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| What is the Community Schools Programme and why does housing need to be built on the site? | |
| <p>Why is Flora Gardens Primary School being redeveloped?</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Since the Building School for the Future programme was halted in 2010 and the financial constraints placed on the council by 10 years of austerity, financial investment in school upkeep across the country has been minimal. • This means that some children in Hammersmith & Fulham are being taught in buildings that are in poor condition and are no longer fit for purpose. • As there is no national programme to proactively renew existing Community Schools, Hammersmith & Fulham Council, in collaboration with headteachers and governing bodies across the borough, have identified a number of schools that would benefit from the new Community Schools Programme. • Flora Gardens Primary School has been identified as one of the first schools which will benefit from the Community Schools Programme. • The current Flora Gardens school facilities are outdated and do not offer the best learning environment for pupils or staff. Re-providing a modern, fit for purpose school will support the borough's ambition to give children the best start in life. |
| <p>What is the Community Schools Programme?</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • It is a new initiative by Hammersmith & Fulham Council, which was approved by Cabinet in March 2019 with the purpose of improving school facilities and educational attainment by providing new high-quality, well-designed schools in the borough. • The Community Schools Programme proposes to fund the building of new schools with the direct delivery of much needed new homes on the site. These homes will be at least 50% truly affordable and 50% private leasehold with the Council always remaining as the freeholder of the entire site. • The sale proceeds of new homes fund the delivery of the school redevelopment. • It is an innovative cross-subsidy, investment model where the building of much needed new housing can also deliver a new school on each site which is fit for the 21st century. |
| <p>What are the objectives of the Community Schools Programme?</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improve educational outcomes for the boroughs' children. • Support thriving communities. • Help to meet the funding challenges facing the school community. |

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| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Deliver much needed affordable housing. |
| Are there no other funding resources available which could pay for a new school without housing having to be built? | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There is no current appropriate funding available from the government to proactively rebuild existing schools. This is why Hammersmith & Fulham Council have sought to introduce an innovative new funding model through the establishment of the Community Schools Programme. • Through the planning application process, a Section 106 Agreements can be used to secure financial contributions from developments to help mitigate their impact and make them acceptable in planning terms. Whilst the Council are in receipt of S106 money from new developments which have been delivered across the borough, none of these contributions were secured to specifically rebuild Flora Gardens Primary School as this project wasn't identified at the time of negotiating them. |
| Why is the Council selling off school land? | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Council would act as the developer for this project and are not selling off the land to a private developer to deliver the scheme. The Council will remain the freeholder of the entire site. Whilst half of the new homes to be built will be sold on the open market, these will be private leasehold properties. |
| Is it not possible for the existing school to be refurbished instead? | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Given the age of the existing main school building (it was constructed in the 1950's), there would be significant cost associated with refurbishing this and there is no funding available for this. Refurbishing the building would also restrict the potential for enhanced educational facilities to be provided. • As well as the main school building there are also modular buildings on the site. These cannot be retro-fitted to bring them up to an appropriate standard and can also not be accommodated within the main school building due to space constraints. |
| Why is it not being rebuilt as a 2-Form Entry school? | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Council's Education Department have undertaken a thorough analysis of both the current and predicted future demand for school places in the borough. Currently there is a surplus of spaces at both Flora Gardens and other good or outstanding schools in the area and there is not demand for Flora Gardens Primary School to be enlarged to provide a 2 Form-Entry school. Should demand increase, then the requirement to create new school places will be met through Section 106 contributions. |
| Will the Department of Education be consulted? | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Yes, the scheme can only go ahead and the school rebuilt if the permission is given by the Department of Education. This is a separate application process to the one needed to gain planning permission and the Council are also currently progressing this. |
| What's happened so far? | |
| Have the school been involved in the design process and do they support the redevelopment? | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Following the Cabinet decision in March 2019 to proceed with the Community Schools Programme, the Council appointed an Independent Design Adviser to work with Flora Gardens senior leadership team, the governors, parents and pupils to prepare a detailed design brief for what they would want from the new school. • A full project design team were then appointed by the Council towards the end of 2019. This included Walters & Cohen, an architectural practice which specialises in designing new schools. |

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| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Walters & Cohen have since worked with the Independent Design Advisor to hold regular design workshops with the school so they can have a say in how their new school is designed. • The school are very supportive of the current proposals, including the principle of locating new housing on the site. At the core of the school brief is that the development is to be led by the needs of the school. |
| How have you been consulting with residents? | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We were first able to meet with the local community in person at a consultation event which was held at the school in January 2020. This introduced the concept of the Community Schools Programme and provided an indicative site layout of how the school and residential buildings could successfully co-locate on the site. • As a result of the ongoing COVID-19 restrictions, our second consultation which was planned for earlier this year was delayed so that the Council could consider the best approach to reaching a wide range of people without meeting in a traditional, face to face exhibition setting. • There was also a pause between January and April whilst the Council considered the initial site analysis work undertaken before the design team could progress with working up more detailed designs. • The design team are now at a point in the process where we have emerging plans that we would like to show and get community feedback on before advancing with further work. |
| Has the decision already been made to redevelop the site? | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The proposals are still at the design development stage and will need to go through the formal planning application process and secure planning permission before any works can start on the site. • The Council's Planning Department will be the Local Planning Authority in this instance and they will have a duty to ensure the proposals are properly assessed in relation to planning policy. They will consider any application based on its own merits. • Whilst the Council's Planning Officers will recommend the planning application for either approval or refusal, the final decision will be made by the Council's Planning Committee, which is made up of local councillors. |
| What's going to happen next? | |
| Will there be any further consultation events where I can review and comment on the proposals before the planning application is submitted? | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Yes, following our online exhibition and presentation on the 21st October, there will be at least another two opportunities for the community to see the emerging proposals and provide feedback. • We anticipate the next consultation event will be in January 2021. This will present the feedback received at the October event and the steps that have been taken to address comments raised. • There will then be a final event in March 2021 which will give the community the opportunity to view the proposed plans which will be submitted as part of the planning application. |
| When will the new school be built? | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The planning application is anticipated to be submitted in Spring 2021. • It is likely to take up to six months for a decision to be made by the Council on the application. • Should planning permission be granted in Summer 2021 then the site will be secured over the school summer holiday period in 2022 and construction will then begin. |

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| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The construction period is anticipated to last two years with the hope it is completed for the new school year in September 2024. |
| Where will the children go whilst the school is being built? | |
| Will the school still operate from the site during the construction period? | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> In consultation with the school, different delivery options were considered. It was decided that to minimise disruption and to support educational continuity for the pupils, that the best arrangement would be for the pupils to move 'off-site' during the construction period. We have identified a suitable existing primary school that is approximately 15 minutes walk away from Flora Gardens Primary school and the pupils will move there for the duration of the build. Both the Council and the school consider there are many positives for the school moving to a different site during the construction. Most significantly, it should minimise disruption and guarantees all children and staff remain on the same site. It also means there is no need for the use of porta-cabins as classrooms or offices. |
| How will the co-location of a new school and housing work? | |
| Is it practical for a school and new housing to be located together on the same site? | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Yes, there are successful examples of this elsewhere in London and also within the borough i.e. Ark Academy. The scheme will be of the highest quality and by having a design team of different specialities we believe we are able to create a vibrant new mixed development where both the school and residential buildings work in harmony with each other. |
| Will there be a loss of playground space? | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Areas of the existing playground space are not currently well used or accessible to the children, whereas the new proposals make maximum use of the site and provide a better outdoor play area. Overall, there will be a minor reduction of outdoor. However, the proposed playground space will be of a much higher quality with many new and enhanced features. In addition, as part of the new school design there is also the introduction of a new 2-court court sports hall which will ensure the school can successfully deliver their sports focused curriculum. This space will also be opened up outside of school hours for use by the wider community. |
| How will the school be kept secure? | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The security of the school and its pupils is a key consideration and one of the fundamental design principles which has been considered from the outset. The strategy to keep the residential and school buildings entirely separate, should ensure this, with the school having its own secure and controlled entrance and exit points. |
| How will the development impact me if I am a local resident? | |
| What will be done to protect adjacent residents during the construction period? | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> It is inevitable that there will be some disruption during a project of this scale and we apologise in advance for that. We will do everything we can to minimise disruption during the demolition and construction phases. A detailed Construction Management Plan will be developed to minimise disruption during the construction period. This will include a Construction Traffic Management Plan to ensure that construction vehicular traffic to and from the site is managed appropriately. |

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| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • This Construction Management Plan will be secured via a planning condition attached to the planning permission. As part of the planning application documents there will also be an Outline Logistics • Standard hours of working will be implemented to minimise disruption. |
| How tall are the buildings? | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The maximum height of the new residential buildings will be six storeys, with a lower four storey building along Ravenscourt Road. The design team have sought to ensure that the heights of the new buildings are in-keeping with the surrounding area and do not appear overly dominant. The proposed height of the buildings is considered to be a sensible design solution for the site, whilst also building enough new homes to fund the delivery of the school. |
| Where will the new residents park? I am concerned about added congestion. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The development is proposed to be car-free. This is in line with policy contained within the Council's Local Plan and the Mayor's London Plan. • The only car parking spaces to be provided on the site will be for dedicated Blue Badge holders only. Otherwise all of the new homes (genuinely affordable and private sale), like with many recent schemes in the borough, will not be provided with a car parking space and will not be granted a parking permit for the surrounding area. |
| How will the wider community benefit from the proposal? | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • As well as providing a high-quality new school and genuinely affordable housing to help meet the borough's housing need, the intention is for the enhanced school facilities, such as the new sports hall, to be made available to the local community/community groups for use outside of school hours. • There will be public realm enhancements around the perimeter of the site. • Should planning permission be granted, there will also be a requirement for the development to contribute funding towards local infrastructure and services through the payment of the Community Infrastructure Levy and the S106 legal agreement. |
| How much affordable housing will be provided? | |
| Why can't more than 50% affordable housing be provided on the site? | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The funding mechanism for the Community Schools Programme is dependent on raising enough money from the sale of housing on the site to pay for the new school. No revenue is raised from the new genuinely affordable housing, however the Council recognise the pressing need for genuinely affordable housing across the borough and hence a key aspiration of the Community Schools Programme is to not only deliver a new school, but also genuinely affordable housing. However, half of the new homes need to be provided for market sale to fund the new school. |
| What is the definition of affordable housing? | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Of the 50% affordable housing homes, 60% of these will be provided for London Affordable Rent and 40% will be for London Living Rent. • London Affordable Rent is a type of social rented housing which is subject to rent controls with the level of rent set by the Mayor of London. • London Living Rent is a type of intermediate product that will help, through low rents on time-limited tenancies, households with average earnings save for a deposit. Eligibility is restricted to households renting privately or socially with a maximum household income of £60,000 and without current sufficient savings to purchase a home in the local area. |

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| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Council are currently exploring the possibility of offering some of the genuinely affordable homes to the borough's key workers, including teachers. |
| What sustainability and urban greening measures are proposed? | |
| Why are some of the existing trees on the site being removed? | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Council recognise that the existing trees on the site are part of what makes Flora Gardens so special. As a result, a core design principal has been to ensure that as many of the existing of trees on site can be retained as possible. Input from a specialist tree consultant has been sought and they have undertaken an assessment of the quality of all the trees on site. Special care has been taken to keep all of those trees which have been deemed to be of the highest quality. To facilitate the development, it is inevitable there will be some loss of lower quality trees. There will however be new planting and landscaping on site and enhancements to the public realm. The proposals will retain the trees at the southern perimeter which are of the highest quality, however in order to facilitate the development of a new school and homes it is inevitable some trees which are of lower quality will be lost. There will however be new planting and landscaping on site and enhancements to the public realm around the perimeter. |
| What is the energy and sustainability strategy? | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Council is committed to a greener future and achieving sustainable design principles. This development will make a step change towards being carbon neutral and is seeking an on-site carbon reduction of at least 45%. This ambitious carbon reduction target be achieved by using a combination of more sustainable energy sources, including PV panels and air source heat pumps rather than traditional gas boilers. The proposals will also incorporate biodiverse roofs. A best practice, sustainable energy approach to is proposed to achieve a carbon reduction on site and ensure energy efficiency. The development will also make a financial contribution to offset the remaining carbon so it becomes a carbon-neutral development. |

You can also ask questions or give feedback by emailing: flora.renewal@lbhf.gov.uk