



AGENDA

SCHOOL ORGANISATION ADVISORY BOARD

Thursday, 8th January, 2009, at 10.30 am

Ask for: **Geoff Mills/Karen Mannering**

Council Chamber, Sessions House, County Hall, Maidstone

Telephone **(01622) 694289/694367**

Tea/Coffee will be available from 10.15am outside the meeting room

UNRESTRICTED ITEMS

(During these items the meeting is likely to be open to the public)

1. Substitutes
2. Declarations of Interests by Members in items on the Agenda for this meeting.
3. Minutes - 10 December 2008 (Pages 1 - 4)
4. Fleetdown Infant Fleetdown Junior Schools, Dartford - Proposed Amalgamation (Pages 5 - 18)
5. Proposed Closure of Tunbridge Wells (Community) High School to replace with a Government Funded Academy (Pages 19 - 40)
6. Proposed Closure of Bradbourne (Foundation) School for Girls and Wildernesse (Foundation) School for Boys, to replace with a Government Funded Academy (Pages 41 - 56)
7. Proposed Closure of Linden Grove (Community) Primary School and Ashford Christ Church of England (Voluntary Aided) Maths & Computer Specialist College and their Replacement with an all-age Government Funded Academy (Pages 57 - 72)
8. Proposal to Add a Sixth Form to the North (Community) School, Ashford (Pages 73 - 84)
9. Schools Applying for Foundation/Trust Status (Pages 85 - 86)

EXEMPT ITEMS

(At the time of preparing the agenda there were no exempt items. During any such items which may arise the meeting is likely NOT to be open to the public)

Peter Sass
Head of Democratic Services and Local Leadership
(01622) 694002

Tuesday, 30 December 2008

Please note that any background documents referred to in the accompanying papers maybe inspected by arrangement with the officer responsible for preparing the relevant report.

KENT COUNTY COUNCIL**SCHOOL ORGANISATION ADVISORY BOARD**

MINUTES of a meeting of the School Organisation Advisory Board held in the Council Chamber, Sessions House, County Hall, Maidstone on Wednesday, 10 December 2008.

PRESENT: Mrs V J Dagger (Chairman), Mr A D Crowther, Mr M J Northey, Mr A R Poole and Mr M J Vye

ALSO PRESENT: Mr M C Dance and Genders

IN ATTENDANCE: Mr D Adams (Area Education Officer Ashford & Shepway), Mr M Doole (Area Education Officer Thanet & Dover), and Mr G Mills, Democratic Services.

UNRESTRICTED ITEMS

1. Minutes - 5 November 2008
(Item 3)

RESOLVED that the Minutes of the meeting held on 5 November 2008 be agreed as a true record.

2. A New Maintained Secondary School to replace the Hereson (Community) School and Ellington (Community) School for Girls - Ramsgate
(Item 4 – Report by Director – Operations)

(1) This report set out the results of the public consultation on the proposal received from The Local Learning Trust to establish a new Trust school on the Ellington site. An amendment to paragraph 8 of the report was circulated at the meeting confirming the views of the Learning and Skills Council.

(2) Mr Poole said that Hereson and Ellington were two very good schools and he believed the proposals would secure their long term viability. He welcomed the intention of the Trust to continue to maximise the opportunities for single-sex teaching and said Dr Ladyman, the local Member of Parliament, who supported the proposals but had expressed disappointment that the two local grammar schools were not included as part of these proposals. Mr Poole also said that a public right of way adjacent to the site was to be upgraded as part of the terms of a planning application. This upgrading of the right of way appeared to have been delayed for some reason and he wished to see that proposal progressed.

(3) Mr Doole said the promoter of the proposal had confirmed that they would deliver a school which conformed to the County Council's specification and this was supported in their detailed submission. The partners of the prospective Trust are currently pursuing trust status and they have assured the Council that the Trust would be in place prior to September 2009. Also, measures would be put in place

to ensure that students who attended the new school were not disadvantaged in terms of accessing post-16 provision. He also said that because of the timescales the local community had had an extended opportunity to comment on these proposals and he believed that the low level of responses to the consultation was in part as a result of the fact that there was wide ranging support for the proposals within the community and this was reflected particularly in the support of the two governing bodies.

(4) Following further discussion the Advisory Board agreed to the proposal received from the Local Learning Trust, for the establishment of a new trust school to replace the Hereson (Community) School and Ellington (Community) School for Girls, Ramsgate to be established on the Ellington site from September 2009.

3. Repton Park (also known as Templar Barracks), Ashford - Proposed New Primary School Provision - Outcome of Consultation on Proposal
(Item 5 – Report by Director – Operations)

(1) In January of this year a consultation exercise was undertaken on the need for a new maintained primary school to meet the demand for places arising from new housing at Repton Park, Templar Way, Ashford. The outcome of the consultation was reported to the Advisory Board at its meeting in March of this year with the local community fully supporting the provision of a new primary school. In accordance with the legalisation, a competition notice was then issued inviting potential promoters to submit proposals for the new school. At the close of the competition period, one proposal had been received from “The Homewood Trust” which proposed to establish a new foundation school which would conform to the County Council’s specification and the Trust’s submission supported this assurance. The report highlighted the fact that “The Homewood Trust” had not yet been formed but it was the understanding of officers that the Homewood School was currently pursuing Trust status and the formation of the Trust was therefore imminent. Mr Adams also briefed the Advisory Board on the outcome of the public consultation exercise and confirmed that Mrs Elizabeth Tweed, who was unable to attend the meeting of the Advisory Board had confirmed her support for the proposal.

(2) During the course of discussion Members raised a number of issues, particularly in relation to the formation of the Trust and the legal and procedural framework around that. Mr Adams said that the Government’s guidance regarding promoting schools had changed during the course of the competition process. Government guidance was now that a governing body could not promote proposals of this nature and that could only be done by named individuals from the Governing Body. Those individuals would therefore form the Trust with other partners then being added. The Trust would be established on the basis of it being a charitable company limited by guarantee and would be formed using a template provided by the DCSF.

(3) Mr Adams said that whilst he appreciated the concerns, Members had expressed around the formation of the Trust he believed the County Council would be able to work successfully with the promoters and said officers would continue to work with the school and with the family of schools within the area in order to

ensure pupils had the best educational opportunities. He said that the County Council was legally obliged to run a competition process and the stage had now been reached when that needed to be determined. If the Cabinet Member did not make a decision then the matter would have to be referred to the School's Adjudicator. If the proposal was rejected by the Cabinet Member then the County Council would have to re-run the competition process. Mr Adams re-affirmed his view that he believed the County Council could work well with the promoters to establish a successful trust which reflected the needs of pupils and the wider community.

(4) In response to a question regarding the consultation process, Mr Adams said that had been undertaken widely and had included the district and parish council, residents of the Repton Park estate and nearby schools. Also nationally appointed consultants would be undertaking a marketing exercise, part of which would include placing adverts in the local media.

(5) At the conclusion of the discussion one Member of the Board said that they believed the proposal should be deferred until the Trust had been formally established. Another Member said they believed the proposal should not go ahead at present and the competition process should be re-run. Two other Members said that they generally supported the proposal but had reservations around the formation of the Trust. Another Member said the proposal should go forward as presented to Members in the report.

(6) Mrs Dagger confirmed that the final decision on this matter would be taken by Mr Dance, the Cabinet Member for Operations, Resources and Skills. Mr Dance said he very much understood and appreciated the views which had been put forward during the course of discussion.

4. Schools Applying for Foundation/Trust Status *(Item 6 - Report by Director – Operations)*

Members noted this report which informed the Advisory Board of the current situation regarding the Foundation/Trust proposals.

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By: Director Operations

To: School Organisation Advisory Board – 8th January 2009

Subject: FLEETDOWN INFANT FLEETDOWN JUNIOR SCHOOLS,
DARTFORD - PROPOSED AMALGAMATION

Classification: Unrestricted

Summary: This report seeks the views of the School Organisation ADVISORY Board on a proposal to undertake a Public Consultation on the amalgamation of Fleetdown Infant School and Fleetdown Junior School (subject to an exemption under Section 10 of The Education and Inspections Act 2006).

Introduction

1. (1) There are two separate schools, Fleetdown Infant and Fleetdown Junior Schools serving the Brent Ward in Dartford East. See Appendices 1 & 2. Both are Community Schools.

(2) The head teachers of both schools have notified their respective Governing Bodies of their intention to retire in December 2009.

(3) The Kent Primary Strategy recommendation for linked Junior and Infant schools, is that when a change of headteacher is notified then the local authority should consider amalgamation.

(4) The local authority will need to apply to the Secretary of State for an exemption to the need to invite proposals to promote a new school under Section 7 of The Education and Inspections Act 2006. This exemption procedure is described in Section 10 of The Education and Inspections Act 2006 and the DCSF guide, "Establishing a New Maintained Mainstream School - A Guide for Local Authorities".

Background

2. (1) The Lower Super Output Area (LSOA) that these schools are sited in is ranked at 755 (out of 883) on the Index of Multiple Deprivation in Kent, indicating that the LSOA is amongst the least deprived in Kent (Analysis and Information Team, KCC).

(2) The IDACI (Income Deprivation Affecting Children Index, a sub-domain of the IMD which relates specifically to children rather than for the whole population) is scored at 770, indicating that the children of the LSOA are amongst the least deprived in Kent.

(3) The two schools are on the same site. The schools have separate staffing structures and governing bodies. The Published Admissions Number of the Infant School reduced from 70 to 60 under primary strategy. And the intention was to reduce the Junior Schools admissions number in line with this in due course. The Infant School has a maintained nursery class.

(4) The head teachers of both the schools have indicated that they will be retiring from their schools in December 2009

(5) Kent County Council has had a policy of supporting the amalgamation of infant and junior schools since 1992 as part of "Children First – A Primary Strategy for Kent". The Kent Primary Strategy 2006 continued this policy with recommendations 14 and 15:

14. All-through primary schools, rather than separate infant and junior schools, are generally preferred, as they help to eliminate barriers to children's learning by providing continuity of experiences, which in turn leads to an overall higher quality of educational achievement.

15. Amalgamation of separate infant and junior schools should be considered when it becomes known that a headteacher is about to leave.

(6) The governing bodies of both schools have voted in favour of proceeding to a Public Consultation with a view to amalgamation.

(7) Fleetdown Junior and Fleetdown Infant schools have well-established, on-site provision for teaching children with impaired hearing.

(8) Both schools are part of the Dartford West Local Children's Services partnership.

The Proposal

3. (Subject to receiving an exemption under Section 10 of the Education and Inspections Act 2006)

(1) To discontinue Fleetdown Junior School and Fleetdown Infant School on 31 December 2009.

(2) To amalgamate the two schools to form a new 2 FE (420 place) Community Primary School for pupils aged 3-11 years, retaining in full the existing provision for children with impaired hearing. All existing pupils at the Infant and Junior Schools will transfer into the new school.

(3) The view of the SOAB is sought on undertaking a public consultation on the proposal to amalgamate the two schools.

Site Issues

4. (1) The schools occupy the same site on Lunedale Road, Dartford, Kent. See plan at Appendix 3

(2) There is a common vehicular entrance and both schools have separate pedestrian entrances.

(3) The schools were built in the 1960s to serve the Fleet Estate in Dartford.

(4) The school buildings are flat roof, brick built on two floors. The general

state of the accommodation is adequate.

(5) There are several outside play areas and three green spaces nearby which the schools use for sports and environmental science studies.

(6) Within a mile radius of the development there are five Primary schools: Brent CPS, Stone, St Mary's CEPS, Gateway CPS, York Road Junior and, St Albans Infant. See Appendix 4.

(7) Within two miles there are six more primary schools. Darenth CPS, Oakfield CPS, Sutton at Hone CPS, Westgate CPS, Temple Hill CPS and St Anselm's RC PS. See Appendix 5.

Resource Implications

5.

Capital

(1) In order for the amalgamated school to operate effectively, it would be preferable to consider some refurbishment and refreshment of the school buildings. It is anticipated that capital to support this will be available in a future capital programme.

Revenue

(2) The proposed amalgamation would be eligible for support from the re-organisation fund. The new school will receive a lump sum of 47,500 and an additional sum if one or both of the schools are eligible for curriculum protection in the year of amalgamation. Based on pupil numbers for 2008-09 the new school would receive an additional £45,318 from the re-organisation fund. The one off funding is intended to support the revenue costs of the associated amalgamation.

(3) There would be efficiency savings in the senior management structure, support staff and in the maintenance of the schools.

Human

(4) An interim governing body would need to be established to oversee the amalgamation and with an early duty to appoint a headteacher. This would ultimately be replaced by a new governing body for the amalgamated school.

(5) The staff of both schools would transfer into the new school, with an alignment of posts once the new school is established. The number and grading of posts below that of headteacher and deputy headteacher would be determined by the interim governing body within the budget available. The posts of headteacher and deputy headteacher would be advertised locally and nationally.

(6) There will also be some impact on support staff, but any adverse impact will be kept to a minimum.

(7) In the event of any redundancies being necessary, full support and advice would be available to all staff in search of suitable alternative employment.

Transport and Road Safety Implications

6. (1) The amalgamation of the two schools is not expected to cause any additional problems or issues. Most of the pupils live locally (see appendices 3 & 4).
- (2) The Fasttrack bus service passes by the Fleet estate along Princes Road to the North.
- (3) A preliminary School Travel plan will be produced prior to the opening of the school.

Environmental Impact

7. (1) The school primarily serves the local community area of Fleet. There is no expected increase in environmental impact.

Equality Issues

8. (1) PLASC data for the Fleetdown schools records a low percentage of pupils with an ethnicity that is not White English or Other White British. Assessment: Low.

Ofsted

9. (1) Fleetdown Junior School was last inspected in January 2008 and rated as a good school:

“This is a good school which provides a good education for pupils and prepares them well for the next stage of their education. Pupils make good progress in all year groups because of good teaching and a curriculum which meets their needs effectively. “

- (2) Fleetdown Infant School was last inspected in January 2008 and rated as a good school:

“This is a good school which has a number of real strengths. Pupils of all abilities grow in confidence and achieve well. It is popular with parents, who express overwhelmingly positive views, typically referring to Fleetdown as 'a welcoming school'.”

- (3) It is anticipated that the amalgamation will result in a positive impact on overall standards for the young people of the Fleet area of Dartford and for improved life opportunities in the local communities.

Exemption under Section 10 of the Education and Inspections Act 2006 (EIA 2006)

10. (1) From 25 May 2007 a new statutory framework applies for the establishment of any new school. The new provisions will apply in all circumstances where it is intended to establish a new school.
- (2) Where the Local Authority wishes to see a new school established it must

either:

(i) invite proposals for the school as provided for in Section 7 of The Education and Inspections Act 2006 and The School Organisation (Establishment and Discontinuance) (England) Regulations 2007 (SI: 2007 No 1288) (as amended). The process is generally referred to as a “competition”.

or

(ii) apply to the Secretary of State for consent to publish proposals for a new school, without running a competition, as provided for in Section 10 of EIA 2006. This process is generally referred to as an “exemption”

(3) The DCSF guide, “Establishing a New Maintained Mainstream School - A Guide for Local Authorities” states in Part B that:

“9. All applications will be considered on their merits taking into account the particular circumstances and factors that apply. However, Ministers have indicated they might be prepared to give consent in the following circumstances:

- straightforward amalgamations of infant and junior schools where a replacement primary school is proposed;”

(4) An exemption is applied for after a Public Consultation has taken place and before the Statutory notice is published. Details of the exemption applied for should be incorporated as part of the Public Consultation as the Secretary of State requires that the following are consulted before the exemption conditions can be considered satisfied:

- (i) any local authority likely to be affected by the proposals
- (ii) the governing bodies and staff of the school
- (iii) the staff of any other school that may be affected
- (iv) families of children at the school
- (v) families of children at any other school who may be affected by the proposals
- (vi) any trade unions who represent staff at the school or affected schools
- (vii) the local C of E and RC dioceses
- (viii) anyone else who has previously expressed an interest in setting up a school
- (ix) MPs whose constituencies include the schools that are the subject of
- (x) the proposals or whose constituents are likely to be affected by the proposals
- (xi) the local district or parish council where the proposed school is to be situated
- (xii) the Local Children’s Services Partnership
- (xiii) such other persons as appear to the LA to be appropriate
- (xiv) any other interested party
- (xv) Under Section 176 of the Education Act 2002, local authorities and governing bodies are under a duty to consult pupils on any proposed changes to local school organisation that may affect them.

A Kent County Council Public Consultation would consult with the above as a matter of course.

(5) An exemption is applied for using Annex D of Section 10 of The Education and Inspections Act 2006. There is a six week target for decisions to be returned.

(6) If the Secretary of State grants an exemption, then the decision documentation will form part of the report to SOAB to seek their recommendation to publish a Public Notice.

(7) If the cabinet member agrees to submit the proposal to statutory public notice, the Secretary of State's decision must be referred to in the Public Notice.

Views of the Governing Bodies

12. (1) The Governing body of both schools are fully supportive of the amalgamation and wish to see it proceed at pace.

Views of Local Children Services Partnership Board

13. The LCSP Manager, Karen Coffey has been informed and is in favour of the proposal.

Views of Local Member(s)

14. The Local Member, Christine Angell has been informed of the proposal.

Views of District Council

15. Dartford Borough Council has been informed of the proposal.

Views of the Area Children Services Officer

16. (1) The proposal is supported by all stakeholders and in my opinion should be allowed to proceed.

(2) Both Governing Bodies have independently of the local authority, met with schools across North West Kent who have amalgamated and have, independently of each other, agreed that amalgamation would benefit the current and future children in their schools.

(3) The Governing Bodies seek to appoint the Head teacher of the new school by November 2009 and have requested that the local authority proceed at pace with this proposal.

(4) The Area Children Services Officer considers that this is an innovative proposal, designed to enhance the life opportunities of young people in the Dartford East district. It is therefore, appropriate to conduct a public consultation for the amalgamation of the two schools.

Proposed Timetable

17.	08 Jan 2009	SOAB
	12 Jan 2009	Start of Consultation
	13 Jan 2009	Public Meeting
	23 Feb 2009	Close of Consultation
	27 Feb 2009	Annex D to Secretary of State
	10 Apr 2009	Secretary' of State's decision received

23 Apr 2009	SOAB – Outcome of Consultation
Early May 2009	Cabinet Member Decision to issue Public Notice
Early May 2009	Public Notice issued, if agreed by Cabinet Member
Jun 2009	End of Statutory Representation Period
Late June/July 09	Cabinet Member decision in proposal
Jun 2009	Establish Temporary Governing Body
31 Dec 2009	School Governing Bodies dissolved
01 Jan 2010	New School opens

Recommendation

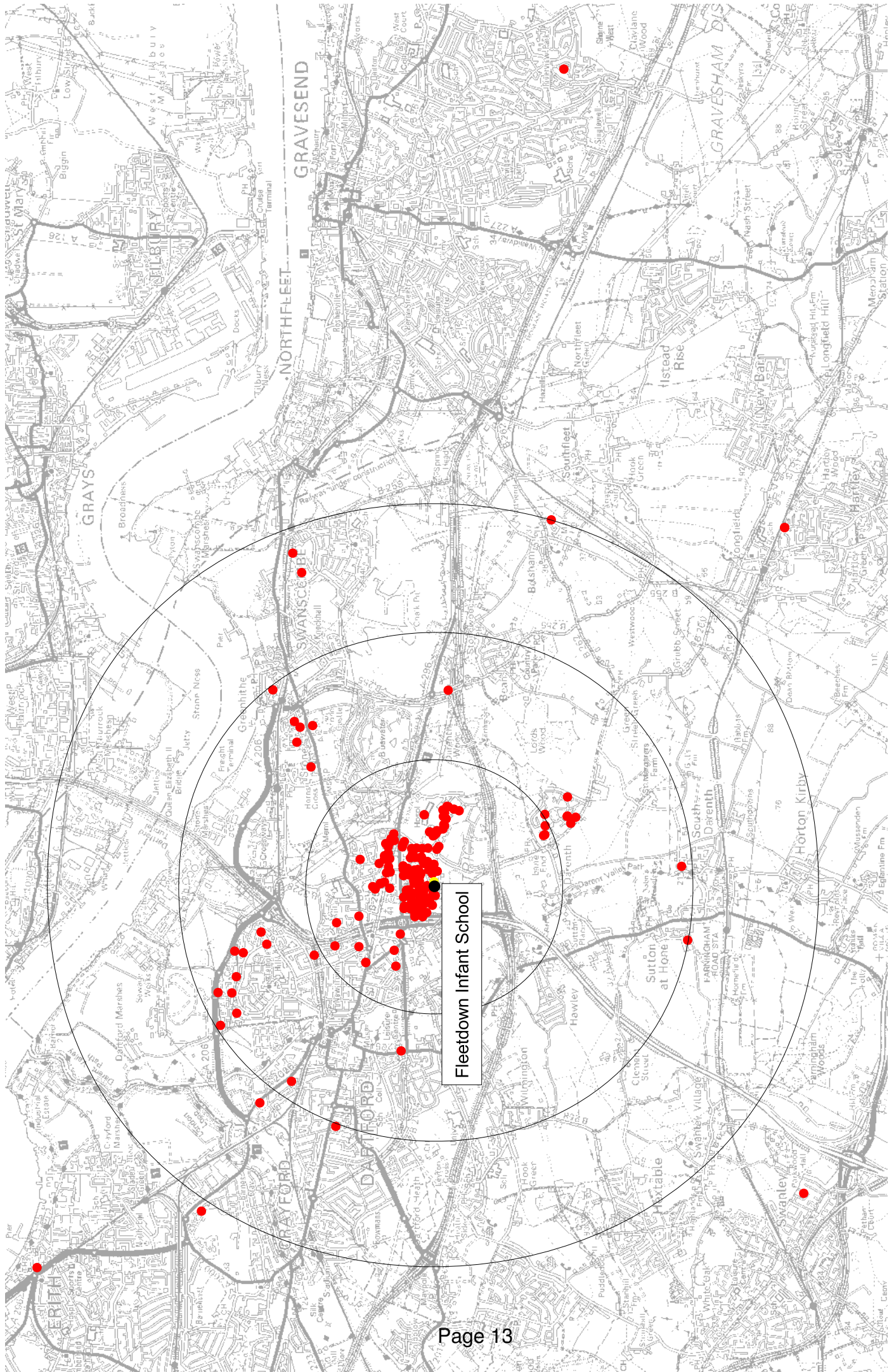
18. Members of the School Organisation Advisory Board are asked to agree to submit the proposal to amalgamate Fleetdown Infant and Fleetdown Junior Schools to public consultation.

Simon Webb
Area Children's services Officer, Dartford & Gravesham
Tel: 01732 525110

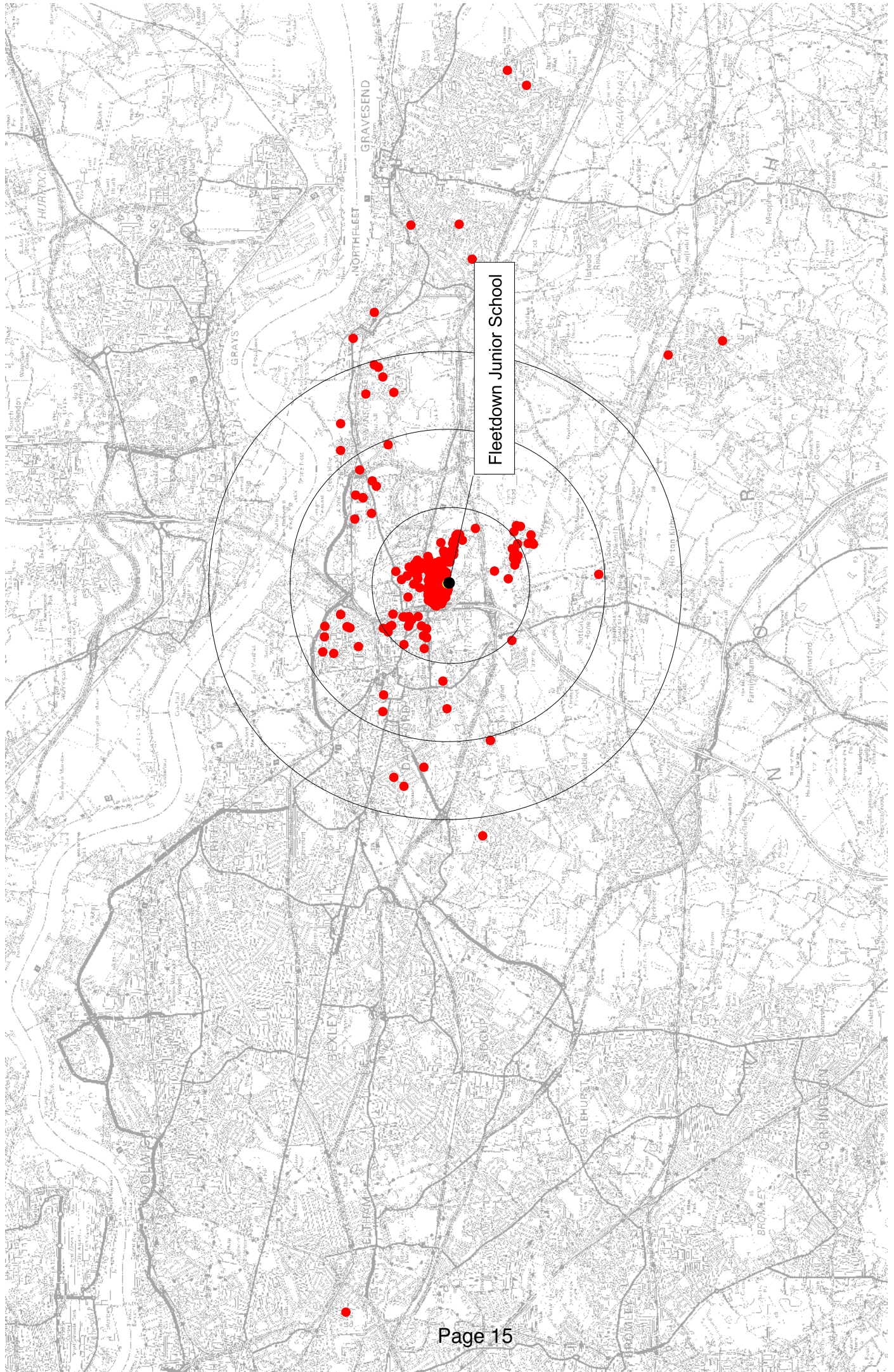
The Local Member is Mrs Christine Angell

Background documents:
Other Information Sources

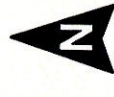
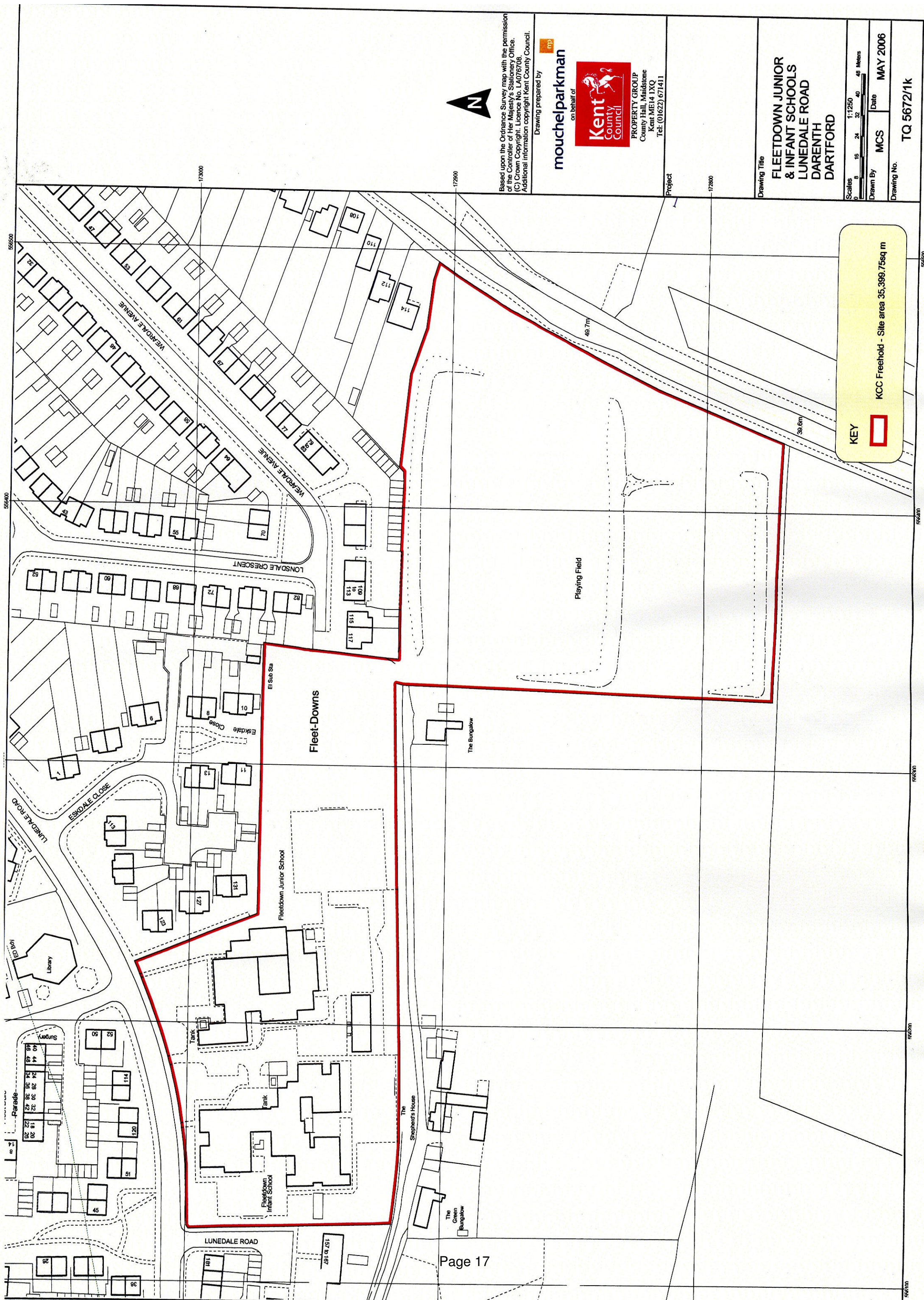
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Drawing prepared by
mouchelparkman
 on behalf of



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Drawing Title

**FLEETDOWN JUNIOR
 & INFANT SCHOOLS
 LUNEDALE ROAD
 DARENTH
 DARTFORD**


Scales 1:1250
 0 8 16 24 32 40 48 Meters

Drawn By **MCS** Date **MAY 2006**

Drawing No.

TQ 5672/1k

KEY

 **KCC Freehold - Site area 35,399.75sq m**

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By: Director - Operations

To: School Organisation Advisory Board – 8 January 2009

Subject: PROPOSED CLOSURE OF TUNBRIDGE WELLS (COMMUNITY) HIGH SCHOOL TO REPLACE WITH A GOVERNMENT FUNDED ACADEMY

Classification: Unrestricted

Summary: This report presents the results of a public consultation exercise undertaken on the proposal to close Tunbridge Wells High School in order that it may be replaced with a government funded Academy. It seeks the views of the School Organisation Advisory Board on the issuing of a Public Notice to close the school.

Introduction

1. [1] The School Organisation Advisory Board, at its meeting on 5 November 2008, supported a recommendation to consult on the proposal to close Tunbridge Wells (Community) High School (TWHS), in order that it may be replaced with a government funded Academy.

[2] This report sets out the results of the public consultation exercise that took place between 10 November 2008 and 19 December 2008.

Background

2. (1) Tunbridge Wells High School is a small, non selective, secondary school located to the east of Tunbridge Wells town. A location map and a site plan are attached as Appendices 1 and 2. The school's age range was re-designated from 11-19 to 11-16 in September 2008, following a formal process. Most students currently access post 16 provision at West Kent College (which is a co-sponsor to this Academy proposal). The school had a roll of 404 students in Years 7 to 11, on PLASC 2008.

(2) Tunbridge Wells High serves an urban community within Tunbridge Wells town and very few students are drawn from further than 3 miles of the school (Appendix 3 comprises a student distribution map). Students come from an area which is marked by unexpected levels of social disadvantage within the Royal Borough, with the majority living on the Sherwood Park estate, the most deprived ward in the Borough, recognised as one of the 20% most deprived wards in Kent and Medway.

(3) The socio-economic profile of the current student intake at Tunbridge Wells High School is well below national and Kent averages. The percentage of students identified as having Special Educational Needs is very high at 62.9%. The percentage of students eligible for free school meals is 24.3%, which is considerably above the National average of 13.6% and Kent average of 7.9%. In 2007, 9.4% of students had English as an additional

language and nearly 20% of the school roll is admitted at varying times throughout the school year.

(4) In terms of attainment, 43% of students gained 5 or more GCSEs at A*-C in 2007. This had risen from 24% in 2003. The percentage of students gaining 5 or more A*-C, including English and Maths, had risen from 10% in 2003, to 22% in 2007. This led to the school being included in the DCSF 'National Challenge', earlier this year, despite its Contextual Value Added being consistently so high as to place Tunbridge Wells High School in the top 6% of schools nationally for four successive years. 2008 GCSE results are, as yet, provisional but suggest 66% GCSE A*-C, dropping to 13% when including only English and Maths. The disappointing GCSE A*-C results when including English and Maths, however, make the school eligible for inclusion in the Academy programme.

(5) This provides a 'one off' opportunity to transform life chances for young people in Tunbridge Wells, many of whom are currently choosing to travel outside of Tunbridge Wells for their secondary schooling. The vision for The Tunbridge Wells Academy is to create an exceptional school which embeds an ethos of high academic standards reflected in good student attainment, increased levels of post-16 participation, together with a highly innovative, vocationally based, curriculum that utilises the expertise of all sponsors. There will be an unremitting focus on tackling low levels of prior attainment and on raising standards to ensure that young people are equipped with the skills and knowledge to access higher level learning.

[6] The Tunbridge Wells Academy will specialise in Science and Engineering with a strong priority being given to the Academy's profile in Technology and Mathematics. Consistent with the vocational vision, the Academy will also be a centre of excellence for the development of business skills and enterprise. There will be a focus on the five Every Child Matters (ECM) outcomes for children and young people within the context of Children's Trust arrangements in Kent.

Academy Proposal

3. (1) The Tunbridge Wells Academy will be established following the necessary closure of Tunbridge Wells High School. The lead sponsor for The Tunbridge Wells Academy will be the Skinners Voluntary Aided Grammar School, while co-sponsors will be West Kent College and Kent County Council (KCC).

(2) The Tunbridge Wells Academy will be an 11-18 co-educational school for all abilities. It will have 6 forms of entry and admit up to 180 students into Year 7. The number of post 16 places available will be 250, taking the roll to a possible 1,150 by 2015. It is proposed that the Tunbridge Wells Academy will open in September 2009, in existing buildings and move into new purpose built premises from September 2012.

(3) Sponsors intend that the Academy will be a place in which all learners have a sense of identity, worth, aspiration and belonging, so that they can develop to the extent of their capabilities and achieve the 5 ECM outcomes for children and young people. The Academy will adopt and adapt the key transferable features that constitute a stable, supportive home life and a healthy, successful working life. The Academy should resemble a village rather than a school.

[4] Collectively, the Sponsors are able to draw upon considerable skills and expertise in the fields of learning, school and college management and the new learning technologies. The Academy will bring about a culture change and raise the attainment,

ambition, thrill of creativity and aspiration for all the young people in its care, building on everything that makes Tunbridge Wells High School a high achieving school.

Consultation Process

4. (1) A Public Consultation Document, attached as Appendix 4, was widely distributed. 'Hard copies' of the document were provided to all parents/carers, students, staff and governors of Tunbridge Wells High School. In addition, schools in all the West Kent Local Children's Services Partnerships and secondary schools in the West Kent Learning Federation received copies of the document. Copies also went to the Local Member, all West Kent Members, other County Councillors, the local Member of Parliament, Tunbridge Wells Borough Council, the Learning and Skills Council, the Dioceses of Rochester and Canterbury, the Archdiocese of Southwark, neighbouring Local Authorities, all Tunbridge Wells District Parish Councils and local libraries. Approximately 1,200 copies of the document were circulated and it was also made available on the Kent County Council website, with an opportunity to respond electronically as well as via the Reply Form included in the Public Consultation Document.

(2) Running concurrently with the consultation to close Tunbridge Wells High School, the DCSF appointed project management consultants, PKF, have been sharing the vision for an Academy with the school's community and wider local stakeholders groups. A website for the Academy has been established at www.proposedtunbridgewellsacademy.org. The first newsletter about the Academy, available on the website, has been very widely circulated in the local community including a hard copy to all TWHS students as well as to prospective future students in Years 5 and 6 in Tunbridge Wells LCSP primary schools.

(3) A Public Meeting was held at Tunbridge Wells High School on 4 December 2008. Mrs Valerie Dagger, Chairman of SOAB and Member for Malling West, chaired the meeting. The panel comprised, Ms Chris Lay, Area Children's Services Officer for Sevenoaks and Tunbridge Wells, and Mr David Adams, Area Children's Services Officer for Ashford and Shepway. In attendance were Mr Kevin Lynes, Local Member, together with representatives from the Academy's sponsors and from PKF, the project management consultants. Also present were the Chairman and Vice Chairman of Governors to Tunbridge Wells High School.

[4] 20 people registered their attendance.

Responses to the Public Consultation

Written Responses

5. (1) A summary of written responses is attached as Appendix 5.

(2) As of 12 December 2008, 25 responses have been received, of which 24 are in favour, and 1 is opposed. As the consultation closes a few days after the deadline for reports for this meeting, a final version of this Appendix will be presented at the meeting.

Public Meeting

(3) A summary of the main issues raised and responses given, at the Public Meeting, on 4 December 2008, is attached as Appendix 6.

Views of Local Member

6. (1) The Local Member is Kevin Lynes. He fully supports the proposal and was pleased, at the Public Meeting, to provide a ringing endorsement of what he believes an Academy will provide, not only to the Sherwood Park community, to which he has a particular commitment, but to social cohesion across Tunbridge Wells as a whole.

Views of Local Member of Parliament

7. The views of Greg Clark MP have not yet been received.

Views of Tunbridge Wells Borough Council

8. The views of Tunbridge Wells Borough Council are awaited.

Views of the Governing Body

9. (1) The Governing Body of Tunbridge Wells High School is in support of proposals for the establishment of an Academy.

Views of Students

10. (1) The Student Council of Tunbridge Wells High School, recognises that change is always challenging and can cause some apprehension. The prospect of an Academy and the enhanced facilities it could provide is, however, very exciting and the Council expects that it will offer all students an enhanced curriculum.

Views of the Partnership Board

11. (1) The Tunbridge Wells Local Children's Services Partnership Board welcomes this proposal and is fully supportive of all that it sets out to achieve for Tunbridge Wells as a whole.

Views of the Learning and Skills Council

12. (1) The views of the Learning and Skills Council are awaited.

Views of the Area Children's Services Officer

13. [1] The Area Children's Services Officer considers that this proposal provides an excellent 'once in a lifetime' opportunity to secure transformational educational facilities for students of all abilities living in Tunbridge Wells.

Transport, Admissions and Community Impact

14. (1) Securing sustainable methods of travel for students is central to the establishment of an Academy in Tunbridge Wells. With the increase in the numbers of students on site envisaged, it will be crucial to ensure that an appropriate school travel plan is in place upon the opening of the Academy. Students will be encouraged to travel to school

through the most sustainable methods possible, including encouraging a good uptake of the Kent Freedom Pass.

Resource Implications

Capital

14. (1) The Academy build will be DCSF funded. Should any part of the current Tunbridge Wells High School site be disposed of, however, the DCSF would expect a contribution to the capital costs of the Academy and this would be negotiated at a corporate level within the context of Kent's BSF programme.

Revenue

(2) The Academy will receive its revenue funding directly from the DCSF each year. It will be funded at a rate equivalent to other Kent specialist schools, plus it will have a proportional share of central Local Authority costs.

Human

(3) Consultation would take place in accordance with the requirements of TUPE (Transfer of Undertakings, Protection of Employment, Regulations 1981). Costs of new staffing (TUPE applies to current staff) and costs associated with TUPE, including any valid redundancies of staff that cannot transfer or be deployed elsewhere in Kent schools, would be negotiated with the DCSF on a case by case basis, but are usually borne by the DCSF.

Equality Issues

15. (1) There are no specific equality implications arising from this proposal.

School Improvement Implications

16. [1] The closure of the current school to provide for the establishment of an Academy will lead to new 'state of the art' facilities, curriculum innovation, together with the recruitment and retention of high quality staff. The investment in facilities and curriculum, together with the funding flexibility that the Academy will bring, will have a positive impact on current standards of attainment and provide improved life opportunities for the local community.

[2] Tunbridge Wells High School has been inspected since the proposal to proceed to Public Consultation was agreed at the SOAB meeting of 5 November 2008. It was judged as being 'Satisfactory' overall.

Proposed Timetable

17. Report to School Organisation Advisory Board	8 January 2009
Cabinet Member decision	Mid January 2009
Issue Public Notice	End January 2009
End of Statutory Objection Period	Mid March 2009
Cabinet Member Decision	End March 2009
Implementation (subject to outcome)	31 August 2009

Recommendation

18. The views of the School Organisation Advisory Board are sought on the issuing of a Public Notice to close Tunbridge Wells High School in order for it to be replaced with a government funded Academy.

Name Chris Lay
Title Area Children's Services Officer
Area Sevenoaks and Tunbridge Wells
Tel: 01732 525107

The Local Member is Mr Kevin Lynes

Background Documents:

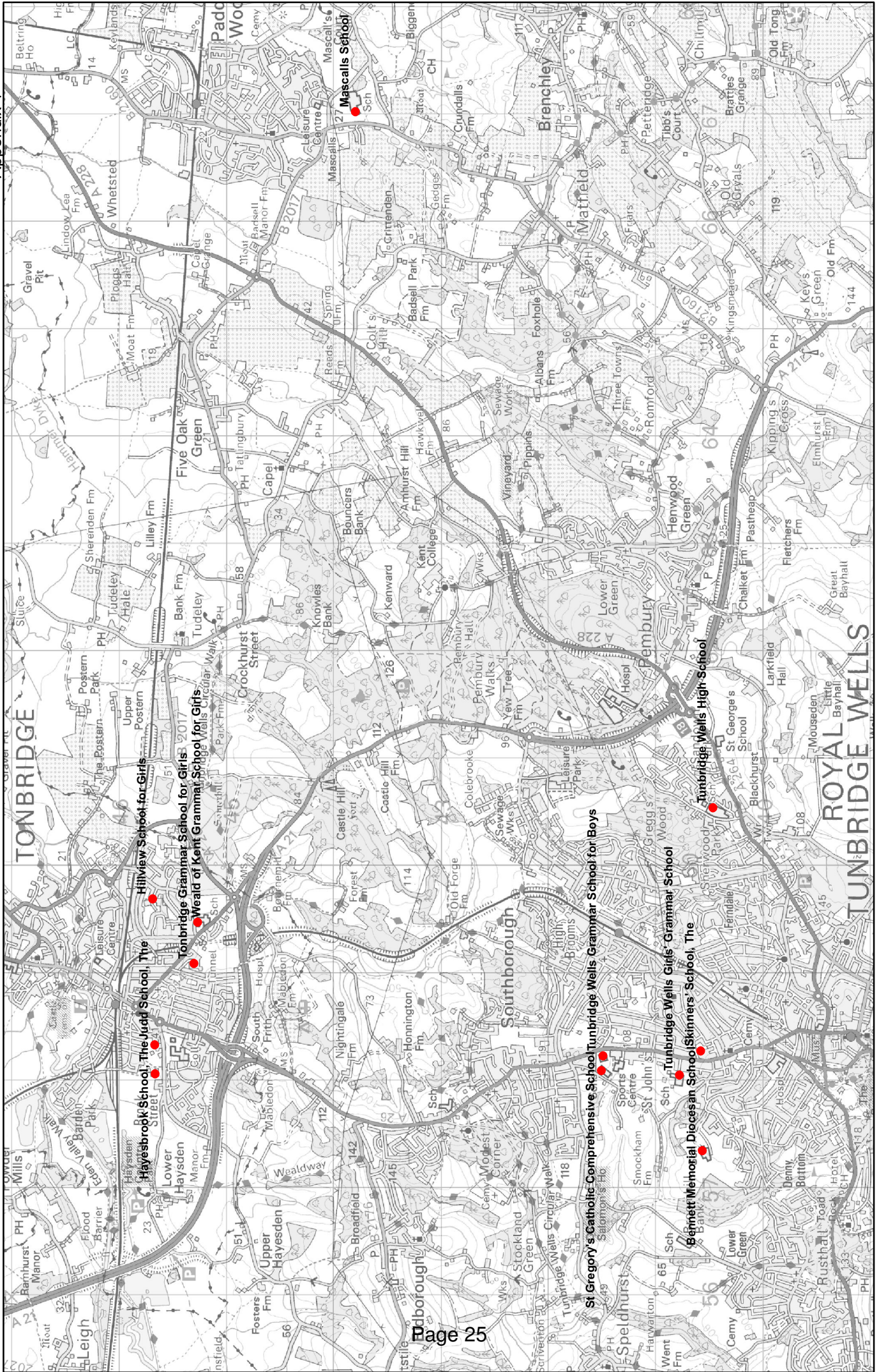
Academy Newsletter available on the PKF website www.proposedtunbridgewellsacademy.org

Previous Committee Reports:

School Organisation Advisory Board – 5 November 2008

Location of Tunbridge Wells High School

Appendix 1

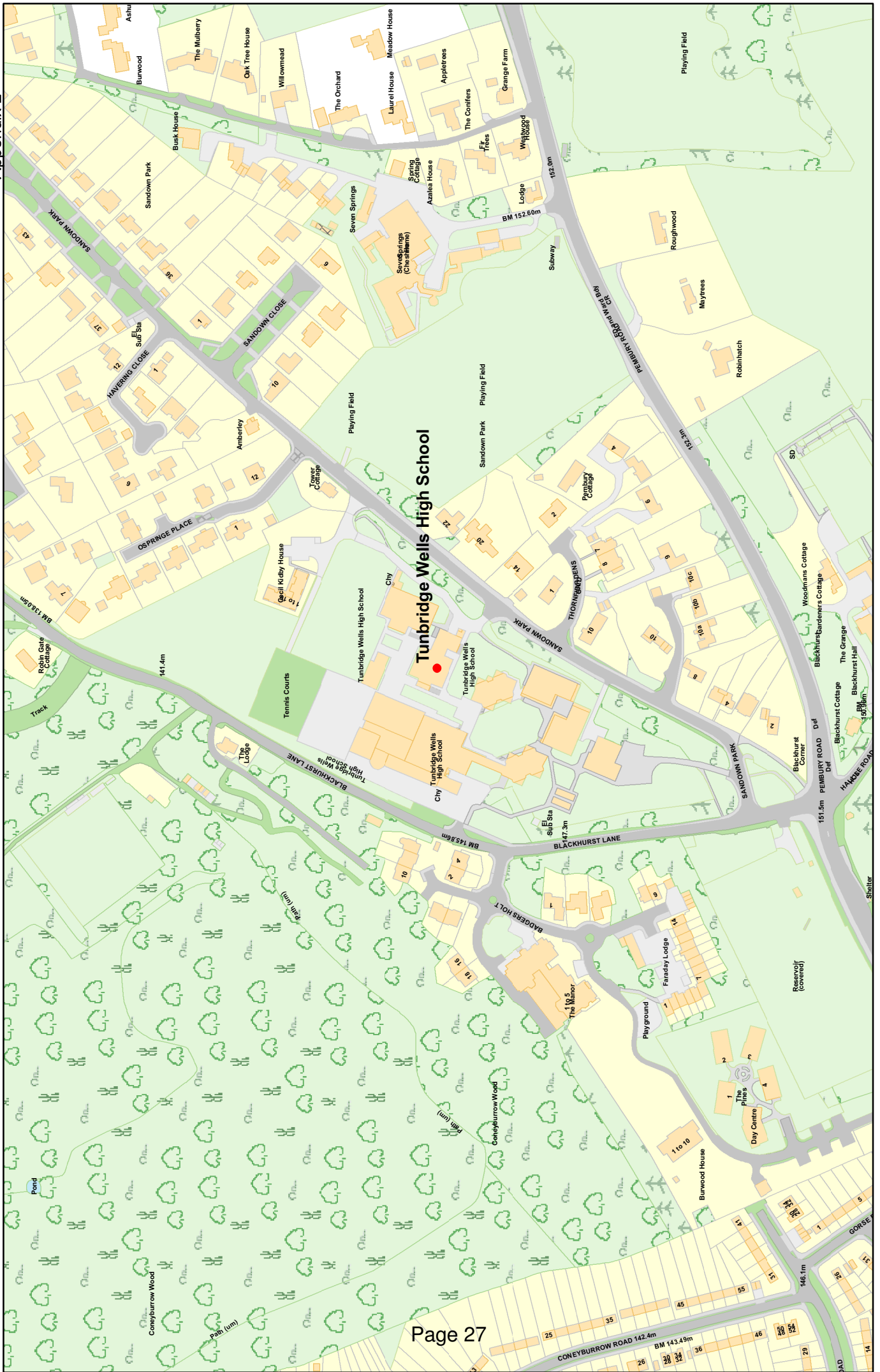


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Site plan of Tunbridge Wells High School

Appendix 2



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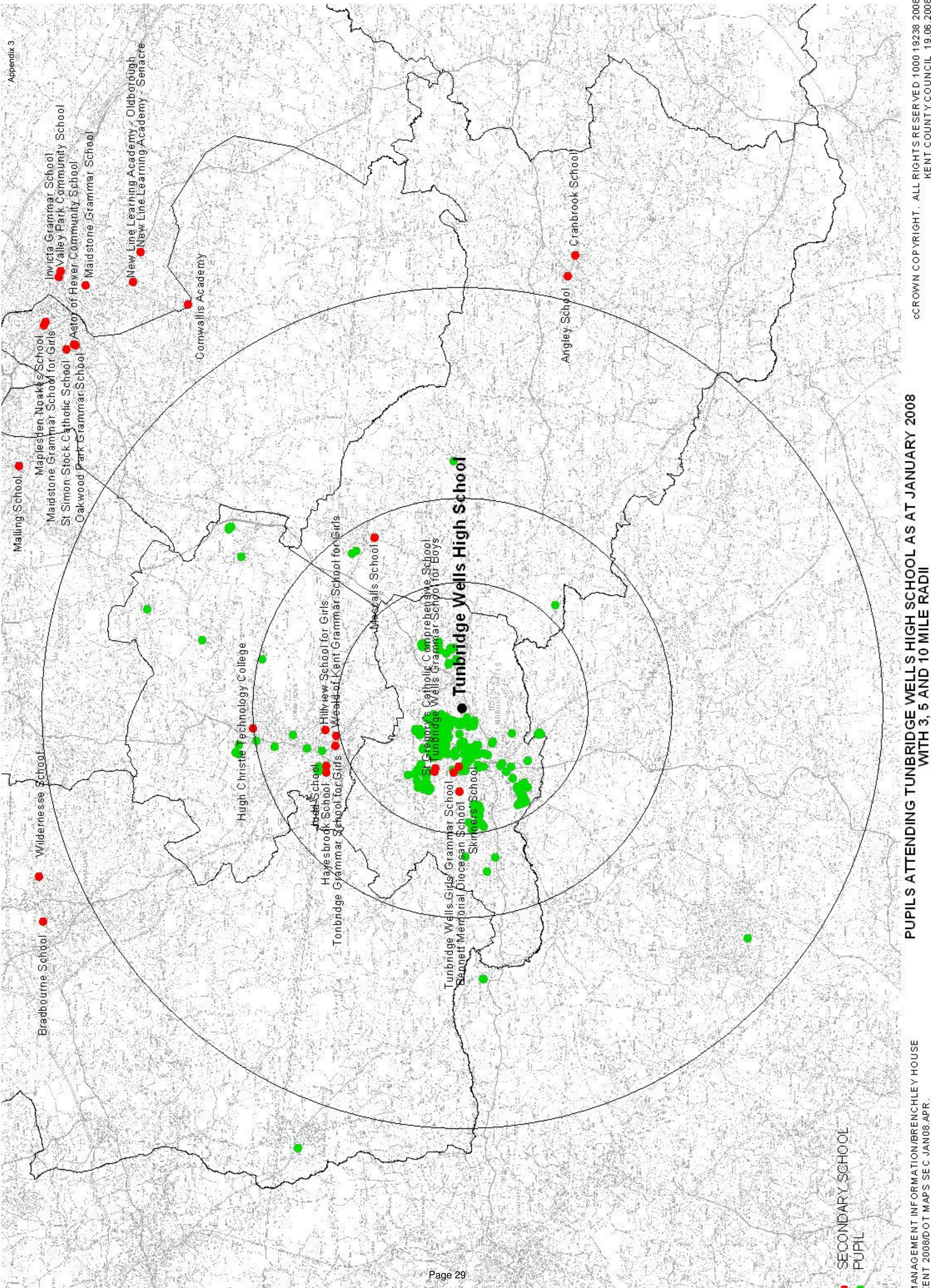
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● SECONDARY SCHOOL
● PUPIL

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Public Consultation

Proposal to close Tunbridge Wells High School to replace with a new Government funded Academy



Page 81

Kent County Council would like to hear your views on this proposal



Children, Families & Education Directorate



Kent County Council is considering a proposal to close Tunbridge Wells High School in order to open a Government funded Academy. We want to know what you think of this.

Your views, as key stakeholders, are important and will help shape what happens. This document gives you the opportunity to share your thoughts and invites you to a Public Meeting to talk about the proposal and to ask questions. It is written mainly for parents/carers, governors, staff, students and other people who have an interest in education in the area.

There are two strands to this consultation process. This one, led by the County Council, is about the need to close Tunbridge Wells High School in order to make way for an Academy to replace it. The second strand is a separate but linked consultation about the opening of an Academy.

Academies are state maintained schools but independent of the County Council and so consultation about them is led by Project Management Consultants on behalf of the sponsors and appointed by the Department for Children, Schools and Families (DCSF). We work very closely together, however, and attend each other's consultation activities. There will be a number of opportunities for you to tell us what you think and to ask questions about the proposed Academy.

Further details about the proposed Academy can be accessed from the website address below, which is managed by PKF, the Project Management Consultants for this Academy: - www.proposedtunbridgewellsacademy.org

Please note that there is a Reply Form at the back of this document for you to send in your comments if you would like to. No decisions will be made until this consultation process is completed and your views will inform the outcome.

Tunbridge Wells High School

Tunbridge Wells Community High School, with a roll of circa 400 students, is a small 11-16 mixed, non-selective secondary school, located to the east of Tunbridge Wells, about one mile from the town centre, off the main Pembury Road.

It is the only community high school in Tunbridge Wells town. There are also three single-sex grammar schools and two co-educational, comprehensive, church schools. A large number of local students travel to other grammar and non-selective schools both within Kent and across county borders.

Tunbridge Wells High School mostly serves an urban community within the town and very few students come from further afield. Many come from backgrounds marked by unexpected levels of disadvantage. Their attainment, on entry, is well below the national and county average. The numbers of students with Special Educational Needs and those eligible for Free School Meals are also above the national and county averages.

The roll of the school has been falling in recent years despite significant improvement in its 5 A*-Cs GCSE results and despite being rated as 'Good' at its last Ofsted inspection, in 2005. Tunbridge Wells High School is, however, part of the DCSF 'National Challenge' initiative for those schools who gain fewer than 30% GCSE A*-C, with English and Maths. This makes it eligible for consideration within the DCSF Academies Programme.

*Dr Ian Craig, Director - Operations
Children, Families and Education, Kent County Council
10 November 2008*

What is an Academy?

Academies are publicly funded independent schools that provide a first class, free education to local students of all abilities. Each Academy is unique, able to provide local solutions for local needs, drawing on the expertise of sponsors to deliver a distinctive ethos. They have the flexibility to be creative in their curriculum, timetabling, organisation and governance arrangements. All offer a broad and balanced curriculum, consistent with national curriculum requirements and focus on one or more specialisms.

Successful Academies share specialist experience and facilities with other primary, secondary and special schools, together with the local community. In this way they play their part in the regeneration of communities, providing a focus for learning and for raising aspiration.

They are all-ability schools established by Sponsors from a range of backgrounds including business, faith or voluntary groups working in highly innovative partnerships with central Government and local education and multi agency partners. The Department for Children, Schools and Families (DCSF) meets the running costs for Academies in full.

What does this proposal mean?

The proposal is that Tunbridge Wells High School will be closed at the end of August 2009 so that an Academy can open in its place. The Lead Sponsor for the Academy will be the Skinners' Voluntary Aided Grammar School, within the Skinners' Company. Co-sponsors will be West Kent College and Kent County Council. There are already strong partnership initiatives between the Sponsors and Tunbridge Wells High School. These will be built upon by the Academy.

Why is KCC proposing this change?

The need for this Academy is simple – to transform a 20th century school into a 21st century one that can deliver a 21st century curriculum and learning environment for Tunbridge Wells.

Collectively, the Sponsors are able to draw upon considerable skills and expertise in the fields of academic and vocational learning, business and enterprise, school and college management and the new learning technologies. Embedding vocational learning into the Academy's curriculum will ensure that students have a wider range of curriculum options and provide for both academic and vocational pathways. There is a commitment to the Academy's provision being complementary to that of the other local secondary schools in the West Kent Learning Federation.

The Academy will be at the heart of its local community, offering a hub for family and life long learning, and providing sporting and cultural activities, together with the delivery of a wide range of essential services for families and local residents, within the context of Children's Trust arrangements in Kent. The Academy will bring about a culture change and raise the attainment, ambition and aspiration of all the young people in its care.

The closure of the current school to provide for the establishment of an Academy will lead to new purpose designed and built facilities and curriculum innovation, together with the recruitment and retention of high quality staff. It presents an opportunity to radically reshape the educational provision available and to secure resources that the Academy programme can deliver to make an enduring difference to life chances for young people.

The Academy will open from September 2009 in existing but refurbished premises. New 'state of the art' buildings are expected to be completed for September 2012 and will be located within the current school site.

It will be an 11-18 co-educational school for all abilities and will admit up to 180 students in each year group. There will be 250 places available in the sixth form, taking the roll to a possible 1,150 by 2015. All existing and future Year 7 students will transfer, automatically, to the Academy's roll.

The Academy will specialise in Science and Engineering, with a particular focus on Applied Science and with strong emphasis being given to Technology and Maths. Sponsors intend that the Academy will be a place in which all learners have a sense of identity, worth and excitement about their life chances. The Academy will have a village feel to it, adopting and adapting the key transferable features that make for a stable, supportive home life and a healthy, successful working life.



The Academy in Tunbridge Wells

At the heart of the Academy will be the desire to make a great school which embeds an ethos of high academic standards, reflected in good exam results, both on an absolute and a value-added basis. It will apply principles and practices that already change lives at The Skinners' School and at West Kent College, while losing nothing of what makes Tunbridge Wells High School a high achieving school.

There are two key tenets of the Vision for this Academy. The first is 'INTEGRATION', allowing smooth transition through the phases of education and involving all aspects of community, external and a secure 'home like' school and working life. The second element of the Vision is that 'EVERY CHILD IN THE ACADEMY WILL BE KNOWN', their family embraced and 'EVERY LEARNER SUPPORTED'. The Academy will place the Social, Emotional Aspects of Learning (SEAL) at the core of its curriculum.

Sponsors want the Academy to become a school of choice for Tunbridge Wells, by becoming a high performing specialist school able to attract back into Kent those local students who currently feel it necessary to cross the County borders to access their secondary education.

Key characteristics will include

- A focus on readiness to learn, building students' confidence and self-esteem
- Ensuring discipline and order through the application of clear sanctions and rewards, within a 'house' framework
- Creative partnerships with business to support the application of vocational learning and understanding the wider work environment through the development of entrepreneurial and enterprise skills
- A focus on individual personalised learning

How much will it cost?

Capital

The capital costs of the Academy will borne by the Department for Children Schools and Families (DCSF). Should there be a need to dispose of any part of the Tunbridge Wells High School site, a contribution towards the capital costs would be provided by KCC.

Revenue

The Academy will receive its revenue funding directly from the DCSF each year. It will be funded at a rate equivalent to other Kent specialist schools.

Human

In these circumstances legislation concerning transfer of staff (known as TUPE) is considered to apply and consultation will take place in accordance with these requirements.

Transport and Road Safety Implications

Ensuring that students travel to the Academy using sustainable methods of transport is also at the heart of this proposal. With the increase in numbers envisaged as being on site, a school travel plan will be in place upon the opening of the Academy. Students will be encouraged to take advantage of schemes such as the Kent Freedom Pass, which for £50 per year provides unlimited bus travel to all Kent students in Years 7 to 11.

CONSULTATION TIMETABLE

5 November 2008	Kent County Council's School Organisation Advisory Board meeting to consider a Public Consultation.
10 November 2008	Start of Consultation
4 December 2008	Public Meeting
19 December 2008	Close of Consultation
8 January 2009	School Organisation Advisory Board meeting to consider issuing a Public Notice, following Public Consultation
Mid January 2009	Report to Cabinet Member
End January 2009	Public Notice issued, if agreed by Cabinet Member
Mid March 2009	End of Statutory Representation Period
End March 2009	Final Decisions made
31 August 2009	Tunbridge Wells High School closes and an Academy opens 1 September 2009

What Happens Next?

- All the views received, either in writing, by email or at the Public Meeting, will be reported to the School Organisation Advisory Board of Kent County Council (KCC) on 8 January 2009 at 10.30am. **This is a Public Meeting and reports to it are available on request: Tel: 01622 694289 or 694297**
- **IF** following a Cabinet Member decision, KCC determines to take the proposal forward, a Public Notice will be published in the local newspaper, at the school, and in public places like the library. The Public Notice will run for six weeks, during which time anyone can make a Statutory Objection or a Representation about the proposal.
- **IF** no one objects, KCC can close Tunbridge Wells High School
- **IF** there are objections, the Schools' Adjudicator may be required to make a final decision.
- **Concurrently**, consultation on the Academy proposal itself, will be led by PKF, the Project Management Consultants.
- **NO** decisions will be made until your views are known

HOW TO TELL US WHAT YOU THINK

► Complete and return the Reply Form

Send to:

Ms Chris Lay
Area Children's Services Officer,
(Sevenoaks & Tunbridge Wells)
17 Kings Hill Avenue
Kings Hill
West Malling
Kent ME19 4UL
Fax: 01732 525223
(your comments must reach us by 19 December 2008)

► Come to a Public Meeting

At:

Tunbridge Wells High School
Blackhurst Lane
Tunbridge Wells
Kent TN2 4PY
Thursday 4 December 2008 at 7pm.

An elected member of Kent County Council will chair this meeting. You will be able to ask questions and tell us what you think regarding the school closure process. Officers from the Local Authority, the Project Management Consultancy and representatives from the Sponsors will also be present to tell you more about the proposals to open an Academy.

► Email your comments to **school.consultations@kent.gov.uk**

(We will note all you say, but will not be able to respond individually to Reply Forms, letters or emails)

This consultation document is also available at
<http://www.kent.gov.uk/education-and-learning/about-education-service/consultations>

My comments are as follows

Please continue on another sheet if necessary

Public Consultation Reply Form

Proposal to close Tunbridge Wells High School to replace with a new Government funded Academy

To: Ms Chris Lay
 Area Children's Services Officer, Sevenoaks & Tunbridge Wells
 17 Kings Hill Avenue
 Kings Hill, West Malling
 Kent, ME19 4UL
 Fax: 01732 525223

You can also email your views to: school.consultations@kent.gov.uk

PLEASE RETURN NO LATER THAN 19th DECEMBER 2008

Do you agree with this proposal?

Yes **No** **Undecided**

I am (please tick as appropriate)

The parent/carer of a student at Tunbridge Wells High School

A member of staff at Tunbridge Wells High School

A governor of Tunbridge Wells High School

A student at Tunbridge Wells High School

Other interested party

Name of other interested party:

Name:

Address:

Kent County Council is a data controller under the Data Protection Act 1998 and will comply with the requirements of the Act at all times. We will ensure that your personal information is processed fairly and lawfully and in this instance used only for the purpose of validation, which will enable a fair and just consultation.

PLEASE WRITE ANY ADDITIONAL COMMENTS OVERLEAF

PROPOSED CLOSURE OF TUNBRIDGE WELLS (COMMUNITY) HIGH SCHOOL
TO REPLACE WITH A GOVERNMENT FUNDED ACADEMY

Summary of Written Responses, as of Friday, 12 December 2008
(1 week prior to close of consultation)

	Support Proposal	Against Proposal	Total
Parent / Carer	9	0	9
Student	1	0	1
Member of Staff	3	0	3
Governor at School	2	0	2
Other Interested Party	9	1	10
Total	24	1	25

Comments in favour of the Proposal

- The position of Principal will be key to the success of this project.
- This proposal should make parents think again about educating their children in Tunbridge Wells, rather than sending them to a different town or county.
- Students will receive a better education by being able to stay on in the Sixth Form at the school with which they are familiar.
- Tunbridge Wells High School is ideal to become an academy and this is an excellent opportunity to build on its successes.

Comments against the Proposal

- As a result of opening the Academy and its increased popularity, there could be additional traffic problems on Pembury Road.

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Appendix 6

PROPOSED CLOSURE OF TUNBRIDGE WELLS (COMMUNITY) HIGH SCHOOL
TO REPLACE WITH A GOVERNMENT FUNDED ACADEMY

Summary of points raised during the Public Meeting held on 4 December 2008 at Tunbridge Wells High School

Comment or Question	Response
What if Academy is turned down?	
What will happen to Tunbridge Wells High School if the Academy proposal does not go ahead?	The school will continue and the Local Authority will work with the Governing Body to improve its performance and to support it.
Post of Principal	
Given that the post of Principal is already being advertised, does this not mean that the consultation process is irrelevant as a decision has already been made?	It is common practice for academies to run the appointment process in parallel to the consultancy process in order to ensure that a Principal designate is in post by the time the Academy opens. There are contingencies for the event of the Academy not going ahead.
Concern over Falling Rolls and Staff Retention	
What can be done to attract more students to the school given the falling roll, particularly in the existing buildings?	In the short term, there are plans to improve all areas of the school including the introduction of a new uniform and revised curriculum. In addition, there will be some funding available to refurbish the school before it re-opens as an Academy. In the long term, the opening of the new buildings, from 2012, will provide high quality facilities that will attract parents/carers and students.
Is there anything that can be done to retain existing staff and attract new ones?	New staff will be attracted by the additional resources provided by the Academy, particularly once the new build is completed. There will be significant opportunities for existing staff at the school and meetings are planned with all staff in an effort to retain them and to keep them appraised of the situation
Given that many parents choose to send their children to schools in East Sussex because they prefer a fully comprehensive system, is there not a danger that they will therefore not be attracted to the Academy?	The challenge is to provide a local school 'of choice' providing a high quality education that parents/carers want to send their children to, rather than have them spending over 2 hours a day on travelling to and from schools in East Sussex.
Role of Sponsors	
What will be the role of the Sponsors?	The Sponsors will offer wider opportunities for shared learning for young people, particularly in relation to the Academy's specialisms, and for joint training of staff. There will be opportunities for students to access some of the extra-curricular activities available at The Skinners' School

Exclusion Rates	
Concern was expressed that there have sometimes been high rates of exclusions at new academies and was that likely to be the case here?	The Academy will be fully committed to inclusive education and will be a complementary member of the West Kent Learning Federation, signed up to the 'In Year Fair Access' and Managed Moves' protocols.
Dissemination of Information	
How will the wider community be informed about the wonderful new opportunities provided by the Academy?	A Communication Strategy has been developed, providing information through a dedicated website, regular newsletters and press releases to the local newspaper. In addition, a series of consultation events are planned for the New Year
Disruption to Existing Students	
Concern was raised that existing students would be disrupted by, but not benefit from, the changes proposed	Disruption can and will be kept to a minimum. In addition, all students will benefit from the refurbishment for September 2009.

By: Director – Operations

To: School Organisation Advisory Board – 8 January 2009

Subject: PROPOSED CLOSURE OF BRADBOURNE (FOUNDATION) SCHOOL FOR GIRLS AND WILDERNESSE (FOUNDATION) SCHOOL FOR BOYS, TO REPLACE WITH A GOVERNMENT FUNDED ACADEMY.

Classification: Unrestricted

Summary: This report seeks the views of the School Organisation Advisory Board on a proposal to undertake a Public Consultation, in conjunction with the Governing Bodies, on the closure of the Bradbourne School for Girls and the Wildernesse School for Boys, in order that they may be replaced with a government funded Academy.

Introduction

1. (1) The Bradbourne School for Girls and The Wildernesse School for Boys are both non-selective (Foundation) high schools located in Sevenoaks, approximately one mile apart. They are the only two maintained secondary schools serving the Sevenoaks town area. A location map and site plans for the two schools are attached as Appendices 1 - 3. Both schools are designated for students aged 11 – 18 and joint sixth form arrangements are in place. The Bradbourne School had a roll of 835 students in Years 7 to 13, on Pupil Census Data for 2008, whilst the Wildernesse School had a respective roll of 561. Both schools are currently designated 5 form entry schools with Published Admission Numbers of 150. Whilst Bradbourne is close to capacity, Wildernesse carries significant surplus capacity and its roll has been falling.

(2) The two schools serve student populations of whom the majority live within 2 miles of the schools. A significant minority however, particularly in the case of Bradbourne, come from further afield including North-West Kent and some from out of county. Appendices 4 and 5 comprise student distribution maps. A significant percentage of students come from areas of the town which are marked by relative social disadvantage. Deprivation indices for areas closest to the Wildernesse School are above the average for the Sevenoaks District as a whole.

(3) The socio-economic profile of the current student intake at the two schools, is below national and Kent averages, and well below the profile of the Sevenoaks area that they serve. This is particularly reflected by the numbers of students with Special Educational Needs. The proportion of students with SEN at Bradbourne is 20.9% which is only slightly below the Kent and National averages. However, at Wildernesse, this figure is 43.2% which is almost double the Kent average. The proportion of students eligible for free school meals is 8.4% at Bradbourne and 9.2% at Wildernesse, which is above the Kent average of 7.9%. Numbers of students with English as an additional language have been rising but are slightly below the Kent average with 3.1% (Bradbourne) and 3.4% (Wildernesse) respectively.

(4) In terms of attainment, at Bradbourne, provisional results show that 60.5% of students gained 5 or more GCSEs at A*-C in 2008 with 46.3% when including English and Maths. This reflects a significant improvement over 2007 results (42% and 35% respectively). At Wildernesse provisional results show that 46% of students gained 5 or more GCSEs at A*-C in 2008 with 31.7% when including English and Maths. These results saw the school achieve above the floor level target of 30% (including English and Maths) for the first time in recent years, although it continues to be included in the DCSF's 'National Challenge'. This, in turn, makes the school eligible for inclusion in the DCSF's Academy programme.

(5) In order to ensure that the 2008 improvement is sustained at Wildernesse School, the school has recently entered into a collaborative partnership with Hayesbrook School for Boys, Tonbridge, an 'Outstanding' high school with NCSL accreditation. This agreement runs until the proposed date for the Academy to open.

(6) There are no selective schools in Sevenoaks town area and the primary sector is very strong, with consistent high performance in Key Stage 2 SAT results amongst the best in the county. As a reflection of this, Sevenoaks is the largest exporter of students to other areas in Kent. A majority of students living in Sevenoaks town area travel out of the area with upwards of 40% on a recent study travelling to grammar schools in Tonbridge and Tunbridge Wells alone. Parental/carer preference results in large numbers of students travelling to alternative non-selective schools (both co-educational and single sex) within Kent. In addition there are in excess of 2FE of Sevenoaks residents currently attending two out of county schools, Oxted in Surrey and Sackville in West Sussex

(7) The opportunity to open an Academy in Sevenoaks provides a 'one off' opportunity to transform life chances for young people of all abilities, many of whom are currently choosing to travel outside of Sevenoaks for their secondary schooling. The vision for an Academy in Sevenoaks is to provide a school of choice which embeds an ethos of high academic standards reflected in high student achievement for the least and the most able students. It would utilise its independence to be innovative and creative, include single sex as well as co-educational teaching, have a stage not age focus to examinations and provide flexible curriculum pathways which offer both vocational and academic options which would meet the needs of all local learners.

(8) An Academy in Sevenoaks would combine specialisms in Languages and the Expressive Arts. English would be foremost within the Languages specialism underpinning a commitment to strong literacy skills to drive school improvement through innovative approaches to teaching and learning. The Academy would recognise that good performance in languages and the arts are transferrable life skills.

Academy Proposal

2. (1) An Academy in Sevenoaks (name to be agreed) would be established following the necessary closure of the Bradbourne and Wildernesse Schools. The Lead Sponsor for The Academy would be Gordon Phillips, Chairman of the Glen Care Group, while co-sponsors would be Sevenoaks School and Kent County Council (KCC).

(2) The Glen Care Group specialises in the treatment, rehabilitation and care of service users with complex needs. Gordon Phillips' experience includes the provision of services to children and adults with mental health needs, those who require secure custody and long term care for those with learning disabilities. Mr Phillips recognises the potential for the Academy programme to radically transform life chances for young people. He has a keen interest in the emotional well-being of young people and in the

provision of intensive literacy support for those who have yet to gain that 'currency for life'.

(3) The involvement of Sevenoaks School would bring considerable benefits to the Academy. As an independent school which is a centre of academic excellence and is recognised both nationally and internationally, the school's input would have a significant impact on standards of teaching and learning within the Academy. Many of the school's successful educational principles and practices would be utilised along with developing the Academy's own unique ethos and learning framework that meets the needs of the broad range of abilities of its learners.

(4) The Academy would be an 11-18 co-educational school for all abilities. It would have 8 forms of entry and admit up to 240 students into Year 7. The number of post 16 places available would be 350, taking the capacity of the school to 1,550 students. It is proposed that the Academy would open in September 2009 on the Bradbourne site in existing buildings and would move into new state of the art buildings on the Wildernesse site from September 2012.

(5) Collectively, the Sponsors are able to draw upon considerable skills and expertise in the fields of learning, school management and the new learning technologies. Sponsors intend that the Academy would be a place in which all learners have a sense of identity, worth, aspiration and belonging, so that they can develop to the extent of their capabilities and achieve the 5 ECM outcomes for children and young people. The Academy would provide an education which would be attractive to a wide-ability range of local students through its rich and varied curriculum of academic and vocational pathways. With the expertise of its sponsor and co-sponsors the quality of education would be significantly improved and opportunities for students enhanced.

(6) The combined specialisms of Languages and the Expressive Arts are aimed at raising aspiration in order to achieve high standards. The Academy would operate in partnership with local language based and arts industries and practitioners in order to enhance engagement in learning that develops independence, curiosity, self esteem, risk taking and responsibility. Central to the whole curriculum would be a recognition that good basic literacy and numeracy is fundamental to students' future success in life.

(7) The Academy would bring about a culture change and raise the attainment, ambition, thrill of creativity and aspiration for all the young people in its care, building upon strengths in the existing schools and within the context of complementary secondary provision across the West Kent Learning Federation.

Resource Implications

Capital

3. [1] The Academy would be DCSF funded.

[2] On completion of the new Academy buildings on the current Wildernesse site, an alternative CFE use would be explored for the Bradbourne site.

Revenue

(3) The Academy would receive its revenue funding directly from the DCSF each year. It would be funded at a rate equivalent to other Kent specialist schools, plus it would have a proportional share of the central Local Authority costs.

(4) The sponsor Gordon Phillips is committed to making a £1 million contribution to the Academy Endowment Fund.

Human

(5) Consultation would take place in accordance with the requirements of TUPE (Transfer of Undertakings, Protection of Employment, Regulations 1981). Costs of new staffing (TUPE applies to current staff) and costs associated with TUPE, including any valid redundancies of staff that cannot transfer or be deployed elsewhere in Kent schools, would be negotiated with the DCSF on a case by case basis, but are usually borne by the DCSF.

Equality Issues

4. [1] There are no specific equality implications arising from this proposal in terms of impact on ethnic minority opportunity and achievement.

[2] There is, however, a view from the parents/carers of some girls at Bradbourne, who chose single sex education in Sevenoaks for their daughters, that this proposal would remove that choice for them, while leaving it in place for parents/carers in other parts of Kent and for the parents/carers of pupils who pass PESE.

[3] Kent maintains a choice and diversity of provision that is outside of norms for other Local Authorities. There is a commitment to the Academy becoming complementary to that which is already on offer across the West Kent Learning Federation. Within this collaborative of 17 secondary schools and 2 FE Colleges, there are single sex selective and non selective schools in Tonbridge and in Tunbridge Wells.

[3] There is also a commitment, within the Expression of Interest for the Academy in Sevenoaks, to exploring the retention of single sex teaching in core subjects within a co-educational environment, during Feasibility.

[4] In the meantime, research remains inconclusive about the benefits of single sex teaching. There is, however, absolute consensus that, regardless of specific structure and organisation, the most significant impact on standards and school improvement is from the strength of leadership and the quality of teaching and learning.

Transport and Road Safety Implications

5. Securing sustainable methods of travel for students is central to the establishment of an Academy in Sevenoaks. Reducing the number of young people currently travelling out of Sevenoaks in order to retain a more local, wide-ability, cohort is central to the plans to transform secondary education in the town. Students would be encouraged to travel to school through the most sustainable methods possible including ensuring a good uptake of the Kent Freedom Pass (available in Sevenoaks from June 2009).

School Improvement Implications

6. (1) The closure of the current schools to provide for the establishment of an Academy would lead to new 'state of the art' facilities, curriculum innovation, together with the recruitment and retention of high quality staff. It is intended that the investment in facilities, curriculum and funding flexibility that the Academy would

bring, would have a positive impact on current standards of attainment, and for improved life opportunities for the local community.

(2) The Bradbourne School was last inspected in March 2006 when it was judged to be 'Satisfactory' with a number of 'Good' features. A particular strength was deemed to be the personal well-being and development of its students. The follow up Ofsted Monitoring Visit, of March 2007, found overall 'Good' progress in addressing areas for improvement identified the previous year.

[3] The Wildernesse School was last inspected in October 2005 when it was judged to be 'Satisfactory'. It was found to be offering 'Good' care, guidance and support to students but standards and quality of teaching were highlighted as in need of improvement particularly in the sixth form. The follow up Ofsted Monitoring Visit of December 2006 reported 'Satisfactory' progress. Wildernesse is currently included in the DCSF's 'National Challenge'.

Views of the Local Member

7. The Local Member, Nick Chard, strongly supports this proposal.

Views of the Governing Bodies

8. The Governing Bodies of both schools are in support of developing proposals for the establishment of an Academy believing this to be in the interests of all learners in the Sevenoaks town area.

Views of the Area Children's Services Officer

9. The Area Children's Services Officer considers that this proposal provides an excellent 'once in a life time' opportunity to secure transformational educational facilities for students of all abilities living in Sevenoaks town area. The establishment of a 'school of choice' for Sevenoaks, would provide a hub for community activity and build social cohesion within the town and across its necklace villages.

Proposed Timetable

10. Should Public Consultation be agreed, the following timetable is proposed:

Publication of consultation document	12 January 2009
Public meeting	w.c 19 January 2009
Closing date for responses	23 February 2009
Report to School Organisation Advisory Board	12 March 2009
Cabinet Member Decision	March 2009
Issue of Public Notice (if agreed)	End March/April 2009
End of Statutory Objection Period	Mid May 2009
Decision by Local Authority	w.c. 23 June 2009
Proposed Implementation (if approved)	September 2009

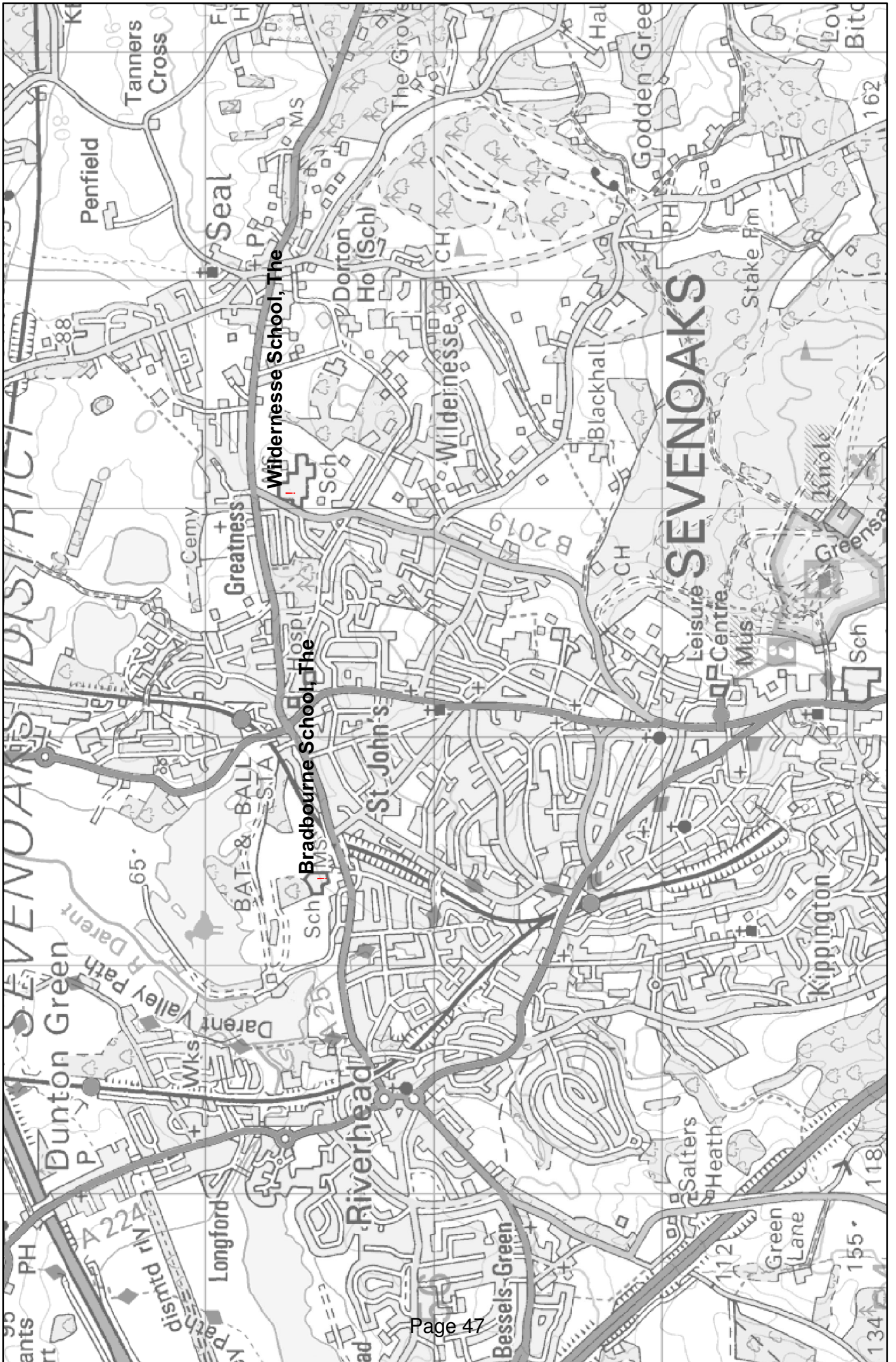
11. The views of the School Organisation Advisory Board are sought on undertaking a public consultation exercise, in conjunction with the Governing Bodies, on this proposal to close The Bradbourne School for Girls and The Wildernesse School for Boys, in order for them to be replaced with a government funded Academy.

Chris Lay
Area Children's Services Officer
Sevenoaks and Tunbridge Wells
Tel: (01732) 525107

Background Papers:

None

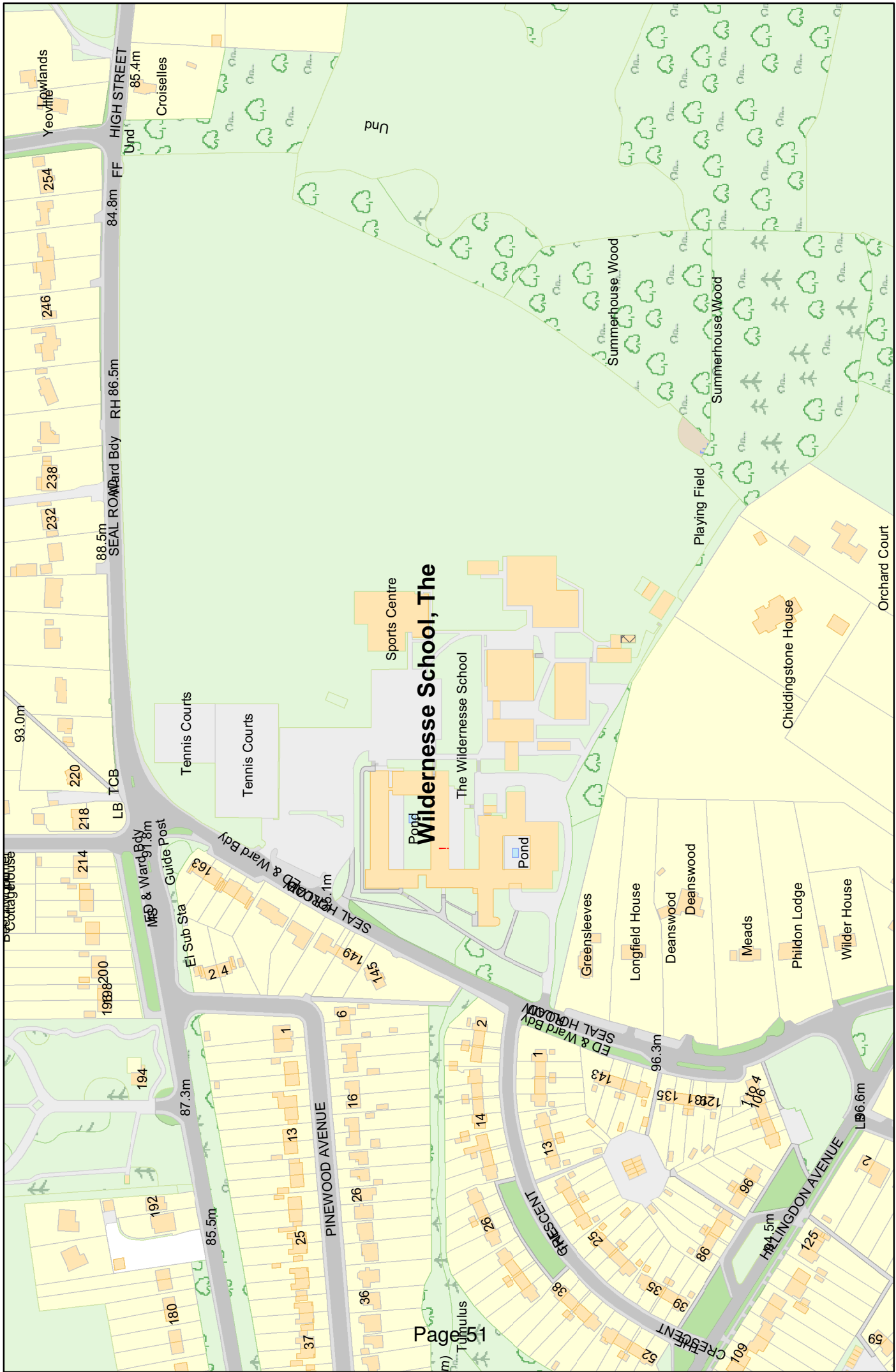
Location of Bradbourne and Wildernesse secondary schools, Sevenoaks



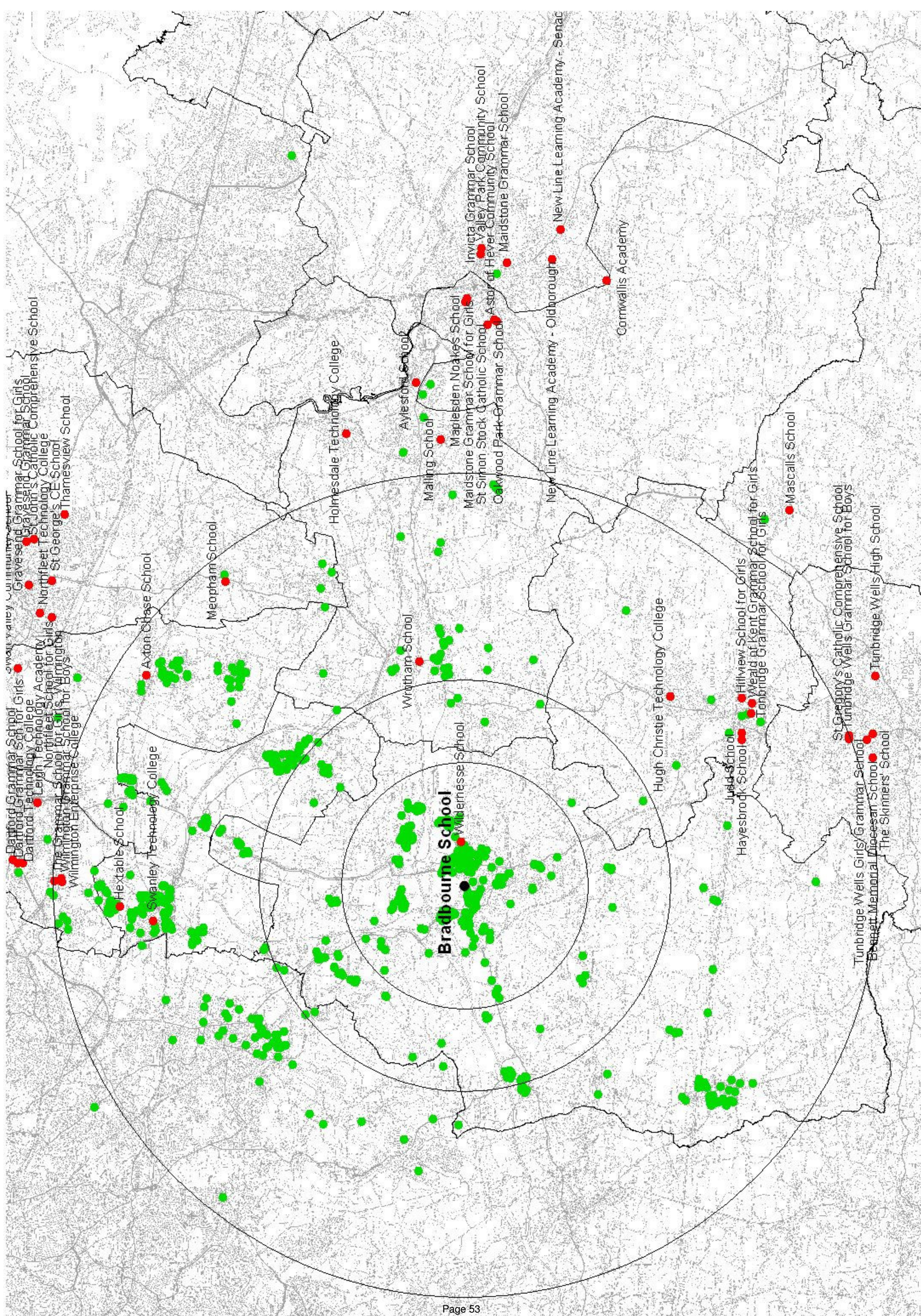
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Site map of Wildernesse School, Sevenoaks



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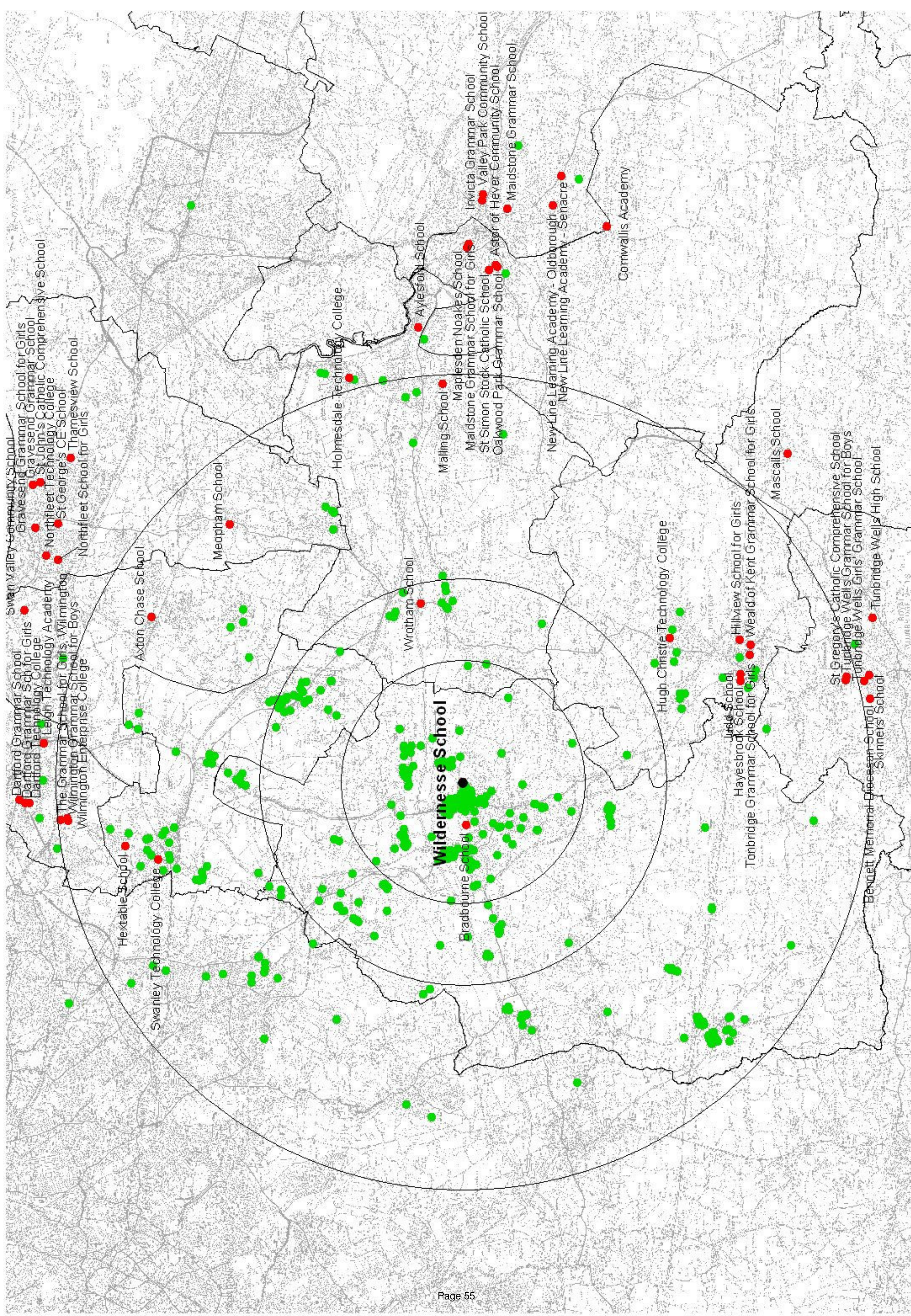
● SECONDARY SCHOOL
 ● PUPIL

**PUPILS ATTENDING BRADBOURNE SCHOOL AS AT JANUARY 2008
 WITH 3, 5 AND 10 MILE RADII**

There are 16 pupils of unknown address not shown on this map

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 KENT COUNTY COUNCIL 19.06.2008

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PUPILS ATTENDING WILDERNESSE SCHOOL AS AT JANUARY 2008
WITH 3, 5 AND 10 MILE RADII

SECONDARY SCHOOL ●
PUPIL ●
 There is one pupil at Wadhurst and seven of unknown address not shown on this map

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By: Director – Operations

To: School Organisation Advisory Board – 8 January 2009

Subject: PROPOSED CLOSURE OF LINDEN GROVE (COMMUNITY) PRIMARY SCHOOL AND ASHFORD CHRIST CHURCH CHURCH OF ENGLAND (VOLUNTARY AIDED) MATHS & COMPUTER SPECIALIST COLLEGE AND THEIR REPLACEMENT WITH AN ALL-AGE GOVERNMENT FUNDED ACADEMY

Classification: Unrestricted

Summary: This report seeks the views of the School Organisation Advisory Board on a proposal to undertake a public consultation on the closure of Linden Grove Primary School and Ashford Christ Church CE Maths & Computer Specialist College and their replacement as an all-age government funded academy subject to Ministerial approval.

Introduction

1. (1) Linden Grove (Community) Primary School admits 60 girls and boys into each year group. Its age range is 3-11 years. The school has the capacity to admit 420 pupils aged 4-11 years and has a 26fte place maintained nursery class. As at spring 2008, the school had 377 pupils on roll in Years R to 6. The school has a 22 place provision reserved for pupils with Speech, Language and Communication Needs and is committed to becoming the partnership primary lead school. The proportion of pupils entitled to Free School Meals is 32%, which is considerably higher than the local and national average (11.1% and 15.9% respectively). 6% of pupils in 2008 had statements compared to a local average of 1.1% and a national average of 1.5%

(2) Ashford Christ Church (voluntary aided) Church of England Maths & Computer College is a co-educational secondary modern school in South Ashford. Its age range is 11-16 years. In spring 2008, the school had 1,126 students on roll in years 7 to 11. The school has a published admissions number of 240 and a capacity of 1200. Ashford Christ Church does not have a sixth form. Almost 2 out of 5 students have learning difficulties and/or disabilities. This fact is reflected in the percentage of students with statements of special educational needs - 5.5% (compared to a national average in Spring 2008 of 2.1%). The percentage of pupils eligible for Free School Meals is above national average at 14% (the national average being 13.1%).

(3) Ashford Christ Church is one of the government's National Challenge Schools as less than 30% of its Y11 students achieved the Government Floor Target in 2007. Furthermore, the ability profile of its intake has been dropping. This, together with the issues of lack of progress raised by Ofsted and HMI, mean that the school is judged to be at high risk of failing to reach the floor target by 2011 - the deadline set within the National Challenge. The adverse

publicity around the Ofsted report and the National Challenge has had a negative impact on community and pupil perceptions of their school, which in turn has impaired the school's rate of progress. Some staff positions have proven difficult to fill, with knock on effects on teaching and learning.

(4) The school has two provisions reserved for pupils with SEN; one a Unit for pupils with Physical Disabilities, the second for pupils with Hearing Impairment. From September 2008, it has Lead School Designation for pupils with Speech and Language, Physical Disability, Hearing Impairment and Cognition difficulties. These Units will be retained in the Academy.

(5) Linden Grove and Christ Church schools are closely located to each other and share an adjoining site (see attached map as Appendix 1). Both schools serve the urban area of Stanhope in South Ashford which is an area of significant deprivation, plus Christ Church also draws pupils from the Kingsnorth area of Ashford. Appendix 2 displays the pupil distribution for both schools.

Academy Proposal

3. (1) The proposal is to open a new all-age Academy in September 2009 in existing buildings and move into its new buildings in the academic year 2011-2012. It would be a school with a religious character (Church of England) for boys and girls of all abilities, aged between 3 and 19 years, located on a single site in the Stanhope area of South Ashford. All pupils from Linden Grove Primary and Christ Church Schools will transfer over to the new Academy. It is proposed that the Academy would cater for:

- 26 pre-school pupils (aged 3-4 years old)
- 420 primary school aged pupils (aged 4-11 years old)
- 1050 secondary school aged pupils (aged 11-16 years old)
- 250 post 16 pupils (aged 16-19 years)
- Pupils with special educational needs supported by the lead school designations (speech and language, Physical Disability, Hearing Impairment and cognition difficulties)

(2) Details of the need for school places (forecasts based on Spring 2008) are contained at Appendix 3.

(3) The new Academy will be led by an Executive Headteacher and one governing body. It is proposed that the Academy will be a single school, but will adopt the principle of having a number of 'schools within schools' which would allow the Academy to be organised into small school environments. It is widely known that students benefit greatly from this learning environment which:

- provides a wealth of opportunities for pupils to achieve their full potential
- has high expectations of all its pupils, irrespective of their range of ability
- ensures pupils are highly qualified, skilled and adaptable
- provides a strong ethos of security, care and warmth for one another
- delivers a personalised learning approach
- increases pupils' self esteem and confidence

- develops a partnership between adults and pupils so that they understand, respect and empathise with each others roles and responsibilities
- has a curriculum that engenders a love of learning
- provides stepping stones to and from the community it serves
- offers outstanding tutorial support.

(4) Discussions are taking place with potential sponsors which are the Diocese of Canterbury, Canterbury Christ Church University and Kent County Council. The vision for the Academy is to have a distinctive Christian ethos which will be strengthened by the Sponsors.

(5) It is proposed that the Academy will specialise in Technology. This is to include the Academy in the long term economic development of Ashford.

(6) The provision of a school sixth form is important in helping to raise standards across the school. It can help in the recruitment of high quality staff who will support improvement across the age range. There is significant pressure in places in school sixth forms which this proposal helps to address. It is evident from pupil voice surveys that many pupils wish to stay in Post 16 education in their own schools (44% according to the NFER survey in Ashford 1). With the roll-out of 14-19 diploma lines it is equally important that pupils can progress at a rate appropriate to their needs and should not be forced to change institutions at a particular stage or complete courses at a pace dictated by the structure of the organisation. The academy will work in close collaboration with other providers in the Ashford 1 Partnership through delivery of its post-16 provision.

Site and accommodation Issues

4. (1) Linden Grove Primary school currently occupies one large building of 1970's SEAC construction. The school buildings are in a poor state of repair with some major works needed imminently.

(2) Ashford Christ Church consists of a large three storey building built in the 1960's. A new teaching block and sports hall were added in 2004. Over recent years, the school's pupil admission has grown from four to eight forms of entry. Many of the classrooms in the main building are undersized. The school does not currently have the capacity to provide sixth form education.

(3) The consensus is that both school buildings require a substantial amount of investment. By closing both schools and opening an all-age Academy, in new and refurbished facilities, with a full suite of extended services, would serve the needs of the pupils and community of Stanhope and provide an environment fit for learning in the 21st century.

Resource Issues

Capital

5. (1) A budget has yet to be confirmed by the DCSF for the Academy's development. Discussions are ongoing with DCSF regarding the LA's capital contribution to the rebuilding of the primary school element and the Special Educational Needs Units. Typically a 2 FE primary school with a nursery costs

about £5m. The LA may need to meet this cost from a capital receipt from the site. Equally, if the Ray Allen Children's Centre is replaced as part of this proposal, the LA is likely to be required to meet the capital cost.

Revenue

(2) The Ashford Academy will receive its funding directly from the DCSF each year. It will be funded at a rate equivalent to other Kent specialist schools, plus it will have a proportional share of the central Local Authority budget.

Human

(3) Consultation would take place in accordance with the requirements of TUPE (Transfer of Undertakings, Protection of Employment, Regulations 1981). Costs of new staffing (TUPE applies to current staff) and costs associated with TUPE, including any valid redundancies of staff that cannot transfer or be deployed elsewhere in Kent schools, would be negotiated with the DCSF on a case by case basis, but are usually borne by the DCSF.

Views of the Local Member

7. (1) Derek Smyth, the local member for Ashford South supports the application for Academy status provided that it can be demonstrated that educational standards can be markedly improved, and provided that both the existing governing bodies are represented on the Trust Board to provide community cohesion.

Views of the Diocese

8. (1) Canterbury Diocese is the sponsor of the proposal. It believes that transforming into an academy is the right step in the continued improvement of education in these schools.

Views of the Learning and Skills Council

9. (1) The Learning and Skills Council are fully aware of the proposal. A statement has not yet been received.

School Improvement Implications

10. (1) By closing Linden Grove Primary and Christ Church Schools and setting up a new Academy will allow for new facilities, flexibility of curriculum and recruitment of high quality staff. It is intended that the investment in facilities and curriculum and funding flexibility that the new Academy will bring about the positive impact on standards that is required for the pupils and students of the Stanhope area of South Ashford.

(2) Linden Grove Primary School was placed in Special Measures in November 2006. At a recent HMI visit in January 2008, the school was judged to be making significant improvement and was given a notice to improve.

(3) Christ Church CE School was inspected in January 2008. The school received a Notice to Improve. An HMI visit in September 2008 found that the strategies in place to raise standards were the correct ones, but, disappointingly, that progress had been inadequate.

(4) The academy proposal would provide an opportunity to rebrand the school, recruit and deploy staff more flexibly and release additional funding and resources. The innovative nature of an all through combined secondary and primary academy, in partnership with the diocese, would contribute to a distinctive ethos where all ages could learn and support from each other. Existing peer mentoring work with primary students could be further developed to improve secondary students' engagement and primary students' achievement. The existence of sixth form provision within the proposed academy would also provide good role models to raise the aspirations of KS4 students at the critical time in their GCSE preparation. The Secretary of State recently recognised the importance of post 16 models on school sites. While the school is striving to improve, it remains at risk of missing the floor target in 2011, at which point the likely outcome would be the school being closed and re-opened as an academy. The students at the school today deserve to benefit from the opportunities for raising achievement that an academy would provide.

(5) Canterbury Christ Church University's role as a co-sponsor is extremely important. The University can help with the delivery of high quality staff training, providing curriculum development work, influencing pedagogy based on research and best practice, and afford extension opportunities for students.

(6) The involvement of a high performing school is being negotiated to add further capacity to the sponsor team in supporting the Academy's development.

Equality Issues

11. (1) Traditional Christian values and discipline will govern the general ethos of the new Academy. Through its strong ethos it will promote tolerance, respect, personal responsibility, recognition of the contribution that each individual makes, fairness and justice, empathy, co-operation and consideration for other people. The Christian ethos of the Academy will permeate the whole of the curriculum and Academy life.

Transport & Environmental Impact, Including Community Implications

12. (1) Early discussions will take place with Ashford Borough Council and Kent Highways. They will be fully consulted as part of the design and development phase of the new Academy and it is also expected that a travel plan will be produced prior to the opening of the Academy.

Proposed Timetable

13. Should public consultation be agreed, the following timetable is proposed:

Publication of consultation document

23 February 2009

Public meeting	w.c. 16 March 2009
Closing date for responses	3 April 2009
Report to School Organisation Advisory Board	23 April 2009
Cabinet Member decision	April 2009
Issue public notice	4 June 2009
End of public notice period	16 July 2009
Decision by Local Authority	By Mid September 2009
Proposed implementation	September 2010

Recommendations

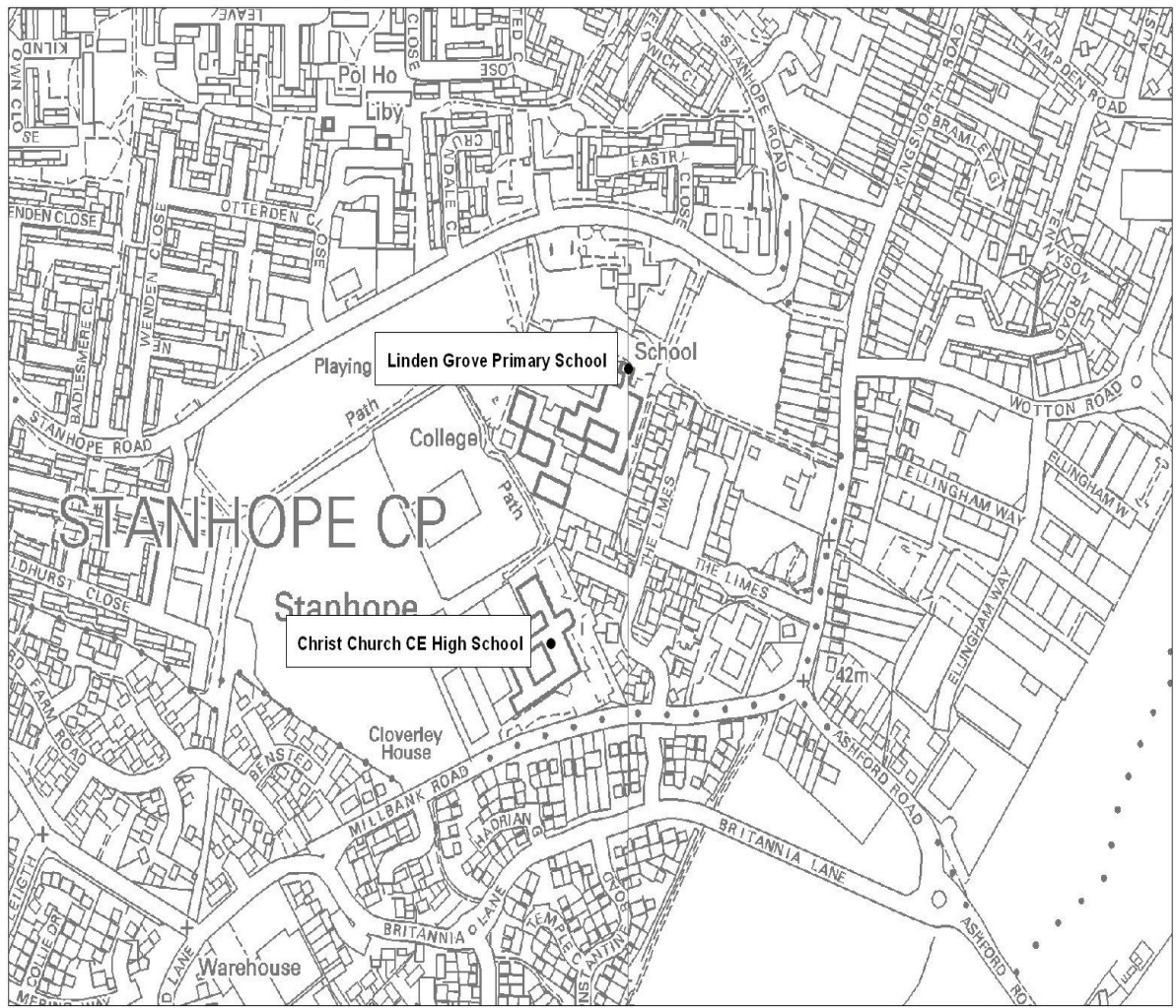
14. The views of the School Organisation Advisory Board are sought on a public consultation being undertaken on the proposal for the closure of Linden Grove Primary School and Ashford Christ Church CE Maths & Computer College and their replacement as an all-age government funded academy subject to Ministerial approval.

David Adams
Area Children's Services Officer
Ashford & Shepway
Tel 01233 898559

The local member is Derek Smyth

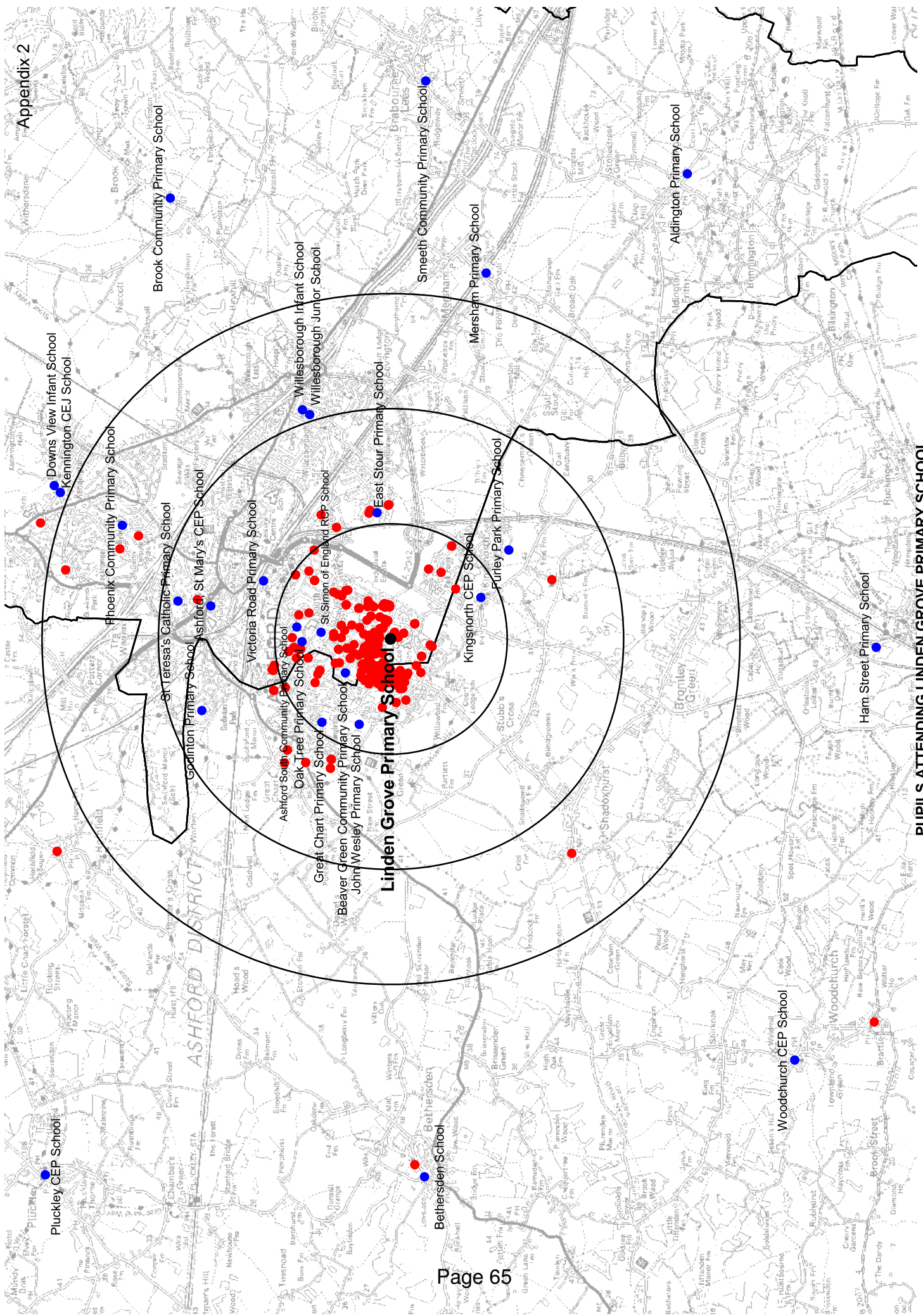
Background Documents: None

Site Plan



MANAGEMENT INFORMATION/BRENCHLEY HOUSE KENT 2008/0 THER APR. **LOCATION OF LINDEN GROVE PRIMARY AND CHRIST CHURCH CE HIGH SCHOOLS** ©CROWN COPYRIGHT. ALL RIGHTS RESERVED 100019238 2008 KENT COUNTY COUNCIL 29.04.2008

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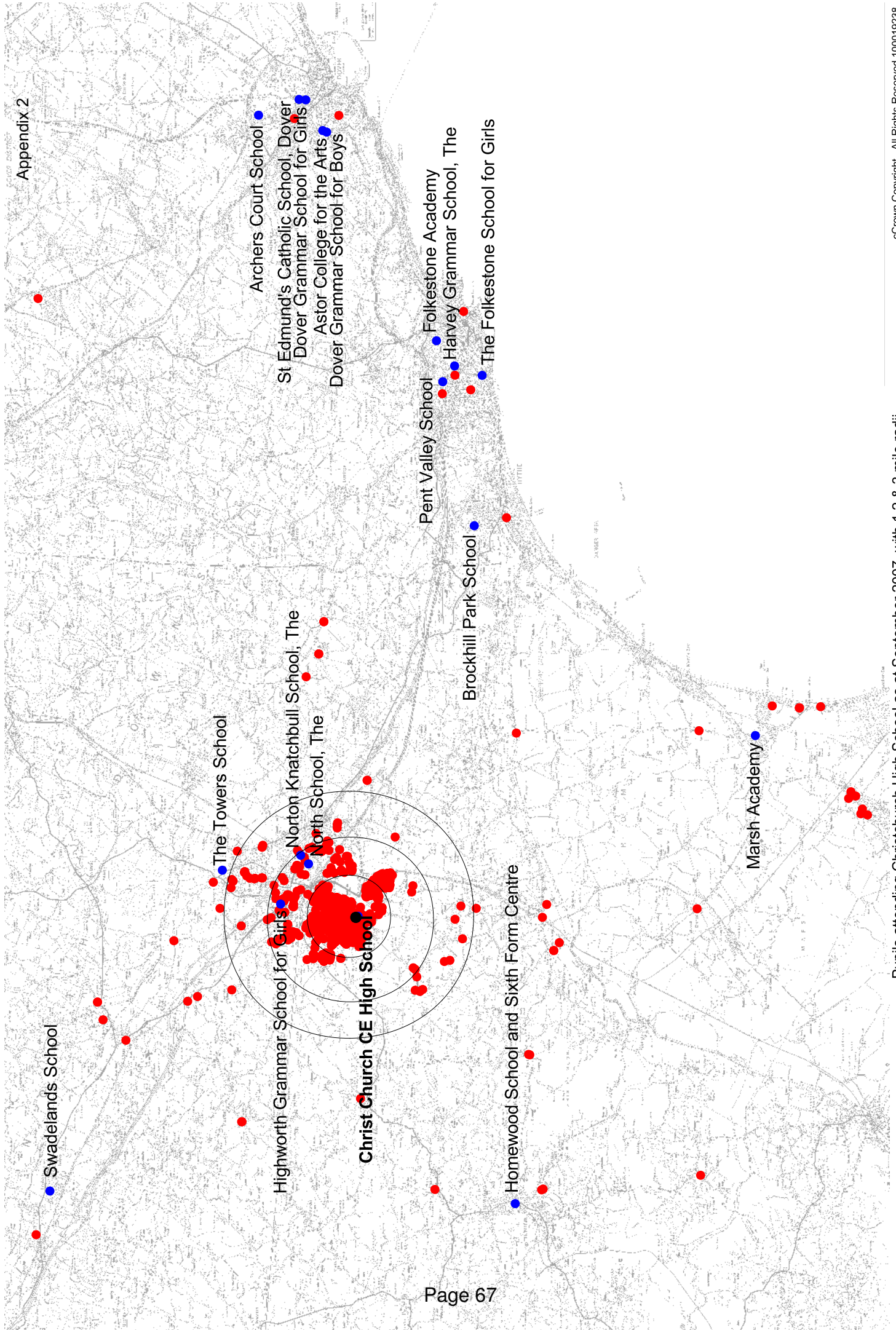


PUPILS ATTENDING LINDEN GROVE PRIMARY SCHOOL AS AT JANUARY 2008 WITH 1, 2 AND 3 MILE RADII
 There are 20 pupils outside this area not shown on the map

MANAGEMENT INFORMATION/BRENCHLEY HOUSE
 KENT 2008/DOT MAPS PRI JAN08.APR.

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Primary projections for Ashford One Partnership – May 2008

	PAN Cap	NOR Jan 08	08/09	09/10	10/11	11/12	12/13	surp/def Jan 08	surp/def 2012/13
Victoria Road PS	210	203	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Ashford Oaks	420	364	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
East Stour PS	420	314	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Great Chart PS	420	425	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
St Simon of England RCPS	210	207	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Beaver Green CPS	420	518	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Furley Park	420	416	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
St Marys CEPS	420	422	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Godinton PS	420	421	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Kingsnorth CEPS	420	405	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
St Teresa's Catholic PS	210	212	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
John Wesley	210	113	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Linden Grove PS	420	377	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
2 mile radius	4620	4397	4451	4518	4574	4645	4689	4.8%	-1.5%
Willesborough IS	360	338	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Phoenix CPS	210	205	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Willesborough JS	480	512	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
3 mile radius	1050	1055	1033	983	981	1000	1027	-0.5%	2.2%
2 & 3 mile radius	5670	5452	5484	5501	5555	5645	5716	3.8%	-0.8%

**2008 projections for Secondary pupils – Years 7 to 11
Ashford One and Ashford Rural Clusters
May 2008**

School	Status	PAN 2008-09	Capacity on PAN (pre-16)	Spring term roll 2008	2008- 09	2009- 10	2010- 11	2011- 12	2012- 13	2013- 14	2014-15	2015-16	2016-17	2017-18
Highworth Grammar School for Girls	C	165	825	845	847	866	860	851	865	865	865	865	869	869
Towers School, The	C	243	1215	1056	1034	1014	982	967	960	949	932	952	978	1019
North School, The	C	200	1000	851	897	944	983	1014	1012	1006	1001	1006	1021	1056
Norton Knatchbull School, The	VC	149	745	749	759	761	766	773	775	775	775	775	775	775
Ashford Christ Church School	VA	240	1200	1126	1090	1039	992	938	890	875	875	875	885	895
Home Wood School and Sixth Form Centre	F	360	1800	1778	1734	1739	1741	1728	1716	1702	1678	1664	1669	1692
Sub-total	-	1357	6785	6405	6360	6363	6324	6271	6218	6173	6127	6138	6197	6306
Pupil product adjustment	-	-	-	-	9	25	55	80	122	181	250	327	392	482
Grand total	-	1357	6785	6405	6369	6387	6378	6351	6339	6354	6377	6465	6589	6789
Surplus/(deficit) on current PAN capacity	-	-	-	-	416	398	407	434	446	431	408	320	196	-4

**2008 projections for Secondary pupils – Post 16
Ashford One and Ashford Rural Partnerships
May 2008**

School	Status	Current sixth form capacity (summer 2008)	Spring term roll 2008	2008-09	2009-10	2010-11	2011-12	2012-13	2013-14	2014-15	2015-16	2016-17	2017-18
Highworth Grammar School for Girls	C	279	273	286	272	282	301	284	281	292	292	289	289
Towers School, The	C	267	305	315	316	317	300	279	278	289	287	271	259
North School, The	C	0	0	15	34	63	88	134	193	214	220	211	199
Norton Knatchbull School, The	VC	311	304	314	321	330	325	329	336	338	338	338	338
Ashford Christ Church School	VA	0	0	22	49	80	118	158	189	188	183	178	173
Homewood School and Sixth Form Centre	F	331	287	339	331	339	343	344	348	355	359	349	338
Sub-total	-	1188	1169	1292	1323	1410	1475	1527	1626	1676	1680	1635	1596
Pupil product adjustment	-	-	-	0	4	11	22	30	37	50	67	84	103
Grand total	-	1188	1169	1292	1326	1422	1497	1557	1663	1727	1747	1720	1699
Surplus/(deficit) on current PAN capacity	-	-	-	-104	-138	-234	-309	-369	-475	-539	-559	-532	-511

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By: Director – Operations

To: School Organisation Advisory Board – 8 January 2009

Subject: PROPOSAL TO ADD A SIXTH FORM TO THE NORTH (COMMUNITY) SCHOOL, ASHFORD

Classification: Unrestricted

Summary: This report seeks the views of the School Organisation Advisory Board on a proposal to undertake a consultation to add a sixth form to The North (Community) School, Ashford.

Introduction

1. (1) The North (Community) School is a non-selective specialist school for Sport, Information Technology and the Rural Dimension within the Ashford One Partnership. It admits 200 boys and girls into Years 7 to 11 and has a capacity of 1000. Attached as Appendices 1 and 2 are maps showing the location of the school and pupil distribution. As of Spring 2008 there were 851 pupils on roll. Pupils are predominantly drawn from across the urban area of Ashford. The proportion of pupils entitled to Free School Meals is 11.9%, compared to the local and national average (7.9% and 13.1%). In 2008, 4.9% of pupils had statements compared to a local average of 2% and a national average of 2.1%. The number of pupils with English as an additional language is 8.6%, which is relatively higher than the local average of 3.6%, but less than the national average of 10.5%.

(2) The school has a designated Dyslexia Unit and a Learning Support Unit attached. It will be a lead school for ASD and Dyslexia.

Background

2. (1) The North does not currently offer sixth form provision. However, Hadlow Further Education College delivers a suite of vocational qualifications focusing on the rural dimension from the North School premises.

(2) The proposal for Christ Church Academy includes sixth form provision. If implemented, this would leave The North School as the only 11-16 secondary school in Ashford and Shepway.

The Proposal

3. (1) The proposal is to add sixth form provision to The North School for 185 pupils. Discussions will take place with the Learning and Skills Council regarding funding and to determine the range of qualifications to offer. It is believed that through extending the curriculum and providing a wider range of courses, pupils will enhance their learning experiences and their future employment prospects. It will keep the pupils engaged in learning by introducing progression routes, which do not currently exist within Ashford's 14-19 curriculum. At its core, the proposal is about re-engineering the provision to provide better access for the young people of Ashford.

(2) Under the current PFI rebuild of The North School capacity was increased

slightly to provide sufficient capacity to accommodate 240 pupils per year. The rebuild has been completed in phases. In September 2008 the Published Admissions Number (PAN) was 200, accounting for the incomplete building works. The works have recently been completed.

(3) The proposal is to increase the PAN for pupils aged 11-16 to 215, leaving 125 places for post 16 provision. Added to this will be the 60 places in the planned vocational centre (funded by the school – Hadlow College), giving 185 places in total.

(4) There is currently a paucity of places in school sixth forms in Ashford. Appendix 3 provides details of the forecast for the 11-16 and 16 plus age groups in Ashford. Current deficit in 6th form accommodation is being met by using 11-16 accommodation and mobile classrooms (for example at Towers School).

(5) The North proposes to offer Diploma courses for the 14-19 age range within the following subject areas;

- Environmental and Land Based
- Retail
- Art & Design
- Creative & Media
- Sport

(6) The school would continue to build on its specialist areas (i.e sports) and continue to deliver Land Based studies (due to its farm) in conjunction with Hadlow College. Both of these areas would complement, rather than compete, with existing provision. It is proposed that the above courses would run in close collaboration with other providers in the Ashford 1 Partnership.

(7) It is proposed that the school will offer 'A' Level Geography, which would link into the Environmental and Land Based framework. Arrangements would be made for those pupils to move to other institutions at age 16 (ie neighbouring school sixth forms, the FE sector or work based learning) as appropriate to access courses and qualifications that meet their needs.

Resource Issues

Capital & Revenue

4. (1) There are no capital implications for the LA. The school and Hadlow College will fund the vocational block.

(2) The vocational centre has now received formal planning approval. Building works are to start at the end of November 2008.

Human

(3) The proposal may require the school to increase its staffing.

Views of the pupils

5. (1) The National Foundation for Educational Research carried out a pupil survey across the Ashford 1 Partnership in 2008. The findings indicated that 44% of pupils, within the partnership, would like to continue into a school based sixth form.

Views of the Local Member

6. (1) Elizabeth Tweed the local member for Ashford Central is completely supportive of the proposal and commented that it would be good for Ashford and the young people living in the area.

Views of the Diocese

7. (1) Canterbury Diocese is aware of the proposal, its comments will be sought during the consultation stage.

Views of the Learning and Skills Council

8. (1) The Learning and Skills Council are aware of the proposal and have yet to make a comment.

School Improvement Implications

9. (1) The North was last inspected in June 2006 and was judged to be good. The provision of post-16 courses in curriculum areas which currently are unavailable locally is a welcomed development and improves the progression pathways available to young people.

(2) The local FE provider (South Kent College) was inspected by Ofsted in April 2008. It was judged as inadequate for effectiveness of provision, capacity to improve, achievement and standards, quality of provision and leadership and management. A strong FE provider is important in Ashford to meet the future training and skills needs of the post-16 learners and adult learners. However, the current students deserve high quality provision too.

(3) The context of education for post-16 learners in Ashford is changing with the introduction of diploma lines, building schools for the future (2015/16), the raising of the age at which students can leave education or training, and the growth of the Town. This proposal broadens curriculum pathways, increases the availability of places and utilises the skills of a "good" institution, without threatening other provision. Currently 454 Ashford students attend Canterbury College and 250 plus go to West Kent College. The local offer needs improving.

(4) While the North School is a good school, it is one of the government's National Challenge Schools as less than 30% of its Y11 students achieved the Government Floor Target in 2007. The Secretary of State at the DCSF recognises the potential of on site 16+ provision in raising the aspirations and motivation of students in lower years. Such provision can stimulate KS4 success in its own right, as well as rates of staying in education, thus reducing the proportion of students ending up in the NEET group. The existence of a sixth form provision would provide good role models to raise the aspirations of KS4 students at the critical time in their GCSE preparation. The scope to teach at 16+ also increases the career development opportunities that the school can offer when recruiting new teachers. This will increase the depth and breadth of fields for new appointments at a time when teacher recruitment - particularly in shortage subjects - has been difficult. Such new staff, teaching across the age range, will help raise standards across the school.

(5) Subject specific capital equipment resourced for the sixth form may be available for use with other year groups when not needed in sixth form lessons. This would be an efficient use of resources and would make an important contribution to raising standards lower down the school.

Equality Issues

10. (1) The proposal will broaden the curriculum opportunities available to the young people of Ashford. Improved access to provision will:

- raise the esteem and aspiration of all pupils, as well as those with special educational needs who struggle with the current provision; and
- encourage young people to continue learning and to remain within the learning environment by offering flexible timetables and pathways, and via personalised learning.

Transport & Environmental Impact, Including Community Implications

11. (1) The schools' travel plan will need to be revisited and particular consideration will need to be given to how the desire of some young people to drive to school will be managed.

(2) Discussions will take place with the Borough Council and Kent Highways as part of the planning application for the vocational building.

(3) The headteacher has already put measures in place on the school site to allow for any potential increase in parking requirements. The vocational centre will have a separate entrance with its own parking facilities. In addition, the main school car park has recently been rearranged to make available a further 24 spaces.

Proposed Timetable

12. Should public consultation be agreed, the following timetable is proposed:

Issue of consultation document	12 January 2009
Public meeting	w.c. 26 January 2009
Closing date for responses	27 February 2009
Report to School Organisation Advisory Board	12 March 2009
Cabinet Member decision	March 2009
Issue public notice	9 or 23 April 2009
End of public notice period	7 or 21 May 2009
Decision by Local Authority	End of May 2009
Proposed implementation	September 2009

Recommendations

13. The views of the School Organisation Advisory Board are sought on undertaking a public consultation on the proposal to add a sixth form to The North School, Ashford.

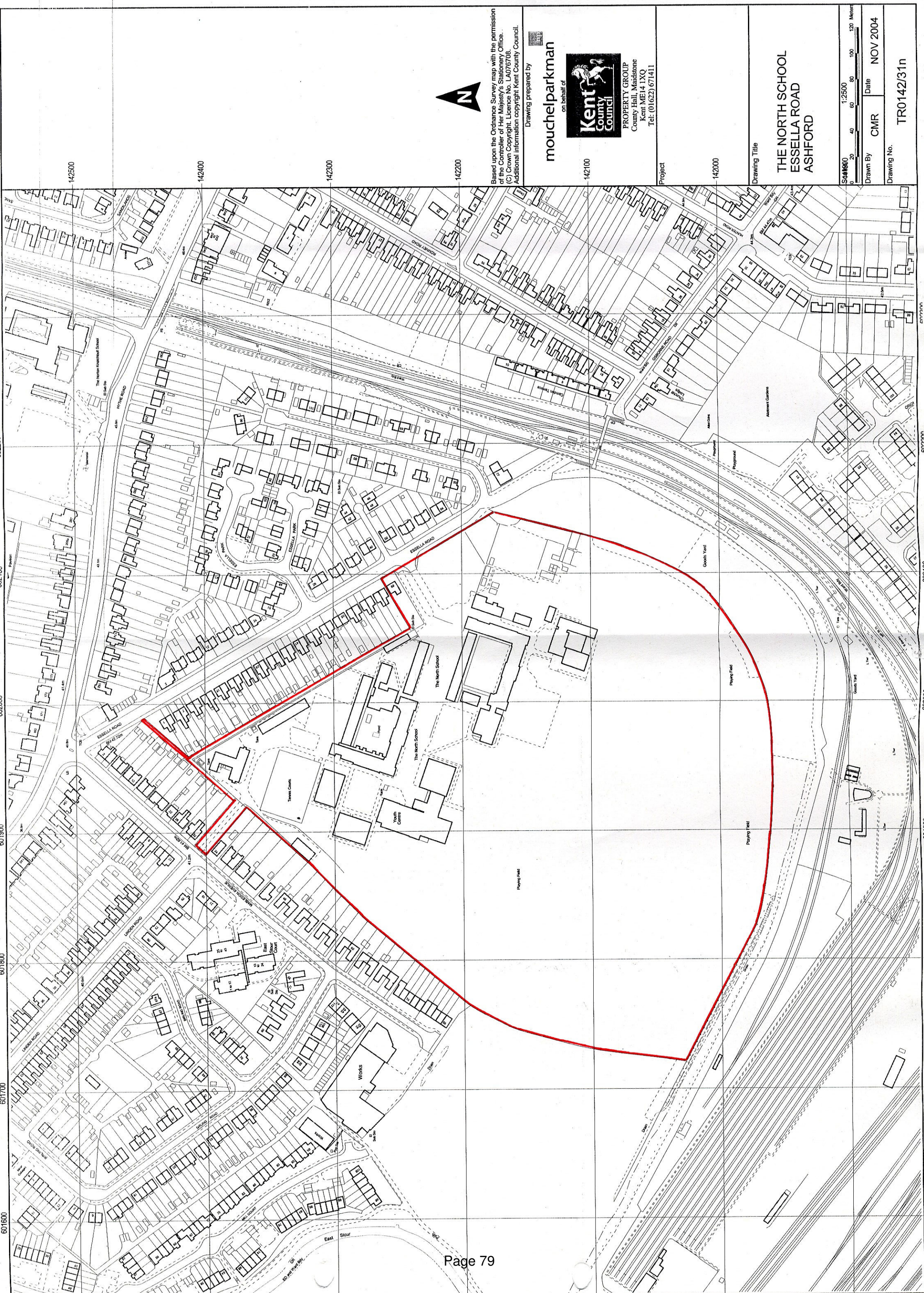
Tel 01233 898559

The local member is Elizabeth Tweed

Background Documents:

1. *DCSF Guidance on 'Expanding a maintained mainstream school or adding a sixth form'*

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mouchelparkman
 on behalf of



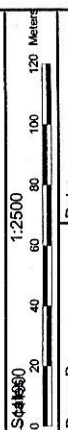
PROPERTY GROUP
 County Hall, Maidstone
 Kent ME14 1XQ
 Tel: (01622) 671411

Project

142000

Drawing Title

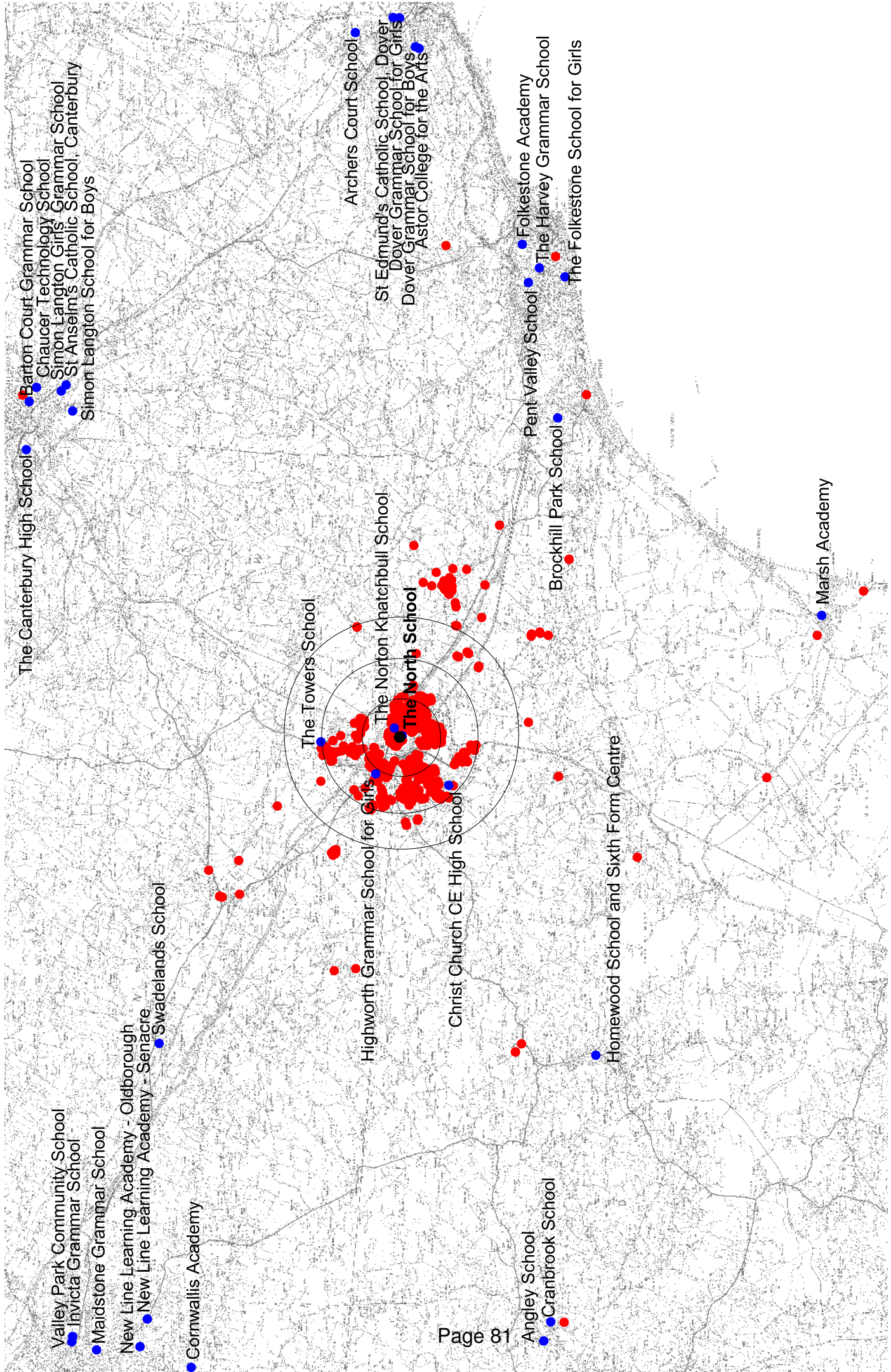
**THE NORTH SCHOOL
 ESSELLA ROAD
 ASHFORD**



Drawn By **CMR** Date **NOV 2004**

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Pupils attending The North School as at September 2007 with 1, 2 & 3 mile radii.
 1 pupil at Tilbury not shown on map.

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**2008 projections for Secondary pupils – Years 7 to 11
Ashford One and Ashford Rural Clusters
May 2008**

School	Status	PAN 2008-09	Capacity on PAN (pre-16)	Spring term roll 2008	2008-09 (F)	2009-10 (F)	2010-11 (F)	2011-12 (F)	2012-13 (F)	2013-14 (F)	2014-15 (F)	2015-16 (F)	2016-17 (F)	2017-18 (F)
Highworth Grammar School for Girls	C	165	825	845	847	866	860	851	865	865	865	865	869	869
Towers School, The	C	243	1215	1056	1034	1014	982	967	960	949	932	952	978	1019
North School, The	C	200	1000	851	897	944	983	1014	1012	1006	1001	1006	1021	1056
Norton Knatchbull School, The	VC	149	745	749	759	761	766	773	775	775	775	775	775	775
Ashford Christ Church School	VA	240	1200	1126	1090	1039	992	938	890	875	875	875	885	895
Homewood School and Sixth Form Centre	F	360	1800	1778	1734	1739	1741	1728	1716	1702	1678	1664	1669	1692
Sub-total	-	1357	6785	6405	6360	6363	6324	6271	6218	6173	6127	6138	6197	6306
Pupil product adjustment	-	-	-	-	9	25	55	80	122	181	250	327	392	482
Grand total	-	1357	6785	6405	6369	6387	6378	6351	6339	6354	6377	6465	6589	6789
Surplus/(deficit) on current PAN capacity	-	-	-	-	416	398	407	434	446	431	408	320	196	-4

**2008 projections for Secondary pupils – Post 16
Ashford One and Ashford Rural Partnerships
May 2008**

School	Status	Current sixth form capacity (summer 2008)	Spring term roll 2008	2008-09 (F)	2009-10 (F)	2010-11 (F)	2011-12 (F)	2012-13 (F)	2013-14 (F)	2014-15 (F)	2015-16 (F)	2016-17 (F)	2017-18 (F)
Highworth Grammar School for Girls	C	279	273	286	272	282	301	284	281	292	292	289	289
Towers School, The	C	267	305	315	316	317	300	279	278	289	287	271	259
North School, The	C	0	0	15	34	63	88	134	193	214	220	211	199
Norton Knatchbull School, The	VC	311	304	314	321	330	325	329	336	338	338	338	338
Ashford Christ Church School	VA	0	0	22	49	80	118	158	189	188	183	178	173
Homewood School and Sixth Form Centre	F	331	287	339	331	339	343	344	348	355	359	349	338
Sub-total	-	1188	1169	1292	1323	1410	1475	1527	1626	1676	1680	1635	1596
Pupil product adjustment	-	-	-	0	4	11	22	30	37	50	67	84	103
Grand total	-	1188	1169	1292	1326	1422	1497	1557	1663	1727	1747	1720	1699
Surplus/(deficit) on current PAN capacity	-	-	-	-104	-138	-234	-309	-369	-475	-539	-559	-532	-511

By: Director - Operations

To: School Organisation Advisory Board – 8 January 2009

Subject: SCHOOLS APPLYING FOR FOUNDATION/TRUST STATUS

Classification: Unrestricted

Summary: To inform Members of SOAB of the current situation regarding Foundation/Trust proposals

FOR INFORMATION

Background

1. (1) A paper was presented to SOAB on 17 October 2007 informing Members of the Government’s encouragement of all schools to consider Foundation/Trust status, and of the ‘fast track’ procedures to achieve it. These procedures require a governing body to consult ‘interested parties’ (including the LA) over a minimum of a four week period, before determining themselves.

Determinations

2. (1) Since the last report to the Board there has been one new determination reported to the local authority. On 10 December 2008 a letter was received from **Oakwood Park Grammar School**, Maidstone, advising us that following full consultation, including a Public Notice process, the governors had decided to change category from Community to Foundation with effect from 1 January 2009. The local Members, Mr Dan Daley and Mr Jeffrey Curwood were informed.

(2) There are now 60 Foundation schools in Kent (13 Primary, 46 Secondary and 1 Special) and 91 Aided schools (78 Primary and 13 Secondary) – a total of 150 and in addition, 8 Academies = 157 (91 Primary, 64 Secondary, 1 Special).

(3) For the sake of simplicity, Aided schools should be considered as having the same status as Foundation/Trust schools.

Consultations

3. Since the last report no new schools have informed us that they have begun consultations

Recommendations

4. Members are asked to note the report.



David Adams
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Background Documents:

- School Standards and Framework Act; DFES 1998
- Education and Inspection Act; DFES 2006
- Changing Category to Foundation; DCSF 2007
- School Organisation; Prescribed Alterations to Maintained Schools in England Regulations; DCSF 2007
- Schools Applying for Foundation/Trust Status;
SOAB - 17 October 2007/14 November 2007/
10 January 2008/7 February 2008/2 April 2008/
7 May 2008/17 July 2008/ 5 November 2008 / 10 December
2008