

London Borough of Sutton

Sutton North Ward



Alan Gunne-Jones
PDA (Wates Planning Consultant),
118 Pall Mall,
London,
SW1Y 5ED

7 April 2019

Dear Alan,

Thank you for meeting with us on 3 April and showing us your proposals for the school development at Rosehill Park. We also had the opportunity to attend the drop-in event in the afternoon and talk to some of the residents who attended and hear their concerns. It would be helpful if you could let us know the number that attended and the results of the feedback survey you received.

We have a number of concerns about the proposal as it currently stands which means that we could not support a planning application unless substantial changes are made. Our main concerns are as follows:

1. The placing of the building at the front of the site, immediately facing the park, provides a bulk and impact at odds with the parkland setting. This positioning together with the monolithic rectilinear form of the building exacerbates its visual dominance.

The positioning of the site, at the back of the park and against the railway embankment, provides long views across the park from a number of points, and especially from the main road. These will make any building prominent, and highly visible. The building massing options that you have shown do not seem to have been assessed against objective criteria, and we would ask you to reappraise each option against the same criteria. We regret that you have not provided a straightforward elevation showing the building against the embankment behind it and with the Sports Village beside it for comparison. We would urge you to look again at the options for placing the building within the site. We appreciate that any repositioning will need to take account of the trees and bat corridor to the rear of the site.

Cllr Ruth Dombey

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Have a look at our web site:

<https://suttonnorth.focusteam>.

2. The rectangular shape of the building and its poor quality design do not provide the inspirational school that this important site demands

The main road is the northern gateway to Sutton, and what is needed is a design that makes a more positive statement, that residents and children can be proud of. The current plans lack inspiration, and while being functional, do not reflect the parkland setting, and are unlikely to engender a sense of pride and ownership among students and staff.

3. The parking is inadequate. You are assuming that less than half the staff will drive to the school, and that nearly a quarter will walk. We would challenge this. The Council has made land available to the north of the tennis centre (but within the bund) for possible parking. Using this land would increase the parking provision and possibly provide more flexibility on the main site to reconfigure the school building. We do not understand why you have not included this land in your plans.
4. We have not yet seen plans for addressing the very limited vehicle access from Rose Hill into the Rosehill Park car park. At the moment this is very constrained, and it will need to be addressed.
5. We discussed at our meeting the presence of neighbouring schools, especially Greenshaw, and the congestion this will cause with buses along Rose Hill. I know you are in discussion with TfL about increasing the frequency of buses. In addition we would be looking for the new school to stagger its opening and closing times for different groups of pupils, and to co-ordinate these with Greenshaw, to reduce the pupil congestion in Rose Hill. We don't believe that breakfast club and after school activities will be sufficient for this purpose.
6. We understand the parents will not be allowed to drop off in the Rosehill Park car park, but are not clear how this will be prevented. We are also concerned about the road safety consequences of parents dropping off in Rose Hill and on Reigate Avenue, and would welcome your proposals to mitigate this.
7. We welcome the fact that parts of the school, including the sports hall, main hall and drama studio will be available for community use and note the design will enable these areas to be separately managed.
8. We would welcome clarification from GLT on the proposed admission arrangements for the school. We understand that the school is considering a nodal admissions point somewhere near Sutton town centre and that a certain proportion of pupils would be prioritised on their proximity to that point as well as their proximity to the main school site. We would ask GLT to consider prioritising a significantly higher proportion of pupils from the nodal point rather than the main school site to ensure a greater intake of Sutton pupils

9. We would seek details of the plans for the construction period, including time of construction and how access between the orchard land and the cricket pitch can be maintained for the community.

We understand and support the need for a new school, and understand that the proposed location, while not ideal, is the best that can be found, but feel our children and residents deserve better than your proposal. We are pleased that you have agreed to think again and delay the planning application beyond May. We would urge you to use that time to consider and respond to residents' concerns and make substantial amendments, in discussion with our planning officers, before submitting a planning application. We appreciate the need to ensure there are sufficient school places for the growing number of secondary school students in our local area but a new school is a lasting legacy for decades to come and it needs to reflect the aspirations of our community.

We are copying this letter to Cllr Marian James, Chair of the People Committee, council officers and to Mike Cooper, Chair of the Greenshaw Learning Trust.

Yours sincerely,

Ruth, Marlene and Steve

Ruth Dombey
Marlene Heron
Steve Penneck