Horsham Local Plan Examination

West Sussex County Council Additional Hearing Statement – Education

October 2026

This additional statement has been prepared by officers on behalf of West Sussex County Council (WSCC) in its role as Education Authority.

Matter 6b: Strategic Policy HA3: Land North West of Southwater

1. This statement is intended to clarify WSCC's position regarding the provision of a 6 form entry expandable to 8 form entry secondary school at the proposed allocation.

2. WSCC as Education Authority take a neutral position on whether the secondary school is located within the safeguarded site in the Southwater Neighbourhood Plan or at the location proposed in the submitted planning application on the allocation site.

3. WSCC have produced a pro-forma for development within the county which outlines the criteria for suitable school sites[1]. This pro-forma is requested from developers at an early stage in order to inform discussions with the Education Authority. Provided the criteria listed are met, a proposed location is deemed to be potentially suitable.

4. In the case of the current planning application for north west Southwater, the developer has completed this pro-forma, which has informed conversations with the Education Authority, and the land identified in the planning application is considered to be suitable for delivery of the required secondary school.

5. In their statement on this matter, Berkely Strategic Land have requested a further amendment to HA3(7)(2)(d) (document ref MJB6b.04 paragraph 1.32). It should be noted that provision of land alone may not be sufficient to deliver the necessary education infrastructure; financial contributions will be required to facilitate the construction and equipping of education facilities. The additional land provided above their expected level of mitigation will be taken into account during the negotiation of financial obligations at the planning application stage. This ensures that contributions are not sought for infrastructure that is not directly related to the development. This is consistent with our approach at similar sites across the county and satisfies the statutory tests set out in regulation 122 of the Community Infrastructure Levy Regulations.

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[1] Planning Obligations Guidance for Developer Infrastructure Contributions: Technical Appendix FORM B: West Sussex County Council Education Site Suitability Checklist (School Sites), West Sussex County Council, 2026