



Report Ref No:

Report of the Service Director
Economic Regeneration to the
Planning Regulatory Board on
21st April 2015

CHANGE TO STAGGERED TIMES AT HORIZON COMMUNITY COLLEGE, DODWORTH ROAD

1. Purpose of Report

- 1.1 To seek the approval of PRB for a proposed change to the staggered times in accordance with the officer recommendatn.

2. Recommendation

- 2.1 That Members approve the removal of the 10:00am – 16:15 start/exit times for year 11 pupils and allow them to instead be merged with the existing 09:30 – 15:45 times subject to the following:

1. The submission and approval of a revised Travel Plan prior to commencement of the proposed arrangements.
2. The submission and approval of a road safety plan prior to commencement of the proposed arrangements.

Thereafter, the Travel Plan and Road Safety Plan shall be implemented in accordance with the approved details.

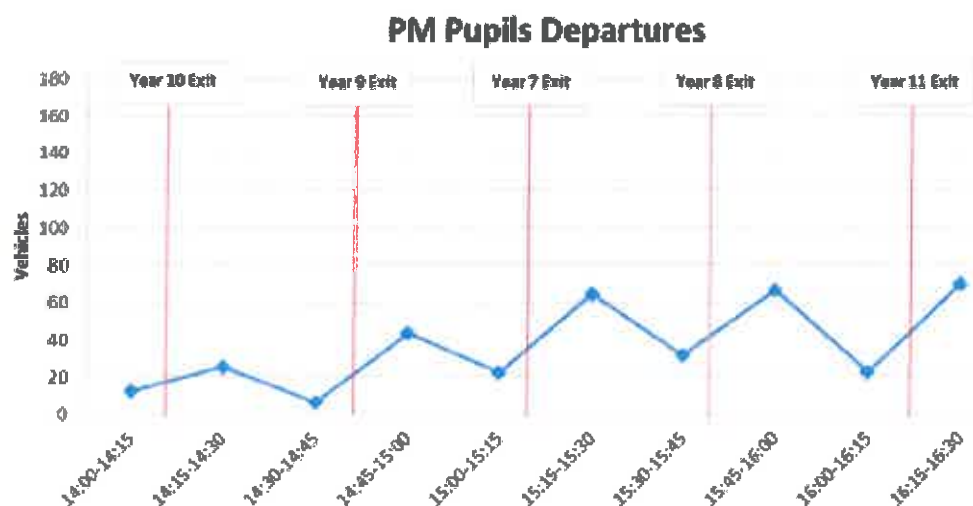
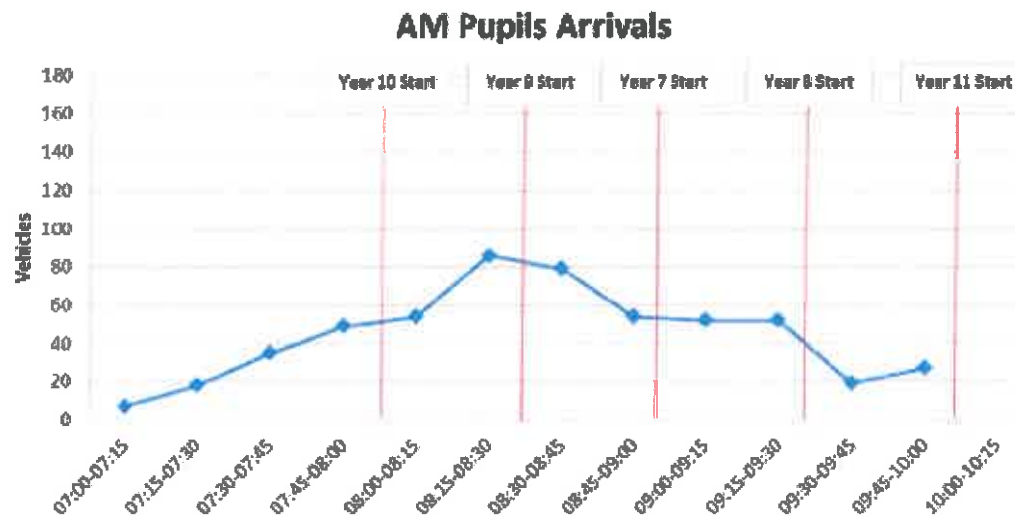
3. Background

- 3.1 The site is located immediately to the south of the A628 Dodworth Road and east of the A6133 Broadway, approximately 1.5 miles west of Barnsley Town Centre. Outline planning permission was granted for an ALC in 2009 (2009/0451) and reserved matters were subsequently approved in 2010. This resulted in the merger of the Kingstone and Holgate Schools into Horizon Community College (HCC). However, given the sensitive location of the site in relation to traffic congestion during morning and afternoon peaks and the associated air quality implications along Dodworth Road, a five stage staggered start / leaving time was secured in order to enable the granting of outline planning permission. These times are as follows:

Table 1 - Horizon CC start/exit times

Start time	Exit time	Existing
08:00	14:15	Year 10
08:30	14:45	Year 9
09:00	15:15	Year 7
09:30	15:45	Year 8
10:00	16:15	Year 11

- 3.2 For the reasons explained in section 4, there are significant benefits for college if the staggered periods are reduced. This requires an amendment to the planning permission and is therefore presented to members for consideration.
- 3.3 It is recognised that these changes are likely to impact upon the profile of vehicular traffic accessing the development which could have further consequences on the operation of the local road network. This is considered to be particularly likely in the morning where the college arrivals coincide with the general traffic AM peak. In turn, any increase in congestion could detrimentally impact on air quality along Dodworth Road, which is designated as an Air Quality Management Area (AQMA).
- 3.4 To support the appraisal of these proposals, both AM and PM peak micro-simulation VISSIM models have been developed by AECOM to assess the potential impact of changes in college traffic profiles on the local highway network operation, focussing particularly on the Dodworth Road junction with Pogmoor Road and Junction 37 of the M1.
- 3.5 The first stage of developing the model was to establish the baseline for the number of vehicles arriving and leaving and how these are distributed under the current arrangements. These are displayed in the graphs below.



As can be seen, arrivals currently peak between 8:15 and 8:45 at approximately 80 vehicles per 15 minute period. Departures peak at just over 60 vehicles per 15 minute period.

4. Options

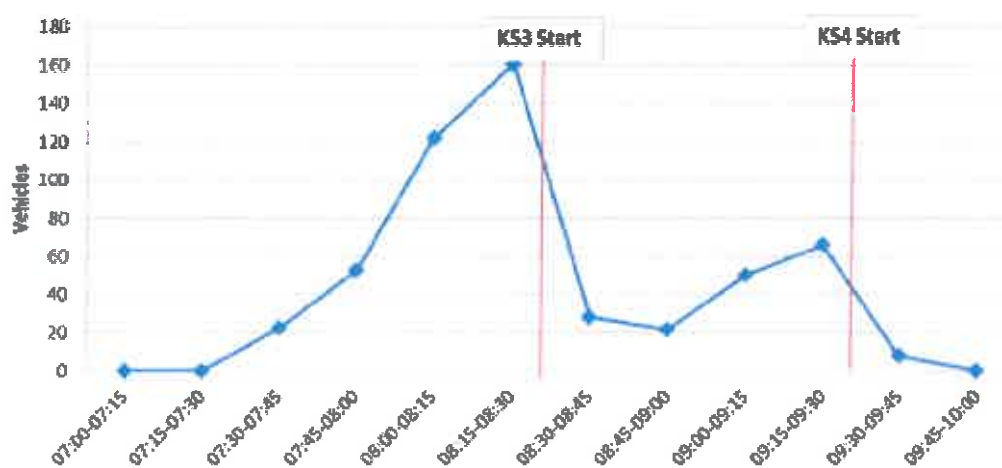
At the outset the College were hoping to be able to reduce the number of staggers from five to two. They identified two possible ways of doing this and these are shown in scenarios 1 & 2. The 3rd scenario, which is the one recommended, merges the final two staggers into one. The three scenarios are shown in the table below:

Start time	Exit time	Scenario 1	Scenario 2	Scenario 3
08:00	14:15	-	-	Year 10
08:30	14:45	Key Stage 3 (Years 7, 8 & 9)	Key Stage 4 (Years 10 & 11)	Year 9
09:00	15:15	-	-	Year 7
09:30	15:45	Key Stage 4 (Years 10 & 11)	Key Stage 3 (Years 7, 8 & 9)	Years 8 & 11
10:00	16:15	-	-	-

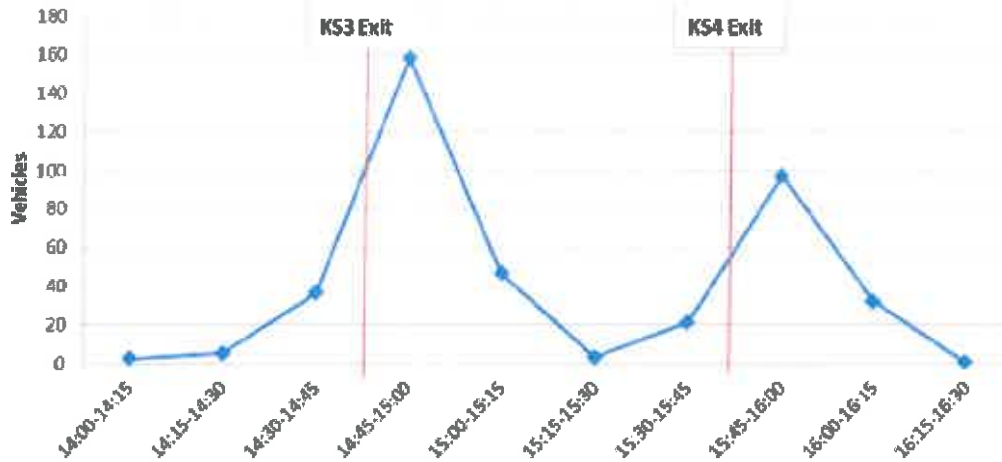
N.B. Although scenario 3 refers to years 8 & 11 arriving and departing at the same time, the proposal is for years 10 & 11 to do so. Given that pupil numbers are the same for each year, this does not materially affect or invalidate the findings of the modelling.

4.2 The results of the modelling clearly demonstrate that reducing the number of staggers will have a significantly harmful impact on the operation of the network, as demonstrated by the following graphs:

AM Pupils Arrivals - Scenario 1



PM Pupils Departures - Scenario 1

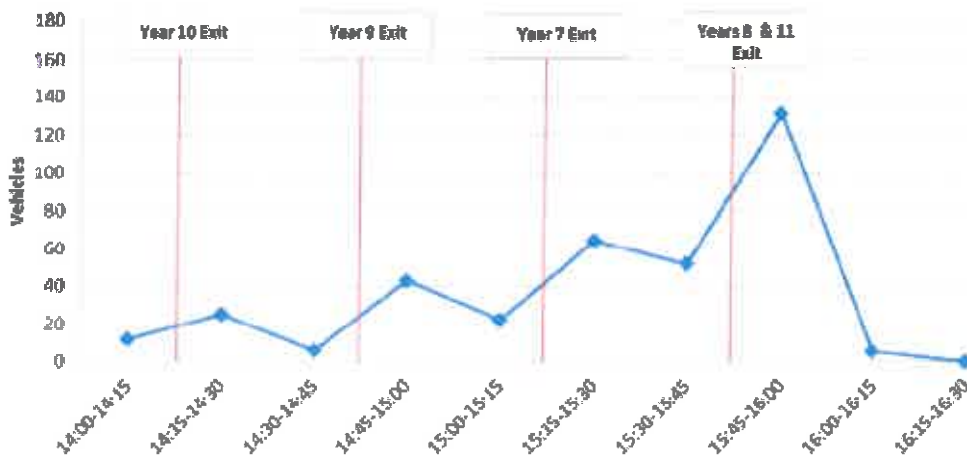


- 4.3 For scenario 2 the height of the peak (160 vehicles per 15 mins) is similar but it would occur between 9 & 9:15 in the morning and between 15:45 and 16:00 in the evening.
- 4.4 In contrast with the results for scenarios 1 and 2, the AM graph for scenario 3 shows no obvious peak, within a consistent distribution between 8:15 & 9:15. There is a significant peak for pupil departures at 15:45 but by 16:15 almost all vehicles would have left and this peak is still 25% below the maximum peaks generated by scenarios 1 & 2 (120 vehicles rather than 160).

AM Pupils Arrivals - Scenario 3



PM Pupils Departures - Scenario 3



5. Benefits of the Reduction in Stagers

5.1 Although the five stagers were agreed at the outset, it was always likely that the College would want to review the effectiveness of this arrangement. Given that it has operated in this way for several terms, it is considered that enough time has elapsed to warrant a review. Having given full consideration to the various options and implications, the College considers that merging the final two stagers will have a number of benefits, which are set out in the document appended to this report. In summary:

- It will free up staff so that some can be deployed to manage pupils leaving at 15:45.
- Staff availability for out-of-hours clubs would be improved. An increase in such clubs would improve attainment but also help manage the amount of pupils leaving at 15:45.
- It will significantly benefit parents with children in different school years, particularly if they happen to have children in years 10 & 11.
- By finishing 30 mins earlier, between late November and mid-January, pupils would be able to leave before it is dark. This significantly improves safety and potentially reduces the number of parents arriving in cars to collect them.
- There is evidence that the late finish has a detrimental impact on learning.

5.2 Given the size of the college and the corporate emphasis on raising academic attainment within the borough, it is considered that substantial weight should be attributed to the identified academic benefits. In addition, there is potential for further weight to be attributed to the benefits to pupil safety. This is considered in more detail in paragraphs 8.5 – 8.7.

6. Policy Context

6.1 Core Strategy policy CSP26 states that all new development will be expected to be designed and built to provide safe, secure and convenient access for all road users.

6.2 Policy CSP41 indicates that we will only allow development in Air Quality Management Areas which could cause more air pollution where the developer provides an assessment that shows there will not be a significantly harmful effect on air quality.

7. Consultations

7.1 Whilst Highways objected to the first two options put forward, which would have reduced the number of stagers to two, they are content that four stagers would not have a significantly adverse impact on highway safety or the free flow of traffic.

7.2 The Air Quality Officer notes that the proposal will not materially affect overall traffic movements and whilst emissions would be concentrated into slightly shorter periods, this is considered not to have a significant impact on air pollution concentrations within the Dodworth Road AQMA.

8. Assessment

Traffic Flows

8.1 This results of the modelling indicate that the greatest impact on the local road network would be likely at the Dodworth Road junction with the Broadway in Scenarios 1 and 2. There are significant increases in modelled journey time, confirming model simulation observations which show this junction operating at/over

capacity due to the increased number of right turning vehicles from Broadway into Dodworth Road at critical times during the peak.

- 8.2 The analysis suggests that the proposed start/exit time changes in Scenario 1 and Scenario 2 are likely to have a significant detrimental impact on the operation of the Dodworth Road / Broadway junction in the AM peak. This is due to the concentration of right turning traffic from Broadway into Dodworth Road during the worst times in the peak period leading to an increase in delay on the Broadway approach. In the PM peak the changes to the leaving times would have minimal impact and it would be unlikely that the network would see a discernible change.
- 8.3 Whilst scenario 3 would lead to increased queues within the college car park in the PM peak when compared to the existing, in contrast to Scenarios 1 and 2, the proposed redistribution in Scenario 3 does not seem to cause a material impact on the network in either of the peaks. Nevertheless, anecdotal evidence suggests that increased queuing within the car park will increase the queue on Dodworth Road westbound, which can often begin as far east as the Shaw Lane junction. However, it is important to note that the queuing in the car park will occur prior to 4pm. As such, there is less likelihood of conflict between school traffic and commuters/shoppers heading home in the early evening.
- 8.4 Further analysis demonstrates that pupils in years 10 & 11 are more likely to use a bus or walk so merging these years is deemed preferable to merging earlier years.

Highway & Pedestrian Safety

- 8.5 The merging of departure times for years 10 & 11 will intensify the number of pupils leaving the site and utilising pedestrian crossings etc, particularly given that they are more likely to walk or use a bus. Although in the winter months there would be clear benefits associated with pupils departing whilst it remains light, at all other times the arrangement has the potential to detrimentally impact on pedestrian safety.
- 8.6 By way of mitigation, the College will place 3 Senior Staff along Dodworth Road at 3.45. These would be located at:
- The front of the College by the traffic island,
 - Broadway Traffic Lights Junction.
 - By the bus stop in front of 247 Dodworth Road (with the instructions to move students to the alternative bus stop with a shelter, away from housing).
- 8.7 The college has also committed to producing a new travel plan, a road safety audit/plan, which will involve South Yorkshire Police and road safety education programmes being timetabled for delivery within school.
- 8.8 Subject to this mitigation, it is considered that the benefits to pupil safety during winter months significantly weigh in favour of the proposed reduction to four staggers.

Air Quality

- 8.9 The proposal will not impact on overall traffic movements and emissions but increased queuing within the car park could have a detrimental impact on air quality. However, the area where cars queue within the car park is relatively remote from residential properties, particularly when compared with the distance between the carriageway and the front elevations of dwellings on Dodworth Road. This area of queuing traffic is also mostly located outside the boundary of the AQMA. Regulatory Services will also continue to measure pollutant concentrations along Dodworth Road to assess long term trends.

9. Conclusion

- 9.1 Whilst the modelling has demonstrated that it would not be possible to reduce the number of staggers from 5 to 2, it has shown that merging the final two staggers would not have a significantly adverse impact on traffic flows. Inevitably there would be some increases in queuing and journey times but this is considered to be outweighed by the benefits to the school, parents and pupils. In addition, to mitigate the impact of two years departing at the same time, a road safety plan can be secured to ensure better management and supervision of pupils leaving the site. Accordingly, it is considered that the proposed reduction to four staggers is acceptable.

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Date: 4th February 2015



Horizon Community College: 4 Day Stagger – Positive impact on highways

Horizon Community College will place 3 Senior Staff along Dodworth Road at 3.45 when we are proposing our two oldest year groups – 10 and 11 will leave:

One at the front of the College by the traffic Island, one by the bus stop – moving students to the alternative bus stop with a shelter, away from housing and one up towards the Broadway Traffic Lights Junction.

Horizon is organising for road safety programmes to run through every year group.

There will be a timetable of extra lessons from 3.45 every day as we run for current Year 11 (see attached timetable for this year which will be replicated for Years 10 and 11 – subjects may vary) which will ensure that, in terms of students leaving school, there will be little difference to the current numbers leaving.

Horizon Community College: 4 Day Stagger – Positive impact on Education

- **Improved focus, behaviour and progress of students**

It is clear that students who currently finish at 4.15 pm struggle to cope with learning at this time. It is too late in the school day and there have been issues with progress and behaviour in the last lesson of the day that are not evident with earlier lessons.

- **Improved opportunities for extended learning beyond the school day**

This will allow targeted intervention (in small groups or individuals) to start at 3.45 pm and will also mean that Year 10 and Year 11 can access similar support. Some students in Year 11 currently have to wait 30 minutes until teachers have finished teaching at 4.15 pm before this type of work can take place (for Year 10 this can be a 2 hour wait!).

- **Improved opportunities for staff to meet and train**

This includes, in particular, improved opportunities for staff across Year 10 and Year 11 to meet and standardise work, as well as better whole staff training opportunities.

- **Improved opportunities for extra-curricular activities for all students**

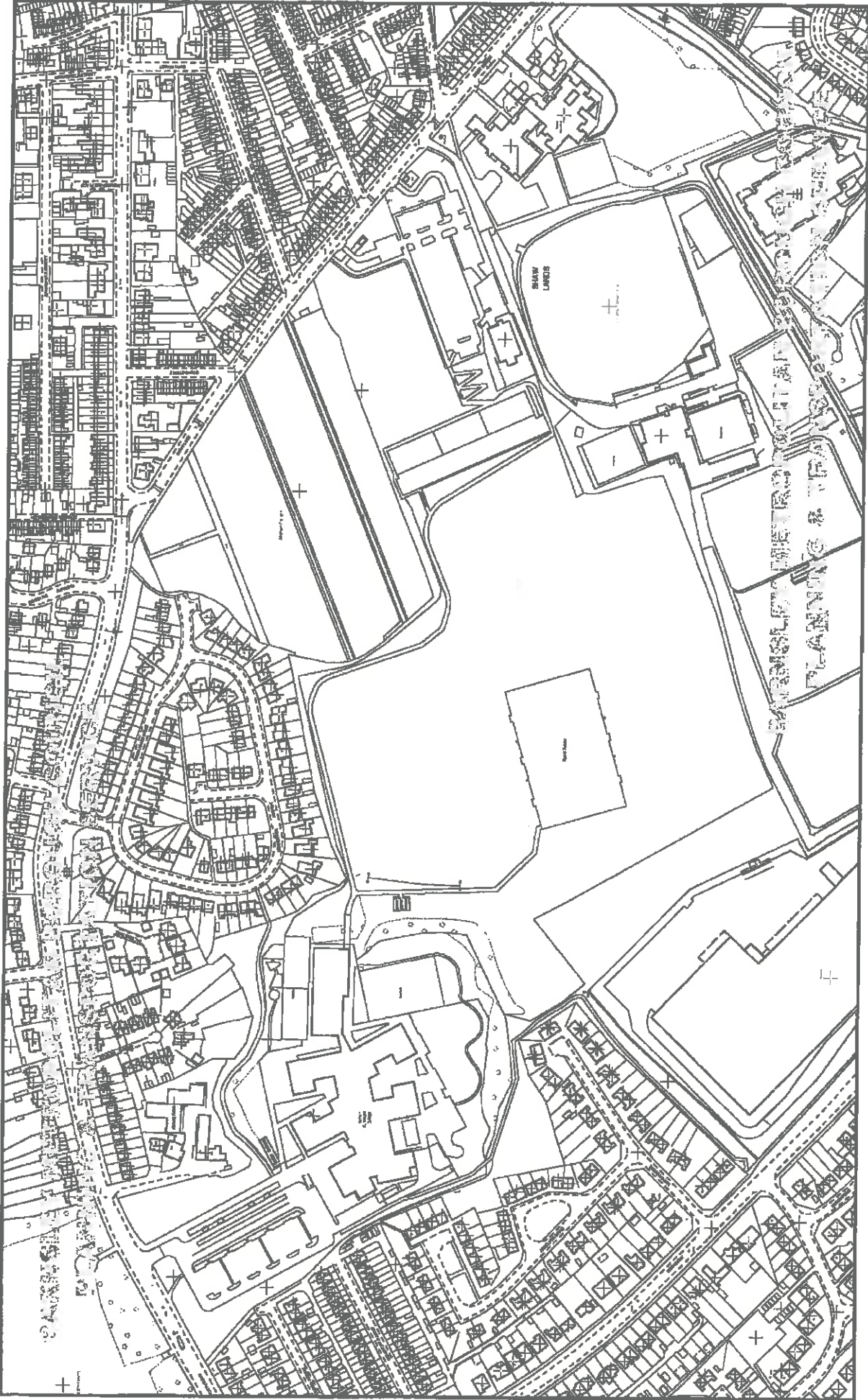
Students currently have to wait until 4.15 pm to take part in extra-curricular activities (this is a 2 hour wait for Year 10).

In summary, there are wide reaching benefits to students in terms of the quality and range of provision, both curricular and extra-curricular, that can be put in place. Staff will have enhanced opportunities to meet and train, and Year 10 and Year 11 will gain from a more consistent and settled Key Stage 4 programme that will enable them to be happy and successful.

The majority of Year 10 and Year 11 students use public transport to get to and from College and I would not anticipate significant disruption to traffic around the College. In order to support the smooth arrival and departure of these two year groups, we would develop systems to ensure that staff were able to support this through being on duty outside the College at these key times. This would ensure that students arrive and leave the site and neighbouring area safely and supervised. We would hope to develop a culture where students chose to arrive early and leave later, taking advantage of the new opportunities that were on offer through focused intervention and extra-curricular activities. This would result in smaller numbers of students arriving and leaving the site at the same time, which would alleviate any potential pressure on Dodworth Road.

23rd March, 2015

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