



St. Peter's CofE Voluntary Aided Primary School

The school was opened in 1870 in a building to the south of the St. Peter's Church just 4 years after its foundation. The school is shown above and again below in about 1907.



In 1893 there were 66 children registered in the school and it was extended. By 1899 there were 200 pupils and in the early 20th century the school was split into two departments - mixed juniors and infants. In 1908 there were 129 juniors and 88 infants. The buildings were extended once more between 1911 and 1912. By 1950 there were a total of 208 pupils and aided status was granted in 1951. The school then became known as St. Peter's Church of England Aided School. In 1955 there were 203 children in the register.

After the closure of the Grammar School in 1969 St. Peter's was able to use part of the large buildings. In January 1973 there were 233 pupils and the figure in 2002 was 278. By 2008 the Diocesan Board of Education reported that "St Peter's is the only Voluntary Aided Primary School (age 4 to 11) in the town. It is small, having 95 pupils on roll, of which 89% are of white British heritage.



There is a higher than average proportion of children with additional needs and mobility is also higher than average. Discussions about a possible relocation have been pending for some time". The Bath Road side of Devizes has limited room for expansion and with falling birth rates the number of children living locally has declined.

With the uncertainty in the future of the Church (St Peter's Church website) the school will probably relocate by 2015 and the large school site, owned mainly by the Salisbury Dioceses, sold for development.

Below is a photo of the present home of the St. Peter's Voluntary aided Primary School. It has an interesting history as part of the old state Devizes Grammar School.



St. Pete's School from the Air c2011

Hunt Begins for Devizes School Site Buyer

The sale of St. Peter's Primary School will not be completed until the school has moved

The search for a buyer for St. Peter's Primary School site in Devizes has begun.

Salisbury Diocesan Board of Education, which is building a school costing up to £4m near new homes in Quakers Walk, decided it was best to start marketing the existing site now.

Simon Franklin, project development officer at the board, said: "We will not be completing the sale until the school moves. We don't want a site that is derelict for an extended period after the school has moved on."

Offers of interest need to be submitted to Savills estate agents in Wimborne by July 14.

There are no listed buildings on the 1.85 acres of land in Bath Road, and Savills said the site has the potential for houses or a care home, subject to planning permission.

Mr Franklin said: "The original plan was to have gone to the market with an established planning consent, but it was uncertain what the best use of the site would be, whether for residential development or a care home or somewhere in between.

"The best option is to let the market decide."

He added that it was anticipated contracts would be exchanged with a buyer in September, followed by an application for planning permission, with the completion date when the school relocates before Easter 2012.

The cost of the new school will be between £3.5 million and £4 million and Mr Franklin said the sale of the current school site would pay for it.

He said the intention was for Taylor Made Nursery, which occupies the building behind St. Peter's Church, to remain on the site and to transfer ownership of the building to Wiltshire Council.

Gazette and Herald, 25 June 2011

Homes Plan for Devizes School Site Agreed

A FORMER Devizes School, where children were taught for more than 140 years, is now to be turned into 26 homes.

Wiltshire Council has given outline planning permission for the former St Peter's Primary in Bath Road, which backs on to the Kennet and Avon Canal, to be developed.

The old school that originally opened in 1870 will be converted and extra homes will be built at the back. Access on to Bath Road will also be modified as part of the plan.

The site is owned by the Diocesan Board of Education and will now be marketed with planning permission by Savills.

Paul Spong, from Savills South Coast Development, said: "Since the school moved to the Trinity School at Quakers Walk in 2012, the site has deteriorated and become something of an eyesore, so I'm sure residents of Devizes will all welcome the redevelopment of this important local landmark site. "We are expecting it to generate considerable interest from the market, largely due to the site's location in the town and proximity to the canal."

His firm will be accepting best and final offers for the 1.85 acre site, which includes the main school block, additional outbuildings, classrooms, playground, field and a car park, until noon on July 10.

Devizes Town Council did not object to the plans and Devizes Trust wrote to Wiltshire Council to applaud the architects for their sensitive approach to developing the building.

In a letter it said: "The proposed property density suits the site and provides a good number of dwellings that supports the Devizes Neighbourhood plan in utilising a brown-field site. Circulation space appears suitable giving an open

feel to the development and enhances the canal side view as well.

"We are delighted that the developers in this case have found a way of keeping the school main structure which is vital to preserve the ethos of the town."

The original St Peter's National School opened in 1870, four years after the church of the same name, the town's fourth Anglican church, was built next door.

As new homes sprang up along Bath Road and Avon Road, the school prospered, moving into the adjoining Edwardian grammar school buildings when it moved to the Green.

The school had a history of long-serving head teachers. Percival Greed, who was mayor of Devizes twice, was headmaster at St Peter's for 38 years between 1932 and 1970, replacing another long-serving head, Sammy White.

But by 2004 numbers at the school had fallen dramatically and it was decided a new school would be built on the other side of town as part of the new Quakers Walk development.

This is Wiltshire, 26 May 2015