

# STATES OF JERSEY



## LA POUQUELAYE SCHOOL REDEVELOPMENT: APPROVAL OF DRAWINGS

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Lodged au Greffe on 2nd December 2003  
by the Education, Sport and Culture Committee

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STATES GREFFE

## **PROPOSITION**

**THE STATES are asked to decide whether they are of opinion –**

- (a) to approve drawings Nos. 3015/101(Rev B), 102(Rev B), 103(Rev B), 104(Rev A), 105(Rev 106(Rev B), 107(Rev B), 300(Rev B) showing the proposed redevelopment of La Pouquelay School, St. Helier;
- (b) to authorise the Greffier of the States to sign the said drawings on behalf of the States.

### **COMMITTEE FOR POSTAL ADMINISTRATION**

- Notes:
- 1. The Environment and Public Services Committee approved these drawings under Permit No. B/2003/1134 dated 14th November 2003.
  - 2. The Finance and Economics Committee supports this proposition, including the proposal to undertake feasibility studies on the St. Mark's School site and on the existing La Pouquelay School site.

## **REPORT**

### **Background**

La Pouquelaye School is of prefabricated construction and like other schools constructed in the late 1960s (e.g. Le Squez and Grand Vaux), has long since reached the end of its economic life and must be replaced. The site of La Pouquelaye School is very restricted and the school is already using 3 temporary classrooms to enable appropriate curriculum delivery to its pupils.

The investigation of construction options and alternatives, together with the need to provide places for those housed at the Waterfront, led to the conclusion that an alternative site should be found on which to build a new and larger La Pouquelaye School.

The land chosen was the D'Auvergne (former Jersey College for Girls) playing fields site which –

- (a) provides an excellent site for a school, with an attached grass playing field; which can be shared with other primary schools in the area;
- (b) enables the new school to be built without disrupting the existing school;
- (c) allows the existing school site to be released for alternative uses;
- (d) removes heavy traffic congestion and disturbance from a residential area;
- (e) allows for a larger school to be constructed;
- (f) allows for much safer approach and exit for children arriving or leaving on foot.

In March 1999, the Education Committee approved a capital bid for the new La Pouquelaye Primary School on the basis that a new 2-form entry school would be constructed on the on the (JCG) D'Auvergne Playing Fields.

Whilst a replacement school is a fundamental requirement, an important aspect of this bid was that the new school should be doubled in size to 2 forms of entry. This increase in size from 175 to 350 pupils was proposed for the following reasons –

- (a) to meet the needs of the new housing development on the Waterfront in addition to the school's existing catchment area;
- (b) to address proposed future housing developments within the La Pouquelaye area;
- (c) to meet the predicted requirement for additional places in the town area.

The Committee had, at this point, recognised that delays on the Waterfront consultation process meant that there would not be an immediate requirement for a new town Primary School, for which funding had been approved for 2000. Agreement was therefore reached that the funds identified for the new town Primary School could be made available for, amongst other things, increasing the size of the new La Pouquelaye School. Such a development would enable spaces to be provided for those children on the Waterfront whilst the need for a new town Primary School could be considered further. The States Resource Plan 2000 therefore included a bid for the development of the new school which was to be 'topped up' from the new town Primary School vote to enable the requirement for two-forms of entry to be met.

In July 2001, the States Assembly approved that an exception be made to the Green Zone policy of the Island Plan to allow the development of the new school on the D'Auvergne playing field.

### **Review of demographics**

In July 2003, the Education, Sport and Culture Committee considered the requirement for a new town Primary School and concluded that the demographic projections did not support the provision of additional capacity within primary school sector. In addition, the Committee agreed that, on the basis of its demographic model, the Department should undertake a formal planning review to assess the future capacity within the primary school sector and the development of a clear strategy to ensure that numbers are catered for in the most effective manner.

In October 2003, the Committee considered a report on the impact of demographics on service provision and noted that it was anticipated that the primary sector will begin to have some surplus capacity (i.e. beyond that needed for planning purposes), from 2006 onwards. Overall, it is anticipated that surplus capacity will rise steadily from c.250 to c.700 between 2006 and 2010. This picture would suggest surplus capacity within the primary sector of c.150 in 2007.

Whilst the above numbers do not indicate the location of any surplus capacity, it is clear that the proposed 175 additional places created by the new La Pouquelaye School in September 2005 are a contributory factor. The Committee therefore recognised that there is an opportunity to ensure it does not create a superfluous additional form of entry at the time the new school opens.

### **Addressing the implications of the demographic picture**

Having considered a number of options, the Committee is proposing that, to address the predicted capacity, La Pouquelaye and St. Mark's schools should be amalgamated into the new school development. The existing St. Mark's School building would be vacated and used for other purposes. As part of this amalgamation, parents would be offered the option of attending another town primary school where places are available. Post-amalgamation, catchment areas would be adjusted to ensure a balance allocation of places within the town area.

St. Mark's School was identified for the following reasons –

- (a) it has limited curriculum and amenity space (particularly external play areas);
- (b) it is located in close proximity to other town primary schools;
- (c) it is likely to be the school that is most affected by a downturn in primary numbers in the town area (numbers have already been affected by the opening of the new Grands Vaux School).

The above proposal is clearly dependent on the redevelopment of the new 2-form entry school being completed towards the end of 2005.

### **Maintaining the new school as 2 forms of entry**

Whilst the need for a replacement for the existing La Pouquelaye School is well established, under the above proposal it is clear that the rationale for developing the new school as 2 forms of entry has changed. The Committee is of the view that it is of paramount importance that this issue is considered by the States as part of the approval of drawings for this scheme.

The Committee believes that, in line with the above proposal, the new school should continue to be developed as 2 forms of entry for the following reasons–

- (a) it will provide teaching and amenity spaces which fully meet educational accommodation standards for curriculum delivery. These facilities would be available to at least 175 more children in the primary sector;
- (b) the new school is, in location terms, the best option for accommodating the children living on the Waterfront and needs to be two-forms of entry if the projected numbers from the Waterfront are to be accommodated in a single school;
- (c) efficiency savings of **£140,000** per annum would be realised, largely due to a reduction in fixed costs,

including key staff, which are duplicated in 2 single-form entry schools. These savings are ‘real’ and could be removed from the Committee’s revenue budget as soon as an amalgamation takes effect;

- (d) in addition to the above efficiency savings, the new building will require less long-term maintenance than the existing St. Mark’s school.

Whilst the above identifies the benefits of an amalgamation, it is important to note that the Committee’s proposal also avoids the provision of an *additional* form of entry (i.e. at La Pouquelaye), which may be superfluous in terms of the overall primary school population. The costs of operating one additional form of entry would, depending on actual numbers, be in the order of **£400,000 – £500,000** per annum, including additional staff.

**Why not develop La Pouquelaye as a one-form entry school**

Notwithstanding the above, the Committee is mindful of the fact that its proposal maintains the existing number of places within the primary school sector. It has, therefore, examined the implications of changing its plans at this late stage to construct a replacement single form of entry school.

First, the additional capital costs of the 2-form entry school need to be considered. To ascertain an order of costs, a comparison between the recent Grands Vaux School development (one form of entry), if built on the new site, and predicted costs of the La Pouquelaye School redevelopment provide a useful guide (figures compiled with the assistance of officers of the Treasury) –

<b>Comparison of Grands Vaux and La Pouquelaye Capital Costs (prices at December 2003)</b>	
Grands Vaux	£4,678,000
La Pouquelaye	£6,511,000
<b>Difference</b>	<b>£1,833,000</b>

The additional capital cost of developing La Pouquelaye as 2 forms of entry is therefore estimated to be in the region of **£1.8 million**. With this in mind, the **£140,000** efficiency savings identified above would pay back the additional capital investment in 13 years.

However, changing the La Pouquelaye plans at such a late stage would incur additional costs related to abortive fees, new design fees and inflation. With the existing plans well advanced and with all contract documentation in place for tenders to be submitted, the following is an assessment of the costs which are likely to be attached to changing the scheme at this stage –

Aborted design fees	£440,000
Inflation**	£165,000
<b>Total</b>	<b>£605,000</b>

\*Assuming redesign of current scheme

\*\*Assuming one year delay and 3.5% inflation per annum

Making La Pouquelaye single form of entry could therefore provide an overall capital saving of in the order of **£1.2 million**. This, however would also mean –

- (a) efficiency savings of £140,000 per annum would not be realised;
- (b) the children of La Pouquelaye would spend at least one further year in sub-standard accommodation;
- (c) the opportunity to provide more children with accommodation and amenity space which meets recognised educational standards would be lost;
- (d) the children living on the Waterfront could not be guaranteed a place at La Pouquelaye School and would

have to attend and travel to other schools in town where places are available;

- (e) the Committee will need to continued to maintain and provide minor capital works on the existing St. Mark's School.

### **The St. Mark's School Site**

The Committee has no defined use for the St. Mark's School site and it could be made available for other uses through transfer of administration to the Property Services Department.

However, the Committee has received an approach from the Governors of Victoria College to investigate the feasibility of operating Key Stage 1 (i.e. reception, Year 1 and Year 2) of its Preparatory School from th St. Mark's School site. On initial analysis, such a development could have the following benefits –

- (a) In the short term, it could address the College's requirement for provision at Key Stage 1 without significant capital investment. At present, there are no funds available within the States capital programme for the proposed rebuilding of Victoria College Preparatory School, which is currently estimated as c. £12 million to outturn.
- (b) It could also provide more places in the fee paying sector at Key Stage 1 for which the Committee meet only 25% of the cost.

These potential benefits have led the Committee to the view that this is a proposal worth exploring in more detail. Subject to States approval of the La Pouquelaye drawings, the Committee would therefore propose that the Board of Governors and officers of the Department of Education, Sport and Culture be requested to investigate the proposal in more detail and present proposals to the Committee which demonstrate a clear business case for adopting this as a way forward. It is further suggested that officers of the Treasury are involved in such a study and the outcome should be agreed by the Finance and Economics Committee before being progressed.

### **The Drawings**

It is proposed to construct a new 2-form entry primary school (i.e. for 350 children) and a 30-place nursery on the site. It is anticipated that construction will begin in February 2004 and be completed in July 2005.

The school, as now approved, will be of simple design and construction with the intention of providing value for money, durability and minimal maintenance. The design is based on the recently completed Grands Vaux School modified for 2 forms of entry.

The 2-storey building has been positioned on the site to minimise its effect on neighbours whilst making the best use of the external spaces. The building construction comprises concrete strip foundations, steel frame superstructure, painted render blockwork and slate roofs.

As part of the planning process, arrangements for traffic and access have been reviewed. Access to the school will be improved to include widening part of the road to accommodate 2-way traffic as far as the main school entrance and adequate parking on site and areas for drop-off and pick-up. The Department has worked closely with the Parish of St. Helier to develop safe pedestrian access, which includes the widening of footpaths and traffic calming along with a school patrol and warning lights and signs.

Given the need to seek value for money, the project has been driven by a brief which reflects the highly successful Grands Vaux project, the standards provided by the U.K. Department for Education and Skills (DfES) and local requirements. The school will include the key facilities required for an 2-form entry primary school accommodating up to 350 students, including classrooms, hall, information technology room, library, music and drama space, nursery, and administrative spaces, such as staff room, reception and storage.

This is another of the Committee's recent projects (along with Grands Vaux, Le Rocquier and Grainville Phase 2 which has been subject to value engineering to ensure that budget targets are met and the scheme delivers the best

possible value.

The scheme received initial Planning Approval on 26th April 2002 and permission in respect of the Buildings Bye-Laws (Jersey) Law 1997 under permit No. B/2003/1134 on 13th November 2003.

### **Budget**

The capital funding allocated to the Committee within vote C3301 (EXPLPO), once adjusted for inflation, supplemented by the agreed additional funds from the New Town Primary Vote C2591 (EXP001) is expected to be sufficient to complete the project.

### **Revenue and Manpower**

This proposition would result in a reduced requirement to the States for both revenue costs and manpower.

### **Conclusions**

On the basis of the Committee's current demographic projections, the rationale for the redevelopment of the school has clearly been modified and the Committee places high importance on this matter being addressed as part of the drawings debate.

In the light of the current financial climate, the Committee believes that its proposals will provide significant benefits, both educational and in terms of the States finances as a whole.

The proposal for an amalgamation of schools in the town area will ensure future numbers are provided for in the most efficient manner whilst maintaining a high quality educational experience. This proposal will generate a genuine revenue saving for the States.

Allied to this is the potential for the existing St. Marks site to be used for the benefit of the States, particularly through the possibility of significantly reducing a future request for capital expenditure.

The Committee therefore asks the States to approve these drawings and to permit the project to proceed as planned.

**LA POUQUELAYE PRIMARY SCHOOL  
APPROVAL OF DRAWINGS**

	<u>PSD Nos.</u>	<u>P&amp;E Nos.</u>
List of Stamped Approved Drawings:	3015/101	C
	3015/102	D
	3015/103	E
	3015/104	F
	3015/105	G
	3015/106	H
	3015/107	I
	3015/300	B
	Location	A