



Cabinet Meeting on Wednesday 18 December 2013

Outcome of statutory consultation on a proposal to enlarge Rykneld Primary School, Burton on Trent

Ben Adams, Cabinet Member for Learning and Skills said,

“The proposal to enlarge Rykneld Primary School is part of our long-term vision for education in Burton on Trent. We have already invested over £20m in schools in Burton to ensure they are well placed to cope with increasing demand for school places, and this latest measure will ensure parents in the area have as much choice as possible when it comes to their child’s education.

“This latest measure is part of our ambition to create a prosperous Staffordshire where young people can learn, grow and make a significant contribution to the success of the area. By acting now, we can ensure we are ready to meet future pressures on pupil places in the area.”

1. The county council’s overriding priority is for a prosperous economy that will provide jobs and opportunities to help make Staffordshire a safe, healthy and aspirational place to live in. The proposals in this report help to ensure children in the Branston area of Burton have the best start in life and get a good education so they are well prepared for their adult lives.
2. Over the past two years county council has invested over £20m to build three primary schools in Burton and expand capacity at other schools. This work has ensured the county is well placed to meet the demand of 1,000 extra primary school places in area over the next 10 years.
3. The county council has a statutory duty to ensure that there are enough school places and it is important, therefore, that decisions are taken to provide places for all the children of Burton. The proposal is a result of a proposed housing development and will be funded by the developer.

Report Summary:

4. Following the conclusion of the statutory public consultation period, Cabinet is asked to consider the responses received and to determine whether to progress the proposal and to publish a formal Statutory Proposal.

Recommendation(s)

I recommend that:

1. Cabinet approve the publication of a statutory proposal to enlarge Rykneld Primary School Burton.

Local Members Interest	
Tim Corbett,	East Staffordshire - Needwood Forest

Cabinet – 18 December 2013

Outcome of statutory consultation on a proposal to enlarge Rykneld Primary School, Burton

Recommendations of the of the Cabinet Member for Learning and Skills

1. That Cabinet approve the publication of a statutory proposal to enlarge Rykneld Primary School in Burton.

Report of Deputy Chief Executive and Director for People

Reasons for Recommendations:

2. The county council is committed to providing the best possible start for young people, which means ensuring that every child who needs a school place in their area has one available. Our vision for improving education in Staffordshire is for all children to be in schools judged as good or outstanding by OFSTED.
3. Following the approval of a new 660-home development at “Land South of Branston”, the county council consulted on a proposal to enlarge Rykneld Primary School in Branston to provide sufficient additional school places.

Background

4. Like many other towns and cities across the country, the number of children born in Burton upon Trent has increased, new homes have been built and new families have moved into the town. As the number of children is increasing the number of primary school places must be increased.
5. In July 2013, planning permission was granted for the employment and residential development of “Land South of Branston”, including 660 homes which are projected to generate around 140 primary school children.
6. Staffordshire County Council has a statutory duty to ensuring that there are sufficient school places in the county and consulted recently on a proposal to enlarge Rykneld Primary School in Branston.

7. The responses received during the formal consultation period are shown in Appendix A, together with a commentary from the Deputy Chief Executive and Director for People.
8. Rykneld is a popular and oversubscribed primary school, is rated by OFSTED as “good” and has around 460 full-time pupils on roll. The proposed enlargement would increase the school’s capacity by 161 places (from 469 to 630 places). It would enable the Published Admission Number (for children starting full-time school) to increase in line with the housing development from 67 places at present to 75 and then 90 by around September 2019.
9. The proposal has the full support of the governing body and would be fully funded by the developer. Separately, the developer is seeking planning permission for the building scheme to include: six classrooms to replace temporary classrooms in mobiles; four additional classrooms; a second hall; three specialist rooms; five small group rooms; and an all-weather pitch.
10. An alternative option considered but not pursued was the creation of a new small primary school within the development site that would grow eventually and provide 210 places. The new school would provide more places than needed from the housing development and would attract children from elsewhere. Whilst both options would provide extra school places, only the proposed enlargement of Rykneld would a) enable the school to serve the whole of the Branston community and b) would fund the replacement of six mobile classrooms and significant improvements to the school’s facilities for the benefit of all of Branston’s pupils. The proposal to enlarge an established successful and popular primary school provides a strong foundation to help ensure that all children, present and future, can benefit from a good or outstanding education.
11. With Cabinet approval, a statutory notice would be published in January. Cabinet would consider any comments or objections received during the statutory four-week “representation period” and determine the proposal in March 2014.

List of Background Documents:

The public consultation document can be viewed at the Burton Places website:
www.staffordshire.gov.uk/burtonplaces.

Report Commissioner: Anu Singh
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Summary of Community Impact Assessment (including a Health Impact Assessment if applicable) for Outcome of statutory consultation on a proposal to enlarge Rykneld Primary School, Burton

SCC's Priority Outcomes & Impact Areas	Impact Assessment	
	Impact	Provide brief detail of impact
Prosperity, knowledge, skills, aspirations	Positive	Will ensure sufficient local school places for children and families, in response to rising numbers of births and children, as well as supporting the local economy.
Living safely	Neutral	
Supporting vulnerable people	Neutral	
Supporting healthier living	Positive	It is vital for the well-being of children and families that there is good quality, accessible primary education available. Provision of an all-weather pitch would enable sports to be enjoyed throughout the year.
Highways and transport networks	Neutral	Whilst more children born means inevitably more journeys, the location of additional places are close to the areas of population growth where places are needed, which will help support sustainable methods of home-to-school travel. All of the proposed homes are within More than half the new homes will be within 500 metres of Rykneld and all within 1 kilometre.
Learning, education and culture	Positive	More primary school places to “ensure the best start in life and to receive a good education”.
Children and young people	Positive	Eventually all 630 children at Rykneld would benefit from the major investment in new and improved facilities. Over 200 children taught currently in mobiles would move into brand new permanent classrooms.
Citizens and decision making, improved community involvement	Positive	Public consultation on the proposal was conducted between 6 November and 3 December and consultation meetings held on 21 November. If the report is approved, a statutory proposal would be published for the Rykneld enlargement with a further “representation period” for comment and objection.
Physical environment including climate	Negative	The impact of any new building work in terms of embedded carbon will be negative but

change		would be minimised by using local, low impact construction materials as far as possible.
Maximisation of use of community property portfolio	Neutral	The proposal would deliver significant investment in facilities within the existing school site.
Equalities Impact	Impact: (positive / neutral / negative)	Provide brief detail of impact
Age	Positive	More primary school places to be provided.
Disability	Positive	Accessibility would be improved.
Ethnicity	Neutral	School admission policies cannot discriminate on grounds of ethnicity.
Gender	Neutral	The primary school would remain co-educational.
Religion / Belief	Neutral	Priority for places would not be given on grounds of religion or belief.
Sexuality	Neutral	School admission policies cannot discriminate on grounds of sexuality.
	Impact / Implications	
Resource and value for money (in consultation with finance representatives)	As part of the granting of planning permission for Land South of Branston, the developer has agreed planning obligations to fully fund the building project.	
Risks identified and mitigation offered (see corporate risk register categorisation)	If Cabinet do not approve this proposal, it would significantly jeopardise the county council's ability to secure school places when they are required.	
Legal imperative to change if applicable (in consultation with legal representative)	The county council has a statutory duty to ensure the sufficient supply of school places and to promote diversity in school provision.	

Report Commissioner: Anu Singh, Head of Business Improvement

COMMENTARY FROM DEPUTY CHIEF EXECUTIVE AND DIRECTOR FOR PEOPLE

1. By the closing date eight responses had been received. Whilst there was **broad agreement that the additional school places are necessary but concerns focussed on.**
 - a. the potential impact of on All Saints CE (C) Primary School, Rangemore
 - b. consideration of alternatives, such as building a brand new school that would be capable of future expansion
 - c. impact on school standards during a building project
 - d. traffic and parking concerns
2. Responses 1, 3 and 8 raise concerns about the **impact on All Saints CE (C) Primary School, Rangemore.** Response 4 asks why children would be “transported to a school in Burton rather than use the existing 'good' school that has places”. Response 8 asks **if the proposal is based upon robust data as too much capacity could pull pupils away from All Saints** and threaten its existence.
3. Whilst Rykneld Primary School is adjacent to the housing development on Land South of Branston, **All Saints is approximately three miles away.** All Saints and the village of Tatenhill are closer to another proposed housing development in Burton at Branston Locks.
4. All Saints is a small (105-place) Church of England Primary School which admits up to 15 pupils per year. It was judged by OFSTED in 2011 to be a “good” school and should continue to attract parents from outside the village. The school has around 7 places available and **All Saints is projected to be full or close to full** for the foreseeable future.
5. The projections used assume that there will be 21 primary aged children for every 100 houses built. This is a modest projection which is in line with recent developments in the town. The pupil projections used assume that parents from Branston and elsewhere outside the All Saints’ catchment area will continue to choose the school. In January 2013 there were 21 children on roll at the school from the Branston area. **The rising population in Burton provides increased opportunities for all schools to attract children.**
6. With regard to transport, children from the housing development would be less than two miles from Rykneld and would not be entitled to free school transport.

7. Response 2 considers it “**more sense to build an entirely new school**” ... “which would be expandable should further building occur”.
8. The building of a new school was considered but **the proposal to enlarge Rykneld would provide the additional places needed and benefit all the school’s pupils through significantly improved facilities** and the replacement of six temporary classrooms. Without the developer funding, the school or county council would not have the resources to make these improvements. It should be noted that the Rykneld site limits the size to 630 places and absolutely no consideration has or is being given to growth beyond this. Elsewhere in the area, new primary schools are intended on the strategic sites of Branston Depot and Branston Locks.
9. If a new school capable of being expanded was sought on the housing site then the county council would require an agreement from the developer to identify a larger site area for a school than that necessitated from 660 homes.
10. Response 4 comments on the **potential impact on standards** of a school enlargement and asks for **alternative options to be considered**.
11. It is the case that any major building project requires, in particular, the time and input of the headteacher and the governing body, whichever school is enlarged. **The potential expansion has been promoted and supported by the governing body** for almost two years and they are working positively with the developer. School staff are positive about the proposal and the headteacher is supported by a large Senior Management Team. During the works, the school’s stated priority is to ensure that educational provision remains good or better.
12. The alternative option considered was to build a new school within the housing development. However, the proposed enlargement of Rykneld provides the extra places at a good school as well as improving the facilities at the school for around 460 existing pupils
13. NB The respondent notes incorrectly that the school will be using six mobile classrooms: in fact, the proposal would replace the mobiles with six permanent classrooms.
14. In Response 5, questions are raised regarding **parents parking** on Festival Road and **construction traffic**. Branston Parish Council, in Response 6, considers that they must object on the grounds of **poor infrastructure and pedestrian crossing facilities**. Response 8 raises concerns about **traffic around the school**. Response 8 raises concerns about **traffic around the school** but concludes that planned improvements would help but not resolve the problem.
15. As noted above, in Response 8 some improvements will be made to highways and nearby parking as part of the approved planning permission for the South

of Branston development. Similarly, **when the planning application to extend the school is submitted further consideration will be given by the Planning Committee to any additional necessary improvements.** The planning application will include proposals regarding site traffic.

16. **Whilst the concerns raised above should be noted these are planning matters:** Cabinet is being asked to give its approval to the principle of extending Rykneld. The implementation of this proposal would be subject to the granting of planning permission.
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CONSULTATION RESPONSES RECEIVED (personal responses anonymised)

17. **RESPONSE 1:** I have read the consultation document thoroughly and **feel that the plan seems wholly appropriate** for the projected number of additional places needed in Burton. The concern I would like to log is our **concern for the effect this will have on our good, thriving primary school in Rangemore.** We do not expect to take children from the development unless families are seeking a small, rural, Church of England Primary school but we do admit approximately $\frac{1}{4}$ of our population from Branston and approximately $\frac{1}{4}$ from Burton, a total of circa 50 pupils. Do you think that it may be that there will still be a need for places because people who live in Branston may take places at Rykneld instead of us and this still leave a deficit of places in the locality and thus **have a detrimental impact on Rangemore** and your plans for the future?
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18. **RESPONSE 2:** I think it would make **more sense to build an entirely new school.** A school with over 600 pupils is very large but just manageable given the location of the school. If further building occurred which is always very likely these days **expanding this school to 750 would make it far too large** and access very difficult. However, **a new school could be built which would be expandable should further building occur.**
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19. **RESPONSE 3:** As a teacher at **All Saints Primary, Rangemore** I would like to make the following comments about the proposed development at Rykneld Primary as I have some **concerns about the effect this will have on our school.**

20. Currently our school's intake from the Branston area is approximately a quarter of our population, with a further quarter coming from nearer to the centre of Burton - a total of about 50 pupils. (We would not and do not, expect to take children from the new development unless families were seeking a small, rural, Church of

England Primary, but this is obviously what a significant number of families require at present.)

21. The plan for **increased places across Burton, seems wholly appropriate**, especially due to the projected housing development in the Branston area, but some of the new development is as near to Rangemore, as it is to Rykneld.
22. Has the knock on effect on our school, and others (especially the smaller ones) in the local area been taken into account? **What do the authority expect and what models, or forecasts have you looked at for ALL schools in the area long term?**

23. **RESPONSE 4:** I would like to query the proposal for additional pupil places to be provided at Rykneld Primary School, Burton.

24. After reading the proposal I noted that the new housing development actually neighbours the village of Tatenhill. As far as I'm aware the catchment area of Tatenhill lies currently with Rangemore CE Primary School. I would like to ask the consultation **why it has been decided for the new residents of Tatenhill to be transported to a school in Burton** rather than use the existing 'good' school that has places available?

25. I have **grave concerns that the small, rural school has been overlooked** in preference of a large town school and that the future of rural schools will be undermined.

26. I noticed that 6 **classrooms at Rykneld will be 'mobile'**. Surely this is not a 'good' teaching environment for pupils. I know I would not be happy as a parent for my child to be taught in such conditions. I would also like to point out the consequences of increasing pupil numbers to create such a large school. I am aware that Hilton Primary school's pupil roll increased to 800+ following a similar housing development. In it's last Ofsted it received a 'needs improvement' rating, mostly due to the challenges it faced with increasing teacher numbers and not having the right environment available for teaching. Hilton is a Derbyshire school but it may be worth Staffordshire reflecting on the similar situation and looking at a more suitable alternative.

27. **Overall, I would like the council to consider alternative options** which will be best for the future of the new children in the area and which support the town and villages of Staffordshire.

28. **RESPONSE 5: In principle I agree to the proposal** but I would like to raise a couple of questions as we live down Festival Road which runs adjacent to the main school drive.

29. We already have **issues at school time with parents parking down our road** in a dangerous manner and blocking drives so this problem would only be

increased if the school is increased in size. Could you please consider putting double yellow lines someway down our street?

30. Also I am concerned about the noise of the construction vehicles going down the school drive as it runs along the bottom of our garden. I understand that there will obviously be an increase in traffic down there but **will there be time periods when no vehicles will be allowed?** For example we don't want heavy lorries etc going down early in the morning disturbing us.

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31. **RESPONSE 6:** Branston parish council has instructed me to contact you on their behalf regarding the above. Whilst **the parish council has no objection in principle for Rykneld School** being extended, on the grounds of poor infrastructure and pedestrian crossing facilities they have to **object to the extension: the safety of local children/residents is key.**

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32. **RESPONSE 7:** Tatenhill Parish Council considered this proposal at their meeting this week. Tatenhill is the next parish travelling west from Branston and the Parish Council is acutely aware of the impact the loss of their local Primary school, All Saints (C) Primary in Rangemore village would have on the community of Rangemore. Some 50% of the current pupil role travel to Rangemore from or through Branston from areas further east in Burton itself.

33. Superficially the proposal to expand Rykneld school to accommodate the additional places anticipated to be generated from the development of the land south of Branston appears to be very sensible. However, there are concerns that there is the **potential for the number of places anticipated not being achieved**, for a variety of reasons. Any **spare capacity at Rykneld could pull pupils away from Rangemore school and threaten its existence.** The recent granting of outline permission for the Branston Locks development also introduces the provision of additional primary spaces which could also threaten All Saints School Rangemore.

34. Hence Tatenhill Parish Council wish to express its concerns over the proposal; they **seek to ensure that the proposal is based on robust, up to date calculations of the anticipated need.** In these days of parental choice has the model been amended to accommodate this? Can the two sites, land south of Branston and Branston Locks be modelled as one to ensure that the required number of combined places is accurately predicted? Has the potential impact on All Saints Rangemore been considered for both proposed increases in Branston's primary provision?

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35. **RESPONSE 8:** The proposal does not address any of the **traffic concerns around the locality of the school**, particularly at school start and finishing times. The area is very busy at these times already and the building of houses on the land south of Branston will not only mean the alteration of the Main Street

junction next to the school to help cater for the greatly increased traffic volumes from this development but will also mean having more parking restrictions along Main Street. I appreciate that a new small car park may be available to share with the shop businesses may help but certainly not resolve the problem.

36. Unfortunately nowadays we live with the fact that many children are taken to school in cars and we **should be making provision for this** occurrence and not just ignoring it as has been done with this planning application. A solution could be to create a drop off point at the rear of the Toby Inn. This is a very quiet cul de sac and could be made adjacent to the school making it very safe place and at the same time reduce the pressure on the other hazardous drop off locations around Main Street / Old Road.
37. These extra school classrooms will increase the vehicles in the area and more consideration should be given to the issues they generate outside the school boundaries.

**Notes of a public consultation meeting held at Rykneld Primary School on
Thursday, 21 December 2013 at 7.00pm.**

38. Present: Ben Adams, Cabinet Member for Learning & Skills,
Anna Halliday, Commissioner for Education & Wellbeing
Geoff Crockett, County Improvement Officer
Andrew Marsden, County Commissioner for Access for Learning
Stuart Lane, Strategic Projects Lead
39. Three members of the public were present.
40. Anna Halliday briefly outlined the purpose of the consultation meeting being undertaken and informed those present that this was their opportunity to express their views on the proposal to enlarge Rykneld Primary Schools. The consultation ends on 3 December 2013 and Cabinet consider the views on 18 December.
41. Ben Adams indicated that the County Council wanted to support good schools like Rykneld Primary. He mentioned that the extra sports pitch being provided was good for the community of Branston.
42. Andrew Marsden informed all present that:
- Rykneld was oversubscribed with over 100 applications seeking 67 Reception places
 - Build will take approximately 12 months
 - Options considered were to build a new school or enlarge Rykneld Primary.
43. Those present expressed the following views:
- No objections were raised to the proposed enlargement

- Came to really see the pictures of the new school as they have a child coming in about 18 month.
- Concern that the area floods so wanted the County Council to take that into account
- Concern about the building of houses at nearby Branston Depot and concerns that there may be another school and if there would be any changes of catchment areas. Also enquiry if the new school at Branston Depot could be an annexe of Rykneld.

44. During the course of the meeting a response was given to all of the issues raised, including the possible timetable. The meeting closed at 7.40pm.

45. NB At the governors and staff meeting held earlier the same day, no objections or concerns were raised and there was full support for the proposed enlargement.
