

Report to: Children and Young People's Panel Cabinet

Date: 13th September 2007 20th September 2007

Subject: Proposed Expansion of Landgate School: Outcome of Statutory Consultation

Report of: Director of Children and Young People's Services

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Purpose / summary: The purpose of this report is to:

- inform Panel and Cabinet of the outcome of statutory consultation in relation to the expansion of Landgate School;
- seek Cabinet approval to proceed with implementation of the proposal.

Alternative options considered and reason for selecting the one recommended: This is contained within the report.

Recommendation / decision: That Cabinet gives final agreement to the proposal to expand Landgate School with effect from 1st September 2008.

Key Decision: This report involves a key decision within ground(s) 1.

The decision made as a result of this report will be published within **48 hours** and cannot be actioned until **seven working days** have elapsed, i.e. before 2nd October 2007.

This item is included in the Forward Plan.

Risks / Implications:

Financial:	Capital Programme and Schools' Budget via prudential borrowing power.
Staffing:	None
Policy:	Wigan's Strategy for School Places and Buildings. LA Inclusion Strategy
Equal Opportunities - Has a Diversity Impact Assessment been conducted?	No
Wards affected:	All

Property – Does the proposal involve a reduction, addition or change to the Council’s asset base or its occupation?

Yes. The number of pupils will be increased. This intensification of use will be addressed by the building of additional classrooms and other works including new car parking. However, the developments currently proposed will be contained within existing site boundaries and the school site will remain compliant with premises regulations. The additional development will affect asset, insurance and rateable values and, in due course, additional revenue charges will accrue which will be accommodated within existing budgetary provision.

Does this proposal have significant implications for the Council and the local population?

A diversity impact assessment is not necessary at this stage, however, equality and diversity implications have been considered when producing this report.

Does this proposal involve a new policy or procedure or significant changes to an existing policy or procedure?

A diversity impact assessment is not necessary at this stage, however, equality and diversity implications have been considered when producing this report.

Has the Director of Legal and Property Services confirmed that the recommendations within this report are lawful and comply with the Council’s Constitution? **Yes**

Has the Director of Finance and IT confirmed that any expenditure referred to within this report is consistent with the Council’s budget? **Yes**

Are any of the recommendations within this report contrary to the Policy Framework of the Council? **No**

* delete which applicable

For Cabinet reports only :

Categorisation of the report:	x
Discussion leading to a decision	x
Monitoring	
Sharing for corporate understanding	

	x
Discussion	
Decision	x
Information	

Tracking/Process:

	Consultation	Ward Members	Partners
Panel	Overview & Scrutiny	Cabinet	Council
13.09.07		20.09.07	

List of Background Papers in accordance with Section 100D of the Local Government Act 1972:

Document	Date	File Reference	Place of Inspection
‘The Proposed Expansion of Landgate School’ - to CYPP and Cabinet	March 2007		Progress House Westwood Park Drive Wigan www.wigan.gov.uk
‘Proposed Expansion of Landgate School: Results of Informal Consultation’ – to CYPP and Cabinet	May 2007		

Proper Officer

Nick Jaman

Date

24th August 2007

1. Background

- 1.1 Following Cabinet agreement, informal consultation on the proposal to expand Landgate School took place between 16th April and 8th May 2007.

At that time the alternative option considered was that Landgate School should remain unchanged.

- 1.2 The results of the informal consultation were reported to Cabinet on 31st May 2007, with the recommendation that the proposal to expand the school be taken to formal consultation.
- 1.3 Based on the information provided to them, Members agreed the recommendation.
- 1.4 Statutory notices were published on 20th June 2007, and the closing date for responses was 2nd August 2007. Complete proposals were circulated to a wide range of interested parties, and made available on request.

2. Response to Statutory Consultation

- 2.1 During the statutory period, written comments on, and / or objections to, the proposal were invited by the Director of Children and Young People's Services (DCYPS).
- 2.2 One letter was received from a local resident which raised concerns around:
- the potential lack of continued community use of the school and its playing fields;
 - the increase in traffic and potential road safety issues.

The letter is available on request.

- 2.3 The Authority's response to that letter is attached at Appendix 1.

3. Comments on Areas of Concern

- 3.1 Community Use of the School and its Playing Fields

Landgate School, and its playing fields, are currently made available for use by the local community outside of school hours. There will be the opportunity for the availability of this facility to be increased if the building is expanded.

The new perimeter fence at the school will have access gates to allow children to continue to play on the fields, when the school is closed, in line with the Council's Open Fields Policy.

- 3.2 Road Safety

The issue of road safety is taken very seriously, and plans are in place to allow vehicles to actually enter onto the school site to drop-off and pick-up away from the highway, thus reducing congestion.

Improved parking facilities on the Landgate site will reduce to a minimum the likelihood of parking difficulties, and inconvenience to the local neighbourhood. Traffic and other environmental impact issues will be fully considered as part of

the statutory planning process.

4. New Decision Making Arrangements

- 4.1 Since 1999 it has been the responsibility of the School Organisation Committee (SOC) to take decisions on proposals for changes to schools. However, in May 2007, under the Education and Inspections Act 2006, SOCs were abolished. The decision-making responsibility will normally now lie with the Local Authority whose duty it is to promote choice, diversity and fair access, and respond to parental demand.
- 4.2 The statutory proposal to extend Landgate School is a prescribed alteration and, under the new arrangements, the LA is responsible for taking the decision on the proposal within 2 months of the end of the statutory consultation period. Failure to do so must result in the proposals being referred to the Schools' Adjudicator to take a decision.
- 4.3 In November, it is planned to present a comprehensive report to Panel and Cabinet on the new decision making powers of the LA and the process by which these new powers may be enacted. The latter is not prescribed by the new regulations and the LA has discretion as to how to exercise its new power in this respect.

5. Recommendations

- 5.1 As a decision needs to be taken by 2nd October, and the proposals have not met with a high degree of objections or objections on educational grounds, it is recommended that Cabinet take the decision on the statutory proposals.
- 5.2 After full consideration of the concerns raised during the statutory consultation period, and the DCYPS response to them, Members are recommended to:
- give final approval to the statutory proposal to extend the school building at Landgate Lane, Bryn, to allow the school to cater for 70 pupils between the ages of 4 and 19 years, with effect from 1st September 2008.

Children and Young People's Services

Director: Nick Jarman

Mr / Ms W Gannon
46 Patterdale Road
Landgate Estate
Ashton-in-Makerfield
Wigan

Our reference:
Your reference:
Please ask for: Elaine Baulcombe
Extension: 86127
Direct line: 01942 486127
Date: 2nd August 2007

Dear Mr / Ms Gannon

Proposed Expansion of Landgate School

I wrote to you on 23rd July to acknowledge your letter regarding the above. I have now looked into the issues you raised with regard to community use of the school and its playing fields, and road safety.

Landgate School, and its playing fields, are made available for use by the local community outside of school hours. This will continue if the proposal to expand the school goes ahead. Indeed, the increase in the size of the school building will provide more opportunity for this.

The incident you highlighted about the use of the school for the Councillor's surgery being restricted, was unfortunate. I understand from Mr Hanbury, the Headteacher, that on that occasion, the Site Manager was on holiday and that his replacement had not been asked to make the building available.

As I am sure you will appreciate, this was a 'one-off' incident, for which I can only apologise.

In answer to your question about the fencing to the school fields, I understand that this is currently being replaced by a new perimeter fence. The new fence will have access gates to allow children to continue to play on the fields, outside of school hours, in line with the Council's Open Fields Policy.

Your concerns regarding road safety, as a result of the increase in traffic, are understandable. However, I can assure you that, if the proposal goes ahead, plans are in place to allow vehicles to actually enter onto the school site, to drop-off and pick-up away from the highway.

Also, as part of the statutory planning process, the Highways Department will examine the proposal, and its potential effect on the surrounding roads, and advise as to whether any alterations to the highway should be put in place as part of the scheme.

The issues you raised, along with the authority's response to them, will be presented to Cabinet on 20th September 2007 to help inform the decision making process.

I will let you know the outcome in due course.

Yours sincerely

Elaine Baulcombe
Strategic Manager – Access and Inclusion