

Appendix 3: Feedback from Consultation – The Rowan

Governors

A briefing was provided to governors in advance of the formal consultation period. Governors expressed their support for the proposals and requested that the Council publish statutory notices to that effect.

Parents

Parents' Coffee Morning 1st July (7 parents attended)

Seven parents attended a coffee morning at the school on Tuesday 1st July. All of the parents were supportive of the proposals and none expressed any concerns. The group discussed the need for careful planning of traffic and parking and the management of the site during construction. Parents emphasised that the children's needs meant more careful management of the site may be required, e.g. to prevent disturbance due to noise.

Parents' Evening 3rd July (10 parents attended)

A total of 10 parents, representing 5 families, came to discuss the proposals. Their comments are recorded below.

Parents A&B

We have no concerns about the growth proposed but are concerned about the part-time/flexible placements and the disruption this will cause both to the children coming in on these placements and the children permanently at the school. We experienced this with our own child who could not cope in mainstream and was in a split placement for a period of time – this disruption impacted on his behaviour.

We believe that parents whose children come to The Rowan will not accept a permanent return to mainstream after accessing the provision here. The aim of supporting training etc is not an issue but there is still the Autism team who provide outreach to mainstream settings, and potential for the staff here to continue to provide outreach. If the criteria for a child to access one of the flexible placements here is that they are in crisis in the mainstream setting the likelihood is they will end up as a permanent placement at The Rowan. 'Revolving door' placements would need very careful management – our own child ended up in the Primary Inclusion Centre on a part time basis despite having an ASD diagnosis, this meant effectively he had to cope with two 'settling in' processes every week. Also, The Rowan provides a low sensory environment which responds to the needs of the children. A child who can thrive here may not necessarily continue to thrive if put back into the mainstream environment. These children do not 'get better' after a period of time in an environment like The Rowan – but it seems that some staff in mainstream still believe that.

With these concerns we would like to see the evidence base for this model being successfully implemented elsewhere. Have other local authorities developed a similar approach?

Staff from mainstream schools could still come to The Rowan to access training but we don't see the need to bring the children with them.

A further issue is where the children move onto after a placement at The Rowan. There is not sufficient provision at secondary level and anecdotal evidence of an increase in placements to non-maintained specialist providers out of city. This is a particular need for children with Asperger's or who are recognised as 'high functioning' but who cannot cope with the sensory overload of a mainstream setting so an IR placement would not be appropriate for them. Increasing numbers of those coming into special schools fit this profile – the children have huge potential but this cannot be realised if they are not in an appropriate placement. We believe that other parents at The Rowan will have similar concerns about the lack of an apparent progression route at secondary.

Parents C&D

The increase in numbers makes sense. The school has a high level of expertise and the proposal fits with the strategic aim of using that expertise to support access to places for children who need them. We have experience of Elective Home Education and then non-Elective Home Education as we withdrew our child from mainstream. The process to then secure a special school place was via Tribunal – this takes far longer if the child is not in school due to the difficulties around assessment etc. The need for additional places is evident.

Traffic issues around the school are a big concern and likely to increase local residents' opposition to the proposals. Could the buses arrive more flexibly over a longer period of time? The major problems are caused by the buses being queued along Durvale Court as they can't all be accommodated in the school drop off area at once. A suggestion for the Transport Service would be to ask the drivers to continue up Durvale Court past the school, turn at the head of the cul-de-sac and then wait in the area beyond the school, where there are gaps between drives. This would mean the buses turn left into the school rather than having to make a right turn across the narrow road, which is a more difficult manoeuvre and leaves the last bus sticking out into the road and blocking access. This is a simple solution which would not need any physical highways work and could be implemented now – this would reassure residents that their concerns are taken seriously.

Some parents are very concerned about the potential for escorts to be removed from the buses. We currently drive our child to school as she would not cope with the bus but our aim is to support her to access the bus independently when she is ready to do so. We are concerned that if the escorts were removed a higher number of parents would remove their children from the transport and drive themselves, adding to the difficulties at the school.

Parents E&F

We think the expansion is a good idea. It's made an incredible difference to our child to come here, compared with how things were when he was in mainstream. All children who have these needs should have access to a place at a school like this – we may need a whole new school, not just extra places here!

Staff in mainstream schools work hard and try hard to meet the children's needs but they lack the expertise and skills of the staff here. We are supportive of the plans to support mainstream schools with training and upskilling – this is really necessary to support those children who are not in specialist settings.

Parents F&G

We are for the proposal – we struggled to get a place here for our child and don't want other parents to have to go through the same. Our only concern is about the ratio of staff to children and whether this will decrease as a result of extra children being placed here. Currently the school is very good and the Ofsted rating reflects this – we would be concerned if this might slip as the school manages the expansion and want to know what measures have been put in place to ensure this doesn't happen? We are mainly concerned about the funding for staffing [parents were reassured by an explanation of how additional revenue funding would be made available to the school and the expectation that the staff:pupil ratio would continue as now]. Overall we are supportive of the proposal and as long as the funding is there we are confident the school will manage it well and continue to deliver high quality provision.

Parents H&I

We think this is a very good proposal and welcome the increased interaction between The Rowan and mainstream schools. Lots of staff in mainstream have a limited understanding of ASD (and would benefit from enhanced links, training etc). An increase in the overall number of places is also welcome – we are part of the Aspergers' Parents and Carers Together group and so know of a lot of other families with Asperger's who are in mainstream and the struggles they have had. A number of parents have withdrawn their children from mainstream schools because they can't cope – we both work (one part time) but this is highly unusual – most of these families have one parent at home because the child is now being home educated, or because the parent is so frequently called to school that they can't sustain work. Now that our child is at The Rowan we know that from the moment they get on the bus in the morning to when they get home they are safe and well cared for. This means we can work, so the placements have a much wider impact on families.

Parents with their children in mainstream settings report problems with staff not having the knowledge and expertise necessary to deal with the children's needs. If the flexible placements are going to succeed funding needs to be linked to these children after the intervention at The Rowan. Parents are also being told that they don't need to pursue a statement (by SENCO's) even if the child has a diagnosis of ASD or Asperger's and this is restricting access to more appropriate support. More places and outreach support are necessary to upskill the workforce but we still need more permanent placements – the need is disproportionate to the number of places available. The LA needs to acknowledge this need and respond to it. For children like our son, with high-functioning Asperger's, there is only Bents Green which will offer an appropriate environment at secondary level. The IR's are not suitable because the sensory environment in mainstream is overwhelming; in any case they are all oversubscribed. At a recent open day at Bents Green there were over 70 families but the school has only 20 places to offer in Y7 – this is why families look to the independent sector. Our preference would be to remain in an LA school but we will look at non-maintained schools which can offer an academic curriculum but an appropriate environment – this is the only way our son's potential will be realised. The Council needs to look at the whole strategy around demand for places in special schools so that parents can have confidence they will be able to proceed from primary to secondary.

Consultation Forms – (7 parents filled in response forms and submitted these to school)

2 | Page

June 2014

Do you support the proposal to increase the capacity of The Rowan from Sept 2015?

A very big yes.

Do you support the proposed introduction of flexible, short-term placements?

Overall yes, only concern would be if children would be in and out of classroom. Some children like Jamie find it quite difficult accepting new children and this would be accelerated if a child was there one week and not the next.

What do you consider to be the priority for new and improved accommodation?

Spacious accommodation with quiet areas or rooms for children to cool off plus continued high teacher to pupil ratio.

Any other comments you would like to make?

If new building work takes place within school/term time consideration needs to be given to noise levels as many children struggle with loud noise!

Representatives from the Council will be attending the parents' evening on 3rd July at the school if you would like to ask any questions or let us know your views. You can also contact us at the following:

Email: schoolreorganisation@sheffield.gov.uk

Letter: School Organisation Team, Sheffield City Council, Floor 3, Howden House, Union Street, Sheffield, S1 2SL

The consultation period runs until Thursday 24th July 2014. Please return your form to school or post it to us before this date. Thank you for taking the time to respond.

Do you support the proposal to increase the capacity of The Rowan from Sept 2015?

Yes we do.

Do you support the proposed introduction of flexible, short-term placements?

Yes we do.

What do you consider to be the priority for new and improved accommodation?

To be as friendly as the rest of
the school.

Any other comments you would like to make?

I hope the new pupils enjoy and
love the school as much as we
do.

Representatives from the Council will be attending the parents' evening on 3rd July at the school if you would like to ask any questions or let us know your views. You can also contact us at the following:

Email: schoolreorganisation@sheffield.gov.uk

Letter: School Organisation Team, Sheffield City Council, Floor 3, Howden House,
Union Street, Sheffield, S1 2SL

The consultation period runs until Thursday 24th July 2014. Please return your form to school or post it to us before this date. Thank you for taking the time to respond.

Do you support the proposal to increase the capacity of The Rowan from Sept 20'

Yes.

Do you support the proposed introduction of flexible, short-term placements?

Yes.

What do you consider to be the priority for new and improved accommodation?

Any other comments you would like to make?

Representatives from the Council will be attending the parents' evening on 3rd July at the school if you would like to ask any questions or let us know your views. You can also contact us at the following:

Email: schoolreorganisation@sheffield.gov.uk

Letter: School Organisation Team, Sheffield City Council, Floor 3, Howden House, Union Street, Sheffield, S1 2SL

The consultation period runs until Thursday 24th July 2014. Please return your form to us or post it to us before this date. Thank you for taking the time to respond.

Do you support the proposal to increase the capacity of The Rowan from Sept 2015?

Yes.

Do you support the proposed introduction of flexible, short-term placements?

More concerned about the increased levels of stress on both children dealing with an ever changing school population and on staff dealing with regular changes of children in difficult situations. I would want an understanding that mainstream teachers are being given more support/education and reduced class sizes to help with this population group.

What do you consider to be the priority for new and improved accommodation?

Priority is to offer children an appropriate environment for an appropriate time, to include both educational and behavioural development and sport.

Please do not short term placements into a political stunt.

Any other comments you would like to make?

Good luck Rowan, teachers and pupils, you are a great school doing a great job and you should be cherished, rewarded, celebrated not stretched!!

Representatives from the Council will be attending the parents' evening on 3rd July at the school if you would like to ask any questions or let us know your views. You can also contact us at the following:

Email: schoolreorganisation@sheffield.gov.uk

Letter: School Organisation Team, Sheffield City Council, Floor 3, Howden House, Union Street, Sheffield, S1 2SL

The consultation period runs until Thursday 24th July 2014. Please return your form to school or post it to us before this date. Thank you for taking the time to respond.

Do you support the proposal to increase the capacity of The Rowan from Sept 2015?

Not really as I cannot see the resources being put in to cope with this

Do you support the proposed introduction of flexible, short-term placements?

No again no extra teachers teaching assistants or increased speech & language therapy

What do you consider to be the priority for new and improved accommodation?

New hall, dining, kitchen & outside area

Any other comments you would like to make?

Expansion of / or short term placements cannot be met without extra resources
The school is very good due to current staff - dilution of this will / could result in a change for the worse

Representatives from the Council will be attending the parents' evening on 3rd July at the school if you would like to ask any questions or let us know your views. You can also contact us at the following:

Email: schoolreorganisation@sheffield.gov.uk

Letter: School Organisation Team, Sheffield City Council, Floor 3, Howden House, Union Street, Sheffield, S1 2SL

The consultation period runs until Thursday 24th July 2014. Please return your form to school or post it to us before this date. Thank you for taking the time to respond.

Do you support the proposal to increase the capacity of The Rowan from Sept 2015?

I ASKED WITH THE PROPOSAL TO EXPAND ROWAN CAPACITY AS THERE IS A SHORTAGE WITH IN THE CITY OF SUITABLE PROVISION FOR CHILDREN WITH ASD. THE NEED FOR EXPANSION ALSO THOUGH NEEDS TO BE CARRIED THROUGH TO SECONDARY EDUCATION AS HERE ALSO THERE IS A DEMAND WHICH EXCEEDS PROVISION.

Do you support the proposed introduction of flexible, short-term placements?

IN SOME WAYS YES AS HOPEFULLY IT WOULD BE IN TANDEM WITH GREATER EDUCATION AND TRAINING OF MAINSTREAM TEACHERS. HOWEVER I FEEL THAT FOR SOME CHILDREN THESE EXTRA TRANSITIONS WOULD PROVE DIFFICULT TO DEAL WITH

What do you consider to be the priority for new and improved accommodation?

IT NEEDS TO BE AS LEAST IMPACTIVE ON CHILDREN AT ROWAN FULLTIME

Any other comments you would like to make?

MY MAIN CONCERN IS THAT THIS INITIATIVE IS WELL FUNDED. AND THE PROVISION IN COMPREHENSIVE LEVEL IS INCREASED AS WELL. WHEN CHILDREN HAVE BEEN TO ROWAN THE RETURN TO MAINSTREAM WILL HAVE TO BE WELL SUPPORTED AND FUNDED TO ENSURE THE CHILDREN CONTINUE TO IMPROVE AND NOT SLIP BACK.

Representatives from the Council will be attending the parents' evening on 3rd July at the school if you would like to ask any questions or let us know your views. You can also contact us at the following:

Email: schoolreorganisation@sheffield.gov.uk

Letter: School Organisation Team, Sheffield City Council, Floor 3, Howden House, Union Street, Sheffield, S1 2SL

The consultation period runs until Thursday 24th July 2014. Please return your form to school or post it to us before this date. Thank you for taking the time to respond.

AS A PARENT MYSELF I DO NOT THINK I WOULD HAVE ACCEPTED A TEMPORARY OR PART TIME PLACE FOR MY CHILD. AS I FEEL THAT IT WOULD HAVE TOO LITTLE TOO LATE SUPPORT AT RECEPTION/NURSERY LEVEL IT MAY HAVE HELPED

Do you support the proposal to increase the capacity of The Rowan from Sept 2015?

Yes, there is a huge demand for places and an obvious lack across the city ~~for~~ of specialist provision.

Do you support the proposed introduction of flexible, short-term placements?

I would like to know more about this element before I could commit to supporting the idea. If a child has a need then surely they need a place full time? How will short term places benefit children, how will they be placed in the school - will it be in an existing class or will there be a separate class where these children are based? There will be a lot of change/confusion for existing children who need continuity and stability. I would like

What do you consider to be the priority for new and improved accommodation?

More definitive answers about this please.

Priority should be to provide similar accommodation - small classes, with a break out room for smaller group work or time out.

Any other comments you would like to make?

Does this increase at Primary mean there will be a consultation for secondary placements? There is also a lack of suitable provision there, particularly for more able/academic children with Aspergers syndrome.

Representatives from the Council will be attending the parents' evening on 3rd July at the school if you would like to ask any questions or let us know your views. You can also contact us at the following:

Email: schoolreorganisation@sheffield.gov.uk

Letter: School Organisation Team, Sheffield City Council, Floor 3, Howden House, Union Street, Sheffield, S1 2SL

The consultation period runs until Thursday 24th July 2014. Please return your form to school or post it to us before this date. Thank you for taking the time to respond.

Local Elected Members

A briefing was provided to Cllr Martin Smith on 27th June. Cllrs Smith and Ross attended the Residents' meeting on 17th July (Cllr Otten sent apologies due to a meeting clash. Local members informed the School Organisation Team of the number of residents who had contacted them and summarised those concerns. A formal response was received by email.

20th July

Dear Janet

I am sending this email on behalf of all three ward councillors.

We support the Rowan School and the excellent work that it does. We also accept the need for more school places in the City for children with ASD. There are however a significant number of practical difficulties in expanding the school in its current location, notably parking & access issues in Durvale Court and Furniss Avenue. There are also noise & privacy issues for properties that surround the school, including Mercia Drive.

These issues appear to stem from the last time the school was expanded, and therefore we think it is essential that they are resolved fully before any further increase in pupil numbers.

Please accept this as our formal response to the current consultation.

Martin Smith, Colin Ross & Joe Otten, Councillors for Dore & Totley Ward

Residents

Drop in 2nd July (17 residents attended)

The majority of residents appreciated the excellent job the school does in catering for students with complex needs. A minority of residents felt that the way students were managed on the site negatively impacted on the 'peace and quiet' of their home lives. All residents agreed that traffic, access, and parking for the school had a negative impact on their daily lives and that this should be looked at as solutions to the expansion of the school are developed.

The following comments formed the bulk of the discussion:

- Car parking is a problem, how many additional staff and therefore staff parking spaces will be needed?
- The school has grown over the last 20 years but no additional parking has been added.
- The area, particularly around Durvale Court is virtually a no go area at pick up time.
- Emergency Services access to Durvale Court is a real problem. I would be impossible to get a fire Engine or Ambulance into the Court at either pick up or drop off time.

- The actions of some of the mini bus drivers are not very 'neighbourly', they often see residents struggling to negotiate a way around them and some do not make any effort to move.
- We are happy to have the school here but the access does need to be looked at.
- Staff parking on Durvale Court often created a difficult situation for residents. A little more consideration when choosing where to park would alleviate the situation greatly.
- Additional staff, parent and delivery parking is needed.
- Is there a way of changing the designation of land as 'open space' or 'developable land' within the planning process?
- Why do you not have plans at this stage? I would have expected to see these.
- What is the timescale for seeking planning permission or starting the development on site? When will the development need to be completed by?
- Construction over the winter will cause irritation for local residents as the contractor traffic will increase the level of damage/mess on local roads.
- The access of and parking of contractor vehicles on Durvale Court will create problems.
- Drainage of the site is a big issue. When previous developments have taken place this has resulted in standing water on the site and neighbouring properties. This is now resolved but contractors will need to take this into account when developing designs.
- The school provide a first class service and I hope the expansion goes forward. This is a great facility!
- One resident stated that; noise is a concern and how the site is used is a concern. You should look at how the site is used and why lessons are taught outdoors. Children are shouting, this is a problem and I should not have to listen to this in my retirement.
- Have you not thought of putting the school on the old King Ecgbert's School site?
- How could we as residents lobby to block the proposed housing development on the old King Ecgbert's School site and encourage the re-location of the school to there?
- How far in to the future do you plan? For how long will these places be sufficient?
- How will contractors vehicles access the site and where will the compound be built?

Drop In 7th July 2014 (15 residents attended)

Overall the feedback was similar with a clear emphasis on the parking arrangements and management of traffic around the site. Specific concerns raised included:

- Is there a second option (Plan B) within the site if the indicated areas can't be developed? If so, residents need to be informed if there are changes.
- Residents have experienced noise disturbance including bad language from children in the school site. Noise is continuous when the school uses the outside area to calm children and for teaching.
- Drainage is an issue particularly for properties on Mercia Drive.
- Traffic is an issue with roads dangerous for pedestrians as well as drivers at the peak times of day.

- At the last expansion residents were promised there would be screening on the windows which face properties on Mercia Drive, but this hasn't been provided.
- Will the school operate any extended school activities outside the normal 9-3 school day? (it was explained this was unlikely due to the reliance on transport for most pupils)
- Parking on Durvale Court is the biggest issue – there is double parking which restricts access to properties and creates a blind turn from Furniss Avenue into Durvale Court – drivers often meet a car coming out of the cul-de-sac and have to reverse back out into Furness Avenue.
- No concerns about the expansion per se, and residents do acknowledge that peak times will always be difficult, but this is an irritation rather than a major problem as it only lasts for 20 minutes or so. Residents are more concerned about parking all day and the number of cars parked on the road – this could be a missed opportunity to improve the situation and improve access for properties at the top of Durvale Court.
- The parking area as indicated on the sketch plan looks inadequate for the number of vehicles which need to be accommodated within the site – there are already numbers parking on the road and the proposed expansion will only add to that issue.
- The amount of cars parking on Durvale Court has increased in the recent past. Buses delivering pupils, especially in the mornings, also double park. Residents are concerned about access to their properties but also about emergency services being able to access the road (including the school itself)
- Some taxis/buses appear to be coming to the school with very few children on board (the school responded to this to explain that one taxi brings a child from Chesterfield so they are on their own, 2 other taxis carry 2 and 4 children each. The minibuses all have around 10 children on them. Drivers have a quick comfort break after dropping off the children so sometimes the buses will be parked up but empty; this is only for a few minutes).
- Could the school be redeveloped as 2-storey?
- Will there be any other access to areas for parking? Current access is constrained.
- Could the Council consider other sites in its ownership in the area?
- Can the tree in the current car park area be retained? Needs to be protected if possible.
- Residents opposite the site are concerned about the visual impact of the parking area and would like to know how this will be screened – NB change in levels across this area.

Residents' Meeting 17th July 2014 (12 residents attended)

A meeting was held at the school on 17th July. 16 local residents attended. The discussion initially focused on the process of engagement and communication between the Council and local residents, including the potential to establish a project group. The strong feeling amongst residents was noted and it was agreed to continue a dialogue with local members and residents. An opportunity to view and comment on the plans as they are developed was highlighted as a key milestone for the project. The process for the development of the plans and the approximate programme was also shared with residents. Key concerns which were raised focused on parking within the site, traffic and access to Durvale Court (and Furniss Avenue) and noise, privacy and drainage issues affecting residents of Mercia Drive.

Written Responses (19 correspondents responded by email, 4 sent a response by post and 4 submitted consultation forms to the school. One response (correspondent 22) was received after the close of the formal consultation period.)

Emails

Correspondent 1

20th June

Durvale Court is a narrow residential cul-de-sac and the residents are presently inconvenienced, at times severely inconvenienced, with the parking of school user cars on the footpaths during the day, many Sheffield Transport mini buses and private taxi cabs queuing on the cul-de-sac to deliver and collect pupils, some of which park on the opposite side footpaths, and subsequently at times there is difficulty in accessing and egressing from the estate.

Several school user cars also park on Furniss Avenue adding to the traffic problems of accessing and egressing the estate.

In principle, we are not against the expansion of the school providing the plans properly and adequately take into account and make provision for the additional traffic and car parking that will be created by the expansion and hopefully you will take this opportunity to incorporate additional parking spaces to alleviate some of the existing traffic and parking problems. Any proposal must necessarily incorporate a detailed construction traffic plan to ensure that the residents can safely reach their properties.

8th July (the contents of this email were also forwarded in hard copy, with a series of accompanying photographs - these have not been copied here on legal advice as they include private individuals and vehicles and no permission has been sought for their reproduction)

We write to express our disappointment and concerns following the "Drop In Session" last night (7th July 2014). There appeared to be little point in having a drop in session where very limited information was apparently available or not being disclosed.

All that was made available was a plan showing shaded areas for the extended car parking, the school extension (size apparently unknown) and the relocated play area. When we raised questions about the congestion caused on Durvale Court due to the staff parking their cars and the SCC mini buses, taxis and parents delivering and collecting the children, we were told that there would be additional parking in the area shown on the plan and that staff will be asked to park on Furniss Avenue.

We feel that we must stress the problems that we are currently encountering with regard to parking and ask that you seriously take the following into account:

1. Durvale Court is a narrow cul de sac serving 38 properties with no other means of access other than via Furniss Avenue. There are two properties on Furniss Avenue that also park on Durvale Court due to parking restrictions on the junction.

2. Twice a day, access and egress to Durvale Court is blocked by the cars parked on the footpaths and the SCC mini buses, taxis, parents queueing to drop off or pick up their children.
3. There is a currently a clear danger to the residents that in an emergency situation the ambulances, and particularly fire engines will be severely delayed or even not able to reach the residents property. This of course also applies to the school itself.
4. We currently have difficulty with delivery vehicles being unable to gain access.
5. Furniss Avenue, which is a bus route, is currently very congested with traffic, and if the staff from the school are encouraged to park there, this situation will only worsen.
6. There is currently a problem at the junction of Durvale Court and Furniss Avenue with vehicles being on the wrong side of Durvale Court due to cars being legally parked and often you can turn into Durvale Court to be faced with a vehicle in the way and have to reverse back into the busy Furniss Avenue.
7. We have noticed recently that the weekly refuse collection vehicles appear to be timing their arrival to avoid the congestion on our road.
8. The area indicated on the plan for additional car parking is very small, has a severe cross fall, has a very well established tree on the boundary that is not within the schools ownership, is currently used as access to the rear of the school for ground maintenance and access to this area would have to be at the expense of some of the existing parking bays. The net result is likely to be a minimum number of additional parking bays.

Durvale Court was once again blocked this morning with taxis and mini buses reversing and manoeuvring to allow access. I attach hereto a couple of photographs of such incidents this morning.

We were assured that a traffic management survey and plan would be undertaken and it is imperative that this is undertaken at the busy times during the school term.

As stated in my email of the 20th June, we are not in principle against the expansion of the school providing the plans properly and adequately take into account and make provision for the additional traffic and car parking, particularly during the busy periods and that you incorporate measures to alleviate the existing problems that the residents are experiencing.

A neighbour has said that the expansion could mean up to 50% more pupils and an increase in teaching and support staff. If this is correct the congestion caused by cars parking and taxis, mini buses and parent's cars queueing to drop off or collect the pupils will be spread onto Furniss Avenue which already has problems. This could become a hazard to the pupils walking to and from Dore Primary and King Egbert Schools.

We feel that you are currently getting a "quart into a pint pot" and will need reassurance that you can accommodate the extra pint,

We understand that you intend work commencing in October of this year which is three months away. It is difficult to understand how you are going to prepare a design brief, undertake a traffic management survey, have detailed plans drawn up, submit for planning permission and appoint a building contractor within that time limit unless you have further

and better information that you have chosen not to disclose at this time. We certainly left the meeting with that impression and feel that the school has not been open and forthcoming and is in danger of losing the goodwill of its neighbours. A fact sheet detailing the numbers of existing and the maximum number proposed, of pupils, teachers, staff, support workers, teacher and all staff vehicles, visiting taxis, visiting mini buses, visiting parent's cars etc, distributed to all the affected residents would have been helpful to enable us to make constructive comments on what appears to be a very rushed consultation.

If the building works are to be undertaken during term time, where will the builders compound and the workers cars be placed, and will deliveries be programmed to avoid the periods of congestion?

Correspondent 2

23rd June

I read with some concern your recent letter regarding the proposed expansion of the Rowan School, I along with many residents of Durvale Court have noticed the increased activity at the Rowan witnessed by restricted access to Durvale during morning and afternoon dropping off and collection periods. Many of the staff and bus drivers block the pavements forcing people at times to walk on the road, a particular hazard for those with children in pushchairs and older people with mobility problems. This lack of consideration for the residents of Durvale Court is one of the major concerns that we have and we hope that the proposals make adequate provision for additional parking for staff and collection vehicles, if they do not then this is a major omission and needs addressing urgently. Durvale Court is not part of the school and should not be considered as school parking, I believe as do other residents that there is serious risk of an accident and lack of access at certain times of the day could restrict access for emergency vehicles in the event of illness or fire.

Items I hope the proposal will address are given below :-

- what consideration was given to alternative sites eg the Mercia (?) site further up Furniss Avenue - plenty of room and no immediate neighbours to consider.
- increase in number of pupils and consequent increase in staff at the Rowan.
- plan of the site and location of new buildings.
- type of new buildings eg:- single story, two story.
- car parking provisions.
- provision made to minimise disruption to residents of Durvale Court - you say this is of paramount importance.
- you say the site will be segregated from the rest of the school - how will this be addressed? What will be the impact on the residents?
- what will be the working hours during construction? We are facing up to 2 years of disruption, we need reassurance that should the proposal go ahead every consideration is afforded to the residents of Durvale Court and these are included in the Method Statements agreed by the contractors
- what risk assessments have been done regarding the impact on Durvale Court and increased traffic on Furniss Avenue.

18th July (this correspondent agreed to act as a representative of residents in the area and had spoken to a number of other households)

I have been surprised and gratified by not only by the responses from my neighbours in Durvale Court but also residents of Mercia Avenue and Furniss Avenue. There are three recurring themes:-

- 1) parking and traffic control in Durvale Court and Furniss Avenue during term time especially at drop off and pickup along with the associated dangers to people and damage to vehicles and property.
- 2) flooding in Mercia Drive due to poor site drainage.
- 3) noise pollution and foul language suffered by those adjacent to the school.

Correspondent 3

By phone 24th June

Not against the plans but key issues for residents are around parking and access. It's not possible to enter or leave properties on Durvale Court between 8:30-9:30 and 3:00-3:30 due to the buses blocking the road. There is also an issue with some staff from the school parking on the road (all day) as well as visiting professionals parking on the road for shorter periods whilst at the school. Cars often block residents' drives.

By email 22nd July

We live at [] Durvale Court which is directly opposite to the vehicle access opening to the school. On a daily basis, from about 8am, we have one or more cars parked partially on the pavement in front of our window. Also cars parked directly opposite our drive on the other side of the road again partially on the pavement. This both significantly reduces visibility and reversing space as we leave our drive. This is both a hazard to us and other car drivers but most importantly pedestrians. Numerous other cars are similarly parked throughout Durvale Court.

We also face the daily virtual blocking off of Durvale Court as the buses arrive between 9am and 9.30am and 3pm and 3.30pm each day to deliver and collect pupils. These transport vehicles park across drives, on corners and at times double park. This creates a very worrying situation because if there is ever the need for emergency vehicles they would be unable to access Durvale Court. Let alone residents and visitors to Durvale Court going about their normal daily business.

That is the situation now and its far from acceptable but apparently of little or no concern to the school or the council. However, as we understand it the situation will become much worse with the proposal to increase the school places from 68 to 90. Because of the essential high teaching support to pupil ratio there will be further demand for parking places which really do not exist. We also understand 12 of these places are for short term replacements from mainstream schools. These pupils we believe will attend the school with teachers and/or parents. Placing yet more pressure on the areas surrounding the school.

We have been led to understand that while the Council has funds to increase the school size and pupil intake there no money in that particular pot for parking. Apparently parking issues and the associated problems are for the Highways Department and not for you. Will this proposal, therefore go to planning without raising the parking and associated issues? If that is the case it seems unacceptable as the concerns of the residents and safety and security issues for the children will not be addressed.

As you know there have been meetings and discussions about these issues with councillors and officials but these have left us more concerned and less trusting of the proposal process. If this proposal becomes a plan we would reasonably expect planners and the planning committee to fully consider and address our concerns about the dangerous, inadequate and perhaps illegal parking. If these are not considered then surely any proposal is flawed and unacceptable.

Correspondent 4

My initial concerns are how the plans address the problem of parking. Will further provision be made for off road but unobtrusive parking? On a related matter, the part of Durvale Court leading to the school is in a shocking state even by Sheffield standards - not least because of its intense use by school traffic.

Correspondent 5

Notwithstanding the value of the work done by the school, the fact remains that even at its current scale, the school causes significant nuisance to residents of Durvale Court in the form of vehicular intrusion: firstly by the ever increasing number of vehicles parked often along both sides of what is already a narrow suburban road throughout the school day, and secondly by the twice daily fleet of mini buses / taxis delivering / collecting pupils and manoeuvring around the school in a situation already congested by the excessive parking. On this point it is worth noting that Durvale court was designed with garages and off road parking for all houses, so on road parking was expected to be minimal and the road width was specified accordingly. The school and the LEA appear to consider this problem to be of a very low priority, and as far as I am aware, do nothing effective to eliminate or minimise it. The changes to the car park / turning area a few years ago made no impact in this regard.

Any expansion of capacity at the school can only make the problem worse unless the opportunity is taken to prioritise the issue and substantially increase the capacity for parking / manoeuvring by vehicles brought to Durvale Court by the school.

Without knowing the detail of the plans, I do know that there is a substantial area of unused land behind the school but currently fenced off from the playground. Given sufficient priority, it must be possible to incorporate that land into the scope of the exercise and provide sufficient parking for the school's needs, thus avoiding continuation or exacerbation of the nuisance.

An alternative that may not have been considered is to eliminate the problem by making more lateral use of the LEA estate as a whole.

Within the LEA land devoted to school buildings, there remains a few hundred yards from the Rowan school the undeveloped site of the now demolished Mercia buildings of King Ecgberts Secondary School. That site is at least sufficient to accommodate an enlarged Rowan School with provision for sufficient off road parking and therefore without simply transferring the parking problem to Furniss Avenue. As a bonus, such parking space could be made available at week-ends for community users of the Mercia playing field, thus avoiding the problems that will certainly be caused otherwise if/when the site is developed for residential use, thus removing the parking facility currently used by those community users.

Any opportunity loss to SCC could be made good by releasing the current Rowan School site in its entirety for residential use.

Clearly such a scheme would have greater implications as regards planning applications and district plans. However, if the need to expand the Rowan School had been known 12 years ago, such a scheme would have been considered as a natural fit of resources to needs. The fact that alternatives were planned in the absence of that need, particularly as the alternative use of the Mercia buildings site has not progressed beyond the planning stage, should not prevent more appropriate use of the sites available, now that need is known. However, if such an alternative is considered too radical, the fact that the opportunity to consider it has not been pursued adds weight to the argument in favour of prioritising parking provision in the easier scheme currently planned.

Correspondent 6

27th June

The timing of your letter was strange as I had been asked to get a petition together by a number of residents concerning the parking within Durvale Court, some of the concerns have been outlined by [another correspondent].

17th July

I have read all of the correspondence regarding the meeting this evening and I believe my neighbours have outlined the situation very well. Parking, Safety, gross inconvenience. I would like to add a personal observation. Parking outside of our house No [] very close to the junction leading to Nos 15 to 37 causes difficulty for vehicles reversing to turn around. Large vehicles have often had to drive on the grass outside our house or No 15. In addition some people park on my lawn at the side of the house where there is no footpath. I pay a gardener to look after my garden. Someone has mentioned the difficulties for delivery vehicles getting through the parked vehicles. Delivery drivers have their own timetable and cannot guarantee deliveries outside school hours.

From reading the documents it would appear that the planning department would be visiting the site to see the parking problems. I hope the school will not be given prior warning as I am sure there will be few cars parked!!!!.

18th July

I have already passed comments to Janet Collins but felt I should also write to yourself.

There has been at least one accident caused by a resident reversing into a car which had been parked without consideration.

Delivery drivers have difficulty manoeuvring between cars parked on both sides of the road.

I understand that it is illegal to park on pavements unless the circumstances are exceptional; if the circumstances are so considered there should be sufficient space at the side of the vehicle to accommodate a double pushchair or a wheelchair. Although at first glance at wheel level the space left may accommodate a wheelchair, with mirrors extended this is not the case.

Elderly people, and mothers with children should not be expected to walk on the road because of inconsiderate parking.

In addition, my lawn at the side of my house is not a parking area yet this is another area where inconsiderate teachers decide to park their vehicles.

Correspondent 7

By phone 1st July

Key issues for Mercia Drive residents are noise; residents feel that this is getting worse and is exacerbated by the fencing installed by the school to prevent children from leaving the site. This now funnels the children to a part of the site which borders residential properties. A further concern is the disturbance of the water table when works are being done – water now seems to be running down into gardens and some residents have reported damp issues since the last round of works was completed at the school. The earthworks, which were forming a 'dam' above the gardens, seem to be less effective than previously and water is still pooling in the gardens below the site.

By email 18th July

At the meeting [on 17th July] it was raised by a local resident that previously The Rowan School had been ear-marked for closure. I confirmed this, but we were strongly told this was never the case by Jackie Drayton and Colin Ross. This will be in the minutes, so I feel you need to be aware of the following information which confirms our statement and can be checked.

On the 23.9.2003 the Executive Director of Education submitted a report to the Cabinet of Sheffield City Council on:

'the development of a coherent pattern of integrated resources in mainstream schools and proposals to implement this 3rd strand of the Special Educational Needs strategic plan.'
The report proposed that The Rowan site would be disposed of (page 21 para 5.2). The timing of the disposal was not given but inferred it would be within the period 2003 to 2008 (page 21 para 5.1 table and page 22 para 5.2 table).

I leave these details with you, and ask that this information be added to the minutes as a formal note at the end to clearly show we were not putting forward invalid and untrue statements.

By email 24th July

Background information:-

My family live at [] Mercia Drive, sited directly below The Rowan School Adventure Playground and small wood. We have lived here for over 20 years and as such have seen a number of changes at the school. We have had growing concerns regarding the school building programme, the maintenance of the site, and the use of the outside space.

These concerns are:

***The recent extension (addition of 2 new classrooms)**

We were told by representatives at the planning stage that due to the angle of the extension we would not be overlooked. This is not the case.

I attended each of the resident liaison meetings held during the build, and we were told that the window design could not be changed in any way, but blinds would be used so that privacy would be observed. This has not been the case.

We drew attention to the fact that issues related to the disturbance of the 'water table' on the Rowan site when it was first built had meant specialist measures had been put in place as part of the building programme to alleviate flooding to the houses along Mercia Drive during periods of heavy rain fall. These were the use of the embankment, drainage channels created at the side of this and down the gardens/drives of No 3 & 5 of Mercia Drive. We asked for reassurances that the extension would not cause rain water issues for us and that that any resulting issues would be resolved during the build. Since the building of the extension we have found our lawn remains water-logged well into the Summer months. When heavy periods of rain occur we can now hear water running underneath our house. We have had to use a dehumidifier in the house to decrease humidity levels in the winter months. Safety measures need to be in place to divert the flow of water away from the house if this continues. As this was a risk we notified you of prior to the build we will be looking for support to resolve these problems.

***The recent addition of green wire fencing around the school site.**

When the school was first built and the Adventure Playground was introduced the residents were told at a public meeting that a wall would be built as a barrier to safe-guard the children and to create a noise barrier. This did not take place. Instead a wooden fence was placed around the Adventure Playground and the children were closely supervised.

The area at this side of the school was used as an outside corridor. The children would play in the Adventure Playground at breaks. Since the addition of the green wire fencing, the outside area is now used continually throughout the day when the weather allows. The fencing offers no sound barrier and allows the children to come to the boundary perimeter. The noise levels have increased and the behaviour of some of the children has noticeably changed. Bad/foul language can be heard clearly. We find this unacceptable, given the fact that young children of neighbouring houses play in their gardens and hear this. As the school and facilities are at a higher level/raised above our houses, staff and children's conversations can be heard clearly.

***The development of the woods behind our house**

The 2/3rds clearance of the wood and later, the building of a 3 sided wooden shelter, has also resulted in the further use of this space as an outside classroom. On the planning application for the development of the outside space, a cabin was stated. A cabin would have absorbed the sound – this structure/shelter, throws the sound of staff and young people talking towards the houses. The shelter directly faces no. 23 Mercia Drive.

***Traffic congestion**

It has been noticeably seen that Durvale Court is a 'no-go' zone at drop-off and pick-up times. There are multiple mini buses and taxis, as well as staff, parents, and volunteer driven cars. Throughout the day these people are obliged to park their cars on the road as the school does not provide sufficient parking. Additional professional staff attend, children with their parents or support staff come –and - go throughout the day with the additional effect

more vehicles create. The school car park provides space for less than half of that actually needed. Residents have difficulty getting in and out of their drives and using the road safely. The footpath is often restricted. This creates an environment where there's 'an accident waiting to happen.' When people can't find parking space they park on Furniss Avenue. Here cars are parked on both sides of the road and this only allows for one car to pass at any one time. As schools are sited further up the road congestion occurs all the way up. Buses often struggle to move freely up and down the road. More cars now use Mercia Drive and Chatsworth Road as a 'rat-run' to avoid the junction at the bottom of Totley Brook Road and Bushey Wood Road at peak times. Drivers 'cut-corners' and drive quickly causing a hazard for children making their way home from school.

Given these concerns that are already in place, the new proposals give us grave concern and we feel are grounds for objecting to further expansion unless major rethinking is carried out to support both The Rowan and the local residents.

Here are the reasons to be considered along with the background information given above for our objections to the two proposals put forward at this time:

Traffic congestion, safety issues and lack of car parking

- 1) The proposal is to increase the capacity to 90 children – an increase of 22 children. 10 of these places are to be permanent places, whereas the remaining 12 would be short term. This would increase the already unacceptable traffic congestion and parking issues. We were told the staffing is at present 35, and that would increase to 47. This does not take account of the additional professionals, parents and volunteers who visit and/or do support work at the school. Children who are brought-in on short term basis will bring with them additional transport needs and staff. I do not believe that the area 'ear-marked' for parking on the site will be sufficient. Where will all of these cars be parked?

Noise and bad language issues

- 2) The noise pollution and high levels of noise from the school - children and occasionally from staff, as they teach or deal with difficult behaviour outside Coupled with this is the bad/foul language spoken by some children - this will no doubt increase. If the proposals go ahead, the outside environment here described, that we cope with, will be spread over further residents as the school moves closer to homes on Durvale Court and Wyvern Gardens. What will be put in place to give us some sort of sound barrier?

Privacy and security

- 3) No wall was ever built to ensure the privacy of residents. The green wire fencing has given the school security, but has not afforded any level of privacy for either side - school or residents. The children and staff can come to the boundary, items can be thrown into our gardens and comments made to us. We are overlooked at the back of our home from the new classroom windows, from the embankment where staff often stand supervising children, from the nature walk in the woods and from the Adventure Playground. Given the children in the school have complex communication difficulties,

and this affects some of the children in that they display difficult and challenging behaviour, a better level of privacy should be put in place by the school. The school is accepting more of these children - we should not have to experience the behaviour modification practices that are used. We need assurances that some form of barrier be put in place.

Water table disruption and drainage issues ensuing as a result

- 4) The water table was again disrupted during the recent build of the 2 classroom extension. The ground surface area needed to absorb rain water was also reduced. A number of residents on Mercia Drive have noticed the effects and have had to deal with this. With all the building envisaged on this site, the damp and flooding problems will increase and spread over a wider number of homes. What assurances can you give us that the rain water be diverted away from our homes as part of the new building programme? How will you manage this water drainage problem? We have doubts that these issues will be resolved on site.

Correspondent 8

9th July

Further to your letter regarding the above proposal we would like to express our extreme disappointment and concerns. We were unable to attend either of the two [drop-in] meetings personally but did have representatives present.

We have no objections in principle to the expansion of the school itself but our main concerns are with regards to the amount of extra traffic generated by such an expansion. Durvale Court is a cul-de-sac and therefore has only one point of access and egress.

The junction of Furniss Avenue and Durvale Court becomes extremely congested during times of drop off and pick up with a large amount of Mini Buses, taxis and parents private cars as they battle to get along Durvale Court which is extremely narrow. Any emergency vehicles would also have great difficulty accessing the road as well as the school itself due to the congestion. Many of the vehicles end up having to mount the kerbs and footpaths to be able to negotiate around each other to enter the school grounds. This is extremely dangerous as there are also children walking to Dore Primary School and King Ecgbert School at the same time.

Vehicles are then parked on the pavements along Durvale Court and this is now spreading onto Furniss Avenue. This results in double parking on Furniss Avenue which is a bus route and often ends up with the buses inching forward to squeeze between the cars.

As a result of the 'drop in' meetings we are informed that there does not appear to be any plans for sufficient parking and traffic management of the extra vehicles that will be using Durvale Court and that the only solution from yourselves seemed to be 'they can park on Furniss Avenue'. We are very disappointed in this response as we are sure many of the residents of Furniss Avenue will be. In fact we are under the impression that these meetings were in fact a waste of time as either no or very little information was known or disclosed.

We believe that feasibility works, which confirm that the site is big enough to accommodate the necessary buildings and associated hard spaces (including additional car parking) have

been completed so fail to see why detailed designs for the site are as yet unavailable for local residents to peruse?

We also believe that representatives have been appointed to represent local residents but that you are unable to tell the residents who these people are due to Data Protection. How can we put our views forward if we are not able to have the details of 'our' representatives?

We would welcome your comments on all of the above as soon as possible.

14th July (to Cllr Martin Smith)

We are writing to express our grave concerns over the proposed expansion of The Rowan Special School on Durvale Court in Dore. Whilst we have no objections in principle to the school being expanded we do have very grave concerns on the resulting problems that will occur with regards to parking and local traffic management.

We are residents on Furniss Avenue who not only back onto the school but also live very close to the junction of Durvale Court and Furniss Avenue. There is already a lack of adequate parking for staff and visitors to this school which results in vehicles being parked on pavements on Durvale Court and vehicles also being parked on Furniss Avenue.

I believe that with this proposed expansion there will be another 10 members of staff as well as 12 'special case' pupils with their own individual tutors. There are currently already 42 members of staff and only 15 parking spaces on the site. Durvale Court is a narrow cul-de-sac serving 38 properties as well as the school. During term times there is a serious congestion of traffic from the junction of Furniss Avenue leading all the way up Durvale Court. A constant queue of minibuses and taxis as well as parents cars - many of them having to mount the kerbs to negotiate around each other. When questioned about the lack of parking at a meeting held last Monday the response was 'well, they can park on Furniss Avenue'.

Furniss Avenue is already extremely congested at school 'rush hours' as it is the main thoroughfare for both King Egbert School and Dore Primary School. There are a lot of children walking up Furniss Avenue and having to cross the Durvale Court junction which is a feat in itself as the road is often completely blocked with minibuses and taxis and cars accessing The Rowan school. There is also the problem of traffic turning onto Durvale Court only to be met with oncoming traffic and actually having to reverse back onto Furniss Avenue.

We not only have the 98 bus service coming up Furniss Avenue but also the school buses bringing pupils from the S2 and S7 areas to King Egbert School. We already have double parking near the junction of Durvale Court and my worries are that this will only be exacerbated by the extra cars and traffic that will be generated by this expansion. Buses are already having to inch their way through a large amount of cars.

We have been unable to see any plans with regard to this but believe that construction is due to start in October! We sincerely hope that any plans do in fact accommodate adequate parking on site.

We also believe that a meeting is due to take place with yourself on Thursday at the school and would ask that we be informed if this is in fact a public meeting which we could attend as there seems to be a distinct lack of information being disclosed to us.

We trust that you will appreciate our concerns as local residents and be able to represent our views to the appropriate bodies.

Correspondent 9

We support the school generally, but the parking issue really must be sorted out.

Several of our neighbours nearer the school have real problems currently and this can only get worse with an increase in numbers of around 1/3. The emergency services aspect is particularly worrying.

Correspondent 10

We live at no. [] Durvale Court, opposite the Rowan School. I have attended the Drop in sessions at school on Wednesday 2nd and Monday 7th of July 2014 and I have expressed my concerns regarding the above expansion, verbally, to both Ms Janet Collins and the school head teacher, who was present at the second meeting.

Our main concerns, as that of many other residents neighbouring the school, are related to staff parking on the cul-de-sac and the subsequent road blockage at school rush hours, and on odd occasions the unacceptable language used by pupils which can be heard from my house. (Just put yourself in my place trying to explain to my 7 year old why a child going to the school opposite our house greets their teacher by shouting repeatedly 'Good morning Mother F*****s'). Luckily both my children attend their school at the same time and are not in the house to hear such colourful language used most of the time. In general we do realise that these children have serious behavioural problems and we appreciate that all the staff, teachers and the head teacher do an excellent job.

Our main problem at the moment is 'parking'. Because of the nature of the school, there is a very high ratio of teachers to pupils. Durvale Court is a small Residential cul-de-sac with no turning circle at the end. The car park to the school has about 12 spaces marked out. On any average day there are between 20 to 25 cars (belonging to school staff or other support workers) that park on Durvale Court (between 8:30 am and 4:00pm). Most of these cars park half on the pavement. I take my son to school every morning and for instance outside house no 11 where 4 cars park as such, we regularly walk on the road as the parked cars do not leave enough space between their parked car and the hedge, not even for a small child to pass. Outside my own house [] and that of my neighbour [] there are also three cars parked every day (half on the pavement) as are three more cars opposite my house (in front of house no []). There are also about 6 cars always parked by the side of the road with no space left for pedestrians outside of the school. I have personally raised the issue with the head teacher, about the above double parking as have several other residents. These drivers are forced to park half on the pavement so that there is parking for them on both side of the road. These parked vehicles obscure the road and any coming vehicle (as the road curves round) and make it dangerous for cars parked at drives (at my drive in particular) to drive out into the road. I had an accident once driving back out of my drive with another car belonging to a parent that had stopped outside my drive, because of the number of cars that had double parked in the vicinity and totally blocked my view; I did not see this car which just moved there shortly before the accident.

The parking problem is exacerbated between 8:30-9:15 am and 2:45-3:30 pm, when half a dozen large minibuses, several taxis and parents arrive to pick up / drop off children. Pupils

at this school are not allowed to be dropped off or collected at the school gates and are personally met in the morning or handed over at the end of the day by a member of staff. These vehicles queue on the road (between the parked cars there is only space for one vehicle to pass through). They completely block the road while waiting in turn to drop off /pick up their pupils. I usually walk with my son back from his school at the same time and have to zig zag between parked cars and minibuses completely blocking the footpaths on both sides and the road. Many of the taxis and minibuses keep their engines running (while they wait in this queue). Most residents completely avoid driving past the school at these times and I try most days to stay in my son's school ground for half an hour longer to avoid the car exhaust fumes and the chaos opposite the school.

I have contacted Sheffield city council and enquired about solutions to the parking and congestion problems in the past. They have explained to me that I can request traffic regulations to be put in place but this process itself will take about one year (it will need to go through consultation process etc and due to cuts etc will take between 6 to 12 months).

On the meeting on the 7th of July, we were shown a sketch map for a new car park (which is at present a very steep bank) which will not even accommodate for a fraction of the existing cars, let alone any extra ones. Also there was no space for the extra minibuses or taxis to wait or turn around. Taking into account the 32% increase in children number which will result in as much if not a more % increase in number of staff cars parked, minibuses and taxis and parents dropping and picking children.

In our view the school site is not capable of accommodating the additional parking spaces necessary for the proposed expansion or the additional off road space for the many vehicles that will need to queue to drop off and collect the pupils. We feel that the proposal would be over development of this small site and will create further traffic problems over and above that already being experienced by the residents of Durvale Court.

Correspondent 11

I am a resident living on Furniss Avenue and will be directly affected by the proposed extension to the Rowan School. I have learned of this planned work indirectly since it is the opinion of the planners that I and many people living adjacent and opposite to Durvale Court need not be informed.

I would like to have my objection to this proposed extension recorded due to the following:

- i) Furniss Avenue is already extremely busy during the school and work run each morning and I understand that, although the extension will allow for additional children and teachers, it will not cater for any additional parking onsite thus increasing both the traffic on Furniss Avenue but also hamper any existing road users and residents by forcing staff to park on Furniss Avenue,
- ii) Furniss Avenue is a major bus route where the buses are forced to weave a path between cars parked on both sides of the road effectively forcing one-way traffic. This is already a problem which can only be exacerbated by any additional parking,
- iii) any additional parking outside of residences along Furniss Avenue by staff at Rowan School will increase the risk of road traffic accidents as residents will have their visibility of the road restricted as they attempt to join the traffic venturing along Furniss Avenue,

iv) staff from the school already park outside mine and other homes on Furniss Avenue and this is only likely to increase; making it both difficult to enter the road easily with a clear line of sight but also reducing the ability of households to allow guests to park outside their homes and to receive deliveries and for bins to be emptied safely.

I fully expect there to be a great deal of additional traffic and disruption due to any construction work (delivery and removal of materials, vehicles carrying workers to and from the location). However, has anyone considered where these vehicles are to be sited during the working day, when already there are insufficient parking places at the school for existing staff?

Has anyone considered the obvious solution to the parking problem of simply taking advantage of the building work and ensuring adequate space for future staff and drop-off parking are included in the extension work?

How could the funds be secured to extend the school's capacity in the first place without considering the need for additional parking given the fact that the school requires that all children are delivered safely to the school entrance? Would it not make sense during the planning and estimating stage of this work to calculate and accommodate the additional parking and temporary space required during drop-off and pick-up times as well as the remainder of the day?

I have no objection in principle to the proposed extension, my main objection is that the planning appears to have been restricted to the extension of the school and completely ignored the problems which already exist with access to the school and parking issues already well understood. These pre-existing issues having been ignored will only be exacerbated with any increase of traffic and parking requirements associated with the increased capacity of the school.

Correspondent 12

We live at [] Durvale Court and have some serious concerns regarding the proposed expansion of the school.

The main concerns relate to parking and traffic movements on Durvale Court during school hours and particularly during the morning and afternoon when pupils arrive and leave the school. During this time traffic can be log jammed as vehicles wait to drop-off or collect pupils.

Parking by school staff on Durvale Court frequently obstructs footpaths, forcing pedestrians onto the highway, and restricts the passage of other vehicles between parked cars. Furniss Avenue, the next obvious place to park, is a bus route and frequently restricted to a single lane by parked cars. On both streets parking can restrict access/egress for residents from driveways and restricts visibility of other vehicles and pedestrians when manoeuvring.

The restricted vehicle access potentially prevents access for service, delivery and emergency vehicles to Durvale Court particularly in the school drop-off and collect period.

The proposal to increase the number of pupils by 30% will be associated with at least a 30% increase in both vehicle movements to drop-off and collect pupils and school staff, teaching/teaching assistants/support, requiring parking.

I understand that pupils are met at the door from the vehicle that brings them to the school and similarly when they leave. In this case the school must provide adequate on site arrangements to stack vehicles during the drop-off and collection period such that there is no obstruction or interference to other vehicles using Durvale Court. The very nature of the school and the planned extension will increase the number of vehicles at these busy periods, it is very likely that many of the additional pupils will arrive on an individual basis increasing traffic movements above the 30% increase in actual pupil numbers.

Similarly the increase in school staff will be at least 30%. The provision of short term placements will require a relatively higher proportion of staff to support these pupils and their needs. This will increase the problem of parking on Durvale Court and adjacent streets. The school needs to provide adequate on site parking for the actual number of staff needed at the school.

The school is located in a residential area on the outskirts of the city and access by public transport is probably impractical for the majority of staff. The school must recognise this reality and make adequate provision for on site staff parking.

On the grounds of parking and traffic problems we object to the proposed development.

I cannot currently comment on the actual proposed development and the visual impact of this, there are no plans or detailed drawings available. I was unable to attend the consultation meeting but talking to neighbours the plans available gave no meaningful information or detail. I will reserve judgement on this until meaningful plans and drawings are available. Until adequate plans and drawings are made available the consultation period cannot end.

The consultation period feels very rushed and almost an attempt to rail road the changes through without consultation. Funding was granted in July 2013, almost a full year later the consultation starts. Why has it taken a full year to start this? After a year I would have expected a very detailed proposal to be available for the consultation.

We would appreciate a full copy of the proposals and a response to the points raised above. We have no desire to prevent expansion of the school but currently the parking etc is already unsatisfactory and will be significantly exacerbated by this proposal unless adequate provision is made as part of this project.

Correspondent 13

We write as residents of Mercia Drive and would like to register the following concerns regarding the proposal for the alteration of The Rowan School.

- Drainage and disturbance of the 'water table'. As mentioned at the meeting held on 10 July, Mercia Drive is at a lower ground level than The School. We aware that when The School was originally built pictures were taken which showed that the flow of rain water caused severe issues, the result of which meant that extra drainage had to be introduced both through the garden of number 3/5 Mercia Drive and further drainage installed behind the school. Given the implications when erecting the school, we would like assurance that drainage will be constructed to ensure that our homes and gardens will be safe from water damage. That we will not incur any costs associated with the prevention of water damage or putting right any damage caused by the proposal. The Council themselves will take full responsibility for any measures required to put any issues right/or the prevention of water damage.

- Privacy, when the The Rowan School extension was built, the School/Council agreed to place blinds at windows, this had not happened to date. How can we be assured that our privacy will be maintained. The school children are often outside in the play area some displaying/verbalising challenging behaviour. What provision for reducing the noise levels has been considered. (We understand original plans promised a solid wall around the School perimeter.)
- Flow/volume of traffic. As mentioned at the meeting the number of vehicles coming into and out of the school will increase, we have concerns regarding the volume of traffic and with regards to child safety when walking up to/from school (crossing the junction at Durvale Court and Furniss Avenue can at times be hazardous.) This is an ongoing issue raised within the Community. Often the bus services have difficulty navigating up Furniss Avenue with the current volume of traffic. The roads around Sheffield are in a poor state, with pot holes etc., Mercia Drive is of no exception, vehicles often use Mercia Drive as a 'cut through'/'rat run' and often at speed which does not bode well on this road.
- We would like confirmation that the school has no plans for extra curricular activities (both prior to and after school hours) that there are no plans to hold residential or weekend respite accommodation/activities.
- Assurance that the trees existing trees will not be removed.
- The 'plans' presented on 10 July were somewhat vague/no drawings have been made available, further information, therefore, should be made available which would allow us to base concerns. What is the height of the planned extension? Size of the extension? What modifications will take place to the existing building/planned drainage/type of surface which will be used for the play area/parking provision etc.
- Are there any other proposals?

Correspondent 14

First of all I have received a copy of a letter written by [another correspondent] addressed to yourself dated 21 July 2014 the contents of which I totally and thoroughly concur.

We live at number [] Durvale Court and, having read the information currently available from the council, attended a meeting on 17 July 2014 at the school. I write on behalf of myself and my wife both of whom are car drivers.

We have lived at this address since 1991 and the traffic issues around the parking and staff cars on the Durvale Court have not been much of a problem until 2009/10. It was at that time that 2 extra classrooms were built. At that time the council were warned that the parking would get more problematical but they chose totally to ignore all the comments from residents.

The residents comments have proved totally accurate and the parking and the disregard to proper careful considerate parking by teachers and carers have caused immense problems exiting and entering the cul-de-sac. There is a serious safety issue for existing road users, pedestrians and schoolchildren both from the Rowan school and at other local schools.

Teachers and vehicles bringing children to and from the school park on pavements, often double park and park on corners causing serious safety problems for other road users.

As the warnings were totally ignored in 2009 we have the feeling that similar warnings being raised now will totally and utterly be ignored by the council again. Planning was allowed as the comment from highways was as that the head teacher had advised them that these 2 additional classrooms were for extra teaching space and there would be no increase in pupil

numbers. However if you refer to Ofsted reports you will see that prior to these extra classrooms the pupils numbers were consistently at 63 per year but is now 68 (as per school web site) an increase of 7.9%

Extension to the school

At the meeting on 17 July Councillor Jackie Drayton confirmed that the council were fully aware that there were parking issues already present at the school (and so they should be because the schools web site actually makes reference to the problems of parking as follows: "When visiting school for events there will often be too many cars for the car park. We ask that you park considerately on the roadside taking care not to block entrances for our neighbours' houses/driveways"). The proposal to extend the school seems to be focusing totally on whether this site can contain extra classrooms or not. The problem of parking seems to be completely overlooked. As this appears to be the major issue regarding increasing the site size, respectfully I would suggest that this needs to be addressed before any extension to the site is considered.

Please explain why you would expend valuable tax payers money on architects fees about the expansion without first considering if the major issue, parking, can be addressed satisfactorily or not. This is just poor project management, and gives the impression to residents that come what may we are going ahead with the expansion irrespective of how this messes up the road system.

The increase to the site represents a 32% expansion,(or 43% since march 2011 when there were 63 pupils) therefore there must be an expectation that the parking problems are going to be increased by that percentage yet we're led to believe that little or no regard to extra parking is being considered. It is just not acceptable to expect the existing roads to carry the extra parking that will inevitably accompany this expansion. Can I suggest representatives from the highways committee/department visit the site during the day, during term time preferably on a Wednesday and unannounced to the school.

At the meeting on 17 July Councillor Jackie Drayton was advised that funding for this scheme was agreed 12 months ago and yet she appeared to deny or disbelieve that this was the case. However there is evidence on the web that she was aware of the funds available on 18 July 2013 and in fact commented to the fact that this was "wonderful news for education in the city and rebuilding Rowan special school ". The reason for mentioning this is that the residents feel that the decision for the expansion to the school is being rushed as a last minute decision when the council have had more than 12 months to consult and do something about it with the residents.

Conclusion

In conclusion until the Parking and Road issues have been properly addressed to the residents' satisfaction we are totally against any further expansion of the school.

Correspondent 15

As a householder in Durvale Court, Dore; I have been advised by [another correspondent] that you would welcome further comment by householders with regard to the proposed expansion of the special school in the near future.

My wife and I moved to no. [] Durvale Court in the July of 2012 and have been delighted by the relative peace and calm of the immediate neighbourhood.

We have absolutely no problem with the presence of Rowan Special School and believe that its presence and activities in our local area only serve to increase its stature. In addition we have found the staff of the school to be most accommodating in terms of access to the school grounds for hedge-trimming etc.

There does, however, remain a single and important point of concern; and one which I believe has been expressed by many residents when informed of the possible expansion of the School:-

This concerns the localised road-traffic situation, with respect to both the arrival and departure of students in the morning and evening and also the stationary parking which persists throughout the school day.

I have taken the opportunity to make some physical measurements of road dimensions in the Court as follows:-

Immediate entrance from Furniss Avenue: width approx:- 510cm

Opposite Rowan School: average width approx.:- 520cm

Top end of Durvale Court average width approx.:- 550cm

An average saloon-car width is of order:- (160- 175)cm

Much of the bottom of the Court (toward its junction with Furniss Avenue) has double yellow (no parking) lines, although this is often ignored on the Left-hand-side going out.

Any consideration of the above measurements indicates the potential danger of a resident attempting to drive in or out of Durvale Court in conditions of double parking.

In practice those permanently (or temporarily) parked during the day usually use the foot-paths to artificially increase the road-width. I believe this is illegal?? Even in these cases drivers must be extremely careful in both avoiding stationary traffic and keeping an eye open for pedestrians/students.

The situation at the times of student delivery and collection can only be defined as chaotic and it is often necessary to reverse in order to allow access to incoming traffic. Reversing through doubly-parked cars can be extremely dangerous.

In conclusion, and regardless of the specific details presented above, it is my belief that the current road parking facilities for the school are insufficient and potentially dangerous and that the danger will only be exacerbated with school expansion. An alternative may be to propose that part of the existing school grounds be seconded to permanent and temporary parking.

Correspondent 16

In principle, we are happy with the Rowan School expansion such that they can do their "good work" with more children.

However, the only issue we have is the traffic chaos at pick-up and drop-off times often exacerbated by poor parking by staff and visitors. It seems to us if the council is investing a significant sum in the school it is not beyond their wit to include additional parking (to cater

for both the current underprovision and the expansion). In fact it is a no-brainer - plenty of land available, tarmac is cheap in the scheme of things and this will give enhanced neighbourhood relations and heightened safety for staff, children and locals alike.

Please take these points into consideration.

Correspondent 17

I write further to your [Cllr Martin Smith's] meeting with [another correspondent] on 12 July regarding the expansion plans of the Rowan School and would like to fully endorse the concerns raised.

In addition I would like to highlight that the primary problem is around the bend of Durvale Court at the entrance to The Rowan school as too many cars are parked alongside taxis and mini buses around peak times, that being the morning and afternoon collection.

The exit and entrance to Durvale Court & Furniss Avenue has become increasingly dangerous with in all honesty an accident waiting to happen as too many vehicles are trying to access a small close all at the same time.

In summary there are too many vehicles, cars, taxis and minibuses for the current infrastructure (i.e. space and roads) which means that at present it is unable to cope let alone looking at further expansion plans.

Correspondent 18

We live at No [] Durvale Court and, having read the information currently available from the Council, attended two meetings at the school and discussed the issue with a Council member, we wish to make a number of comments regarding both the proposed changes to the school and the consultation process. These fall into two main categories: the current situation at the school and the impact any expansion will have on it; the manner in which the communication of those proposed changes have been conveyed by the Council to residents of the area surrounding the school.

Impact of the proposed changes on Durvale Court

Current situation

- There is already insufficient parking at the Rowan School for staff, volunteers and parents resulting in parking on both sides of Durvale Court. This often stretches from the junction of Furniss Avenue – hampering entry and exit to both Durvale and Furniss – around both bends in Durvale and beyond the first junction within the Court
- Parking makes it difficult to drive along the first part of Durvale Court in a car – at times impossible in a bigger vehicle such as a delivery van - with the additional risk of scraping one's own or another vehicle
- When reversing in or out of the drives of properties close to the school drivers are often unsighted as cars impede driveways, obstruct pavements and park on both sides of the road on bends, not only making it inconvenient for home owners, but dangerous for them, other road users and pedestrians
- Because many cars are partially parked on the pavement it is impossible to use the paths if pushing a buggy or using a wheelchair, further adding to the problems on the road as this is the only way in which to negotiate parts of Durvale Court for parents with small children or the disabled

- Because Durvale Court is a cul-de-sac with only one vehicular access to the school, these problems are exacerbated at the beginning and end of the school day by the addition of seven mini buses, at least three taxis and some parental cars, which park on or queue in the road prior to picking up or dropping children off
- The bus drivers in particular frequently leave their engines running adding to the pollution levels
- Buses are often double parked so that the drivers can chat to one another while waiting, blocking the carriageway completely
- When leaving Durvale Court buses often block the junction with Furniss Avenue because cars parked further up Durvale force them into the middle of the road thus making it impossible to turn into Durvale if a bus is attempting to leave it
- Should there ever be an emergency at one of the houses in Durvale Court or at the school, emergency vehicles would have considerable difficulty negotiating the road to, or past, the Rowan wasting valuable time – in such cases, wasted seconds can cost lives
- Due to the high traffic levels between the junction with Furniss Avenue and just beyond the school, the road surface is deteriorating badly.

Extension to the school

Should the proposed development go ahead, not only will the effect on access, parking, pollution, traffic noise and the deterioration of the carriageway be increased temporarily during the construction period as builders lorries access the site, but the increase in pupil numbers will also exacerbate these problems making an already bad situation permanently worse.

Because of the nature of the school, there is a higher than normal teacher/pupil ratio plus a high number of volunteer helpers. Therefore, the proposal to increase the school's capacity from the current role of 68 up potentially to 90 places, will not simply result in one or two extra staff and another volunteer. Since it is not yet known from which areas of the City the new pupils will come, there remains the possibility that they will not be able to use existing transport, but will require the provision of additional buses or taxis to enable them to reach the school, or will require their parents to bring them.

The inclusion of 12 places for short term placements as part of the 22 place increase, will further exacerbate the problems as these children will be accompanied by a teacher from their main stream school. Those teachers may, or may not, be insured to carry the pupils in their own cars, raising the spectre of still more cars on Durvale Court – and no doubt Furniss Avenue. The cumulative effect of the additional traffic trying to access the school or parking for the day will be intolerable and dangerous.

All the issues outlined above, both current and potential, have an impact on us personally. However, it should also be noted that other parts of Durvale Court, Wyvern Gardens and Mercia Drive, are affected by additional issues such as noise pollution, bad language, drainage and potential flooding.

The Council's handling of the proposed expansion to the Rowan School

We, like we believe most residents of Durvale Court, support the Rowan School and admire and respect the way in which staff and volunteers work with children who are, at times very challenging. However, the Council's handling to date of the 'consultation' over the expansion, is greatly undermining the good will of residents that the majority of school staff have worked hard to develop over the years.

Despite stating in a letter to residents dated 18/6/14, that the Council is “*very keen to ensure that local residents understand the proposal, and have the opportunity to engage with the Council’s project team at every stage..... we will listen to, and seek to address any concerns you may have in advance of this stage of the project*”, the manner in which the Council is handling the ‘consultation’ is simply serving to alienate local residents.

The process has so far not been transparent and information has either not be given or has been factually incorrect. In brief:

- At a meeting on 2/7/14, residents were told that money for the project had not yet been granted, yet a press release stating that it had and dated almost a year earlier (18/7/13), was subsequently found to be available on the Council’s own website
- At the same meeting residents were told that Council staff could not answer questions about the plans or location of the proposed development as nothing was yet know or available. However, at a further meeting on 7/7/14 (only three working days later) other residents were shown sketch plans indicating the proposed location of the new build and new (inadequate) parking area.
- Similarly on 2/7/14 there was not even an approximate start date for the build, but by the 7th July, ‘no date’ had become October/November 2014
- At both meetings residents were told that they could have three representatives and that three people had already put their names forward. However, residents were not ‘allowed’ to know who those representatives were without their permission. How can one judge the suitability of a representative, let alone put forward one’s views to them, if they are anonymous?
- Given the heightened levels of feeling due to the issues already outlined and the misinformation and lack of transparency exhibited by the Council, the attitude and tone of the Chair of the meeting held at the school on the 17/7/14 was unfortunate to say the least and did nothing to improve relations between the Council, school and local residents.

Correspondent 19

18 JUL 2014

Dore,
Sheffield,
S17 3PT

Executive Director Children, Young People and Families
c/o Joel Hardwick
School Organisation Team,
3rd Floor , Howden House
Union Street,
Sheffield,
S1 2HH.

14/7/14.

Proposal of extension to Rowan Special School

Dear Sirs,

We live in the house next to the Rowan School. Our garden leads down to the existing car park and we are so close that some people believe that our large specimen conifer belongs to the school. Last year we found 2 boys deliberately damaging the tree but when we shouted at them they were quite horrified that they were damaging someone's property. They obviously felt that damaging school property was acceptable. (We don't think they attended the school.)

In general the school itself is no real problem to us. The language is sometimes very colourful, so we are glad that our children are not still young and learning such words. Listening to some of the expressions they use, you wonder where they have picked up such language and if someone speaks to them that way. Sometimes there is quite a commotion when a child is being particularly difficult. We have known a child stand there screaming for over half an hour. But we do realise that these children have serious behavioural problems and we appreciate that the teachers do an excellent job.

Our main problem is 'Parking'. Because of the nature of the school there is a very high ratio of teachers to pupils so there is a large number of staff vehicles for the size of the school. But even more of a problem is the way the children arrive and depart from school. Durvale Court is a small residential cul-de-sac with no turning circle at the end. The Car park to the school has about 12 spaces marked out. Following major problems with vehicles turning around, there is now an 'entry only' and 'exit only' to the car park. Most of the children arrive by taxi or minibus. The minibuses can hold up to 12, but children are coming from all over Sheffield and surrounding area, so they often carry a lot fewer. The taxis only carry one or two. There are over 60 children and as many as 40 teachers on an average day. The teachers arrive at about 8.30 am. From then on there is a constant stream of vehicles. By 9.15 am every morning there is chaos. Residents are trying to get off their drives, parents are trying to drop off distressed pupils, minibuses are desperately attempting to turn around. The road becomes blocked and tempers frayed. Teachers end up parking across part of

ATOS JUL 8 1

residents' drives, others give up and try Furniss Avenue. Meanwhile coach drivers that do not have another call stand chatting oblivious of people's desperate attempts to back off their drives.

By 9.30 am things calm down but the road by then is choc-a-block with parked cars. Drivers are forced to park half on the pavement so that there is parking both sides. Otherwise there would not be enough places. This of course means parents with push chairs and the disabled, have to walk in the road to get round the parked vehicles. Also it is extremely dangerous for children to play in the street because of the corners being obscured by these vehicles. At 2.50 pm it all starts again, but worse, because half a dozen minibuses arrive early to try and get the best spots. Residents have learned to never go out in their cars between 2.45pm and 3.30pm. We tell all friends and relatives not to try getting down Furniss Avenue or parking on Durvale Court anytime near 3.00pm. If there was an emergency, it would be impossible for an ambulance or fire engine to get through to the end of Durvale Court.

These problems need to be addressed urgently. We have no major objections to the Rowan being expanded by a couple of class rooms, as long as the planners are made fully aware of the parking issues. We have been promised that they will be fully informed. But they need to see the problems first hand because they are so specific to the Rowan. The planners need to visit at 9.00 am and 3.00 pm to see the nightmare that already exists. Any expansion without solving all the existing parking problems and catering for the new ones to come will resort in total chaos.

The area we were shown indicated on the sketch map for a new car park is laughable. The area would only park a fraction of the existing cars, let alone any extra ones. Also there would be no space for the minibuses to turn around. There is the added problem that the area indicated is at present a very steep bank. May we suggest they consider running the car park all along the stretch of field behind 6 -20 Durvale Curt. This would provide spaces for at least 40 cars without losing a large chunk of playing field. And being mainly at a lower level than Durvale Court it should not cause the residents much annoyance. It would leave the existing car park as a drop off / turning point for the minibuses. The only problem left would be the parents dropping off children, but if all staff were parked inside the grounds, the road should be able to handle that number. We hope this has been useful and our comments will not be ignored. We do not wish to halt the progress of the children's education but the concerns of the residents of Durvale Court do need to be listened to.

We are only voicing our own opinions and do not profess to know the opinions of all of Durvale Court .

Yours faithfully

Copies to Cllr Martin Smith. Janet Collins, School Organisation Project Officer

1, 3, 5, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12, 13, 14, 15, 16, 17, 18, 19, 20, 21, 22, 23, 24, 25, 26, 27,28, 29, 31, 33, 35 37, 39, 41 ,43, 45, 47,,49.

Correspondent 20

I hope this issue can be sorted without the attitudes displayed on both sides. I suppose the residents feel this is not really a proposal but a "done deal" & his-one seems to be listening to the feelings of the residents re. parking. It is not surprising their relations between the two are tense!

Yours faithfully

Dece
Sheffield S17 3PT
21/7/14

Lower School Proposal

Dear Sir/Madam

I am writing to wholeheartedly endorse the letter of the 21st July from Anisa Baddoo & Patricia Barbering. I feel it is unnecessary for me to repeat these issues which have been expressed very clearly.

The only thing I would like to add is that I accept "the attitude and tone of the Chair of the meeting on the 17/7/14 was unfortunate" but I also feel that the rudeness displayed by some of the residents was also unfortunate & made me feel very uncomfortable.

Correspondent 21

Mercia Drive
Dore
Sheffield
S17 3QF

24 July 2014

Dear Sir

PROPOSED EXPANSION OF THE ROWAN SCHOOL, DURVALE COURT, SHEFFIELD S17 3PT

We are writing to express our concerns in relation to the proposed expansion of The Rowan Special School. These concerns are principally privacy and noise. While not directly experiencing the current problems with school related traffic on Durvale Court, we are concerned about the consequential increase in future traffic likely to use Mercia Drive.

Our property lies directly behind the school and is impacted on a daily basis by significant screaming/screeching of the children together with the shouts of supervising teachers / carers. This is currently experienced by my wife as she works part time. However, I will be retiring in two years' time, and am concerned about the proposed development. The proximity of the boundary weldmesh fence in recent years has led to this level of noise being brought even nearer to our property. The earth bund, which deflected noise before the fence was erected, when pupils were largely kept on its school side, now acts a viewpoint into our, and our neighbour's, garden. We now regularly have objects thrown into the garden from the school. We would also add that the language frequently used by the children is not that which should be heard by the pre-school children who live on the street. Whilst I appreciate that the full extent of the schools site is now used, the bund, provided as a visual and noise barrier is now exacerbating the situation – I would suggest that this could be rectified by siting a noise barrier along the top of the bund, which would assist with both our privacy and noise concerns. The extent of the noise barrier should be the subject of local agreement to maximise its effect on us and our neighbours.

The rat-running traffic on Mercia Drive, using the Chatsworth Road/Bushy Wood Road route to Abbeydale Road to avoid the awkward junction with Totley Brook Road will only increase with the expansion. We have no control over this, but would register our concern over the expansion being the cause of this increase.

We have been unable to view any plans in relation to the expansion so cannot comment on the detail or likely effect of the development. This makes it difficult to provide a more developed response to this consultation.

We trust that you will appreciate our concerns as a directly affected local residents and that our comments are given due consideration.

Yours faithfully

Rowan school expansion proposal

This report is in response to the document titled

PROPOSALS FOR PRESCRIBED ALTERATIONS OTHER THAN
FOUNDATION PROPOSALS. ROWAN SCHOOL

(undated)

BACKGROUND

The Rowan school was built before 1980 on "greenfield" land associated with King Egberts upper school. The access was via a single house plot purchased to provide this access. This narrow access site necessitated a narrow access road and a less than ideal junction with Furniss Avenue.

Around 1980 the Council sold the undeveloped land around the school for private housing. The single access for the housing was the narrow road described above, shared with the school.

With the passage of time the number of vehicles associated with the school has increased steadily, made up of:-

Minibuses collecting the pupils around the City,

taxis bringing in pupils,

parents delivering pupils

and staff.

This causes severe congestion at the school entrance. At the last expansion of the school about 3 years ago, efforts were made to confine the unloading and loading of pupils within the entrance car park. This works to an extent, but the number of minibuses and taxis exceeds the loading space. Durvale Court becomes a hazardous melee of vehicles, through which non-school traffic struggles to pass, and which is impassable to HGV vehicles, refuse vehicles and builders merchant lorries.

EDUCATIONAL NEEDS CATERED FOR

With the changing needs of educational policy and fashions, the pupils allocated to the Rowan have changed from MLD category, more and more to severe behavioural problems, such as tourette's syndrome, causing violence to the staff and buildings, with long periods of abusive shouting.

This is causing distress and frustration to the people living adjacent to the school, many of whose houses are within 50 ft of the school boundary. Should they have to listen to someone shouting “ **Fuck off, leave me alone** “ for hours at a time? Or hear the fracas when up to 4 staff attempt to subdue a violent pupil?

The site is unsuitable for the pupils now allocated to it, by reason of the continual anti- social behaviour disrupting the many adjacent properties.

CONTINUAL NEW BUILDING AND MAINTAINANCE.

Over the last 5 years, school holidays, rather than bringing peace and quiet, herald building works with the attendant noise, vans and lorries. It would appear that most summers a new “facility “ appears in the school field, like a poly tunnel, a gazebo, a yurt, some more play equipment. If there is nothing to build, the school roof will be re waterproofed, yet again.

NUMBER OF PUPILS

The proposal to increase pupil numbers from 68 to 90 is unsuitable for this hemmed in site, with inadequate parking, traffic chaos and adjacent houses. This 32% bigger. Is the parking going to be 32% worse? Are the buildings going to get even closer to the house boundaries? How soon will the next expansion be?

Furniss Avenue already struggles (and sometimes fails) to deal with the traffic from the 3 mainstream schools on it, Dore Pre school, Dore Junior and infant, King Ecgberts. What will happen when the former King Ecgberts site is developed as housing?

FORMER “CONSULTATION”

Consultation in the past has meant those affected are told of what has been decided, A few soothing words are spoken, and any alternatives are brushed aside with phrases like:-

There is no money

It is in the best interest of the pupils

We could not consider that

That field is essential for the pupils’ education, we would not use it for car parking, (despite it being little used for most of the year.)

(Continued overleaf)

WINDOW DRESSING

Over the last few days school parking has been directed elsewhere, to give a false appearance of space on Durvale Court with no road or path obstruction. What a cheap trick.

CONCLUSIONS

The incremental enlargement of the Rowan has gone on over the last ten years. The infrastructure changes to accommodate expansion have been minimal, with the car park alterations to circulate mini-buses, the sole improvement.

Past "consultations" have been minimal and end with the school stating "we cannot do that or, we have no money."

One could suspect that the present rushed "consultations", while summer holidays are starting, have been deliberately chosen to make responses difficult for the contributors, as they, and those dealing with the submissions, are coping with holiday absences.

The proposals, as submitted, are unfit for purpose.

CONSIDERATION IS BEING GIVEN TO REFERRING THIS PROPOSAL, AND THE WAY IT IS BEING HANDLED, TO THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT OMBUDSMAN.

Consultation Forms

2 | Page

June 2014

Do you support the proposal to increase the capacity of The Rowan from Sept 2015?

Yes. The school provides an excellent and much needed service for Sheffield children. As a near neighbour of the school I observe/hear some of the outdoor activities at the school.

Do you support the proposed introduction of flexible, short-term placements?

Yes. I am sure the school will manage/provide for such placements.

What do you consider to be the priority for new and improved accommodation?

I am waiting the opportunity to see the site plans for the new development. I was in residence when the school was first built. This caused CONSIDERABLE DRAINAGE PROBLEMS (apart from this area) as the natural drainage system DITCHES/HEDGEROWS were destroyed.

Any other comments you would like to make?

In particular drainage and screening are important. Elevation and car parking are other matters of concern to the local neighbourhood. ** I am prepared to act as a neighbourhood representative if you have not already got representation

Representatives from the Council will be attending the parents' evening on 3rd July at the school if you would like to ask any questions or let us know your views. You can also contact us at the following:

Email: schoolreorganisation@sheffield.gov.uk

Letter: School Organisation Team, Sheffield City Council, Floor 3, Howden House, Union Street, Sheffield, S1 2SL

The consultation period runs until Thursday 24th July 2014. Please return your form to school or post it to us before this date. Thank you for taking the time to respond.

**

Do you support the proposal to increase the capacity of The Rowan from Sept 2015?

Not unless the serious problems of parking and access are dealt with FIRST.

Do you support the proposed introduction of flexible, short-term placements?

Only if parking space is made available off-road

What do you consider to be the priority for new and improved accommodation?

PARKING

Any other comments you would like to make?

Drivers of buses bringing children should not block access for others driving on Durvate Court.

Representatives from the Council will be attending the parents' evening on 3rd July at the school if you would like to ask any questions or let us know your views. You can also contact us at the following:

Email: schoolreorganisation@sheffield.gov.uk

Letter: School Organisation Team, Sheffield City Council, Floor 3, Howden House, Union Street, Sheffield, S1 2SL

The consultation period runs until Thursday 24th July 2014. Please return your form to school or post it to us before this date. Thank you for taking the time to respond.

Do you support the proposal to increase the capacity of The Rowan from Sept 2015?

No. I do support the fact that more places need to be there for children with special needs - but not at The Rowan. This is not the right site - positioned on a corner of the road in a residential area.

Do you support the proposed introduction of flexible, short-term placements?

Yes, at a different^{site}, King Egbert's site is much larger. I don't think there has been enough thought into long-term needs. At the growth rate - there will probably be a greater

What do you consider to be the priority for new and improved accommodation?

need for extension in 10/15 yrs time.

Any other comments you would like to make?

Even at the present time cars are parked illegally. They park on pavements & legally you should be able to get a twin pushchair down a pavement & in many cases you can't - even now.

Buses are a problem - as they block access for drivers on Desdale Ct.

It would be impossible for a fire-engine to through.

Representatives from the Council will be attending the parents' evening on 3rd July at the school if you would like to ask any questions or let us know your views. You can also contact us at the following:

Email: schoolreorganisation@sheffield.gov.uk

Letter: School Organisation Team, Sheffield City Council, Floor 3, Howden House, Union Street, Sheffield, S1 2SL

The consultation period runs until Thursday 24th July 2014. Please return your form to school or post it to us before this date. Thank you for taking the time to respond.

<p>Do you support the proposal to increase the capacity of The Rowan from Sept 2015?</p> <p>Yes. I believe Rowan to be a very good and much needed school. We need to do all we can to ensure children who need these places can have them</p>
<p>Do you support the proposed introduction of flexible, short-term placements?</p> <p>N/A</p>
<p>What do you consider to be the priority for new and improved accommodation?</p> <p>N/A</p>
<p>Any other comments you would like to make?</p> <p>A joy to hear the children having so much fun. This is an ideal site for a school like Rowan. Safe enclosed space. Well managed variety of outdoor space. Therapeutic value of being outside, fresh air, ability to run and 'let off steam' I've always heard good reports from anyone who was involved</p>

Representatives from the Council will be attending the parents' evening on 3rd July at the school if you would like to ask any questions or let us know your views. You can also contact us at the following:

Email: schoolreorganisation@sheffield.gov.uk

Letter: School Organisation Team, Sheffield City Council, Floor 3, Howden House, Union Street, Sheffield, S1 2SL

The consultation period runs until Thursday 24th July 2014. Please return your form to school or post it to us before this date. Thank you for taking the time to respond.

This page is intentionally left blank