worcestershire county council

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Requester: Demi Parsons

Environmental Sustainability Full Impact Assessment
Impact Assessment Id: #237

1.0 Screening Information

Project Name
New Worcester City Secondary School

Name of Project Sponsor
Sarah Wilkins

Name of Project Manager
Lucy Langdon

Name of Project Lead
Sarah Wilkins

Please give a brief description of the project
Delivery of a new secondary school on site at Newtown Road to meet the needs of Worcester City families and allow us to provide a 5% surplus across the Education Planning Area.

Data Protection screening result
Will require a full impact assessment

Equality and Public Health screening result
Will require a full impact assessment

Environmental Sustainability screening result
Will require a full impact assessment

1.1 Background and Purpose

Background and Purpose of Project?
To support your answer to this question, you can upload a copy of the project's Business Case or similar document.
The provision of places for secondary school pupils in the Worcester City Education Planning Area is the key mainstream sufficiency risk in Worcestershire over the next five years. Mitigating this risk is necessary to meet our statutory and strategic aims over the next five years.

We have seen that the number of children seeking a year seven place in Worcester City has been consistently increasing over the last decade. The population of Worcester continues to grow, with increasing cohort numbers due to enter year seven over the next six years, as well as substantial housing planned for the City and surrounding area as part of the South Worcestershire Development Plan. In Autumn 2020 there were fewer than 10 spare places in year seven across the City, which represents a 0.7% surplus.

Across any Education Planning Area in Worcestershire we seek to maintain a 5% surplus of places. This is an important factor to meeting the strategic aims as outlined in the Worcestershire Education and Skills Strategy (2019 – 2024) and ensures:
• Families have an element of choice and increase the likelihood that families receive one of their top two preferences;
• all children who move into the City during the school year are offered provision within 20 days; and
• all children who want to access a place in their local community are able to do so, reducing school travel times.

The oversubscription criteria of schools favour pupils living closest to the school when oversubscribed from in-catchment or feeder schools. Therefore, schools on the outskirts of Worcester City are disproportionally affected by this strain, notably children living within Warndon Villages, Warndon, Claines, and looking into the future, those families moving onto housing developments on the outskirts of the City. We have seen a year on year decline in pupils at schools in these areas receiving an offer for their preference secondary school.

The growth of housing in the City will be particularly focused on the South and South East, which is supported by two secondary schools; Nunnery Wood High and Blessed Edward Oldcorne Catholic. The rise in population in this region is expected to continue with significant housing developments approved in the South Worcester Urban Expansion land allocation. Provision in the South is currently below forecast need for the next five years, with demand approximately four forms of entry (120 places) higher than these two secondary schools can currently support.

The level of additional places required provides us with an opportunity to deliver a new secondary school to meet short-term and long-term growth of Worcester City.

The provision of a new Secondary School in the City would meet the sufficiency needs of Worcester and allow us to provide a 5% surplus across the Education Planning Area.

The provision of a new Secondary School to meet this need was approved by Cabinet on 4th February 2021.

This project aligns to the Council's requirement to:
• The Local Authority's statutory requirements to provide a sufficiency of school places;
• The ability of the Worcestershire County Council to meet the aims agreed within the Education and Skills Strategy
• Providing local schools which can be accessed by active travel routes is key to the Council's core priorities of 'Protecting the Environment' as set out in our Corporate Plan 'Shaping Worcestershire's Future 2017 to 2022

Upload Business Case or Support documents

No files uploaded

Project Outputs

Briefly summarise the activities needed to achieve the project outcomes.
The project output will be a new 4FE secondary school in Worcester City with a mainstream autism base and sports facilities available for use by the community. This will be delivered via a number of workstreams:
• Land, procurement and delivery - acquisition of suitable land and construction
• Education - Academy Sponsor selection and consideration of educational requirements of the school (e.g. inclusivity)
• Communication and engagement - stakeholder management and consultation
• Legal
• Mitigating school places - ensuring sufficiency of school places in Worcester

Project Outcomes

Briefly summarise what the project will achieve.
• Sufficiency of school places for all secondary age pupils in Worcester City
• A reduction in travel times and car use for secondary age pupils travelling to school
• Certainty that all pupils in Worcester City can attend a secondary school in their community
• Longevity of secondary school sufficiency in Worcester in line with housing growth
• Increase in jobs for school staff in Worcester
• Increased inclusivity for pupils with autism

Is the project a new function/service or does it relate to an existing Council function/service?

Existing

Was consultation carried out on this project?

No

1.2 Responsibility

Directorate/Organisation

Worcestershire Children First

Service Area

Education and Early Help

1.3 Specifics

Project Reference (if known)

Not Recorded

Intended Project Close Date *

September 2025

1.4 Project Part of a Strategic Programme

Is this project part of a strategic programme?

No

2 Greenhouse Gas Emissions

Could the project result in an increase in GHG emissions (including CO2)? Yes

Please be mindful that the Council has committed to reduce its GHG emissions to zero by 2050 and most projects are likely to have an impact on this target. This should be a key consideration in your project delivery and should be reviewed when completing the assessment.

Please explain your answer below:

- The project will aim to achieve a sustainable net zero carbon building in line with the Councils's objectives by 2050
- Greenhouse gas emissions could be increased as a result of transport, build and efficiency of operation
- Construction could produce greenhouse gases, but in the operation of the school we will be using sustainable energy methods and consider opportunities through the project (procurement, meetings etc, materials storage to reduce delivery trips etc.)
- Reduction of car use by delivering the school in the local community
- Ongoing review through design/delivery of opportunities for emissions reduction
- Site waste management

Have you undertaken an assessment of the project to know if there will likely be an increase in GHG emissions? No

Please explain your answer below:

Not recorded

3 Resources

Will the project result in increased consumption of electricity, gas or other heating fuels? Yes

e.g. project may require use of additional buildings, lighting and heating in buildings, additional ICT equipment, etc.

Please explain your answer below:

The delivery of a new school will result in an increase in consumption of electricity. However, the school is required due to an increase in pupils who will result in an increase in consumption at the new school or at an existing school. It is not proposed that gas will be connected to the school - if required for science labs then a small solution will be created.

Will the project reduce energy needs and result in reduced consumption? Yes

e.g. disposal of WCC property assets

Will the project require additional water resources leading to an increase in water consumption? No

e.g. increased use of water through construction processes

Might there be a decrease in water consumption? Yes

e.g. will the project involve water saving measures or initiatives

Please explain your answer below:

We will seek to:
Low water use/ waterless fittings and appliances, while considering maintenance challenges
Provide sub metering to monitor high water use areas/ equipment
Recycled rainwater for irrigation
Recycled rainwater for flushing WCs & other potable water uses - review embodied impact and LCC
Recycled greywater for irrigation - review feasibility and embodied impact.
Grey water management - reed beds etc
Identify a surface water strategy with measures to mitigate climate change beyond statutory requirements, integrated within green infrastructure strategy.
Sustainable Urban Drainage to support biodiversity while supporting site surface water strategy - swales/ green roofs etc
Increase permeable surfaces for climate resilience
Other initiatives

Will the project result in the use of other resources, materials or minerals? Yes

e.g. use of natural resources such as wood; or use of aggregate minerals?

Please explain your answer below:

We will be seeking to use local resources wherever possible to reduce project resource requirements and reduce risk

4 Transport

Will the project result in more people needing to travel? No

e.g. will there be additional cars on the road

Have alternative transport modes been considered? Yes

e.g. could use be made of public transport/walking/cycling etc.

Please explain your answer below:

One of the key outcomes of this project will be for more families to have a secondary school within their local community - seeking to reduce care use and enable more pupils to travel to school by active travel routes.

A Traffic Impact Assessment will be carried out by the Council as part of the planning process for the build project.

The appointed sponsor will be required to develop a School Travel Plan encouraging safe travel to school which promotes walking and cycling.

The use of cars for students will be discouraged through the design of the school and through active management by the school. The minimum parking requirements of 1 parking space per full time member of staff will be use for the school site.

5 Waste

Is there likely to be an increase in waste as a result of the project? Yes

e.g. construction waste, packaging waste etc.

Please explain your answer below:

This project will result in construction waste as part of the construction phase. Options for mitigating this aspect will be fully explored during the pre-planning and pre-construction phases

Have opportunities to prevent, minimise, reuse or recycle waste been identified and considered? Yes

e.g. will recycling facilities be available as part of the project

Please explain your answer below:

Opportunities to prevent, minimise, reuse or recycle waste when the building is operational will be considered at an early stage in development, to ensure there is adequate bin storage facilities to deal with segregation of waste to enable ease of recycling, and also to allow for recycling areas within the classrooms/communal areas as appropriate.

6 Wildlife and Biodiversity

Will there be any negative impacts on the natural environment? Yes

e.g. will the project involve removal of green space/trees; have wildlife surveys been considered; result in enhancements to green infrastructure; increased biodiversity opportunities etc.?

Please explain your answer below:

This is a green field site and therefore there will be an impact on the natural environment. Full surveys as required will be undertaken. As part of the school design we will be looking to utilise and enhance the natural environment wherever possible. A preliminary ecological appraisal has been undertaken on this site which resulted in a change in our preliminary designs to reduce the number of protected trees and hedgerow to be disrupted.

Has a preliminary ecological appraisal been undertaken? Yes

Please explain your answer below:

Yes, please see answer above.

Has there been consideration of statutory assessments? Yes

e.g. Sustainability Appraisals, Strategic Environmental Assessments and Habitat Regulations Assessment Screening?
N.B. This is a matter of legal compliance - All plans and projects (including planning applications) which are not directly connected with, or necessary for, the conservation management of a habitat site, require consideration of whether the plan or project is likely to have significant effects on that site. This consideration – typically referred to as the 'Habitats Regulations Assessment screening' – should take into account the potential effects both of the plan/project itself and in combination with other plans or projects.

Please explain your answer below:

Yes, these will be taken in line with what the planning application requirements.
We will also be looking to use the net biodiversity gain assessment which is not statute yet but good practice.

7 Pollution to land/air/water

Is there a risk of pollution to the local environment? No

e.g.

- will there be surface water run-off or discharge into local water source?
- will there be any impact on local water quality?
- will any waste water require treatment?
- is there the potential for spillage of chemicals?
- is there the potential for emissions to air from combustion processes resulting in poor air quality?

8 Resilience to climate risks

Could climate risks affect your project? Yes

N.B. some projects may be more sensitive to future changes in the climate e.g. hotter and drier summers; milder and wetter winters; increased likelihood of extreme weather events. These climate risks may affect project delivery and should be considered at the early stages of project development.

Please explain your answer below:

This building is anticipated to be in use for the next several decades and therefore is likely to be impacted by climate risks. The site selection process took account of location to natural and man made hazards and flooding risk. Moreover, temperature management will be required for the building. In planning temperature management and controls, likely temperatures in future years will be considered

Has the impact of extreme weather events on the project been considered? Yes

e.g. heat waves and flooding.

Please explain your answer below:

The impact of flooding on construction delivery and future operation of the school has been considered. The site selection process favoured this site due the absence of flood risk for the site, and appropriate attenuation to manage future extreme weather will be considered as part of detailed design.

Is there a business/project continuity plan in place to ensure climate risks are minimised? No

e.g. can you ensure that the project is resilient to climate risks and can continue to deliver on outcomes.

Could the project exacerbate climate risks? No

e.g. increase flood risk or worsen temperature extremes in the locality.

Will the project result in the use of other resources, materials or minerals? Yes

e.g. use of natural resources such as wood; or use of aggregate minerals?

Please explain your answer below:

We will be seeking to use local resources wherever possible to reduce project resource requirements and reduce risk

9 Historic Environment

Have you checked with the WCC Historic Environment team as to whether there are any impacts on the Historic Environment (negative or positive)?

Yes

Check every development with the Historic Environment Team at the planning stage of each project. Further assessment may be required depending on the nature and scale of development. There may also be design options that would negate any need for further assessment (and lessen costs), or even opportunities to enhance heritage assets or their setting through the development.

Please explain your answer below:

The WCC Historic Environment Team have identified that the risk of any historic environment or landscape issues affecting the scheme is low.

There have been a few related surveys undertaken over the last 20 years:

• 2004 evaluation on South parcel of the site: WCC have no records of the outcome of this so we are following up with Worcester City, but unlikely to be anything significant uncovered.
• 2011 Geophysical survey of the whole site: No significant matters identified on site
• 2012 Archaeological watching survey as part of the installation of the drainage system on site: No significant historic environmental issues revealed

There is a known roman settlement enclosure on land within the Country Park South of our site and adjacent to the main road so there is a risk it extends onto our piece of land. No conclusive evidence. Advice is to avoid major construction on this part of the land to alleviate risk. We are not consider significant construction here at the moment but things like significant earth works or the installation of lights around an AstroTurf pitch could disturb. Therefore we will continue to evaluate as the design work progresses. Therefore further survey works or Archaeological evaluation on site may be needed dependent on the scheme proposed – these can be undertaken alongside ecological surveys as part of the pre-planning works.

Does the development have the potential to result in any impacts to the historic environment or opportunities for enhancement?

Yes

If yes, then further assessment will be required. This could take the form of a watching brief during groundworks if the potential is clearly understood and relatively low, or a more comprehensive desk-based and/or field investigation prior to development.

Please explain your answer below:

Please see above.

10 Procurement

Could any procurement associated with the project have a detrimental environmental impact? Yes

e.g. procurement of goods from overseas that have to be shipped; use of unsustainable materials or materials that cannot be recycled at the end of their use?

Please explain your answer below:

Unable to answer at this stage but our aspiration is to use local materials and avoid importing materials.

Is there likely to be increased Greenhouse Gas emissions from products purchased for the project? No

e.g. carbon emissions from transport and manufacturing

Will you be able to make use of sustainable products? Yes

e.g. recycled, local, ethical etc.

Please explain your answer below:

Unable to answer at this stage but our aspiration is to use sustainable materials.

Have you considered the Public Services (Social Value) Act 2012? Yes

All major contracts let by the Council (those of more than £100,000 in total value) will be expected to deliver a meaningful contribution to our vision of Social Value in the county. The Act requires us to consider how the services we commission and procure might improve the economic, social and environmental well-being of the local area.

– please see: Social Value

Please explain your answer below:

The delivery of this project at its core will improve social value for the county through the delivery of essential services for the wellbeing of the community

11 Declaration

I have confirmed that to the best of my knowledge that the information I have provided is true, complete and accurate

I have confirmed that I will make sure that Environmental Sustainability has been and continues to be considered throughout the project life cycle and should circumstances change in the project a further Environmental Sustainability Assessment Screening will be carried out.