

CABINET MEETING 13TH FEB 2013

Mich Moore

STATEMENT ON BEHALF OF PAULTON SCHOOLS EXPANSION ACTION GROUP.

I am here on behalf of 'Paulton Schools' Expansion Action Group', a group of concerned parents and residents from Paulton.

We object to the proposed expansion of the two Paulton schools, on the following grounds:

Reason 1 Road Safety

Section 5.4 of the report states that the site lends itself to expansion. We believe that this is simply not true.

The proposals for improved pedestrian and traffic access to the school remain inadequate to support the proposed expansion. The proposals are impractical and inappropriate to a primary school. Furthermore, they will only appease the current volume of traffic and do not provide a solution to the proposed expansion.

Roads such as Park Road and Ham Lane further a field than those considered by the proposals will also be affected. The plans do not show any consideration for residents or safety in these areas.

Reason 2. on-site facilities

Within the school, the expansion would place extra pressure on existing shared facilities – the halls, IT suites, libraries and playspaces.

Already at full capacity, the expansion plans do little to accommodate the increase in numbers in these spaces, which are fundamental to the recognized high standard of teaching. Staggered use of the facilities will add to the breakdown of the community feel of the school.

We also question Section 9 of the report where options explored do not include building a new school and we oppose the objections put forward against this option

Objection 1 - insufficient pupil numbers

Despite promises laid down by the parish council in the 2010 community action plan, the village continues to grow with new developments in progress and in planning. A sustainable solution, which will cater for the impending growth of the village, needs to be sought.

The sustainable, and safe solution is not to expand but to build.

Objection 2: insufficient capital funding

The Action group appreciate that a new development is not cheap, but together with the residents of Paulton, we would like to see a return for our higher council tax band. We question whether

- section 106 money

- Paulton's share of the £2 million New Homes Bonus scheme
- additional council tax receipts generated by the increased homes in the area
- plus the sale of the current schools site

really can't go a long way to funding such a development.

We want to see our money put back into our community.

While a new site will not change the scale of the school, it does give banes the opportunity to provide adequate facilities and spaces for its staff to maintain the nurturing environment and high quality of early years teaching that they have worked so hard to achieve. Something they may struggle to maintain within the restraints of the proposed expansion.

You will also be giving the residents of Paulton, particularly those around the Plumtre Road area, a better and safer quality of life.

We urge this Cabinet to abandon plans to expand the existing Schools in the village and direct resources towards a new facility that will provide a sustainable solution for our village.