

Dear Mr Collis and Mr Randall

RE: DEMOLITION SURGERY AT DOWNS INFANT SCHOOL FRIDAY 17th NOVEMBER

We are writing further to the above surgery held at the school last Friday. As you may be aware, over 50 parents and 2 local councillors (Keith Taylor and Kevin Allen) attended this surgery. We attach a copy of the questions that parents wrote down and asked to be forwarded to you in your absence. Please note that these questions have also been sent to the two councillors at their request.

We feel that efforts should be made for the questions to be answered fully by the end of next week, Friday 1st December, with specific efforts made to address this week the questions raised about the current stages of the schedule:

Air quality/pollution and dust mitigation and monitoring Trial pits bore holes and soil testing and the implications of this work

Can you please let us know by this Thursday, 23rd November, when we can expect a response to the questions.

Yours faithfully
Concerned parents of Downs Infant School

Send instant messages to your online friends
<http://uk.messenger.yahoo.com>

Dear parents of Downs Infant School,

In response to your email dated 21st November, and as requested, I now respond to your list of questions pooled from your surgery, held on the 17th November. To simplify matters I have used your numbering system and to avoid repetition I will refer to these throughout.

Provision of information questions: 1, 4, 5, 6, 12, 18, 19, 20, 22, 23, 25, 26, 28, 29, 30, 37, 38, 39, 40, 41, 42

Veolia has always made information available in dedicated literature, on its web site and via a general enquiry line. Information on the proposals for the facility at Hollingdean Lane is freely available and contained within the planning application, as well as in further information on our website, www.veolia.co.uk/southdowns A dedicated helpline has been in operation since 22/09/06.

In response to enquiries from school parents we have undertaken to provide regular updates on information relating to the Hollingdean Lane site in the form of a bulletin. These have been sent out since September to all neighbours to the site, with additional copies sent to Downs Infant School and Downs Junior School. People can subscribe to receive e-copies of our bulletins. These are also available to view on our website. To ensure you get your copy please subscribe by emailing info.southdowns@veolia.co.uk These bulletins have always provided timetables for the works on site. All work of this nature is at the mercy of weather and other operational factors. For this reason, we have made it clear at all times that schedules are subject to change.

We believe that this is the best way to address people's concerns and keep everyone, including the school, informed and up to date; therefore we feel that our communications have been entirely appropriate.

Dust and monitoring questions: 1, 3, 7, 8, 11, 12, 14, 15, 16, 18, 21, 22, 23 24, 26, 27, 30, 33, 38, 39, 41, 42

To ensure that dust levels are well below safe levels monitoring is done twice daily. Details of monitoring and control are contained in issue 3 of the bulletin, which was sent out on 28th November, including 400 copies delivered to Downs Infant School. Please visit our website at www.veolia.co.uk/southdowns for more detailed information on dust controls.

There any external checks/monitoring done to ensure that Veolia is conforming to all guidelines for safe removal of asbestos, noise, dust and other hazards. Routine visits are made by council officers, including Environmental Health and planning officers, in order to assess compliance with the Construction Environmental Management Plan. The site is also regularly inspected by the contractor's internal Health and Safety Inspector. The site has also been visited by an inspector from the Health and Safety Executive, who raised no concerns.

Asbestos questions: 1, 2, 3, 11, 12, 13, 14, 16, 17, 18, 21, 23, 27, 30, 32, 34, 35, 39, 42

Removal of asbestos from old buildings is a common procedure, and our contractors have removed it in accordance with all the relevant procedures and Health and Safety regulations. In the case of notifiable asbestos, this has also been reported to the Health and Safety Executive. This has been detailed in the bulletins.

There is no foreseeable risk to the public of contamination. Our contractor has rigorous safety procedures in place.

We confirm once again that while this work was ongoing it was perfectly safe for the pupils to be outside.

Before notifiable asbestos is removed, the room in question is sealed. Once all works are complete air quality tests are undertaken by specialist companies who give the all clear. Thereafter the demolition can start; please see bulletins 2 and 3.

All contaminated parts of buildings have been treated as hazardous and have already been removed from the site.

All appropriate regulations for the control of asbestos were followed. Where required, the relevant company responsible for notifiable asbestos removal is accredited under the regulations. Routine visits are made by council officers, including Environmental Health and planning officers, in order to assess compliance with the Construction Environmental Management Plan. The site is also regularly inspected by the contractor's internal Health and Safety Inspector. The site has also been visited by an inspector from the Health and Safety Executive, who raised no concerns.

Contaminated land questions: 1, 2, 3, 13, 14, 16, 17, 18, 21, 23, 27, 30, 32, 34, 35, 39, 42

In terms of ground contamination found at the site (and therefore, what may be expected) this is detailed in our planning application, along with all appropriate safety and mitigation measures. We confirm that while this work is ongoing it is perfectly safe for the pupils to be outside.

The site was tested for Anthrax and the results have all been negative.

We are testing in line with the planning conditions and the requirements of Brighton & Hove City Council, the Environmental Health Department and the Environment Agency.

The extra trial pits and bore holes are needed in order to complete soil testing work on those parts of the site which were previously occupied by the buildings, details of which are included in bulletin 3 sent out on 28th November.

Before construction commences, any necessary site remediation will have been carried out. In the unlikely event of a fire no previous site contaminants either from the ground or demolished buildings will cause a pollution hazard.

All this information along with all appropriate safety and mitigation measures are contained in the Environmental Statement, Chapter 8. The statement is on our website at www.veolia.co.uk/southdowns in the facilities section. A full copy of the application is still available on CD on request.

General questions: 6, 9, 10, 31, 42

A planning application was submitted after a full environmental impact assessment was undertaken by independent, qualified and accredited consultants who examined the site and any potential risks in detail. This planning application has received approval from the City Council after it assessed all the facts. There are no grounds for an enquiry or any other evaluation of any risks.

Before work could commence on the site various licences and approvals needed to be obtained from the Environment Agency and the City Council. This took time and therefore we were not able to start with the demolition phase until October.

We have approval from Brighton & Hove City Council's Environmental Health Department for our Construction Environmental Management Plan. This plan states the specific measures which will be taken to ensure that we contain and monitor dust and noise, both on site and in the local area during the demolition phase.

Traffic, noise and odours have been fully investigated within the environmental impact assessment and are detailed in the planning application's environmental statement. The statement is on our website at www.veolia.co.uk/southdowns in the facilities section. A full copy of the application is still available on CD on request. There is also summary literature available to view on the website or a hard copy is available on request.

With regards to rodents, once the facility is taking waste there are set procedures and ways of handling waste materials that are specifically designed to stop rodents. This will be monitored and controlled in accordance with the site operating licence, which will need to be issued by the Environment Agency before the site can commence operations.

The site, as with all commercial sites, has a full fire risk and emergency plan in place for the demolition, construction and final operation of the facility.

Noise Questions: 14, 26, 33

With regard to noise, the works are carried out to the requirements of the Environmental Health Department and the planning conditions. The protocol requires that there be one check per phase. There are only two phases (regarding noise) during the demolition: 1 – the demolition itself & 2 - during crushing. Further details on noise will be provided in the next bulletin.

I hope that the above answers have addressed the concerns of those parents who asked questions. I urge people to read the currently available information, as detailed in the first two paragraphs, as this is extensive and informative. Copies of the full planning application are also available on request, together with hard copies of literature. For those people who want to be kept up to speed on the development of the Hollingdean Lane site the best way to do this is to subscribe to an e-copy via our website at www.veolia.co.uk/southdowns or by email at info.southdowns@veolia.co.uk