



CHANNELING POSITIVITY

Michael Edwards
Councillor, Bridge ward
Nottingham City Council
LH Box 28
Loxley House
Station Street
Nottingham
NG2 3NG

17 March 2016

Dear Councillor Edwards

We were informed last week that you had submitted an objection to the application being considered by Nottingham City Council with regards to the change of use of Riverside Building from B1/B8 to D1 for educational purposes.

As you are aware we have been operating from this site since September as a school, working in partnership with local secondary schools to provide a service offering an alternative education for students who, for a wide variety of reasons, fail to succeed in their mainstream setting.

It is unfortunate that we did not manage to arrange a visit to school after your initial contact with us in August as I think you would find our education setting of interest to you as Bridge ward Councillor.

I thought it would be helpful to alleviate some of the concerns expressed in your objection.

We are not in a position to comment on the future plans the Council may have had for this area but we are located in a small industrial area with established businesses so it would appear unlikely that any major changes to this area would be made easily. Our business neighbours understand our school ethos and the high expectations we have for our students and have supported us with school events like BBC Children in Need and support our employability ethos around work experience placements for our students.

We purchased the warehouse from Paul Smith. It had been marketed for a number of years without any interest and was only housing out of season clothing; there was no-one employed on the site. Our understanding is that this had been the case for at least 4 years. We have already created 11 jobs at school. This will increase to 17 over the next 24 months. These jobs are at a variety of levels and of the 11 employees recruited for September 2015, 3 were out of work at the time of applying and 8 are Nottingham or Nottinghamshire residents. We believe we are creating new jobs promoting the economic viability of your Ward.

Our focus with our students is also about employability; spending time which mainstream schools do not have, preparing these students for employment and providing them with the employability skills they need to gain employment, an apprenticeship or be successful in their post-16 choices; this is a key strategic driver for the school – positive post-16 destinations. Our aim is to equip students with the tools to help them to become economically independent.

The demographics of our commissioners and students demonstrate that we are meeting a need across the City and County. We are currently working with 10 commissioners, 4 from the City and 6 from the County, however 74% of our students are City residents and of these 13% are resident in Bridge ward. Our aim is to provide a service to commissioners' south of the City as this is where there is limited or no provision for the most vulnerable students. The location of our building lends itself to many easy routes for student access with local buses and the tram in easy walking distance. The majority of our students use public transport to come to school with some students and staff making use of the excellent cycle routes to school. A transport plan for every student is considered with their commissioner; we have not experienced any concerns around access to the site by students.

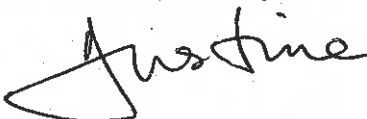
The school has been covered in the press on several occasions especially around the securing of the site and the opening of the provision. We have made contact with local services including the Community Policing and local Police station, the local Primary School and have had visits to school by local community residents. We have been approached by local residents around employment opportunities and work experience and last term assisted a local resident on a Job Centre scheme to return to work providing her with a placement for 6 weeks.

I am sure there are ways we can do more to build our relationship with the local community including making our facilities available, once completed, to community groups. We would be very open to discuss these with you and ensure we play a part in the community we are located.

The Channeling Positivity Trust and I have worked tirelessly to secure this provision for our students. We believe passionately that there is a need for some young people to be educated in a different environment to a mainstream school to ensure they can achieve.

I hope this letter will be the start of a positive relationship and I would like to invite you to the school to see for yourself what our aspirations are. To this end I have listed my contact details below.

Yours faithfully



Justine Drury

Principal

Channeling Positivity

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