

Homefield Primary School

Planning & Educational Need Statement

Final

HM/NK/36843

June 2026



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1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 REPORT PURPOSE

1.1.1 This Planning and Educational Need Statement has been prepared by DHA Planning on behalf of West Sussex County Council ('the Applicant') to accompany a full planning application relating to a proposed development for Homefield Primary School at its campus located on Chesswood Road, Worthing, BN11 2AA ('the Site').

1.1.2 The description of development is as follows:

"Removal of existing structures and erection of a school building, including hard and soft landscaping (with associated structures), alterations to existing elevations, and reconfiguration of the access and parking arrangements."

1.1.3 This Statement provides an overview of the Site, the context surrounding the need for the new school building and the application proposals. It assesses the planning merits of the scheme with regard to the statutory development plan and material considerations, including comment on educational need. The Statement subsequently concludes that the proposal is acceptable in planning terms and planning permission should be granted.

1.2 BACKGROUND

1.2.1 Homefield Primary School is located on Chesswood Road, Worthing, and serves children between ages 4 and 11 years.

1.2.2 The school in its current form has been operational since September 2024, following the amalgamation of Lyndhurst Infant School and Chesswood Junior School (see **Figure 1.1** for the location of both campuses). The amalgamation followed a review of pupil projections and primary school provision which revealed a significant surplus in spaces in the Worthing and Durrington areas. It was agreed thereafter that the Lyndhurst Infant school site would be closed and the Chesswood Junior School site would be used to create an all-through primary school - 'Homefield Primary School' - to serve the local area.

1.2.3 Additional facilities are required at Homefield Primary School to support the ongoing transition to the new site, including the addition of a Special Support Centre (SSC), two reception classrooms, as well as associated resource spaces, admin spaces, and toilet and storage facilities. The school has a high percentage of pupils with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) - 36%, which is 20% above the County average of 16%. There is therefore a significant requirement to develop specialised SEND provisions for the school. This will also aid in improving the national undersupply of specialist provision, with an increase in pupils with SEND requirements generally over recent years.

1.2.4 The former Lyndhurst Primary School has continued to serve as an SSC. However, the intention is to move all operations to the main school campus; a single campus that improves operational efficiency, aids safeguarding and provides a cohesive

learning environment for all students. Until such time that these facilities can be provided, the schools will continue to operate from the two existing sites.



FIGURE 1.1: FORMER CHESSWOOD PRIMARY SCHOOL CAMPUS (RED) AND FORMER LYNDHURST INFANT SCHOOL (BLUE)

1.3 STATEMENT STRUCTURE

1.3.1 The structure of this Planning Statement is as follows:

- Section 2 sets out the context of the site, the immediate surroundings and the relevant planning history;
- Section 3 has regard to the development proposed;
- Section 4 reviews the planning policy context by which the planning application will be considered, including having regard to the advice contained in the NPPF (December 2024) and the formal policies of the development plan;
- Section 5 considers the 'principle' of the development, educational need and any other relevant planning considerations; and
- Section 6 draws conclusions to justify why it is considered that the development is acceptable.

1.4 APPLICATION DOCUMENTS

- 1.4.1 This application is accompanied by a suite of documents which are listed in **Table 1 and 2** below. This list accords with West Sussex County Council's Local List (January 2025).

REPORT	AUTHOR
Archaeological Desk Based Assessment	Chris Butler Archaeological Services Ltd.
Arboricultural Impact Assessment and Tree Survey	AtkinsRéalis
Biodiversity Net Gain Statement and Metric	
Design and Access Statement	
Drainage Strategy	
Flood Risk Assessment	
Noise Impact Assessment	
Outline Landscape Specification	
Preliminary Ecological Appraisal	
Transport Statement	
Updated School Travel Plan	

TABLE 1: ACCOMPANYING DOCUMENTS

PLAN/ DRAWING	AUTHOR
HMF-ATR-01-ZZ-D-A-021051-Site Location Plan	AtkinsRéalis
HMF-ATR-01-ZZ-D-A-021052-Existing Site Plan	
HMF-ATR-01-ZZ-D-A-021053-Proposed Site Plan	
HMF-ATR-01-00-D-A-011051-Existing Ground Floor Plan	
HMF-ATR-01-00-D-A-011054-Proposed Ground Floor Plan	
HMF-ATR-01-RF-D-A-011053-Existing Roof Plan	
HMF-ATR-01-RF-D-A-011055-Proposed Roof Plan	
HMF-ATR-01-ZZ-D-A-012051-Existing Elevations	
HMF-ATR-01-ZZ-D-A-012053-Proposed Elevations Sheet 1 of 2	
HMF-ATR-01-ZZ-D-A-012054-Proposed Elevations Sheet 2 of 2	
CHPS-ATR-XX-XX-D-L-401001_External Arrangement	
CHPS-ATR-XX-XX-D-L-402001_Section	
119757_NCG-ZZ-SL-DR-E-7003_P01 - Lighting Plan	Norse Group

TABLE 2: ACCOMPANYING PLANS/ DRAWINGS

2 SITE AND SURROUNDINGS

2.1 SITE LOCATION AND DESCRIPTION

- 2.1.1 Homefield Primary School is located in Worthing, to the north east of the town centre. The main campus extends to approximately 1.72 hectares and is linear in shape. There is an abutment at the southern access point with Chesswood Road, but the majority of the campus sits behind the built frontage.
- 2.1.2 The main school building sits at the centre of the Site, with a smaller detached building to the east. The buildings have no singular design style and exhibit a range of materials and roof forms. To the west of the school building is an area of hardstanding used as a play area, ancillary structures and a pond with an area of decking and adjacent vegetation. To the south of the building is an additional playground area and the main car park, accessed via Chesswood Road. To the east of the building are hard surfaced playing pitches and a playing field. At the very west of the site, an additional car park is found, accessed via Ladydell Road.
- 2.1.3 The area surrounding Homefield Primary School is predominantly residential, with some community uses nearby. The northern boundary of the site adjoins a railway line.

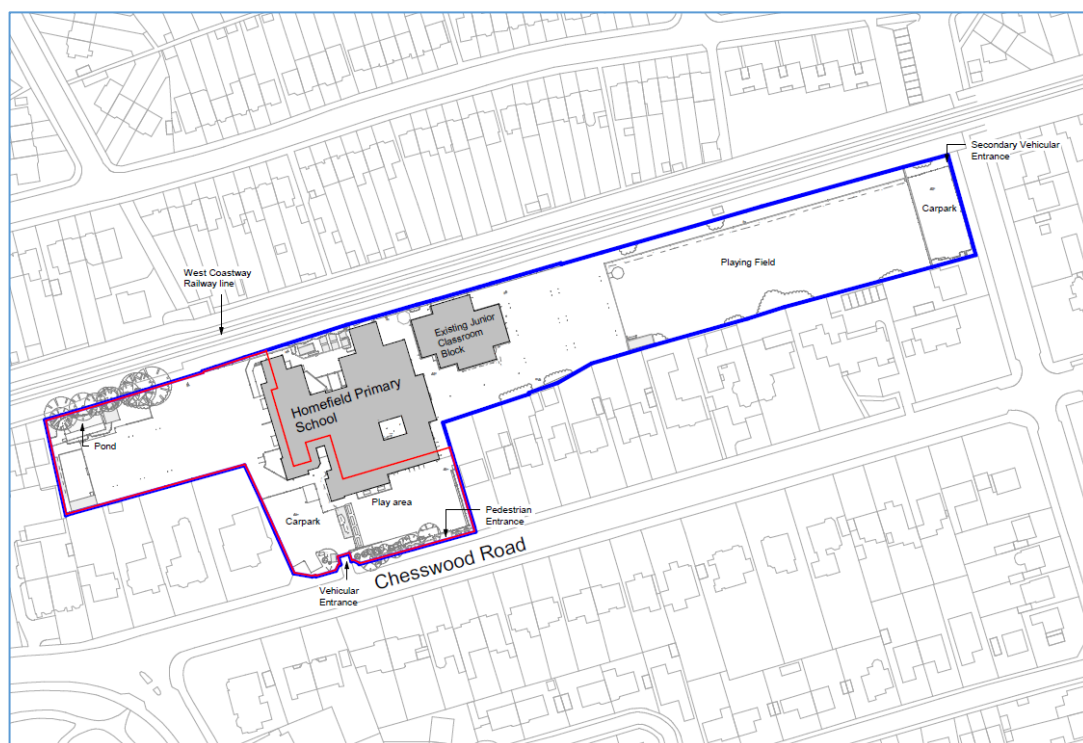


FIGURE 2.1: SITE LOCATION PLAN (SOURCE: ATKINSRÉALIS)

2.2 SITE SPECIFIC PLANNING CONSIDERATIONS

Spatial and Landscape Designations

- 2.2.1 The Site falls within the built-up area of Worthing. It does not fall within any other spatial or landscape designations such as the Green Belt, National Park or National Landscape.

Environment

- 2.2.2 The Site is not subject to any designated habitats or Ancient Woodland on or immediately adjacent to the Site. There is no Priority Habitat within the Site and opportunities for wildlife are limited due to the extent of built form and hardstanding.
- 2.2.3 Online records indicate that no trees in proximity to the development area are subject to a Tree Preservation Order (TPO).

Flood Risk

- 2.2.4 The Environmental Agency's Flood Map for planning indicates the Site is found entirely within Flood Zone 1, meaning it is at low risk of flooding from nearby rivers or the sea.
- 2.2.5 Additionally, some risk of surface water flooding has been identified. The flood map indicates risk of surface water flooding at the western end of the Site. The area at risk of flooding expands when modelled against the 1-in-100-year flood scenario and 1-in-1000 year flood scenario. The extent of this is shown in **Figure 2.2** below.



FIGURE 2.2: 1-IN-30-, 1-IN-100-, 1-IN-1000- YEAR SCENARIO FOR SURFACE WATER FLOODING

Heritage and Archaeology

- 2.2.6 There are no listed buildings or Conservation Areas on or immediately adjacent to the site, with the nearest designation being The Hollies (Grade II) (ref. 1263279). This is located approximately 550m to the southeast of the site.
- 2.2.7 The Site is located within an Archaeological Notification Area (ANA), as shown in the WSCC ANA area in the map in **Figure 2.3**. The ANA (Ref. DWS8646) has potential for Prehistoric Occupation, Roman Cemetery, Medieval and Post-

Medieval Occupation. Accordingly, a Desk Based Archaeological Assessment has been submitted with this Application and it is summarised in **Section 5** of this report.



FIGURE 2.3: ARCHAEOLOGICAL NOTIFICATION AREA MAP (SOURCE: WSCC)

2.3 PLANNING HISTORY

2.3.1 A review of the relevant planning history is outlined in the table below. It should be noted that these were Regulation 3 applications submitted by West Sussex County Council. As a result, West Sussex County Council was the local authority determining the application and therefore a reference for Worthing Borough Council's planning record is also provided.

REFERENCE	DESCRIPTION	DECISION
WB/534/04	<i>Extension of Existing Car park.</i>	Approved: 16/08/2004
04/00534/CCR3		
WB/1002/004	<i>Variation of Condition 3 on Planning Permission WB/357/97 to allow the retention of the temporary classroom unit on site</i>	Approved: 02/11/2004
04/01002/CCR3		
WB/94/05	<i>Provision of family resource centre to ground floor with ancillary office use to first floor with additional car parking to rear.</i>	Approved: 18/07/2005
WSCC/046/09/WB	<i>The continued siting and use of a temporary classroom unit</i>	Approved: 27/08/2009

REFERENCE	DESCRIPTION	DECISION
WSCC/046/14/WB AWDM/0090/14	<i>Construction of 12 classroom 2 storey building with group rooms and toilets. Demolition of existing temporary classrooms and stores, forming of increased hard play areas with PE store, remodelled and new car parks.</i>	Approved: 12/09/2014
WSCC/065/14/WB	<i>Adaptation of existing building to form Small Hall with extension to provide new Kitchen with associated Stores and external works. Demolition of wall and store and provision of new PE Store.</i>	Approved: 21/10/2014
WSCC/048/15/WB	<i>Extension of tarmac hard play area and entrance path</i>	Approved: 24/07/2015

3 PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT

3.1 OVERVIEW

3.1.1 The application seeks planning permission for the following development:

"Removal of existing structures and erection of a school building, including hard and soft landscaping (with associated structures), alterations to existing elevations, and reconfiguration of the access and parking arrangements."

3.1.2 The proposal looks to provide a single-storey school building on the Site to deliver much-needed provision for the existing students, following the amalgamation of Chesswood Junior School and Lyndhurst Infant School in September 2024. The building will total 740 sqm and will include 5 no. classrooms, break out spaces, group and therapy rooms, play areas, staff offices and toilets.

3.1.3 The use of the proposed building will primarily be as a Special Support Centre (SSC) and the western part of the building will support SEND students. The remaining eastern block will provide teaching facilities for reception age students.

3.1.4 In tandem, external alterations are proposed to the main school building to facilitate internal alterations made to support the amalgamation. This includes new windows and doors and the erection of a canopy along the western elevation, which diverts west to connect with the new building. It is also proposed to improve parking and access arrangements from Chesswood Road.

3.1.5 A full list of works proposed are as follows:

- Erection of a new 740 sqm Special Support Centre (SSC) and reception school building;
- A small 8 sqm extension to the northwest of the main school building for an extension lobby, together with new windows and doors;
- The replacement of the play area to the front of the school with a drop off area and additional parking places. The existing car parking area to the front of the school will be replaced with a hard-surfaced play area, separated from the car park through a proposed 4.5m wide gate;
- Addition of 'Forest School' to the south of the proposed building. This is a wooded area with a footpath running through it. This will individual teaching areas for the classroom of the proposed building, a den and fire pit with seating.
- A SSC play area and reception play area adjacent to the southern edge of the proposed building.
- A canopied walkway between the proposed school building and main school building, this will extend along the western edge of the main school building;
- A footpath surrounding the northern and eastern edge of the proposed building. Gates will be put in place to break up the path; and

- A new refuse store to the front of the site, screened with vegetation.
- 3.1.6 The remaining area of hardstanding to the east of the main school building will be used as breakout areas for different year groups at the school. This will include clusters of trees vegetation.
- 3.1.7 To facilitate the construction of the proposed building, the existing pond and vegetative area will be removed from the northwestern corner of the Site, as well as the removal of existing structures.

3.2 LAYOUT AND DESIGN

- 3.2.1 The proposed building will be located to the west of the main school building. Entrances will be located to the south and east, connecting to a paved footpath that surrounds the building. A canopy will lead east from the new building, connecting to a lobby which is proposed as an extension to the northeast of the main school building.
- 3.2.2 To the south of the proposed SSC building, a landscaped outdoor amenity area is proposed which considerably enhances the quality of outdoor spaces within the Site. This will include new trees and planting with outdoor breakout spaces.
- 3.2.3 The proposed building is linear in shape, with a mono-pitched roof and a canopy overhang to the south and a flat roofed section to the rear. The building will be treated with white brick with green zinc features and a light grey standing seam roof.

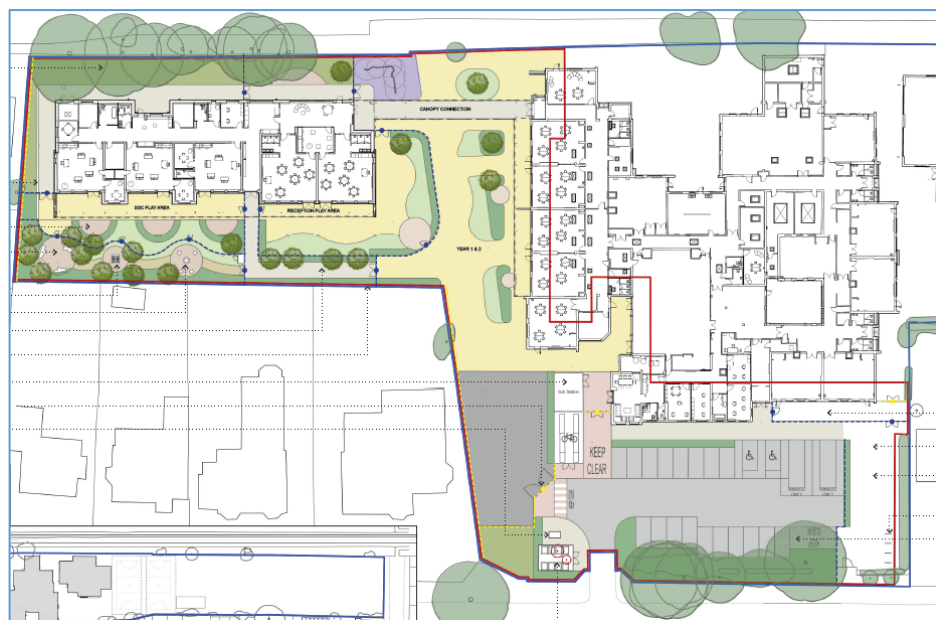


FIGURE 3.1: PROPOSED LANDSCAPING SCHEME

3.3 PARKING AND ACCESS

- 3.3.1 The car park will be relocated from southwest of the main school building, to directly south of the building, which will provide improved circulation for vehicles

entering and existing the Site. The access point at Chesswood Road will remain unchanged.

- 3.3.2 The car parking area will include 18 no. car parking spaces, 2 no. disabled spaces, and 2 no. minibus parking areas. The reconfiguration will ensure sufficient space for manoeuvring vehicles, as demonstrated by the submitted tracking drawings included within the Transport Technical Note.
- 3.3.3 To the east of the parking area is a new pedestrian entrance route into the Site which improve collection and drop off arrangements for parents and children away from the road. This space is clearly defined and separate from the car park.

3.4 PUBLIC FEEDBACK

- 3.4.1 The application follows a public exhibition on the emerging proposal. A total of 15no. responses were submitted which were largely positive, as shown in the response summary table provided below.
- 3.4.2 Positive aspects to the proposals were noted to be the design and materiality of the building; light and spacious classrooms; outdoor green space; efficient use of land; modest building design; and the location of the building (i.e. not being located on the playing field).
- 3.4.3 Respondents were also asked to comment on aspects of the proposal that they did not like and only 3no. comments were made on this question. Responses noted the scale of the development relevant to the accommodation currently provided on the campus and the former Lyndhurst Infant School site; outside space (although no reasons were given on the reasons why); and the large windows (due to weather and cleaning needs).

	STRONGLY DISAGREE	DISAGREE	NEITHER AGREE OR DISAGREE	AGREE	STRONGLY AGREE	DON'T KNOW
<i>The scheme creates an inspiring learning environment for local children.</i>				9	5	1
<i>The building will be a landmark for the neighbourhood that creates a sense of place.</i>			3	8	2	2
<i>It is important that this scheme meets high standards of sustainability.</i>				2	12	1
<i>The design of the scheme is sympathetic to its environment.</i>				7	7	1

	<i>STRONGLY DISAGREE</i>	<i>DISAGREE</i>	<i>NEITHER AGREE OR DISAGREE</i>	<i>AGREE</i>	<i>STRONGLY AGREE</i>	<i>DON'T KNOW</i>
<i>The scheme promotes and supports sustainable travel, walking and cycling.</i>			6	2		7

4 PLANNING POLICY FRAMEWORK

4.1 OVERVIEW

- 4.1.1 Under the provisions of Section 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act, applications for planning permission are required to be determined in accordance with the Development Plan in force unless material considerations indicate otherwise.
- 4.1.2 West Sussex County Council's adopted policies are related to minerals and waste, comprising Joint Minerals Local Plan (2018, with a partial review in 2021)) and West Sussex Waste Local Plan (2014). There are no adopted policies of relevance to general development management. Therefore, the relevant development plan for this site will be the adopted Development Plan for Worthing, which comprises of the Worthing Local Plan (March 2023).
- 4.1.3 Material considerations include the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF, 2024); relevant Supplementary Planning Documents (SPDs) including the Worthing Planning and Climate Change Checklist (2023).

4.2 THE DEVELOPMENT PLAN

Worthing Local Plan (March 2023)

- 4.2.1 The following policies from the Worthing Local Plan are considered to be of relevance to this Site:
- Policy SP1: Presumption in Favour of Sustainable Development
 - Policy SP2: Climate Change
 - Policy SP3: Healthy Communities
 - Policy SS1: Spatial Strategy
 - Policy DM5: Quality of the Built Environment;
 - Policy DM7: Open Space, Recreation and Leisure
 - Policy DM8: Planning for Sustainable Communities / Community Facilities;
 - Policy DM9: Delivering Infrastructure;
 - Policy DM15: Sustainable Transport & Active Travel;
 - Policy DM16: Sustainable Design;
 - Policy DM17: Energy
 - Policy DM18: Biodiversity;

- Policy DM19: Green Infrastructure;
- Policy DM20: Flood Risk and Sustainable Drainage;
- Policy DM21: Water Quality and Sustainable Water Use;
- Policy DM24: The Historic Environment.

4.3 MATERIAL PLANNING CONSIDERATIONS

National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF, 2024)

- 4.3.1 The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) sets out the Government's planning policies for England and how these should be applied. It is a material consideration in planning decisions. The framework sets out that the purpose of the planning system is to contribute to the achievement of sustainable development.
- 4.3.2 **Paragraph 8** states achieving sustainable development means that the planning system has three overarching objectives, which are interdependent and need to be pursued in mutually supportive ways (so that opportunities can be taken to secure net gains across each of the different objectives):
- (a) An economic objective – to help build a strong, responsive and competitive economy, by ensuring that sufficient land of the right types is available in the right places and at the right time to support growth, innovation and improved productivity; and by identifying and coordinating the provision of infrastructure;
 - (b) A social objective – to support strong, vibrant and healthy communities, by ensuring that a sufficient number and range of homes can be provided to meet the needs of present and future generations; and by fostering well-designed, beautiful and safe places, with accessible services and open spaces that reflect current and future needs and support communities' health, social and cultural well-being; and
 - (c) An environmental objective – to protect and enhance our natural, built and historic environment; including making effective use of land, improving biodiversity, using natural resources prudently, minimising waste and pollution, and mitigating and adapting to climate change, including moving to a low carbon economy.
- 4.3.3 **Paragraph 98** states to provide the social, recreational and cultural facilities and services the community needs, planning policies and decisions should:
- (a) plan positively for the provision and use of shared spaces, community facilities (such as local shops, meeting places, sports venues, open space, cultural buildings, public houses and places of worship) and other local services to enhance the sustainability of communities and residential environments;

- (b) take into account and support the delivery of local strategies to improve health, social and cultural well-being for all sections of the community;
- 4.3.4 **Paragraph 100 (a)** sets out that LPA should give great weight to carry, expand and alter school facilities through decisions on applications.
- 4.3.5 **Paragraph 104** states that existing open space, sports and recreational buildings and land, including playing fields and formal play spaces, should not be built on unless:
 - a) an assessment has been undertaken which has clearly shown the open space, buildings or land to be surplus to requirements; or
 - b) the loss resulting from the proposed development would be replaced by equivalent or better provision in terms of quantity and quality in a suitable location; or
 - c) the development is for alternative sports and recreational provision, the benefits of which clearly outweigh the loss of the current or former use.
- 4.3.6 **Paragraph 131** states that the creation of high quality, beautiful and sustainable buildings and places is fundamental to what the planning and development process should achieve. Good design is a key aspect of sustainable development, creates better places in which to live and work and helps make development acceptable to communities.
- 4.3.7 **Section 14** outlines the need to meet the challenges of climate change, flooding and coastal change. Particularly, highlighting the need in **Paragraph 172** for all plans applying a sequential, risk-based approach to the location of development.

Supplementary Planning Documents: Worthing Planning and Climate Change Checklist (2023)

- 4.3.8 The Worthing Planning and Climate Change Checklist was adopted in 2023 alongside the current Worthing Local Plan. The Checklist sets out the specific requirements set out in the Local Plan's policies regarding Climate Change, ensuring developments are compliant with these policies.

Policy Statement Planning for Schools Development (Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government; 2011)

- 4.3.9 The Government has pledged its support for the development of schools by producing the Planning for Schools Development Policy Statement in August 2011. The Policy Statement sets out that the creation and development of state-funded schools is strongly in the national interest and that planning decision makers can and should support that objective, in a manner consistent with their statutory obligations.
- 4.3.10 It emphasises the importance of increasing school capacity to meet growing demand, enhancing educational standards, and promoting diversity in school provision.

- 4.3.11 The Statement outlines the Government's belief that the planning system should operate in a positive manner when dealing with proposals for the creation, expansion and alteration of state-funded schools.
- 4.3.12 It introduces a presumption in favour of school development and urges authorities to fully consider the importance of enabling such projects. Authorities are instructed to use their planning powers constructively, streamline application processes, and avoid unnecessary conditions. Any refusal or imposition of conditions must be backed by strong evidence, or it may be deemed unreasonable.

5 PLANNING ASSESSMENT

5.1 INTRODUCTION

5.1.1 In determining whether the proposal accords with the development plan, the following key issues are considered:

- Principle of Development
- Design and Landscaping
- Highways and Access
- Ecology, Trees and Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG)
- Flood Risk and Drainage
- Heritage and Archaeology
- Other Environmental Matters

5.1.2 These considerations are discussed in turn below.

5.2 PRINCIPLE OF DEVELOPMENT

5.2.1 The Site falls within the defined built-up area of Worthing in which, under **Policy SS1: Spatial Strategy**, the principle of new development is supported subject to other relevant planning considerations.

5.2.2 The Government has expressly confirmed through the Planning for Schools Development Policy Statement in August 2011 that the planning system should operate in a positive manner when dealing with proposals for the creation, expansion and alteration of state-funded schools.

5.2.3 The Statement requires local authorities to apply a presumption in favour of state-funded schools, as expressed in the National Planning Policy Framework, and that the following principles should apply:

- (1) There should be a presumption in favour of sustainable development of state-funded schools.
- (2) Local Authorities should give full and thorough consideration to the importance of enabling the development of state-funded schools in their planning decisions. The Secretary of State will attach significant weight to the need to establish and develop state-funded schools.

5.2.4 In order to facilitate the efficient and positive delivery of school development, the Policy Statement requires Local Authorities to make full use of their planning powers to support applications for state-funded schools and clearly justify a refusal of any application.

- 5.2.5 Local Planning Authorities should take a proactive and collaborative approach to meeting this requirement, giving great weight to the need to create, expand or alter schools and work with applicants to resolve any planning issues before applications are submitted.
- 5.2.6 Further, **Policy SP3 (Healthy Communities)** part (a)(iv) highlights the importance of improving provision and access to education in order to provide maximum opportunities to promote healthy lifestyles; and **Policy DM8 (Planning for Sustainable Communities/ Community Facilities)** states that the Council will support improvements to education facilities to ensure they meet the needs of local communities.
- 5.2.7 The Government's commitment to ensuring the planning system supports the development of schools affirms that the principle of development for the proposed scheme at Homefield Primary School should be accepted. This is aligned with the adopted policies of the Local Plan.

Educational Need

- 5.2.8 The NPPF states a commitment to ensuring a sufficient choice of school places are available to meet the needs of existing and new communities, where local planning authorities should take a positive approach to meeting the necessary requirements.
- 5.2.9 As set out previously in this Statement, the proposed development is necessary to support the amalgamation of the schools and improve the quality of teaching spaces on Site, including the provision of suitable and dedicated SEND facilities for students which specialist requirements.
- 5.2.10 The West Sussex SEND Strategy 2026-2030 and the Growing Special Education Needs provision in West Sussex Report by Interim Director for Children, Young People and Learning sets out that West Sussex have an increased demand for specialist educational provision when compared to national averages. West Sussex has experienced a rise in the number of requests for EHC needs assessments since 2019, which is over double the rise seen nationally.
- 5.2.11 Furthermore, the Growing Special Education Needs Report states that all the maintained Special Schools in West Sussex are at maximum capacity. Students are increasingly required to travel outside their local area to access appropriate education provisions. Expanding the SEND capacity at Homefield Primary School through the addition of an SSC unit would significantly reduce the need for such travel. This would enhance the accessibility for local students and alleviate the logistical challenges posed for SEND students in travelling further afield for schooling.
- 5.2.12 Overall, there is clearly a significant need for SEND provisions across West Sussex. The addition of an SSC block at Homefield Primary School will increase the capacity of SEND students which can be enrolled at the school, reflecting the increasing demand for SEND support across West Sussex. This is encouraged by the NPPF's commitment to ensuring a sufficient choice of school places are available to meet the needs of the community.

- 5.2.13 Additionally, the inclusion of the SSC block on the main campus will help meet a key priority set out in the SEND Strategy 2026-2030, for inclusive education with smooth transitions for children and young people with SEND to support a sense of belonging in educational settings and community. The inclusion of SEND students in the main campus creates a greater sense of inclusion with the students at Homefield Primary School who do not require specialist support. This ensures SEND students can access mainstream education while still having the specialist support they require.
- 5.2.14 The above highlights that there is a clear, unmet need for SEND provisions in Worthing. In line with the NPPF, and the Ministerial Statement, this need should be given great weight.

Development on Playing Fields

- 5.2.15 Given the limited size of the school campus, the location of the teaching block was a key consideration in the design process. The proposed siting of the building was informed by a comprehensive options appraisal which concluded that the existing playground to the west of the campus was the most suitable location for the proposed development. The location of the building would better suit the school's emerging operational requirements and would have less of an impact on the school's amenity and sporting facilities. The western part of the campus was discounted due to its use as a sports field with adjoining surfaced sports pitches / play areas.
- 5.2.16 The development is located on a multi-use playground area. Sport England were consulted on the emerging proposal, issuing their pre-application response on 25 June 2026. They confirmed that the area is not considered a formal playing pitch, but rather a playground; this is given that although the area where the development is proposed to take place is marked out for games, there is no fencing around the area. This means that Sport England do not require to be consulted by the Council on this application.

5.3 DESIGN AND LANDSCAPING

- 5.3.1 To demonstrate compliance with **Policy DM5 (Quality of the Built Environment)** a Design and Access Statement has been prepared by AtkinsRéalis and submitted as part of this application. The requirements of Policy DM5 are set out in the table below, as are the means in which the proposed development complies with this Policy.

REQUIREMENT	COMPLIANCE
i <i>be of a high architectural and design quality and respect and enhance the character of the site and the prevailing character of the area. This will include consideration of proportion, form, design, context, massing, siting, layout, density, height, size, scale, materials, detailed design features and landscaping;</i>	The proposed development reflects a considered design development process involving a careful assessment of the Site's context and character. The building has been designed to respond to the varied roofscape and design styles visible across the Site, whilst ensuring that the building reads a secondary and subservient feature of the campus compared to the main block.

REQUIREMENT	COMPLIANCE
ii <i>enhance the local environment by way of its appearance and character, with particular attention being paid to the architectural form, height, materials, density, scale, orientation, landscaping, tree canopy, impact on street scene and layout of the development;</i>	The proposal utilises a high quality material palette which has been carefully selected to respond to and complement the existing context of the Site.
iii <i>make a positive contribution to the sense of place, local character and distinctiveness of an area;</i>	The proposed development is considered to improve the overall appearance of the Site through the comprehensive landscaping scheme which will soften the appearance of the outdoor amenity spaces and the proposed building. The existing Site largely comprises an expanse of hardstanding which, whilst functional, offers limited visual amenity.
iv <i>respect, preserve and where appropriate enhance, heritage assets and settings;</i>	There are no listed buildings or Conservation Areas on or immediately adjacent to the Site. The nearest designation is approximately 550m to the southeast of the Site. Given the significant distance and the intervening built-form and vegetation, the proposed development will not impact on the setting of the nearest designated heritage assets.
v <i>be well built, accessible, fit for purpose, and adaptable to changing lifestyle, demography and climate;</i>	The proposed development has been purposefully designed to suit an educational use and the needs of future users.
vi <i>include a layout and design which: take account of potential users of the site; create safe conditions for access, egress and active travel (walking and cycling) between all locations; provide good links to integrated public transport; and have acceptable parking arrangements (in terms of amount and layout);</i>	This application is submitted with an updated Travel Plan for the school, which seeks to encourage the use of non-car travel modes. See Section 5.4 for further discussion on this.
vii <i>make a positive contribution to creating a safe and secure environment by integrating measures for security and designing out opportunities for crime;</i>	Student safeguarding has been a central consideration in the emerging design, including the careful use of boundary treatments.
viii <i>not have an unacceptable impact on the occupiers of adjacent properties, particularly of residential dwellings, including unacceptable loss of privacy, daylight/sunlight, outlook, an unacceptable increase in noise giving rise in significant adverse impacts, or vehicular movements resulting in severe cumulative impacts on the road network, or loss of important open space of public value (unless it satisfies any of the exceptions set out under Policy DM7 – Open Space, Recreation and Leisure);</i>	The proposed building has been set back from the residential dwellings to the south along Chesswood Road. The massing and height of the building has been carefully considered to reduce any impact on the amenity of the surrounding residential area. Please refer to Section 5.4 for discussion on travel.
ix <i>respect the existing natural features of the site, including landform, trees and biodiversity and contribute positively to biodiversity net gain. Where appropriate,</i>	The proposed development is able to demonstrate a 10% net gain for biodiversity, resulting from a considerable increase in soft landscaping within the Site.

REQUIREMENT	COMPLIANCE
<i>this will include the protection and integration of existing trees and green infrastructure into new developments;</i>	Existing landscaped features have been retained wherever possible.
x <i>ensure that lighting incorporated into developments provides the minimum for public safety, is energy efficient and avoids light pollution.</i>	The submitted Lighting Plan demonstrates that the proposed light fixtures have been sensitively designed and suitable for use in a residential context.

TABLE 3: REQUIREMENTS OF POLICY DM5

5.4 HIGHWAYS AND ACCESS

- 5.4.1 In compliance with **Policy DM15 (Sustainable Transport and Active Travel)**, a Transport Technical Note and Updated Travel Plan has been prepared by AtkinsRéalis and submitted alongside this application. The Policy requires new developments to be integrated into the existing transport network and promote sustainable forms of transport.
- 5.4.2 The Transport Technical Note sets out the planning history of the Site as it relates to highway impacts and pupil numbers. The planning application for the new two storey classroom building to the east of the Site included an assessment of 720 pupils and 97 staff at that time. Other than a short term increase in staff numbers to support the amalgamation, the proposed development and planned Pupil Admission Number for the school will, in the long term, be lower than the assessed capacity of 720 and considerably lower than the combined former capacity of the existing campus and at Lyndhurst Infant School. As such, the proposed development will primarily redistribute existing school travel demand within the local area rather than generate wholly new trips.
- 5.4.3 For pupils already attending Homefield Primary School, the journey to school will remain unchanged and in line with existing travel patterns (although the catchment of the amalgamated school is currently unknown and will change year-on-year). Following amalgamation, pupils previously attending the Lyndhurst Road site will instead travel to the new Homefield Primary School site via the surrounding local residential highway network. Existing walking routes between the former Lyndhurst Road site and the Application Site are supported by continuous footways, crossing facilities and established residential street connections which can be utilised by those living closer to the Lyndhurst Road site. An Updated Travel Plan is submitted with this application to promote sustainable travel, encourage considerate parking, manage short-term peak period parking pressures and support ongoing monitoring.
- 5.4.4 As set out in the NPPF a development should only be prevented or refused on highways grounds where there would be an unacceptable impact on highway safety, or where the residual cumulative impacts on the road network would be severe. Overall, the proposals are considered acceptable in transport terms and are not expected to result in a significant increase in movement, an unacceptable impact on highway safety or a severe cumulative impact on the local highway network.

Parking

- 5.4.5 The proposed site layout includes revised access and parking arrangements, replacement cycle and scooter parking, dedicated minibus provision, accessible parking closer to the building entrance and suitable arrangements for servicing and emergency access. Vehicle tracking confirms that minibus, refuse and fire appliance movements can be accommodated, with fire appliance access assessed against the relevant requirements of BB 100: *Fire Safety Design for Schools*.

5.5 ECOLOGY, TREES AND BIODIVERSITY NET GAIN

Ecology

- 5.5.1 A Preliminary Ecological Appraisal (PEA) has been submitted as part of this Application. The proposed development area is identified to contain principally sealed surfaces, with small areas of habitat located in the north western corner of the Site, along the perimeter boundary fence and along the frontage of the road.
- 5.5.2 The PEA provides an assessment of potential impacts on these habitats and protected species including bats, birds, reptiles, Great Crested Newts (GCN), hazel dormouse, badger, protected invertebrates, protected plants. The table below provides a summary of the recommendations and explains how these recommendations have been addressed within the application:

RECOMMENDATION	RESPONSE
HABITATS	
<i>Native hedgerow and trees should be retained.</i>	Native hedgerow within the Site is being retained. Two trees within the Site will require removal (T031 and T032), with all other surveyed trees being retained. These trees are located in the position of the proposed bin store located adjacent the Site entrance. Replacement tree planting over and above this loss is proposed within the submitted landscaping scheme.
<i>Opportunities to retain the pond should be explored. Where this is not possible, opportunities to replace the pond should be explored.</i>	The existing pond within the Site cannot be retained as it will be affected by the low retaining wall to the north of the proposed building. The pond has been factored into BNG calculations and will be offset through the BNG strategy offsite.
<i>General pollution prevention measures should be implemented to reduce risk to nearby priority woodland habitat.</i>	The construction phase measures contained in Section 4 of the PEA will be contained within any Construction Environmental Management Plan (CEMP) agreed for the Site, with input from the Contractor.
<i>Building design and landscaping proposals should consider Biodiversity Net Gain requirements.</i>	The project ecologist and design team have worked collaboratively to identify opportunities for BNG within the Site. The submitted BNG Statement confirms that there will be no net loss.

Retained trees should be protected in accordance with British Standards Institution (2012). Guide for Trees in relation to design, demolition and construction: recommendations. BS5837:2012.

Please refer to the submitted Agricultural Impact Assessment for details on the protection of trees during construction.

BATS

Incorporate bat roosting features into new building – features / boxes suitable for crevice roosting species (such as pipistrelle) should be selected.

Bat roosting boxes will be installed onto the building.

Any proposed external lighting should take into account the Bat Conservation Trust and Institute of Lighting professionals guidance note 08/238.

The submitted lighting design has evolved to ensure that potential impacts on community and foraging bats is minimised through the location and specification of fixes and fittings.

BIRDS

Planting scheme should consider provision of plants which provide a food source for birds, such as seed or fruit bearing plants.

This recommendation has formed the proposed landscaping specification.

Tree felling and vegetation clearance should be minimised as far as practicable and undertaken outside the core bird nesting season (01 March to 31 August) to avoid damage or destruction of occupied nests or harm to breeding birds. If works must occur during this period, a nesting bird check must be completed by a suitably qualified ecologist within 24 hours of clearance. If any active nests are found, they must be retained in situ until young have fledged; exclusion zones or alternative working methods may be required.

This recommendation is noted and will be included within any CEMP prepared for the development. Tree and vegetation removal is reduced to the minimum necessary.

Vegetation already cleared should be rendered unsuitable for nesting (e.g., removed, chipped or covered) to prevent re-nesting.

GREAT CRESTED NEWTS

Recommendations made if GCN are confirmed to be present.

The submitted Great Crested Newt Survey report confirms the likely absence of great crested newt from the pond.

REPTILES

Consideration should be given to re-provision of a wildlife area if this is lost to the proposals.

Opportunities for new planting and habitats have been included in the proposed landscaping strategy which, alongside offsite habitat provision, will ensure a 10% net gain for biodiversity.

To avoid harm to any slow worm or other common reptile species, vegetation clearance should be carried out sensitively. Brief site operatives on the potential presence of reptiles, safe handling procedures and relocation protocols. Clearance should ideally occur March to October, when reptiles are active. Any reptiles encountered should be moved to suitable habitat outside the works area, ideally within undisturbed habitat within the Site, directly adjacent to the adjacent railway corridor. It is recommended this approach is captured in a written method statement / precautionary method of working.

This recommendation is noted and will be included within any CEMP prepared for the development.

INVASIVE NON-NATIVE PLANT SPECIES

If works are likely to affect these plants, a careful plan must be implemented to prevent their spread beyond the Site, in accordance with legal responsibilities under Schedule 9.

This recommendation is noted.

It is recommended that a specialist invasive-species contractor is appointed to provide advice on appropriate management, control or eradication measures.

Trees

- 5.5.3 Given the proximity of the development to existing trees at the north of the Site, an Arboricultural Impact Assessment (AIA) has been submitted alongside this application.
- 5.5.4 The AI identifies 42 no. arboricultural features on the Site; their classification is as follows:
- No trees were classified as Category A, meaning they are of high quality and should therefore be protected;
 - 12 no. trees were classified as Category B, meaning they are of moderate quality.

- 24 no. trees were classified as Category C, meaning they are of low quality.
 - 1 no. tree was classified as Category U, of such quality that it cannot realistically be retained as a living tree for longer than 10 years.
- 5.5.5 The AIA further confirmed that no veteran trees, ancient woodland or TPO trees were found on the Site.
- 5.5.6 The alignment of the proposed development has been carefully considered to ensure retention of higher quality trees. Two trees are required to be removed as part of the proposed development; the AIA categorises these as Category C trees, so of low quality with an estimated remaining life expectancy of at least 10 years. The loss of these trees is unavoidable.
- 5.5.7 The addition of the 'Forest School' area to the south of the proposed building introduces a new area of habitat to replace that being lost to facilitate space for the proposed new building. This ensures compliance to **Policy DM19 (Green Infrastructure)**, which requires there to be no net loss of trees as part of a proposed development.
- 5.5.8 The AIA is supplemented by a Tree Protection Plan (TPP), which sets out the proposed mitigation measures to prevent any adverse impact on existing trees on the site during construction. This includes the provision of protective barriers, arboricultural supervision and hand excavations.
- 5.5.9 Further, the AIA has ensured that the development and construction works do not encroach into the root protection areas (RPAs) of the trees on the Site.

Biodiversity Net Gain

- 5.5.10 In compliance with **Policy DM18 (Biodiversity)** a Biodiversity Net Gain Report and Metric demonstrate that a 10% net gain for biodiversity can be achieved on the Site.

5.6 FLOOD RISK AND DRAINAGE

- 5.6.1 As per **Policy DM20 (Flood Risk and Sustainable Drainage)** a Flood Risk Assessment has been carried out by AtkinsRéalis and submitted alongside this application.
- 5.6.2 The site is found within Flood Zone 1. The developable area is, however, at risk of surface water flooding in the 1-in-30-, 1-in-100- and 1-in-1000-year risk of surface water flooding event.
- 5.6.3 Current guidance within the NPPF states that all developments should apply a sequential risk-based approach to the location of development. However, Paragraph 176 of the NPPF confirms that minor developments are excluded from this requirement, as well as the requirement for an exception test. Notwithstanding this, the submitted FRA sets a sequential assessment to demonstrate why there are no alternative locations available in lower areas of flood risk.

- 5.6.4 The proposed surface water drainage strategy comprises a filter drain positioned along the western boundary of the Site to collect runoff. All other surface runoff is managed using either yard gullies or drainage channels, which connect into the proposed pipe network alongside the rainwater downpipes from the building's roof and covered areas. A single connection from this proposed network is provided into the existing drainage system, with a proprietary silt filtration system located immediately upstream from this connection.
- 5.6.5 The building's foul drainage will convey flows to a foul pumping station located within the landscaped area. From there, flows will be discharged into an existing private manhole via a 90mm rising main, for an indirect connection to the public sewer network.

5.7 HERITAGE AND ARCHAEOLOGY

- 5.7.1 Given the site's location in an Archaeological Notification Area (ANA), in compliance with **Policy DM24 (The Historic Environment)** an Archaeological Desk-Based Assessment has been carried out by Chris Butler Archaeological Services Ltd and submitted as part of this application.
- 5.7.2 There is local interest for the archaeological potential of the Site including potential prehistoric occupation, a Roman cemetery, and medieval and post-medieval occupation.
- 5.7.3 The Assessment finds there is high potential for finds and features dating to the Roman cemetery and post-medieval period. The post-medieval features relate to the Site's previous use as a horticultural nursery in the late 19th Century.
- 5.7.4 Given that the land is previously developed as part of a school and previously as a horticultural nursery, it is likely that there have been some disturbances to the archaeological remains through the previous construction processes.
- 5.7.5 As previously stated, there are no listed buildings or Conservation Areas on or immediately adjacent to the site. The nearest designated heritage asset is Grade II listed 'The Hollies' (ref. 1263279). This is located approximately 550m to the southeast of the site. Given the distance between the asset and the site, as well as the significant intervening built form and vegetation, including those at Homefield Park and Playground, the proposed development will not have impact on the setting or significance of this listed building.

5.8 OTHER ENVIRONMENTAL MATTERS

Energy and Sustainability

- 5.8.1 **Policy SP2 (Climate Change)** of the Local Plan requires development proposals to address climate change. **Policy DM16 (Sustainable Design)** requires new non-domestic buildings to achieve a 27% reduction in CO₂ on average per building compared to the Building Regulations Part L 2013 standard unless superseded by national policy or Building Regulations.

- 5.8.2 The 2013 Part L Building Regulations have now been replaced by more stringent targets for new development. The proposed development demonstrates strong performance in ventilation, heating efficiency and energy compliance, with the building meeting all current regulatory requirements. The design benefits from a high-performance fabric and an effective mechanical ventilation heat recovery (MVHR) system, resulting in low heating demands and high indoor air quality. In addition, the building achieves a high level of energy performance, with the possibility of future photovoltaic panels offering the potential for very low or net-zero operational carbon.
- 5.8.3 In accordance with **Policy DM16**, the proposed development will also achieve a minimum 'B' rating Energy Performance Certificate. Indicative calculations indicate that the proposed development can achieve a rating of an 'A' rating.
- 5.8.4 The proposal also aligns with the sustainability requirements for minor development set out in the Climate Change Checklist (2023).

Noise

- 5.8.5 The proposed development will be compatible with the existing educational use of land. In accordance with **Policy DM22 (Pollution)** the proposal will therefore have no material impact on amenity levels compared to the existing Site. Indeed, the proposal may result in improvements to school amenity during school hours due to the change in function from a playground.

6 SUMMARY

- 6.1.1 This Planning Statement has been prepared by DHA Planning on behalf of West Sussex County Council ('the Applicant') to accompany a full planning application related to a proposed development for Homefield Primary School at their campus located on Chesswood Road, Worthing, BN11 2AA.
- 6.1.2 The full description of the development is as follows:
- "Removal of existing structures and erection of a school building, including hard and soft landscaping (with associated structures), alterations to existing elevations, and reconfiguration of the access and parking arrangements."*
- 6.1.3 The proposal aligns with the NPPF and local planning policies, in particular those relating to the principle of development and the great weight given to education provision through planning decisions. This Statement demonstrates the considerable and immediate need for the development proposed to support the amalgamation of Lyndhurst Infant School and Chesswood Junior School and the need for additional SEND teaching space in this location.
- 6.1.4 The addition of a new teaching block would allow for Homefield Primary School to operate from a single campus, ensuring SEND students are integrated into mainstream education with greater sense of inclusion, while still have access to the specialised support they require.
- 6.1.5 Based on the information provided to accompany this application, it has been demonstrated that the proposed development is in accordance with the policies of the Local Plan and other material considerations including the NPPF. It is therefore requested that planning permission be granted, subject to appropriate conditions.