

CABINET

31 July 2020

SECONDARY SCHOOL SUFFICIENCY

Report of the Strategic Director for People

Strategic Aim:	Delivering sustainable development	
Key Decision: Yes	Forward Plan Reference: FP/120620	
Reason for Urgency:	N/A	
Exempt Information	No	
Cabinet Member(s) Responsible:	Mr D Wilby, Portfolio Holder for Lifelong Learning, Early Years, SEND, Inclusion, Safeguarding Children & Young People	
Contact Officer(s):	Dawn Godfrey, Deputy Director - Children's Services	01572 758358 dgodfrey@rutland.gov.uk
Ward Councillors	N/A	

DECISION RECOMMENDATIONS

That Cabinet:

1. Approves the recommendation to undertake Stage Two of the feasibility study for school expansion at the preferred site of Catmose College, Oakham to deliver additional places through the development of an 8 Form Entry secondary school as identified through Stage One of the study.

1 PURPOSE OF THE REPORT

- 1.1 To inform Cabinet of the key findings from Stage One of a feasibility study undertaken by the NPS Group to identify the preferred site for expansion of a Rutland secondary school to provide an extra 30 places for students entering in to Year 7 and outline the advantages and disadvantages for each site.
- 1.2 To gain Cabinet approval to undertake Stage Two of the feasibility study for school expansion at the preferred site of Catmose College, Oakham to deliver additional places through the development of an 8 Form Entry secondary school.

2 BACKGROUND AND MAIN CONSIDERATIONS

- 2.1 All three secondary schools in Rutland are academies which means they are directly funded by the Department for Education and independent of local authority control. They are self-governing and are responsible for their own curriculum planning and delivery, and for determining their own admission arrangements based on the capacity of the school buildings.
- 2.2 Rutland's three secondary schools are popular and are over-subscribed. As schools' funding is mostly determined by the numbers of pupils attending, this popularity ensures viability of each of the schools and supports the strong educational performance seen across the Rutland secondary education sector. When pupil numbers rise, increased funding is available for teaching staff and resources and therefore these schools can increase their staff numbers and breadth of curriculum which is to the benefit of all students.
- 2.3 As an outcome of Stage One of the feasibility study, it was identified that all three secondary schools would have potential for expansion with a number of options available for each site, however there are considerations which would need to be taken into account as outlined in Appendix A of this report.
- 2.4 The feasibility study has not directly taken into account the potential major housing development at St George's; however, all schools have admission criteria to decide which children get places if the school is oversubscribed. If the St George's development were to go ahead, the new 'village' would be located in an area that already falls within the catchment area for Uppingham Community College. Therefore, the college would identify the children resident in the new village as living in the catchment area, thus giving them priority into the college over children resident outside the catchment area. Currently 20% of pupils attending Uppingham Community College are outside of the catchment area. This means there is sufficient capacity for Uppingham Community College to prioritise places to children living on the St George's development who will be living within the catchment area. In addition, any new primary school located within the St George's development would be added as a feeder school to Uppingham Community College although these changes would need to be consulted upon as per guidelines in the School Admissions Code.

3 CASTERTON COLLEGE

- 3.1 The visual condition survey for Casterton College concluded that, whilst the building remains fit for purpose, the age of the building and the internal layout offers limitations to expansion without a combination of re-modelling and new build.

- 3.2 The location of Casterton College means that their natural intake includes a high percentage of children from families in bordering authorities and, whilst the latest School Capacity (SCAP) assessment shows the school at only 84% capacity (SCAP 2019), this does not reflect the current pressures in Year 7 and Year 8 as a result of the school choosing to offer places in excess of their Published Admission Number of 180 to meet increasing applications from out of county. When considering the costs associated with the provision of the additional places required and the location of the site, this option offers limited confidence that these places would meet the projected need for the Council and for Rutland families as places could not be guaranteed for Rutland children who live outside the catchment area for this school.

4 UPPINGHAM COMMUNITY COLLEGE

- 4.1 The age of the buildings at Uppingham Community College, and the internal configuration, would not readily offer the additional provision required but would continue to add to a building that has been built up through a piecemeal approach. The school is at 98.7% capacity (SCAP 2019) and is forecast to exceed capacity by 20 places in the academic year 2020-21, peaking at 104.9% (45 places) in 2024-25 which reflects the popularity of this school with families from neighbouring authorities and the school's own admission arrangements which names villages outside Rutland. This would therefore mean that, although additional places could be delivered through this site, these could not be guaranteed for Rutland children who live outside the catchment area for this school.

5 CATMOSE COLLEGE

- 5.1 Catmose College building stock is overall in better condition, being relatively newly built, and would be more suitable to expansion of this nature. This is reflected in the cost per pupil equivalence for each of the options considered. The school, with a Published Admission Number of 210, is currently at 99% capacity (SCAP 2019) and is forecast to exceed capacity by 4 places for the academic year 2020 - 2021, peaking at 103.5% (37 places) in 2023-24. The proportion of out of county pupils is very low compared to Casterton and Uppingham schools and therefore expansion would be of greater benefit to Rutland families. Early discussions with Catmose College indicate they could manage a 1-year increase of pupils in 2021/22, as long as the expansion was fully completed for the start of the academic year in September 2022.

6 CONSULTATION

- 6.1 The portfolio holder and deputy director have met with each of the respective head teachers who have all confirmed they are generally content with the conclusion of the Phase 1 feasibility studies and our proposals for Phase 2.

7 ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS

- 7.1 All alternative options have been considered as part of the Phase 1 feasibility studies as detailed in this report.

8 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 8.1 The costs of the Phase 2 study have previously been agreed by Cabinet on 18 February 2020 and will come from available capital funds.

8.2 The full costs of expansion will be confirmed as part of the Phase 2 study and will be funded by Basic Needs funding.

9 LEGAL AND GOVERNANCE CONSIDERATIONS

9.1 There are no legal or governance considerations.

10 DATA PROTECTION IMPLICATIONS

10.1 A Data Protection Impact Assessments (DPIA) has not been completed.

11 EQUALITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT

11.1 An Equality Impact Assessment has not been completed as it is not deemed relevant to this report.

12 COMMUNITY SAFETY IMPLICATIONS

12.1 None identified.

13 HEALTH AND WELLBEING IMPLICATIONS

13.1 None identified.

14 CONCLUSION AND SUMMARY OF REASONS FOR THE RECOMMENDATIONS

14.1 Initial findings from Stage One of the feasibility study identify Catmose College as the favoured site for Phase 2 Study because of the current conditions of the existing modern new-build school and this would consolidate the investment that has already been made in recent extensions on the site, with fewer potential planning constraints than at the other two sites.

14.2 The site is centrally located within the County which is reflected in the majority of admissions for this school being from Rutland families and would therefore more readily address Rutland's pupil place sufficiency need.

14.3 It is therefore requested that Cabinet approves the recommendation to undertake Stage Two of the feasibility study for school expansion at the preferred site of Catmose College, Oakham to deliver additional places through the development of an 8 Form Entry secondary school as identified through Stage One of the study. The Phase 2 study is anticipated to be concluded by end of September with the developed design completed by the end of November 2020.

15 BACKGROUND PAPERS

15.1 There are no additional background papers to the report.

16 APPENDICES

16.1 Appendix A – Feasibility study overviews

A Large Print or Braille Version of this Report is available upon request – Contact 01572 722577.

Appendix A.

A.1 Casterton College

Casterton College is currently classed as a 6-form entry school, with their Pupil Admission Number (PAN) set at 180. However for last year, and this year's admission rounds, the school has chosen to 'over-offer' and admitted 210 pupils into the Year 7 cohort at the second offer round. The increased intake has been to the benefit of families in the wider locality of the school, with 69% of offers for September 2020 made to children from neighbouring local authorities.

The school site has developed over many years since the original build in 1939, with a range of two story building of different ages and conditions. There are many changes of level across the site and only parts of it are wheelchair friendly.

The school accommodation generally complies with the requirements in BB103¹ and the external areas could accommodate expansion. However, there are some faculty deficiencies which would require general infrastructure changes, as well as the expansion, to include increased dining facilities, pupil toilets and changing rooms and specialist teaching rooms such as a science laboratory.

As an outcome of the feasibility study, three options were identified. Option 1 would permanently increase the school to 7-form entry (7FE), and Option 2 to 8-form entry (8FE) through extension to the current building. Option 3 is for a new build 8FE provision.

Option 1 - 7FE expansion requires an indicative area of 800m² new build and 160m² remodelling and 100m² of external works hard surfacing. Cost estimate £3,847,900; cost per pupil £18,941.

Option 2 - 8FE expansion requires an area of 1560m² new build and 200m² remodelling. All weather pitch 6000m² of external works hard surfacing. Cost estimate £10,184,300; cost per pupil £25,695.

Option 3 - 7FE/8FE demolition of existing buildings and new build school to current Education and Skills Funding Agency (ESFA) standards. Cost estimate £36,411,100; cost per pupil £92,851

If this site was chosen, expansion could be accommodated on adjacent field subject to Planning Approval. Expansion would improve some school facilities and flows and would address over-subscription of this popular school. However, as the majority of pupils come from out of county, the expansion would not necessarily address Rutland's pupil place capacity need.

Additionally, some of the building dates back to 1939 and the continued piecemeal expansion does not address long term viability of school and building infrastructure issues, and there can be difficulty integrating a modern extension with existing older building and services.

¹ Building Bulletin 103: Area Guidelines for Mainstream Schools - non-statutory area guidelines for school buildings for all age ranges from 3 to 19

Owing to the location, most of the pupils and staff travel by car or bus meaning the road outside is congested at arrival and departure times and expanding numbers will increase congestion around an already busy site.

There are potential planning concerns because part of the site is within RCC's 'limits of development' zone, which will determine where future extensions can be located.

A.2 Catmose College

Catmose College is currently classed as a 7-form entry school, with their Pupil Admission Number (PAN) set at 210². The school is oversubscribed, with an intake predominantly from Oakham and surrounding villages with only 15% of offers for September 2020 made to children from neighbouring local authorities.

The college was a new build secondary school constructed in 2011 during the 'Building Schools for the Future' programme with all accommodation provided in a single 2- storey building which is well maintained and remains in good condition. Some modifications have been made to the original building including a mezzanine floor converted for a designated special provision area³.

A separate 1960s building previously used as a nursery has been converted to offices and a conference area.

As an outcome of the feasibility study, four options were identified which would provide additional accommodation. However, two of these options (Options 1 and 2) would only enable the College to continue to maintain current arrangements for 7-form entry (7FE) and therefore not increase provision to meet SCAP forecast. Options 3 and 4, which would expand the site and increase capacity to provide 8-form entry (8FE) would be the only Options at Catmose to provide the 30 additional pupil places required.

Option 1 - 7FE expansion requires an area of 450m² new build and 500m² remodelling. Cost estimate £2,622,300; cost per pupil £12,664

Option 2 – 7FE expansion with no new build but with the extension area provided by remodelling of Brightways Community Support Service and adjacent classroom, with Brightways relocated elsewhere in the town. Cost estimate £1,982,900; cost per pupil £9,390

Option 3 – 8FE expansion requires an area of 1200m² new build and 750m² remodelling. Cost estimate £5,761,800; cost per pupil £14,371

Option 4 – 8FE - generally as Option 3 but the total new build could be reduced by up 380m² by remodelling of the Brightways facility assuming a suitable replacement can be provided elsewhere in the town. Cost estimate £5,212,300; cost per pupil £12,964.

All options can be accommodated within the existing site but the impact on the support for Brightways service users would need to be considered.

² Catmose College raised their PAN from 180 to 210 in their 2019 Admission Arrangements and so have offered to PAN in the last 2 admission rounds.

³ The Designated Special Provision (DSP) is for students with Moderate Learning Difficulty (MLD); admission is determined in consultation with Rutland County Council.

If this site was chosen there would be fewer difficulties integrating extension into the existing fit for purpose buildings with full range of facilities on site. The majority of pupils are from within Rutland, therefore expansion would more readily meet pupil place planning requirements, and there would be less impact on congestion due to existing site arrangements and on-site parking.

However, planning constraints may have to be overcome. If option 4 was to be considered, the current provision offered through Brightways would need to be relocated to a suitable alternative venue in the locality, with associated costs to be factored in.

A.3 Uppingham Community College

Uppingham College is currently classed as a 6-form entry school, with their Pupil Admission Number (PAN) set at 180. The school is over-subscribed with 61% of offers for September 2020 made to children from neighbouring local authorities.

The school is housed in a mixture of buildings which have been developed over the last 70 years, on a rural site which is irregular in shape, with school buildings located on the corner of the part sloping site. A separate single storey classroom block has recently been added, to the east side of the main school.

Building stock is of different ages, ranging from 3 to 80 years, and some localised repair and maintenance work is required, but overall the site is well maintained and generally in good condition.

As an outcome of the feasibility study, two options were identified; option 1 would permanently increase the school to 7-form entry (7FE), and option 2 to 8-form entry (8FE).

Option 1 - 7FE expansion requires an area of 1115m² new build and 153m² remodelling. Cost estimate £4,943,500; cost per pupil £24,552

Option 2 - 8FE expansion requires an area of 2050m² new build and 153m² remodelling. Cost estimate £8,441,500; cost per pupil £21,232

If this site was to be chosen this would improve the school facilities and address over-subscription to this popular school. However, as the majority of pupils come from out of county, the expansion would not necessarily address Rutland's pupil place capacity need.

Whilst the site could accommodate physical expansion, this would continue the piecemeal expansion and does not address some of the building infrastructure issues, such as dining facilities and pupil toilets and changing rooms.

Most of the pupils and staff travel by car or bus meaning the road outside is congested at arrival and departure times and expanding numbers will potentially increase congestion around an already busy site.

Planning constraints may need to be addressed because the school is in a rural location outside the 'Planned limits of development' that ring the boundaries of Uppingham and Lyddington.