# WOODLANDS MEED COLLEGE – FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

Background, Brief and Design Considerations

1. *Why is it essential for the College to be rebuilt?*

Whilst the physical condition of the building was acceptable, it was insufficiently sized to modern standards set out in Building Bulletin 104 and therefore we have undertaken to address this in the new design.

1. *How much will it cost?*

WSCC have a budget approval of £20 million for this project and current indications are that we will be within this. Throughout the project we will review these costs to ensure value for money.

1. *When will the building works start and how long will it last for?*

We are targeting starting on site September 2021 and completing in October 2023. The main buildings are programmed for completion in May 2023.

1. *What is the capacity, will it take more students than the existing college?*

The college is being designed in accordance with Building Bulletin 104 with sufficient capacity for 100 students

1. *What range of facilities will it provide?*

The new building will provide facilities to current standards for pupils with improved access throughout.

1. *Will every part of the building be accessible to all students?*

All student-designated areas and learning spaces will be accessible.

1. *What indoor and outdoor sports facilities will be provided?*

There will be an indoor 2 court sports hall, hydrotherapy pool and changing facilities, an all-weather pitch (55m x 33m) and a hard-outdoor PE/multi use games area (37m x 18.5m).

1. Will the washing and toilet facilities cater for large wheelchairs and allow covered access from every part of the college?

Yes, all washing and toilet facilities are in the building will accommodate large wheelchairs.

1. *How big is the Sports Hall?*

The 2 court sports hall is approximately 300m2 in area.

1. *How big will the classrooms be?*

There are 12 classrooms of 60m2 plus storage space, which is to the standard set out in Building Bulletin 104.

1. *What access and perimeter security is being proposed to keep children safe?*

The design includes for a “secure line” to the perimeter to manage student safety while on campus, which has been agreed with the college.

1. *Is there any provision for covered outside space that can be used all year as part of the project?*

Yes, there are canopies outside all classrooms

1. *Is the building easy to maintain /eco-friendly?*

Yes, the building has been designed to be both easy to maintain and include sustainable features.

1. *Will there be dedicated rooms for art, medical, drama and dance?*

There is a medical room and a sick bay. Drama is linked with music as the current college but there is a very large multipurpose hall that can be used for drama and dance too. Art will take place in the Design & Technology room.

1. *Are WSCC confident that they can deliver by 2023 target dates?*

WSCC are confident of delivering within the target timescales.

1. *Does the proposed school meet the needs of the children and are Adam, the staff and Governors happy with the designs, facilities etc.*

Quote from Adam, “we are very happy with the progression of the design. Yes it has all the facilities to meet the needs of pupils at Woodlands Meed.

1. *Will the All-Weather Pitch have floodlights?*

There is only one pitch that will be floodlit and that is the central pitch that sits just beyond the drop off and pick up zone. LED floodlights that have zero upward light and very little overspill will be used. These lights will be manually operated and have a dimming ability to alert users that their time of use is coming to an end.

Transport, Access and Parking

1. *Will there be enough standard and disabled parking spaces for staff and visitors to prevent parking on Wykeham Way?*

There will be additional provision of 14 parking spaces and improved drop off / pick up zones as part of the scheme.

1. *Will the vehicular and pedestrian access be the same as at present?*

This is improved, with a new drop-off/pick-up zone, as shown on the drawings

1. *Will any measures be taken to stop school traffic using Birchwood Grove Road?*

The design for the pick-up and drop off area is intended to ease congestion on adjoining roads.

1. *Will Birchwood Grove School parents still park around the school access when collecting and delivering?*

There will be no change to the access to Birchwood Grove School as part of the Woodlands Meed College project

Planning Process & Considerations

1. *If residents wish to comment on this planning application, who can they contact?*

If residents would like to comment on this planning application, they should do so via the Planning Portal. Orange notices will be posted in the neighbourhood announcing when the application is open for the formal consultation process.

1. *When is the consultation?*

The consultation on this scheme will be undertaken as part of the Planning Process, where members of the public will be able to make representation directly to the Planning Authority. All documents plans and statements will be available on the Planning Portal for member of the public to access. Members of the public will have 21 days to comment on the application.

1. *Will any trees be felled on the site?*

Yes, we anticipate approximately 5 trees that will be felled in order to accommodate the new building. In terms of new trees planted, the current scheme proposes a minimum of 23 new trees, in addition to new habitat areas, growing areas, wild garden, sensory nature trail and enhanced landscaping throughout.

1. *What effect will the new building have on the adjoining residential properties, if any?*

The scheme works to minimise the impact on adjoining properties by making the most of the topography of the site. The building will be set into the ground so it appears as a single storey building from properties on Birchwood Grove.

1. *Why has the building been put so close to residential boundaries on the Northern side of the site?*

The building had to be at the optimum level, in terms of ensuring the most opportunities for level access as possible. However, the team had been working to minimise the impact on the neighbouring properties by proposing to move the building 4m further South. This was approved by the Project Board on 9 November 2020.

1. *Are there windows on the North side of the building overlooking properties?*

There are windows on the ground floor, but they do not overlook the properties as they are buried into the site.

1. *Why does the building need to be an L-shape, taking it so close to residents at the West of the site, instead of extending the building in a straight line?*

The building has been positioned to achieve optimum levels for access and to satisfy Sport England’s requirements.

Project Risks

1. *Is the project likely to be impacted by Covid-19 and/or the end of the Brexit Transition period?*

The project risk register is reviewed on a monthly basis and actions are put in place to minimise the risks as and when they appear.

1. *What are the three key risks to delivering this project within budget and on time, and what are the mitigation plans for each?*
2. **Topography of the site** – Difficulties and costs related to access and logistics.

This has been de-risked by undertaking extensive cut and fill exercises with the structural and civil engineers, to understand the movement of ground material across the site, to minimise the amount of material taken off-site, thus ensuring the most cost-effective solution as possible.

1. **Construction access to the site** – A review was undertaken by the transport consultant, and the health and safety team in terms of how construction vehicles will access the site. This was done in conjunction with the college and Birchwood Grove Primary School.
2. **Working on a live site, with Birchwood Grove Primary and the College still in operation** – This has been managed by bringing on a health and safety team from the start, to review the risks and implications. We are tendering to specialist contractors that understand and have experience with working in this environment.
3. *Is the budget of £20m secure?*

In May 2020 the Council and the Cabinet Members approved a budget of £20m to proceed with this project and that figure is secure in our Capital Programme.

1. *Does May 2023 completion include contingency for any potential protests from residents?*

As part of the planning process, the programme has allowed for some assumptions about the levels of protest that we may get from local residents, we are therefore confident of a May 2020 completion date for the new building. WSCC hope to establish a positive relationship with the local residents and seek to ensure the appointed contractor has a resident Liaison Officer to liaise with residents and the school to ensure that issues are dealt with swiftly and suitably.

Construction

1. *How long is the build stage envisaged as lasting?*

The construction period is envisaged to last for approximately 20 months. However, we are procuring a contractor during the design phase to finalise the design, together with the incumbent design team, and hopefully improve on logistics, buildability and programme.

1. *How can or will noise be mitigated during development, given sensitivities to noise of some of the students?*

Any potential causes for concern will be discussed with the college so that that any impact is mitigated. Contractors will ensure communication with the college throughout the construction phase. This has already been discussed with the college, who are fully aware of the risk.

1. *What measures will be taken to protect the amenities and safety of BGS during the construction period?*

Measures will be identified as part of the development of the project to ensure health and safety throughout the construction of the project. It is anticipated that this would include

construction deliveries to be outside of drop off/ pick up hours, barriers to separate construction traffic and pedestrians and between BGS and the construction site.

1. *How will additional work-related traffic effect the journey times for students to and from the college?*

Deliveries of construction materials will be outside pick up and drop off times, to limit disruption.

1. *Will dust/dirt in the air during construction cause issues to the college?*

The contractors will have rigorous plan for reducing dust during construction. It is the College’s responsibility to manage the needs, health and wellbeing of their pupils while on campus.

1. *How will disruption be managed for pupils at the College during construction?*

As part of the procurement process for the contractor, one of the key questions is how they will seek to secure their site, in terms of making it as safe as possible for the pupils, dust mitigation, noise reduction etc. Furthermore, as part of the planning process a logistics plan and proposal will need to be submitted as part of the application. Acoustic surveys have been conducted across the site to advise on how mechanical ventilation will work in terms of external noise coming into the school, but equally we have taken readings from the school and local area so we can understand and monitor noise and this again will probably be conditioned through planning.

1. *How will construction traffic access the site?*

The proposed access to site will be along Wykeham Way.

1. *If site access is a key risk, why was access via the land which Burgess Hill Town Council supported, ruled out and can you swop if the risk is too great?*

This option was declined due to cost and the time implication. There are multiple landowners involved in that piece of land and there is an onerous process that would have to be followed. We do not envisage using this option in the future.

Other Considerations

1. *What about the Alternative Site? Why wasn’t it considered initially?*

The Alternative site was not considered to be available when the Woodlands Meed College project started. WSCC is now investigating the potential for the alternative site in parallel to progressing the Planning Application for the current scheme.

1. *How will the new college works effect Birchwood Grove School?*

There will be some disruption during the building works as safe access will be arranged but overall, this will not affect BGS.

1. *Will the new facilities be available for public or private hire?*

This will be dependent on the outcomes of discussions with Sport England and the outcome of the Planning Application. Any bookings would be managed by the College.

1. *What measures will be taken to protect the safety and amenities of Wykeham Way and the surrounding streets during the construction period?*

Before construction, the contractor will survey the condition of the routes to the site, which will be reviewed upon completion, with any necessary remedial works undertaken.

1. *Given the current size of the school and college, and the projected growth in population in Mid Sussex over the next ten years, for what reason is provision only being built to cater for 100 students?*

Following extensive review of projections for Key Stage 4 and above at Woodlands Meed, the Director of Education and Skills has confirmed there is no requirement to expand Woodlands Meed College. Future pupil number projection are regularly reviewed by WSCC Education.

1. *Will any of the services or education/care currently on offer at the college be affected/reduced due to redevelopment of the site?*

The college will be losing a playground during the construction phase. The College may choose to pause delivery of some services during this time. The close involvement of the college through out the design will ensure the impact is appropriately managed.

1. *Is the feasibility study still going ahead on the alternate site?*

Yes, WSCC are still proceeding with the feasibility on an alternative site, the reason being the disruption that surrounds building on the existing Woodlands Meed College site.