



4<sup>th</sup> February 2011

Dear Vickie,

Thank you for sending through questions from the subscribers to 'What's in Wapping'. A good source of information about our project to open a new secondary school in or near Wapping is our website [www.wappinghigh.org](http://www.wappinghigh.org). Your subscribers have asked two specific questions:

1. What is the proposed size of the school?
2. Where will the school be located?

Let us try to answer those questions now.

#### What is the proposed size of the school?

According to the Office of National Statistics 700 teenagers currently live in Wapping and approximately 1500 teenagers live in Shadwell. The combined total number of teenagers in Wapping and Shadwell is expected to exceed 3000 by 2014 as the millennium baby boomers become teenagers and due to the decrease in mobility resulting from the financial crisis.

The Trust has applied to open a small co-educational secondary school for between 450 - 600 children using the model of a village comprehensive school. It is clear that a school as small as this would not even cater for all the children in Wapping. However, we expect that a number of parents will still prefer to send their children to other schools for specific reasons (e.g. single sex or faith). Limiting the school size will prevent an influx of children from other areas, there just wouldn't be the spaces.

#### Where will the school be located?

The Trust is working with private landlords and local and central government to identify a suitable site for the school. We are looking at a number of different sites both north and south of the Highway. Our personal preference is Tobacco Dock. This would bring back into use a much loved local building and enable it to be taken off the at risk register. Both English Heritage and LBTH planners appear supportive and we are in discussions with the owners to see if we can agree reasonable rental terms.

John Orwell sports centre has been identified by the LBTH as being the second most suitable council owned site for a secondary school in Tower Hamlets. The Trust is discussing the possibility of locating the new school on this site. There is sufficient unused land within the site to build a new school for up to 450 pupils without any negative impact on the existing sports centre. The sports centre would remain open both day and night for use by the community. At the weekends, holidays and in the evenings the sports centre would expand to make use of school buildings.

[www.wappinghigh.org](http://www.wappinghigh.org)

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It is essential to us that the plans for the new school add value to the local community, of which we are all members. We are doing our utmost to be sensitive to needs of the wider community while trying to resolve the widely recognised lack of provision for education for local youngsters.

Please do keep sending through your questions and ideas.

Kind regards,

Kerstyn & Jon