
CHILDREN'S SERVICES CAPITAL PROGRAMME FOR PRIMARY SCHOOLS

**Councillor Cyndi Hughes,
Children and Young People Portfolio**

Jenni Cooke, Service Director - Children, Families and Learning

SUMMARY REPORT

Purpose of the Report

1. To inform Cabinet of the outcome of feasibility projects to provide additional school places on the eastern side of the borough and to seek approval for the release of capital funding to support these projects.

Summary

2. In March 2013 Cabinet approved the School Organisation Plan 2013-2017 and for the release of Basic Need capital funding to allow feasibility work to be undertaken to define the most appropriate schools in which to provide additional places for the planned period.
3. Detail is given in this report on the outcome of the feasibility reviews alongside the project teams' recommendations for developing the preferred scheme through to detailed design.

Recommendation

4. It is recommended that:-
 - (a) £3,168,081.50 of capital funding is released, as outlined in paragraph 21, for the provision of additional accommodation at Heathfield Academy School.
 - (b) The Director of Children's Services be authorised to proceed with those works developed during the feasibility stage of the project, and outlined in the report, subject to planning consent.
 - (c) Members accept the recommendation to retain the existing Red Hall Primary School on its current site and develop detailed design proposals to expand the school as required to meet the needs of the Eastern Urban Fringe development.

- (d) £260,000 basic need funding is released to support the remodelling of the entrance at Red Hall primary school to address safeguarding issues.
- (e) £50,000 basic need funding be released to support advanced feasibility and design fees should these be required to consider options for any other school place planning requirements in line with developing and revising the School Organisation Plan.

Reasons

5. The recommendations are supported by the following reasons:-

- (a) That the feasibility project concludes that Heathfield School and Red Hall Primary can, and should be, expanded on the existing site to ensure consistency for those schools and to ensure value for money in terms of capital spend.
- (b) The draft programme meets the requirement needed for the future housing developments currently identified on the Eastern side of the Borough.
- (c) That the recommendations will create additional primary places which will help to meet the Authority's statutory requirement to provide a school place for all children of school age in its area and enable parents to express a choice of a local school.

Jenni Cooke
Service Director

Background Papers

Rachel Kershaw - Extension: 2026

S17 Crime and Disorder	No recommendations from this report.
Health and Well Being	Provide facilities that enhance children's life chances and opportunities to thrive.
Carbon Impact	All work undertaken will be designed and constructed with the highest regard to sustainability and aim to reduce the carbon footprint and reuse energy and environmental resources.
Diversity	All projects will add to the diversity of buildings and technology available in Darlington.
Wards Affected	The schools to be expanded are in the Lingfield ward and the Haughton East ward.
Groups Affected	Children and young people aged 5 to 11 in full time education.
Budget and Policy Framework	This report does not recommend a change to the budget and policy framework.
Key Decision	This is not a key decision.
Urgent Decision	For the purpose of the 'call-in' procedure this does not represent an urgent matter.
One Darlington: Perfectly Placed	The Basic Need Programme is consistent with Aspiring Darlington: providing high quality facilities that support modern approaches to education in schools and for lifelong learning.

MAIN REPORT

Background

6. In March 2013 Cabinet approved the School Organisation Plan 2013-2017 and for the release of Basic Need capital funding to allow feasibility work to be undertaken to define the most appropriate schools in which to provide additional places for the planned period.
7. The school places are required to support the following large scale housing developments on the eastern side of the borough:-

Phase 1&2 Eastern Urban Fringe development	Anticipated 700 new homes from 2016-2026 and a further 500 from 2026 onwards	255 primary school aged pupils
Lingfield Point development	Anticipated 500 new homes from 2014-2026 and a further 700 from 2026 onwards	216 primary school aged pupils
former Eastbourne School footprint	76 new homes from 2014-2016	14 primary school aged pupils
former Eastbourne school playing fields development	76 new homes from 2016-2019	14 primary school aged pupils

Options

8. Following agreement at a Joint Head Teachers Conference in 2013 the following three schools were identified as having the potential to meet the demand for primary places on the eastern side of Darlington. Feasibility reports for each school were commissioned:-
 - (a) Red Hall Primary - an increase of 105 places (PAN 30 to PAN 45)
 - (b) Heathfield Primary - an increase of 210 places (PAN 60 to PAN 90)
 - (c) The Rydal Academy - an increase of 105 places (PAN 75 to PAN 90)

N.B. Planned Admission Number (PAN) = number of places available in each admission year.

The Rydal Academy

9. The Rydal Academy was removed from the options in August 2014 following detailed consideration of the location of the proposed housing sites and the potential demand for school places expected to be created. The pupil modelling did not evidence sufficient impact by providing increased places in the Rydal Academy and as such the feasibility work for this option was ceased.

Red Hall Primary School

10. The feasibility options for Red Hall Primary School considered a number of different options for the provision of school places due to the scale of the Eastern Urban Fringe development. The feasibility process was split into three different options:
 - (a) Build a new school in a new location at the centre of the overall Eastern Urban Fringe development.
 - (b) Expand the existing school from a 210 place school to a 315 place school which would require 3 additional classrooms to be built plus additional ancillary spaces.
 - (c) Expand the existing school from a 210 place school to a 420 place school which would require 7 additional classrooms to be built as well as significant expansion and enhancement to all communal areas (dining hall, toilets, kitchen, offices etc.)
11. The options were reviewed in terms of costs, value for money, adaptability of the existing school and a consideration was also given to certainty of funding as any additional accommodation is likely to need to be funded from developer contributions from the Eastern Urban Fringe development.
12. After reviewing the options the recommendation was heavily weighted in favour of supporting the existing school to remain in its existing location and to expand at an appropriate, but gradual rate in line with the house building rate and as funding becomes available. The school could be expanded in two phases, initially up to 315 places and then eventually to 420 places if the demand is created.
13. Members are asked to support this recommendation as it offers sound value for money; it provides long term support to an existing school and its community; it provides certainty for the master planning arrangements for the new development; and it provides flexibility for the school to expand at a rate appropriate to the house building rate so that it does not compete for children with other schools.
14. The approval of this option will allow detailed design work to be completed on the phased approach to expanding the school to meet the need for school places in line with the house building programme. A further report will be brought to Cabinet in due course to seek the release of appropriate capital funding to deliver the full scheme.

Red Hall Primary School – Safeguarding works

15. On the basis that Members approve to expand Red Hall Primary School on its current site there is an urgent requirement to release a proportion of the basic need funding at this stage to address urgent safeguarding issues within the school. The main school entrance and access routes to the school are inadequate in terms of providing robust safeguarding arrangements and although there have been no major incidents to date; there have been occasions when issues could have occurred. During a recent Ofsted inspection these safeguarding issues were raised and it was recommended that they be addressed as soon as possible. Temporary arrangements have been put in place to ensure staff and pupils are secure at all times, but a more permanent solution is required.
16. The long term expansion project outlined earlier in this report would have addressed these concerns as part of the overall design for increasing the intake at

the school; however, the timescales do not meet the need for action. The cost for undertaking the work to the main entrance and access routes has been extracted from the main feasibility report and is expected to cost £260,000.

17. Cabinet are asked to approve the release of this funding as an early proportion of the total costs of the capital project to expand the school. All works completed will be designed with the larger expansion of the school in mind and will not be abortive or require redesigning during the expansion works.

Heathfield Academy

18. The feasibility proposal to expand Heathfield Academy from a planned admission number of 60 (two classes per year group) to a PAN of 90 (three classes per year group) has been undertaken. This proposal will provide an additional 210 primary school places which will meet a high proportion of the identified need from the nearby housing developments. The extremely close proximity of the school to the housing developments at Lingfield and Eastbourne make this school an ideal choice for expansion to meet the needs of these developments.
19. Cabinet approval is now sought to develop this scheme through detailed design stage, construction and to completion so that work can progress to provide the school places in this area. Part of the detailed design process will involve careful consideration of site design and will provide suitable solutions to improve the congestion from school traffic already affecting the area immediately outside the school. The details of the proposal will also consider phasing the expansion of the school over a number of years to ensure an increase in school places does not have a detrimental effect on other primary schools within the area.

Funding

20. Basic Need Grant is an annual source of funding from the Department for Education, allocated to Local Authorities on a formulaic basis to meet the basic need i.e. the need for additional school places. The priorities for this funding should be considered across all schools within the Borough, including maintained, Academies, Voluntary Aided schools and Free schools.
21. The total available funding is currently £3,084,495 with a further £1,592,807 earmarked from DfE and due to be released for the financial year 2016/17. The funding pot is made up of the following:-

Unallocated Basic Need from 12/13 - £47,776
Basic Need 13/14 unallocated in Account - £759,880
Basic Need 14/15 Unreleased - Allocation confirmed from DfE - £759,880
Basic Need 15/16 Unreleased – Allocation confirmed from DfE - £1,516,959
Basic Need 16/17 Unreleased - Awaiting release from DfE - £1,592,807

22. In addition to DfE funding, a developer planning commitment has been received of £500,000 from the Lingfield Point Phase 1 development to support expansion of school places in the local area. The Cabinet Resolution 1 July 2014, giving authority to dispose of the former Eastbourne School playing fields, has also earmarked £170,000 to be allocated from the Capital Receipt to contribute towards

the sports provisions at Heathfield Primary School as a result of the proposed regeneration development.

Feasibility

23. The initial design and appropriate costs have been developed by Darlington Borough Council Building Design Services.
24. An estimate of the cost of the Heathfield Academy expansion project has been prepared and this paper seeks approval for an overall project budget of £3,168,081.50 to be released by Members. The funding envelope would be created from the following sources: £2,498,081 Basic Need, £500,000 106 Contribution, and £170,000 Capital Receipt. Should the 106 contribution or the capital receipt not come to fruition any shortfall would be the first priority to be supported from the remaining Basic Need capital pot.
25. The initial costs that have been provided as part of the feasibility report and are indicative costs that are set to be refined as part of the detail design process.
26. The costs per m2 are based on BCIS reported schemes for new build primary schools post 2006 rebased to the locality and to Q2 2015 together with remodelling costs per m2 for certain parts of the school. Ten similar single story schools of similar size were used to obtain an average cost per m2. Remodelling costs are based on experience of previous schemes and Spons 2013 cost m2 rates. Additional costs for a canopy and specialised kitchen server equipment have been added, together with external works; other items added to this figure are contingencies, design risk and fees. The baseline for EFA designs have been costed at approximately £1,500/m2 (including professional fees). Building cost per m2 for this new build scheme including additional abnormal work listed and fees, but excluding contingencies, and design risk; rebased to Q2 2015 is £1,818/m2.

Programme

27. An initial draft programme has been established, but this will be developed further and agreed by the Project Board early in 2015. The programme meets the deadline for the availability of the new primary school places in line with the proposed housing developments.
28. The proposals will be subject to the planning process that will determine the precise design and layout of the accommodation. The planning stage will involve its own consultation processes.

Quality

29. The design has been prepared in accordance with statutory requirements and Department for Education guidance regarding space provision (Building Bulletin 99).
30. The design has been approved by the school head teacher and Project Board, please refer to **Appendix A**, essentially the proposed design provides the

following:-

- (a) Remodelling the existing hall into three new classrooms and building an additional four classrooms including associated spaces elsewhere within the school grounds.
- (b) Building a new sports hall with changing facilities to develop community use in the area and house the whole school.
- (c) Re-providing the schools existing car park and create a pick up and drop of turning circle for parents to use to address historical highways issues outside the school.
- (d) Extend the current dining hall and kitchen facility to meet the extra demand.

Risk

- 31. An initial Project Risk Register has been developed but following approval from Cabinet to proceed with the scheme, the Project Manager will arrange a risk workshop to identify risks along with mitigation for each and an appropriate cost or time impact it may have to the contract. A contingency and a risk fund has been added in at 10% to the client managed budget to mirror the 10% for both the design risk and contingency held by the design team. In total there is £650,420.00 held to cover any unforeseen issues that are uncovered as the design process develops.

Project Management and Procurement

- 32. The project is following the authority's capital process and the following roles have been agreed:-
 - (a) Project Sponsor: Children, Families & Learning (CF&L);
 - (b) Project Management: Capital Projects Team;
 - (c) Project Board: Children, Families & Learning Capital Programme Board (Assistant Director CF&L, Assistant Director Highways, Design and Projects, Head of Capital Projects, School Place Planning & Assets Manger).
- 33. Asset Management Board will agree the procurement route of the main construction contract. Procurement Board will agree the procurement routes of the client retained packages i.e. ICT, furniture and equipment, however the initial route has already been discussed with the headteacher and he is happy for the construction works to be carried out by Darlington Borough Council.
- 34. Although Heathfield School is an Academy school, it is proposed that the local authority retains the funding and responsibility for the delivery of the proposed project and that a legal agreement regarding access and warranties be put in place before work commences. This has been achieved successfully with other schools which converted to academy status during Primary Capital Programme projects and also the most recent expansion of Mowden Infants and Junior, where no issues have been reported.

Consultation

35. As part of the design process we will be appointing a highways consultant to undertake consultation on behalf of the LA to ensure a full in-depth survey is conducted and all agencies, local residents, parents, staff and children are consulted with. Whilst undertaking the highways consultation we will also be consulting to the same groups regarding the expansions and collating all views and comments before submitting a planning application.

School Organisation Planning

36. Since the last School Organisation Plan was developed in 2012/13 there have been significant developments to the landscape of school place planning across the Borough. The outcomes of the Marking and Growing Places consultation and the development of a revised Local Plan for Darlington all have the potential to impact on the school place planning arrangements further. This paper seeks cabinet approval to undertake a review of the School Organisation Plan so that appropriate updates and revisions can be considered for future presentation to Cabinet. £50,000 feasibility and option development funding is requested to be released from Basic Need funding to support the advance design fees of any options for future expansions or changes so that appropriate options can be prepared for Cabinets consideration.