

Appendix B - Harrow School SPD – consultation Feedback from Drop-in-Sessions

Below is an outline of the comments received during discussions with people attending the drop-in-sessions arranged as part of the consultation on the draft Harrow School SPD.

The points below seek to capture the sentiments expressed but do not formally respond to the points raised, these are covered in Appendix A.

Consultation

Concerns were raised regarding:

- the notification of the consultation process, as not all residents / properties had been individually advised of the draft SPD and the consultation arrangements. It was also asserted that some residents' associations had not been notified.
- the format of the consultation event held at the school on Thursday 23 April 2 – people attended with an expectation that it was to be a public meeting rather than a drop-in session

Process

Comments were made that:

- the Council should not have prepared the SPD using Council resources as there is no discernible benefit to Council tax payers i.e. it is the School's master plan and the SPD is only a material consideration when assessing any subsequent planning applications
- putting a framework in place gives the School a 'blank cheque' with respect to future planning applications
- the SPD was not flexible enough as circumstances / needs may change in the future.
- the process is being done in an 'underhanded' manner between the school and the Council, with insufficient input from other stakeholders (i.e. residents, TfL and the Council's own Highways section).

Landscape Core

- concern about the quality of this proposed core with respect to its future status as Metropolitan Open Land (to offset the loss of existing MOL)

New Sports Building

- concern regarding the proposed loss of Metropolitan Open Land in proposed location

New Biology and Chemistry Building

- No specific comments

New Music Building

- No specific comments

Drama and the Extension to the Ryan Theatre

- Concern regarding the potential traffic impacts of expanding the theatre / larger audiences.

Improvements to Minor Sports

- No specific comments

New Entrance Building

- Comments on whether this building would be set back from the street / whether a public space would be provided as part of the proposal, with an indication that public space at this location had previously been 'offered' by the school
- Concern that the green space in the area would be used for parking, and if not, would sufficient parking be able to be provided.
- The phasing of this does not match with the additional parking (proposal 9)

Shared High Street Surface

- A range of views were expressed in relation to the principle of altering the High Street, as well as specific options. Many people suggested that nothing needs to be done, with the issue of student safety being over stated by the school / draft SPD. Others indicated that they thought something did need to be done, but none of the suggested options were acceptable
- Strong views were expressed (i.e. no one in favour) that one way working / road closure options are not acceptable, due to impacts on local traffic movements, bus routes and access to properties (including St Mary's Church).
- Comments were made that people did not want to see the 'branding' of the street as Harrow School and felt that the High Street proposals amounted to the school seeking to 'take-over' the High Street for its own benefit, at the expense of the broader public, local residents and local traffic movements.
- It was suggested that traffic / pedestrian issues could be better dealt with through improved management of students / parents (i.e. students wandering in the middle of the street, parents parking on either side of the street, blocking buses etc).
- It was also suggested that students' pedestrian movements should be internalised as much as possible i.e. scope for routes within school grounds and parallel to High Street etc.
- Suggestion that there needed to be double yellow lines along West Street as parking narrows the road too much, particularly with respect to buses / coaches.

Additional parking

- Concern whether this would impact upon existing housing on this part of the site
- Scepticism that this area had sufficient space for a meaningful amount of additional parking
- Belief that parking issues in surrounding areas exacerbated by staff not parking on-site.

New Perimeter Road Extension

- Concern about how this may impact upon the circulation around the broader site, including access to the public highway network.

Improvements to the Dining Halls Service Area

- No specific comments

Re-location of Mereton's 5-a-side

- No specific comments

New all-weather pitches

- A number of people queried whether additional all-weather pitches were necessary, with it suggested that the school had enough pitches and / or alternative locations for the proposed all-weather pitches
- Impact upon Metropolitan Open Land, with hard surfacing / formal pitches not considered to be 'open' or 'green' by attendees
- Impact upon the value of the site as a Site of Nature Conservation Importance, with hard standing considered by attendees to be incompatible with biodiversity
- Loss of the pitch-and-putt and café facilities, with these being widely used by the public.
- Loss of individual livelihoods / significant personal investment into land and buildings on the site.
- Whether or not the pitches would be accessible to the public, as the pitch-and-putt currently is.
- Impact of coaches visiting the site on the local road network.

Additional staff residential accommodation

- Concern that the area shown suggested a significant amount of new accommodation and impact upon Harrow Park.

Other

- Impacts upon rights-of-way of any proposals. Reference was made to issues with access to 'Churchfields'
- Concern that the areas delineated on maps were 'precise' (i.e. development would cover the full area inside the polygon).
- Common issues regarding built and natural conservation impacts / Conservation Areas / listed buildings etc.
- Concern that leaving consideration of detail (i.e. ecology, transport, conservation) to after the SPD was adopted / when specific proposals were made meant that the proposed master plan was not fully informed.