

Appendix 2: Main Themes and responses from the statutory consultation

Comment: *Increase in travel time and distance and a decrease in active travel options.* Of the comments received, 87 people referred to travel, with the most relating to an increase in travel time and distance (50), increase in traffic (29) and a decrease in active travel options (38). The respondents were concerned about the impact on their children as they live close to The Henry Cort Community College and are currently able to walk to school. The respondents said they/their children would have to travel to school by motor vehicle, to North Whiteley, Fareham Academy, or Cams Hill School. Some concerns were raised about safety as a result. There were also comments received which highlighted an improved, shorter journey to school for those living on the Whiteley estate (8).

Response: As outlined in the [North Whiteley New Secondary School report](#) and the Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs) provided during the Public Notice consultation, School Transport are already transporting Whiteley secondary age pupils to local schools, including The Henry Cort Community College. Once the new secondary school opens the broad impact is likely to be a reduction in transport costs. Currently, four large buses and several smaller vehicles transport pupils from Whiteley to The Henry Cort Community College on a twice daily basis at a total annual cost of £353,069.

Should the County Council's recommendation be progressed and The Henry Cort Community College relocates to Whiteley, there would be further implications for School Transport in the short term. There is the potential for a split site arrangement as well as some existing pupils attending The Henry Cort Community College needing to be transported to Whiteley. Once arrangements are confirmed any pupil who is eligible under the Hampshire County Council School Transport Policy, will be provided with funded school transport until they have completed secondary school.

In the longer term, alongside a catchment area change, demand for the relocated The Henry Cort Community College would become more locally generated with the feeder schools being located only in the Whiteley development, so transport costs should be significantly reduced. There would, however, be an increase in travel time to the catchment school for some families who live close to the current location of The Henry Cort Community College and further from the alternative catchment schools proposed of Fareham Academy and Cams Hill School. As detailed within the FAQs provided during the Public Notice consultation, funded school transport will be available to eligible pupils, namely those without a safe walking route to school of under three miles walking distance.

Comment: *Consistency of education and concerns about outcomes if there is disruption.* 61 respondents referred to education, with 26 people emphasising

the need for consistency in education. 18 people raised concerns about a potentially negative impact on pupils' exams and educational outcomes.

Response: The County Council, DfE and Ofsted expects all schools to strive for improved outcomes regardless of any building arrangements. The County Council is working closely with The Henry Cort Community College in order to ensure that the needs of all pupils are supported. This focus and required accountability on leaders, including the governing body, by the County Council will not be affected by the decision around the school's relocation. The improvements to the provision will continue to be driven throughout the period.

If The Henry Cort Community College is relocated, school leaders will work with the County Council to consider the best arrangements for pupils in Years 10 and 11 who will have embarked on their GCSE courses. This may require the school to establish some split site arrangements or draw all pupils into the new site. Any decision will be made closer to the time and following discussion with pupils and their parents/carers.

Comment: *Local development and future increase in population. Need to plan for the future.* 55 respondents referred to local development in their comments, with 31 mentioning the increase in housing in Whiteley and Fareham, and 30 people mentioning Welborne specifically. Comments centred on the need to plan for the future to ensure there are sufficient secondary places available to meet any increase in demand in line with new housing. Many respondents commented that The Henry Cort Community College is the closest secondary school to the Welborne major development area. 22 respondents also stated that the reason for the relocation was so the current Henry Cort Community College site would be sold for housing, leading to additional housing and the loss of the community hub.

Response: The County Council uses school place planning areas, based on historic pupil movements between a small number of school catchments, to help forecast the demand across a local area. This data, along with other linked information, primarily birth and housing data, is used to forecast school places across the County.

There will be sufficient secondary places available in Fareham with all known housing developments included in the forecasts. This includes the anticipated pupil yield from Welborne as the development builds out, in advance of the planned secondary school being provided as part of the development.

A new primary school at Welborne is due to open in September 2028, starting with a Year R class of 30 and growing with each new Year R admission. A new secondary school is proposed to serve the Welborne development, but it is unlikely that there will be significant secondary demand before 2035, when the first cohort at the primary school will move to the secondary school phase.

This is dependent on the pace of the development and the demand for school places at that time. Until then, as with all new developments, to ensure viability, we would utilise the surplus capacity in secondary schools within the surrounding area.

Data shows that the secondary schools in Fareham fill with pupils from outside the local area, most notably from Gosport, whose schools have 20% surplus places in 2025 and are forecasted to have x% in Sept 2027.

Therefore, there is capacity within the system to meet more demand from Fareham residents if required. The key driver behind this consultation is to provide secondary education provision locally for the growing development area of Whiteley whilst ensuring that pupils in Fareham continue to receive a high-quality education offer in the Fareham area and Hampshire County Council's educational resources are utilised to their optimum capacity.

In response to comments regarding the sale of the land for housing, the decision regarding the future use of The Henry Cort Community College land and assets, if the school were to relocate, has not been and will not be considered until a final decision has been taken. If the recommendation to relocate the school is approved, then options for the site will be thoroughly evaluated.

Comment: *Relocation/removal of The Henry Cort Community College will lead to overcrowding/oversubscription and local schools for local children.* 37 respondents commented that the new North Whiteley school could not cope with the yield of pupils from the development plus the pupils from The Henry Cort Community College, and that the other Fareham schools could not cope with the extra pupils if there was no school on the current site of The Henry Cort Community College. 33 respondents mentioned the need for local schools for local children. Respondents felt the area around the school site must continue to have its own school, just as Whiteley should have its own school as well.

Response: The County Council uses best endeavours to provide local schools for local children. The relocation of The Henry Cort Community College to North Whiteley, is to provide school places in the area where the population is growing and reduce the travel times for a considerable number of pupils. The County Council has significant concerns that this would in turn reduce the number of pupils seeking a place at The Henry Cort Community College if it remained in its current location. A school needs sufficient long-term demand because of the nature of per pupil funding, in order to ensure there is a strong educational offer along with maintaining a balanced budget.

The new secondary school at North Whiteley is being built at 900 places initially. There is enough capacity in the building to be able to take the expected number on roll from the Henry Cort Community College in September 2027 (Years 8-11) and the Year 7 intake would be from the linked schools for the new catchment, Cornerstone Primary and Whiteley Primary. From then on, the expectation is that the school on the North Whiteley site would take from those two primary schools as its feeder schools.

The proposed change to the linked secondary schools for the three primary phase schools affected by the relocation of The Henry Cort Community College, would mean that pupils coming from those schools would have a local secondary to attend, albeit further away for some than The Henry Cort Community College.

Both Fareham Academy and Cams Hill are currently full, however they are not full from their linked schools. Fareham Academy has a significant proportion of pupils from the Gosport area and Cams Hill has a significant proportion of pupils from both the Portchester Community School catchment and Portsmouth City Council area. Therefore, there is capacity in both schools to be able to absorb the extra pupils from the schools formerly linked with The Henry Cort Community College on the Fareham side.

Comment: *Comments on the consultation process.* 26 respondents mentioned the non-statutory or the statutory consultation process. Comments on the fact that the results from the previous non-statutory consultation have been ignored when 72% of respondents said to keep The Henry Cort Community College where it is and open a new secondary school on the North Whiteley site. So therefore, the decision has already been made regardless of what the public think and consultation is a waste of public money.

There were also suggestions that:

- the main driver is finance and not in the best interests of the pupils and not the focus for parents.
- only those families who live in the wards affected by the change should be able to respond to the consultation
- a decision to sell the land that The Henry Cort Community College is sited on has already been made and that it would lead to additional house building.

Response: The previous consultation was a non-statutory consultation to seek feedback on the three proposed options. The feedback from the previous consultation, although hugely in favour of the proposal to have two schools, one at North Whiteley and keep The Henry Cort Community College where it is, did not change the view that there is a serious risk that The Henry

Cort Community College will not be viable in its current location. This is primarily because of the inevitable reduction in pupil numbers when the new secondary school would open (if The Henry Cort Community College is not relocated) and secondary age pupils from the Whiteley community begin to attend their local school. This outcome would seriously impact upon the budget of The Henry Cort Community College resulting in commensurate challenge in maintaining a strong education offer.

While acknowledging that the non-statutory consultation showed a preference for one option, it should be noted that this process was part of a Hampshire County Council 'good practice' approach to consultation to enable points of view to be expressed and considered. In addition, Department for Education statutory guidance on 'Making significant changes to maintained schools' advises that there is a strong expectation that local authorities will consult interested parties and take into account all relevant considerations when developing proposals prior to publication. The non-statutory consultation process was carried out in accordance with that expectation.

No decision or recommendations will be made about the future use of the site or buildings until the outcome of the consultation has been carefully considered by the Executive Lead Member for Children's Services. To do so, would be to pre-judge the outcome of the formal public consultation and the decisions arising from it. Each of the responses to the consultation have been carefully considered and taken into account in preparing this report.

Comment: *Community impact and the loss of facilities.* 24 people were concerned about the loss of the community hub should The Henry Cort Community College close or be relocated, with a significant number of clubs and organisations making use of the school facilities. 4 people commented that they thought it was positive that the new secondary school in Whiteley would provide the area with a new community hub.

Response: Hampshire County Council will engage fully with the current community users if the recommendation to relocate The Henry Cort Community College is taken. The future use of The Henry Cort Community College site will be the subject of a separate and future consultation in the event the decision to relocate the college is taken by the Executive Lead Member for Children's Services in April 2025.

The County Council are aware that frequent users of the site such as the Fareham Hockey Club have leases in place and have concerns about the future of the club if the school is relocated. Officers from the County Council and Fareham Borough Council will liaise closely with users such as the Hockey Club following a decision on the relocation of the school, if that is the decision taken.

Comment: *Increase in travel costs.* 24 respondents raised concerns about an increase in travel costs for families, and 10 raised concerns about an increase in travel costs for Hampshire County Council.

Response: If the recommendation for the relocation of The Henry Cort Community College is approved then the County Council predicts a net reduction in School Transport costs of approximately £400,000 per annum. Further detail is available in Appendix 4.

Those pupils who would be on the roll of The Henry Cort Community College and needing to be transported to the new North Whiteley site due to distance, would be eligible for funded school transport. This would not be at a cost to families.

There would be a short-term increased cost to the County Council but these costs will diminish over a four-year period. The longer-term cost estimates for School Transport is £100,000 per annum instead of £500,000 per annum.

Comment: *Emotional impact of the relocation of The Henry Cort Community College.* 22 respondents stated that the relocation of The Henry Cort Community College would have an emotional impact on themselves or their family. Respondents mentioned both positive and negative emotional impacts. There were concerns raised about friendship groups being broken up if parents decide to apply for in year transfers to other schools. Also, emotional impacts on those SEN pupils who struggle with transition and therefore the move to a new building and having to travel on a bus to school would have an impact on them. Concerns raised about the mental health and well-being of pupils due to the change especially those in exam years. Concerns also regarding the time taken to make a decision causing uncertainty for pupils and staff.

Response: The County Council understands that any proposed changes to a school can be unsettling for pupils, staff and families. If The Henry Cort Community College is relocated, then the school will take decisions on whether it transfers all of the pupils and staff over to the new North Whiteley site, or if it takes a phased approach and retains the Year 10 and 11 pupils on the Hillson Drive site whilst the Years 8 and 9 cohorts transfer to the new building. This is a decision for the school governing body to make with

support from Hampshire County Officers collectively they will assess what is best for the pupils.

Due to the cancellation of local elections the County Council has been able to bring this decision forward to April, from June, so that pupils, staff and families have earlier certainty around the future of The Henry Cort Community College.

Comment: *Respondents objected to the relocation stating that if The Henry Cort Community College remained on its current location and the new school at North Whiteley opened then there would be less pressure for places and potentially smaller class sizes.* 15 respondents commented that there would be an increase in the pressure on local schools. A majority of these comments stated that if The Henry Cort Community College remains where it is there would be a positive outcome in terms of more choice for parents and potentially improved educational outcomes due to smaller class sizes. Conversely, many respondents felt that should The Henry Cort Community College relocate that it would result in an increase in pressure for places at Fareham College and Cams Hill School.

Response: Funding for schools is directly related to the number of pupils enrolled. A decline in pupil numbers means a reduction in funding, not smaller class sizes. Fewer pupils in a school does not equate to smaller class sizes and conversely could result in potentially larger classes in order that the school remains financially viable. Reduced funding presents difficulties for schools in appointing staff and delivering a full range of curriculum opportunities to pupils. It also results in fewer teachers and less flexibility around group sizes. School funding is on a per-pupil basis, so regardless of the overall size of a school, it is not financially sustainable to run smaller classes.

The prognosis for small secondary schools is not good, either nationally or locally. This situation is exacerbated when there are newer, better-equipped schools nearby that are large enough to offer a full range of GCSE subjects, maintain specialists in all disciplines who learn from each other, field teams in many sports, and provide modern, adaptive teaching that is responsive to pupil needs.

The new building at North Whiteley is being built at 900 places initially. There is enough capacity in the building to be able to take the expected number on roll from the Henry Cort Community College in September 2027 (Years 8-11) and the Year 7 intake would be from the linked schools for the new catchment, Cornerstone Primary and Whiteley Primary. From then on, the expectation is that the school on the North Whiteley site would take from those two primary schools as its feeder schools.

Comment: *Future use of The Henry Cort Community College site as SEND provision.* 15 respondents mentioned SEN in their comments. Some mentioned using The Henry Cort Community College site for SEND provision and others mentioned the impact on the relocation on SEND pupils currently at The Henry Cort Community College.

Response: No decision or recommendations will be made about the future use of the site or buildings until the outcome of the consultation has been carefully considered by the Executive Lead Member for Children's Services. To do so, would be to pre-judge the outcome of the formal public consultation and the decisions arising from it. If the decision made is to relocate The Henry Cort Community College, then options will be explored for future use including any potential for SEND provision.

Those pupils with identified Special Educational Needs who may be affected by the relocation will receive extra support with regards to transition to the new building. The decision on the relocation is being made two years ahead of the move so there is time for parents and pupils to work together with the school to ensure that individual transition plans are in place.

Comment: *Retention of good teachers.* 14 people responded to say that retention of good teachers is vital. Concerns were raised about teachers not choosing to stay at The Henry Cort Community College due to uncertainty surrounding its future. Conversely, some respondents felt that a relocation of The Henry Cort Community College would support the retention of good teachers.

Response: The governing body has appointed a new headteacher and the experienced senior leadership team is currently stable. All teachers are permitted to progress their careers through applying for new positions in other schools and recruitment and retention is a current challenge in many schools. The County Council expects that relocation of the school would provide considerable opportunities for the existing staff to contribute to shape the future of the school on a new site and would expect it to be an attractive option in recruiting any further staff needed. In this respect relocation provides greater staff security and certainty, and consistency for the pupils.

Comment: *Deprivation levels of the area surrounding the current site of The Henry Cort Community College.* 14 respondents raised the issue of The Henry Cort Community College being in a deprived area. There were concerns that the impact of the relocation is impacting more on deprived families and exacerbating existing inequalities. There were concerns that families would not be able to afford the bus fares for their children to get to the new school building in Whiteley and therefore absenteeism would increase.

Response: The County Council is aware that The Henry Cort Community College is sited in an area of deprivation (the postcode for the school is in an area measured as Index of Multiple Deprivation Decile 3 – with 1 being most deprived and 10 being least deprived), and it is clear there are some concerns about the relocation further impacting on families in this area. Where pupils are eligible for assistance with transport to the new school, this would be provided at no cost to families. Additionally, some of the pupils living in this area who would in the future be in the catchment for Cams Hill or Fareham Academy would be eligible for funded transport if they meet the eligibility criteria.

Families will still have access to good education provision in the other secondary schools in the area, albeit not as close to some as they are currently to The Henry Cort Community College site on Hillson Drive.

Comment: *Reputation of The Henry Cort Community College.* 14 respondents commented on the reputation of The Henry Cort Community College. 6 comments were made about the school's Requires Improvement (RI) Ofsted judgement, 6 comments were made about the poor reputation of the school, and 2 comments were made about the good reputation of the school.

Response: The Henry Cort Community College was judged by Ofsted in July 2023 to have an overall judgement of Requires Improvement. It will be reinspected by Ofsted within 30 months, and it is both the County Council's expectation and that of Ofsted that it will have improved sufficiently to have good judgements across a number of the separately judged areas (in line with the Ofsted Framework 2024/25). The school is being supported by the County Council with subject support, training and leadership development and improvements are being seen.

As a school that is currently judged as Requires Improvement, there is a package of leadership and curriculum intervention in place for both school staff and the governing body to support its improvement. The impact of this work is regularly evaluated and adjusted to ensure that The Henry Cort Community College is on track to receive good judgements at its next inspection. The recently appointed new headteacher and governing body are working closely with the County Council and the school is strengthening.

Comment: *Modernisation and improvement of The Henry Cort Community College.* 11 respondents referred to the need for improvements to The Henry Cort Community College, including 8 who suggested the school buildings need investment and modernisation.

Response: The majority of the funding to build the new school comes from Developer Contributions, collected to mitigate the education requirement on the development at Whiteley. Some funding secured from the Department for

Education (Basic Need) is also being utilised to build the school to the 900 places required. The funding that has been secured through a Section 106 agreement can only be used to develop a school on the North Whiteley development, not to modernise buildings elsewhere.

Comment: Other comments made include:

- Concerns around admission arrangements (14)
- Existing staffing issues (10)
- Negative impact on environment (9)
- Increased active travel options (8)
- Gain of a community hub (4)
- Staff redundancies (3)
- The new school at North Whiteley prompted a house purchase (2)
- School has a good reputation (2)
- Positive environmental impact (1)
- Increase in safety (1)
- Reduces pressure on places (1)