

Fenland Secondary Review Phase 2 Consultation Outcomes

October 2016

Background

A second phase consultation was undertaken on the Fenland Secondary Review in the autumn term during the period 6th September 2016 to 31st October 2016.

The consultation paper was distributed to key stakeholders including but not limited to; Local Councillors, Neighbouring Local Education Authorities, District and Parish Councils, Secondary Schools, Primary Schools and Academy Trusts.

It was also placed on the Councils external website and gained periodic media coverage in the local paper and via twitter feed.

Smart Survey, an online survey software and questionnaire tool was used to collate feedback from respondents.

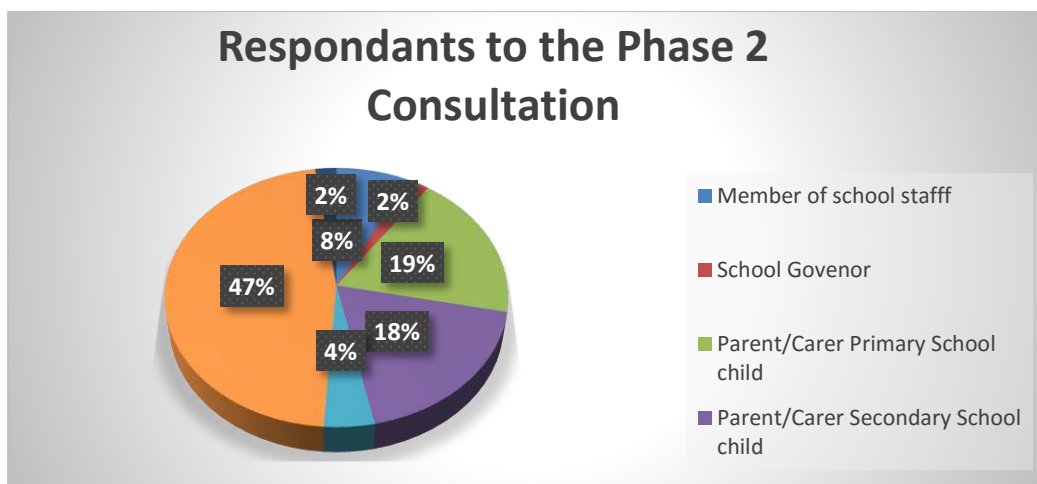
Findings

1. The Smart Survey recorded a total of 107 respondents, of these 83 fully completed the consultation and 24 partially completed the consultation.

The survey showed that all seven key stakeholder groups, (Local Councillors, Neighbouring Local Education Authorities, District and Parish Councils, Secondary Schools, Primary Schools and Academy Trusts), participated in the consultation.

The largest response group (43) were individual members of the local community. The second largest response, 17 from each, was received from parents and carers of primary and secondary school aged children. This demonstrates that members of the local community engaged with the consultation.

Table 1: Role that best describes participant



2. Response to Expansion Options

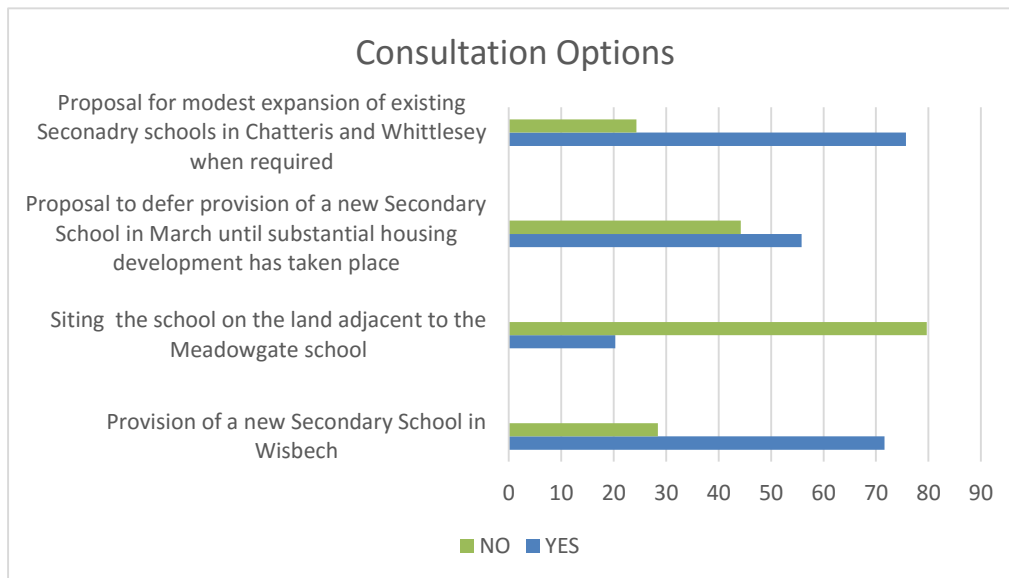
2:1 The proposal to provide a new Secondary School in Wisbech received 56 (71.6%) in favour and 23 (28.4%) in opposition.

2:2 In relation to the siting of the school on the land adjacent to the Meadowgate School 63 (79.7%) opposed the proposal and 16 (20.3%) endorsed the proposal.

2:3 Deferral of the proposal to provide a new Secondary School in March until substantial housing development has taken place was endorsed by 43 (55.8%) responses in favour and opposed by 34 (44.2%) respondents.

2:4 The proposal to provide a modest expansion to existing secondary school provision in Chatteris and Whittlesey when required received 56 (75.7%) respondents in agreement and 18 (24.3%) in opposition.

Table 2: Response to Expansion Options



2 General comments made within the smart survey are summarised below:

Education

- Parental concern about the lack of school choice and quality of existing provision. Different type of school needed including suggestions of a grammar school
- Low aspirations in Wisbech in particular
- Location of the school too close to existing Secondary Provision (TCA) and College of West Anglia if the preferred site is chosen
- Unease about current size of schools and the lack of provision for children with high functioning ASD
- Further development and expansion on current TCA site should be considered as an option
- Support for the establishment of a Free School
- Early discussions needed about the size of Neale Wade Academy before the need for a new school is triggered

Site/Location;

Alternative sites suggested

- North of the river Waterlees/Walsoken
12 acre site for sale Broad End Road, West March
- Dowgate, land owned by council to the west of the town
Barton Road (part of County Farms Estate)

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- Viable public transport links required if site in south or east of the Town is to be accessible or suitable.
 - Favoured alternative location is a site to the west of Wisbech for children living in the north and west of Wisbech and the surrounding villages
 - Traffic congestion and impact of the CoWA site on local residents especially around the Meadowgate Lane area
 - Anxiety that Meadowgate forest area and wildlife may not be preserved
 - Garden Town - assurance that this project provides sufficient educational places and that schools are encompassed within growth plan. In terms of sites other growth areas to the west of the Town must be considered
 - Endorsement that children need a new school within their local community
 - School should be centrally located in Fenland so it could meet needs arising across the district and not just Wisbech

Other Views

- Impact of Brexit on local demography
- Concern over the level of housing development and the impact it is/will have on Wisbech as a local community

3. Detailed Written Responses

There were 45 detailed written responses received via the smart survey. These included; 24 responses from residents of the local community, 2 local Councillors, 10 parents of primary school aged children, 5 parents of secondary school parents, 1 Multi Academy Trust and 3 members of school staff. These are summarised

In addition to the smart survey significant written responses were also received.

Fenland District Council (FDC) was concerned that the consultation paper did not contain sufficient detail to allow consultees to make informed comparisons between the site options. Concern was also expressed regarding the level of detail provided to justify a September 2020 opening. A school on the CWA site did not comply with the broad concept plan for the area, therefore preference was given by FDC to a

secondary school to the West of the Town. There is a willingness on the part of FDC to not restrict its advice about sites to the current local plan but to consider wider/future development and growth linked to initiatives such as the garden town.

The Brooke Weston Trust also shared its unease at the proposal of the COWA site. The Trust put forward a different proposal to extend current provision at TCA to 10 forms of entry (FE). This would require the provision of some 6th form accommodation on the footprint of the TCA site.

More detailed CCC highways advice has been received on the site options. However, no clear preference has been expressed and, therefore, further discussions need to take place.

There is a consultation meeting with Wisbech Town Council on the evening of 21st November. The views of the Town Council will be included post meeting.