

Site Allocations DPD

MSDC-07: Response to Action Point 5

Matter 3.3: SA16: St Wilfrid's Catholic Primary School, School Close, Burgess Hill.

5th August 2021

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1.0 Introduction

- 1.1 This note has been prepared in response to queries raised in the Matter 3 Hearing session on the 4 June 2021, at the request of the Inspector [ID-05]. This note responds to Action Point 5 which requests:

Note from the Council, to clarify the programme for relocating the primary school to the St Paul's campus, including;

- (i) a commitment from the Diocese to relocate and in which timeframe, and an indication that the funding is either in place or is very likely to be available at the appropriate time;
- (ii) an indication of any other activities, e.g. emergency services, which require to be relocated from Site SA16, to ensure the redevelopment of the site for housing and mixed use within the plan period; and
- (iii) the total housing yield from this site, which I understand could be in the region of 300 dwelling units. Other parties will have a window of one working week to submit any responses

- 1.2 This note is in relation to the proposed site allocation SA16: St Wilfrid's Primary School, School Close, Burgess Hill. The proposed housing allocation is for 200 dwellings.

- 1.3 A third party at the Hearing session on 4 June queried the likelihood of the site being redeveloped within the plan period, citing lack of evidence to support the relocation of St Wilfrid's Primary School to St Paul's Catholic College, Burgess Hill.

- 1.4 A further query was raised regarding the potential requirement for any other activities on the site to be relocated, such as emergency services.

- 1.5 The Inspector raised a further query regarding the relationship between Sites DPD policy SA16: St Wilfrid's Catholic Primary School and the wider Burgess Hill Neighbourhood Plan allocation BHNP – TC3 The Brow Quarter; including the total housing yield across both policies for the area of The Brow as a whole.

2.0 Programme for relocation of St Wilfrid's Primary School to the St Paul's campus and; (i) commitment from the Diocese, timeframe and funding.

- 2.1 Delivery of site allocation SA16 is not being relied upon within the council's 5YHLS and is instead identified as coming forward within years 6 – 10 of the plan, as identified within the policy under 'Indicative Phasing'. The Diocese have been actively working for 5 years towards achieving their aspiration of relocating the school and are in discussions with a housebuilder; they are confident they can bring forward the site within the plan period.

Site Context and Constraints – St Wilfrid's

2.2 St Wilfrid's school is part of the Diocese of Arundel and Brighton, the land on which the school sits is also in their ownership and was originally built in 1940. Much of the school is now in excess of 55 years old and is approaching the end of its useful life, the Diocese estimate that significant investment will be required within the next three to five years to keep the building operational. As a minimum this would involve considerable roofing repairs and replacement / upgrades to the failing and outdated heating systems (further details are contained at appendix 1 in the form of a note from Mark Brunet on behalf of Arundel and Brighton Diocese). This investment would not however address physical constraints attributed to the poor internal layout of the building which is hampering both the potential for inclusion and also making delivery of the most effective education more difficult.

2.3 The existing access to the school is via a cul-de-sac known as School Close, which is shared with nearby industrial premises and is flanked by residential properties making pick-up and drop-off times challenging and potentially dangerous.

Proposed relocation site – St Paul's College

2.4 St Wilfrid's is a feeder school to St Paul's College (located 1.7m north west of the site) and many of the families of children at St Wilfrid's have siblings at St Paul's. St Wilfrid's and St Paul's therefore already have a close working relationship and the physical proximity would aid this and offer further opportunities for collaboration and sharing of resources. The co-location of the two schools would also have the potential to help reduce vehicle movements across Burgess Hill between the two sites.

2.5 Ongoing discussions with West Sussex County Council have confirmed that the land adjacent to St Paul's is restricted to educational use and the diocese and the County Council have been working together to undertaken feasibility and master plan work for the redevelopment of the St Paul's site to accommodate St Wilfrid's Primary School and associated facilities.

2.6 The initial feasibility / masterplan work has demonstrated that with some reprofiling of the site in line with a now expired planning permission (11/04119/C3REG) and potentially using spoils from the adjacent Northern Arc redevelopment, the site is more than capable of accommodating both schools and their associated facilities on the St Paul's site.

2.7 As confirmed by the attached note from the Diocese (note at Appendix 1 from Mark Brunet on behalf of Arundel and Brighton Diocese), they remain committed to moving the school to the St Paul's campus. The Diocese have also been working with a commercial developer to explore the potential for developing the school site in isolation of the wider Brow Quarter whilst still taking account of the redevelopment aspirations for the wider Brow. The basis of their discussions has been to relocate St Wilfrid's Primary to the St Paul's College site without having to secure any additional funding beyond that which is secure from the sale of the land at St Wilfrid's. The Diocese have confirmed that they will be exploring what opportunities they have to provide some funding support to the project if necessary.

3.0 Other activities which require relocation from Site SA16 to ensure redevelopment within the plan period (ii) and clarification of total yield.

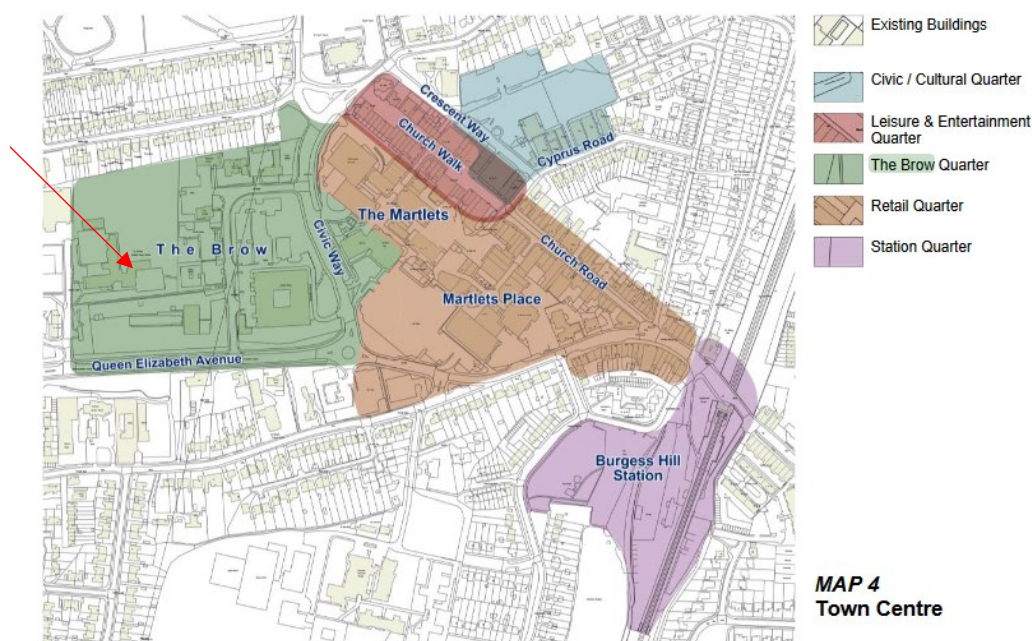
- 3.1 Housing allocation Policy SA16 relates to the St Wilfrid's Primary School site only which is in the ownership of the Diocese which has the benefit of access along the School Close which is publicly adopted highway. The delivery of SA16 is facilitated by the relocation of the primary school only; there are no other uses within the housing allocation site for SA16.
- 3.2 As set out in national policy and in the site specific policy requirements for SA16, in accordance with District Plan policy DP 24: Leisure and Cultural Facilities and Activities, the playing fields at St Wilfrid's are required to be re-provided or their loss justified to the satisfaction of the Council and Sport England. The feasibility work undertaken by the Diocese at St Paul's demonstrates there is sufficient land to accommodate both the school buildings and playing fields/sporting facilities necessary to support both schools at the St Paul's College site.

Burgess Hill Neighbourhood Plan:

- 3.3 Policy SA16 sits within an area identified by Burgess Hill Neighbourhood Plan Policy BHNP – TC3 The Brow Quarter, which extends beyond the St Wilfrid's Primary School site.

Burgess Hill Neighbourhood Plan extract of Policy Map 4 of the Burgess Hill Town Centre: The extent of The Brow Quarter shown in Green:

Site SA16:
St Wilfrid's
School

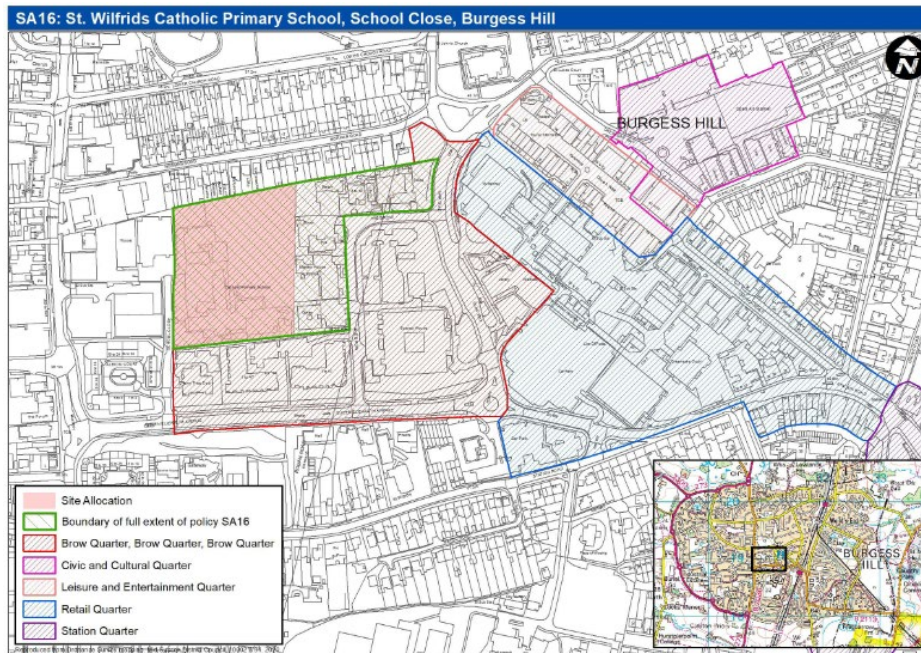


- 3.4 BHNP TC3 The Brow Quarter seeks to support mixed use redevelopment of The Brow Quarter and includes support for relocation of St Wilfrid's School, new community facilities and also allocates a further 100 residential dwellings (anticipated / indicative yield). The Neighbourhood plan area includes various other uses, including The Brow Medical Centre, Fire and Ambulance Stations which front onto The Brow to the east of the St Wilfrid's School site.

Relationship to policy SA16:

- 3.5 The council has an aspiration to bring forward redevelopment of both the school Site SA16 and the area to the west of the site as a single comprehensive redevelopment.

The wider area for redevelopment which encompasses part of the BHP area TC3 is indicated in SA16 policy map by the green boundary and hatching:



- 3.6 Policy SA16 therefore encompass the broad aspirations and objectives of the Burgess Hill Neighbourhood Plan Policy BHP – TC3 The Brow Quarter and supports the adoption of a Development Brief Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) to inform a masterplanned approach to the wider Brow area.
- 3.7 The comprehensive redevelopment of the wider area within the Brow Quarter (BHP Policy TC3) covered by policy SA16, would require the relocation or reprovision of a number of other uses including West Sussex Fire and Rescue and the Ambulance Station. The wider redevelopment of both SA16 and TC3 in the Neighbourhood Plan combined could facilitate delivery of a total of a total yield of 300 dwellings (200 on SA16 and 100 already committed within the made Neighbourhood Plan).
- 3.8 On the basis that SA16 St Wilfrid’s School site has separate access and given they have already made steps to secure a development partner, the Council are confident site could be brought forward independently of the wider Neighbourhood Plan area within the plan period. The council intend to develop a development brief for the area to ensure that any redevelopment of the school does not prejudice redevelopment of the adjacent sites. The Brow SPD will establish broad parameters for redevelopment of the area to ensure the sites potential is optimised and to help realise the Neighbourhood Plan aspirations for the area.

Appendix 1: Statement from Arundel and Brighton Diocese (Mark Brunet on behalf of the Diocese).

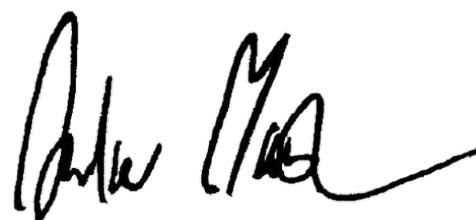
The Diocese remains committed to moving the school; given the lack of progress on other parts of the site we have been working with a commercial developer exploring the potential for developing just the school part of the site (but with the intention of ensuring that this does not impede full development of the whole site in due course). Considerable time and effort (and money) has already been spent on this.

As to relative costs – the intention is that moving the school will cost no more than the proceeds from the sale of the land at the existing site.

If the school is not moved, it is of an age and, despite the excellent maintenance routines which have been in place, of a condition such that we will have to undertake considerable works over the coming three to five years – roofing £300,000, heating distribution £250,000 and boilers £30,000 for certain, possibly rewiring as well within that time frame.

So – moving, cost zero; staying put, cost c £600,000 of which the public purse will contribute 90% and the school governors the other 10%.

Signed:



Mid Sussex District Council

Date: 26/7/21



Mark Brunet

Date: 12/7/21