

WEST SUSSEX COUNTY COUNCIL CONSULTATION	
TO:	Horsham District Council
FROM:	WSCC Education – School Organisation
DATE:	13 July 2026
LOCATION:	Land North-West of Southwater West Sussex
SUBJECT:	DC/26/0366 Outline planning application, with all matters reserved (except for primary access to the highway) for a phased development comprising: the demolition of existing buildings and the construction of up to 1,000 residential dwellings (including affordable housing) (Use Class C3); up to 80 specialist accommodation units (Use Class C2); a mixed-use neighbourhood centre (Use Classes E and F); education facilities (Use Class F1(a)); business and employment floorspace (Use Classes B2, B8 and E(g)); redevelopment of existing agricultural buildings including construction of a building for community use (Use Classes E and F2); improvements to public rights of way; sports pitches; gypsy and traveller pitches/plots; public open space; landscaping, and associated infrastructure
CASE OFFICER:	Matthew Porter, Principal Planning Officer
RECOMMENDATION:	WSCC Education’s formal recommendation is as follows: a) No Objection b) No objection subject to conditions c) Deferral d) Refusal

Thank you for consulting WSCC in its capacity as Local Education Authority in respect of the above application. We have reviewed the information as submitted and set out our recommendation and comments below.

1. Recommendation

WSCC Education has no objection to this application for outline planning permission but recommends certain conditions and s106 planning obligations are imposed.

2. Sustainable Education Infrastructure

We wish to confirm that the proposals for development would be mitigated appropriately by the stated education provision on which this application is based as things currently stand. Site specific mitigation for Early Years/Nurseries, a Primary school, Secondary school and facilities for children with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) are to come forward via

reserved matters planning applications led by WSCC. Access to the Secondary school site is required early in the development to mitigate the pupil product from the proposed development and cater for demand for secondary places from other developments in the District such as Horsham Golf Club DC/23/1178 recently agreed at appeal and potential sites in the Regulation 19 draft Local Plan review which is likely to be subject to an Examination in Public later in the year.

The schools and nurseries will require provision of fully serviced and appropriately deliverable sites by the master developer in a timely manner. Triggers will be subject to agreement as part of the s106 negotiations. Proportionate s106 contributions for all aspects of education infrastructure are requested as tailored, site-specific obligations to serve the Southwater community with the exception of the sixth form contribution. The provision for sixth form is likely to be provided off-site in Horsham, Steyning or Billingshurst where existing college and school sixth forms are established. Community Infrastructure Levy and s106 obligations can operate alongside each other provided the s106 meets the Reg 122 tests. The Early Years, Primary, Secondary and SEND contributions of land and financial contributions comply with the CIL Reg 122 test in that they are: -

- i) Necessary to make the development acceptable in planning terms
- ii) Directly related to the development
- iii) Fairly and reasonably related in scale and kind

WSCC will have objections to development if the sites and financial contributions are not brought forward within suitable timeframes to meet the needs of the development.

3. S106 financial contribution requirements for Education (subject to contract)

The financial contributions requested by the County Council and set out in the response dated 1 May 2026 are based on the overall requirement to deliver the following education infrastructure for North West Southwater:

- A new primary school: 1FE, expandable to 2FE, including a Special Support Centre (SSC) for children with SEND.
- A new early years facility: a 63-place full day care nursery, either co-located with the primary school or provided as a standalone facility.
- A new secondary school: a pro-rata contribution towards a 6FE secondary school with an 8FE core, including an SSC for children with SEND.

Primary School Contribution

A contribution of £7.70 million (index-linked) is required towards the delivery of a new 1FE primary school expandable to 2FE, serving North West Southwater. This is based on 1,000 dwellings and includes the requirement for 2.2 ha (22,010 sqm) of land, which will also accommodate Early Years provision and an SSC for children with SEND.

Early Years Facility Contribution

A contribution of £2.646 million (index-linked) is required towards a new 63-place full day care early years facility serving North West Southwater. This is based on 1,000 dwellings and includes 1,731 sqm of land, to be incorporated within the primary school site.

Secondary School Contribution

A contribution of £6,113,333 (index-linked) is required as the pro-rata cost of a new 6FE secondary school with an 8FE core, with a total estimated cost of £36,680,000. This contribution represents 1/6th of the total cost, reflecting that 1,000 dwellings generate demand equivalent to one form of entry. The land requirement is 8.71 ha (87,096 sqm).

Special Support Centre (SEND) Provision

A contribution of £1.38 million is required towards two new Special Support Centres (8 places each, expandable to 16) serving North-West Southwater. This is based on the need generated by 1,000 dwellings, which equates to one 8-place SSC. Land requirements total 2×0.049 ha (496 sqm), to be provided on the primary and secondary school sites and already included within the land allocations above.

Cost Basis

All cost estimates have been provided by AtkinsRéalis and AECOM Consulting as part of the WSCC multidisciplinary consultancy work. These figures are currently under review and subject to update.

4. CIL Further Secondary Education Financial Contribution

The provision for sixth form is likely to be provided off-site in Horsham, Steyning or Billingshurst where existing college and school sixth forms are established. Community Infrastructure Levy and s106 obligations can operate alongside each other provided the s106 meets the Reg 122 tests. The sixth form contribution applicable would be calculated by reference to the s106 calculator published on the WSCC website and be fundable from CIL contributions.

[Section 106: Planning obligations - West Sussex County Council](#)

The further secondary education contribution generated by this proposal shall be spent on additional facilities at The Weald School Sixth Form and/or Steyning Grammar School Sixth Form, or passported to The College of Richard Collyer, Horsham.

5. Suggested triggers for financial contributions (subject to contract)

- 5(a) We will require £7.70 million subject to indexation towards a new 1 FE expandable to 2FE primary school, triggers to align with the phasing of the development with a smaller percentage due upon commencement and a larger percentage part way through based on occupations. The exact

number of occupations to be subject to negotiation as part of the s106 agreement.

- 5(b) We will require £2.646 million subject to indexation towards a new 63 place full day care early years facility, triggers to align with the phasing of the development with a smaller percentage due upon commencement and a larger percentage part way through based on occupations. The exact number of occupations to be subject to negotiation as part of the s106 agreement.
- 5(c) We will require £6,113,333 subject to indexation, a pro-rata cost of a new 6FE plus 8FE core secondary school (£36,680,000), triggers to align with the phasing of the development with a smaller percentage due upon commencement and a larger percentage part way through based on occupations. The exact number of occupations to be subject to negotiation as part of the s106 agreement.
- 5(d) We will require £1.38 million towards two new 8 expandable to 16 place SSC/SEND facilities, triggers to align with the phasing of the development with a smaller percentage due upon commencement and a larger percentage part way through based on occupations. The exact number of occupations to be subject to negotiation as part of the s106 agreement.

6. Suggested triggers for land transfer (subject to contract)

- 6.1 A serviced site obligation to transfer 2.2 Ha / 22,010 sqm of land for a Primary School which includes space for Early Years and a Special Support Centre for children with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities before the occupation of the 500th Dwelling.
- 6.2 A serviced and levelled site obligation to transfer 8.71 Ha / 87,096 sqm of land for a Secondary School which includes space for a Special Support Centre for children with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities within 18 months of the commencement of development or prior to first occupation whichever is the sooner.

7. Valuation of school sites in order to meet CIL (Reg 122) tests

When local councils ask for Section 106 contributions in addition to CIL, they are legally bound by the CIL Regulations (Regulation 122). To be enforceable, any planning obligation must pass three tests as mentioned in 2. above. The planning obligations must be:-

- i. Necessary to make the development acceptable in planning terms
- ii. Directly related to the development
- iii. Fairly and reasonably related in scale and kind

Both the primary school site and secondary school site provide for a quantum of land greater than the mitigation required by the population directly related to the development. The local authority accepts that it must pay for the 'non-

statutory' land to provide for the minimum size of school to be sustainable which serves a wider catchment than the extent of the application. The value of the extra land or non-statutory land take will be based on a D1 planning class (use for a serviced non-residential education institution) the market value of which is to be agreed between the parties. The 'statutory' element that is directly related to the development will be transferred for £1. The secondary school non-statutory land requirement is 7.25 Hectares (5/6ths) and the statutory land take is 1.45Ha (1/6th) as 1000 homes generates one form of entry of secondary aged pupils and the school is to be 6FE expandable to 8FE in size. The primary school non-statutory land is 1.1 Hectares (1/2) and the statutory land take is 1.1 Hectares (1/2) as the school is to be 1FE expandable to 2FE in size and 1000 homes generates one form of entry of primary aged pupils.

8. Power lines

The developer acknowledges that 11kV power lines cross the primary/nursery school site and will need to be diverted as part of the development. A planning condition that ensures this is undertaken prior to the school site transfer would be welcomed.

9. Ancient woodland

Smith's Copse, a designated ancient woodland, is located to the south of the primary/nursery school site. It is likely to require a 15m 'no dig' buffer zone to preserve its area and character. WSCC has welcomed the confirmation that the ancient woodland does not impinge on the the primary/nursery school site.

10. School travel planning

The focus on promoting sustainable, active travel particularly for secondary aged pupils is welcome as the school may draw from a wider catchment than Southwater ie. walking and cycling to and from Christ's Hospital railway station, the Hop Oast roundabout and into Horsham.

The application requires individual Travel Plans serving each school to come forward in due course. It should be noted that the development's infrastructure should be designed to mitigate the negative impact of the traffic generated by the schools, as the impact of a Travel Plan is often limited and should be understood as a secondary/ supporting measure.

Please do not hesitate to contact us if you wish to discuss further.

Yours sincerely,

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