

Consultation: Re-locating Foxfield School to Woodchurch

This report describes the option, outlines the timetable for consultation and possible implementation and tells you how to respond to consultation.

Dear Consultee,

Following a successful bid within the national Priority Schools Building Programme the Governing body of Foxfield School had asked the Council to look at moving Foxfield to a new, purpose built facility with more outdoor space. The possibility of relocating Foxfield to a new site in the Woodchurch area and co-located with Woodchurch High School has now been discussed between the Local Authority and the Governing body of Foxfield School, and so far all are agreed that relocation would be beneficial.

Because the proposed site is more than 2 miles away from Foxfield's existing site, we are consulting more widely with parents, staff, governors and other people related to Foxfield School in order to help decide whether Foxfield should relocate to the Woodchurch area.

Your views are important to us. Please take this opportunity to have your say.

Yours sincerely,



Julia Hassall
Director of Children's Services

The Consultation

We have tried to think of questions you may have about the option to relocate Foxfield School. We are also sure you will have plenty more! Please ask your headteacher, or write to the Local Authority at the address at the end of this leaflet.

What is Foxfield School?

Foxfield School is a local authority maintained community special school for boys and girls aged 11 to 19, who have statements of special educational needs because of complex learning difficulties.

Foxfield is located on Douglas Drive in Moreton, but serves the whole of Wirral. When last inspected by Ofsted in 2012, Foxfield was found to be a good school.

Why move? What are the benefits?

At present, Foxfield occupies a former middle school (St Thomas Becket) which has had several extensions and a number of refurbishments, and whilst the school makes good use of the existing facilities many are requiring updating and are presenting restrictions in teaching and supporting pupils.

Relocating to a new site would allow a brand new purpose built special school to be built, in the centre of Wirral. It would allow the school to provide places for 140 pupils. **Please see the location maps on page 3.**

Would any building work be needed?

Yes. A new school building will be constructed. Funding for this has already been identified from central Government. The Council has agreed to provide additional funding for a new school to provide 140 places and to ensure that facilities such as hydro-therapy and swimming can be replicated in the new school. All construction would be completed before Foxfield move in to the new facility, so that there is no disruption to children and staff.

There have been no planning applications made at this stage. We are asking for your views on the proposal to relocate Foxfield to the new site.

What is the legal process?

By law, a school can't relocate more than 2 miles in a straight line from the original site without publishing a "prescribed alteration" notice. The legal process involves a consultation with stakeholders before a decision is made whether to publish the legal notice for the transfer of site.

After the legal notice is published, at both sites and in local newspapers, there is another 6 weeks for people to make comments about the proposal to relocate the school.

This means that the final decision would be made by the end of August 2013. Due to the procurement process being used by the Education Funding Agency, the anticipated date for the school to move would be January 2015.

Would admissions change?

The process for admission to Foxfield would be the same as now. The new buildings would be modern, fit for purpose, and there would be places for 140 pupils.

Travel to school arrangements would continue as specified in the Authority's information booklets for parents however, the Authority is currently consulting on its transport policy which could lead to changes to the arrangements.

Would the school have a new name or uniform?

No, not unless the Governing body decide to do so.

What about existing staff?

As a re-location project, all existing staff would transfer to the new site, unless they move to another school or retire, just as in any other school.

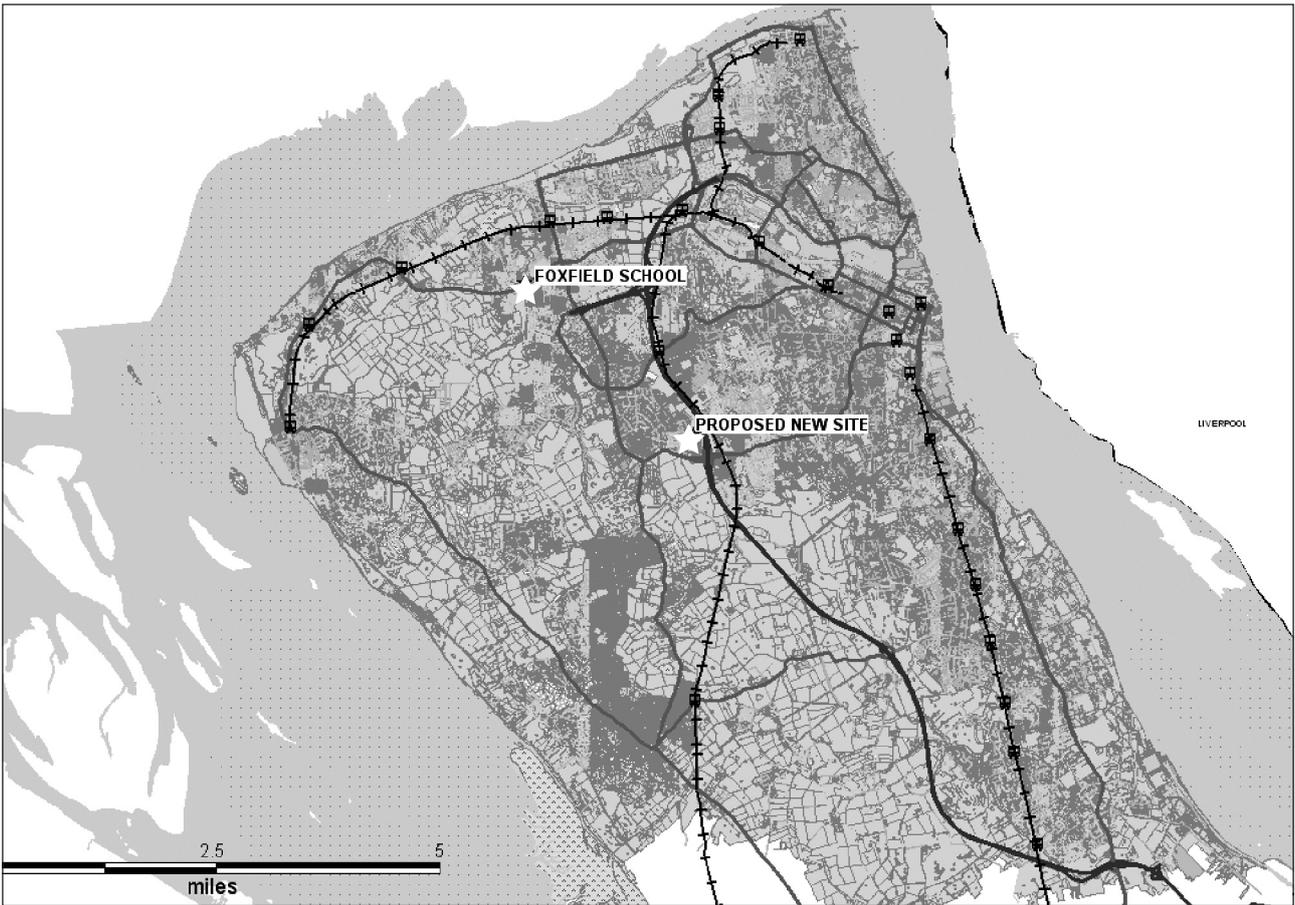
The Consultation

It is important for you to understand that a decision has not already been made. The Council's Cabinet will want to see the comments made during consultation before making any decision about what happens next.

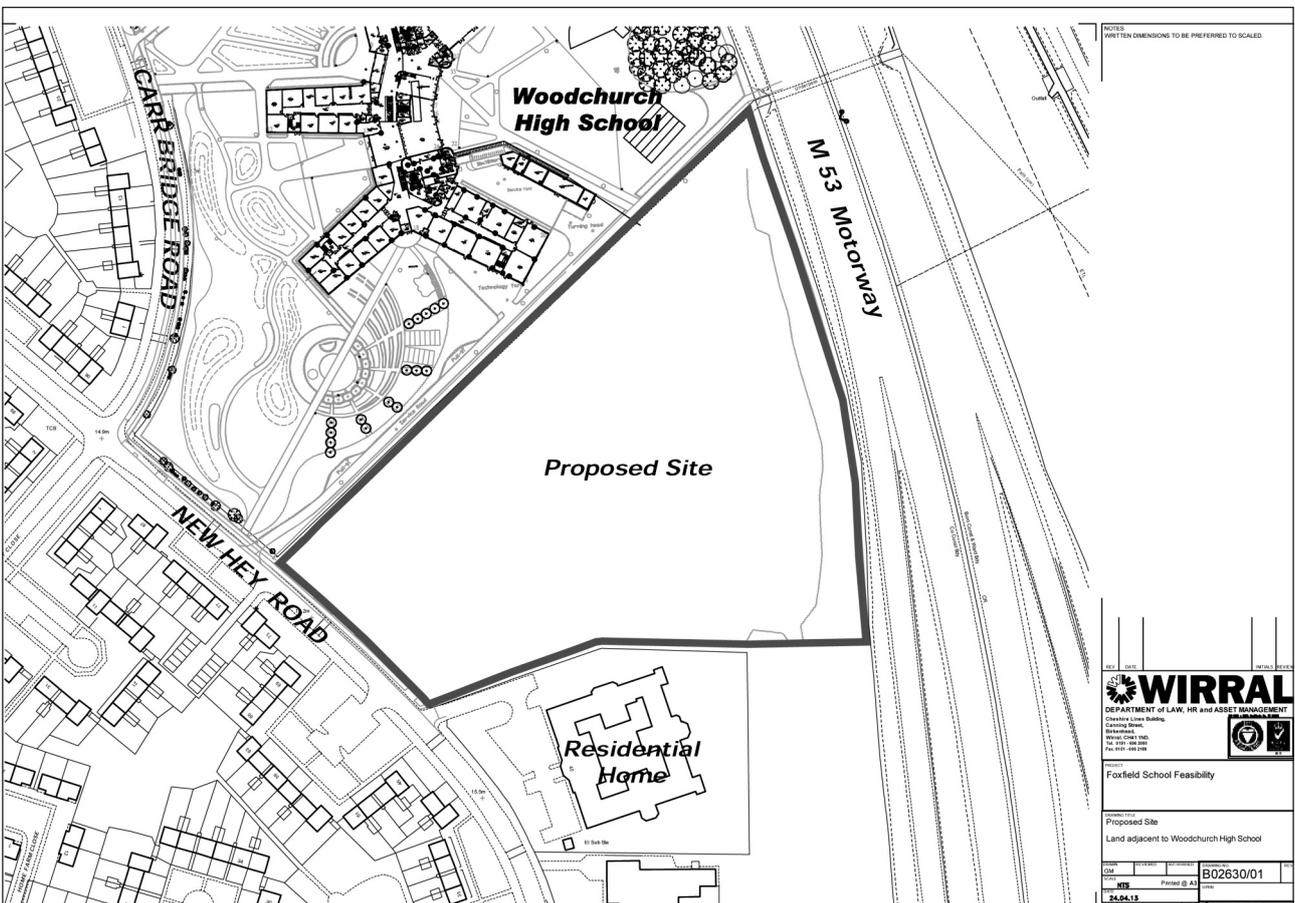
Finding out more

For more information about the options, you can find out more on the internet, where updates will also be posted. Go to: www.wirral.gov.uk/my-services/council-and-democracy/have-your-say/consultations/current-consultations/foxfield-school-relocation-proposal

If you do not have access to the Internet at home, you can go to your local library where staff will help you log on and print out the information.



Map of Wirral showing the existing and proposed sites



Proposed site at Woodchurch

The Consultation leaflet will also be available to read at the following places:

Libraries

Woodchurch
Birkenhead Central
Moreton
Wallasey Central

Community Centres

Woodchurch
Moreton

One Stop Shops

Moreton
Upton

You can also look at the documents at Wallasey Town Hall. If you want more printed copies, please contact the Asset Management Team, Hamilton Building, Conway Street, Birkenhead, CH41 4FD, **0151 666 5604**, or by email at jeannetteroyle@wirral.gov.uk.

What are the next steps?

Step 1: The first step is to distribute the consultation leaflet and ask for views and comments.

There will be a session at Foxfield School 15th May 2013 at 10am.

The meeting is an opportunity for parents, governors and other people directly related to the school to find out more information and talk to representatives of the Children and Young People's Department. A similar meeting will be held for school staff.

People associated with other local or special schools, and members of the public who want to, can write in with their views. Anyone who wants to can write and say what they think.

When the Consultation ends, all the views and opinions received in writing and at the consultation meeting will form part of a report to the Council's Cabinet. Cabinet members will read the report and decide what to do next. They may decide not to go further with this option at this stage. Members might make changes, consider other options put forward as part of the consultation, or they could decide to do more consultation.

Step 2: If Council's Cabinet decides to go ahead with this option, the Local Authority will publish a prescribed alteration notice. This notice is followed by six weeks for formal written objections and comments to be sent to the Director of Children's Services.

Step 3: After the six week representation period ends, the proposal, with the objections and comments, is sent to the Council's decision making body, which is Council's Cabinet. Cabinet can decide to:

- Approve the proposal
- Approve the proposal with changes
- Approve the proposal subject to other factors, such as obtaining planning permission
- Reject the proposal.

If Cabinet can't agree a decision, the Schools' Adjudicator will make the final decision. The Adjudicator is independent, and is appointed by the Government to make decisions on school proposals.

Step 4: If the proposal is approved, either by Cabinet or by the School's Adjudicator, it will be put into practice.

Having your say

What do you think? Please make sure your response is received by 20th May 2013.

You can write on your own, or you can join together with other people to write a joint letter. Your comments can be sent by post, by handing them in at your school or by email. If you find it helpful you can complete and return the feedback form on the next page. There is also a feedback form on the Council website:

www.wirral.gov.uk/my-services/council-and-democracy/have-your-say/consultations/current-consultations/foxfield-school-relocation-proposal

The postal address for return of feedback forms or written comments is:

Foxfield Consultation, Director of Children's Services, Hamilton Building, Conway Street, Birkenhead CH41 1FD

Or by email to: jeannetteroyle@wirral.gov.uk

Please note: To make sure the Consultation is fully open and transparent, all the responses to this consultation will be made available for inspection.

Foxfield Consultation Feedback Form

Please let us know the main relationships you have with the school by putting a tick in the appropriate box or boxes. You might be a parent and a member of staff, for example.

School	Parent	Member of staff	Governor	Other person
Foxfield School				
Other (please state)				

Do you agree with the proposal to relocate Foxfield School to a new building in Woodchurch? *Tick one box only.*

Yes **No**

Comments:

Please give your reasons or comments in the box below. You can write more on the back of the form, or on another sheet if you need to.

Please tell us your name and address, and email address if you have one.

We will not use your personal information for anything other than this consultation.

Name: _____

Address: _____

Postcode: _____ **email:** _____

Please note: In order to ensure that this process is fully open and transparent, other people will be able to read all the responses to this consultation.

Address:

Foxfield Consultation, Director of Children's Services, Hamilton Building, Conway Street, Birkenhead CH41 4FD

Email:

jeannetteroyle@wirral.gov.uk

Make sure your response is received by: **20th May 2013**