



# Area Schools Review

## Queensferry, Shotton and Connah's Quay Area

*November 2012 • Consultation on the preferred option*



## Background

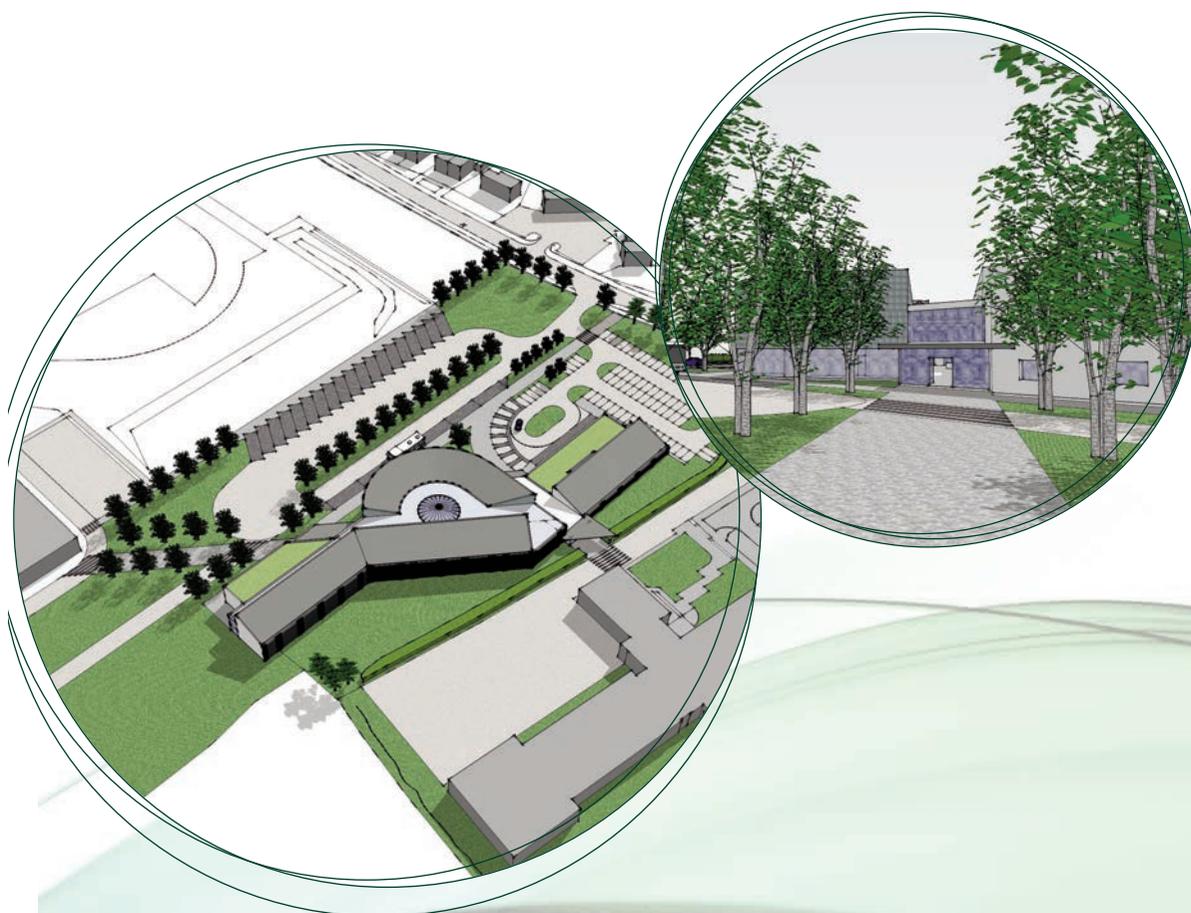
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Earlier this year, a number of consultation events were held in the John Summers High School, Connah's Quay High School and Deeside Leisure Centre.

The purpose of the events was to allow people to consider a series of options designed to reduce the number of surplus places in John Summers High School and improving the viability of sixth form provision in the area.

The consultation information and supporting documents supplied at that time can be found on the Council's website [www.flintshire.gov.uk/areaschoolsreview](http://www.flintshire.gov.uk/areaschoolsreview).

Attended by Governors, Teachers, Staff, Parents and Carers, the events provided the Council with a wealth of feedback, and at a meeting on Tuesday 17 July 2012 the Council's Cabinet approved the commencement of a further round of informal consultation on a single preferred option.



## Consultation

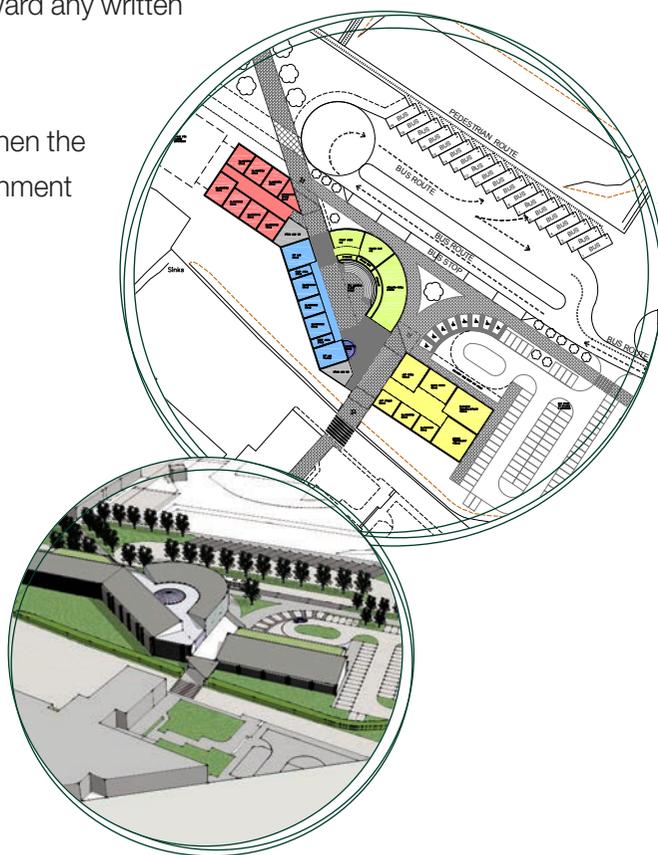
During the first round of consultations, Councillors committed to undertake a second stage of consultations before making any final decision about whether or not to formally progress with one single proposal.

This is now that second stage of consultation.

On page 10 of this document you will find details of where and when consultation events will be held.

If following this consultation stage, Councillors decide to continue with the single proposal, then we will enter the statutory stage. During the statutory stage, the details of one single proposal will be clearly set out and you will be given one month to put forward any written objections you may have.

If the Council receives just one objection at the statutory stage, then the matter will be handed over to Welsh Ministers in Welsh Government who will make the final decision.



## How long will this take?



## The Preferred Option

### **‘Develop a 3-16 facility at John Summers High School with a Post-16 Centre at Connah’s Quay High School’**

A substantial investment would be needed to re-model John Summers High School and Queensferry Primary School to provide a modern 21st Century school.

The existing sixth forms at both Connah’s Quay High School and John Summers High School would be closed and post 16 courses would be held at a new purpose built Post 16 Centre at Connah’s Quay.

Queensferry Primary School, which is located on the same campus as John Summers High School, would be developed to take nursery age children within its existing building.

St Ethelwolds Primary School would also be developed to take nursery age children within its existing building.



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The Croft Nursery School would be closed and nursery pupils would relocate to either Queensferry Primary School or St Ethelwolds Primary School, according to parental preference. The Flying Start and Families First Initiatives, which support young families in the area would be expanded into the existing Croft Nursery accommodation. Other foundation phase provision within the area would be unchanged.

Queensferry Primary School and John Summers High School would amalgamate to create one 'new' school catering for pupils and students from aged 3 up to 16. There would be one headteacher and one governing body.

Children and young people would be educated in their own age appropriate spaces, but having the advantage of access to specialist facilities for example sports, drama and shared support services.

The 3-16 school would also continue to work closely in partnership with Sealand, St Ethelwolds, Shotton Infants, Taliesin Juniors and other local primary schools.

A significant investment will be needed to integrate Queensferry Primary School with John Summers High School to bring them up to the required standards, and to ensure that they can work effectively as one school.

The Welsh Government has approved in principle, funding that would remodel the existing Queensferry Primary School and John Summers High School, to create a single 'new' school for students aged 3-16. Flintshire County Council would need to 'match fund' this contribution. Substantial funding would also be required for upgrading and adapting of Connah's Quay High School.

Welsh Government has also indicated its willingness in principle to contribute half of the cost of building a new Post 16 Centre in Connah's Quay. Flintshire County Council and Deeside College would need to pay the other half, this will mean an investment of over £3m by both Deeside College and Flintshire County Council.



## Vision

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John Summers High School and Queensferry Primary School already share a site, and some resources. Both schools do an excellent job in serving not only children and young people but the community at large.

The number of students at John Summers High School has reduced so that there are many surplus places. One consequence of this is that the sixth form is also very small, and cannot provide the wide curriculum spread which is now a requirement of Welsh Government. If the preferred option was developed, a substantial investment would be made in remodelling the existing High school and Primary school in order to provide a 3-16 school fit for the 21st Century, with integration of the management, shared facilities and resources, and the elimination of the steps between nursery/primary and secondary schools.

Post-16 in terms of AS, A2 and vocational courses would be offered in the brand new post 16 Centre at Connah's Quay. This development would provide a full range of subjects and would also provide access to some facilities in Connah's Quay High school and Deeside College.

The new School in Queensferry would be an attractive development which would have the capacity to accommodate the increase in population which is expected over the next few years with the Northern Gateway development at the ex RAF Sealand site.

This will mean that modern up to date accommodation and resources will be available to post 16 students at one location. The opportunities for students at Connah's Quay High school would be enhanced for the post-16 provision. As the proposed Post 16 Centre would be adjacent to the schools, it is envisaged that there would be a shared usage of some facilities at the school, such as laboratories and the opportunities to access vocational resources in Deeside College.

Being part of a larger post 16 provision would mean that students would benefit from the bigger investments, both in terms of learning environment and resources.

Significant investment would be required to upgrade and adapt Connah's Quay High school so that it also becomes a 21st Century School. Connah's Quay would therefore become the focus not only for 11-16 provision in the community but also for the post 16 provision for North Flintshire Schools.

## Why propose any change?

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**Surplus Places** - Some school buildings are too big for the number of students who attend them. Welsh Government says schools should not have more than 10% surplus places overall. This means if a school is big enough to take 500 students then it shouldn't have less than 450 students registered to attend it.

Wales Audit Office, Estyn (the schools inspectorate) and Welsh Government all say that the Council must reduce its number of surplus places.

John Summers High School has a capacity of 565 places with 189 (Sept '12) surplus places (33.45%), this means that about a third of the school is underutilised.

With the development of the Northern Gateway at Sealand, it is likely, over the coming years, that student numbers will rise in this area and the number of surplus places are likely to reduce. It is not possible to predict when we may see the start of this demand for school places as a lot will depend on when, and how quickly, the new houses are built. In the meantime empty areas of the school could be used by other Council office staff. Some areas of the community wing are already used for council accommodation.

Connah's Quay High School has a capacity of 1102 and 137 surplus places, 12.43% (Sept '12).

**Sixth Form Provision** - Welsh Government says that sixth forms must provide at least 30 different subjects that students can choose to study. Welsh Government also provides schools with funding for sixth forms. The fewer students who register, the less money the school receives. The Council's School Modernisation Strategy says that for a sixth form to be viable it should have at least 120 students, although the Welsh Government indicates a figure of 150.

Whilst John Summers High School currently works well with other schools in the area to provide students with a wide range of post 16 subjects to study, the cost of travel arrangements getting students to and from different locations is expensive and is not sustainable.

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## Why propose any change? (continued)

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The sixth form at Connah's Quay High School has 137 students; this is above the agreed minimum number in the Flintshire School Modernisation Strategy, but below the latest guidance from Welsh Government. The school works closely with other schools and Deeside College, to make sure it can offer students a wider range of subjects.

The preferred option would mean that the sixth forms at both John Summers and Connah's Quay High Schools would close. Sixth form education would be provided at the proposed new Post 16 Centre at Connah's Quay. This Centre would be a joint venture between Flintshire County Council and Deeside College.

This new joint Post 16 Centre would provide students with the full range of academic and vocational subjects all at one location. It is expected however that Deeside College and Connah's Quay High School would share some facilities to provide the highest quality facilities for all students. For example, using the science labs at Connah's Quay High School and vocational facilities at Deeside College.

**3 – 16 Provision at John Summers site** – A single 'new' school for students aged 3 to 16. Following a pattern already successfully established in England and now being developed in Wales, would provide seamless progression from nursery, through into primary and from primary through into secondary education.

**Nursery Provision** - Queensferry and St. Ethelwolds Primary Schools are the only schools in the whole of Flintshire that do not currently have integrated nurseries. Nursery education for this area is currently provided at the Croft Nursery.

Changing nursery education in this way would allow young children in the area to smoothly progress from nursery into foundation phase education, in the same way as all other primary schools in Flintshire. This would increase the capacity for nursery provision and accommodate an expansion of Flying Start and Families First Initiative.

## Minimising the effects of any change

If after this consultation process, Councillors decide to formally put forward their preferred option as a single proposal for the Queensferry, Shotton and Connah's Quay area, arrangements will be made to maintain continuity for students preparing for AS and A2 courses.

Students already in years 12 and 13 at John Summers and Connah's Quay High schools at that time of any changes would complete their courses in their existing school under existing arrangements.

This would mean that if the new Post 16 Centre would open in September 2016, then students in the current years 10, 11 and 12 will complete their courses according to the current arrangements at their respective schools. The current year 9 would therefore be the first school cohort to attend the newly completed Post 16 Centre at Connah's Quay.

The schools would actively promote the new Post 16 Centre in Connah's Quay, along with other appropriate post-16 establishments, to students entering year 11 so they may begin to make their choice of where to continue their education after the age of 16.

Transport to the Post 16 Centre would be provided in accordance with the Flintshire School Transport policy. This currently provides for free transport to students living more than 3 miles away from the post 16 provision they attend.

There are a number of ways you can let us know what you think.  
You can:

- ask questions and let us know your views at these meetings
- complete a questionnaire on-line at [www.flintshire.gov.uk/areaschoolsreview](http://www.flintshire.gov.uk/areaschoolsreview)
- complete a questionnaire and return it to the School Modernisation Team, Lifelong Learning, County Hall, Mold, Flintshire, CH7 6DN; or alternatively,
- put your responses in writing to the School Modernisation Team, Lifelong Learning, County Hall, Mold, Flintshire. CH7 6DN



**The consultation will close on 21 December 2012.**

## Consultation Meetings

Venue	Invitees	Date	Time	Type of Meeting
John Summers High School	Teachers, staff and governors of: John Summers High School Queensferry Primary School St Ethelwolds Primary School The Croft Nursery	12 Nov 2012	4.00 pm	Presentation followed by questions and answers
John Summers High School	Parents and Carers of students attending: John Summers High School Queensferry Primary School St Ethelwolds Primary School The Croft Nursery, Primary Schools in the Queensferry area	12 Nov 2012	7.00 pm	Presentation followed by questions and answers
Connah's Quay High School	Teachers, staff and governors of: Connah's Quay High School	19 Nov 2012	3.45 pm	Presentation followed by questions and answers
Connah's Quay High School	Parents and Carers of students attending: Connah's Quay High School Primary Schools in the Connahs Quay area	19 Nov 2012	7.00 pm	Presentation followed by questions and answers



# Consultation Response Form

Area Schools Review

November 2012

Before you begin – if you would like to fill this form in on-line please go to [www.flintshire.gov.uk/areaschoolsreview](http://www.flintshire.gov.uk/areaschoolsreview)

Based on the information you have been given in this booklet, at the consultation event and from other documents available on the Council's website, please tell us your views on the Council's preferred option in your area.

Please tick the area which applies to you:

- Buckley
  Queensferry, Shotton and Connahs Quay
  Holywell

How strongly do you agree with the preferred option in this area?

- Strongly Agree
  Tend to Agree
  Neither Agree nor Disagree  
 Tend to disagree
  Strongly disagree

Please tell us why you feel this way

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About you:

To help us understand what different groups of people think, please tell us a little about yourself:  
 Please provide your contact details below *(Unfortunately we are unable to consider responses unless contact details, including full postcode are provided.)*

Name: .....

Address: .....

Postcode: .....

Are you:

- Parent/Carer
  Teacher
  Support Staff  
 Governor
  Other

Name of school:

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