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Date 1st July 2010

Dear Mr Haigh

CORE STRATEGY – FURTHER EVIDENCE RELATED TO EDUCATION NEEDS

Further to previous submissions and discussions which have taken place between our respective authorities in relation to core strategy consultation, please find below additional evidence in relation to secondary education needs on behalf of the Children Schools and Families Service (CSF), following on from our letter of 14th May 2010.

We positively welcome the ongoing opportunity to engage in discussions with the local planning authority to identify the implications for services. This response attempts to identify how the growth proposed within Broxbourne to 2031 may impact upon service requirements and where additional school places might be required.

In forming this response we have considered the Core Strategy consultation document. We are also aware of the March 2010 publication of the SHLAA document, and this has been taken in to consideration.

With regard to education, work has been undertaken to assess future forecast demand, likely to be the result of proposed residential development across the borough.

Methodology applied to identification of CSF needs at secondary level

The methodology which has been applied to identifying the secondary needs is as follows. The method responds to the need for pupil places to 2024.

- The balance between existing capacity in the schools and the current needs of the existing community has been assessed to establish the ability of schools to accommodate extra pupils.

- Taking into account surplus places in schools, any additional school capacity needed to meet that need has been identified.
- A small margin to cater for both parental preference and short term variations in pupil numbers needs to be added to the forecast. The Audit Commission recommends a surplus of no more than 10%. A margin of 5% has been added here.
- The impact of future development ie the need for school places is included within the forecast (to 2021), assuming a trajectory of 239 dwellings per annum (between 2008-2021). This draws upon information gathered from local developments and the number of children who occupy them at the time of study. This informs an estimate of the number of pupil places likely to be required to meet demand from new developments.
- A separate forecast (developed by Dr Paul Garcia for the county council) is able to model secondary age demand to 2031. This indicates that demand for school places will remain fairly stable over the longer term, with the effect that additional places are unlikely to be needed within Broxbourne borough as a whole. It should be mentioned that there can be local fluctuations within this scenario, however.

Application of this methodology in Broxbourne means the following;

Current Needs and Secondary Forecasts to 2021

There are two secondary education planning areas in Broxbourne: Hoddesdon and Cheshunt. A plan showing these areas is attached.

The total number of Year 7 secondary school places in the Borough of Broxbourne is currently 1315. The 2009 PLASC (school census) indicates that there 1209 children at school in year 7. This provides a margin of 8% capacity.

Hoddesdon

There are 569 pupil places available in year 7 across three schools. The latest pupil census data (PLASC January 2009) shows that there were 52 spare places, equivalent to 9% surplus capacity. The forecast (mid year 2009/10) indicates that the number of pupils is expected to rise in the short term to a peak in 2019/20. However, in 2020/21 49 spare places are forecast

If the need for additional places emerges, Broxbourne school could expand from 7 to 9 FE. This school lies in the green belt. It would assist if relevant planning policy was worded so as to afford sufficient flexibility to allow expansion, or remodelling to occur.

Cheshunt

There are 746 places available in year 7, across four schools. The January 2009 PLASC data shows that there were 54 spare places, equivalent to 7.2% surplus capacity. However, the forecast indicates that demand will exceed supply in 2016/17 and beyond.

A 5% margin indicates that 37 additional places (1.2FE) should be allowed for.

The county council should begin to prepare to expand pupil places for 2016/17. There are several options available from an initial assessment. Cheshunt school could expand from 6 to 9 FE (even excluding the site promoted for housing). Goffs school could possibly expand from 6.5 to 7 FE and St Mary's School could increase from 6 to 8 FE. Turnford School (6FE) might be able to expand if adjacent playing fields in BoB ownership could be utilised. This school is affected by a floodplain constraint, and lies within the Lea Valley regional park however. Feasibility work would need to be carried out to affirm this initial assessment.

All of these sites lie within the green belt. It would assist the county council with future planning if the sites could be removed from the green belt or, failing that policies might be written to afford sufficient flexibility to allow schools to expand as and when required.

Forecast 2021 to 2031

Notwithstanding what has been said at paragraph 5, bullet 5, it is important to regularly update longer term forecasts; they will be subject to regular review and may of course change over time.

Other issues

At our most recent meeting, you asked for our comments in relation to further education childrens homes and youth services. With regard to further education, enquiries are underway, however it will take some time to respond to you on the findings of this and we do not want to hold up our response on the other issues outlined in this letter. There are no comments to make with regard to childrens homes. On the subject of youth services, our response is as follows:-

The County Council set out requirements for Youth Connexions (previously known as the Youth Service), in our response to the core strategy consultation in December 2008. We then said "Youth Connexions have tabled to both the DCTP and LSP a local need for a good quality centre for young people offering a wide range of activities; information, advice and guidance; training and opportunities for a wide range of providers to deliver from it." Since then an information and advice centre has been developed but the ideal remains a large integrated centre where young people could access services across the whole youth offer. This site would serve the whole Borough and would need to be situated appropriately with good transport links. Further work with young people would be carried out using other provider's venues such as schools or community centres and street based settings. If a large centre is not realised refurbishment of the current centre at Waltham Cross and the

development of neighbourhood venues west of the A10 and in Hoddesdon would be needed. Herts Young Mariners Base will continue to offer quality outdoor education in partnership with their Trust.

Conclusions

The above comments are made in addition to those set out in the letter of 14th May 2010. I hope they assist, however, if you have any questions on the contents of either of these letters, please do get in touch with me.

Yours sincerely

Jacqueline Nixon
Principal Planning Officer
Hertfordshire Property