

WORK ON WOKING'S NEW YOUTH CENTRE & SCHOOLS WILL BEGIN SOON - PROMISE!

Iain Wakeford 2019

Last week we looked at new school buildings to the east of the borough – now I want to turn to the centre, where new school provision in the late 1960's was a major talking point.

At Maybury, the old Monument Hill School built between Alpha & Beta Roads was utterly outdated by the late 1960's. In the summer of 1965 the Development Control Sub-Committee at Surrey County Council had suggested that a new junior and infant school should be built off the nearby Maybury Estate. With places for 560 pupils it would not necessarily cater for more children, but the conditions in the school (when it was eventually built), were to be a marked improvement on its old Edwardian predecessor.

In January 1968 it was announced that work would soon begin on the new £74,000, 'Park School', replacing the old army huts on the site that had once been the Girls' Grammar School (and before that, during the First World War, the home of the Army Pay Corps).

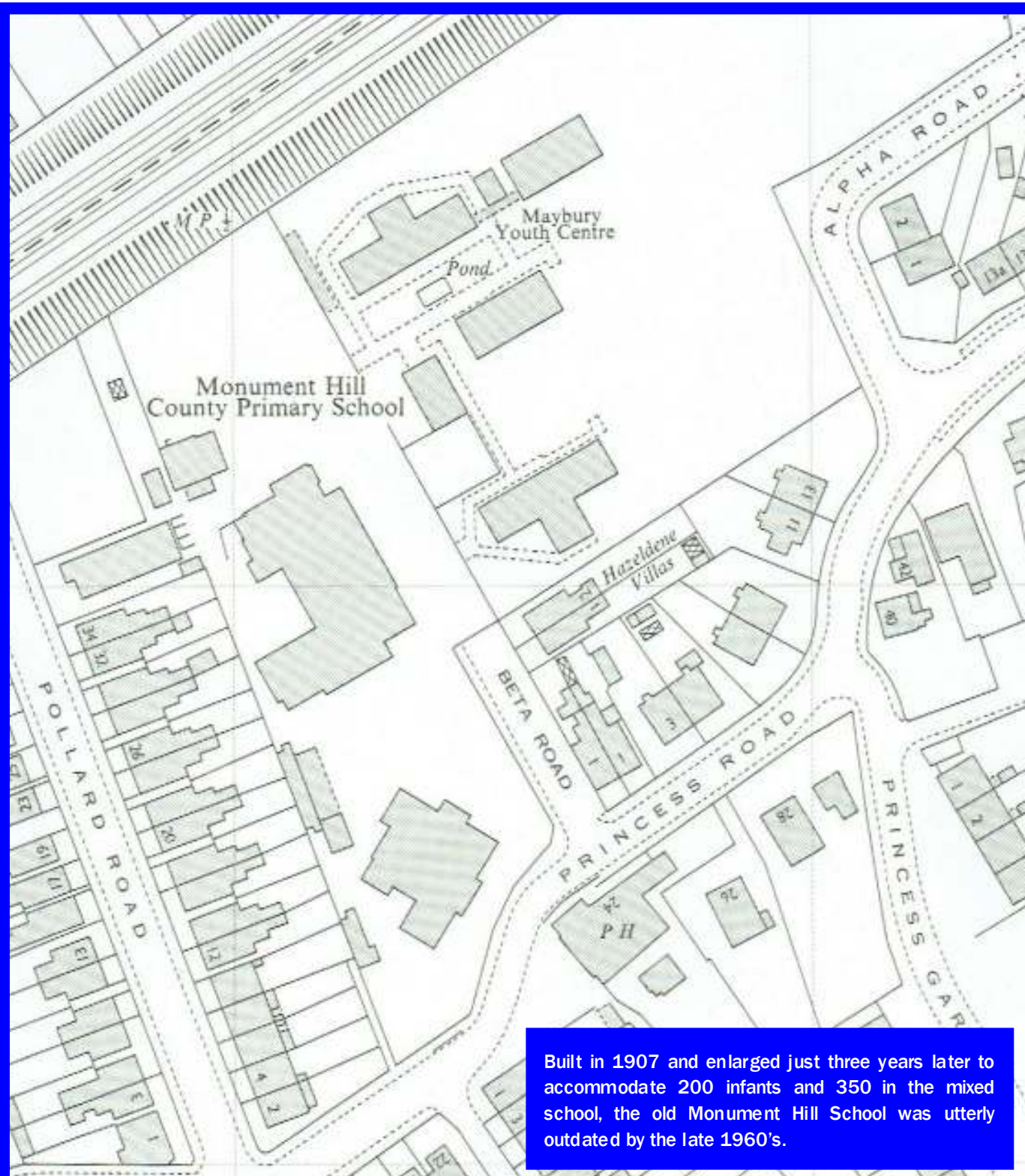


Monument Hill Central School (Class 6), 1929

The new school, with places for 120 special needs children meant that the Youth Centre on the site had to move to 'temporary' accommodation in the old Territorial Drill Hall in Walton Road, before a proposed new centre could be built on the Brewery Road Car Park in Horsell.

The problem, as is often the case in Woking, was that the scheme for the car park site was perhaps a little too ambitious. As well as the Youth Centre, the plans released in February 1968 also included a new Y.M.C.A hostel, a restaurant, multi-storey car park and even a petrol service station on the site - which as you can possibly imagine was not supported by the majority of those in the neighbourhood.

What was approved of by Horsell Resident's Association, however, was the new 280-place Church of England Primary School in Meadway Drive. Its construction had been in Surrey County Council's plans as far back as 1957, but it was not until the autumn of 1967 that work



Built in 1907 and enlarged just three years later to accommodate 200 infants and 350 in the mixed school, the old Monument Hill School was utterly outdated by the late 1960's.

Originally army huts during the First World War, and then used by the Girls Grammar School until their move to the Old Woking Road in the mid 1950's, these buildings were eventually to be demolished and replaced by the new Park School in 1968.



began. The new £80,000 school would cater for 226 pupils aged from five to six and from nine to ten, with 216 children in the middle age range remaining at the old school on Church Hill.

For almost as long there had been plans to build a new Secondary School in Horsell, on the former allotments off Morton Road, bought by the County Council in 1960 for £27,000. A couple of years later it seemed that work was progressing with the laying out of the playing fields – although local residents at the time may not have thought that the work was progressing that well, as Morton Road was turned into a quagmire. A number of cars were apparently marooned in the mud caused by the contractor's lorries, one of which itself got stuck and had to be 'bodily lifted out again'!

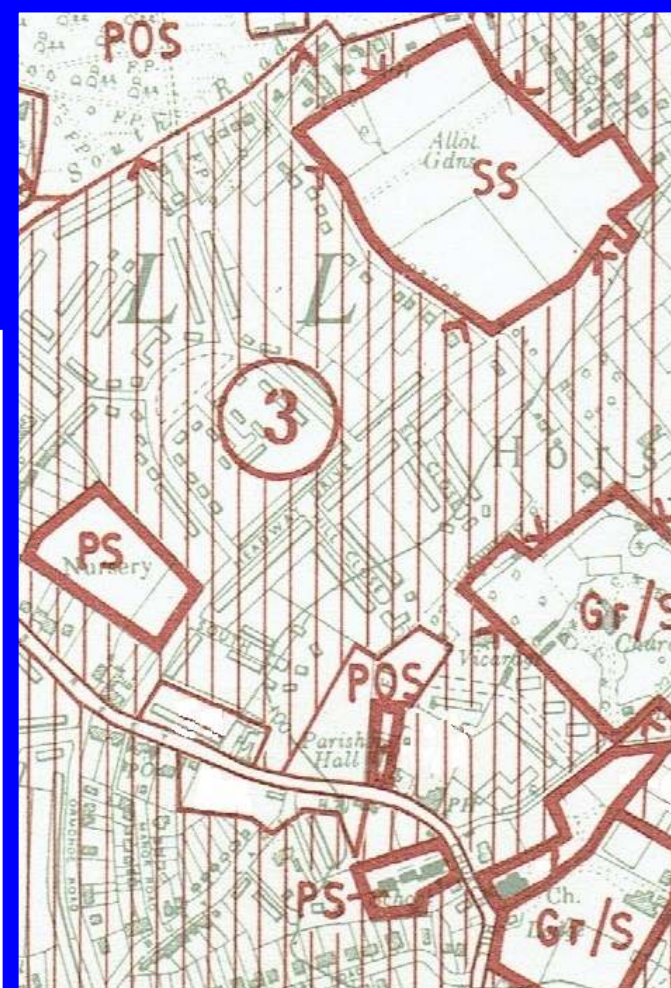
But delays in County Council funding, Woking Education Committee's indecision and changes

The Revised Structure Plan of 1968 shows the site of the proposed new Secondary School (SS) on the allotments site off Morton Road, with the new Primary School (PS) in Meadway Drive (and the old Primary School on Church Hill).

The Grounds of the two private schools (Gr/S) are also shown and the Public Open Spaces (POS) of Horsell Common and Elizabeth Gardens.

to Government policy, meant that work on the actual buildings (which were to replace the old Edwardian Goldsworth Secondary School) were again delayed - much to the annoyance of one local Labour councillor, who got himself in hot water in 1965 when he claimed the council had abandoned plans to replace the 'slum school' at Goldsworth in favour of a new Boys Grammar School in Rydens Way.

In January 1968 it was announced that work on the 700 place school would start within the next couple of years, with pupils being transferred not only from Goldsworth but also from Chobham's Secondary School, which was now set to close – much to the astonishment of those in the village.



The new £80,000 Primary School in Meadway Drive was officially opened in October 1969, the old school on Church Hill (pictured here) being retained as an Annex.

