**WOODLANDS MEED COLLEGE NEW BUILD**

PROJECT UPDATE JULY 2020

This project involves the design and construction of a replacement Woodlands Meed College in Birchwood Grove Road, Burgess Hill, West Sussex, RH15 0DP and the subsequent demolition of the existing facility. The existing College will remain open and fully operational until the new College is available for occupation. The neighbouring Birchwood Grove County Primary School will also remain open and fully operational during the construction and demolition works at Woodlands Meed College.

A feasibility study has been undertaken to identify the best location for the new

College within the existing grounds (*Figure 1).* The proposed new College has been positioned wholly on the playing field site to allow the current College building to stay in operation throughout the construction. The sloping nature of the playing field site means that significant cut and fill will need to be undertaken on the site to support a fully accessible College and external sport facilities.

The current proposal is predicated on classroom clusters in wings and the main communal and shared facilities in a central block. Access directly to the outside from classrooms is a key consideration given the nature of the young people. We have looked at a range of sports pitches across the site, but this needs to be further explored at the next stage to ensure they meet the needs of the College and community fully. We are proposing that the contractor access will be via the Birchwood Grove Primary School site. We are seeking to retain the existing car park where possible.

The drop off and pick up in the longer term will be retained via the shared driveway with Birchwood Grove Primary School but access will be slightly adjusted to where it is now. The proposed new building will be predominantly two storeys with a single storey classroom cluster at the west of the site to take advantage of the levels.

*Figure 1: Feasibility Site Plan*



WSCC are working closely with the College, by holding monthly Project Board meetings and, where necessary, College Engagement Meetings. The vision for the new Woodlands Meed College is to deliver an inspirational and flexible building that is a safe, secure and happy learning environment for both pupils and staff.

Despite COVID-19, the project has continued to move forward by holding virtual meetings with consultants and the College. A schedule of accommodation (rooms and sizes) has been agreed and this completes the RIBA Stage 1 report, which was agreed and signed off by both parties on the 6th July 2020, this does not include external works at this stage. The Architect and design team will work with the College to ensure that the sports facilities and external areas work for the school and satisfy Sport England requirements. Sport England are a statutory consultee, forming part of the planning process. The project now progresses into RIBA Stage 2, concept design. The concept design represents the [design team's](https://www.designingbuildings.co.uk/wiki/Design_team) initial response to the [project brief](https://www.designingbuildings.co.uk/wiki/Project_brief) taking on board more functional and practical [considerations](https://www.designingbuildings.co.uk/wiki/Consideration).

KEY DATES:

Planning application preparation and submission: October 2020 to April 2021

Planning Decision: March 2021

Handover: May 2023

The programme has taken into consideration, WSCC’s governance processes which must be adhered too. WSCC are exploring various procurement options to ensure the least disruption to Woodlands Meed School and the neighbouring Birchwood Grove County School.