

Appendix 1

Summary of Consultation on proposals to create additional capacity at Aston Academy

18th May 2018

Dear Stakeholder,

NB: Letter sent via Aston Academy to all parents and carers of pupils at the Academy. Communications sent to Parish Councils, Elected Ward Members, MP's and neighbouring schools, and posted on the RMBC website.

Proposal to add additional capacity at Aston Academy

The Local Authority is proposing to add additional capacity to the school building to create new teaching and learning space for September 2021 onwards. The capacity at the school will increase from a total classroom space for 1,650 pupils to a total classroom space for 1,800 pupils. The extension of the building will support the Principal and Governing Body to accommodate the current and expected future pupil population at the school.

The school is currently oversubscribed and this trend is set to continue in future academic years. Following the expansions of two Primary phase feeder schools in the Aston learning community and the ongoing development of housing at Waverley, this will mean the increased capacity at the school will allow the Principal and Governing Body to plan for future years intakes of pupils with the assurance that there is sufficient space to deliver the schools' curriculum.

The proposal is subject to a successful planning application and should the proposal then move forward, Officers from the Council working with the Principal and Governing Body would outline to all stakeholders detailed plans for the school and the implications of the building work on site in relation to health and safety and how this would be managed during the development project.

This letter gives stakeholders an opportunity to comment on the proposals prior to any report being submitted to Council Cabinet.

Please send correspondence to:

Elaine Maltby
School Planning, Admissions and Appeals Service
2C Riverside House
Main Street
Rotherham
S60 1AE

or by Email to:

Elaine.Maltby@rotherham.gov.uk

by 29th June 2018.

Yours Sincerely

Christopher Stones
School Planning, Admissions and Appeals

Covering Email to stakeholders accompanying the letter:

Following the report to Council Cabinet approved on 11 July 2016 - Proposal to increase secondary school capacity across the Borough to meet future increased demand.

Please find attached a consultation letter for your consideration. Rotherham Metropolitan Borough Council are consulting stakeholders (in-line with the recommendations of the above mentioned report) from 18th May to 29th June 2018 in relation to proposals to increase capacity at Aston Academy.

Should you have any comments in relation to this proposal, please submit them to –

Elaine.Maltby@rotherham.gov.uk by Friday the 29th June 2018.

Comments received will be submitted as part of the subsequent decision making process to Council Cabinet.

Responses received to the consultation held between 18th May 2018 and 29th June 2018:

Comment:

With regards to the application for Aston Academy I would like to make a few points.

Before the extension is considered will the existing school be refurbished?

The school is in desperate need of refurbishing with tape over threadbare carpets, peeling and badly painted walls and doors and the whole school looking in a poor state of repair and condition.

The corridors and stairwells are too narrow for the current level of pupils causing bottlenecks at peak times and increasing the pupils will only further exasperate the situation.

Aston Academy also accepts applicants from several schools outside of their catchment area .If they are indeed oversubscribed then that should be down to other authorities to manage. Any available money should be used to upgrade the existing facility.

LA Response:

Thank you for your email received on 18th May, 2018 in which you have raised several points regarding the proposal to expand Aston Academy.

Your comments have been noted in relation to the proposals and a copy of your comments will be submitted as part of the formal consultation and decision making process.

The Local Authority is required to build sufficient capacity for future need. The new Waverley development will bring increasing pupil numbers, and half of this development will fall under the Aston Academy catchment area. The condition of the school is for the Academy and DfE to maintain and fund accordingly, as this falls out of Local Authority control.

Comment:

With the current increase in number of children within the locality and in the feeder schools, I would fully support this proposal.

LA Response:

Your comments have been noted in relation to the proposals and a copy of your comments will be submitted as part of the formal consultation and decision making process.

Comment:

Thank you for the opportunity to be involved in the consultation regarding the proposed expansion to Aston Academy. I personally recognise the necessity to meet future demands and the proposal to increase the capacity at Aston, would appear to be a positive and common-sense element of the strategic response. The conversations I have had so far within the community are in line with my thoughts. So at this stage my response is wholly supportive but with the caveat, should I receive any comments I think should be considered before the consultation concludes, I will forward them to you.

LA Response:

Your comments have been noted in relation to the proposals and a copy of your comments will be submitted as part of the formal consultation and decision making process.

Comment:

Re the above. Will the school receive the 'makeover' it desperately needs alongside this extension? Aston missed out on a proposed update (alongside other close secondary schools such as Oakwood & Wales!) as it became an academy! Of course, as a parent, my first concern is that the level of teaching continues to improve but an overall of the outdated parts of the school (old swimming baths building still there plus same hall floor, toilets and carpeting from my generation!). It does feel a nice environment in terms of the personal (plus the pupils) despite the tired fixtures & fittings. The staff, current and future pupils deserve a more modern & uplifting environment. I know parents that have sent their children to other school at Y7 just because Aston looks so tired - it does not deserve that reputation!

Appreciate long email but this extension should be beneficial to all.

LA Response:

Thank you for your email sent on the 8th June, 2018 in which you have raised several points regarding the proposal to expand Aston Academy.

Your comments have been noted in relation to the proposals and a copy of your comments will be submitted as part of the formal consultation and decision making process.

The Local Authority is required to build sufficient capacity for future need. The new Waverley development will bring increasing pupil numbers, and half of this development will fall under the Aston Academy catchment area. The condition of the school is for the Academy and Department for Education to maintain and fund accordingly, as this falls out of Local Authority control.

Comment:

As a parent I fully support the proposed addition to the school. It would be beneficial to the whole community to have a larger school and new facilities. It is also important that current pupils are respected by removing the awful building that housed the swimming pool. This would make the whole site a much nicer place to be and support pupils to value their school.

LA Response:

Thank you for your email sent on the 20th June 2018 regarding the proposal to expand Aston Academy.

Your comments have been noted in relation to the proposals and a copy of your comments will be submitted as part of the formal consultation and decision making process.