

By:	Patrick Leeson, Corporate Director, Education, Learning and Skills
To:	Education Cabinet Committee – 18 January 2013
Subject	Decision number: 12/01962 - Proposal to expand The Discovery School, Kings Hill
Classification:	Unrestricted

Summary:	This report informs Members of the results of the Public Consultation
Recommendations:	The Education Cabinet Committee is asked to consider and endorse or make recommendations to the Cabinet Member for Education Learning and Skills on the decision to issue a public notice to expand The Discovery School.

1. Introduction

The Tonbridge and Malling District section of the Kent Commissioning Plan 2012-17 indicates a need to commission additional primary school places in the Kings Hill area.

1.1 On 12 September 2012, Education Cabinet Committee recommended to the Cabinet Member for Education, Learning and Skills that a consultation take place on the proposal to expand The Discovery School.

1.2 This report sets out the results of the public consultation, which took place between 8 November and 19 December 2012. A public meeting was held on 27 November 2012.

2. The proposal

2.1 It is proposed to enlarge The Discovery School by 30 Reception Year places, taking their Pan to 90 (3FE) for the September 2013 intake. Successive Reception Year intakes will offer 90 places each year and the school will eventually have a total capacity of 630 places.

3. Bold Steps and the Kent Commissioning Plan

3.1 This proposal will help to secure our ambition “to ensure every child will go to a good school where they make good progress and can have fair access to school places” as set out in ‘Bold Steps for Kent’.

3.2 The Tonbridge and Malling section of the Kent Commissioning Plan indicates a need to enlarge The Discovery School by 1FE.

4. Outcomes of the Public Consultation

4.1 While there appears to be widespread support for the need for further school capacity in Kings Hill, the majority of respondents expressed the view that Discovery School should not be expanded. A smaller number of respondents supported the proposal, primarily on the grounds of meeting community need. A significant number felt a new school was the right solution.

4.2 A summary of the questions, comments and responses received during the consultation period are given at Appendix 1.

4.3 A copy of the notes made during the public meeting are given at Appendix 2.

5. Views

5.1 Local Member of Parliament

The Local MP, The Rt. Hon. Sir John Stanley strongly supports KCC's expansion of primary school places at Kings Hill the objective of which should be to ensure that there are a sufficient number of primary schools and primary school places at Kings Hill to enable all parents who are resident at Kings Hill to send their children to the Kings Hill primary school of their choice if they so wish.

5.2 Local Member

The Local Member, Mr Richard Long is supportive of the proposal. His view is that we need a third primary school for Kings Hill and he has been pushing for one for some years now. We also need more capacity now; otherwise families expecting to get a place at a Kings Hill school in 2013 will be allocated places at one of the outlying villages.

5.3 Area Education Officer

The Area Education Officer (Mid Kent) fully supports this proposal and in response to the public concerns makes the following comments:

- The highways and traffic issues have been considered as part of the planning application for the modular buildings.
- The school's car park has been redesigned to enable an in-out drop off process to operate which should significantly ease traffic flows.
- Pedestrian and vehicle segregation has been improved by fencing.
- The modular units are providing high quality class bases and toilet facilities. Some aspects of the school, for example the hall, already conform to the space requirements of a 3FE school.
- We continue to work with the school's leadership to ensure suitable SEN space and hard play areas are provided.
- Use of neighbouring public sports pitches has been agreed in principle with the land owner, to ensure the PE curriculum can be delivered.
- The school is led by a National Leader in Education, and a strong staff team supports her. I have every confidence the school has the capacity to grow and maintain its high standards. Other local schools do not have surplus capacity to provide an alternative to enlarging Discovery School. The proposal conforms with the Authority's commissioning principles of expanding good, popular provision when places are needed. Whilst it is anticipated that a planning application may be received shortly by Tonbridge & Malling Borough Council for another 850 – 950 homes in Kings Hill, and this would result in a third school becoming available, the earliest it could open is September 2015. It would not, therefore address the current issues.

5.4 Governing Body

While supportive of a temporary expansion of the school, to ensure places are available for local children. The Governing Body does not support a permanent expansion.

However, the Governors wish to emphasise the following points:-

- (i) They are willing and able to continue to work with KCC to accommodate the severe short term need for primary school places on Kings Hill.
- (ii) This current academic year (2012/13) there were some 20 children not offered places on Kings Hill. This is before construction of approximately 250 further dwellings for which the developers already have planning permission.

- (iii) The planning permission for the three pavilions (six additional classrooms) at The Discovery School is temporary for five years only. Covered walkways joining the pavilions to the school were refused on the basis that it would make the installation “too permanent”.
- (iv) The current school infrastructure, access and parking was not designed for 3FE.
- (v) There is an opportunity with the imminent submission of plans by Liberty Property Trust UK Ltd to convert land currently earmarked for commercial development to a further 950 residences, to rethink the overall approach to primary school education on Kings Hill.
- (vi) That a sensible approach would be to review the overall current and forecast demand for primary school places on Kings Hill and make adequate provision through a combination of supporting the current two schools and provision of a third school. The new third school should be completed and ready to operate within the five year temporary planning window granted for the temporary pavilions with a clear plan to revert The Discovery School to 2 FE at or before the end of that time.

5.5 Headteacher

The Headteacher, Senior Management Team and Staff of the school have been fully consulted and are supportive of the proposal. Primarily the school needs stability so it can plan effectively.

5.6 Pupils

The pupils of the school have been consulted and their views are included in this report.

5.7 Kings Hill Parish Council

- The school was designed as 2FE and both internal and external infrastructure are not suited to further expansion.
- Temporary buildings should be considered as a short term solution as playing fields will be compromised by adding mobile classrooms.
- The current parking at the school is dangerous. The parking provision and surrounding roads are insufficient to cope with increased numbers.
- The proposed expansion could degrade the quality of education at the school.
- KCC should consider effective medium/long term proposals for Kings Hill primary schools including provision of a third school.
- The pressure on schools in surrounding areas will continue to increase as further new housing development takes places in areas such as Leybourne Chase.
- Further expansion proposed at Kings Hill School highlights the dire need for additional school places on Kings Hill.
- The proposed expansions at both schools show the current significant demand for primary school places. This does not take into account the 250 houses still to be built in Phase 2 and the 800-900 homes proposed in Phase 3. It is imperative that KCC develops an effective strategy for education on Kings Hill to cope with the likely additional primary school children arising from these additional homes.
- KCC has admitted that the demand for primary school places far exceeded the expected numbers for which it provided two 2FE primary schools. With houses continuing to be built on Kings Hill the problem will only be exacerbated.

KHPC urge KCC to reconsider its proposal to cram additional children into the current schools. The ill-planned expansions will compromise the education of children. There is overwhelming evidence to support the provision of at least one more school on Kings Hill.

5.8 Tonbridge and Malling Borough Council

- The evidence provided in support of the proposed expansion clearly establishes the justification for the proposal based upon the rather unusual population and demographic characteristics that have been experienced in recent years at Kings Hill. This has given rise to unexpectedly high demand for local primary school places and seems set to continue for the foreseeable future. The evidence is supported by more anecdotal experience and frustration locally about the availability of school places. On that basis it seems that the short term expansion proposals can be fully and properly justified and the Borough Council would wish to support the project in principle.
- The consultation document refers to further potential development at Kings Hill. These will bring additional future demands for school places and that will need to be fully assessed in the new context and it is right to adopt the view at this stage that a third primary school will be required if the emerging proposals are to be successfully realised and the local community need addressed.

6. **Equality Impact Assessment**

6.1 An Equality Impact Assessment has been completed and can be found at: <http://consultations.kent.gov.uk/consult.ti/Discovery/consultationHome>. No changes needed to be made to the Equality Impact Assessment following the Consultation period.

7. **Recommendations**

The Education Cabinet Committee is asked to consider and endorse or make recommendations to the Cabinet Member for Education Learning and Skills on the decision to issue a public notice to expand The Discovery School.

8. **Background Documents**

Discovery School Consultation Document

<http://consultations.kent.gov.uk/consult.ti/Discovery/consultationHome>

Bold Steps for Kent and Policy Framework

<http://www.ab-consulting.co.uk/Delivering%20Bold%20Steps%20For%20Kent,%20Education%20Learn%20ing%20and%20Skills.pdf>

Kent Commissioning Plan for Education Provision 2012-2017

<http://kent590w3:9070/documents/b11518/FINAL%20Version%20Kent%20Commissioning%20Plan%20Education%20Provision%202012-2017%20-%20Published%2020%20September%202012%201.pdf?T=9>

Education Cabinet Committee report – 12 September 2012 – Primary Commissioning – Ashford District

<http://kent590w3:9070/documents/g4880/Public%20reports%20pack%2012th-Sep-2012%2010.00%20Education%20Cabinet%20Committee.pdf?T=10>

Lead Officer Contact details

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Proposal to expand The Discovery School, Kings Hill

Summary of Written Responses

Printed Consultation Documents distributed: 600
 Consultation responses received: 61

A summary of the responses received showed that:

	In Favour	Undecided	Opposed	Totals
Governors				
Staff				
Parents	8	2	40	50
Pupils			1	1
Other	1		9	10
Totals	9	2	50	61

Pupils' comments in favour of the proposal:

- Some pupils were not aware that the school had been admitting 90 pupils each year for the last 3 years. As far as they were concerned there are 30 children in a class with a teacher and a teaching assistant and what was the problem as long as that continued.
- I think it will be better for us all as new teachers always bring lots of new ideas and talents to our school.
- Eating in the classrooms is better than eating in the hall – it's quiet and we get out quicker.
- Parking – only the parents can make a difference.
- We think the pavilions look good and can't wait to get into them.
- We think the wireless laptop trolleys are the way to go. If we still only had the ICT suite there would be less time in there per class and per child.

Pupils' comments against the proposal:

- Assembly will be very cramped and this will cause a lot of moaning.
- We would need more dinner ladies because some of us eat in our classrooms.

Comments in favour of the proposal:

- Support the proposed expansion to respond to the needs of the community. (2)
- I support any plans that allow children on Kings Hill to attend a school they can walk to, whether that is by extending Discovery School or building a new school.
- Fully support the expansion of Discovery School and would also support a third school if it was to be built.
- The proposed expansion seems fine to me. Having been schooled in damp creaky portacabins with no long term damage to my health or education the Discovery School expansion looks like luxury compared.
- Our child entered the school in the 2011 intake after the school had expanded to meet high demand. We have since enjoyed and benefited from being able to walk our child to an outstanding local school. How could we now demand that the school revert to 2fe and deprive new parents on Kings Hill of the same opportunity? (2)
- We are concerned about the school's ability to maintain its high standards but if the school had not offered 90 places in 2011 our son would not have got in and we also have a younger child who will need a place at the school. To vote against the proposal would be hypocritical.

- Some of the problems (loss of IT, cramped assemblies, chaotic parking etc) could be solved – or at least improved – by different planning solutions. For example, the piece of land opposite the school could be used as a car park and the current car park could be used to extend the school and provide an extension to the hall, an IT room etc.
- The school hall is separated from a smaller hall by a set of door. If these were replaced with a folding partition, then it could be opened when a larger space is needed.
- We believe that the headteacher would not be prepared to take on this expansion if she didn't believe it could work, and we trust she will do everything in her power to not let her high standards slip.
- I would hope that the school would be able to expand and then contract if/when the third school is built.
- Whilst it is understandable that siblings of pupils from outside Kings Hill are given priority for places I would be interested in knowing how the numbers impact on the current demand for places for local children.
- I think increased transparency about the ideas and plans would be much appreciated and would help alleviate concerns amongst the parents who would perhaps be more appreciative of the efforts behind the planning.

Comments against the proposal:

- The infrastructure is not large enough – main hall, school grounds, entrance, dining facilities etc. (26)
- I am in favour of the temporary arrangement using temporary accommodation continuing. How can you make a decision to permanently increase the size of the school when the planning committee has only supported a temporary arrangement?
- I understand the need for more places, but The Discovery School has already grown beyond its capacity.
- There is not enough internal space for PE at the moment. (7)
- There will be more accidents and less space in the playground. (4)
- Children should not have to go off site to use sports facilities.
- The school will not have unlimited use of the new all weather pitches at Heath Farm as this is a commercial business and will need to be rented.
- The hall is packed now. Some children eat packed lunches in their classrooms. (10)
- The school can no longer benefit from school assembly. (3)
- A school of 630 places would cease to be a “village” school. Personal knowledge and daily interaction between staff and pupils would become virtually impossible to maintain. (3)
- Building upwards would be a far better solution (assuming the ground is of sufficient strength to withstand the future load).
- The school has already lost its SEN rooms and ICT suite. (7)
- I am massively concerned about the lack of SEN space in the school. Intervention groups and therapy sessions take place in a corridor. This may be solved for a while but as the mobile classrooms fill up the corridor sessions will start again. As an LEA you are all about inclusion – do the plans reflect this? I don't think so.
- I am pleased to see 3 disabled bays have now been painted in but I am still not convinced this is enough for the school.
- There are currently children in mixed year groups yet nothing is being done to address this situation.
- The increase in traffic and bad parking is potentially dangerous. (16)
- Cars are currently parking on pavements, a private road and in a private car park in Monroe Way.
- I live locally and there is a lot of noise from children and parents as they go through the walk ways. There is mess, ie crisp packets in our gardens. Parents also leave dogs barking outside the school while they take their children into school.

- Why can't Kings Hill School take some of the children as well?
- We need a third school. (12)
- A third school should be built now, ahead of but linked to the planning application for more houses on Kings Hill. (8)
- The Local Authority has known about the higher inward migration rate for a number of years – more than enough time to build a third school.
- This consultation should really have been undertaken three years ago when the decision to increase the intake to 90 was initially taken. (2)
- Planning permission for pavilions was submitted almost a year before any members of the public were aware of a formal expansion proposal.
- The pavilions have air conditioning for one reason only – lack of insulation. We do not otherwise require air-con in a UK environment.
- Not happy that my children will be learning in a mobile classroom. (2)
- I believe that the educational needs of some children nowadays are greater and they need more one to one help. Increasing the intake will put further pressure on staff.
- The proposed expansion will degrade the quality of education currently provided. (11)
- Children going to Discovery School only get one chance at education. KCC plans to make this school 3FE will be depriving children of the only chance they have of a good education.
- The safety of my children could be compromised and their personal, social and emotional well-being are not going to be met in the future.
- More pupils means more struggling to find more teachers and the children's education will suffer.
- Discovery is an outstanding school. This is based on an Ofsted report from 2008. Recent results show that results are slipping compared to other local schools. (4)
- The school has grown and changed so much in five years I don't feel the "outstanding" Ofsted report is current. (2)
- A school expansion cannot be based on a headteacher who is near retirement age. If the headteacher were to leave the school could be left with a replacement headteacher who is not as able. (2)
- I have heard that one parent has already removed their child from the school as a result of the existing expansion.
- Details of the consultation should have gone to every house on Kings Hill.
- The only members of the public who received forms were parents of children at the school.
- Discovery School has had years of disruption and expansion whilst Kings Hill School has not suffered any of this. I do not think it is fair on the pupils of Discovery or local residents to keep putting up with disruptions and an oversized primary school.
- The consultation meeting was held during the busiest few weeks of the school calendar, making it difficult for parents to attend. Many working parents have to commute back from London.
- Every parent that attended the public consultation was unanimous that Discovery should not be extended.
- Although it is ideal, nobody on Kings Hill has a "legal right" to walk to school in Kings Hill. If this was the case why was it acceptable for some children to be offered places at schools outside Kings Hill? There will never be a time that all children on Kings Hill will be guaranteed a place in a Kings Hill school and it will always be "tough luck" for those that do not get a place.
- Stop the property developer building more houses. (3)
- Why did KCC release land for residential development which you knew would exacerbate the current problem with school places in Kings Hill?
- Existing children in both schools should not be made to suffer. Families moving in are fully aware of the restricted school places.

- There will be parents moving into the area who will be concerned if they will get their children into the school.
- Parents are concerned as to the effect this will have on their house prices.
- Having such a large school will negatively affect the character of the area.
- Facilities on Kings Hill are not being kept in line with the increasing population. Inadequate primary school places, no secondary school and very little in the way of leisure amenities for the growing number of children.
- Has KCC considered the need for secondary school places that will be needed? (3)

Proposal to expand The Discovery School, Tonbridge & Malling

Public Consultation Meeting – 27 November 2012

Panel:	Gary Cooke	Chairman – Education Cabinet Committee
	David Adams	Area Education Officer - Mid Kent

Introduction

Gary Cooke welcomed parents, staff and members of the public to the meeting.

Purpose of the Meeting

- To explain the proposal to expand The Discovery School
- To give members of the public an opportunity to ask questions and comment
- To listen to views and opinions

Kent County Council is undertaking a public consultation to seek the views of the wider community on the proposal to expand The Discovery School from 420 places to 630 places.

A short presentation outlining the proposal for expansion was given by David Adams.

Mark Wardle, Chair of Governors: This is KCC consultation. KCC set the PAN, not the GB. The Governing Body manages the school and resources with the numbers we are sent. In 2010 we considered 2.5FE, but decided this would be very difficult thing to manage and we would rather have 3 FE. We asked KCC for stability. We are much better off with 2FE or 3FE that is planned ahead.

The expansion so far has been a temporary process. Planning permission is for 5 years. We are already committed to 90 pupils in Year R for 2013. This consultation is for beyond 2014.

Alison Farrall, Headteacher: The school opened in 2003 with 88 pupils. We had an outstanding Ofsted result in 2008 and became a popular choice for the local community. We have grown to accommodate the families on Kings Hill. When we expanded to 2FE I was worried we would lose our ethos, but I don't think that's happened. The ratio of staff to children has not changed. Being a larger school we can improve opportunities, for example offer a wider range of before and after school clubs.

We already have plans to develop other areas of the school for play and SEN space. Please put your trust in the school, the Governing Body and the Local Authority and offer others the opportunities your children have had.

Gary Cooke: In terms of how the numbers work, we as Members try to build in a little (5%) surplus capacity to enhance choice. This has not been possible in the past on Kings Hill. Richard Long has been trying for several years to create additional places.

Question / Comment	Answer
Parent - Back in 2010 I was in correspondence with the LA. I was told that this was a 2FE school, the site can only accommodate two mobiles and the LA was actively seeking a third school on	David Adams – In 2010 KCC actively pursued new school options. However, it was found to be not viable. There is not a 3 rd school option available at the moment. The DFE produces a design guide where it sets out

Question / Comment	Answer
<p>Kings Hill. We are in exactly that state now. The school is designed to accommodate 420 children; not 630 children.</p> <p>In addition, the new school building regulations state a requirement for SEN, ICT and multi-purpose rooms. We don't have those here.</p> <p>It's bad now. What will it be like with another 200 children?</p>	<p>what a school should have, eg, ICT suite. However, this gives a footprint guide. Schools have flexibility. For example, a lot of schools have moved away from an ICT suite, they use lap top trolleys, notebooks, etc. Indeed, we funded this school to provide laptops when the ICT room was converted. Core elements of this school fit the 3FE brief – for example, this hall is a 3FE size, although other elements of the school do not fit.</p> <p>Government has recently reduced the space requirements for schools. There are adjacent sports pitches for PE space that the school could use.</p>
<p>Parent – You mention the Ofsted result (Outstanding in 2008) and you are using this to show the school has the ability to change. I fully understand that the Senior Management Team and the Governing Body do a great job, but that Ofsted result was around a PAN of 60 not 90.</p> <p>Ofsted have since significantly changed the criteria of what they judge a school on.</p> <p>Where we say the performance is good - 11+ etc – that is on a 60 year group not on 90. We have not yet had the 90 year group going through 11+.</p> <p>Back in 2008 there was money for schools.</p>	<p>Gary Cooke –We had money under BSF, but not for primary schools. We offered to deliver schools at the size the Government wanted but more cost-effective. We would then have been able to spend the savings on primary schools. The Government declined.</p> <p>Allison Farrall - Re attainment. The pupil / teacher ratio has not changed. When we had great results – which we still do – we were doing that at 0.5FE, then at 1FE then at 2FE. This will continue. The expansion will not be a negative impact it will be a positive impact.</p>
<p>Parish Council - Earlier this year parents came to lobby the Parish Council re additional school places.</p> <p>The Parish Council did not receive the Public Consultation Document until last Thursday.</p> <p>What do you propose to do about asking future parents for their view?</p> <p>Re parking – it is a known fact it's a problem. We do get a lot of complaints. I think that needs to be looked at.</p> <p>I take on board your comment re consultation on playing fields. Please be actively involved when the Parish Council signs the lease.</p> <p>The whole community should be consulted. The consultation should be extended or something put in the newspaper.</p>	<p>Gary Cooke - in terms of range of consultation - future parents and local residents - this question crops up regularly. I have instructed officers to instigate a review of how we do these consultations. We cannot go back and undo these consultations and redo them.</p> <p>David Adams – We send documents out to schools, nurseries etc. Apologies to Parish Council that they did not get theirs in time.</p> <p>Re parking –There will be double parking for staff and a designated area for parents to come in, drop off children and leave. The process has been agreed with Highways. The school has a travel plan and has had to review this as part of the planning application.</p> <p>The school asks parents to park and stride, use drop off areas and to park considerately. Part of this proposal is about trying to make sure that as many youngsters as possible in this community can come here and walk here.</p>
<p>Parent – I don't believe the quality of teaching and learning will be impacted by expansion.</p> <p>We had to appeal for my child to come here. We live very close. Appeals argument was that there was not enough space, not enough toilets etc – that was</p>	<p>David Adams – Re the pavilions. These are double classroom bases, with toilets. In terms of other facilities, some facilities are already 3FE, and we are addressing others, e.g. hard play space and SEN provision within the school.</p> <p>Re appeals. The majority of your child's time in school is spent in a classroom with another 29</p>

Question / Comment	Answer
<p>their reason for trying not to let in one child. The appeal was 1.5 years ago. I'd like to know how the Local Authority are going to support the school re accommodation?</p>	<p>children. Only at certain times will there be pressure points. Appeal may well have been for a child above 30 in the class, and therefore needing an extra desk etc.</p>
<p>Parent - You say the hall is correct size for 3FE. Why are our children eating their packed lunch in their classrooms?</p>	<p>Allison Farrall – This has been caused by the temporary delay for the pavilions. The small hall was used for packed lunches but is currently a class base. We have extended the lunch time and now have three sittings. We do not want more than three sittings as this impacts on PE so we have put some of the children in their classrooms for lunch. The children say they enjoy it. It is quieter, it's calm and they can talk to their friends.</p>
<p>Parent - What if all or even half of our children wanted school dinners; could the hall cope?</p>	<p>Gary Cooke – Yes. And a proper hot lunch aids learning.</p>
<p>Planning and Transport sub committee rep – The Planning and Transport sub committee has not had any discussions with the Education department re a permanent 3FE expansion. We had a debate over temporary classrooms and agreed to the temporary placement of classrooms. This year the LA produced its Commissioning Plan. In it there were no medium or long term plans for Kings Hill. The short term plan confirmed temporary accommodation at Kings Hill. Plan also confirmed ideal size for a primary school is 2FE.</p>	<p>Gary Cooke – There has been no mention of permanent planning application as this has not been submitted. When it has been submitted you will be consulted – along with other statutory consultees. The Commissioning Plan (p58) includes medium and long term commissioning on Kings Hill. It is expected that a planning application for 950 houses is going in. We will tell the planners what is needed in the way of a school. The long term plan is the expansion of that school. David Adams - Although the LA's preference is for 2FE primary schools, we have 0.5FE schools to 4FE schools. We have a variety. We don't always have the option; children don't come in nice round packages of 30.</p>
<p>Parent - I have visited most schools in Kent in my previous career. Kings Hill has a model school here. Pavilions, mobiles – failed drastically. KCC got rid of the mobiles. You have taken a model school and are adding mobiles. It will be a shanty town – no better than any other school. Expansion should be permanent or expand Kings Hill school. You had mobile classrooms out there that were 25 years old. In 25 years you will have a mobile out the back of this school. Children trekking across the playground in all weathers.</p>	<p>Gary Cooke – failing schools do not fail because of buildings, but because of teaching. If children receive quality teaching – such as here – the school will not fail. There are numerous schools in the county in excellent buildings that are not as good as they should be. We do not want to have permanent “temporary” solutions. Part of the solution of making the PAN 90 is to provide stability and then we can provide the permanence. David Adams – The pavilions could equally be deemed permanent. Proper foundations, potentially permanent, 60 year lifespan, drainage etc. It could have a permanent planning permission. It is intended to blend in better with the school - pitched roof etc. The key question is what is the long term provision needed in Kings Hill? Normally we expect more children to come forward from a development during the early part of the development and then it settles down as children move to secondary school. You need stability, which we can provide. In 15-20 years' time there may be less demand so we can</p>

Question / Comment	Answer
	consider taking this school back to 2FE. You will all have views, and parents at that time will have views. We want to ensure we can meet current and future demand.
<p>Resident - Two points: Under BB99 each child should have 2.2sqm inside and Xm outside. Have requirements diminished to meet new sizing. The MORI poll was inaccurate. Pupil Product Ratio of 0.28 per house and 0.07 per flat is KCC ratio not Kings Hill ratio. Kings Hill has extra bedrooms. Tonbridge & Malling Borough Council do not know current population and do not know population in 5 years. Going forward how can we be sure it's correct?</p>	<p>David Adams - BB99 is now superseded. Kent always had more luxurious building brief than BB99 – generally classrooms were larger. BB99 sets out what government defined in the past. Government said to just use this as a starting point. The School Premises Regulations 2012 are now two sides of paper. "Suitable outdoor space ..." is the definition of how much green space a school needs. Classroom sizes are now smaller in the EFA's exemplar design. The MORI survey showed how many children might come out of a development. We found on Kings Hill that it's running about 0.42 primary aged children per house as opposed to an expected 0.28. Agreed with Liberty to use the Kings Hill model in the future so 950 houses will use that model. Fine for phase 3, but still have debate over how to correct current issue. Liberty have no legal obligation to do anything but it is in all our best interests to work together.</p>
<p>Parent – This was a scripted delivery. I am very angry about the things you have said about parents here tonight. It's already been decided. It's a given. How do we know you will listen?</p>	<p>Gary Cooke – ECC Members try to ensure that education is provided in Kent for children in the best possible way. Re scripted delivery by Headteacher and Chair of Governors – that is their view; they are not the LA's view. I fully expect David to recommend expansion. ECC committee will consider responses received. It's very important that you all respond.</p>
<p>Parent - Discovery should be a 2FE. It's not about whether this building can cope. It's about wear and tear of outside space. I've spent a couple of years with Reception children – 90 of them. There is no time for individual attention in outside activities – they are wearing and tearing their environment. All done very quickly, should be rich learning.</p>	<p>Allison Farrall - Thank you for the work you have done. It is still the same ratio. The outside learning environment is probably 6, 8 times bigger than other schools. Wear and tear – yes a huge amount but we have a budget for this. If we have the use of the all weather pitches this will be a luxury for a primary school. We are going to lose a small amount of space. We have looked at converting soft play into hard play and developing rough area at front into KS1 area. We call them pavilions – not mobiles. Visited Challock PS – they call them lodges, Ryarsh PS call them pods. My staff are fighting to get into them. They are bigger, lighter, they have air-conditioning.</p>
<p>Local Member - Three years ago we fought to get an expansion at this school. 30 very anxious parents wanting a place at a school on Kings Hill. I have been fighting for 3 years for a 3rd school. The ideal solution would be a new school 300 yards up the road. We don't have it now. Therefore the best solution is to expand this school. What I'm really pleased</p>	

Question / Comment	Answer
<p>about is how this school has taken it in a very positive way. The Headteacher can do it, the staff can do it. We still need that 3rd primary school and I will be speaking to David Adams and Gary Cooke to make sure we do get it. If we don't get it we will continue to have 30 anxious parents every year. I would ask you to support the proposal here tonight.</p>	
<p>Parent – This is focussing on reception intake. With all the families moving into the area there will be older children. What guarantees will we have that KS2 classes won't go to 35 children?</p>	<p>David Adams – Our strategy focuses on YR as that's when the majority of children enter school. We cannot easily accommodate older cohorts. Far fewer families move with children of school age. But that's no different here to anywhere else – Tonbridge town, Maidstone etc. We will only be admitting 90 into the school. We will not ask the school to take in 91 or 92. Appeal panels will look at each case individually and may let additional children in but that is outside my control. Allison Farrall – if a family does appeal they are nothing to do with the Education Department. We send in papers defending our situation. For some families it is not good news. We do not want more than 30 in a class. I know in years 3 and 4 we have a few additional children but it is not my choice.</p>
<p>Parent - My concern is that it seems a lot of piecemeal activity and no cohesive activity. Why is the lean on Discovery why not on Kings Hill School? I also have concerns over consultation process in terms of non parent residents being approached. I have heard rumours about older children being displaced. Will this happen to my daughter? I feel sorry for parents sending their children to a 90 intake school. Not the same experience as some children have had.</p>	<p>David Adams - Part of the rationale of looking at this school is that it is more popular, the Ofsted grade is higher. Kent Commissioning Plan talks of expanding popular and successful schools. Plus, the majority of new housing was at this end of Kings Hill so more parents seek places here. Why not Kings Hill School? We are looking at Kings Hill School as well. 175 children this year. At least 175 in 2013 coming in. We have done some feasibility work and are looking at whether we can add additional accommodation to take a bulge in 2013 and 2014 and if needs be beyond that. The strategy is for a 3rd school. No planning application has been submitted, but there will be one. Probably in planning terms it will be successful. If 3rd school does go ahead it could be open by September 2015.</p>
<p>Resident - I was one of the 20 displaced parents and my child goes to Watlingtonbury. If Kings Hill School is expanded will the displaced children be brought back and how will this be managed? If 3rd school is going to be built you will learn from Discovery and will build as 2FE able to expand to 3FE if required. And it will have sufficient outdoor space.</p>	<p>David Adams – 3rd school will be funded by Developer Contributions. The developer will give as little as they can, we will ask for as much as we can justify. It is in everyone's interest here to get it right. There is a two year time lag between building and paying out. Liberty are builders as well as site agents so are more reasonable. 1,000 houses – do I need it to be 3FE to meet existing demand? How long will that demand last? I can make a case around 2FE – not sure if I can make a case around 3FE. Liberty want to work with us to make sure we</p>

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	<p>have future proofed the issue and I am optimistic about it.</p> <p>Open with YR and then smaller half year classes. When we opened Goat Lees, Ashford we asked whether parents wanted just YR or all ages. We had overwhelming support for all ages to be able to accommodate siblings.</p>
<p>Parent – My child is at Mereworth as could not get into Kings Hill Primary School. Ask all Kings Hill residents who have children whether they want permanent 3FE at Discovery. I am happy with temporary accommodation to get over the hump, but not comfortable with 3FE permanently. I would be happier with Mereworth as 1FE. You need to have widespread consultation with all residents before permanent issues are discussed.</p>	<p>Gary Cooke – Mereworth is satisfactory so we would not look to expand Mereworth.</p> <p>David Adams - PAN has changed. Looked originally at 1 year expansion then 2 year. I don't have a 3rd school site but there are 175 children who need provision this year, next year and probably the year after.</p> <p>If we expand by more than 25% we need to go through a statutory consultation, a significant enlargement.</p> <p>Experience suggests that once the development is built out things settle down. At some point we will be able to scale Discovery School back to 2FE. The question is when?</p>
<p>It costs just over £120k for a new classroom. If you spent the money on mobiles why did you not spend it on a new school? You own the land not Liberty.</p>	<p>David Adams – We do not have control over that land. We are in partnership with Liberty and we cannot legally take land away from the partnership. We want to deliver places for the community.</p>
<p>Parent – I have a question around SEN. If you are bringing more children into the school, it will be 90 children per year for ever. The SEN space has gone. There are many children with AEN coming in. I want to see that SEN space is put back or at least provided in the same way. The plans for the new car park now show fewer disabled car parking spaces Long-term we will run out of space – what will happen then? You can't have a private consultation with someone in a corridor. By the time my child is in Year 6 there will not be a single room left for SEN</p>	<p>David Adams –Discussing SEN are with school. Easy solution is to put in some accommodation early to be able to use in different way.</p> <p>Allison Farrall: Parking - on the original plans no disabled bays were marked out. We had the bays marked out ourselves. The number put down now is the official number.</p> <p>The SEN room was small and dark and nobody wanted to work there. We are waiting to hear when the second pavilion will be on site. We could use this for SEN, or could put Yrs 5 and 6 outside and SEN inside. We are looking at ways of creating additional space in the building.</p> <p>Mark Wardle –There have been delays putting the classrooms in. Not the fault of the LA. Foundations have gone in for 2 of the classrooms, we have permission for 6. Regardless of what you decide now, we already have or have agreed to accommodate 4 additional years.</p>
<p>Parent - If you're going to add classrooms add them all at the same time.</p>	
<p>Parent - We are here today because of previous short-sightedness. The free school was rejected as it was not different enough. I'm pleading with planning authorities. Please look at what a mess has already been caused here. People are spending money on houses in a</p>	<p>Gary Cooke –Generally we agree with you. The funding for a new school will come from Developer Contributions. That will be from the new housing, not from the current housing. We do not have the money otherwise to build a new school. If we don't expand here the children will have to go to schools in adjoining parishes and villages.</p>

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<p>dream to walk their children to school. I know that Liberty will say if you give us permission to build these houses we will provide a 3rd school, but we need the 3rd school now.</p> <p>Re the free school application. We were looking at 6FE on Kings Hill and that was a year ago. You are looking at an extra need for 2013 but there is a need now.</p>	
<p>Parent - Looking to the future every school is getting bigger. Are there plans to extend secondary schools? Why wasn't this consultation done three years ago when you knew there were problems?</p>	<p>David Adams – Planning for secondary is a little easier as there are 10 years worth of children in the system. Looking at where children go to school - 43% go to grammar schools in Maidstone or Tonbridge. That is unlikely to change. About 10% go to church schools in Maidstone and Tunbridge Wells. In essence, over half go to those provisions. The remainder go to a range of schools, particularly Mascalls. Assuming Kings Hill ends up with 8FE of primary places, these figures show there would be 4FE of pupils seeking non-selective, non-denominational school places.</p> <p>6FE is the minimum size of secondary. Don't see a stand alone school here being viable on that basis and Malling school has spaces. There are references in the Commissioning Plan re opening selective provision to support Sevenoaks. If that goes ahead, capacity will be freed up in Tonbridge. Some local schools are planning to increase their intakes already.</p>
<p>Parent – You said that if the school expands by more than 25% we need a statutory consultation. That worries me as it implies things have gone wrong in the past. By growing to 630 how will we compare to other schools of that size?</p>	<p>Gary Cooke – Allison Farrall is an outstanding leader. She is one of the best headteachers in Kent not just in the Tonbridge & Malling District. We have a range of schools. Some of our 3FE schools are outstanding. We even have 4FE.</p> <p>David Adams - Woodlands JS is 3FE and it outstanding. But just because you are another 3FE does not mean you will be the same. Difficult to compare.</p> <p>Allison Farrall - We have astonishing and outstanding staff here. We are lucky – we attract very high quality teachers here. The Governing Body are hot on questioning us. That is part of their role. They question – they do not just expect. Hand on heart, given the choice of 2FE or 3FE I would say 2FE. That is what the school was built as. But, there is a great need out there. We have done a fantastic job in supporting the community. Standards have not fallen.</p>
<p>Parent - from what I can see in a simplistic way there is mismanagement going on here. Everything going on here exacerbates the problems – mismanagement. Did the planning department not speak to you? The general public, the buyers need to be able</p>	<p>David Adams – We meet regularly with Tonbridge & Malling planners. This situation arises from what I said earlier. If you build this number of houses, you will expect to have that number of children. You have to have a defensible model when seeking contributions. However, the reality for every site will be different. We know the Kings Hill demographics</p>

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to make a decision. A lot more people need to understand what's going on to prevent this happening again. I don't know how you can allay those fears. I'd like to know what goes on between KCC and the planners.	are different and we also want to correct the problem we have now. Lack of places does not help Liberty sell properties. Commercially it's in everyone's interests to get it right. Liberty paid what we asked them to pay at the time.
Parent - I've been sold a dud. I came here thinking it would be a great place to live. My son is 2 years old. I don't know what school he will go to.	
Parent - if we have plans for 630 children why was an application for a Road Crossing Patrol turned down this year?	David Adams - I manage that service. The criteria used will look at traffic movement. Traffic here is generated mainly by parents. Road Crossing Patrols are for fast moving roads not residential streets outside a school.
Parent - we may be able to cope, we have coped over the past couple of years, but that does not necessarily make it the best outcome for pupils. Headteacher said this school should ideally be 2FE. It may cope for a few more years but it should be 2FE. Do you have any schools that have gone up to 3FE and then gone back to 2FE?	David Adams – part of the aim is to have some surplus capacity but not too much. Willesborough IS and JS in Ashford reduced from 5FE to 4FE. A number of schools dropped from 2FE to 1FE. St Mary's in Folkestone went from 2FE to 3FE, back to 2FE and we may ask them to go back up again.

112 people attended the meeting.