

Equality and Public Health 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 disproportionately 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 Organisations Involved

Please identify the organisation(s) involved:

Worcestershire County Council

Details of contributors to this assessment:

Name	Demi Parsons
Job title	Project Support Officer
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Name	Lucy Langdon
Job title	Project Manager
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3.0 Who will be affected by the development and implementation

Please identify group(s) involved:

Service User

Staff

Communities

3.1 Information and evidence reviewed

What information and evidence have you reviewed to help inform this assessment? *

Demographic and forecast pupil level data

Preference information for school admissions

3.2 Summary of engagement or consultation undertaken

Who and how have you engaged, or why do you believe engagement is not required? *

So far we have undertaken a 4 week engagement exercise inviting all stakeholders to engage in what they feel is important in the delivery of a new school and their opinion on key operational matters such as admissions etc.

This was an online survey that was advertised on the website, local media, direct email, social media and through schools to engage with families

3.3 Summary of relevant findings

Please summarise your relevant findings. *

- 595 responses received plus nearly 500 individual comments
- 83% agreed or strongly agreed that a new secondary school in Worcester was needed
- The most important factors for respondents were that students felt safe in and around school, the school has strong leadership, that students feel their mental health and wellbeing is well supported, and that students make good academic progress
- The school should foster an environment of inclusivity and support, focusing just as much on mental health and wellbeing and ensuring children are well rounded citizens as much as academic success
- The school should be located within the local community it will serve and accessible by active travel routes from day one. Existing congestion within the city should be considered
- The new school should be integrated within its new community, through community use of facilities and by prioritising children living nearby in the admissions criteria
- The new build should take consideration of sustainability and energy efficiency, and use local resources where possible

4 Protected characteristics - Equality

Please consider the potential impact of this activity (during development & implementation) on each of the equality groups outlined below. **Please select one or more impact box(es) below for each equality group and explain your rationale.** Please note it is possible for the potential impact to be both positive and negative for the same equality group and this should be recorded. Remember to consider the impact on e.g. staff, public, patients, carers etc. who are part of these equality groups.

Age

Potential positive impact selected.

Explanation of your reasoning:

Education provision for secondary school aged pupils (11-16yrs)
 More children will be able to attend a secondary school within their local community. The location of the school will also enable it to connect directly with existing walking and cycle paths. This will reduce car use, reduce travel times, and increase potential for using active travel routes to walk or cycle to school. This will improve physical activity, reduce risk of cardiovascular disease and obesity, and reduce risk of mental illness and social isolation.
 The school will also be located close to natural green spaces and benefit from natural ecology integrated into the design of the school, improving mental health and learning potential.

Disability

Potential positive impact selected.

Explanation of your reasoning:

There are plans to integrate a 12 place Mainstream Autism Base to increase capacity for and integrate specialist provision designed for pupils with Autism Spectrum Disorder.

The school specification states that the chosen Academy Sponsor will be expected to show an inclusive approach to education. It details the steps that should be taken to ensure inclusivity, including with regard to the following:

- Active engagement with the SEND and Vulnerable Learner teams and the Virtual School in WCF
- A behaviour policy that does not discriminate against pupils with SEND or vulnerable learners
- Funding
- Deployment of teaching assistants and support staff
- Appropriate training to support the individual needs of pupils
- Curriculum
- School/parent relationships
- SEND Governor
- Early Help pathway for early identification of need
- Student council

Gender reassignment

Potential positive impact selected

Explanation of your reasoning:

The management of school facilities such as bathrooms and staff facilities must link to the inclusivity policy of the school, in particular gender and self identity

Marriage and civil partnerships

Potential neutral impact selected.

Explanation of your reasoning:

The development and implementation of the new school is not anticipated to have an impact on marriage and civil partnerships.

Pregnancy and maternity

Potential neutral impact selected.

Explanation of your reasoning:

The development and implementation of the new school is not anticipated to have an impact on pregnancy and maternity.

Race including travelling communities

Potential neutral impact selected.

Explanation of your reasoning:

The development and implementation of the new school is not anticipated to have a specific impact on individuals of a particular race including travelling communities

Religion and belief

Potential neutral impact selected.

Explanation of your reasoning:

The development and implementation of the new school is not anticipated to impact on religion or belief

Sex

Potential neutral impact selected.

Explanation of your reasoning:

The development and implementation of the new school is not anticipated to have an impact on sex. The school will be a mixed gender school

Sexual orientation

Potential positive impact selected.

Explanation of your reasoning:

The school ethos is proposed to reflect the values of inclusivity and acceptance

5 Characteristics - Public health

Other vulnerable and disadvantaged groups

Potential positive impact selected.

Explanation of your reasoning:

Warndon is one of our most disadvantaged areas of Worcestershire, ranking 72nd on The Index of Multiple Deprivation (IMD) out of circa 33K LSOA in England. At present, Pupils in Warndon are some of the least likely in Worcester City to receive an offer from one of their preferred secondary schools and are often required to travel the furthest to access a school places.

The provision of a new secondary school at Newtown Road will positively impact on this community, enabling better access to education places and community facilities.

Health inequalities

Potential neutral impact selected.

Explanation of your reasoning:

None identified

Social and economic

Potential neutral impact selected.

Explanation of your reasoning:

None identified

Physical health

Potential positive impact selected. Potential negative impact selected.

Explanation of your reasoning:

More children will be able to attend a secondary school within their local community. The location of the school will also enable it to connect directly with existing walking and cycle paths. This will reduce car use, reduce travel times, and increase potential for using active travel routes to walk or cycle to school. This will improve physical activity, reduce risk of cardiovascular disease and obesity, and reduce risk of mental illness and social isolation. In order to maximise this we will explore options that may include:

- A separate cycle/walking access to the schools
- Well managed, raised, pelican crossing that prioritises pupils and cyclists particularly during school opening and finishing hours
- Ensure active travel routes are usable, enjoyable, and time effective to use
- Sufficient cycle parking on site which are secure and easily accessible

It will be important to ensure site safety during construction – this will be done by a full site risk assessment for construction and site security.

Traffic management measures on Newtown Road, where the majority of pupils will travel onto the site, will be considered, including zebra and pelican crossings. However, Newtown Road is a key access road for Ambulances and therefore traffic mitigation will be mindful of potential disruption to Blue Light vehicles including consideration of appropriate turning into the school site and pupil crossing.

The community use of sports facilities on the school site will provide residents in this part of Worcester access to sports facilities not currently located within their local community.

The diversion of the bridleway on site and integration of this with a green corridor will enable continued access to green and open spaces on the Countryside Centre for existing communities.

Access to hot food takeaways is limited – though a fast food establishment is located within half a mile of the site, there are no direct walking routes from the school and therefore

Mental health and wellbeing

Potential positive impact selected. Potential negative impact selected.

Explanation of your reasoning:

The location of the school will enable more pupils to walk and cycle to school, improving mental health and wellbeing.

The school will also be located close to natural green spaces and benefit from natural ecology integrated into the design of the school, improving mental health and learning potential by providing opportunities to integrate natural habitats and places for growing within the curriculum.

The school specification states that the Academy Sponsor is expected to have a strong approach to ensuring the health and wellbeing of pupils and teachers, in consideration of both physical and mental health. We would expect the chosen Sponsor to have:

- A clear policy which documents the approach to ensuring and improving pupil and staff health
- Safe spaces and quiet areas for pupils to access for counselling sessions or to support with emotional regulation or sensory needs
- Development opportunities for staff and a process for ensuring wellbeing is prioritised
- An ethos of pupil and staff wellbeing throughout policy and practice

The school will focus on community cohesion by providing community use of facilities after hours and prioritising pupils living nearby to the school to support social cohesion. The design of the school will be mindful of creating an attracting environment to create a sense of pride and satisfaction.

Construction operations during the development stage including increased vehicle movement, noise etc. Disturbance and stress caused by construction activity could impact on mental health of nearby residents - Will consider options such as Limit the disturbance levels and Adjust the vehicle movement and operation hours to benefit surrounding communities. Care Home positioned adjacent to the school so sensitivity must be given to that.

This project will provide new employment opportunities for local people. On opening the school will be sufficient to accommodate

600 pupils, and the school will full by 120 pupils as it fills from

Access to services

Potential positive impact selected.

Explanation of your reasoning:

This project will see the improved access to education places for young people (11-16) in Worcester. The project will also see improved access to sports facilities for existing communities in the local area.

The school will also see the provision of a new 12 place Mainstream Autism Base, which will improve the access to appropriate education for young people living with a diagnosis of ASD in Worcester within their local community.

6 Actions to mitigate potential negative impacts

Risk identified

Access to hot food takeaways is limited – though a fast food establishment is located within half a mile of the site, there are no direct walking routes from the school and therefore it is not expected that students will readily or easily access this facility. However, a risk remains of students risking travelling across unsafe roads to access the facility

Actions required to reduce/eliminate negative impact

The school will be required to manage this through their operations and day to day management - discussion to be held with Academy Sponsor once appointed

Who will lead this action

Academy Sponsor And Wcf

Timeframe

April 2022 - September 2025 (prior to school opening)

Risk identified

Newtown Road is a key access road for Ambulances and therefore traffic mitigation must be mindful of potential disruption to Blue Light vehicles during construction and following opening of the school

Actions required to reduce/eliminate negative impact

Construction works to be undertaken during summer months wherever possible where traffic and ambulance requirements will be lower.

Who will lead this action

A full impact and traffic assessment to be undertaken
Turner And Townsend

Timeframe

January 2022 - October 2022 (in time for planning application submission)

Risk identified

Site safety during construction

Actions required to reduce/eliminate negative impact

Undertake full site risk assessment for construction and site security.

Who will lead this action

Turner And Townsend

Timeframe

January 2022 - March 2023 (March 2023 proposed start on site)

How will you monitor these actions?

Maintain an up to date risk spreadsheet

7 When will you review this equality and public health estimate(EPHIA)?

At risk management points identified
 Prior to planning application submission
 Prior to construction commencement
 Prior to school opening

8 Declaration

The following statement has been read and agreed:

- All public bodies have a statutory duty under the Equality Act 2010 to set out arrangements to assess and consult on how their policies and functions impact on the 9 protected characteristics: Age; Disability; Gender Reassignment; Marriage & Civil Partnership; Pregnancy & Maternity; Race; Religion & Belief; Sex; Sexual Orientation
- Our Organisation will challenge discrimination, promote equality, respect human rights, and aims to design and implement services, policies and measures that meet the diverse needs of our service, and population, ensuring that none are placed at a disadvantage over others
- All staff are expected to deliver and provide services and care in a manner which respects the individuality of service users, patients, carers etc, and as such treat them and members of the workforce respectfully, paying due regard to the 9 protected characteristics

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

I confirm that I will make sure that Equality and Public Health have been and continue to be considered throughout the project life cycle and that, if circumstances change in the project, a further Equality and Public Health Impact Assessment Screening will be carried out.