



## **Frequently Asked Questions for the proposed new school on Sunningdale at Waltham**

**Question:** Why this site?

**Answer:** The Sunningdale site has been allocated for use as a school for some time. Historically in 1976, through the planning application 08/276/76 (residential development at Turnberry Approach) the principles of this Education land were established with a housing developer, though at the time there was no immediate need for a school.

As more developers have built houses in the surrounding area and the popularity of Waltham Village with families, the demand for school places has now grown to a point where a new school is required.

**Question:** Is the hedgerow which runs across the proposed site protected and has the site has been designated as a nature reserve and open green space?

**Answer:** The parcel of Education Land is approximately a 1.39ha site and has been through Planning Pre-application. Whilst there was no immediate need for a school, the intention of the Council has always been to retain the land for Education at such time that a school was required. The land is allocated for Education within the North East Lincolnshire Local Plan 2013-2032 (Adopted 2018). The development is also within the development boundary of Grimsby as defined with the North East Lincolnshire Local Plan 2013-2032 (Adopted 2018) [NELLP]. During the Pre-application the historic significance of the hedgerow has been investigated with the following to be noted:

### Landscaping, Tree Protection and Ecology

We've spoken with the Council's tree officers about this site. There are no tree preservation orders within the site. However, there is an established hedgerow which is proposed to be removed. The loss of the hedge needs to be replaced with new hedgerow planting within the site. The new planting should be presented to the local planning authority for review, as consideration needs to be given to neighbouring land uses, how the landscaping works with surface water drainage, and its positioning in relation to buildings and boundaries.

It is likely that an ecological appraisal will be required given the existing nature of the site. Ecological advice is recommended on the publication of a formal report. This is a planning validation requirement, and such a document would help in further supporting the case for new landscaping in light of the loss of an existing green area used by the community.

### Historic Environment Considerations

There are no heritage issues with the development at this stage, however the heritage officer will be consulted during the planning application. Heritage should be covered in the Design and Access Statement and the applicant should provide historical information in reference to the site.

**Question:** Is the school going to be a Special Educational Needs School, and what about the additional traffic required for SEN pupils?

**Answer:** The school will have a dedicated Special Needs resource based provision for up to 12 primary aged pupils incorporated into the building. The intention of this provision is for pupils with additional needs who, wherever possible, live within the locality of the school. This will enable children with a higher level of identified SEND to remain within their local community school and have their needs met, whilst maintaining a place in school alongside their peers in their local community.

**Question:** How will pupils arriving and leaving school be managed?

**Answer:** As with all schools, parents and carers will be encouraged to find sustainable means of travel for their journey to school. The expectation is that most families will be living locally within the development or immediate adjacent area – within walking distance of the school.

Once appointed, the Academy provider will support this through communication with parents and pupils via the school.

Parents electing to drop children off in vehicles will not be allowed to access the school site and any parking on the site will be for staff and school visitors only. This is to ensure the safety of staff and pupils. There will be a pupil storage area for bikes and scooters on the school site. Parents and carers will, however, be expected to comply with whatever traffic enforcement is put in place through the adjacent area which will include signs and road markings and show consideration towards the school's neighbours.

**Question:** Why would the Council build a school in the middle of a housing estate?

**Answer:** Primary school provision is usually housed within populated developments. Primary schools are deemed as critical infrastructure and often seen as the heart of a community. They are vital to the formation of friendships and relationships for parents, carers and children who live within the school's locality.

**Question:** Is the proposed site large enough for a school?

**Answer:** Yes, the circa 1.39ha Education site is of sufficient size to house a 210-place school building, all associated areas and provide a playing field of sufficient size.

**Question:** Why has the school not been built before now?

**Answer:** Waltham Leas a 420-place provider has been full for circa 10 years with a waiting list and no places available for in-year admissions from new-to-area catchment children. With the new housing developments currently under construction particularly within the village's boundary there is now a need to provide the village with a second school and give parents with further choice over their child's education.

**Question:** Why not use the former Infants School on the Waltham Leas site?

**Answer:** The Waltham Leas 420 place site is at capacity, and it does not have enough site space to grow to a 630-place provider. The former Infants building is occupied by a private day-care provider who provides a successful service to the village.

**Question:** What about the impact upon secondary provision as more families move to the locality?

**Answer:** There are sufficient secondary places across the borough (outside of the two Cleethorpes secondary sites, both of which are currently in the process of expanding). Several key local school sites have already expanded and have capacity to grow further if required, and whilst Waltham's pupil population is growing that is not the case in other areas across the borough. Primary reception intake for North East Lincolnshire peaked at about 2,000, though this number has now fallen to about 1,850 pupils. It should also be noted that within North East Lincolnshire whilst a majority of primary-aged pupils attend their catchment school, around 50% of the Borough's secondary-aged pupils do not, with parents choosing schools outside of their immediate locality.

**Question:** Why is the Council now opening new schools when they've previously closed others?

**Answer:** Schools are led by pupil supply and demand, and this is a fluid process driven by birth data and population movement. If there is not sufficient demand for places this makes a school unsustainable. This was the case for the decisions taken around previous closures and the reorganisation of primary and secondary provision. The Government is very clear that sites which are not sustainable should be closed. Schools should not have excessive long-term spare capacity as there is a cost implication to keeping unviable sites open. When pupil numbers increase and demand is evidenced the Council would look to increase provision at the time, through either expansion or new build.

**Question:** What is the land edged in blue on the proposed plan?

**Answer:** The area edged in blue sits outside of the designated Education site and will not form part of the school site.

**Question:** Will there be after and before school clubs and community use outside of school hours?

**Answer:** The provider once appointed will work with the community to establish how community use will be managed, and this will include dialogue about before and after school clubs.