

REPORT TO:	Planning Policy Committee 30 January 2023
SUBJECT:	Arun Secondary School Study Update
LEAD OFFICER:	Kevin Owen (Planning Policy & Conservation Manager)
LEAD MEMBER:	Cllr Lury (Chair of Planning Policy Committee)
WARDS:	All
CORPORATE PRIORITY / POLICY CONTEXT / CORPORATE VISION:	
The recommendations supports:- <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improve the Wellbeing of Arun; • Supporting our environment to support us. 	
DIRECTORATE POLICY CONTEXT:	
The Secondary School Site Selection Study 2023 will help promote health and wellbeing by selecting a sustainable location for a secondary school ensuring that existing and new communities have accessible education facilities while also enhancing the quality of life.	
FINANCIAL SUMMARY:	
There are no direct financial implications arising from The Secondary School Site Selection Study 2023.	

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1. This report updates the Committee on the 'Arun Secondary School Study' update which has been undertaken in consultation with West Sussex County Council (the Local Education Authority). The study update is seeking to resolve the allocation of a sustainable and deliverable site for the accommodation of a '10 Form Entry Secondary School' (with room for '4 Form Expansion' and '6th Form' provision) to serve the new communities being developed in Strategic Allocations within Arun.

2. RECOMMENDATIONS

2.1. Planning Policy Committee resolves to agree:-

- i. That site Option F remains the council's preferred site for the delivery of a 10 FE Secondary School in the district;
- ii. In the absence of an allocation of the preferred site Option F within the update of the Ford Neighbourhood Plan, the council's Local Development Scheme be updated to include preparation of a Secondary School Development Plan Document;
- iii. That the four sites (Site 14 - Site to the South of Yapton; Site 5 – Land South of Yapton Road; Site 4 - Land North of Yapton Road and East of Blossom Way; and Site 3 - Land at Maypole and North End Road) are sites with the most potential to be considered as alternative sites as a contingency to the preferred site, subject to undertaking further work; and
- iv. Should the preferred site (Site Option F) not proceed, following the further work and consultation with West Sussex County Council and landowners, officers, a report back to this Committee at a future meeting, will consider the alternative best performing site for the Secondary School, so that the formal legal process can commence.

3. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

3.1. Through the Secondary School evidence study 2019, the council identified a preferred central location (Option F – this is identified as site 12 west of Strategic Allocation SD8 in Appendix 1) in the district for the delivery of a new 10 Form Entry Secondary School to serve the Strategic Allocations at West of Bersted, Barnham-Eastergate-Westergate (BEW), Ford, Yapton and Climping (including Littlehampton Economic Growth Area (i.e. LEGA, when this comes on stream). However, negotiations with the landowner have not resulted in West Sussex County Council (WSSCC), being able to acquire the site because of significant differences in value expectations between both parties. The council therefore, commissioned a further evaluation study of the remaining site options, including any additional ones that may be identified that may provide a viable alternative site in the event that the preferred site 'Option F' prove undeliverable.

3.2. A further 8 sites have been identified and assessed through this updated study (i.e. 'Secondary School Site Selection Study 2023'). As a result, based on the evidence in this study, the four best performing alternative sites are:-

- Site 14 - Site to the South of Yapton;
- Site 5 - Land South of Yapton Road
- Site 4 - Land North of Yapton Road and East of Blossom Way; and
- Site 3 - Land at Maypole and North End Road.

3.3. The above sites are illustrated on the map in Appendix 1 (Site Map of Potential School Sites).

4. DETAIL

4.1. The requirement for a new secondary school in Arun District was identified in the adopted Arun Local Plan 2018. Policy INF SP2 seeks a school to serve the pupil growth generated by strategic developments located in the central part of the district. The school will, therefore, provide secondary school and sixth form places close to the new communities being created.

4.2. The first Secondary School Site Selection Study was undertaken in 2018 which identified a shortlist of suitable sites for a new 10 FE secondary school. The preferred site ('Option F') was reported to Planning Policy Sub-Committee (PPSC) on 27 February 2019 and Full Council in March 2019.

4.3. However, site negotiations are currently stalled regarding the value of the land, and consequently WSCC have been unable to secure it. Until this is resolved it is appropriate to update the study (i.e. 'Secondary School Site Selection Study 2023') as a contingency measure. This study is referred to as the 'Study 2023' for the purposes of this report. The 'Study 2023' was commissioned to revisit the previous potential sites and assess any other options for an alternative best performing secondary school site. This work has been set out as part of Stage 1 of the 'Study 2023'. However, it should be noted, that this work does not change the council's preferred site Option F.

4.4. Ford Parish Council are preparing an update to the Ford Neighbourhood Development Plan (NDP). A Regulation 14 Pre-submission consultation which is the first stage of NDP preparation, closed on 21 August 2023 and the council's response recommended that the NDP update include provision of an allocation for a secondary school at the location of the council's preferred site Option F. Currently, this is designated as a Local Green Space in the Ford NDP and it is not proposed to update this policy. However, it is the councils' view that the allocation of a secondary school would be compatible with that designation and help to secure the openness between Ford and Yapton through appropriate configuration of the school and playing fields and open space. On that basis, officers have requested that the policy be updated and an allocation be made, to be in broad conformity with the adopted Arun Local Plan 2018, Policy INF SP2 New Secondary School which seeks a school to serve the growth in the central part of the district. Allied to the council's preferred site Option F and the supporting evidence this is the most sustainable location. On 24 November Ford Parish Council confirmed that it remains opposed to the school being located in Ford Lane on site F. On this basis officers consider that the Ford NDP must not proceed in its current form as it would be in conflict with the Local Plan. If it does, it is very likely that the council will be unable to 'make' the plan. The council will, therefore, need to progress a site-specific allocation through preparing a Secondary School Development Plan Document (DPD).

- 4.5. The 'Study 2023' provides a site assessment of eight newly identified sites (not considered previously in the 2018 Study) that could potentially accommodate a secondary school (as a contingency should Option F not proceed) and is prepared by using the 2018 study as a base, applying similar assumptions and criteria. The aim is to set out the viability, accessibility and constraints assessment for the eight sites and their relationship to the Strategic Sites within the adopted Arun Local Plan 2018 (e.g. BEW, Climping and Ford) including the existing main settlements in the central area of the district. The 'Study 2023' will provide alternative evidence (which accords with the Arun Local Plan Policy INF SP2 'New Secondary School') to assist Arun District Council (ADC) should the preferred site 'Option F' be undeliverable for the new 10 FE Secondary School.
- 4.6. It is important to note that the recommended shortlist of four best performing alternative sites for further work, are based on a high level, desk-based assessment of the best performing sites. All the sites are potentially suitable for accommodating the secondary school although each performs differently under the assessment criteria, allowing the identification of the better performing sites. Any additional detailed survey and study may, however, provide evidence that changes the assessment and is likely to be required to test if there is further scope to improve the relative performance and mitigation of each site. Following agreement of the four best sites arising from the 'Study 2023', Officers from ADC and WSCC will work together to apply WSCC's 'Education Site Suitability Checklist' to the Study 2023 outputs and undertake discussions with site promoters, identify the most suitable alternative potential site for the secondary school as a contingency.
- 4.7. The brief for the Study 2023 requires the outcome to identify a shortlist of four sites, following which to undertake further work to help identify a single, contingency site as an alternative to 'Option F' to accommodate the secondary school. Based on the evidence in the Study 2023, in summary, the four preferred sites were selected as follows:-

Site 14 - Site to the South of Yapton;

- This site is located within good walking distance to strategic sites via active travel routes;
- The site is well located for bus stops;
- This site is considered suitable for cycling commuting distance;
- This site is in flood zone 1;
- The site does not have any significant heritage impacts
- The site does not appear to have any significant biodiversity impacts

Site 5 - Land South of Yapton Road

- Within reasonable walking distance of strategic sites although, the site is over the recommended walking distance for some - this can be improved through implementing active travel routes through strategic developments;
- The site is within the recommended commuting cycling distance of all the strategic sites;
- The site is within close proximity of Barnham Railway Station;
- There would be a low degree of harm identified to the significance of the identified locally Listed Buildings;

- This site is currently outside any nature designations, it does have areas of more mature boundary vegetation.
- The site is in Flood Zone 1 with some corners being slightly in Flood Zone 2.

Site 4 - Land North of Yapton Road and East of Blossom Way; and

- Within reasonable walking distance of strategic sites with potential improvement using active travel routes;
- The site is well located to Barnham Railway Station;
- The site is well located for cycling journeys to and bus journeys.
- This site is in Flood Zone 1 although would need groundwater flooding-mitigation;
- It is not affected by any nature conservation designations.
- There would be minimal impact to Non-designated assets.

Site 3 - Land at Maypole and North End Road.

- Within recommended walking distance of one strategic site and reasonable distance of others;
- The site is within the acceptable cycling commuting distance;
- The site is also quite close to Barnham Station;
- This site is in Flood Zone 1;
- There are very few heritage assets identified within the buffer area;
- The northern half of this site is located within the second buffer zone associated with Arun Valley but there have been no swans seen in the vicinity of the site in the last decade.

NEXT STEPS

- 4.8. Should the Committee agree that the four site options (section 3.2 above) are the alternative sites to be explored further and a final contingency site be identified from this list for the Secondary School, then the formal legal process can commence should the contingency site be needed. It is important to note that whichever site progresses, it will still be subject to all necessary feasibility, design, consultation, planning and statutory processes. A subsequent planning application will need to be made either by the developer of the secondary school or West Sussex County Council.
- 4.9. The new school shall be delivered through a legal agreement which sets out how and when the facility will be delivered to meet the education requirements of WSCC as the Local Education Authority (Policy INF SP2 – bullet point d) and will need to be progressed in consultation with WSCC.

- 4.10. Officers will begin addressing the further work identified in the study to progress the identification of a final contingency site, at the same time as pursuing a new Secondary School Allocation Development Plan Document for site option F in Ford. One process may overtake the other and will consequently cease to be progressed. The further work will include looking at the site relationships to Masterplans for Strategic Sites to ensure safe cycleways and footpaths are provided (including upgrading and extending existing routes to provide a complete and consistent cycle link route). Such pedestrian and cycling enhancements will need to be co-ordinated through Development Management decisions to secure their delivery.
- 4.11. Officers will bring this item back to Committee at appropriate stages throughout the process.

5. CONCLUSION

- 5.1. The brief for the Study 2023 evidence work, required the outcome to identify a shortlist of sites and then undertake further work to refine the shortlist to one contingency site as a potential alternative to the preferred 'Option F' should this not progress to accommodate a secondary school. Based on the evidence in the Study 2023, the four sites to progress are Site 14 - Site to the South of Yapton, Site 5 – Land South of Yapton Road, Site 4 - Land North of Yapton Road and East of Blossom Way and Site 3 - Land at Maypole and North End Road.
- 5.2. Following agreement of the four shortlisted sites, further work will commence that may change the assessment of each site to help select a single preferred site contingency to accommodate the Secondary School. This work will include Officers from ADC and WSCC coordinating to apply WSCC's 'Education Site Suitability Checklist' against the findings of Study 2023 and entering into discussions with site promoters as part of the refinement process.

6. CONSULTATION

- 6.1. West Sussex County Council have been consulted. There are no other external consultations on this report.

7. COMMENTS BY THE GROUP HEAD OF FINANCE AND SECTION 151 OFFICER

- 7.1. There are no comments.

8. RISK ASSESSMENT CONSIDERATIONS

- 8.1. There are not likely to be any significant risks with this policy however, because of the local criteria restrictions, the policy should be periodically reviewed.

9. COMMENTS OF THE GROUP HEAD OF LAW AND GOVERNANCE & MONITORING OFFICER

- 9.1. There are no Governance or legal implications.

10. HUMAN RESOURCES IMPACT

10.1. There are no implications arising for Human Resources.

11. HEALTH & SAFETY IMPACT

11.1. There are no direct implications for Health & Safety.

12. PROPERTY & ESTATES IMPACT

12.1. There are no direct implications for council property.

13. EQUALITIES IMPACT ASSESSMENT (EIA) / SOCIAL VALUE

13.1. There are no direct adverse implications for Equalities/Social Value.

14. CLIMATE CHANGE & ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT/SOCIAL VALUE

14.1. There are no direct adverse implications for climate change from this report. However, delivering a secondary school will likely have negative impacts on the environment and biodiversity of Arun. It will therefore be essential to consider climate change, sustainability, and the environment in the development of this school and the wider site. This should include aspects such as, but not limited to the provision of onsite renewable energy, building to a standard that supports high energy efficiency and low energy usage, reducing the amount of water wasted on site, sourcing construction materials responsibly, protecting and enhancing the biodiversity and green space on site. Undertaking consultation through the plan making and decision-making process to ensure any adverse impacts are minimised as much as possible should also be undertaken.

15. CRIME AND DISORDER REDUCTION IMPACT

15.1. There are no direct adverse implications for Crime and Disorder.

16. HUMAN RIGHTS IMPACT

16.1. There are no direct adverse implications for Human Rights.

17. FREEDOM OF INFORMATION / DATA PROTECTION CONSIDERATIONS

17.1. There are no implications for FOI/Data Protection.

CONTACT OFFICER:-

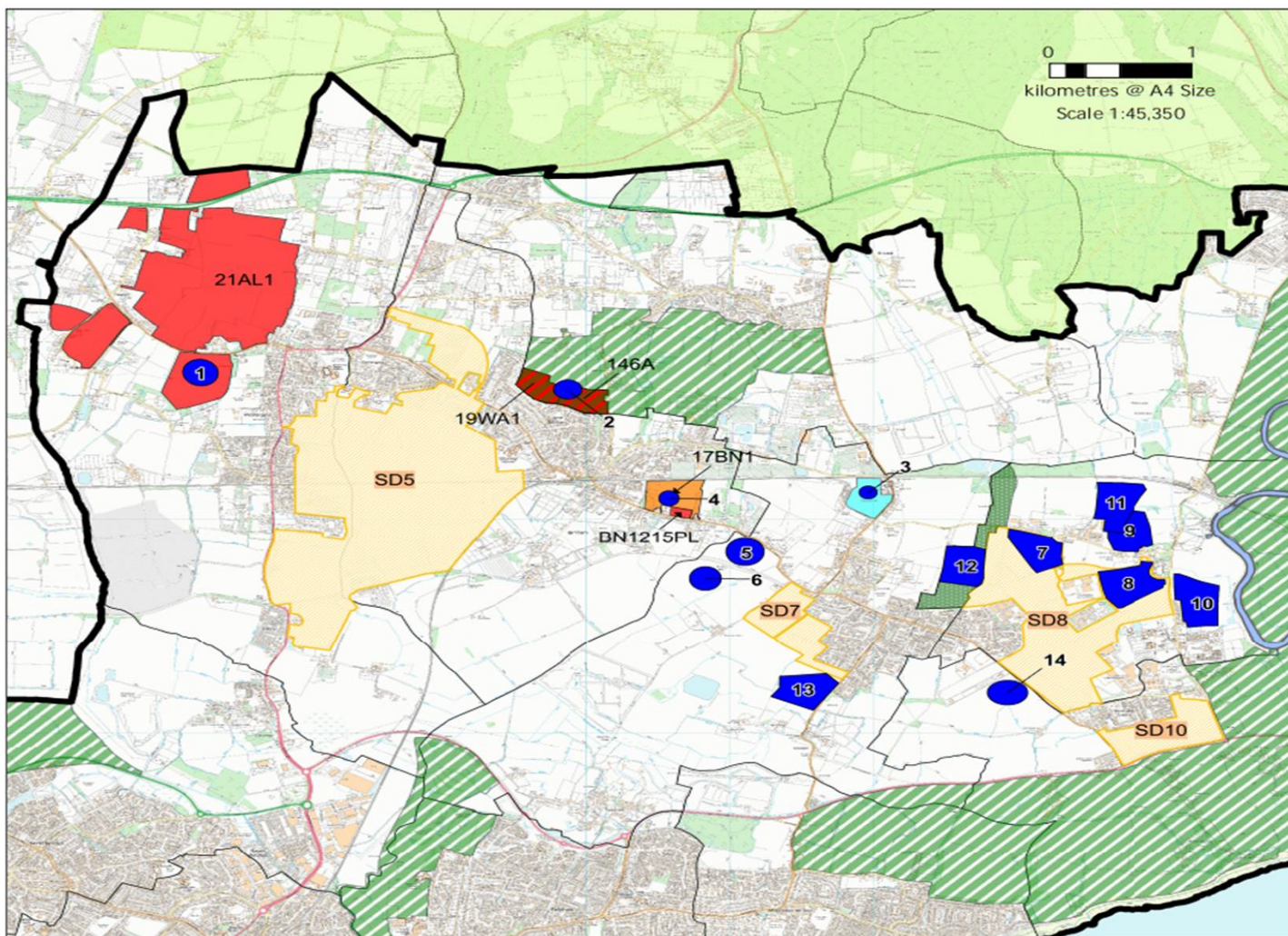
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BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS:

Background papers

- **Background paper 1** SEDP8 Secondary School Site Selection Study- SITE STUDY (dated 05/12/2018) [Infrastructure and funding - planning policy | Arun District Council](#)
- **Background paper 2** SEDP9 Secondary School Site Selection Study- SITE SELECTION STUDY – NON-TECHNICAL SUMMARY (dated 05/12/2018) [Infrastructure and funding - planning policy | Arun District Council](#)
- **Background paper 3** SEDP3d Update to School provision in Arun District (ADC Local Plan Examination Library) [Infrastructure and funding - planning policy | Arun District Council](#)
- **Background paper 4** SEDP3c Appendix 2 Strategic Housing Secondary Education Requirements (ADC Local Plan Examination Library) [Infrastructure and funding - planning policy | Arun District Council](#)
- **Background paper 5** – Secondary School Site Selection Study 2023 [Infrastructure and funding - planning policy | Arun District Council](#)

Appendix 1: Site Map of Potential School Sites



**Map showing Potential Secondary School Sites in Arun District Council
Local Planning Authority Boundary**

Key

- The Local Planning Authority Boundary of Arun District Council
- South Downs National Park (Outside LPA Boundary of ADC)
- Gaps Between Settlements
- Arun Parishes
- Ford Neighbourhood Plan Local Gap

- HELAA Site 17BN1
- HELAA Site 19WA1
- HELAA Site 21AL1
- HELAA Site 146A
- HELAA Site BN1215PL
- HELAA Site NEWY16
- Strategic Housing Allocations
- SD5 BEW
- SD7 Yapton
- SD8 Ford
- SD10 Climping

Potential Secondary School Site Locations

- 1 - 21AL1 (Norton Grange Farm)
- 2 - Choller Farm, Barnham Lane
- 3 - NEWY16 (land at Maypole and North End Road)
- 4 - 17BN1 and BN1215PL (land north of Yapton Road and east of Blossom Way)
- 5 - Land South of Yapton Road
- 6 - Land to the South of part of the Canal
- 7 - Option A
- 8 - Option B
- 9 - Option C
- 10 - Option D
- 11 - Option E
- 12 - Option F
- 13 - 18Y2 Lambs Field Bilsham Road BN18 0JP
- 14 - Site to the south of Yapton

