

Harlowbury Primary School

Proposal to relocate and expand the school to 420 places (on a phased basis), from September 2021

October 2019



Introduction

Each year, Essex County Council (ECC) must ensure that a school place is available for every child requiring one within its administrative border. In doing so it seeks to maximise opportunities for parents and carers to gain places for their children at preferred schools, and in turn supports these schools so that they may increase the educational achievement and life chances for all of the young people in their care.

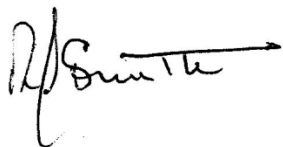
Whilst restraints upon public expenditure make meeting the demand for additional school places harder, this remains a high priority for the County Council. And pressure on primary places on the eastern side of Harlow can soon be expected to see a significant rise, as the houses being built on the Gilden Way development become occupied by families with young children.

Working in partnership with the Templefields Multi Academy Trust (MAT), Essex County Council and the senior leadership team of Harlowbury Primary School are exploring the possibility of relocating the Academy to a site adjacent to its current one (but within the Gilden Way development), and taking the opportunity presented by that relocation to expand it. Doing so would overcome the issues around the condition of the existing buildings, as well as provide a high quality learning environment to serve an increased number of local children for many years to come. All parties agree that the measures set out within this consultation document represent an important and exciting enhancement to the educational offer that could be available to parents in this area.

Yet nothing is decided, and we invite you to engage with us on the proposed relocation and expansion of Harlowbury Primary School, so that we may take full account of your views when the best way forward is considered.



Councillor Ray Gooding
Cabinet Member for Education, Essex County Council



Robert Smith
Chair of Governors, Harlowbury Primary School

BACKGROUND

Pupil Forecasts and Deficit of Primary Places

Amongst its statutory duties, the County Council must ensure that there are sufficient school places available to children living within Essex. To do this it monitors birth rates, new housing developments and patterns of parental preference across groups of schools. This information is then used to forecast pupil numbers, ensuring that demand and supply are appropriately matched throughout each District of the county.

Harlowbury Primary School sits within Harlow District, and for planning purposes is grouped with Church Langley Primary School, Churchgate CE (V/A) Primary School, Fawbert & Barnard's Primary School, The Henry Moore Primary School, Newhall Primary Academy and Potter Street Academy. The following table shows the potential deficit of Reception places across that whole group over the next 10 years, should additional capacity not be created somewhere within it:

	ACADEMIC YEAR									
	2019 / 20	2020 / 21	2021 / 22	2022 / 23	2023 / 24	2024 / 25	2025 / 26	2026 / 27	2027 / 28	2028 / 29
Reception Place Forecast for Harlow East Planning Group	-14	-23	-33	-42	-54	-61	-67	-73	-77	-81

THE WAY FORWARD

School Expansion and Relocation Proposal

Harlowbury Primary School would expand from 210 places to 420 places (creating a two form entry primary school), by relocating it to newly built accommodation adjacent to its current site from September 2021. The Academy would grow year-on-year from that date by admitting 30 extra children into its Reception cohort, until it filled across all Year Groups in September 2027. (A map showing the proximity of both sites is provided on the back cover of this document.)

Why Essex County Council is leading this process

Harlowbury Primary School is an Academy. This means that any process to expand it would normally be led by the Academy itself, and would be substantially different to the process required to expand a local authority-maintained school. However, the legal duty to deliver sufficient school places throughout its administrative area rests with Essex County Council. And being mindful of its obligation to Essex taxpayers to ensure cost effectiveness in all that it delivers, the local authority would be unlikely to prioritise an

expansion to Harlowbury Primary School on its current site, given both its space constraints and the condition of its existing buildings.

Yet an opportunity has arisen where a possible relocation and concurrent expansion of the Academy can be explored, ECC having secured a school site within the Gildea Way development in anticipation of the long term rise in demand for primary school places that the occupation of those houses will bring.

But in order for any relocation to take place, the County Council must sell the land on which the Harlowbury Primary School currently sits, with that sale generating sufficient funds to deliver both relocation and expansion in a way that is cost neutral to the Essex taxpayer. Should this proposal not go ahead in the form being consulted upon, an alternative strategy will need to be explored in order to meet the shortfall in primary school places in the east of Harlow that ECC's forecasts show will happen. This will likely require it to run a competition to find an Academy sponsor to run the newly built 420-place primary school located on Gildea Way, whilst Harlowbury Primary School will continue to operate as a 210-place school from its Watlington Road site.

Admissions

The Academy does not propose to change the admissions criteria and Priority Admission Area (PAA) for the school as a consequence of what is proposed, as the Gildea Way development sits entirely within the existing PAA of Harlowbury Primary School.

Transport Arrangements

Transport arrangements would remain in line with the home to school transport policy of Essex County Council and the existing Travel Plan would be reviewed by the school.

Harlowbury Speech and Language Centre

Harlowbury Primary School has enhanced provision for up to 20 children with an Education Health and Care Plan (EHCP) or Statement of Special Educational Needs for Speech, Language and Communication Needs, and therefore needing specialist teaching and speech and language therapy. Should the Academy relocate and expand then the Enhanced Provision would simply be re-provided at its new location.

Building Work

Any building project to deliver these proposals is subject to planning permission. There will be pre-planning application consultation with the community involved on the detailed design for expansion of the school. A full feasibility study, including highways and access considerations, will be subject to consultation with the community during the detailed planning stage of the building scheme should these proposals to relocate and expand the school be approved.

Funding

ECC has made provision within its Capital Programme to forward fund the element of this proposal that is not anticipated to be received through Section 106 agreements already in place with local housing developers. However, in order for the building project to go forward, (as previously stated) the County Council will need to gain a capital receipt from the sale of the original school site, which in turn will repay the money it needs to borrow in order to forward fund what is proposed.

The County Council publishes its capital programme at www.essex.gov.uk

How Can You Make Your Views Known?

The County Council and senior leadership team of the Academy are eager to engage with all interested persons about this proposal to relocate and expand Harlowbury Primary School. A drop in session has been arranged at the school, to provide an opportunity for parents, carers and members of the local community to ask questions of those leading this process, and make comments about what is proposed. This session will take place in the school hall between **2.30pm** and **7.30pm** on **Wednesday, 16th October 2019**.

At this stage no decision has been taken, and all of the views expressed during the consultation period will be considered prior to one being made on whether or not to move to the next stage of the process. Should that occur, a final decision to enact the proposal will still require endorsement from Essex County Council's Full Cabinet. Not only will this have to consider the growing need for more primary school places within the eastern part of Harlow, but also whether the various financial caveats already mentioned within this document can be satisfied.

Your Comments

You are invited to respond to this consultation using the following electronic survey form <https://consultations.essex.gov.uk/school-organisation/harlowbury>

You may also send written feedback/ comments to:

Monica Bird – School Organisation Officer
School Organisation Team
County Hall
Market Road
Chelmsford
CM1 1QH

or get in touch by email using school.organisation@essex.gov.uk

All comments received through the mechanisms set out above will be collated and included in an analysis of the feedback received.

Essex County Council should receive all written comments no later than midday on **13th November 2019**. It handles information in accordance with the Freedom of Information Act 2000 and the Data Protection Act 1998, and is the data controller for the purposes of the Data Protection Act 1998. Your responses to this consultation will only be used to assess the community's view of what is proposed, and not for any other purpose. We will not give information about you to anyone outside the County Council.

If you have any questions about the consultation process and/ or proposal you can call David Mason, School Organisation Support Officer, on 03330 131189, or alternatively contact the chair of governors, via Harlowbury Primary School.

The information contained in this leaflet can be made available in alternative formats: large print, Braille, audio tape or disk. Please call 03330 131071.

What happens next?

The decision making body on this proposal will be Essex County Council. At the end of this consultation period, all feedback and views expressed by all interested parties during the consultation will be considered. A report will need to be submitted to and signed off by ECC's Full Cabinet (around December 2019/ January 2020), in order to take a financial decision on the use of local authority resources. A positive outcome will then allow a procurement exercise to take place, contractors to be appointed, specifications to be drawn up and a new school built upon the Gilden Way development.

Being an Academy within a Multi Academy Trust, it will also be for the school and Templefields MAT to put together a full business case for the attention of the Regional Schools Commissioner (RSC), to evidence why the expansion is required and why the move to the Gilden Way site supports an ambition to deliver and sustain the very best outcomes for the children on its current and future school roll. This will need to be submitted to the RSC at least three months before the opening date of the relocated school (this being September 2021, but in practice this would happen around April 2020). That business case will then be assessed by the RSC, and a view reached upon whether or not the proposal can proceed along the lines set out within this consultation document.

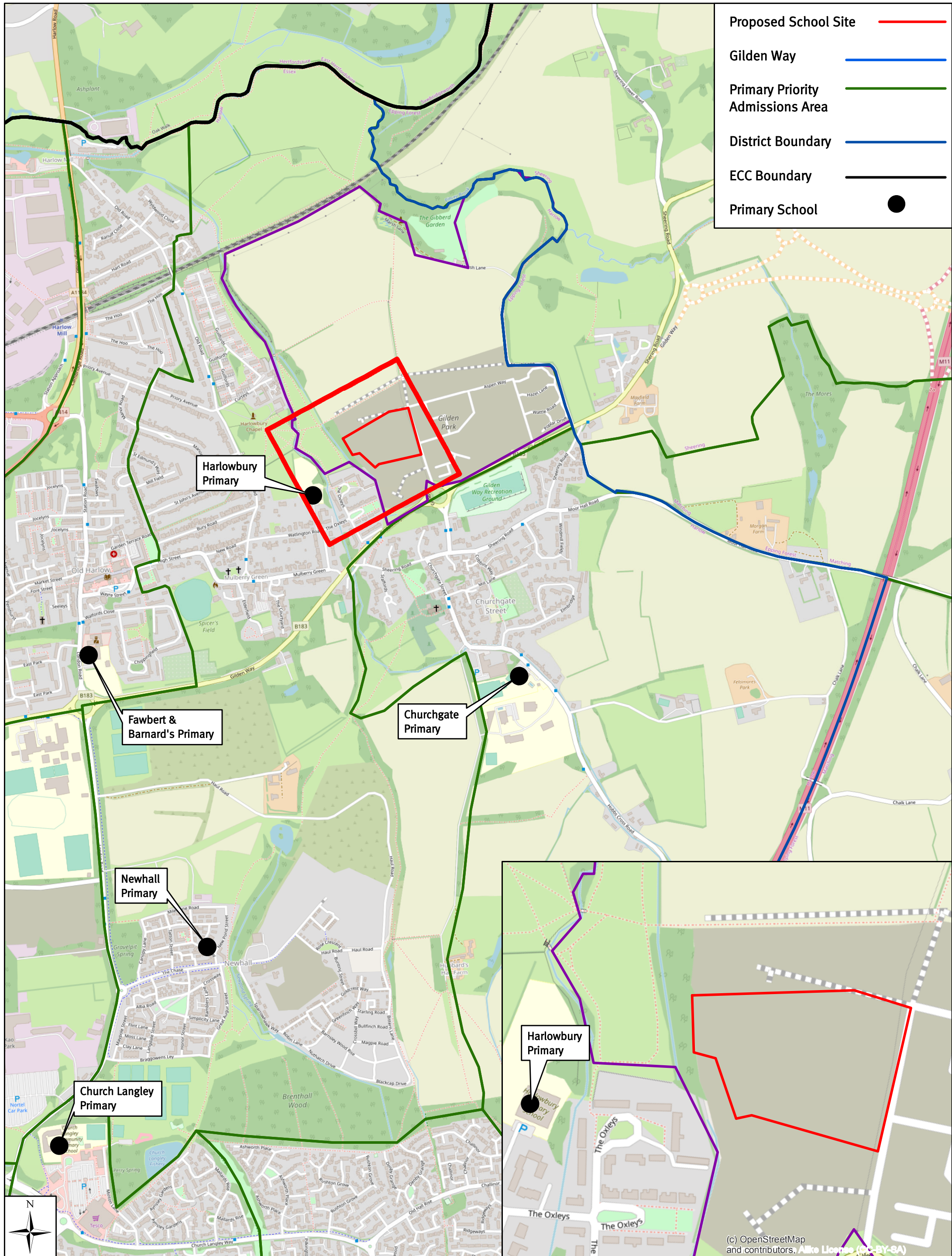
Timeline

The consultation period will run from 2nd October 2019 to 13th November 2019. Below is an estimated timeline for the decision process.

Date	Activity
2 October 2019	Consultation period begins. Consultation document can be viewed at: https://tinyurl.com/ECC-consultations-proposals
16 October 2019	Drop in session for parents, staff and the local community, to be held in the school hall between 2.30pm and 7.30pm.
13 November 2019	End of consultation period.
December 2019/ January 2020	Decision by the Full Cabinet of Essex County Council on whether to authorise the borrowing that will allow the proposal to proceed on a cost neutral basis.
Expected April 2020, but required to be before the end of May 2021	The submission of a full business case to the Regional Schools Commissioner, to seek the expansion and relocation of Harlowbury Primary School.
* 1 September 2021	Harlowbury Primary School expands to become a 420 place primary school in new buildings on the Gilden Way development.

* This stage will apply only if the proposal is approved by the Full Cabinet of Essex County Council, and then subsequently by the RSC (in relation to the elements of the proposal that are specific to the Academy).

Golden Way, Harlow, Proposed School Site



Proposed School Site

Golden Way

Primary Priority Admissions Area

District Boundary

ECC Boundary

Primary School



0 0.125 0.25 0.5 Miles
 1:110,000
 When printed at A3

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