

**Response from Haywood Engineering College to
Extract from Draft Re-organisation Consultation Paper - 8 October 2007**

Further to the reorganisation discussion at the Director's meeting last Friday morning, please find attached the relevant extract from the draft re-organisation consultation paper with reference to your school site. Any comments on this text should be sent to consultation@stoke.gov.uk:

Haywood, 11 – 16

It is proposed not to use this site, which does not meet government standards and which cannot be extended. Families in this area will have access to the new school proposed for Burslem Bank Top, or the proposed new academy on the Brownhills site or the Roman Catholic school on the James Brindley site.

Our Comments:

1 **“Which does not meet government standards”**

This is not true. The original “Stoke on Trent City Council, Building Schools for The Future Strategic Business Case May 2005” had this to say about the site:

“Haywood High School Closure

- School generally over-subscribed.
- Considerable investment in City Learning Centre and other elements of school.
- One or three largest schools in City.
- Limited scope for other local schools to accommodate pupils, although small number could easily go to James Brindley.

Amalgamation

- No scope for other schools to absorb other than small proportion of Haywood's pupils.
- Haywood could not absorb pupils from other schools – despite the good facilities; it has one of the lowest ratios of space to pupils in the City. Any amalgamation would require very major build, which is not currently envisaged.

Downsizing

In due course by one form of entry – would make school more comfortable in existing facilities.

PFI

PFI capex complete

Building Conditions and Facilities

Condition

- Generally, they comprise framed post-war buildings with flat roofs and some significant framed extension built over the last twenty years.
- The buildings have undergone PFI Capex Works so they can be deemed adequate:

Suitability and Sufficiency

The site is very sloping and the school is consequently on several levels, which presents challenges to accessibility, many of which have been overcome.

Site access is not easy and improved secondary approaches are needed.

The original building is a series of pavilions served by central corridors and the frame system should permit easier internal alteration and possible development of 'cluster' and 'linear cloister' systems based around subject areas and departments.

Whilst the PE facilities are generally well configured, the sports hall is not to BSF and Sports England standards.

The technology facilities were constructed after 1984, but need further development as part of Engineering College.

Science facilities poor".

The Area Guidelines for Schools (BB98) do suggest that the site area of 58,801 would only provide sport for 680 students, but this site area figure doesn't take into account or use Dimensions (owned and run by the LA) and our new BSF buildings plans which reduce the floor space required by the building of a student designed learning tower. In fact if our original BSF plans had gone ahead the design/layout of the school would have changed significantly. The whole of the elongated Science department was to have been demolished and replaced by a 2, possibly 3 storey building based on engineering hexagonal shapes. There would be no problems about planning because the top of the student designed tower would be no higher than existing buildings. Yes remodelling of the existing buildings would be required - a £10 million refurbishment was part of the original BSF strategic case. The other point to note is that, as arguably the best PE department in the City, both our staff and facilities are regularly used by other schools. For example we recently ran on our site (and had plenty of room), an Able and Talented sport competition for 10 schools. One of our partner primary schools regularly uses us for their Sport's Day. Because of the proximity of Dimensions we have been consistently refused bids to enhance our sports facilities. But if the LA's sports strategy of using an organisation like Dimensions is to continue then Dimensions should be included in our site area figures and/or fully incorporated into our site.

It used to be said that we wouldn't have the numbers in future or that our site wasn't safe. Now that these statements have proved to be false, one paper is now trying to make the weak ridiculous claim that we are not big enough. Was it deliberate that sports facilities weren't even mentioned and the statement reads as if the whole school is too small? Just look at our floor area – one of the largest in the City!

If the will was there our facilities could be enhanced by including Dimensions, by building a new sports hall and/or joint use of nearby land with Port Vale FC, as suggested in the headteacher's email to the Director, 4 October 2007: *"Staying on our site would also enable us to continue with all of our extended schools activities in and around the local community, as well as allowing the revitalisation of our Creative Partnerships Aiming Higher/BSF Project. Subject to governor discussions Creative Partnerships, as well as Port Vale FC and possibly the local hospital could also become Trust partners. There is also the local Co-operative store with whom we have fair-trade links and university and college links. As a Foundation Trust working with these organisations, continuing with our curricular links with local secondary schools and the college developing further links with local partner primary schools we could all work together to transform Haywood into an outstanding school in all features by raising achievement"*.

Using the BB98 guidance on sports facilities the Holden Lane site is also too small as acknowledged in a letter to Joan Walley MP *"This Holden Lane site, whilst slightly too small, meets the requirements because it has a sports centre on site!"* The answer for us is simple! Give us the same sort of facilities.

Also we have pointed out before that a lot of extra space will be gained by going ahead with our original BSF plans including the new learning tower, our students; Aiming Higher project. Our students' views are currently being put forward in the general BSF discussions led by the LA, because they have already helped design our possible new buildings. Several points from the recent curriculum discussion at the LA BSF meeting are worth noting:

2.3 *Examples of different educational practices from around the world were considered in terms of their impact on school design. An American school with 5,000 pupils was given as an example where school days were split up such that only a fraction of the pupils were in school at any one time. A Canadian school was discussed with full vehicle workshops and a high specification hospital training ward as part of its vocational training. Schools in Stoke-on-Trent needed to be similarly fit for their purpose.*

4.1 *Movement between schools – is likely to become increasingly important for both pupils and staff as the curriculum becomes delivered from a number of networked sites. Transport considerations were therefore of particular importance. Would appropriate drop-off points be designed into the building exteriors and would staff/visitors have adequate car parking facilities.*

We have pointed out before that in schools of the future a lot of the learning would be virtual with not everyone on site at once. Your current proposals and rejection of our plans for a learning tower show a lack of imagination and contradict the ethos of BSF.

2 **"Which cannot be extended"**

Why close all 4 schools in the area if there is a potential for future growth? The 3 schools of 1,200 would be too large and would not suit the community's needs if they become even larger. $3 \times 1,200 = 3,600$ which could be 4×900 .

3 **“Families in this area will have access to the new school proposed for Burslem Bank Top, or for the proposed new Academy on the Brownhills site on the Roman Catholic school on the James Brindley site”.**

How does this proposal meet the requirements of the new Education Act to provide “*choice and diversity*” and address local community needs? There would be less choice of schools, not more and only the choice of one if parents are opposed to the ethos of either a Roman Catholic or Academy education. They already have a school they wish to go to in large numbers – Haywood Engineering College.

4 What does “***the new school proposed for Burslem Bank Top***” mean?

Is this a new site for Haywood Engineering College? If it is, it is unnecessary because with refurbishment the current site will be adequate and a lot of money would not be wasted. If it isn't because the school will be closed to move it from the current site then this will be opposed by all stakeholders. Information from the current Hands off Haywood community campaign explains why:

“We have a jewel at the heart of our local community”

➤ The School BELONGS IN OUR COMMUNITY:

- We want to keep the School **at the present site**, serving the local community with its ‘**outstanding**’ care and ethos (**Ofsted’s view 2007**)
- The School is **at the heart of our local community**.
- The School site is also the location of the **City Learning Centre** and Community Library.

➤ **We TREASURE the school:**

- The School has proven community support gained over several generations
- “Students have an **exceptional involvement in the life of the school and the local community**, and these activities are developing them well as **citizens.**”
- “**Meaningful relationships**” **We** will not have these taken from us!
- “The **school strives to involve parents** in their children’s education and to build effective and meaningful relationships with them” **OFSTED**
- Like it is now, we want our children to be able to **travel safely** to school, without the need to be taken in cars or buses!
- We want a **CHOICE** of secondary school in Burslem, for the community.
- We will not have **the heart ripped out of our community**, leaving a vacuum, with **no local school for our children**.

➤ **The School is SUFFICIENT, and IS NEEDED**

- There is sufficient land at and around the school's present site for any future needs, including for sports facilities.
- The School will be large enough for projected student numbers

➤ **We DEPLORE THE PROSPECTIVE WANTON DESTRUCTION of a good school and its ethos:**

- **Ofsted's view** that Haywood is a 'good school' with some 'outstanding' features
- **Successful and oversubscribed** school, providing education to 1090 local children.
- 2007 Ofsted Report "*Students said what a special place the school is and inspectors agree*".

"A caring, friendly community". "The school's performance for promoting students' personal development is good. Students interviewed during the inspection week confirm they feel staff care for them, support them and that the school is a caring, friendly community. Where students are given responsibilities they are eager to accept them." **Ofsted**

- The wantonness and carelessness of allowing rumours of closure which could affect morale of the whole Haywood Team.

➤ **We DEPLORE THE PROSPECTIVE WASTE OF RESOURCES:**

- The **increased carbon emissions** from vastly increased motorised **travel**, and **relocating** a whole school site, **must** be opposed, and all available resources invested "eco-wisely".

➤ **OPPOSING NATIONAL GOVERNMENT POLICY:**

- Government wants self-governing schools

➤ These are **POSSIBLE ILLEGALITIES:**

Illegalities possibly exist in present decisions and proposals, which the local community has the will and legal backing to fight".

The proposed new site is unsuitable and possibly has dangerous methane problems. The bank slopes too much, and the ripping up of playing fields, as well as the new building required would be apposed by residents in the area. People around our current site are comfortable with this school and haven't opposed recent building extensions including the building of the City Learning Centre. They benefit by our facilities including our library and would benefit by our new learning tower and extended lecture theatre linked to the CLC in our plans. The Bradeley residents near the proposed new site would strongly oppose using it for a school when there is a perfectly adequate site where we are now.

- 5 Is 5 lines all we are worth? It leaves a lot of unanswered questions. If we are to be closed what would happen to the current site? Who will it be sold to? What happens to the City Learning Centre which houses a Community Library? In the draft proposals for closing Longton it makes proposals for the site there and the CLC.
- 6 Where and when has the case for academies been discussed? It has not been discussed with headteachers, principals, governors, parents, students or other stakeholders.
- 7 The proposals for this area ignore the 14 – 19 curriculum collaboration that is already underway in the northern area. Will the schools be 11- 16 or 11 – 18? The specialism for the new Brownhills Academy has been identified as Maths and Computing. Why has the engineering specialism been ignored when there are very few engineering specialisms in the area, not just in Stoke but in neighbouring counties?
- 8 Why are you continuing to seek to close a successful oversubscribed school with one of the best recent Ofsted reports in the area? There was strategic intervention in the LA because of the poor quality of the LA Leadership and lack of capacity to improve, as well as concerns about Social Services and the protection of children. It was not because of the failure of secondary schools and/or their leadership. If secondary results are to improve a 3 – 19 vision and approach is needed. Students enter Haywood “well below the national average”. Failure to build upon good practice and the destruction of popular secondary schools will lead to a reduction in achievement. The proposal to close schools, WHICH HEADTEACHERS DO NOT AGREE WITH, seems to be predicated on a ground zero approach of destroying everything and building up again. Your current proposals will lead to lots of job losses. At Haywood and other schools there is a young staff with only a small percentage due for retirement. The government did not like the idea of 17 schools staying open, but has never suggested reducing 17 to 12. This untruth is the same as the one about all headteachers supporting the closure of schools and yet continues to be perpetuated. As many schools as possible should stay open in support of their local communities. The headteachers accept that those schools that have to close because of a drastic reduction in numbers should be protected and supported while new schools are being built.

Haywood Engineering College.