

**NEW SECONDARY SCHOOL TO SERVE  
MORETON HALL, BURY ST EDMUNDS**

**BACKGROUND INFORMATION DOCUMENT**

## 1. BACKGROUND SECTION

The focus of this document is the proposal, subject to Suffolk County Council and SoS approval, to expand educational provision in the Moreton Hall area of Bury St Edmunds with the opening of a new secondary school in September 2016. It provides:

- Information on the existing educational provision in the area;
- Forecast pupil data for Bury St Edmunds and the school catchment area which covers Moreton Hall;
- Information on the number and type of new educational facilities, which need to be provided to serve this community; and
- Information on the statutory process, which all local authorities must follow in order to establish new schools.

This document should be read in conjunction with the notice published locally on the Suffolk County Council website and nationally on the DfE website and the school specification document. Interested sponsors must submit their proposals in accordance with the requirements set out in section 9.

## 2. AREA PROFILE

Bury St Edmunds is an exceptionally fine medieval town, with a Norman street plan, cathedral, abbey ruins and attractive timber-framed and Georgian buildings. The town is a sub-regional centre for West Suffolk and it is also part of the Cambridge sub-region. It has a large rural hinterland and a wide range of shops and services.

Bury St Edmunds has a population of 37,150. It is the largest town in the borough and the third largest town in Suffolk after Ipswich and Lowestoft. It has grown considerably in the past seventy years, more than doubling in size from 16,922 in 1931 to 35,473 in 2001. In 2001, it had 15,591 households with residents (*Census*). The town has accommodated a consistent level of growth for many years, averaging 225 new homes a year since 1991. The *East of England Plan* identifies it as a key centre for development and change.

The town has a central position in East Anglia and is midway between Cambridge and Ipswich on the A14. The town is also on the Ipswich to Cambridge railway line.

## 3. CURRENT EDUCATIONAL PROVISION

Suffolk County Council, the Local Children's Service Authority, is responsible for educational provision in the County. This includes the planning and provision of educational services, including the establishment of new schools. It has a statutory duty to provide a school place for every child living in its area of responsibility who is of school age and whose parents want their child educated in the state funded sector. To achieve this, the Authority has to

keep the number of school places under review and to take the appropriate steps to manage the position where necessary. The Education and Inspections Act 2006 also requires local authorities to adopt a strategic role, with a duty to promote choice, diversity and fair access to school provision.

### Primary School Provision

School	Current PAN
Abbots Green CP*	60
All Saints, Lawshall CECVP*	20
Barrow CEVCP	30
Great Whelncetham CEVCP*	20
Guildhall Feoffment CP*	50
Hardwick CP*	45
Howard CP*	45
Ickworth Park Primary*	40
Risby CEVCP*	30
Sebert Wood CP*	60
Sextons Manor CP*	30
St Edmunds Catholic Primary**	60
St Edmundsbury CEVAP*	60
Tollgate Primary*	60
Westgate CP*	60

### Middle School Provision

School	Current PAN
Hardwick Middle*	100
Horringer Court Middle	117
Howard Middle*	100
St James CEVA Middle*	124
St Louis Catholic Middle**	110
Westley Middle	116

### Secondary School Provision

School	Current PAN
County Upper Academy	260
King Edward VI CEVC Upper *	350
St Benedict's Catholic High**	Yrs 7/8 60 Yrs 9/10/11 150

\* These schools are part of the Bury Schools Partnership

\*\* These schools are part of the Catholic Pyramid

If reorganisation is agreed for the town, schools in the Bury Schools Partnership and the Catholic Pyramid would be reorganised within a two tier structure.

## Post 16 Provision

All three high schools have sixth forms, with shared provision between County Upper and St Benedict's Schools which are on adjacent sites.

West Suffolk College is a further education college with its main campus located in Bury St Edmunds. The college also delivers education and training in a range of Local Learning Centres located in towns in West Suffolk.

The college offers a range of Full-time, Part-time and Adult Education courses and has a large contract for Apprenticeships and training for businesses.

## 4. DEMOGRAPHIC FORECASTS

Forecasts for the area indicate that the following places are needed in the town in the entry year group:

### Secondary School Places

2013	2014	2015	2016	2017
746	707	737	731	768

### Primary School Places in the Bury St Edmunds Area

2013	2014	2015	2016	2017
565	584	556	572	566

### Primary School Places in the Moreton Hall Area

2013	2014	2015	2016	2017
118	132	116	134	129

## 5. THE LOCAL AUTHORITY'S PLANNED RESPONSE TO THE NEED FOR ADDITIONAL PLACES

We need approximately 750 places in each year group for students aged 11-16.

Currently, King Edward VI High School offers 350 places in each year group, St Benedict's offers 150 places and County Upper 260 places. All of this provision is located on the western side of the town. The King Edward VI

school site is too small to maintain the same number of pupils in each year group if it extends its age range to include pupils in Year 7 and 8.

As part of the reorganisation proposals for the town and adjacent area, we are proposing therefore to establish a new high school on the eastern side of the town – on the Moreton Hall estate. Initially, this new school could offer 120 places in each year group but would be able to grow later on as we expect more school places to be needed in the next 10 years or so following new housing developments in Bury. The new school would be expected to show how its admissions' criteria would prioritise children from the Moreton Hall area.

## **6. THE SITE AND BUILDINGS**

The site allocated for the new high school is located off Lady Miriam Way, Moreton Hall, Bury St Edmunds. The timescale for developing the buildings could be as follows:

Initial Design:	April 2014
Planning Application:	July 2014
Detailed Design:	August – October 2014
Appointment of Contractor:	December 2014
Mobilisation on Site:	Easter 2015
Handover and occupation:	Summer 2016

## **7. PROCESS FOR ESTABLISHING NEW SCHOOLS**

The Education Act (2011) states that when a local authority identifies the need for a new school, that this school should be promoted as either an academy or a free school. The Authority is required to publish a notice inviting proposals to this effect and to specify a date for academy / free school proposals to be received. After that date, the Authority forwards all proposals received to the Secretary of State outlining the steps taken to secure the proposals together with the details of any academy / free school proposals received.

Suffolk County Council requires all potential sponsors who submit proposals in response to an invitation to establish a new school to serve an existing community in its area of responsibility to present their proposals at a public meeting and to attend a question and answer session with an assessment panel comprising county councillors (members) and officers.

Following detailed consideration of all of the information available to the assessment panel, the members and officers concerned will reach a view on which, if any, of the applications received they would prefer to see implemented. A report on the conclusions reached by the panel will then be

presented to the next available meeting of the council's cabinet (its decision-making body).

It is important to note that whilst the Authority is able to state a preference in respect of which application it would wish to see implemented, it is the Secretary of State for Education who will make the final decision and select the successful sponsor.

If none of the proposals are acceptable to the Secretary of State for Education, then the Authority will embark on a school competition process based on the guidelines to establish a new maintained school as set out in section 7 (1) of the Education and Inspections Act 2006.

The key milestones for establishing the new secondary school in Moreton Hall, Bury St Edmunds, Suffolk are set out below:

<b>Stage 1 – Invitation for Proposals</b>	
August 2013	Launch of process: National and local announcements – start of 7 week process
27 September 2013	Deadline for receipt of proposals
<b>Stage 2 – Assessment</b>	
11 October 2013	Assessment of proposals and selection of preferred proposals
wc 25 November 2013	Assessment Panel Interviews and confirmation of preferred sponsor
wc 25 November 2013	Public Meeting
February 2014	Decision on reorganisation. If agreed, SCC Cabinet confirms its preferred bid(s)
February 2014	Proposals are sent to Department for Education for consideration and decision subject to final SCC approval on reorganisation
April 2014	Final SCC Cabinet Decision on reorganisation
<b>Stage 3 - Decision by Secretary of State</b>	There is no specified timescale for this part of the process.

Once advised of the outcome of the Secretary of State's consideration of the applications, the Authority will publicise this information on its website and via other media / communication channels and begin the process of working with the successful sponsor to establish the new secondary school.

## 8. FUNDING

The County Council has set aside capital funds to establish the school buildings. The Council will also provide 'up front costs' i.e. to cover the employment of a Headteacher and administrative support in advance of the

school opening plus the cost differential between the funding the school receives from the pupils admitted up to the point at which the school is operating at its planned capacity.

## **9. FURTHER DETAILS AND APPLICATION PROCESS**

Proposals should be submitted using the Suffolk County Council Specification Document available to download at: <http://www.suffolk.gov.uk/sor>

If you would like any further information, or would like to discuss your application in detail, please contact Phil Whiffing at:

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**Proposals must be submitted by: 27 September 2013**