



Northamptonshire County Council

# **Consultation on new Primary School**

**at:**

**Towcester South SUE,**

**Towcester**

**Northamptonshire**

**Closing date: 10<sup>th</sup> July 2020 at 5pm**

## **Section A – Introduction**

Northamptonshire County Council proposes to establish a new mainstream primary school on the new Sustainable Urban Extension (SUE) development at Towcester, known as Towcester South. Provision for this school is made in the planning consent and the Section 106 (S106) agreement for the development. This agreement is a legal document which requires that sites suitable for 2 two form of entry primary schools need to be provided in accordance with timescales which are linked to the pace of the development along with other conditions which must be met.

Under the legislation which governs the establishment of new schools, the County Council is required to invite proposals to run the school from qualifying academy providers. That competitive process will be starting later in the summer of 2020. Prior to commencing the process, however, the Council is consulting on the school proposal generally.

This non statutory consultation will run from 1<sup>st</sup> June 2020 to 10th July 2020.

### **Reason a new school is required**

A Sustainable Urban Extension (SUE) is underway in Towcester, off the A5 close to the old racecourse. Once complete there will be circa 2750 homes. As part of the infrastructure and Section 106 (S106) proposals for the development, provision for 2 two form entry (2FE) primary schools has been included to serve the local community. Having regard to the pace of development and pupil-number growth, the County Council believes that the first of those schools will be required by September 2021. A second primary school is provided for within the S106, to be procured in the later stages of the SUE.

It is proposed that the school will be a co-educational mainstream sponsored academy primary school for children aged 4 to 11 years, with a total capacity of 420 pupils (two forms in each year group), once fully open. This size and type of provision is consistent with what the Council would expect for any development of the scale and nature of the Towcester SUE. The Council considers that a 2FE school is the minimum size that should be provided for new primary provision to ensure budgetary stability and the ability to effectively deliver curriculum.

The construction will be funded fully through S106 contributions to be made by the developers of the SUE at a cost of circa £7.5m. There is no proposal for nursery provision on site. The S106 stipulates that nursery provision should be within the Main Local Centre on the SUE.

The school is expected to open in a phased manner, allowing it to grow to accommodate new pupils as the housing comes on line. Mixed class teaching is likely to be required in the early years of opening.

The planning consent for the SUE and associated S106 specifies that the sports pitch on the Primary School site is to be made available for public use, at times to be determined. A scheme must be presented to South Northamptonshire Council, in conjunction with Northamptonshire County Council, and approved before the school can open. The academy provider will run/manage both the school and the community pitch use.

Due to the current Coronavirus pandemic, the timeline for the school may change if circumstances dictate.

### **Pupil profile – Towcester**

The SUE is expected to generate in excess of 825 primary age pupils, once complete and the S106 makes provision for two primary schools on the development, to provide sufficiency of school places within the town.

Towcester currently has two primary schools; Nicholas Hawksmoor Primary School and Towcester CE Primary School. Available primary school places in the town stand at 35 as of May 2020. It is expected that these spaces will be taken up by the children moving into the first phases of houses.

### **Consultation**

The planning consent and associated S106 for the SUE stipulates a site for the school large enough for a two form entry school with a sports pitch to be made available for community use, at hours to be determined. The County Council is of the view that provision in accordance with the planning assumptions is the appropriate way to ensure that there are sufficient primary school places for children in Towcester as the SUE progresses. The proposal comes forward in the context of the SUE which has been carefully considered by the local planning authority and has been the subject of a public planning process.

The Council is consulting generally at this stage to invite any comments which might inform the process for delivering the school within the criteria already established in the planning process.

If you have any comments to make regarding any aspect of the proposed school, please feed them back through this consultation.

The formal statutory consultation, which sponsors are required to undertake under section 10 of the Academies Act 2010, takes place during the pre-opening phase of the school i.e. after the sponsor has been selected. This is not part of this process.

This school will be deemed a free school under the Free School Presumption process. Guidance on this can be found at:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/establishing-a-new-school-free-school-presumption>

Consultation feedback must be received no later than 5pm on Friday 10th July 2020. Please send any responses to:

[Schoolconsultation@northamptonshire.gov.uk](mailto:Schoolconsultation@northamptonshire.gov.uk)

