



# Borough of Telford and Wrekin

## Cabinet Report

3 November 2022

## School Growth Report

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<b>Cabinet Member:</b>	Shirley Reynolds – Cabinet Member: Children, Young People and Families
<b>Lead Director:</b>	Simon Wellman – Director: Education and Skills
<b>Service Area:</b>	Access and Sufficiency
<b>Report Author:</b>	Adam Womack – Service Delivery Manager: Access and Sufficiency
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<b>Wards Affected:</b>	All Wards
<b>Key Decision:</b>	Key Decision
<b>Forward Plan:</b>	22/08/2022
<b>Report considered by:</b>	SMT - 11/10/2022 Business Briefing - 20/10/2022 Cabinet - 03/11/2022

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### 1.0 Recommendations for decision/noting:

It is recommended that Cabinet:-

- 1.1 Notes the position on current and projected demand for school places and the action taken to date to manage the supply of school places.
- 1.2 Delegates authority to the Director: Education & Skills, in consultation with the Director: Finance & HR and the Cabinet Member: Children, Young People and Families to allocate the basic need grant and high need capital funding, including allocations for 2022-25, and relevant section 106 funding, in relation to the

provision of mainstream and specialist provision across all age groups within the Borough.

- 1.3 Approves the proposed acquisition of land to the council that was negotiated as part of the s106 agreement, so at no financial cost, on the Castle Farm Way/A5 site in Priorslee and onward lease to the Department for Education (DfE) who will act as an agent for the Thomas Telford Trust who have been granted sponsorship of the new free school, for the provision of additional primary education places.
- 1.4 Delegates authority to the Director: Education & Skills, in consultation with the Director: Finance & HR and the Cabinet Member: Children, Young People and Families to take all necessary steps to implement the proposed expansion of Lawley Village Academy by 210 primary school places and 30 nursery provision places subject to such expansion being in accordance with the available budget.
- 1.5 Delegates authority to the Director: Education & Skills, in consultation with the Director: Finance & HR and the Cabinet Member: Children, Young People and Families to take all necessary steps to implement the proposed expansion of Ercall Wood Academy by at least 150 secondary places and create additional class bases across the secondary estate to create a further 150 places, subject to such expansions being in accordance with outcomes from feasibility studies and the available budget.

## **2.0 Purpose of Report**

- 2.1 To update Cabinet on the Council's statutory duties as set out in s.14 Education Act 1996 to plan for sufficient school places.
- 2.2 To seek agreement to the proposals as set out in this report including secondary school feasibilities and resulting expansions.

## **3.0 Background**

- 3.1 Telford was designated as a New Town in the 1960's with an intended population of 220,000 people. The Telford Development Corporation aimed to utilise land formerly used by extractive industries to create a new town with a balance of industrial and residential development, alongside connecting existing settlements including Wellington, Oakengates, Madeley and Dawley.
- 3.2 A number of development sites were granted permission under the New Town Act of 1965 and 1981, some of which remain to be built out. The principle of developing these sites has been accepted and therefore the Local Planning Authority only control the type, style and nature of development. Homes England owns a significant amount of land in the borough, which has begun to be unlocked through the Telford Land Deal, formed in 2015.
- 3.3 The adopted Telford and Wrekin Local Plan (2018) sets out a housing requirement of approximately 17,280 net new homes up to 2031 and includes allocations for housing including a Sustainable Urban Extension at Priorslee which is expected to deliver around 1,100 new homes.

- 3.4 More people are choosing Telford as the place where they want to live, work and raise a family. Inward local migration and an increase in birth rates in the early 2000's have been the main drivers of population growth within Telford and is reflected in the number of children attending schools in the area.
- 3.5 The number of children on roll at primary schools has increased by 18% over the last 10 years. These larger primary cohorts have now transitioned to secondary school which have also experienced similar increases; secondary school rolls have increased by nearly 17% in the last decade. The population growth within the Borough has led to an ambitious investment programme to ensure we continue to meet the demand for school places.
- 3.6 The Council has made significant investment in the school estate to ensure that children in Telford and Wrekin have access to exceptional education facilities. Most secondary schools and a number of primary schools in Telford and Wrekin were rebuilt using £200m funding secured through the Building Schools for the Future (BSF) programme, initiated in 2003. Funding from the BSF programme ended in 2010, however, Telford and Wrekin Council retained £43m through building efficiency savings which was then used alongside capital receipts, other grant and partner funding, including national sporting governing bodies, to deliver four additional new build schools compared to what was proposed in the original outline business case. As a result, alongside a robust spend on maintenance and building condition, the standard of accommodation and educational facilities across our school estate is of an exceptionally high standard. See **Appendix A** for further information.
- 3.7 Alongside the additional mainstream places set out in **Appendix A**, a series of SEN Hubs are being developed to provide places for children with moderate learning needs. Each hub will deliver eight additional places in existing mainstream primary and secondary school settings. Primary hubs are already in place at Hollinswood, Old Park and Wrockwardine Wood Infant Schools, with another at John Randall soon to be finalised. A secondary hub has also been established at The Telford Langley School. Two further SEN hubs will be created by 2024/25.
- 3.8 The additional capacity the Council has added to its school estate has ensured that children are able to access places at local schools. High rates of meeting parental preference for children starting primary and secondary school have been maintained. For September 2022, 98% and 96% of parents, respectively, were offered a place for their child at one of their preferred schools.
- 3.9 Since 2018, the number of recorded births in Telford and Wrekin has fallen by 14%, which is broadly in line with the national trend. It is anticipated that pupil numbers are likely to fall in the longer term as smaller cohorts of children start school. The number of primary pupils in Telford and Wrekin is expected to peak in 2023/24, before gradually reducing over subsequent years. However, an additional 780 primary places are required to manage the local demand created in areas of new housing.

- 3.10 In line with the phased school growth programme of our secondary schools and following recent receipt of the 2022-25 DfE basic need grant (£15.68m), we will create an additional 300 secondary school places which are needed by 2025/26 to meet known demand. Secondary pupil numbers are expected to fall from 2026/27, although this will be closely monitored in line with housing growth. The creation of school places is always phased to ensure there is careful management of the overall estate. An oversupply of places will lead to schools facing significant budgetary pressures as Designated Schools Grant (DSG) funding (revenue) is based on the number of children on roll.
- 3.11 To ensure that the Council meets its statutory sufficiency duty, it works closely with schools, Academy Trusts and other partners including the West Midlands Regional Director (RD)/Department for Education (DfE). Following the move towards the academy programme, schools now have many more freedoms to determine their admission arrangements and expansion plans. The Council does not have the authority to insist that an existing academy expands, is unable to determine their admission policy and cannot define their overall pupil admission number. Therefore significant partnership is needed with the sector to deliver on the sufficiency duty.

#### **4.0 Summary of main proposals**

##### **Development of a new school on the Castle Farm Way/A5 site**

- 4.1 The Council, through S106 negotiations, will consider what local amenities are required for the local communities to thrive, whilst considering too the impact on existing provision within the locality. As part of the discussions relating to Castle Farm Way the Council secured land and funding for a new primary school and is therefore being provided at no cost to the Council, other than legal expenses. Subject to Cabinet approval, the land is due to be transferred to the Council in January 2023.
- 4.2 A new primary school is needed as part of the local infrastructure required to support the Castle Farm Way/A5 development. Existing primary schools, local to the site, are at their published admission number and cannot easily be expanded to accommodate the number of children anticipated to move into the new development.
- 4.3 The new school will be developed by the DfE as part of wave 11 of the free school programme. The proposed school will provide an additional 420 primary school places from September 2024. The DfE are due to enter procurement imminently. The Council has secured £4.75m of s106 receipts to contribute to the cost of the build. The draft masterplan for the development site and school site plan are provided at **Appendix B**.
- 4.4 In line with current legislation, all new schools must be academies. The Thomas Telford Trust has been appointed by the Regional Director (RD) as the sponsor for the new school. The Council plan to lease the land to the DfE who will act as an agent on behalf of the Trust.

## **Allscott Free School**

- 4.5 As part of the s106 planning agreement in relation to the new housing development at Allscott Meads comprising of up to 470 dwellings, the Council agreed for the developer to fund and build a new 150 place primary school on the former British Sugar site in Allscott. Construction of the new school is underway and the school is due to open in September 2023. Upon completion of the school building, the land will be transferred to the Council and subsequently leased to the Learning Community Trust, who were the successful sponsor appointed by the RSC following the free school presumption process. The Council has agreed to provide funding to support the Trust with its pre and post-opening revenue costs in its first year, through growth funding provided from the DfE. See **Appendix C** for the masterplan for the Allscott Meads site.

## **Lawley Village Academy expansion**

- 4.6 Lawley Village Academy opened in 2015/16 to meet the demand for school places generated by new housing within the area. In line with the phased development at Lawley, it is now necessary to commence the expansion of the primary school as was originally intended. This is being explored with the school's sponsor REAch2 Academy Trust with the intention to provide an additional 210 primary and 30 nursery places from 2024/25, at an estimated cost of £5.8m.

## **Secondary School Expansion**

- 4.7 The Council are conducting feasibility studies on the expansion of its secondary provision. Ercall Wood has been identified to accommodate at least 150 places from 2024/25. Further expansion options of our secondary estate are being explored to provide the additional 150 places required which will likely be delivered by additional temporary classes in a number of schools. For example, the Learning Community Trust have agreed to accommodate additional children across its secondary schools at Charlton, Ercall Wood and HLC. Where needed additional space requirements at the schools will be considered and associated revenue costs funded. Discussions with other academy trusts are ongoing to deliver the remaining places required.
- 4.8 A feasibility study will also be conducted at Southall School to ascertain whether the school can increase its capacity to be able to accommodate 200 pupils, alongside the further development of SEND hubs as required.

## **5.0 Alternative Options**

- 5.1 Where the Council is not able to provide a new school or a permanent expansions where needed, then short-term measures to provide more places using temporary buildings may be required.

## **6.0 Key Risks**

- 6.1 The risks, in summary are:

- If the proposals in this paper are not implemented then there is a likelihood of insufficient school places for the growing population.
- A delay in implementing these proposals could impact on increased costs given the current uncertain economic situation.
- Alternative proposals could lead to increased revenue costs elsewhere in the borough.

## **7.0 Council Priorities**

- 7.1 The proposals set out in this report support the following council priorities:
- Every child, young person, and adult lives well in their community,
  - All neighbourhoods are a great place to live,
  - A community-focussed, innovative council providing efficient, effective and quality services.

## **8.0 Financial Implications**

- 8.1 The Council maintains a capital programme for schools, supported by capital funding from the DfE and developer contributions. DfE funding is allocated based on projected demographics, compared to the capacity and condition of the local authority's school estate.
- 8.2 The projects described in this paper are included in the capital programme and based on estimated costs and available funding, are affordable within the projected available resources.
- 8.3 There are some revenue costs associated with opening new schools, but it has been agreed with the local Schools Forum to use DfE provided growth funding (part of Dedicated Schools Grant (DSG) allocations) to support these costs.

## **9.0 Legal and HR Implications**

- 9.1 Under sections 13 and 14 of the Education Act 1996 (as amended by the Education Acts 2006 and 2011), a local education authority has a general statutory duty to ensure that there are sufficient school places available to meet the needs of the population in its area. The local authority must promote high educational standards, ensure fair access to educational opportunity and promote the fulfilment of every child's educational potential.
- 9.2 It must also ensure that there are sufficient school places in their area and promote diversity and increase parental choice. To discharge this duty the local authority has to undertake a planning function to ensure that the supply of school places balances the demand for them. The Education and Inspections Act 2006 requires local authorities to promote choice and diversity when carrying out their strategic duties in relation to the provision of new school places.
- 9.3 In respect of the specific proposals outlined in this report, ongoing legal support and advice will be provided by Legal Services.
- 9.4 There are no Human Resource implications arising from this report.

## **10.0 Ward Implications**

10.1 Proposals in this report are intended to ensure sufficient school places across the borough and therefore has the potential to affect all wards.

## **11.0 Health, Social and Economic Implications**

11.1 None.

## **12.0 Equality and Diversity Implications**

12.1 The proposed addition of two new schools adds to the choice of educational provision available in Telford and Wrekin. There is already a range of schools in Telford including community schools, academies, faith schools, grammar schools and special schools which are well placed to be able to meet the needs of the communities they serve.

## **13.0 Climate Change and Environmental Implications**

13.1 New school buildings and expansions are built to higher specifications under BB103 and BB104. New school buildings are more energy efficient and as a result will help to progress our carbon neutral ambitions.

13.2 By providing local school places we can further encourage more active travel (e.g. walking, cycling) to school.

## **14.0 Appendices**

Appendix A – Summary of New Schools and Expansions from 2015-22

Appendix B – Draft masterplan of Castle Farm Way/A5 site and school site plan

Appendix C – Masterplan for Allscott Meads Development Site

## **15.0 Report Sign Off**

<b>Signed off by</b>	<b>Date sent</b>	<b>Date signed off</b>	<b>Initials</b>
Legal	06/10/2022	06/10/2022	RP
Finance	06/10/2022	06/10/2022	TD
Director	06/10/2022	09/10/2022	SW

## Appendix A – Summary of New Schools and Expansions from 2014-22

- 1) Newport Infant school was expanded in 2014/15 to provide an additional 90 key stage 1 places, at a cost of £580k.

After:



- 2) Lawley Village Academy was built and opened in 2015/16, providing 210 new primary school places costing £4.36m. The school has admitted a reception intake of 30 children each year since opening, with 2021/22 being the first year with children in all year.

Before:



After:



- 3) Hadley Learning Community Primary expanded in 2016/17 with an additional 210 places, costing £2.61m.

After:



- 4) A small expansion at Old Park Primary school was undertaken for 2016/17 to provide the school with one additional class bases. This cost £450k.

Before:



After:



- 5) Ladygrove Primary School was expanded from 280 places to 420 in 2019/20, costing £3.83m.

Before:



After:



- 6) A small expansion at St Georges CE Primary School was completed in 2019/20 providing an additional 35 places at a cost of £720k.

After:



- 7) For 2020/21, Newport Junior School was remodelled to provide an additional three class bases and replace the Victorian section of the school, costing £910k.

After:



- 8) A new build and remodelling scheme has been completed for 2022/23 at the co-located John Randall and Haughton School site at a cost of £7.49m.

Before:



After:



- 9) By 2016/17, Charlton (£16.45m), Erccall Wood (£17.47m), Holy Trinity (£20.80m), Telford Park (£17.40m), and Telford Priory (£19.15m) had all relocated to newly built school sites using (BSF) funding with a net gain of 24 secondary school places.

Charlton:



Erccall Wood:



Telford Park:



Telford Priory:



- 10) Internal remodelling work at Burton Borough School was completed in 2019/20 providing an additional 130 secondary places, costing £1.69m. Further work to extend and refurbish the kitchen and dining facilities at the school are due to be completed by 2023/24.

Before:



After:



- 11) A refurbishment of Hadley Learning Community Secondary was undertaken for 2019/20. This enabled the school to be able to accommodate an additional 300 secondary children. The Council contributed £90k towards this.
- 12) Haberdasher Adams' and Newport Girls' High School were both successful in their bids to expand via the Selective School Expansion Fund (SSEF). Both schools were expanded to each provide an additional 150 places from 2020/21.

Newport Girls' High School After:



- 13) The Council has invested £15.85m in expanding secondary schools in Telford. The Telford Langley School was expanded for 2021/22 and construction work has been completed to expand Holy Trinity Academy from 2022/23. These two expansions have delivered an additional 600 secondary places.

Telford Langley After:



Holy Trinity After:

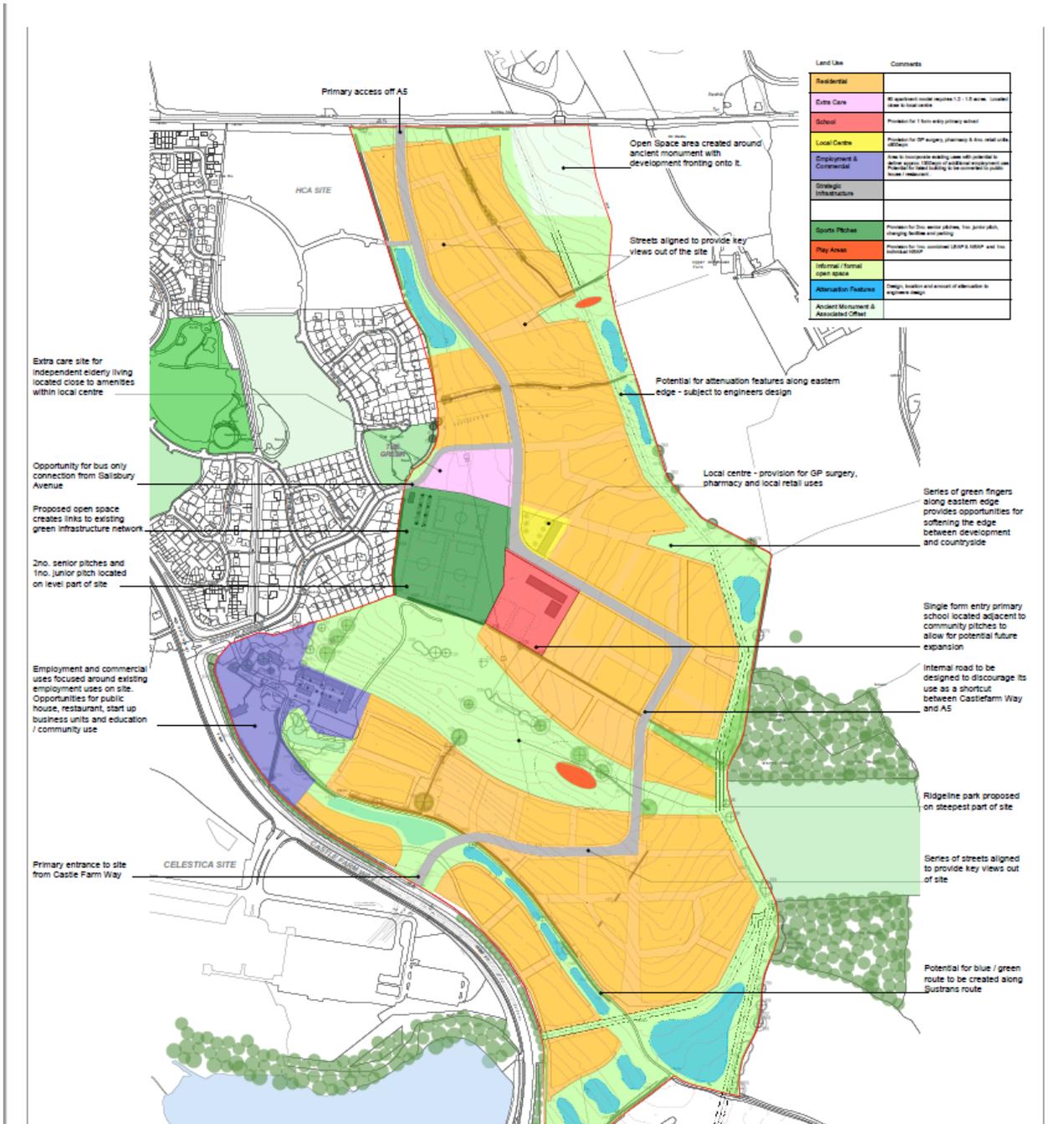


- 14) The Council have also developed SEN Hubs at Hollinswood, Old Park, Wrockwardine Wood Infant and Telford Langley Schools.

Wrockwardine Wood Infant SEN Hub:



# Appendix B – Draft masterplan of Castle Farm Way/A5 site and school site plan.





## Appendix C – Masterplan for Allscott Meads Development Site



Progress at Allscott Meads Primary free school from early October 2022:

