



Joseph Hood School Governing Body  
C/O Joseph Hood Primary School  
Whatley Avenue  
Raynes Park  
London  
SW20 9NS

2<sup>nd</sup> January 2018

Dear Merton Council

We are writing to you to provide the response of Joseph Hood Primary School to the consultation on the Local Plan 2020, specifically relating to the proposal for site RP9, Merton Adult Education Centre in policy N3.4 for Raynes Park.

What was previously the Merton Adult Education Centre located at Whatley Avenue, Raynes Park SW20 9NS, is currently occupied by Harris Academy Wimbledon. This is a temporary arrangement before the permanent location is opened in September 2020 in the High Path area of South Wimbledon.

Whilst we fully support the council's plan for investment and improvement of Raynes Park, we have genuine concerns about the proposal for the use of the site after Harris has vacated the building.

Our immediate concern which is being felt under the current arrangement with Harris is the lack of road access to our school.

Until the beginning of this academic year when Harris moved into the building, we had shared road access with the Adult Education Centre and our deliveries and coaches were able to come into the car park attached to the building.

This car park is now used as a playground/outdoor space by Harris and we are unable to use it during the school day except in exceptional circumstances.

The coaches that transport children to and from our school and the large vehicles that deliver daily food and goods are therefore having to now park on the yellow zigzag lines outside the school as this is the only space big enough for them anywhere nearby and is also the only practical option in some cases for large deliveries. As a result of parking on the lines, vehicles are often being given parking fines by Merton council. The administrative, financial and logistical burdens associated with this arrangement are taking up a lot of time for school staff and are the cause of much anxiety. This is not a safe or long-term solution.

We also had available to us several parking bays, which we were able to use and offer to disabled visitors, staff and parents of disabled children. We are no longer able to offer any on-site parking and the nearest parking space to our school can be a 10 minute walk away or more. As a school that is fully accessible with ramps into playgrounds, a lift to the first floor and disabled toilets, this is a particular frustration for us.



Looking to the future, we feel that the site has huge potential for further educational use and we will be campaigning hard for the site to continue to be used for this as opposed to it being turned over to developers for residential use.

The site has recently undergone a full refurbishment for its temporary use as a secondary school and this investment could be further leveraged by a long-term strategy for educational use for the building in conjunction with the site benefiting our school both for access and wider use. Potential uses for the site could be for adult education, as it was previously or even as a dedicated Special Educational Needs facility.

We would therefore request that the council consider allowing the site to remain as an educational 'D1 Use Case' in the long term.

If the council declines to accept the proposal and changes the site allocation to be residential, we feel that this could adversely affect our school and the surrounding area especially around traffic movement, congestion and access. We are currently not coping with the situation of no longer having road access to our school or parking for disabled visitors and we also have concerns about the impacts of a new residential development in extreme proximity to our building's access points especially around safeguarding implications.

Any development proposal will therefore need to be appropriately judged against the impact on our school and local amenities. In particular, we would insist that a condition of the site being declared for residential use included a portion of land to be made available for road access to our school. Without this, the school will continue to struggle with basic logistical requirements of vehicle deliveries, coach trips and disabled access.

In summary, we hope that the council approve a long-term strategy for the site as an educational facility which is what it is designed for and now includes a full refurbishment fit for future use for high quality learning. If the site becomes open for residential development, the council must acknowledge the huge impact this could have on our school and be willing to ensure that the school's needs are paid close attention to in any proposals.

We look forward to your response and in keeping us fully abreast of developments relating to this site.

Yours sincerely

Harriet O'Connor

**Chair of Governors**

*on behalf of the Joseph Hood Primary School Governing Body*

