

Briefing Note

Our ref 13801/04/JF/VBM
Date 13 October 2021
To Brighton and Hove City Council
From Lichfields
Copy Brighton College

Subject **Brighton College Performing Arts Building application ref. BH/2021/01845**

1.0 Introduction

1.1 Application ref. BH/2021/01845 was considered at Planning Committee on 6th October 2021 for:

“Erection of a new Performing Arts Building, incorporating a 400 seat Theatre, 2no. Dance / Drama Studios, new 6th Form Centre, multiple new Classrooms and offices, storage areas, a Cafe and associated works.”

1.2 Members resolved to defer the application seeking further clarity on the proposed community use proposed. This note sets out the extent of community use proposed. A separate note is provided containing additional detail on the accessibility of the proposed building, views from outside the College boundary, traffic impacts and confirmation of the existing and proposed floorspace.

2.0 Extent of community use

2.1 Brighton College already has extensive links with community organisations and partner schools. In addition, the College typically hosts other Brighton language schools that need premises in the summer holiday. This proposal will provide a further state of the art building which can be accessed by these organisations and schools. The College currently undertakes a number of community outreach projects, as set out within the submitted Planning Statement (para. 2.4) and further information on the College’s community programme is available [here](#).

2.2 The application commits to external use by:

- 1 Continuation/expansion of existing community outreach projects, including:
 - a Use by the 20 partner schools (see Appendix 1) for prioritised use of the facility outside of term time. It is anticipated that this would be for around 2 weeks per year (allowing up to two or three performances by up to 3 different schools per year). If demand for use by partner schools exceeds the time available and timetabling cannot assist in enabling all of those who wish to access to do so, there will be a rotational system so as to seek to ensure all schools that wish to access the facility can do over a two or three year period. Such access would be provided for free.

- b Similarly if partner schools do not wish to use the facility, the College would consider hiring the venue in the available period for other community use (other schools and theatre groups).
 - c Access during term time to the new facility for three local primary schools which currently use the College's sports, science, drama and music facilities on a carousel basis (also known as the Primary Pelican Club). These students would benefit from access to the new state of the art theatre and performing art spaces.
 - d Use by Patcham High School's GCSE group on an annual basis, which the College's GCSE group collaborate with on a joint performance of a Shakespeare play in line with the GCSE curriculum (involving both sets of teachers and pupils). This currently takes place at a more modest venue in Kemp Town and would transfer to the new building once delivered comprising one or two performances during the day to a modest audience.
 - e Use as part of the partnership with the Syrian refugee community who use existing facilities at the College on a weekly basis (Sundays) and for key celebrations.
- 2 If partner schools do not wish to use the venue, external organisations/groups could hire the new theatre over the currently estimated two week period, subject to an entertainments licence.

2.3 The College will staff the café during use by external groups as required and can discuss providing other support with the external user as appropriate.

2.4 Brighton College is committed to allowing these external community groups to use the proposed facility. The extent of community use has been carefully considered having regard to the responsibilities of the College, including:

- 1 **Safeguarding of the pupils** (including 400 boarders who live on the site during term time aged 13 to 18): as one of the College's primary duties and therefore carefully managing who and when external groups are able to access the site.
- 2 **Use by the pupils of the school:** In order to maintain a suitable regime for mental health and welfare given the relatively modest footprint of the site, boarding pupils need access to the facilities on site outside of normal educational hours.
- 3 **Use by other Brighton educators:** For reasons noted above, access for external community groups will be enabled outside of Brighton College's term-time and relevant co-curriculum activities. The College provides boarding accommodation during parts of the Summer holidays to Brighton's language schools and so amenity impacts on these groups needs to be considered.
- 4 **Possible traffic implications:** Please see separate note.
- 5 **Refurbishment/renovation activity at the school:** as refurbishment/renovation works (such as maintaining the heritage masonry) are scheduled during school holidays, the safety of community groups will be considered when timetabling external access.

2.5 In addition, the College is exploring the ability to offer an open day for local residents to allow them to view the new building, and its facilities bearing in mind the constraints above, in response to the comments of Members at during the Planning Committee and feedback received during the public consultation.

- 2.6 The College will be able to provide more detail on these community outreach projects following grant of planning permission. Accordingly, it is considered that the recommended condition (no. 15) by officers is still appropriate to enable final details to be reviewed and agreed by the Council:

Prior to the occupation of the development hereby approved, details for community/external use shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority to set out arrangements for hours of use, access by non-school users and frequency of use. The approved scheme shall be implemented upon commencement of use of the development.

Appendix 1: List of partner schools

- 1 Brunswick Primary School
- 2 Fairlight Primary School
- 3 Hove Junior School
- 4 Rudyard Kipling Junior School
- 5 Southover Primary School
- 6 St Andrews Primary School
- 7 St Bartholemew's Primary school
- 8 St Bernadette's Primary School
- 9 St Margarets junior school
- 10 Stanford junior school
- 11 Woodingdean Primary School
- 12 Dorothy Stringer High school
- 13 Durrington High School
- 14 London Academy of Excellence
- 15 Patcham High School
- 16 Peacehaven Community School
- 17 Varndean School
- 18 Moulescoomb Primary School
- 19 Elm Grove Primary School
- 20 Carlton Hill Primary School