



Chichester Neighbourhood Plan: White House Farm & School Land Swap

CHICHESTER NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN
BACKGROUND DOCUMENT

ANNA WHITTY

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PLEASE TELL US WHAT YOU THINK

Vote online at <https://www.surveymonkey.co.uk/r/SchoolLandSwap> or by using the QR code above, or return page 13 of this document to Chichester City Council offices: The Council House, North Street, Chichester **by 15.12.2020**.

Introduction

- 1.1 Chichester City Council, together with the residents of Chichester, are in the process of preparing a Chichester Neighbourhood Plan. The Plan can include planning policies, infrastructure projects, and aspirations. This document discusses the White House Farm major development site, and examines the possibility of developing a new all-through school which would replace Bishop Luffa High School with an all-through Primary and High School on the Whitehouse Farm site, in exchange for the development of residential dwellings on the current school site.
- 1.2 Should the developers and landowners come to an agreement to provide a new school, additional housing, or any other new development or changes to the existing planning permission, this would be subject to examination and assessment through the planning application process in the normal way. The purpose of this paper is to set out the existing position with regard to planning permission and development on the site, and to explore the possibility of developing a new all-through school at the site.
- 1.3 The area covered within the Chichester Neighbourhood Plan is shown outlined in black in figure 1, below, and encompasses the whole of the parish area of Chichester city.



Figure 1: Chichester Parish and Neighbourhood Plan area.

Planning Background

Site Allocation and Planning Permission

- 2.1 The White House Farm development site (also referred to as “West of Chichester”, and since development has commenced, it is referred to by the developers as “Minerva Heights”), is allocated as Strategic Development Land (SDL) in the Chichester District Local Plan. This establishes its suitability in principle (subject to detailed planning consent) to accommodate 1600 new homes over the site, as well as employment and community uses, including public open space, and a primary school. The site is shown outlined in black in figure 2, below.

Map 12.5 West of Chichester Strategic Development Location

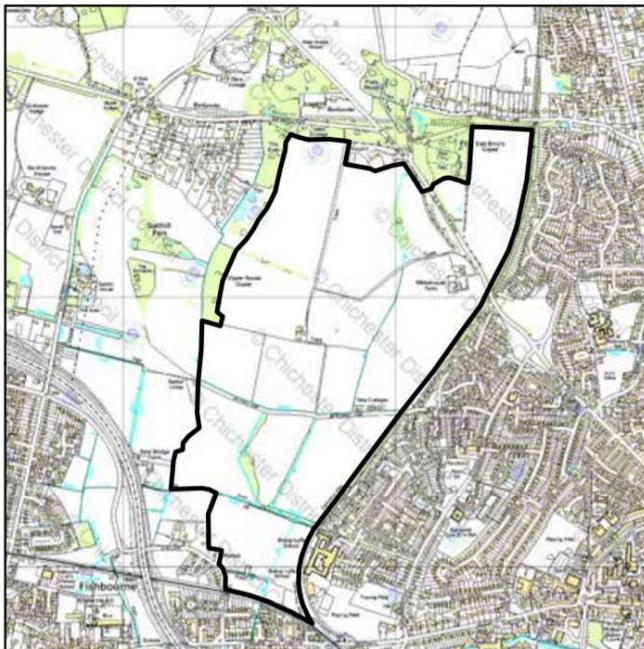


Figure 2: White House Farm SDL

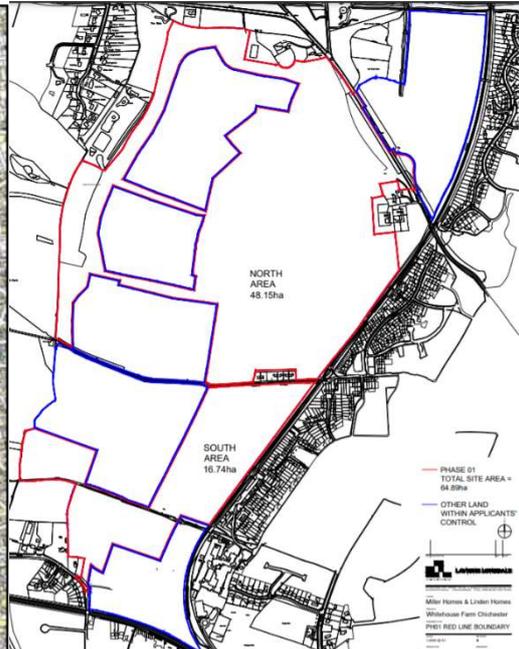


Figure 3: Phase 1 (red) and Phase 2 (blue)

- 2.2 An outline planning application under reference 14/04301/OUT was submitted and approved for phase 1 of the site, which would include the first 750 dwellings, a local community centre with shops and a primary school, a country park and sports pitches. An outline application deals with the principle of the development and can determine one or more of the following major issues: access, scale, appearance, layout and landscaping. The remaining details are then subject to a further “reserved matters” application. The outline permission for White House Farm dealt with the principle of the development and the access, via a roundabout from Broyle Road. All other details were held in reserve, to be determined by a number of reserved matters applications, each dealing with a smaller parcel of land within the phase 1 outline permission site.
- 2.3 Figure 3, above, shows the phase 1 site outlined in red, with the blue areas excluded; these will form phase 2, for which no planning permission has yet been applied for or granted.

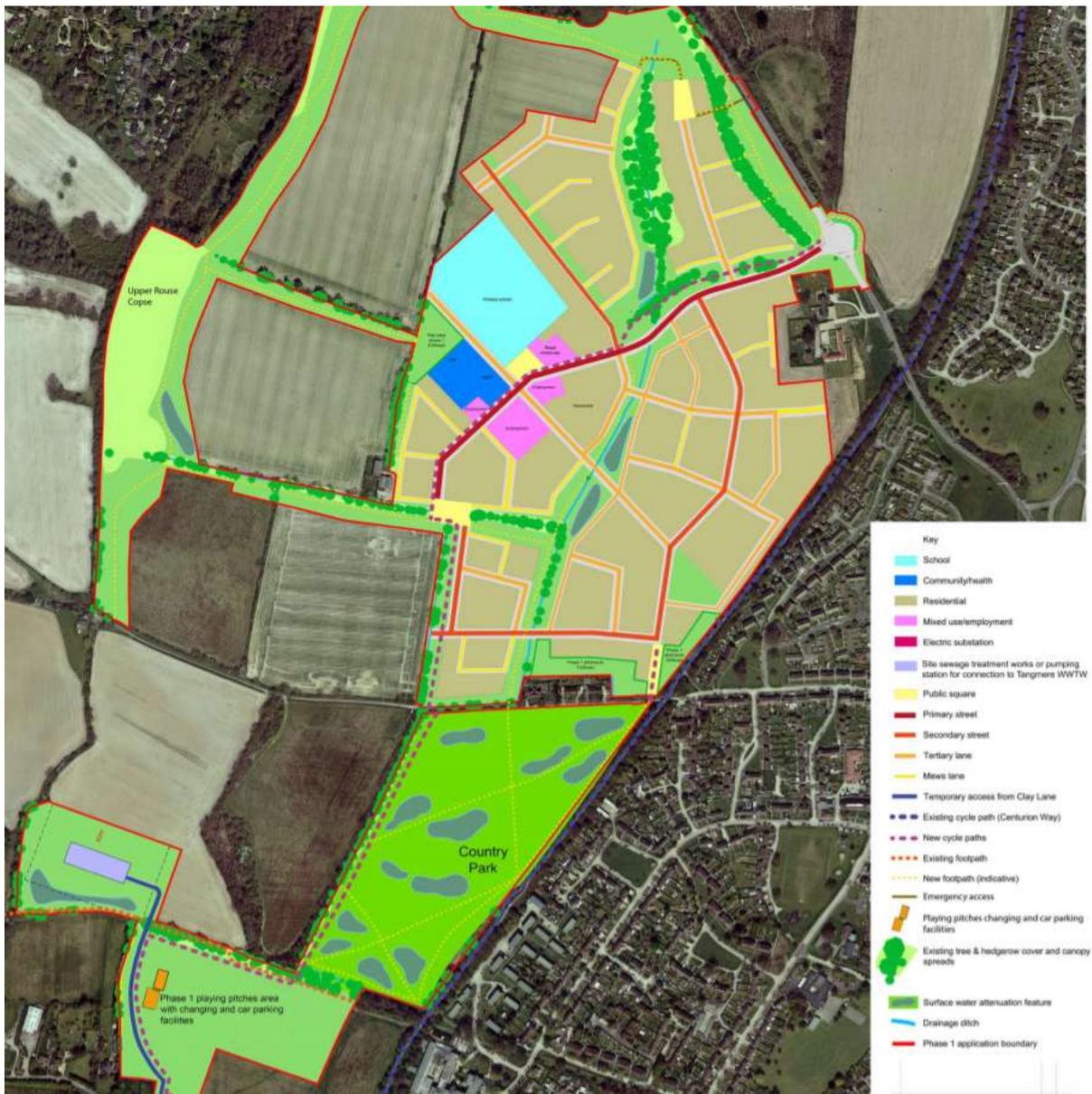


Figure 4: Land Use and Layout Plan

2.4 As part of the outline planning permission, land use, layout, building height and density plans were submitted, with which the future “reserved matters” detailed planning applications would need to be broadly in accordance. Figure 4, above, shows open space/landscaping in green, housing with main roads in darker red and more minor road in orange and yellow, shops and employment in pink, community hall (dark blue) and primary school (light blue). To the south of the main built area is a large country park (in bright green), and further south are sports pitches (green) with pavilion.

2.5 Detailed reserved matters planning applications have now been submitted for the main spine road and services, landscaped areas, sports pitches and many of the residential parcels of land within phase 1 and building works have started. A planning application for the central community hub area has not yet been submitted (at the time of writing) but this is expected soon.

2.6 In due course, phase 2 is expected to provide the remaining 850 homes alongside further employment land, and an access from the south would be required to serve this development. Indicative plans were submitted as part of the phase 1 outline permission, illustrating that a southern access could be provided as part of the phase 2 planning and development, see figure 5, below. This is shown to cross through Bishop Luffa school land from the bottom of Centurion Way, joining the local road network at Westgate. However, full and final details of this access were not required under the phase 1 permission, which relies on access from the Broyle Road to the north.

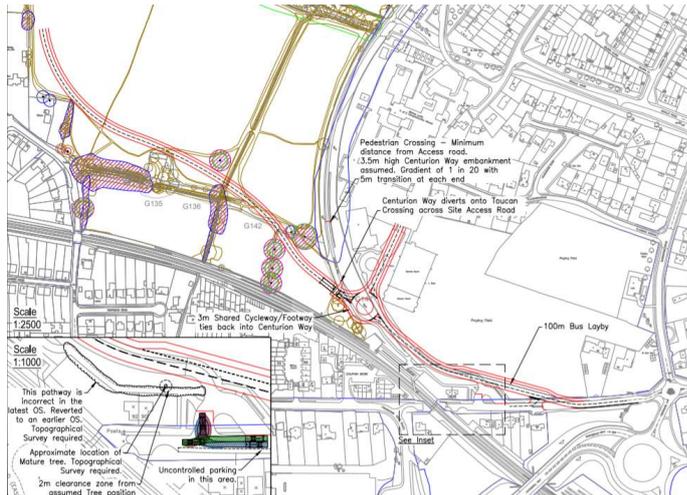


Figure 5: Indicative southern access plan

2.7 South of the southern access shown indicatively above is an ecological wildlife habitat area, and a chalk stream runs south/south-west into this area; the new school would be sited just west of this. These ecological assets would not be affected by the school swap proposal. Approximate locations are shown below in figure 6. Sports pitches for shared school and community use would surround the new school to the west, north and east. Further north, beyond the thick tree line, is the country park, to be completed by the end of 2021.



Figure 6: Potential land swap sites shown in relation to ecological assets (no change proposed to these)

Development Timeline

- 2.8 An indicative timeline from the developers relating to the White House Farm development is outlined in figure 7 below. This is from January 2020 and is therefore subject to slippage, in particular there may be delays due to covid-19.

Part 1 Indicative Delivery Timescale

Winter 2019	Commence works on Phase 1 infrastructure (assuming all conditions approved by CDC)
Winter 2019 to Spring 2020	Delivery of roundabout works
Spring to early summer 2020	Completion of main Spine Road (as approved)
Winter 2019/Spring 2020	Commence works on SANG area, Country Park and drainage areas
March 2020	Start first residential parcels (Miller & Linden)
Autumn – Winter 2020	Completion of SANG
December 2020	Occupation of 1st Unit (Miller & Linden)
December 2021	Delivery of 100 units Year 1 (100 occupation)
December 2022	Delivery of 100 units Year 2 (200 occupation)
December 2023	Delivery of 100 units Year 3 (300 occupation)
December 2024	Delivery of 100 units Year 4 (400 occupation)
December 2025	Delivery of 100 units Year 5 (500 occupation)
December 2026	Delivery of 100 units Year 6 (600 occupation)
December 2027	Delivery of 100 units Year 7 (700 occupation)
December 2028	Delivery of remaining 50 units Year 8 (750 occupation)

Note: Community infrastructure (school, local centre, allotments etc) and approved highways improvements will be provided commensurate with dwelling completions, in accordance with the triggers and requirements agreed as part of the part one legal agreement.

Part 2 Indicative Timeframe

Autumn 2019 to Spring 2020	Progression of land negotiations with key stakeholders
November 2020	Outline Application preparation and preapplication discussions, including public consultation
March 2021	Submit Outline Planning Application for Phase 2
October 2021	Resolution on Outline Planning Application (assumes 6 months to Committee resolution)
January 2022	Completion of S106 and Outline Decision issued
January - February 2022	Submission of Phase 2 infrastructure RM (Southern Access)
May 2022	Decision on Phase 2 infrastructure RM
June - July 2022	Commence works on Phase 2 infrastructure
Spring - Summer 2023	Southern Access open

Figure 7: Development timeline

Bishop Luffa Land Swap

- 3.1 Bishop Luffa is a popular and well rated Church of England High School with Sixth Form. However its buildings are reaching the end of their useful life and extensive investment in new buildings is now becoming necessary. Building a new school, particularly of this size would cost a significant amount, beyond the means of most educational establishments.
- 3.2 There are some issues currently with the location of Bishop Luffa; some residents have complained about parents parking in their residential streets surrounding the school at drop off and pick up times. In addition, there has been some concern expressed about school pupils crossing over Centurion Way to use the new sports pitches.
- 3.3 As a potential remedy to these issues, it is suggested that a “land swap” is considered by the school, landowners and developers. The developers are required to provide a primary school as part of the White House Farm development. This could be provided as part of an all-through school, taking primary children as well as Bishop Luffa pupils. The ideal location for the new school would be adjacent to the sports pitches at the south of the White House Farm development site. The new school would then be surrounded by sports pitches which it could have shared use of during school hours. A suitable design for a modern, three storey school building with separate large sports hall has been provided by local architect and city councillor Julian Joy. Siting in this location would resolve the issue of parking in residential streets, and parking spaces and/or a “kiss and drop” lane could be provided for the school off the access road. An indicative layout is suggested below in figure 8.



Figure 8: Land Swap: potential new school position

- 3.4 It is understood that the site on which the new all-through school is shown in figure 6 would likely have been used to provide a further sports pitch as part of phase 2 proposals. It is

therefore suggested that this should instead be provided on the site which was to be used for the primary school. This is located in the community hub area, adjacent to a community hall, and would therefore be well-sited to serve the local community. The area would be sufficient to provide an all-weather 3g football pitch with 400m running track surrounding it. This is shown in figure 9, below.

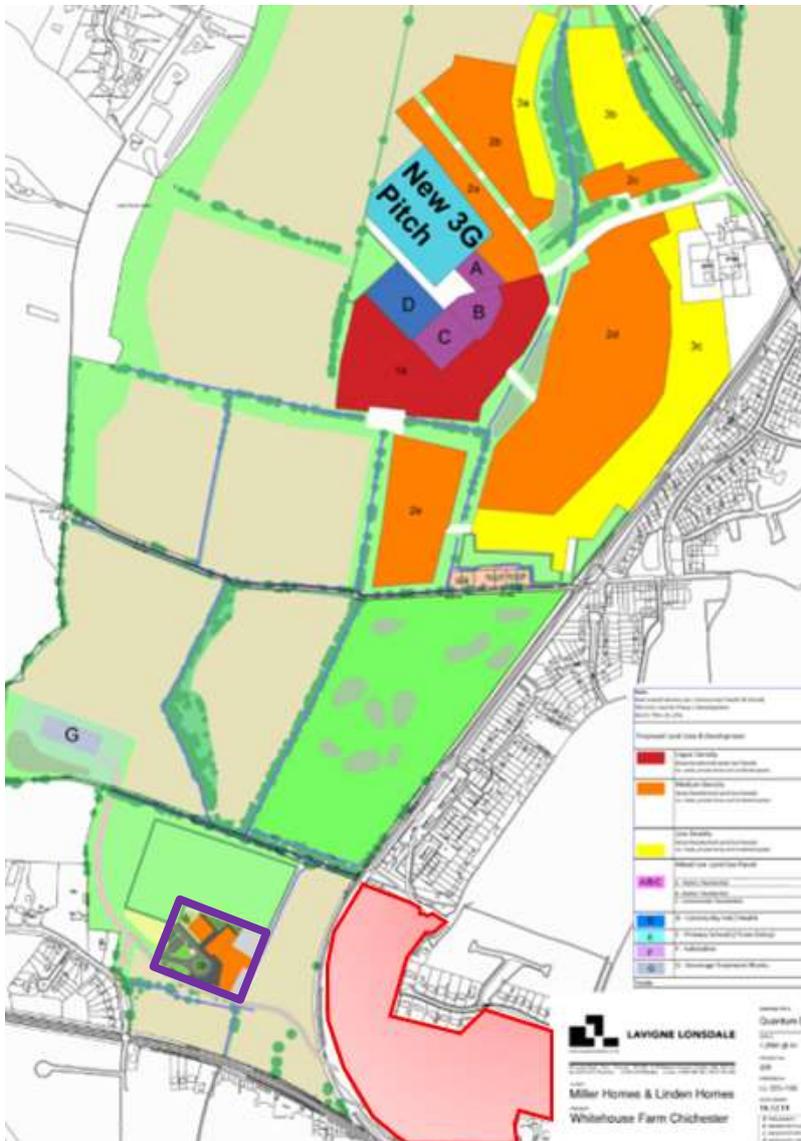


Figure 9: Suggested sites for new pitch (blue), new all-through school (purple outline) and residential development on former school site (pink)

- 3.5 In order to finance the construction of the all-through school with sixth form, it is suggested that, following provision of the new school building, the then redundant land which currently comprises Bishop Luffa school and grounds could be passed to the developer for residential development. The site amounts to approximately 7.2ha of land, and depending on density of around 30-55dph, it could provide between 250-400 homes. This would assist in meeting the government's required housing targets for the area. It would also enable the developer to provide the southern access point for phase 2 of the White House Farm development through the (former) school site without the current land use and ownership complications.

School Design

4.1 At this stage, there is no agreement to a land swap, it is still an idea in negotiation between landowners, developers, the school and the relevant authorities. However, should the relevant parties agree, set out below is a recently designed three-storey all-through school with sports building, which would meet the requirements and could be replicated on the suggested site. Plans by architect Cllr Julian Joy.

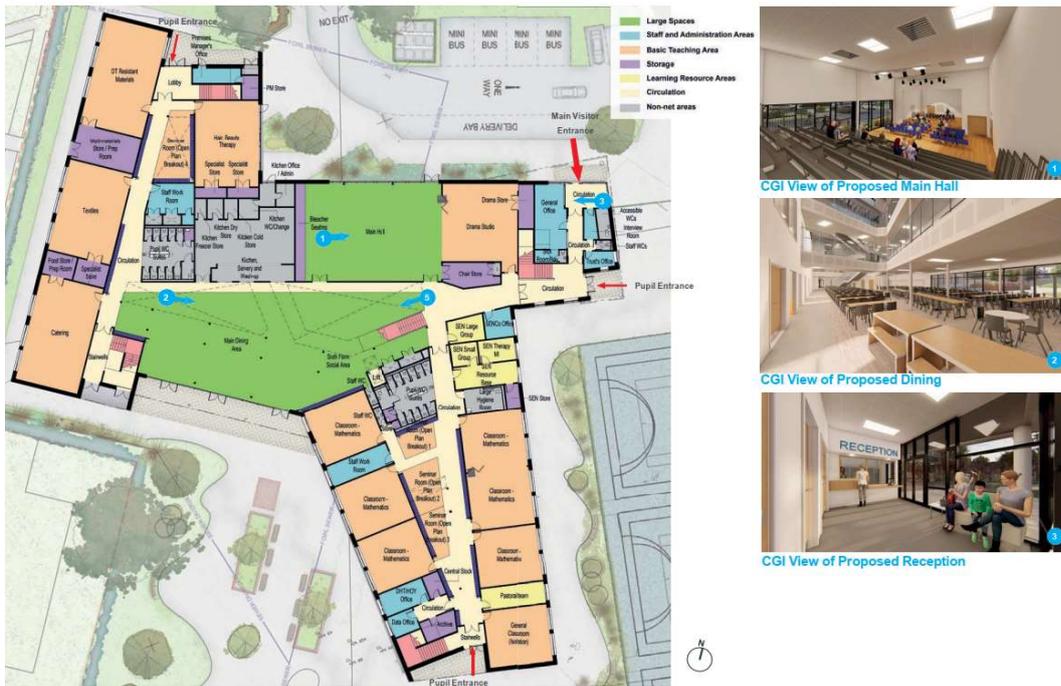


Figure 10: All-through School, ground floor



Figure 11: All-through School, first floor



Figure 12: All-through School, second floor



Figure 13: Sports building



Figure 14: CGI All-through School building

Note: Housing Requirement

Do we need another 300 homes?

- 5.1 The Planning Authority, Chichester District Council (CDC) is in the process of revising and updating the Local Plan. The government requires Local Authorities to allocate land for at least 5 years' worth of projected housing "need", which is based on the government's calculations. If enough housing land is not allocated and/or not enough new homes are built (even though Local Authorities cannot compel house builders to build any faster), the area is then considered, in planning terms, to be in significant housing need. This "need" is very heavily weighted as a planning consideration.
- 5.2 Currently, Chichester District does not have a sufficient 5-year housing supply. This means that until either a new Local Plan or a Neighbourhood Plan is adopted which allocates the required amount of housing land, developers can propose large housing developments on any site, and they will generally have to be permitted, except where it can be demonstrated that the development would cause significant harm. This is because the proven "need" (in the form of not having a 5-year supply) very often outweighs other harms the development may cause.
- 5.3 A request has been made to CDC for our annual housing target, that is the number of new homes that the parish of Chichester is now required to provide each year. CDC has advised that they do not yet have this information. They have an overall target for the District and are currently in the process of working through how to divide this requirement between its parishes. It is anticipated that Chichester will be required to provide a significant proportion as it is the District's central hub.
- 5.4 Once we have our housing requirement, we can assess sites to determine which are most suitable to allocate. The process would involve putting out a "call for sites", asking land owners or members of the public to nominate sites they think could accommodate new housing, and then each site would be assessed according to how well they fit criteria such as being on brownfield land, being sited close to the existing settlement, existing services or transport provision, impact on ecology, and so forth. The sites which best fit the criteria are allocated for housing. The aim is to allocate sufficient housing land to provide a 5-year supply, because this gives the Planning Authority the ability to refuse applications for major housing development on less suitable sites, and removes the developers' argument that their development on any site should be permitted because of the significant housing need which cannot be provided for without a 5 year allocated land supply.
- 5.5 If a new school was provided elsewhere, the existing Bishop Luffa school site would be likely to be assessed as suitable for housing allocation, because it is inside the existing built up area, it is previously developed land which usually has low ecological value, it is already surrounded by housing or other built form, and therefore a housing use would be suitable in the context of surrounding uses as well as visually; the potential to harm the landscape is low. These types of sites are generally the most preferred for allocation, as compared to less preferable sites

on greenfield land, further from the existing settlement or encroaching on the countryside, where there may be greater potential for ecological impact, or sites surrounded by uses which would be impacted by (or would impact) the new housing to a greater extent.

- 5.6 Development on allocated sites is still subject to a detailed planning application, but the site is established to be suitable in principle for the type and scale of development it is allocated for.
- 5.7 In summary, we are still waiting for CDC to confirm the exact number of new homes that will have to be provided in the parish of Chichester over the next 5 years, but it is likely to be significant. We can allocate sites we feel are suitable for these homes. If we do not allocate sufficient land, developers will determine which land to site the new homes on.

What happens now?

- 6.1 The Neighbourhood Plan are taking a poll (see next page of this document) to see if there is public support for the land swap proposal. The School are in support of the idea. There are a number of developers, and their interest will likely depend on two key issues; firstly whether the proposal stacks up financially, and secondly how likely it is that the proposal can be achieved. This will come down to questions like is planning permission likely to be granted, are the landowners keen to carry this through to completion, will the school agree, etc.
- 6.2 One way to give greater certainty to the developer with regard to planning permission would be to adopt a policy within the Neighbourhood Plan to allocate the land for the land swap proposal, that is to allocate the new school site for new school development, and the existing school site for housing (with the caveat that it could only be developed after a new school is provided of course). However, a Neighbourhood Plan is about what the residents want, so we need to check the general consensus on the issue before we can take it any further through the Neighbourhood Plan process. For this reason we're asking Chichester residents to take part in our poll, and tell what you think of the idea. You can do this online or by filling in the next page of this document, and returning it to the City Council Offices in North Street, Chichester.

School Land Swap Poll

In principle, would you support a policy in the Neighbourhood Plan for a new all-through school (ages 4-18) on the White House Farm site, and the redevelopment of the current Bishop Luffa school site for housing?

YES

NO

OTHER/COMMENT

Vote online at <https://www.surveymonkey.co.uk/r/SchoolLandSwap> or by using the QR code below, or return page 13 of this document to Chichester City Council offices: The Council House, North Street, Chichester by **15.12.2020**.



Thank you.