals going to Hillsborough, Marcliffe etc as the families are closer to those schools).
- Any building work on the site should be on an area which is not currently well used.
- What impact will additional places at Oughtibridge have on secondary places at Bradfield Secondary School?
- I have no concerns; this would not really affect my children.
- I think this is a good idea and I have no concerns with it.
- You should ensure as much of the open space on the site as possible is maintained.
- The quality of teaching and learning should not be impacted.
- I think the additional places are a good idea but they should be reserved for children who actually live in the area.
- I think this is a good idea as quite a few local people have had difficulty getting a place at the school.
- 60 places per year is ok, but I would not want to see the school grow any larger in the future.
- It is the number of new housing development in the area causing a problem. There are a lot of developments in and around Oughtibridge.
- Parking at the school at pick up and drop off times is a real problem. Some parents have had their cars damaged and cars are often double parked.
- I am concerned the school could become too large and this might lead to more congestion.

- As well as investing in buildings for additional pupils you should also look at improving the current school infrastructure.
- Any new development should not impact on the amount of green space on the site or the view.

Drop In 2nd July 2014 (8 Parents attended)

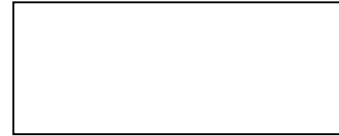
The majority for parents who attended were parents of pre-school aged children who were trying to understand how the pupil admissions system worked and the likelihood of their child getting a place. 6 of the 8 parents were catchment residents. Some had had difficulty in securing a place for their older children at the school and at least one had had a child referred to another school. The overall tone of comments was positive and strongly in favour of the expansion.

The main comments from the meeting were:

- Some people have mentioned that some parents are renting property in the area in an effort to secure a place at the school for their child, is this the case?
- The classroom sizes at the school are small. Will anything be done to address this or provide more teaching space?
- We are very short on high quality nursery provision in the area and what there is is in very poor quality accommodation. Are there any plans to include a nursery at the school as part of the project?
- I think you should add more places at the school. If you live in this are you want to go to the local school. Also, people move to the area with the school in mind.
- I fully support the addition of the places.
- The school should be made bigger but this should have been done earlier. My child has had to take a place at another local school and this has had a negative effect on family life. They have to travel out of the village to play with school friends and don't go to school with the children they know locally.

Written Responses (1 received)

03 JUL 2014



30.06.14

Mrs Munt
Head Teacher
Oughtibridge Primary School

Dear Mrs Munt,

As you know my son Max is due to start school in September. He will be part of the increased intake which we welcome, both as a sign of the success of Oughtibridge School, and for provision of much needed school places for catchment children.

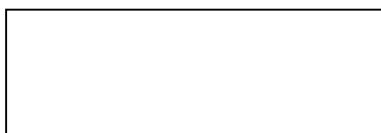
I suspect you have been inundated with "helpful suggestions" but just wondered if I could share some thoughts regarding possible opportunities as part of the school expansion.

First, has consideration been given to solar panels? I know our weather does not perhaps lend itself well to solar energy, however we have panels and have found that they do, in fact, produce a considerable energy supply. Government remuneration, for energy we return to the national grid, offsets our outlay and in a few years we will see a regular profit/income from our solar energy. Friends of The Earth have a current campaign to help schools interested in solar energy (as I have gathered from their many emails!). I have enclosed their flyer for information. I would be happy to find out more if this would be of interest.

Secondly, having made many trips to and from school over the years, I feel that school access could be improved. I am not sure if this is something that you are able to influence but I thought that this may be increasingly relevant given the planned school expansion. At the moment some of the access paths, particularly the path from Footgate Close, are narrow and become congested. Also there are quite a few steps to get to the school grounds from all up-hill access routes. This is a particular problem for parents with buggies. I have often wondered if this is seen by some as a barrier to walking their children to school. Small children and toddlers can be carried or walk the short distance from a car parked close to school making bumping a buggy up steps unnecessary; this could be seen as a more attractive option. We are both well aware of the health and environmental benefits of walking to school. Maximising the number of parents walking their children to school would also help parking around the school. Perhaps the council would agree to improvements in school access in conjunction with the expansion of buildings?

Thankyou for considering these suggestions and congratulations on your new Grandchild. I hope you share many happy times.

Best wishes,



Residents

Meeting: Oughtibridge Residents meeting
Date: 02/07/14
Officers: David Metcalfe (Chair); Daniel Taylor (notes)
Also present: Phil Wood (Labour Councillor)

Residents 1 (couple): Poplar Road

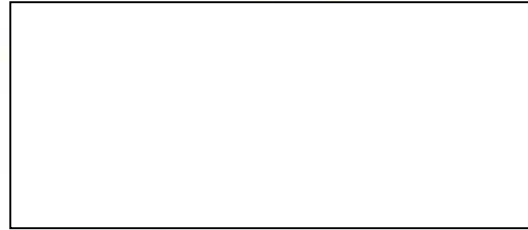
- There should be more done to publicise the proposals.
- The road surfaces have deteriorated as a result of the additional traffic from the school.
- One resident's garden wall was knocked over by a reversing car.
- Parents often park across or overshoot driveways.
- Local residents have to purposely arrive later from work to avoid the school runs.
- Majority of parking on Poplar Road is parents collecting children from the Children's Centre.
- It is nice to see that more local children can use the school.

Residents 2 (couple): Footgate Close

- The onus should be on the school to get the parents to live in harmony with the residents.
- Perhaps a walking club (similar to those set up at other schools) could be set up?
- Can the school promote help from the parents; perhaps volunteers to set up systems to reduce traffic.
- We realise that it is the parents that need to change their behaviour, but surely it is worth the school trying to encourage this change.

Both couples suggested another residents' meeting is arranged before the planning application is submitted. *This is a normal part of the process and will be progressed in due course.*

Gates on the south side of the school site were locked potentially making access to the meeting difficult for elderly residents who may have wanted to attend to do so. *This was noted and a request will be made to the school to ensure this entrance is open for any future meetings.*



To whom it may concern,

We are unable to attend the meeting tonight but we want you to be aware of our opposition to the 15 extra Places at Oughtonbridge school.

We live on Poplar Road which is very narrow so cars are unable to park on both sides. The lack of room on this road does not deter Parents and Staff from the school and nursery trying to park as close as they possibly can. We have problems nearly every day. In the past 6 months I have had my car damaged by Parents on 3 separate occasions, I ever reported one Parent to the Police when I witnessed her damage my car and she drove away without giving me her insurance details.

Parents also abandon their cars on the end of the road to run in to the school and nursery, I have been late for work on numerous occasions as I was unable to get my car off the road.

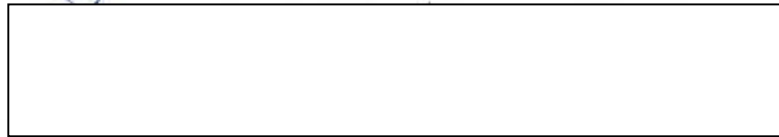
My neighbour at number 2 constantly has Parents Piling across their drive and using their drive to turn around.

P.T.O.

We feel that the addition of 15 extra Places could mean 15 extra cars all vying to Park on the schools doorstep.

We understand that it is good for the school + for Cognatebridge but we feel this will have a detrimental effect on the residents of the surrounding roads.

Yours Faithfully



Neighbouring Schools

Bradfield Dungworth (Governors' Meeting 17th July)

- Concerns were raised over the small numbers in the Bradfield Dungworth catchment area and the impact of any reduction in pupils on the school's budget
- Governors asked about the potential impact of expansion at Oughtibridge on pupil numbers at Bradfield Dungworth and whether expansion at Bradfield Dungworth or a change in catchment boundaries could have been an alternative solution. Whilst the focus was clearly on concern to ensure the viability of Bradfield Dungworth, there was understanding that the population growth is in the Oughtibridge catchment and that current forecasts suggest Bradfield Dungworth would be closer to filling in September 2015 and should fill in the following two years.
- Governors considered whether a change in the school bus route may increase the numbers of families that choose Bradfield Dungworth

Wharnccliffe Side (Notes of Meeting with Headteacher 21st July)

- Understanding of the proposal and the level of demand within the Oughtibridge catchment area for Oughtibridge Primary School
- Concerns around the potential impact on Wharnccliffe Side were the local population to drop in the future
- Concerned about the general viability and sustainability of Wharnccliffe Side as a small primary school where a small drop in future pupil numbers would have a disproportionate impact on the school's budget when compared to larger schools