



21 January 2010

Dear Member/Resident

HOLLYMOUNT SCHOOL TO DOUBLE ITS SIZE

In case you are not aware, Hollymount School (Cambridge Road) is planning to expand from a single form entry (30 children per year group) to a two form entry school (60 children per year group). This will mean an increase in the number of pupils attending the school from some 250 to approximately 500.

This planned expansion has implications for current and future pupils, parents and local residents in terms of the greater number of people visiting the school site, increased traffic generation and pressure on parking and for the use of Holland Garden.

In order to accommodate the additional number of pupils, the school is proposing to expand its buildings on the school site. A planning application has been submitted to the London Borough of Merton for **Phase 1** of the proposed works, which involves alterations to the service buildings on the eastern side of the school and the removal of trees and a grassed bank on the eastern boundary. Full details of this application are given on the Merton Planning website (www.merton.gov.uk/planningexplorer) Application 09/P2912, and any comments on this application must be sent to Tony Ryan at the London Borough of Merton planning department by **29 January 2010** (tel: 8545 3114, or by email to planning.representations@merton.gov.uk).

A further planning application is planned for submission in April 2010 for **Phase 2** of the works, which is for the construction of a new 2-storey building in place of the Astroturf MUGA (mixed use games area) at the rear of the school site which will consist of eight classrooms to accommodate an extra 240 pupils. This Astroturf pitch, which was built at considerable expense only a few years ago to provide an all weather sports facility for the school, will be lost if the construction of the new building goes ahead as currently proposed. This will result in a significant reduction in the amount of available space for sport and games within the school grounds, at the same time as the number of children is increased. The planning application surprisingly is silent as to how Hollymount School anticipates being able to provide sufficient play area to accommodate up to 500 pupils.

The timescale for the proposed works is for enabling works (Phase 1) to be commenced at Easter 2010, with the main build (Phase 2) commencing on site in Summer 2010.

Community consultation is required to be carried out as part of any planning application put forward by the school. A small number of neighbouring residents were apparently advised at the end of last year that a planning application was to be submitted for works at the school. To date, there has been no consultation about the proposals with residents living in the vicinity of the school. According to

Hollymount's website, consultation with local residents is planned for **Thursday 4 February at 7.30pm** at the school (6pm for parents of children at the school), and we would urge all local residents to attend this consultation to see the proposed plans for the expansion of the school and make their views known. You should note however, that this date is after the closing date for submission of comments to London Borough of Merton on the current Phase 1 planning application.

As the two planning applications are linked, it is important that anyone concerned about the planned increase in the size of the school, the proposed building plans, or the loss of the Astroturf MUGA, should write to the Council to comment on the current (Phase 1) planning application. This Phase 1 application includes enabling works to allow for Phase 2 (the proposed construction of a new two storey building on the MUGA pitch to commence in the summer of 2010). It follows that if the Phase 1 application is refused, then the Phase 2 application cannot proceed in its current form.

A number of questions arise from this proposal:

- Why is there a need for the school to double its size? Are all the 43 Primary schools in Merton being expanded to the same extent?
- Is the catchment area being widened?
- What will be the future recreational facilities available?
- Why has the proposed expansion been so secret?
- Why has there not been adequate and open consultation with all stakeholders?
- Why has the Phase 1 application been separated from Phase 2?
- What is the impact on traffic and safety with such a significant increase in pupils? It seems likely that the proposed expansion will lead to a disproportionate increase in traffic.
- What is the impact on Holland Garden?

This is a significant development which will have a lasting effect on the local community. It deserves a lot of attention and detailed consideration before decisions are made.

As a local resident, you are urged to put forward your views and if possible, attend the meeting on 4 February at 19.30.

The Committee
Friends of Holland Garden
