

MINUTES of the meeting of the **PLANNING AND REGULATORY COMMITTEE** held at 10.30 am on 22 February 2023 at Council Chamber, Woodhatch Place, 11 Cockshot Hill, Reigate, Surrey, RH2 8EF.

These minutes are subject to confirmation by the Committee at its next meeting.

Members Present:

Tim Hall (Chairman)
Ernest Mallett MBE
Penny Rivers
Victor Lewanski
Scott Lewis
Catherine Powell
Jeremy Webster
Harry Boparai

Substitutes Present:

David Harmer
Richard Tear

Apologies:

Jeffrey Gray
Jonathan Hulley (Vice-Chairman)
Edward Hawkins

9/23 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE AND SUBSTITUTIONS [Item 1]

Apologies for absence were received from Edward Hawkins, Jeffrey Gray and Jonathan Hulley.

David Harmer acted as a substitute for Edward Hawkins. Richard Tear acted as a substitute for Jonathan Hulley.

10/23 MINUTES OF THE LAST MEETING [Item 2]

The Minutes were approved as an accurate record of the previous meeting.

11/23 PETITIONS [Item 3]

There were none.

12/23 PUBLIC QUESTION TIME [Item 4]

There were none.

13/23 MEMBERS' QUESTION TIME [Item 5]

There were none.

14/23 DECLARATIONS OF INTERESTS [Item 6]

There were none.

15/23 SURREY COUNTY COUNCIL PROPOSAL RE22/01796/CON - LAND AT WOODHATCH PLACE, 11 COCKSHOT HILL, WOODHATCH, REIGATE, RE2 8EF [Item 7]**Officers:**

Caroline Smith (Planning Group Manager)
 Sonia Sharp (Senior Highways and Planning Solicitor)
 Stephen Jenkins (Planning Development Manager)
 Dawn Horton Baker (Planning Development Team Leader)
 Tricia Gurney (Principal Transport Development Planning Officer) – Attended virtually

Speakers:

Sophia Oliver spoke on behalf of Chris Morris and made representations in objection to the application. The following key points were made:

1. That she did not have children at Reigate Priory Junior School but, as a local resident, strongly objected to the proposed relocation.
2. That there was a viable alternative to relocating the school which was upgrading the existing school and moving the 'right of way' through the existing site. Reigate and Banstead Borough Council confirmed that they supported this.
3. That Surrey County Council should consider the alternative before attempting to progress with a proposal that had severe drawbacks and had resulted in so much opposition.
4. That she was gravely concerned with road safety. The transport assessment stated that there had been no serious accidents involving children on Cockshot Hill in the last five years however very few primary school children used the road at present. A combination of heavy traffic, unsafe pavements and a large number of primary school children would clearly create a set of conditions in which accidents were more likely.
5. That there had been a fatal collision involving a child on Cockshot Hill.
6. That the proposal should have included proper consideration of anticipated road safety conditions and the circumstances of previous accidents.
7. That the transport assessment conducted was superficial and did not provide confidence that the proposed traffic mitigations would improve safety.
8. That she had concerns regarding congestion and the proposed traffic mitigations, as the relocation would cause more journeys, and the parking provision was inadequate. Surrey County Council had proposed that parents park in surrounding residential roads but ignored that many of the streets were blind closes. If parking was not available, then drivers would have to turn around and drive out of each close to access the next one. The closes were accessed from a blind service road, off Cockshot Hill, that was one lane only when vehicles were parked. The road would not be able to deal with the anticipated volumes of traffic and so would create significant congestion.

9. That traffic mitigations were a prerequisite if primary aged children were to use Cockshot Hill regularly. Mitigations would affect local and through traffic during the construction phase and over the longer term.
10. That the A217 was a key through route and a main route to Gatwick therefore the proposal would have significant economic impacts.
11. That she was deeply concerned that Surrey County Council wanted to commit to major public works of this nature without wider consultation and assessment.
12. That the trees proposed to be cut down were subject to Tree Preservation Order (TPO) RE717. The purpose of the TPO was to protect valuable environmental heritage and said she was shocked that Surrey Council were proposing to undermine their own regulations.
13. In summary, the speaker said that the proposal would have negative economic and environmental impacts and that Cockshot Hill was unfit for use as a route to a primary school.
14. That the proposal was not a viable solution to the dilapidated school building.

Luke Carter made representations in objection to the application. The following key points were made:

1. That he was a planning consultant, a chartered town planner and a member of the Royal Town Planning Institute for over 20 years. He was speaking on behalf of the residents of The Belvederes which was a development of houses and apartments immediately adjacent to the site of the proposed school.
2. As the immediate neighbours to the site, the residents of The Belvederes would be the most severely impacted by the development. Their homes would be 25 metres from the proposed building and, in some areas, the new school grounds would be immediately outside their living room windows.
3. That the building would stand 16 metres taller than the ground floor of the flats and houses in The Belvederes.
4. That 16 metres was roughly equivalent to the height of a five storey office block and that the building would be nearly 80 metres long.
5. That the proposed materials of the main block were a striking red and dark grey cladding in a random pattern which bears no reference to any local building material and made no attempt to blend in within its surroundings. The building's materials increased the building's prominence and its incongruous appearance within the historic grounds of the locally listed building.
6. In regard to impact on residents, over 40 windows and doors were proposed on the east side of the building looming over the houses, flats and gardens and looking down on occupiers of The Belvederes and their private gardens which would result in an unacceptable impact on their privacy.
7. That, not only would the loss of privacy be unacceptable and harmful, the sheer bulk height and scale of the proposed building would result in loss of sunlight and a substantial increase in overshadowing to the homes and gardens.
8. That a note from the officer report stated that there had been no analysis of overshadowing submitted with the planning application. This was unacceptable and contrary to both building planning requirements.

9. That it was not only the building itself that would be harmful to the occupiers of The Belvederes as the proposed sports pitches would be located next to The Belvederes and the land, just beyond their ground floor windows, would be raised up by 1.5 metres to provide a level pitch.
10. That noisy sports pitches would be used everyday up to 8pm.
11. That the proposed new entrance path through the school would cause noise and disturbance by pupils, parents and staff walking to and from the school, from the east entrance on Hornbeam Road.
12. That the raised path would have a 2.4 metre-high mesh fence all along the boundary on top of the raised ground so that the top of the fence would be 4 metres higher than the ground floor level of the adjacent homes. This was unacceptable and would be incredibly harmful to the occupiers of these homes.
13. That matters of visual impact, unacceptable design and materials, loss of privacy, loss of amenity, harm to living conditions were key concerns of the immediate neighbours.
14. That the impacts of the proposal would be so harmful that it would be wholly unreasonable for the committee to grant planning permission.

Jonathan Higon spoke on behalf of Katherine Black and made representations in objection to the application. The following key points were made:

1. Noted that he lived in Reigate and that one of his children attended Reigate Priory.
2. That he knew the proposed site well and understood issues related to traffic congestion, the limited street parking and the vulnerability of people walking to the site.
3. That the proposed unique site was never designed for a school and that the application states that the urgent need for the school outweighs the other considerations.
4. Asked what the urgent need was for a new school and said that it was questionable whether there was a need for a new school when the existing site could be repurposed.
5. Urged the Planning Committee to reject the application due to traffic congestion, parking provision, increased pollution and highway safety.
6. Stated that Woodhatch Place included a carpark for 552 cars because when the site was approved in 1996 inadequate street parking in the local area was acknowledged. The car park would not be available for school use.
7. That the application stated that 318 parents were expected to drive to the site with 165 on street parking spaces. This meant that 153 cars would be without a parking space.
8. That County Council had plentiful parking at the office site at Woodhatch Place but the 600- pupil school did not.
9. That the application stated that 282 pupils would walk or use active travel.
10. That cycling or scooting to the site, along an A-Road, would result in a death.
11. The application stated that the impact of traffic and parking on residents was not significant however resident impact would be for 36

weeks of the year, every weekday from 7:00 to 10:00 AM, and 2:00 till 6:00 PM, which was a significant impact.

12. That the application was flawed, contained inaccuracies and was replete with an uncomfortable level of bias.
13. That one example of inaccuracy was that the application stated that there were 290 objections however the speaker had confirmation of 400 objections.
14. That the unprecedented level of objection was equal only to those for oil drilling or fracking.
15. That, in conclusion, this was the wrong location for a junior school of 600 small children who would need to be accompanied by an adult twice a day with no parking and unsafe access.
16. The application breached local, national and Surrey County Council's planning policies.
17. Asked the committee to reject the application.

Stuart Nicholson made representations in objection to the application. The following key points were made:

1. Stated that he lived in Broadhurst Gardens for 28 years.
2. That he had followed the progress of this project, attending both online and face-to-face presentations, and had made relevant comments at each stage.
3. That Surrey County Council had claimed to promote sustainable travel to school by cycling or walking but moving Priory school would result in a large increase in parents driving pupils to and from school.
4. That the A217 was normally a very busy road and took on additional pressure when there was a problem on nearby motorways. The potential additional school traffic would further increase congestion on the A217 and the roads surrounding the school, as well as through Reigate Town Centre.
5. That parents and children walking from Reigate Town Centre would have no option but to use the only available footpath along the east side of Cockshot Hill which was already inadequate at busy times. This would be even more dangerous with the additional pedestrian traffic with a risk of children being crowded off the path,
6. Asked whether a Road Safety Audit had been carried out.
7. Said that there was currently no safe cycling route from the Reigate Town Centre, and that none had been proposed, so sustainable travel options were limited.
8. That increase in traffic would inevitably result in increased emissions, especially at idling speeds in traffic jams.
9. Said that children would be walking adjacent to a busy road with their faces on a level with the exhausts of heavy lorries.
10. Asked for the reason for not undertaking an Environmental Impact Assessment on the eastern side of Cockshot Hill as an EIA should be essential in view of the increased emissions that would occur.
11. That the proposal discriminated against those who cannot drive their children to school as no adequate improvement for non-motorised users were planned.
12. That Surrey County Council had declared policies to rely on parents using local roads to drop off their children. Many of the local roads

mentioned were on the opposite western side of an extremely busy A road so drop off was a serious misnomer as parents would have to park then walk pupils across the road at an unregulated junction.

13. That the local roads were quite inadequate for extra parking. They were too narrow for large modern cars to park and to allow access by refuse and emergency vehicles.
14. That short term parking with its associated manoeuvres and pedestrian movements would put unprecedented pressure on residential streets. They are in no way an acceptable replacement for the current extensive arrangements available for the primary school within the Bell Street car park or Morrisons car park.
15. Said that the proposal was deeply flawed and asked that the application be rejected.

Greg Ardan made representations in objection to the application. The following key points were made:

1. That there had been a huge number of objections from parents and the local community.
2. That the first issue was related to safety and that several objectors at the meeting had made that clear. Cockshot Hill was a busy road with dangerous traffic and narrow pavements.
3. That many parents were terrified of what would happen if there was an accident on Cockshot Hill.
4. That his other issues were related to environmental, traffic and congestion, and the logistics around multiple school pickups and drop offs.
5. That the primary school was currently in the centre of town but much of its catchment area was to the north. North Reigate had few state junior schools, but had a large Infant School, Homesdale Primary School, by the railway station. The infant school was a feeder school to the Priory school and so by moving the Priory School to its proposed new location, south of the town centre, then it would be moved further from the majority of parents that the school served.
6. That parents who currently walk with their children would resort to driving which would increase pressure on local roads as well as create additional environmental damage.
7. That the proposal would create challenge for parents with one child at Homesdale Primary School and one child at Priory School as it would be physically impossible to do multiple drop offs / pickups within the times needed by those two schools.
8. That the proposed move was unsafe and would lead to more car journeys and more pollution.
9. That the proposed plans were physically impossible for parents who do not own a car, and those who do own a car would likely have to pay for expensive wrap around childcare.
10. That he fully appreciates the need for building a new modern school in the community but that this was the wrong proposal in the wrong place.
11. Asked the committee to reject the application.

On behalf of the applicant, Ed Furse (Regional Head South East and South West England, Department for Education), Liz Mills (Director for Education, Surrey County Council), David Holdaway (Director, Velocity Transport Planning) and Oliver Moses (Headteacher, Reigate Priory Junior School) spoke in response to the objector's comments. The following key points were made:

Ed Furse

1. That The Priority School Building Program 2 was launched on 1 May 2014 to undertake major rebuilding refurbishment projects to address the needs of schools in the very worst condition. 277 schools, around 1% of schools in England, were selected to benefit from PSBP 2 funding, so it was very positive for the funding to be available, given the size of the school estate, the current economic climate, the finite amount of funding available, and that the program had largely ended. The Reigate Priory School stood to benefit from this funding.
2. That the proposal had the Department of Education's (DfE) support, as it would be a purpose-built net carbon zero school that would meet the latest building regulations for internal and external spaces, creating a safe and secure site that was designed for education.
3. That classrooms would be of the right shape and size with the right lighting and air flow to give children the best possible chance to learn.
4. That PSBP2's primary focus was on buildings only, so it was positive to see the program's funding contribute to a scheme that also provided good quality, formal and informal external play spaces.
5. That the construction of the proposed scheme would not disrupt the delivery of education in any way. This compared favourably to the vast majority of PSBP2 projects where development would take place on the existing school site.
6. That the DfE did consider potential development on the existing site, but what was before Members was a better solution in the short and long term.

Liz Mills

1. That her role was working in partnership with local education providers to ensure Surrey's children, young people and adults had access to education and to ensure all learners, especially vulnerable groups, were supported to achieve their potential. This was a statutory duty.
2. That Surrey County Council was committed to the principles of 'no one left behind' and educational equality. This meant allowing every child the same chance to grow and learn. The proposed new school would deliver against both commitments in a way that was not possible within the school's existing building.
3. That the proposed school was designed to meet the Department for Education's requirements for a new build school and was accessible and compliant with the Disability Discrimination Act in a way that the existing school was not.
4. That the new school would underpin the children's right to inclusive education, opportunity and accessibility, regardless of physical disability.
5. That the new build's defined boundaries would create space for children, which was currently not possible for Reigate Priory Junior

School, ensuring that there were spaces for children and enable them to be safeguarded. This was at the heart of officer's work for all children and paramount to any decision they make on their behalf,

6. In regard to recruitment and running costs for the new school, the proposal would be an attractive incentive to teachers looking to work in a modern facility which has been purpose built with teaching and learning and safeguarding at the heart of the process.
7. In regard to energy efficiency, the proposal would save money for the school in the long run and supported the Council's Greener Futures priority and commitment. The increased use of natural light, smarter heating with a more efficient layout, and increased recycling efforts through intelligent design would make a big impact. These savings would mean more money for children and their education. The proposed school would ensure that the school leadership team and governing body were able to spend their time and energy focused on continuing to achieve excellent outcomes for children rather than premises management.
8. In regard to place planning, Reigate Priory Junior School served the whole of Reigate and pupils came from across the Reigate area. The school was a popular choice with parents, and officers expect the new school would be a positive choice for parents too.
9. Admissions arrangements for the school had been changed to ensure that the current geographical intake of pupils was not disadvantaged.
10. Asked the committee to approve the planning application.

David Holdaway

1. Stated that he had provided transport and highways advice throughout the project and had carried out extensive engagement with all the relevant officers at Surrey County Council from Highways, Transport Development Planning, Road Safety, Reigate Priory School, its feeder schools and with residents, parents, governors and councillors.
2. Assured Members that a thorough assessment had been developed and its findings, underpinned by transport surveys, were agreed with officers in line with industry standard best practice.
3. That the Highways Team had not raised any objections to the proposal and that the assessment was overly robust as it assumes future traffic growth predictions in line with pre-covid travel patterns and took no account of vehicle trips that will be already on the network and assumed that the catchment area will stay the same.
4. That, throughout consultations, suggestions were made as to how to address safety issues on Cockshot Hill. Concerns had been listened to with an extensive package of highway works that would fundamentally change the character of the A217. This included a blanket 20 mile hour speed zone from Reigate Centre to Woodhatch, alterations to the highway which included speed humps, road narrowing, new crossings on Cockshot Hill and the school access giving priority to pedestrians and cyclists, and widening the entire stretch of footway which would be much wider than many footways already in Reigate.
5. Further works included designing in the maximum possible parking within the site to reduce the impact of long stay parking on the street from staff, extensions to supervised play, the phased departure of pupils to minimize on street parking impact and to facilitate drop off

and pick up between the Priory and Homesdale School, and implementation of the HomeRun nationwide Travel car share app for schools over a period of five years,

6. That there would be £50,000 of contributions towards local highway works and in and around the school site.
7. That there would be the continuation and potential expansion of the breakfast and after school club's capacity and the implementation of the school travel plan, delivery and servicing plan, and car park management plan.
8. That the next 30 months prior to occupation would allow officers to work with the Council, the school, the Police, to develop the road safety audits that had already taken place, the highway mitigation, and to fine tune and promote and communicate the travel plan and the parking management strategy.
9. Noted that, as with all school developments, day-to-day operations would be continually monitored. The strategy would be updated, and any mitigation and remedial measures would be implemented accordingly.
10. Asked the committee to approve the application.

The Chairman highlighted that, in line with the speaking process, the speakers, speaking on behalf of the applicant, were allowed 15 minutes in total to address the committee.

Oliver Moses

1. Stated that he was the Headteacher at Reigate Priory School.
2. Noted that he grew up in Reigate, attended Holmesdale and Reigate Priory as a pupil, and remained a local resident.
3. Stated that, with his personal relationship with the town and the building, along with educational experience, he could appreciate the feelings across the debate.
4. That Reigate Priory's first responsibility was to ensure that children were safe and happy when in the school's care. The new building, which was a fully enclosed site, modern construction and a purposefully arranged layout would achieve this on a level far superior to anything the current home could provide and ensured safeguarding and welfare expectations were met.
5. The new building would allow Reigate Priory to fulfil its responsibility to be a fully inclusive school to all children, their families, and staff. Those with impairments or disabilities would no longer be told 'no'.
6. Stated that the school would no longer need to adapt and compromise to the challenges and obstacles that the current home creates. This would enhance the consistency and continuity of provision, providing an even better platform for improved learning going forward.
7. That the new building would provide dedicated staff with the working conditions that they deserved, whether that was a classroom of appropriate size, ventilation and temperature, correct fittings of primary learning experience, or modern and specialised spaces with digital infrastructure.

8. That the proposal would attract the finest staff in a difficult recruitment market.
9. That the new building would offer a more operationally efficient and financially viable home, allowing the school to better focus on its core safeguarding and educational duties.
10. Said that he accepted that that the school operation would need to be sensitive to the drop off and collection arrangements and was confident that they can work towards a solution.
11. That the current building was never intended to be a long-term home for the school.
12. That, after 75 years, it had served the community well, however it was time for the school to move to a new purpose built home.

The Local Member, Catherine Baart, made the following comments:

1. Stated that, after months of public consultation work by officers and scrutiny with Members, the council unanimously voted for a new local transport plan for Surrey after decades of cars having priority. The new Local Transport Plan prioritised active travel and sought to reduce car use. The proposal under consideration ran completely against the County Council's Local Transport Plan.
2. That currently 70% of pupils used active travel to get to Priory school however by putting the school at the new location it would decrease active travel to 53%.
3. With the proposal, car volumes on Cockshot Hill would increase by 5.7%. This was 728 more car movements at drop off and pick up every school day.
4. That nowhere in the planning proposal was there mention of the Local Transport Plan.
5. That more parents would be forced to drive and would need to find somewhere to park near the site.
6. That she understood that consultants had undertaken an analysis on parking capacity, however she had doubts with the analysis because of the recommendation that after three months, if traffic flow was not working well, some parking restrictions would be introduced. The Member asked, in this circumstance, where the parents would park.
7. That the A217 was a major through road, a route to Junction 8 on the M25, a route to Gatwick, and a route for HGV's to take to come through Reigate.
8. That the measures being proposed for safety would fundamentally change the nature of the road.
9. Asked at which point the additional congestion would force traffic to go off on the alternative route through the drop off zone of Sand Cross Junior School.
10. That an alternative was to build a new carbon neutral school in Priory Park behind the listed buildings. This alternative was supported by Reigate and Banstead Borough Council and borough planning officers.
11. That by building behind the Priory school, active travel would be maintained, increased car use would be avoided, a new school would be provided, and Surrey County Council would be seen to be in accordance with its Local Transport Plan.

Key points raised during the discussion:

1. The Planning Development Team Leader introduced the report and highlighted that an update sheet was circulated and published on 21 February 2023. Members noted that the update sheet included reference to:
 - a. Three letters received. One referred to a freedom of information request. The documents sent by the representor were attached to the update sheet which related to pre-application meetings that were held between the DfE and Reigate and Banstead Borough Council prior to the application. The officer's reading of the documents was that there was no appropriate acceptable development being put forward on the existing site and that a development could not be easily accommodated next to a Grade 1 listed building within a conservation area. Very special circumstances could not be proven within the Green Belt if it was shown that there was another site elsewhere. The officer further stated that she disagreed with the previous speaker's conclusion that there was an acceptable alternative elsewhere.
 - b. Reworded conditions
 - c. Three additional conditions
2. The introduction provided by the Planning Development Team Leader is attached to these minutes at Appendix 1.
3. Cllr Mallet said that he had researched the proposal online and found comments made by Reigate and Banstead Council, parents and a statement by the Headteacher. He also attended the school and had a meeting with the headmaster, who did not try to persuade him in any way, but had the current situation explained to him. The Member said that following conversations he would consider the school to be an excellent school however, there were issues with the current classrooms. The Member noted that the objections were mainly around the loss of open space, traffic issues, heritage assets, a dislike of the new location on the A217 being a busy road. The Member further noted issues related to the suitability of the current building which included narrow fire escapes, small kitchens and classrooms, high energy costs and the general condition of the building. The Member went on to say that the educationalists had decided what they require and that it was not for the committee to decide this on their behalf. The Member noted that there were conflicts between parents and some of the local population and education, issues related to heritage of the present school, The interest of future pupils should be considered and that the headteacher had a particular interest in the interests of disabled pupils which could not currently be accommodated in the current building. The Member said that he considered the current building to be inadequate for present educational purposes and that there was an opportunity to place the school in a modern environment, and that the main concern of the Member was the safety of pupils. The Member stated that he was concerned with Condition 9, as there was an opportunity to provide a fairly sustainable pick up and drop off process, and would propose an

amendment to amend Condition 9 to allow the pick up and drop off road to be open to all parents rather than a select few. The Member further said that the proposed plan to have parents park on the nearby residential estate was not adequate.

4. Cllr Powell said that the alternative site assessment stated that an alternative site needed to be greater than five hectares however the proposed site was 2.4 hectares. Furthermore, the alternative site assessment stated that the proposed site needed to be within 2 miles of the existing site, and that she wondered why this was, as the Local Transport Plan reference '20 minute communities', and that she would have expected a map which included the existing school catchment areas, for all of the schools in Reigate, rather than within 2 miles, to be included. Section 547 of the Transport Assessment stated it was anticipated that over time, in addition to the fact that the HCIS PAN was reducing by one form entry, that the catchment would move further to the South, however there was no map of the existing schools in the area. In regard to maps 5.1 and 5.2 of the Transport Assessment, the Member said that it was interesting to note that the two maps were on different scales and that they did not show the existing pupil population in the same way. The existing school map showed the existing pupils as different sizes of circles on the map. Map 5.2, which was reported to show the same data, did not show the same information and, when overlayed, were different. The Member asked, with the permission of the Chairman, to circulate a map which did overlay the two profiles of walking distance on each other and also showed where the existing school was. The Member said, when looking at where the existing schools were, that there was an infant school in the north of Reigate, there were no other schools to the north that would allow the catchment of the proposed school to move south. And that it would lead to a significant number of children with no school to attend. The Member further said that one of the speakers, Liz Mills, spoke about ensuring the current geographical intake was not disadvantaged, however the Member said that they felt this would happen with the proposal. The Chairman agreed that the maps would be circulated. The document circulated is attached to these minutes as Appendix 2. The Senior Highways and Planning Solicitor spoke to the Chairman and suggested that Cllr Powell explain whether there was a physical difference within the plan circulated compared with the plan within the report, to elaborate on the point being made on the new plan, and that the applicant, perhaps through the planning officer, received a copy of the circulated plan. The Member said that map 5.1 showed the current pupil postcode locations, and their proximity to the existing school, which showed that 82% of pupils lived within one mile of the existing school, and therefore it would be expected that the majority of the pupils would travel by non-car means, The Member added that the centre of Reigate was relatively flat and that attendees would need to travel up a hill to reach the proposed location. In regard to the second page of the document, the Member said that it included a map of the current site and a map of the proposed site, and that it was reported to be on the same basis but, the second map of the proposed site, showed all of the clusters of the numbers of children as the same size dot, but when the dots were compared, they were not the same.

5. Senior Highways and Planning Solicitor highlighted that, for those watching the webcast, the maps circulated could be accessed by clicking a tab on the webpage titled 'slides'.
6. Cllr Powell continued her point and said that, in regard to the third page of the document, this included where the existing state schools were in the area. In regard to the final page of the document, the background slide was map 5.1 from the Transport Assessment, the yellow circles were existing infant schools, the red circles were existing junior schools, the blue circles were existing primary schools and the green circles were existing secondary schools. The Member said that there was a secondary school that, broadly speaking, served the north and centre of town, and that there was a secondary school that broadly served the south of the town. The red line was the one mile walking distance of the existing school and the blue line was the one-mile walking distance of the proposed school location. The Member further said that there was no school for pupils to the north of the red line that would be within one mile as there was no school there. Therefore, for the Transport Assessment to state that it was envisaged that the catchment area of the school would move south over time was flawed as there was no school for pupils to attend that was within a one mile walking distance. The Member added that she was also concerned that the walk to the proposed site was uphill and that she had doubts that the proposed site was in an appropriate location. It was further said that she understood the concerns related to the existing school, as she was educated in a school that was in bad condition, but that it was the teachers that made it a special place. Concerns were that the proposed site was not sustainable and that the Transport Assessment was flawed as it did not consider where the other schools were located.
7. Cllr Rivers said that she agreed with the points raised by Cllr Powell and that the issues with traffic, congestion and parking and their impact on pupils walking to school, did not convince her that the proposed site was the right site for a new school. Further to this, the Member said that she did not believe the building's design to be elegant or playful.
8. In regard to the document circulated by Cllr Powell, the Planning Development Team Leader said that it included information on where the current pupil population lived, but that Members should consider pupils in the future, as the school would not be built for a number of years, and that it was difficult to say that there would not be more pupils attending from the south of the catchment. The Education Authority, the Highways Authority, the DfE and the existing school had said that the proposed site was in an acceptable location that met the standard required, and therefore she could not give weight to the comment made.
9. In regard to the homes within The Belvederes, Cllr Lewis said that, as they were close to the proposed new school, he had not seen any legitimate interest assessments which considered risks related to being close to the school and the impact on noise levels. The Member further said that they felt the design of the building was not in keeping with the local area, and there were risks related to the volume of children walking up the hill towards the proposed site. In addition, the Member said that there would be an increased risk to children's lives due to the number of attendees driving to

Woodhatch Place. In regard to the environmental impact, the Member said that the proposal would have a negative impact. In regard to comments related to potential changes to the catchment area in the future, the Member said that Members were unable to assume the future local plan of the area. The Member went on to say that, after considering the report, they did not feel the proposed site was the right place for the school.

10. Cllr Lewanski said that more discussion should have been had on the potential to redevelop the 1950's block next to the existing school. The Member further added that a select committee report from 2021 said that the primary purpose of the purchase of Woodhatch Place site was to relocate the primary school and to provide land for the provision of extra care, and that he felt this meant that there was no choice but to move the school's location. In regard to the Alternative Site Assessment, the Member said that it did not include detail on why sites were not selected. The Member said that he felt the report was skewed toward building the new school on the Woodhatch Site. In regard to a noise assessment, the Member said that there was no detail in the report regarding the number of decibels other than it cannot exceed 35 decibels. According to his own research from a Nottingham County Council noise assessment, the Member said that a playground of 200 children would make 66.5 decibels and asked why detail on a noise assessment had not been included within the report. Furthermore, the Member said that the report stated that the playground would only be used for school purposes, however later in the report it stated that the playground would be available after 5pm. This could mean that local people could be impacted by noise up to 8pm.
11. In regard to Cllr Mallet's comment regarding Condition 9, the Principal Transport Development Planning Officer said that the drop off zone was limited as the Safer Routes to School Team prefer not to have drop off zones within schools as they generally lead to more problems and can cause parents to queue on the public highway.
12. In regard to Cllr Lewis' comment regarding noise, the Planning Development Team Leader said that comments on this were included on pages 92 and 93 of the report. In regard to Cllr Lewanski's comment on the same issue, the officer said that there would be a degree of noise from playground use, and that a noise assessment was submitted by the applicant but it was not currently clear what mitigation could be put in place to reduce the impact on the local homes. A condition had been suggested which, in consultation with The Belvederes, looked towards providing additional screening and landscaping along the southern boundary of the site to a degree where there would be no loss of privacy and reduce the impact of noise. The officer further said that having a school next to a development was not necessarily unacceptable and that the degree of harm was considered appropriate if limited within school time usage. The officer highlighted that the Member may have confused the condition which referred to the use of the school building after school hours as appropriate, with the condition relating to the external play area. There would be conditions restricting the use of the playing pitches.
13. In regard to issues related to the catchment area, the Planning Development Team Leader said that she was guided by the

Education Authority, but as a planning officer, would not challenge the point as she would not consider the distance change to be inappropriate when considering the future, and that she believed that the site was an appropriate site for the school.

14. In regard to comments made regarding the building of the new school close to the existing site on the 1950's block, the Planning Development Team Leader said that the update sheet included reference to a meeting between the DfE and Reigate and Banstead Council where the replacement of the building was considered but the officers of the borough council said no and that a three storey building could not be accommodated on the site. The officer further said that she was not convinced that the existing site could accommodate a new school that met the requirements of the Education Authority.
15. In regard to the noise assessment, the Planning Development Team Leader said that noise readings had not been taken from inside of the site of The Belvederes which was the reason why a condition had been included. Cllr Lewanski said that the figures should be available before the committee make a decision. The officer said that she did not consider the impact caused by noise during playtimes during school hours to be a significant issue however it was a residential amenity issue that could be mitigated by conditions.
16. In regard to screening, the Planning Development Team Leader said that they had not suggested that screening would cover the whole building, nor were they suggesting a need to do that, as there is an expectation of visual impact in most planning applications, but that there was the potential for conditions to mitigate, allowing an acceptable balance.
17. In regard to air quality, Cllr Lewanski referenced paragraph 220 of the report, which stated that proposal was not giving rise to completely new vehicle trip generation, and that the operational traffic impacts on the proposed development on local air quality were not significant, however within bullet point 2 of paragraph 18, it stated that 29.8% of pupils currently travelled to school by car and that it would increase to 52.7%. The Member said that this was therefore new trip generation. The Planning Development Team Leader said that she did not disagree with the conclusion however air quality was considered within the building and the adjacent sites, so although increased car movements was a material consideration, it was not a significant factor in the application. Cllr Lewanski did not agree with the officer's conclusion. Cllr Rivers added that she also did not agree as children would be walking on the pavement while breathing the pollution.
18. Cllr Boparai said that the transport assessment was flawed as was the opposite of what the council was aiming for, putting more children at risk, and was unacceptable. In regard to the new building, the Member added that a building needed 'soul', and further asked whether a cost assessment had been undertaken to consider upgrading the current school. Furthermore he said that, as a parent of a primary school child, he felt the proposal was unrealistic.
19. Cllr Lewanski queried an inaccuracy within the report on page 157. The officer highlighted that the paragraph had been deleted within the update sheet.

20. In regard to the pick-up / drop-off road, Cllr Powell asked what would happen if the barrier did not rise to a car as it was not on the agreed list. The Member added that there would be no way to turn around which would cause traffic to build up. The Principal Transport Development Planning Officer said that it would be something for the school to monitor and manage, and that she would hope that a member of staff would be present at the gate to manage issues. The officer added that this was one of the issues of drop off / pick up roads within a school site.
21. Cllr Harmer said in his view the main issues were the protection of residential amenity and requested information on where the new exit would be. Members highlighted the area within a map.

The Chairman adjourned the meeting for 15 minutes

22. The Chairman stated that he knew the area well, and that there was no ideal site for the school, and that the committee had received comments from the Education Authority, advisors, the headteacher, which said that a new, upgraded school was needed. There were obvious issues around access and transport, and that he agreed with Cllr Mallet regarding amending Condition 9, and that changes to the public transport offer were required, as no bus stopped outside the site. The Chairman further commented that a new school was never popular.
23. The Planning Group Manager stated that officers understood the issue related to parents having to travel further to reach the school, but that the alternative site assessment was carried out and the proposed site was the only site available. In regard to the transport assessment, the officer further said that the Highway Authority was satisfied that the Transport Assessment was robust and was based on the current homes of pupils and was therefore a fair reflection on what the likely impact would be.
24. The Planning Group Manager confirmed that the application had been considered by officers completely independently of the education department.
25. Cllr Powell asked if the education department had considered the catchment area issue for the proposed site and believed that the new site could serve the same catchment area as the existing infant school. The Planning Group Manager said that she was unaware of the process undertaken to justify the school, but as the applicant was promoting the school, she assumed that they were happy with it. The Chairman added that, as the Headteacher had spoken in favour of the proposal, it should be assumed that he was aware of the catchment area issue.
26. The Chairman said that he agreed with Cllr Mallet's point regarding amending Condition 9 of the report, and that he felt the public transport issue, which related to there being no buses which stop outside the new site, should be addressed within an informative.
27. The Senior Highways and Planning Solicitor stated that the application should be considered as submitted and on its own merits, and that there could be an issue if the proposed amendment to the condition was agreed but the school did not want to change it. Cllr Mallet responded that he felt that the committee could amend the conditions of the application that was being decided.

28. The Planning Development Team Leader said that she felt confident that the applicant would provide a considered response, however she felt uncomfortable with saying that the 26 drop off spaces could be used to accommodate the population of the school at peak times, and that allowing this could promote the use of a car.
29. Cllr Mallet proposed an amendment to Condition 9, which was to remove the bullet point which stated 'Details of the criteria to be used for school pupils to be eligible for the use the proposed drop off and pick up spaces.', and to include an informative related to improving the public transport available to the site, The Chairman also added that he wished to agree the conditions with the Vice-Chairman outside the meeting.
30. The Planning Group Manager said that, as this was a Regulation 3 application, there was no right of appeal, and therefore if the applicant was not in agreement with the amended conditions, then the application would need to return to the committee for consideration.
31. The Chairman moved Cllr Mallet's proposal, as outlined in paragraph 29 of these minutes, which received five votes for, zero against, and 5 abstentions. Therefore, it was carried.
32. The Chairman moved the recommendation for approval with the amended condition, which received four votes for, five against, and 1 abstention. Therefore, it was lost.
33. The Senior Highways and Planning Solicitor advised that the committee conduct a further vote to confirm the intention to refuse and the reasons for such a refusal. The Senior Highways and Planning Solicitor further confirmed that, if Members were minded to come to the view to refuse, then, as per the usual procedure, the application would be referred back to the applicant with the grounds for refusal which would apply were the application to be determined.

The Chairman adjourned the meeting for 10 minutes

34. Cllr Lewanski moved a motion that the committee was minded to refuse, seconded by Cllr Powell, with the reasons for refusal being:
 - a. the basis of the alternative site assessment is contrary to Surrey County Council Local Transport Plan 4 as it looked only at two miles from the existing school and did not give priority to active travel.
 - b. the scale and design of the extension poorly relates to the parkland and surrounding buildings, which, combined with the sheer mass and materials of the building, together with a new fencing to Cockshot Road, would harm the character and appearance of the area.
 - c. the proposal would give rise to a harmful increase in traffic and congestion, together with highway safety concerns associated with the movement of children along narrow footways and across roads, including the internal access road, as well as inconsiderate parking in neighbouring streets, in particular

Hornbeam Road, where it was proposed to have pedestrian access.

- d. That there were severe impacts upon the amenities of neighbouring properties from adverse noise, light pollution or overbearing impacts, specifically in regard to The Belvederes.
35. The Planning Development Team Leader asked for clarification on reason for refusal A. Cllr Powell explained that concerns were related to the movement of the site which caused the catchment area to overlap with other schools and left an area of the town with no school. Furthermore, they felt that Surrey County Council Local Transport Plan 4 required 15 or 20 minute communities and that it was important for communities to have access to a school that increased active travel and reduced the need to drive. Therefore the site assessment conducted was contrary to Surrey County Council Local Transport Plan 4.
36. Cllr Mallet said that the committee was a planning committee and not an education committee and therefore catchment areas should not be a consideration of the committee.
37. Cllr Lewanski moved a motion that the committee was minded to refuse, seconded by Cllr Powell, with the reasons of refusal being:
- a. the basis of the alternative site assessment is contrary to Surrey County Council Local Transport Plan 4 as it looked only at two miles from the existing school and did not give priority to active travel.
 - b. the scale and design of the extension poorly relates to the Parkland and surrounding buildings, which, combined with the sheer mass and materials of the building, together with a new fencing to Cockshot Road, would harm the character and appearance of the area.
 - c. the proposal would give rise to a harmful increase in traffic and congestion, together with highways safety concerns associated with the movement of children along narrow footways and across roads, including the internal access road, as well as inconsiderate parking in neighbouring streets, in particular Hornbeam Road, where it was proposed to have pedestrian access.
 - d. That there were severe impacts upon the amenities of neighbouring properties from adverse noise, light pollution or overbearing impacts, specifically in regard to The Belvederes.
38. The Chairman asked for a show of hands on the proposal and then requested that another vote be taken as the vote was split five for and five against. A final vote was taken, and the motion received five votes for, four against and one abstention, therefore the motion to be minded to refuse was carried.
39. The Senior Highways and Planning Solicitor explained that the application would be referred back to the applicant with the grounds for refusal which would apply were the application to be determined. It was then open to the applicant to return the

application to committee for determination with revisions or without revisions, or to withdraw the application.

Actions / Further information to be provided:

None.

Resolved:

The Planning and Regulatory Committee was minded to refuse the application and therefore, in accordance with the Constitution of the County Council, the application was referred back to the applicant for the following reasons:

- a. the basis of the alternative site assessment is contrary to Surrey County Council Local Transport Plan 4 as it looked only at two miles from the existing school and did not give priority to active travel.
- b. the scale and design of the extension poorly relates to the Parkland and surrounding buildings, which, combined with the sheer mass and materials of the building, together with a new fencing to Cockshot Road, would harm the character and appearance of the area.
- c. the proposal would give rise to a harmful increase in traffic and congestion, together with highways safety concerns associated with the movement of children along narrow footways and across roads, including the internal access road, as well as inconsiderate parking in neighbouring streets, in particular Hornbeam Road, where it was proposed to have pedestrian access.
- d. That there were severe impacts upon the amenities of neighbouring properties from adverse noise, light pollution or overbearing impacts, specifically in regard to The Belvederes.

16/23 COMMONS ACT 2006 SCHEDULE 2: APPLICATION TO AMEND THE REGISTER OF COMMON LAND AT RANGERS COTTAGE, PEASLAKE [Item 8]

Officers:

Catherine Valiant, Countryside Access Officer – Commons
Judith Shephard, Senior Lawyer

Speakers:

None.

Key points raised during the discussion:

1. The Senior Lawyer stated that, following the publication of the agenda, on Saturday, 18 February, a request was received from the applicant to withdraw the application as the applicant considered that they had not had the opportunity to challenge the recommendation and considered the process unfair.
2. The Senior Lawyer further stated that, current government guidance to registration authorities on requests to withdraw applications was that applicants did not have an automatic right to withdraw applications if an applicant asked to do so, and that it must be decided whether or not it was reasonable. Further to this, case law had shown that a registration authority should be guided by the general principle of being fair to those whose interests may be affected by a decision. The request to withdraw the application was considered by officers and officers responded to the applicant on 20 February 2023 explaining that permitting the withdrawal of an application was a matter for the registration authorities' discretion. In this case, officers considered that the discretion could not be exercised to permit the withdrawal of the application, as the Council must balance the interests of all parties.
3. The Senior Lawyer explained that other parties had made representations on the application. The Council had also expended resources including obtaining counsels' advice on the application, and that there would be a reasonable expectation that the application should now proceed to determination by the committee. Further correspondence had been received from the applicant the morning of the committee stating that they did not believe that the committee had the power to refuse their request to withdraw the application and, to do so, would leave the decision open to challenge. The applicant considered that the way the application had been dealt with was unfair and that they should have had an opportunity to challenge counsel's advice and the recommendation.
4. In regard to the process on an application of this type, the Senior Lawyer said that it was for the applicant to ensure that their application was accompanied by evidence showing that it met the relevant statutory criteria. The applicant had been given opportunities on several occasions to submit additional evidence to support their application.
5. Officers had Instructor counsel, an expert in this field, to provide advice to the registration authority on the merits of the application. Counsel visited the site, and the applicants were able to provide

Counsel with further information. Counsel's advice was to inform the registration authority and the registration authority was not obliged to share this advice. The appropriate course of action was then for the application to be referred to the committee for the termination. It was not considered that it met the threshold for an inquiry. It was further noted that the applicant had the opportunity to make representations at the committee which was not taken. It was therefore for the committee to consider the applicant's request to withdraw the application.

6. Members noted that, if the application was withdrawn, the applicant would not have a final determination on the matter, and in the light of the recommendation, it would allow the applicant to further consider the evidence required. Further to this, objectors would not have a final determination. If the application was to be withdrawn, it was noted the land would retain its status as common land.
7. The Chairman stated that his view was that, if it was a planning application, then the applicant would have the legal right to withdraw.
8. The committee agreed unanimously to withdraw the application.

Actions / further information to be provided:

None.

Resolved:

The Application was withdrawn.

17/23 DATE OF NEXT MEETING [Item 9]

The date of the next meeting was noted.

Meeting closed at 1.25 pm

Chairman

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The application before you is an application made by SCC for a replacement school for Reigate Priory Junior School.

Under Regulation 3 of the T and C Planning General Regulations 1992, planning applications by interested planning authorities, acting by themselves or jointly with other parties, on land of that authority, fall to be determined by the authority itself.

I would like to stress particularly for the members of the public here today that the SCC Planning Officers who assess planning applications both from external bodies and from surrey county council itself are a completely separate section of surrey county council and carry out their regulatory function strictly in accordance with planning legislation and professional codes of practice and any planning application received whether from the cc itself or other applicants is dealt with in the same way.

I am not proposing to go through all the detail of the application as this is set out in the report papers and I am sure members of this committee has considered the issues of this case.

As the members of this planning committee are fully aware in considering planning applications decisions must be taken in accordance with the development plan *unless there are material considerations that indicate otherwise*

In this case the proposal is assessed against policies contained within Reigate and Banstead's Development Plan document as well as against National Planning advice contained within the National Planning Policy Framework.

Reigate and Banstead Borough council has raised objections to this proposal on several grounds and officers have fully considered these. I would like to remind committee of the conclusion contained within the borough council's officer report on this case which states:

The proposed development sees a replacement junior school being built within designated urban open space, within a historic garden and affecting the setting of various heritage assets and the character of the wider area.

Concerns are raised with regards these impacts, especially given that it is considered that the existing school site could be adapted and extended to enable its continued use.

In light of the above identified harm the decision maker must consider the planning balance.

This must consider the benefits of providing a purpose-built, modern education facility to DfE standards and associated energy efficiencies and other environmental credentials. It would also see the construction of modern play facilities and all weather pitches.

Whilst such benefits are to be given considerable weight, they ought to be offset by the fact that the existing building (being Grade I Listed) will continue to have high energy demands in any future use and the benefits in having an occupant compatible with its form and layout.

Although there is benefit in achieving modern standards of classroom size and layout, meeting this ought not be a prerequisite in a converted building which provides its own benefits in terms of its unique learning environment.

After all, many historic buildings are used for prestigious learning environments. There are benefits in overcoming conflicting rights of way and issues associated with the co-location

with the museum but, similar to existing deficiencies relating to the layout and operation of the school, there are considered to be alternative options for adaptations and extensions, including incorporation of lifts for disabled access, which see such benefits reduced.

Chairman I would advise the committee that in considering this application in its capacity as a consultee Reigate and Banstead Council have given *considerable weight* to the benefits that would arise from this proposal but they appear to balance this against the need to maintain the existing Grade 1 listed building where the school currently resides and which is in the ownership of Reigate and Banstead Borough Council. Officers would advise the committee that it does not share the view of the District Council in this regard and although it is agreed that the availability of the existing site IS a material consideration officers consider that the future condition of Reigate Priory Grade 1 listed building is not a material factor which should be taken into account in the consideration of this planning application.

The scope of what can constitute a *material consideration* is very wide, however in general planning is concerned with land use in the public interest, so that the protection of purely private interests such as the impact of a development on the value of a neighbouring property or loss of private rights to light are not material considerations.

Officers would remind the committee that as with all planning applications particularly those of this size and nature there are many and varied material considerations which must be taken into account but the weight given to each of these considerations is for you, the decision maker, to decide.

In advising the planning committee on this application it is my duty to remind members that they must only take into account material planning considerations, which can include those views expressed in representations where they relate to relevant planning matters.

Officers acknowledge that many of the representations received on this planning applications do address themselves to material considerations however it for the planning committee as decision maker – as it is for us as planning officers advising the committee to decide the weight they wish to give to each material consideration **IN THE OVERALL PLANNING BALANCE.**

Chairman it is also relevant to advise that no development of land occurs without some degree of impact or harm, but it is the degree of harm that occurs, whether it can be mitigated and how much weight is given to the resulting impact which needs to be weighed in the planning balance. Development plan policies and government guidance generally both direct themselves to seeking to prevent *significant harm* and as such proposals giving rise to significant harm generally will not be acceptable.

Chairman in this case we are considering an application for the proposed use of land at Woodhatch place for a new school. The planning assessment must be directed to the material considerations that apply in this case and Chairman before you you have a detailed report which outlines what these are, and these will be summarised in my presentation later.

As a starting point for the assessment of this proposal though is the overarching aim of national planning guidance in respect of schools:

National planning policy guidance states that local planning authorities *should give great weight to the need to create, expand or alter schools through the preparation of plans and*

decisions on applications; and work with school promoters, delivery partners and statutory bodies to identify and resolve key planning issues before applications are submitted.

Officers would therefore advise the committee that it is appropriate in this case to give great weight to the material consideration that is the need for this new school.

On this matter officers acknowledge that many of the representations received on this proposal consider that there is no *need argument* in this case as the site of the existing school is suitable for improvement or expansion. As stated previously Officers acknowledge that the existing site is a material consideration in this case. However the application is proposed by SCC as Education Authority, and is supported by the school itself and the Department of Education who officers consider are all best placed to consider education provision.

Officers consider that the applicant has put forward a robust case on the urgent need to find another site for Reigate Priory Junior School which can enable the provision of a school fit for the future given the unsuitability of the existing site, due to significant constraints.

Officers consider there is a demonstrated need for this new school considers that great weight should be given to that need in this case, and this will need to be considered in the planning balance when assessing the proposal put forward at Woodhatch Place.

Turning back to the other *material considerations* relevant to the proposed development at Woodhatch Place these are addressed in detail in the report with the main ones relating to

IMPACT ON STATUTORY AND NON-STATUTORY HERITAGE ASSETS

TREES, ECOLOGY AND BIODIVERSITY

DESIGN AND VISUAL APPEARANCE AND URBAN OPEN SPACE CONSIDERATIONS

IMPACT ON RESIDENTIAL AMENITY

DRAINAGE AND FLOOD RISK CONSIDERATIONS

HIGHWAYS CONSIDERATIONS

On each of these matters officers have assessed the proposal against development plan policy and identified any harm or impact arising from the proposal and the degree of harm or impact caused. Officers have then considered how the applicant has mitigated or compensated for any harm and in certain instances have recommended conditions to minimise that harm. Officers have then considered any resulting harm in each case within the planning balance.

On those issues officers conclude as follows:

Impact on statutory and non-statutory heritage assets

There is no harm to any heritage assets but some harm to non listed assets but this harm is *less than significant* and can be mitigated to some degree with planning conditions requiring

additional landscaping. Officers do not consider great weight should be attributed to this in the planning balance.

Trees, ecology and biodiversity

There is a degree of harm arising due to the loss of part of the site itself and existing trees but this is mitigated to a significant degree with the most significant trees being retained, measures to improve the ecological value of land to the north of the Woodhatch Site and also other planning conditions requiring replacement landscaping and planting and measures to minimise the impact on ecology during development. Officers do not consider great weight should be attributed to this in the planning balance.

Design and visual appearance and urban open space considerations

A new school of the size proposed undoubtedly will have an impact on the visual amenity of the area but officers do not consider that any significant harm on the wider area will occur. The greatest impact will be felt within Woodhatch Place itself, and from the residential development to the south (which I will address later) but officers do not consider this represents significant harm. The site lies within a developed urban area and in that context officers do not consider it would appear unduly out of place. In respect of Urban Open Land officers have carefully considered this and the relevant development plan policy and also note the comments of Reigate and Banstead Borough Council who consider this proposal is a departure to policy on this point.

Officers would advise the members of the committee that the policy recognises, however, that in some exceptional circumstances development on urban open space might be acceptable, for example where this land is no longer required or the proposal would provide community benefit which would outweigh the loss of the open space. The Development Plan also states in regard to that policy *It is proposed that the Council takes a proactive, positive and collaborative approach to meeting the requirements of local schools: this reflects the importance which national policy places on the potential need to expand and alter schools.* Officers therefore advise the committee that it is considered that this proposal can be considered favourably having regard to this policy and the detailed arguments in support of that view are set out in the report.

Impact on residential amenity

Officers have given careful and detailed consideration to the impact of the proposals on adjacent residential dwellings and the report sets this out in detail. It is acknowledged that the proposal will have an impact on the occupiers of those dwellings in that a site currently undeveloped would, if permission is granted be occupied by a school. However it is considered that subject to appropriate conditions relating to hours of use the proposal will not give rise to significant harm to the occupiers of those dwellings. Officers have also considered the harm to nearby residential dwellings arising from the increased traffic which will occur particularly around peak school drop off and pick up times. It is accepted that this does give rise to a degree of disturbance and inconvenience within the public highways around those roads but this is only for short times throughout weekdays and as such is not considered to be a significant impact.

Highways considerations

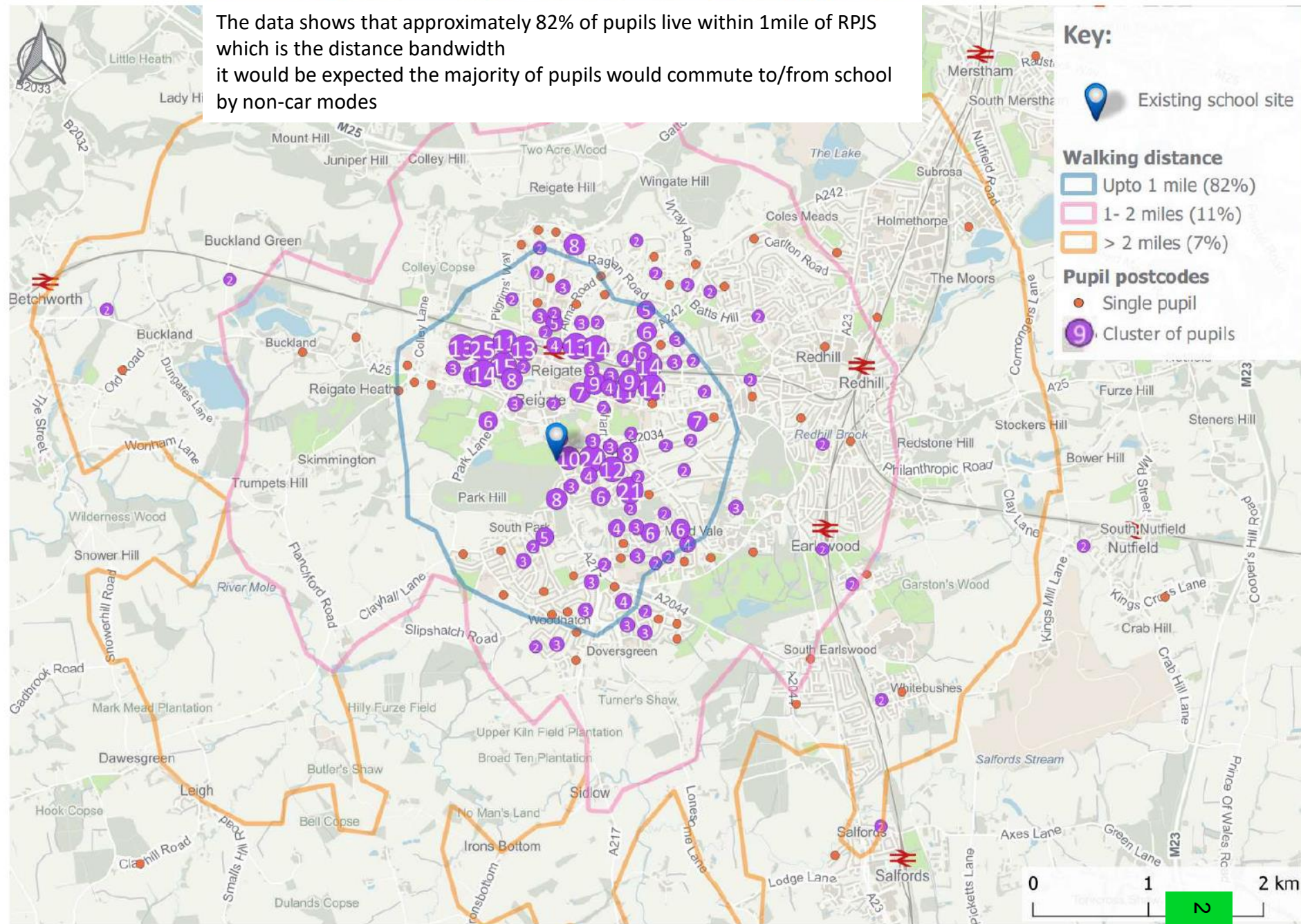
The proposal has been considered by the County Highways Authority and a number of measures on the public highway have been suggested and agreed with the applicants to improve local highways conditions. These are set out in the report in detail. Several planning conditions are recommended on highways grounds and subject to these the proposal is not considered to give rise to harm to highway safety nor have a significant impact on traffic congestion. Highways officers are aware that there is already existing traffic congestion in the area of the application site particularly during peak school arrival and drop off times but is satisfied that the additional movements arising from the proposal can be safely accommodated within the highway network.

So in conclusion officers have had due regard to all of the material considerations in this case and consider that the significant benefits arising from this proposal providing for a long term need for a school outweighs the less than significant harm arising from the development of the site, harm which are mitigated to a significant degree by amendments secured on the scheme and controlled by planning conditions.

Officers therefore recommend that the application is permitted.

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Figure 5-1: Current Pupil Home Postcode Locations in Proximity to RPJS (Existing Town Centre Site)



PREDICTED SCHOOL CATCHMENT AND TRAVEL DEMAND

PREDICTED CHANGE TO MODE SHARE

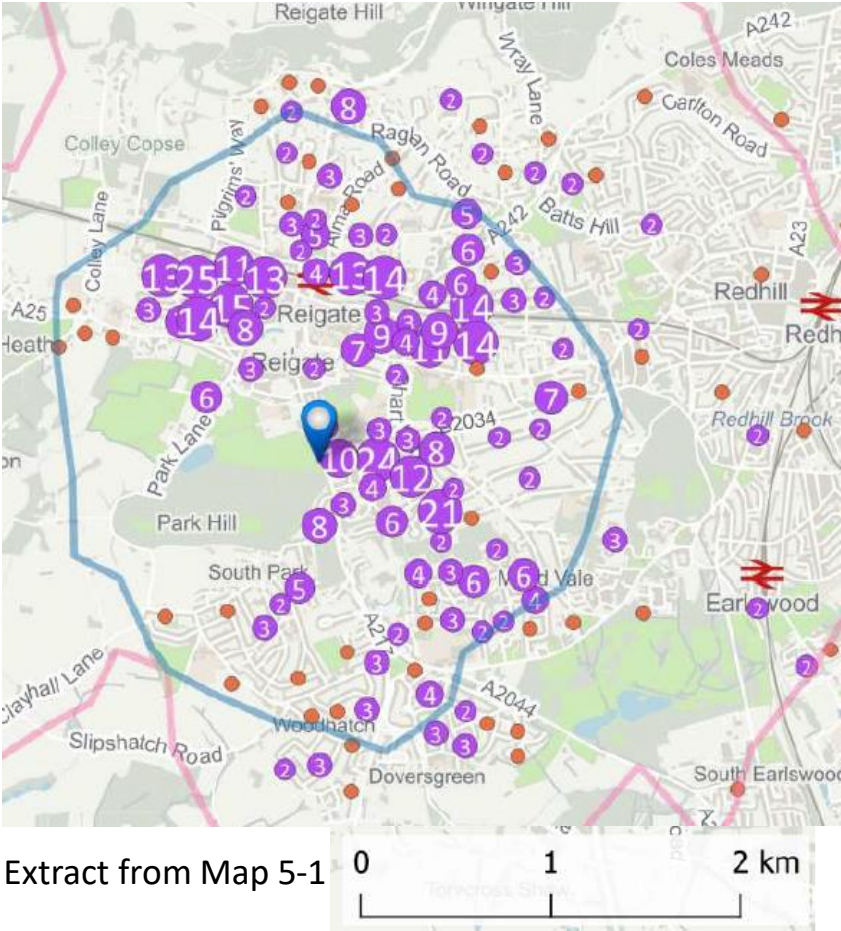
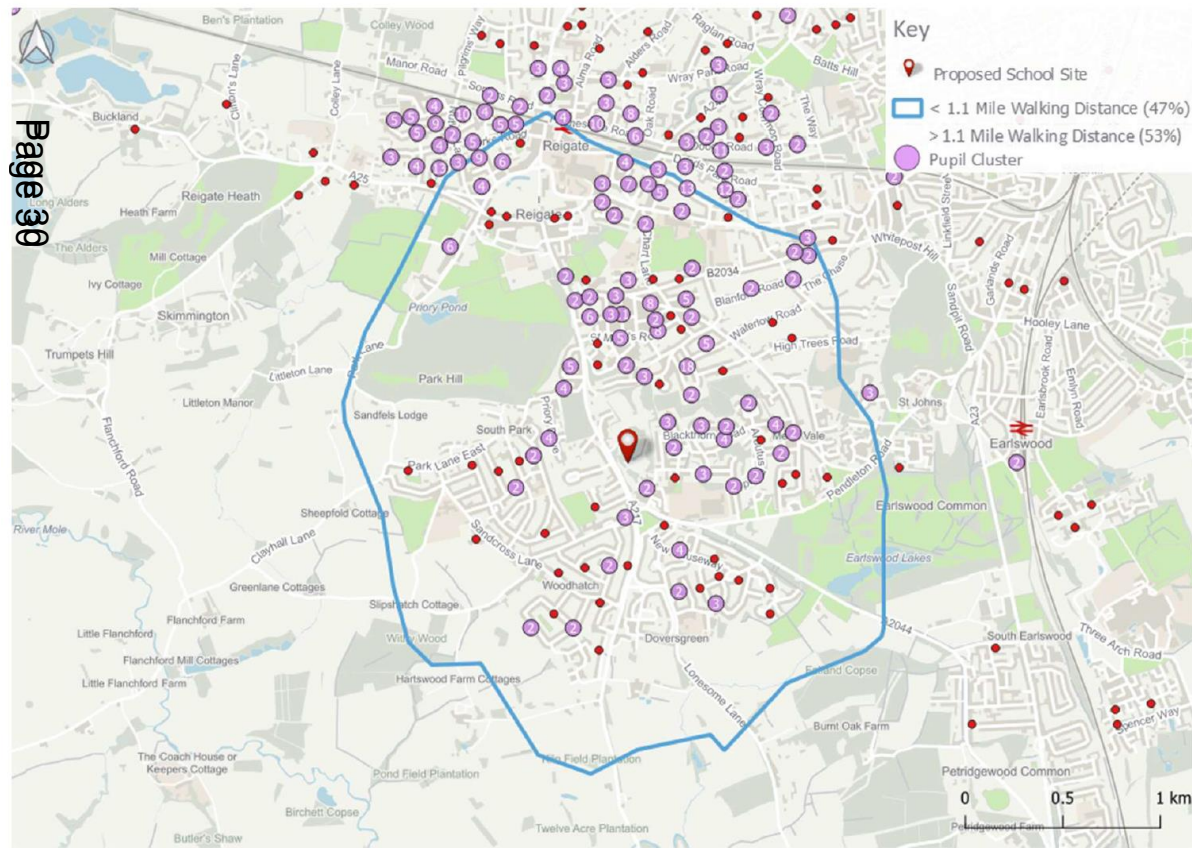
5.4.5 Analysis has been undertaken to understand the change in postcode catchment relative to the new school location.

5.4.6 This is used to determine where existing pupils are predicted to arrive from and what will be the most likely routes to the new proposed school site. The analysis identifies, as would be expected, a shift south of the school's central catchment, though generally well within the school's current catchment.

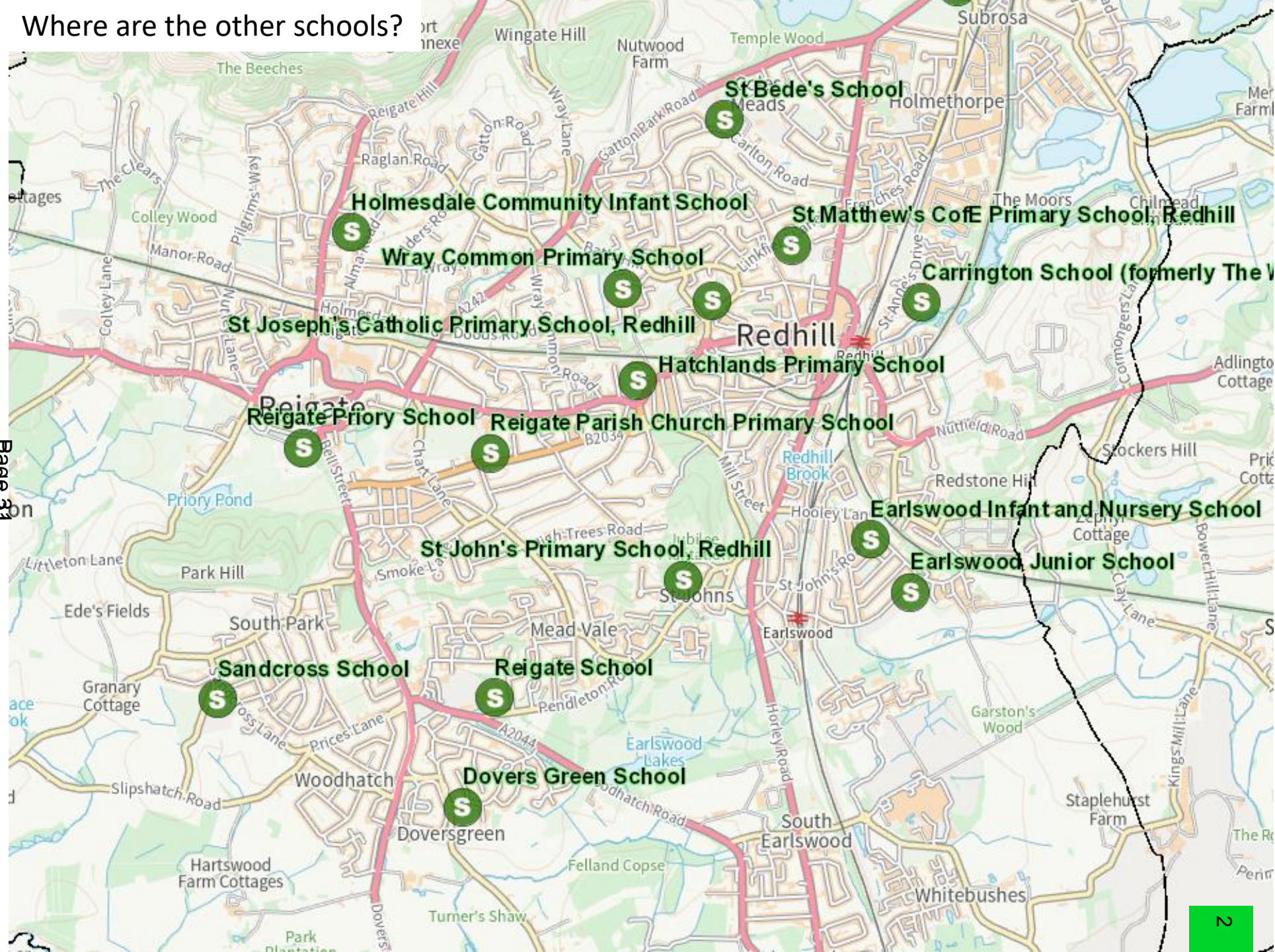
5.4.7 It is anticipated that over time, in addition to the fact the HCIS PAN is reducing by 1 form of entry, that the catchment would move further south. With the proposed relocated site, many families that opt to travel by car will now be able to travel by non-car modes. On the basis RPJS is a fully operational junior school, and many families on the edge of the 1mile catchment of the relocated school location already commute by non-car modes, a review has been conducted of pupils within a 1.1mile catchment. This covers part of Reigate town centre, up to approximately the railway station.

5.4.8 Figure 5-2 shows that upon relocation, 47% of pupils would be located within 1.1 mile of the new site (i.e., 282 pupils are predicted to arrive/depart by active modes: walking, cycling and scooting).

Figure 5-2: Current Pupil Home Postcode Locations in Proximity to Proposed Woodhatch Place Site



Where are the other schools?



Existing Location
appears to be
off on map 5-1
of the transport
plan

