

## DEMOGRAPHIC PRESSURES ON PRIMARY SCHOOLS IN THE NORTH OF CAMBRIDGE

To: North Cambridge Area Committee

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### 1.0 PURPOSE

1.1 To outline:

- the latest position on the demographic pressures facing primary schools in the north of Cambridge City from September 2012 onwards; and
- the broad strategy for meeting this demand.

### 2.0 BACKGROUND

2.1 Cambridgeshire County Council has a statutory duty to provide a school place for every child living in its area of responsibility who is of school age and whose parents want their child educated in the state sector.

2.2 Since 2008, the County Council has faced significant pressure on primary school places in Cambridge, as a result of a rise in the birth rate. This increase in the birth rate is not only being experienced in the City, but also in other parts of the County and nationally. This demand started in the north of Cambridge and then concentrated in the south in 2010 and 2011. A series of measures were put in place to meet this demand. A map showing Cambridge City school catchment areas is attached as **Appendix 1**.

2.3 The NHS registration data on children aged 0-4, on which the planning of these measures is based, is updated twice a year. The most recent data, which was received in February 2012, includes figures for potential demand for Reception places up to September 2015. The table containing this data for the north of Cambridge is attached as **Appendix 2**. This table also includes a column showing the first round of allocations of Reception places for September 2012.

2.4 This data indicates that pressure on Reception places will continue to increase year-on-year from September 2012. The aim, therefore, will be to make an incremental increase in primary school provision to meet this demand at the appropriate time.

2.5 In January, this general issue was discussed with the headteachers of all of the schools in the north of the City and with County and City Councillors at the Cambridge In Your Patch meeting. The matter is also being discussed with individual local County Councillors, as appropriate.

- 2.6 Estimated financial provision, of £11.25m, for school accommodation to meet this increase in demand in north Cambridge is included in the Council's rolling five-year capital programme. This estimate will be firmed up, as part of the annual review process of the capital programme, as proposals are finalised and costed in detail.
- 2.7 The remainder of this report focuses on the action being taken to meet the continuing pressure for primary school places in the north of the City from September 2012 to 2015.

### **3.0 SEPTEMBER 2012**

- 3.1 From this September, the following increase in capacity in the north of Cambridge has been agreed:
- St Laurence's Roman Catholic Voluntary Aided School's annual intake, or published admission number (PAN), will increase from 35 to 45.
  - The Grove's PAN will increase from 30 to 60, making it a two form entry (2FE) primary school rather than one FE.
- 3.2 These expansions will provide an additional 40 Reception places and mean that there is a small forecast surplus of places for this September. The admissions process is currently being monitored closely, and, as can be seen from the table at Appendix 2, at the first round of allocations, there were 24 Reception places still available in the north of the City.

### **4.0 ACADEMIC YEARS 2013 – 2015**

- 4.1 For September 2013, there is a need for an additional 30 Reception places, and for 2014, a further 55 Reception places. The increase in the number of children requiring Reception places is currently forecast to drop slightly for September 2015, but the NHS data for the last year for which it is available is always subject to more fluctuation than the earlier years, because of the time lag in registering new births. This will continue to be monitored closely.
- 4.2 The demand is greatest in the Shirley catchment area. There is also significant demand in the catchment areas of Arbury, King's Hedges and St Luke's primary schools.
- 4.3 Work is continuing on the possible options for addressing this demand in the north of the City from September 2013. This work has been informed by an assessment which explored the potential for expansion of all of the existing primary school sites in the north of Cambridge and other relevant sites.
- 4.4 Exploratory discussions took place during the Spring term with the headteachers and representatives of the governing bodies of the individual primary schools in whose catchment areas the main demand is located. Brief information on the current position is included below.
- 4.5 **For 2013 : Shirley Catchment Area**
- 4.5.1 As indicated earlier, for 2013, the greatest mismatch between available

Reception places and potential demand is in the Shirley Primary School catchment area, with an overall net deficit of 30 places in the north of the City for September 2013.

- 4.5.2 There are two possible site options in the Shirley catchment area: the expansion of Shirley Primary School, in Nuffield Road, to 3FE (i.e. 90 Reception places), or bringing back into educational use the former Shirley lower school site at Green End Road, with the establishment of a new 1FE primary school and associated early years facilities. Detailed feasibility studies have been undertaken for both sites.
- 4.5.3 This matter has been discussed in outline terms with the Head and Governors of Shirley Primary School, and they do not support the expansion of Shirley Primary School to 3FE. Additionally, the site is bound by a number of ground leases which restrict further development, particularly within the required timescale.
- 4.5.4 The consultation and decision-making process for determining the solution to meeting the demand in the Shirley catchment area is currently being considered by Councillor David Harty, the County Council's Cabinet Member for Learning. This will be done in consultation with the local County Councillor. The ultimate decision will be taken by the Council's Cabinet.
- 4.5.5 If the decision were to establish a new primary school on the Green End Road site, in addition to building adaptation work, this would need to follow the government's process for establishing new schools as an Academy or a Free School. Cambridgeshire's Cabinet has agreed that, from the launch of such a process, the County Council would aim to seek promoters and assess the response within twenty weeks. The outcome would then be forwarded to the government's Secretary of State for Education for decision. No timescale has been provided by central government for this, final, part of the process.

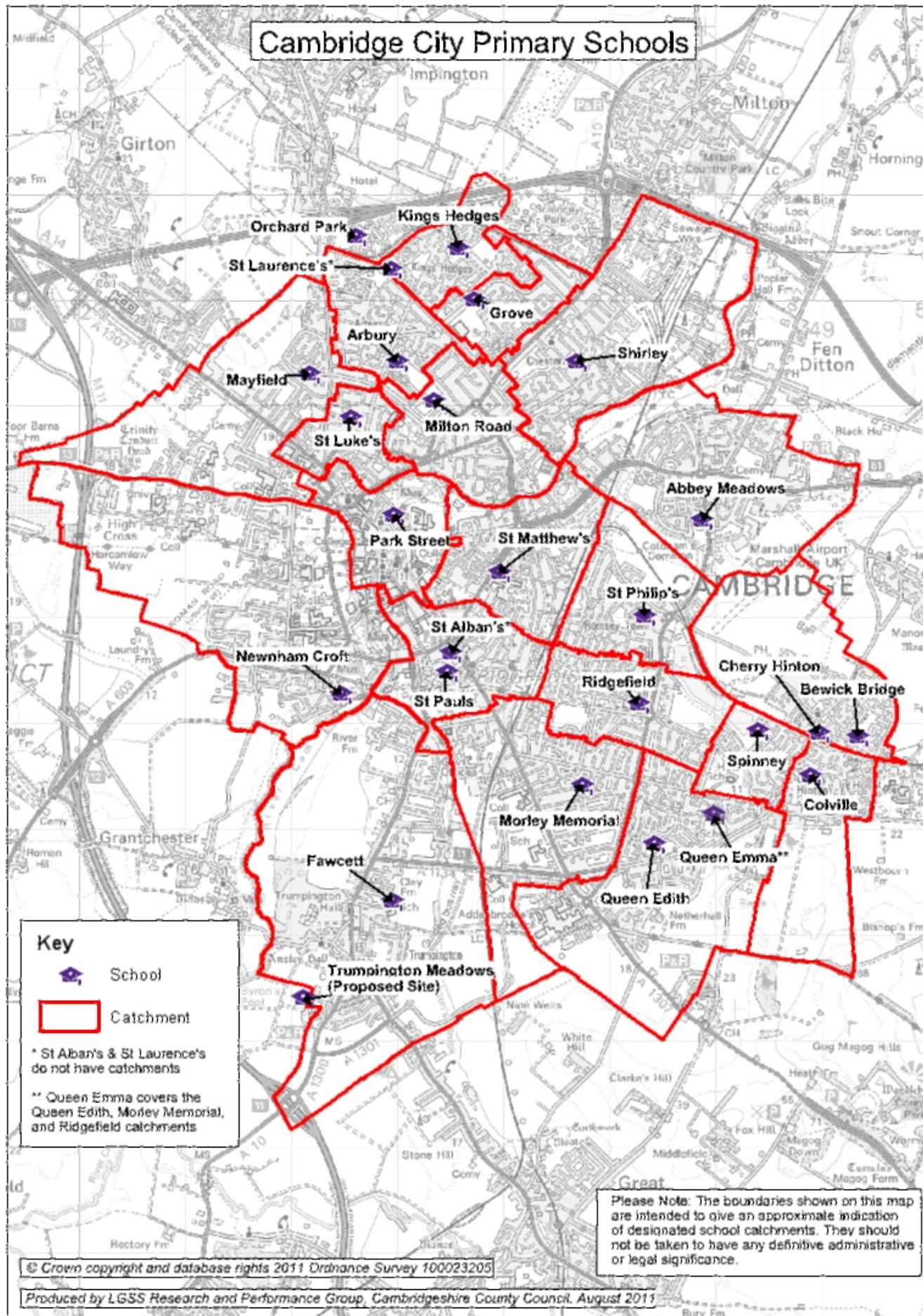
#### 4.6 **For 2014 : Arbury, King's Hedges and St Luke's Catchment Areas**

- 4.6.1 For 2014, assuming that an additional 30 places had been provided in the Shirley catchment area the previous year, the main demand for Reception places would be in the catchment areas of Arbury, King's Hedges and St Luke's primary schools, as indicated earlier.
- 4.6.2 The sites of Arbury, King's Hedges and St Luke's Primary Schools have all been assessed as potentially capable of further expansion. Following initial discussions with the relevant headteachers and governor representatives, further exploration of the options for expansion will take place with King's Hedges and St Luke's, including detailed site feasibility studies.

### 5.0 **NEXT STEPS**

- 5.1 The County Council's internal Places Planning Project Board, chaired by the Cabinet Member for Learning, is steering this work. Formal decisions on the way forward will be taken by the Council's Cabinet. As indicated earlier, the work will be linked closely to the annual review of the Council's five-year rolling capital programme.

# Cambridge City Primary Schools



## Appendix 2

### Primary Schools in the North of Cambridge

This table shows the number of children aged 0-4 registered in each primary school's catchment area, reaching Reception age between September 2012 and 2015, compared with each school's Published Admission Number (PAN). This is based on the December 2011 download of the Child Health Register data from the NHS.

Child Health Register Data/ Schools	Sept 2012	Sept 2013	Sept 2014	Sept 2015	First round Admission Allocations for Sept 2012	PANs Sept 2012
<b>North of City</b>						
Arbury (CP)	90	74	105	75	60	60
Grove (CP)	67	76	69	73	41	60
King's Hedges (CP)	71	79	99	80	60	60
Mayfield (CP)	60	63	55	49	60	60
Milton Road (CP)	72	92	80	91	60	60
Orchard Park (CP)	35	30	42	52	28	30
Shirley(CP)	108	125	136	141	60	60
St Laurence RC (VA)					45	45
St Luke's CE (VA)	51	57	77	68	27	30
<b>Sub-total</b>	<b>554</b>	<b>596</b>	<b>663</b>	<b>629</b>	<b>441</b>	<b>465</b>
<b>83% (5-year average)<sup>1</sup></b>	<b>460</b>	<b>495</b>	<b>550</b>	<b>522</b>		
<b>Children/PAN +/- (83%)</b>	<b>+5</b>	<b>-30</b>	<b>-85</b>	<b>-57</b>	<b>+24</b>	

<sup>1</sup> The Council plans on the basis of a rolling five-year average of the number of children requiring a Reception place in state-funded primary schools in Cambridge City, from the overall number registered with the NHS. This is currently 83%.