

# 4(iii)

## THE ROYAL BOROUGH OF KENSINGTON AND CHELSEA COUNCIL – 25 JANUARY 2006

### REPORT BY CABINET MEMBER FOR EDUCATION AND LIBRARIES

#### RESPONSE TO PETITION CONCERNING A REQUEST FOR A SECONDARY SCHOOL IN NORTH KENSINGTON

This report provides information for Members on consideration of the need for a secondary school in North Kensington and the possible use of the site of the Princess Louise hospital.

**FOR INFORMATION**

#### 1. Background

The prayer of the petition said,

"We the undersigned being parents and residents of the Royal Borough urge the Council to build a new Secondary School in North Kensington to meet established need. We note that only 36% of RBKC resident primary children are successful in gaining admission to our own secondary schools. We further note that there were 713 applications for 240 places at Holland Park School for September 2005. We want our local children to receive their secondary education within the Royal Borough and we do not believe that the problem of admissions to borough secondary schools will be addressed simply by building an Academy in the south of the borough.

Should the Primary Care Trust decide, after consultation, to demolish the Princess Louise Hospital we believe that this site would be ideal for RBKC maintained secondary education provision in North Kensington."

The petition, with 112 signatures, was presented to the Council by Councillor Cunningham.

#### 2. Consideration

- 2.1 The planning of school places is the responsibility of the local authority, but decisions on whether to open new schools have to be approved by the DfES. A recent independent survey undertaken for the DfES concluded that there will be no need for additional secondary schools in London beyond those which are currently planned.
- 2.2 The Royal Borough is aware of the need to continually monitor the number of places at primary and secondary school level in the light of new housing developments. However, given the views of the DfES there is no reason to believe that these will be sufficient to warrant a new secondary school.
- 2.3 The Princess Louise Hospital site is the property of the Primary Care Trust, which has not yet made a decision about its future. At 0.9 acres, the site is smaller than some of the Royal Borough's primary schools in the north of the borough. It would be too small to accommodate a secondary school, which would provide a sufficiently broad curriculum and the range of specialist facilities necessary in a modern comprehensive school.
- 2.4 The Council will, of course, work in partnership with the PCT to ensure that the Princess Louise Hospital site is used for the benefit of the community if it does become available.
- 2.5 There are two current proposals for secondary schools in the borough:
  - A new school in Chelsea, which will be an Academy;
  - A scheme to rebuild Holland Park School.
- 2.6 The site for the proposed Chelsea Academy at Lots Road is significantly larger than the Princess Louise site at 1.486 acres. A study by WS Atkins commissioned by the DfES concluded that the site would be large enough to accommodate a secondary school with up to 900 11-16 year olds and a sixth form of 250 students. The Secretary of State for Education and Skills has approved funding for a feasibility study of the proposal for a school on this site and outline planning permission has been obtained.
- 2.7 There has been strong demand over a long period from parents in the south of the Royal Borough for an additional secondary school in Chelsea. A survey of parents of children in Years 4, 5 and 6 in the Royal Borough's primary schools in June 2001 indicated that 80% (of the 796 who responded) would like to send their child to a secondary school in the south of the borough. This percentage rose to 91% for parents whose children already attended a primary school in the south and to 92% of parents who live in the south of

the borough. Currently only 25% of primary pupils in the south of the borough get a secondary school place in Kensington and Chelsea secondary school, which is a lower percentage than in other parts of the borough.

- 2.8 Holland Park School is on a considerably larger site. It is currently 8.2 acres and the proposed site after the proposed redevelopment is 5.7 acres. The school is improving and heavily oversubscribed. The governing body has no intention of reducing the number of students on roll. Such a move would only serve to compound the existing shortage of secondary places in the borough and the DfES would not regard this as an acceptable reason for a new school nearby. As the only community school it is helpful that it is centrally located as possible.
- 2.9 For these reasons, it is not appropriate at this time to give further consideration to a secondary school in North Kensington.

**FOR INFORMATION**

**Councillor Mary Weale  
Cabinet Member for Education and Libraries**