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28 June 2021

Local School Heads
Parents, Staff and Governors via Parentmail at Local Schools
Local Councillors (County Council, District Council and Town/Parish Council)
West Sussex Multi-Academy Trust Organisation
Local Early Years Settings
The Diocese of Chichester
The Diocese of Arundel and Brighton
Officers from West Sussex County Council
Officers from Mid Sussex District Council
Officers from East Sussex County Council
DfE Lead Contact for Free School Presumptions

VIA EMAIL

Dear Education Stakeholder,

Re: New education provision to serve the growing population of Central and South Mid Sussex and in particular the Burgess Hill Northern Arc housing development

Online response form available from 28 June to 26 July 2021: www.westsussex.gov.uk/burgesshill

Aim

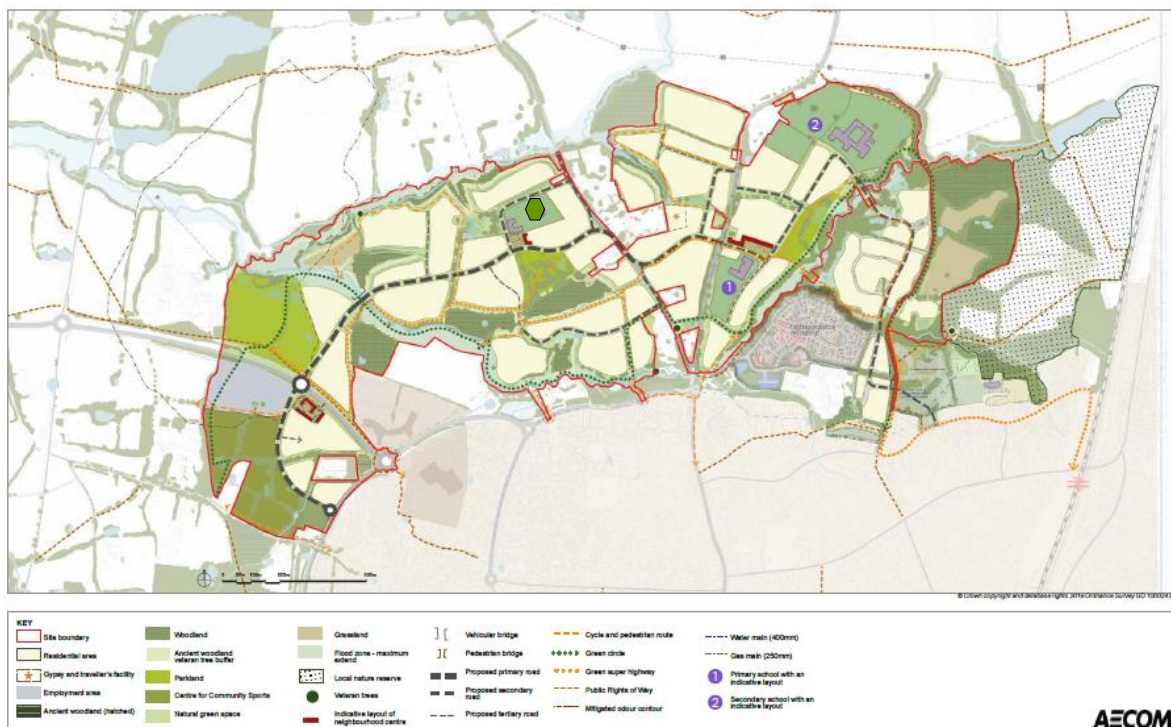
West Sussex County Council would like to hear your views on the building of a new all through free school (for children aged 4 – 16) with additional Early Years and Special Educational Needs and Disabilities facilities over two sites in the Burgess Hill area. This is in response to significant housing development to the North of Burgess Hill known as the Burgess Hill Northern Arc and a large number of smaller developments in the Haywards Heath and Hassocks area. We would like to hear your views on the proposed specification of the school and what kind of sponsor you would like to see run the facilities.

This is a preliminary consultation relating specifically to the future sponsor of the all through primary and secondary school. Separate consultation will be held at a later date on the design of the school when this is-considered by the local planning authority (Mid Sussex District Council).

Background

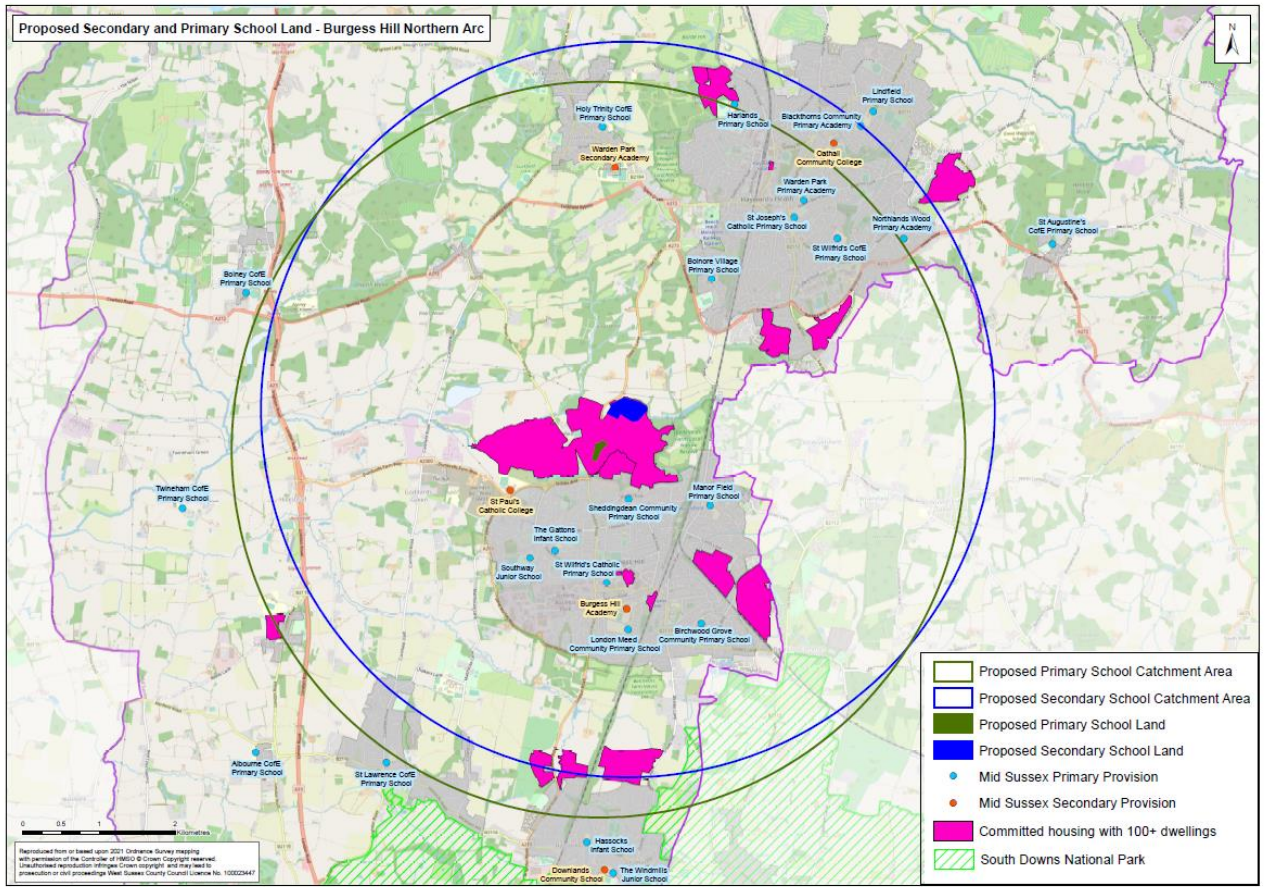
Construction has started on part of an urban extension to the north of Burgess Hill known as the Burgess Hill Northern Arc for which outline planning permission has been granted. The Freeks Farm development to the north east, which is a separate planning application but forms part of the first phase, has already commenced with the first occupations of houses expected by the end of this year. It is planned that a new all through school (for pupils aged 4 – 16) will be built across two sites to serve this community and we would like your views on what kind of school this should be (the primary phase site is marked 1 and the secondary site marked 2 on the masterplan below). There is a second primary school site but this is beyond the scope of this exercise and not likely to be built a number of years into the development.

NORTHERN ARC MASTERPLAN, BURGESS HILL



The County Council plans to seek expressions of interest for a sponsor in September 2021. Based on local views, and the recommendation of educationalists and local politicians, the County Council will recommend to the Secretary of State for Education who should run the new school. It is the Secretary of State that takes the final decision on who sponsors the school.

Map showing current schools, committed housing and the likely areas the school will serve both at primary and secondary phase



Capacity in the local area

The following table shows the growth in numbers at schools serving the North of Burgess Hill, both primary and secondary. There are similar patterns in Haywards Heath and Hassocks which is adding to pressures for school places across South Mid Sussex.

School	Actual NOR*			Forecast NOR*				Capacity**
	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024	
Sheddingdean Primary	183 (87%)	188 (89%)	208 (99%)	226 (108%)	255 (121%)	303 (144%)	338 (160%)	210
Manor Field Primary School	490 (78%)	504 (80%)	522 (82%)	528 (83%)	556 (88%)	585 (92%)	621 (98%)	630
The Gattons Infant School	264 (97%)	270 (100%)	276 (102%)	267 (99%)	264 (97%)	264 (97%)	276 (102%)	270

Southway Junior School	353 (93%)	352 (92%)	353 (93%)	355 (93%)	357 (94%)	365 (96%)	363 (95%)	378
St Paul's Catholic College	1116 (100%)	1130 (101%)	1149 (104%)	1225 (110%)	1302 (117%)	1338 (120%)	1385 (125%)	1110
The Burgess Hill Academy	800 (63%)	885 (69%)	946 (74%)	1054 (83%)	1153 (91%)	1221 (96%)	1273 (100%)	1274

*NOR is the Number on Roll

**The Authority aims for a 5% buffer in capacity for parental preference/changes in demography.

Proposed option – a new free school – advantages and disadvantages

The building of 3,500 houses to the north of Burgess Hill has provided the opportunity to secure three new school sites as part of the development and funding towards a new secondary school building. The master developer, Homes England, have agreed with the County Council to build and deliver the two new primary school buildings and contribute substantially financially to the building by the County Council of a secondary school.

The benefits of having new schools are that school places will be created nearer new homes therefore reducing school journeys. New school buildings can be designed to meet current curriculum guidance and building regulations. Existing schools are able to continue without disruption and a new school provides another option to meet further growth in pupil numbers if required. A school is also a focal point for building a new community.

Disadvantages include that the school is untested whereas existing schools are already established with a good track record. There are also increased overheads in creating a new institution.

Specification (or characteristics) of the new school

We would value your views on the specification of the school. Here are some of the factors which you may wish to comment on or express a preference for which we will consider when commissioning the school.

- Type of provider to run the school;
 - Examples might include a parent group, faith group, an existing local school or group of schools, a large academy chain, a school with international connections, a school with a particular ethos such as Montessori or Steiner
- The number of places the school should cater for;

- It is expected that the Burgess Hill Northern Arc will include 3500 homes. WSCC anticipate that the school would need to cater for 420 pupils between the ages of 4 and 11 (a 2 form of entry primary school phase) and 900 pupils between the ages of 11 and 16 (a 6 form of entry secondary school phase)
- Whether the secondary phase of the school should be built in one or two phases and whether the primary phase should open with just one class and then grow or whether all classes should be opened straightaway;
 - The development will take around 17 years to complete.
- The age range of the school;
- The area the school is expected to serve;
- How pupils would get to the site;
- The date on which the school should open;
- Any extended services required;
- Any dedicated provision for children with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities;
 - It is intended that the school would provide a Special Support Centre at both the primary and secondary phase of the school catering for children with social and communication needs. This often serves children who are on the Autistic Spectrum Continuum
- Early Years/Pre School provision.
 - Although the school would cater for 4-16 year olds, it is intended that the primary school phase would also offer pre-school nursery provision for up to 50 children

School Designations and Definitions

There are a number of designations for schools which affect the governance and funding arrangements. Below are the main types of maintained school and their differences. You may wish to express a preference in your response.

Providing a new school is more complex than it was in the past and reflects the changing role of the Local Authority from a provider to commissioner of services. There is now a presumption in favour of academies/free schools and voluntary aided schools.

	Academy or Free School	Voluntary Aided	Voluntary Controlled	Community*
Ownership of buildings	Trustees	Church Trustees or Governors	Church Trustees or Governors	County Council
Ownership of playing fields	Trustees	County Council	County Council	County Council
Responsibility for Admission	Governors	Governors	County Council	County Council

Policy				
Employer of Staff	Trustees	Governors	County Council	County Council
Revenue funding	Education and Skills Funding Agency	County Council	County Council	County Council
Leadership and Management	Headteacher and Governors	Headteacher and Governors	Headteacher and Governors	Headteacher and Governors

*The Education and Inspections Act 2006 as amended by the Education Act 2011 restricts the establishment of any new Community Schools. This model is only available if providers from other categories of school do not come forward. There is a presumption in favour Academy/Free Schools or Voluntary Aided Schools.

Funding

Capital funding is being sought by internal business case and bids for grant funding available from the County Council for 'basic need'. In addition, monies have been secured by a contract (known as a S106 agreement) with Homes England for the secondary school and Homes England are going to procure and build the primary and early years facilities. The aim is that the Local Authority will forward fund the secondary school from its Capital Programme 2022/3.

Timeframes

No decision has been made yet on the specification for the school(s) and the earliest that a new school building could open, or an alternative option could come into effect, is September 2023 for the primary phase and September 2024 for the secondary phase.

Online survey and other ways to make your views known

An online survey is available on www.westsussex.gov.uk/burgesshill

The deadline for receiving your views online is Monday 26 July 2021.

Alternatively, you can leave your comments at any of the school offices in the area and they will be passed to the School Organisation Team in Chichester to inform next steps. If you prefer you can send letters to: -

The School Organisation Team
Ground Floor Northleigh
County Hall Campus

Chichester
West Sussex PO19 0RE

If you have any concerns or queries or wish to discuss the initial proposals further you can contact schoolconsultations@westsussex.gov.uk or telephone 0330 222 3046.

The deadline for receipt is Monday 26 July 2021.

Response Form

1. I am a – Parent/Guardian
Staff Member
Pupil
Governor
Other
(if other, please provide further information)
If a parent or pupil please write current year group

2. I would prefer the School to be an
Academy or Free School
Voluntary Aided
Voluntary Controlled
...Community

3. Please make any other comments below

(Please continue on a separate sheet or overleaf if required)

What happens next?

1. Establish a specification for the new school through this consultation. June/July/Aug 2021.
2. Expressions of interest are sought from providers based on the specification. Sept/Oct 2021.
3. A County Council Panel/Cabinet Member for Education recommends a provider to the Secretary of State for Education. Nov/Dec 2021.
4. The Secretary of State selects a proposer to take the new school forward.

Further Information

The following websites provide more information on issues discussed in this document.

<https://www.newschoolsnetwork.org/set-up-a-free-school/local-authority-presumption-competitions>

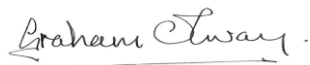
<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/establishing-a-new-school-free-school-presumption>

<https://www.burgesshill.net/housing/northern-arc>

<https://www.facebook.com/northern.arc.BH>

Your views are important to us and we look forward to hearing from you.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Graham Olway".

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Education and Skills Directorate