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From: School Organisation [REDACTED]
Sent: 21 August 2026 09:35
To: Planning (SMDC)
Cc: Chris Johnston
Subject: SCC Response to the Education Infrastructure Assessment report AUGUS-FCL-GEN-FS-RP-Z-0001 by Flinders Chase July 2026 – Land at Augustus Way (Thorley Drive) Cheadle.

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SCC Response to the Education Infrastructure Assessment report AUGUS-FCL-GEN-FS-RP-Z-0001 by Flinders Chase July 2026 – Land at Augustus Way (Thorley Drive) Cheadle.

The County Council has reviewed the report (Version P03) submitted by Flinders Chase and does not agree with the conclusions reached. The County Council's approach is consistent with the requirements of the CIL Regulations and is applied in accordance with its adopted Education Infrastructure Contributions Policy and established pupil forecasting methodology.

This response sets out the Council's position in respect of primary education provision. The Council is not seeking a contribution towards Secondary or sixth form provision.

Primary Education

The proposed planning application 2026/0188/FUL at Land at Augustus Way/Thorley Drive is located in Cheadle.

School places are planned on a planning area basis in line with DfE guidance. Planning areas are usually made up of groups of schools which interact with each other in a geographical area. This development falls into the Cheadle Town planning area which includes three schools that interact with each other in terms of pupil movement. Whilst there may currently be a number of places available within the planning area, our forecasts are showing anticipated growth with the developments that are already approved or underway.

Even where a level of surplus exists at a given point in time, this does not equate to available capacity for new development. Capacity must be considered in the context of forecast growth and planned housing delivery. Apparent surplus, particularly where provision is operating below capacity pending the build-out of committed development, cannot be relied upon to accommodate additional demand.

SCAP data forms only one component of a wider evidence base used when planning future education infrastructure. In accordance with the Staffordshire Education Infrastructure Contributions Policy, assessments of planning applications consider school capacities, pupil projections, committed developments, housing allocations and other relevant factors. The County Council does not rely solely upon SCAP forecasts when assessing the long-term infrastructure requirements arising from planned and committed housing growth.

The fact that SCAP data may indicate historical or short-term surplus capacity does not negate the identified requirement for additional primary provision arising from cumulative housing growth across the Cheadle Town planning area.

The published SCAP 2025 data represent a point-in-time snapshot and does not provide an appropriate basis for assessing the longer-term impact of planned and committed development. Whilst SCAP provides useful national data, it is not intended to assess the longer-term impact of education requirements arising from housing growth.

Two of the three schools in the planning area have allocations almost at the PAN of the school (29 against a PAN of 30 for each school) for September 2026. Whilst the other school may have available places for Reception 2026 pupil generation from developments that are already approved and underway will increase demand.

The suggestion that the Cheadle Town planning area will retain sufficient surplus places to accommodate future growth is not supported by the available evidence.

To clarify this point, SCC has prepared the graphs below, which demonstrate the need for the new primary school. The analysis uses the latest birth data, average birth assumptions for future years, NHS data, current pupils on roll and the number of new homes proposed and expected to be delivered. This evidence supports SCC’s previously stated position regarding the long-term requirement for additional primary provision in Cheadle Town.

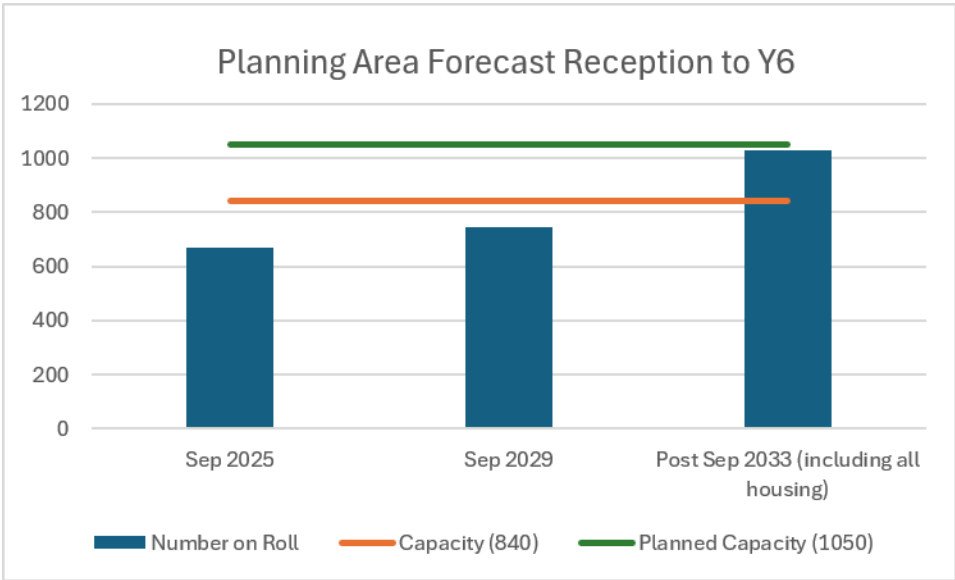


Chart 1: Cheadle Town Planning Area forecasts from Reception to Year 6

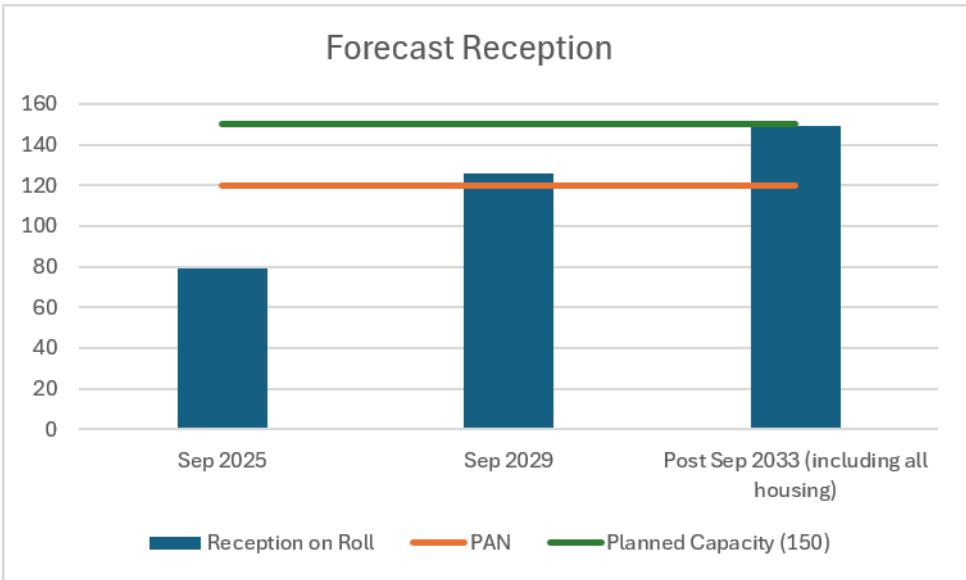


Chart 2: Cheadle Town Planning Area forecast for Reception Year intake

The County Council therefore disagrees with the suggestion that existing capacity is sufficient to accommodate pupils generated by the proposed development.

Pre-school cohort data shows that birth numbers are not reducing in this planning area and the latest four-year average is 114 compared with 104 for the previous four years. In addition, there is considerable growth in cohorts between birth and Reception. Using the latest available NHS data, the 2025 Reception cohort grew by 17 children between birth and Reception. The 2026 Reception cohort has grown by 19 children between birth and age 4+ and the 2027 Reception cohort has grown by 11 pupils between birth and age 3+. For the 2026 and 2027 cohort it is reasonable to assume these will grow further before pupils begin school.

The requirement for a new primary school in Cheadle arises directly from the County Council's statutory duty under Section 14 of the Education Act 1996 to secure sufficient school places. The contribution is sought because the proposed development will generate additional primary-aged pupils who will place demand upon the Cheadle Town primary planning area and therefore contribute to the overall requirement for additional primary capacity.

The County Council is required to plan strategically for the cumulative impact of growth across the planning area and to ensure sufficient school places are available to meet future demand. The new primary school has been identified as the strategic mitigation measure required to address overall growth across the Cheadle Town planning area. The planning system routinely secures contributions towards strategic infrastructure where multiple developments contribute towards a common infrastructure requirement. The existence of a strategic solution does not break the relationship between the development and the infrastructure required to accommodate its impact. The contribution sought is therefore directly related to mitigating the cumulative education impacts arising from growth.

The need for a new primary school in Cheadle has been identified through the Local Planning process and education infrastructure planning work.

SCC remains satisfied that the requested obligation satisfies Regulation 122(2) of the Community Infrastructure Levy Regulations 2010 and paragraph 58 of the National Planning Policy Framework.

Conclusion

The development generates additional primary and secondary aged pupils.

Additional primary education infrastructure is required to accommodate housing growth and to mitigate the impact of this development.

There is deemed to be sufficient secondary school provision at the current time to mitigate the impact of this development.

The contributions sought from this development are proportionate to its pupil yield.

For these reasons SCC's position remains unchanged and the requested education contribution continue to be necessary to make the development acceptable in planning terms, directly related to the development and fairly and reasonably related in scale and kind.

As costs have recently been updated to deliver new schools we will provide an updated response to SMDC setting out the latest figures.

Kind regards

**School Organisation Team**

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