

# Planning 11-16 education for Barrow The potential Academy – one site or two?

A consultation document



October 2008

## Introduction

As you probably know, in February this year Cumbria County Council agreed a plan which, if implemented, would transform secondary education in Barrow. This followed a consultation exercise which took place towards the end of 2007.

This plan included an Academy which was to be located only on the Parkview School site. A new possibility has recently emerged. This would see the Academy being developed using both the Parkview and Thorncliffe Schools' sites.

We would like your views on these two options. The county council and the government are committed to providing an Academy which is influenced by the opinions of local people on whether it should operate on one or two sites (or campuses).

In order to transform secondary education in Barrow, things need to improve. Both the county council and the local community wish to see improvement brought about. The county council and government want to begin making changes to make this happen as soon as possible. The proposed Academy is a vitally important part of our plans. Your views will help enormously in shaping the potential Barrow Academy.

**If you would like further information on our document and the things it covers, you can find out more by:**

- visiting our website: [www.cumbriacc.gov.uk/childrensservices/school-organisation](http://www.cumbriacc.gov.uk/childrensservices/school-organisation);
- ringing the School Organisation Team: **01228 226013**



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County Councillor Anne Burns, Cabinet Member for Children's Social Care and Lead Member for Children's Services, Cumbria County Council

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# Index



• The present 'agreed way forward'	2
• Why consult again?	3
• What are we consulting on?	3
• About the consultation document	3
• General information and comment related to the options	4
• The options in outline	
• A single Academy	
• Admissions and choice	
• Buildings for the Academy	
• Future student numbers	
• Preferences and concerns raised during the last consultation	
• Timescale for opening the Academy	
• Personnel implications	
• Sports and other community facilities	
• Academy development	
• Choosing between the two options	8
• Addressing local concerns	
• Educational, financial and organisational issues	
• Other factors to consider	
• Weighing up the pros and cons	
• Meeting the challenges of a two-site model	
• To summarise	
• Drawing conclusions	11
• Next steps – the consultation and decision-making process	11
• The consultation period	
• What happens after the consultation process?	
• How can I find out more?	
• Translation services	14
• The questionnaire	15

## The present 'agreed way forward'



Following consultation during the last three months of 2007, the county council's Cabinet agreed a potential way forward for the future on 5 February 2008.

Put simply, that way forward involves:

- establishing on **1 September 2009** an Academy (eventually with 1200 places) located on the Parkview site to replace Alfred Barrow, Thorncliffe and Parkview Schools which would each close on **31 August 2009**
- extending St Bernard's and Walney Schools to accommodate extra students

The way forward is intended to:

- achieve much needed improvement to secondary education standards and performance in the town
- deal with the issue of surplus places
- tackle Alfred Barrow School's acute problems about viability
- provide schools with new and much better facilities
- ensure that the remaining schools are excellent, strong, viable and successful
- encourage and increase participation in education post-16 and post-18 through close partnerships with the Colleges and the University

Since the Cabinet decision was taken, work to prepare for its implementation has begun. Together with the lead sponsors of the potential Academy (Barrow Sixth Form College, Furness College and the University of Cumbria), the council prepared an Expression of Interest (Eoi) which was sent to the Department for Children, Schools and Families (DCSF). This is the first stage in the development of any Academy. The Eoi was approved by the appropriate government minister in May. This meant that the development of the Academy could move into what is called the 'feasibility stage'. A project management consultancy, Mouchel, has been appointed to help the lead sponsors implement the detailed arrangements for the Academy.

A series of meetings arranged by the county council to develop plans for the extension of St Bernard's and Walney Schools began around four months ago. This planning is ongoing.

Academies have to build up an endowment fund of £2m over a five to ten year period to provide additional educational experiences and opportunities for their students and the wider community. The county council has agreed to contribute up to £1m to the endowment. BAE Systems have indicated their willingness to put in around £½m. It is expected that contributions from other local businesses will ensure the £2m figure is achieved.

## Why consult again?

When the county council carried out the previous consultation and took its decisions afterwards, it was understood that the government would only be prepared to support and pay for an Academy on a single site. A few weeks ago ministers indicated that they might be prepared to back a model based on two campuses, Parkview and Thorncliffe. They have very recently confirmed that they would support and fund the two-campus arrangement for the potential Academy, if this was the preferred option locally.

A two-campus approach may address some of the main concerns about the proposed Academy which have been raised by people in Barrow. However, it was not part of any of the options included in the earlier consultation and the Cabinet's decision was for an Academy located only on the Parkview site. In order for the county council to consider changing its decision, a further consultation exercise must be carried out.

Both the government and the county council are open-minded about the two options. In the circumstances we feel it is right to find out local opinion through a second round of consultation.

## What are we consulting on?

The consultation is about whether the potential Academy planned for Barrow should eventually be located only on the Parkview site or on both the Parkview and Thorncliffe sites. In other respects the agreed way forward set out on page 2 will remain the same.

## About the consultation document

The main purpose of this document is to provide you with information and comment on the location options for the potential Academy for Barrow and to explain why it has been decided to consult again.

Of course, we also wanted to bring you up-to-date about the plans for secondary education in the town more generally. However, the consultation process has to only focus on issues related to forming a view on whether it would be best for the Academy to have just one campus or two.

Much of what is said in the first consultation document produced in October 2007 is still relevant as background to the current consultation process. If you would like a copy, please let us know (see page 13 for details).

## General information and comment related to the options



### The options in outline

The two options are summarised in the table below:

	Schools Closing	New School	Location	Number of Places	Age-range
<b>The one campus option</b>	Alfred Barrow Parkview Thorncliffe	Academy	Parkview site	1200	11-16
<b>The two campus option</b>	Alfred Barrow Parkview Thorncliffe	Academy	Parkview site	600	11-16
			and Thorncliffe site	600	11-16

In the two-site model, each site would cater for the full ability range from 11 to 16.

### A single Academy

Whether the potential Academy for Barrow is to be located on one or two campuses, it would be a single institution. It would have one governing body. The Academy's senior leadership team would be led by a single manager, i.e. the Principal.



## Admissions and choice

Assuming that the county council's Cabinet decides to close the schools, then those students in Years 7-10 who are attending Alfred Barrow, Parkview and Thorncliffe Schools when they close will be guaranteed a place at the Academy.

Admissions of present Year 6 children to the Academy's Year 7 in September 2009 will be based on the existing admission arrangements for the three schools that are closing, Alfred Barrow, Parkview and Thorncliffe. This means that the Academy's September 2009 admission number for Year 7 will be based on the total number of places available in those three schools. Children to whom those places are allocated will be given a place at the Academy. From 2010, the Academy's admission number for Year 7 students is expected to be 240.

It is envisaged that if the Academy were to be developed in two locations on a permanent basis, each campus could offer a rather different curriculum and choice of courses. For example, one of the Academy's two specialisms could be delivered on each campus. This approach could well begin to be introduced from September 2009.

In the first few years, and in the longer term if there continue to be two campuses, the Academy will allocate students to a particular site. This will happen, as far as possible, in line with student/parent preferences.

Parents can, of course, seek a place for their children at any local school.

## Buildings for the Academy

The vast majority, if not all, of the Academy's accommodation would be brand new. The investment needed is estimated at £30m for a single campus at Parkview and £40-45m for two campuses, one at Parkview and the other at Thorncliffe. The final amount of funding will be subject to assessment. The new buildings are expected to be completed by 2012.

The government has indicated that it would be prepared to fund whichever option is preferred locally.

## Future student numbers

During the last consultation process, respondents questioned the projected numbers of future students set out in the documentation. Many consultees felt that the numbers quoted may turn out to be too low. The most up-to-date projections we have for the Barrow area are generally lower than those in the last consultation document.

The number of school places planned for Barrow in ten years time is 11.5% or around 350 greater than the estimated number of students. This allows for potential growth in the expected student numbers and provides flexibility in the system.



## Preferences and concerns raised during the last consultation

Of those who responded to the consultation in 2007, 67% felt that there needed to be changes to secondary education in Barrow.



The most preferred option for change involved the closure of Alfred Barrow, Parkview and Thorncliffe Schools and their replacement with new 650 place (non-Academy) schools to be developed on the Parkview and Thorncliffe sites. Resources to enable that option to be delivered would not be available for some considerable time. The two-campus Academy option is, however, quite close to the previously preferred option which found favour with 60% of respondents.

There has been opposition to the county council's plans for change. For those against the agreed way forward the major concerns appear to be that:

- the schools, particularly the Academy, would be too large
- parental choice would be reduced
- there would be a loss of community-based schools
- the student population might grow leaving insufficient school places
- it conflicts with their views on Academies in terms of principle
- community sports facilities would be lost or negatively affected
- traffic movement and congestion would increase

## Timescale for opening the Academy

Our planning has always been based on the potential Academy opening on **1 September 2009** using Parkview and Thorncliffe's existing buildings. This remains the case. Work to develop the Academy will continue alongside this current consultation exercise.

## Personnel implications

Where Academies replace existing schools, staff are protected by the Transfer of Undertakings (Protection of Employment) Regulations 2006 (TUPE). This protection will apply whether it is decided that the potential Academy for Barrow will eventually operate from one or two campuses.





### Sports and other community facilities

The plan for change to secondary education in Barrow has led to fears being expressed about how this might affect the future of sporting and other community facilities at or adjacent to the schools. The county council, through the proposed changes, would wish to see the development of this kind of provision for local people rather than see it diminish.

### Academy development

The Academy is in the feasibility stage of its development leading up to its opening. This is when its educational vision, policies (for example, admissions, special educational needs, behaviour), catchment area, curriculum, funding and staffing structure are determined. In addition, there will be discussions about work needed to existing buildings, extended services to be offered, school uniform and many other issues.

The responsibility for all of this planning rests largely with the Academy's lead sponsors. A Project Steering Group (PSG) is in place to ensure the necessary planning happens at the right time. The PSG includes the lead sponsors and representatives of the county council, the DCSF and the management company appointed to support the planning process. There will be ongoing opportunities for local stakeholders to have an input to the work of the PSG.

Once the planning has progressed further, the sponsors will consult with prospective parents and staff on the kind of details mentioned above regarding the nature of the Academy and how it will operate. This consultation is likely to occur early next year.



## Choosing between the two options



Deciding on which of the two possibilities you prefer will depend partly on your individual circumstances. This section of the document begins by commenting on how the two-campus approach might deal with local concerns. It then goes on to explain some of the possible arguments for and against each option and sets out other factors to consider. It also suggests how the Academy could get over some of the potential disadvantages of being on two sites. All of this is to help you take an informed view.

### Addressing local concerns

As acknowledged on page 6, there are some significant concerns about the planned changes to secondary education in the town. Some of these are likely to be addressed fully or partly by the two-campus model. For example:

- **The Academy would be too large** – having two campuses, each eventually having up to 600 students, would be closer to the views expressed during the previous consultation
- **Choice would be too restricted** – having two campuses with rather different provision on each would offer more choice on both locational and educational grounds whilst giving access, as required, to the facilities on both sites
- **There would be a loss of community-based schools** – having secondary education in Barrow operating from four rather than three sites would reduce that impact
- **The secondary school population will begin to grow again** – should this happen in 10-15 years time, two 600 place campuses make it easier to develop extra places
- **There would be more congestion around the Parkview site and more traffic movement generally** – developing 600 places on both the Parkview and Thorncliffe sites would mean less congestion and traffic movement than with the current plans

## Educational, financial and organisational issues

Over the last couple of decades the county council has been phasing out split-site schools. This was because they were felt to be organisationally and financially less effective than schools operating from a single site. There are therefore some potential disadvantages to consider alongside the benefits of moving to a two-site arrangement for the Barrow Academy.

Amongst these possible disadvantages might be:

- the additional costs of running two sites rather than one
- a more limited and less flexible staffing organisation
- loss of teaching and learning time due to movement between sites
- some inconsistency in expectations regarding behaviour and standards
- a less wide range of curriculum choice overall for students
- with fewer students in each year group, less precise ability grouping is possible with reduced potential for the most able to be stretched and those needing support to be properly targeted
- to the extent that students move between campuses, tracking their progress, behaviour and attendance at school would be likely to be more difficult

Advantages of the two site model could be:

- opportunities to develop an individual character for each campus through developing different specialist facilities at the two sites
- students benefiting from a smaller school environment that could offer a better sense of ownership, security and belonging
- the two campuses could offer different courses to students aged 14 and above so that they could take advantage of a more personalised curriculum

## Other factors to consider

There are a number of other points which might be considered relevant when deciding which option to choose. These include:

- a two campus Academy would mean £10m-£15m more investment in the town to complement that to be made in primary schools, the two other secondary schools, both colleges, the University of Cumbria and on the wider regeneration of Barrow.
- having two campuses rather than one is likely to offer a better community focus which could help community cohesion
- two smaller campuses might provide a better context for hosting other local community services, such as the existing sports facilities, and reduce travelling distances

## Weighing up the pros and cons

It seems apparent that an Academy with two campuses would help address a number of the concerns of parents and the wider community with the county council's plans for change. There also seem to be specific advantages in terms of encouraging a better sense of community and making delivery of services to local communities easier:

On the other hand, a two site operation for the Academy would present some educational, financial and organisational challenges. We expect, however, that the Academy would overcome these through clear policies and strategies.

## Meeting the challenges of a two-site model

There are two-site models around the country which do work. A number of Academies have successfully faced and are facing the challenges involved. The Academy for Barrow would in any case face them during its first three years of operation even if a one-campus model was pursued for the longer term. So how might the educational and organisational challenges be met?

Two parallel 11-16 campuses would make up the Academy. They would eventually be quite small with year groups of around 120 students and teachers would know them well. One of the keys to the success of this model would be to achieve consistency across the two parts of the Academy.

There would need to be consistency in expectations of students' achievement and standards, common expectations about behaviour, common uniform, structure of the school day and the school year. All policies would need to be implemented in the same way. The aim would be to create a common ethos and climate for learning.

To achieve this, the two parts of the Academy would need shared staffing structures. One senior team would oversee both campuses and there would be one Improvement Plan. The curriculum delivery across both parts would not be exactly the same but responsibility for subjects such as English and maths would probably be across both. All planning would be done jointly. Those staff working on inclusion and support for the most vulnerable young people could be members of one properly staffed team serving both sites.

Curriculum and support or pastoral models could be the same for both campuses. Staff training may also be centrally planned and delivered. Although movement between the campuses would be limited, both students and teachers would need to get used to working across the sites so that each was seen as just an extension of the other. The introduction of the new diplomas for 14-19 year olds means that, generally, there will be more movement of students between their school and other schools and colleges.

## To summarise

How the Academy would actually be organised, be that on one campus or two, is for the sponsors, working with colleagues and stakeholders, to decide. What we have tried to do in this section is to identify some advantages and disadvantages of the two options. We have also tried to outline how some of the issues with the two-campus model might be addressed successfully. We hope that this helps you decide which option you prefer.



## Drawing conclusions

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When the county council's Cabinet took its decision on the plan for secondary education in Barrow on 5 February 2008, it was based on what councillors felt was the best available option at that time (Option 4). This had a single-site Academy at the heart of it.

An alternative two-site (or campus) Academy, which the government is prepared to fully fund, is now a possibility.

There are pros and cons relating to both options. As we said at the start of this document, we would very much like to know which you would prefer. This will influence significantly whether we proceed with the one or two campus model.

Thank you for reading this document. We look forward to receiving your views. We hope we can then move on to begin to transform secondary education in the town for the benefit of its young people and the wider community.

## Next steps - the consultation and decision-making process

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### The consultation period

The consultation period starts on Wednesday 1 October 2008. The final date for letting us have your thoughts and comments is **Friday 21 November 2008**.

### Questionnaire

There is a questionnaire at the end of this document. We would like you to complete it and return it to us using the Freepost address given on the form. Alternatively, you can complete the questionnaire online from Wednesday 1 October 2008, by following the consultation finder links on the county council website: [www.cumbriacc.gov.uk/consultation](http://www.cumbriacc.gov.uk/consultation).

## Meetings

Consultation meetings will be held in October 2008. They will give you the opportunity to express your views and to ask questions about the content of the consultation document.

### Meetings for student councils, staff and governors



Meeting For	Times	Date	Venue
<b>Thornccliffe School</b> Student Council Staff Governors	2.30pm – 3.00pm 3.15pm – 4.30pm 5.00pm – 6.00pm	Wednesday 15 October	Thornccliffe School
<b>The Alfred Barrow School</b> Student Council Staff Governors	2.30pm – 3.00pm 3.15pm – 4.30pm 4.30pm – 5.30pm	Thursday 16 October	The Alfred Barrow School
<b>Parkview School</b> Student Council Staff Governors	3.00pm – 3.30pm 3.45pm – 5.00pm 5.00pm – 6.00pm	Monday 20 October	Parkview School
<b>St Bernard's School</b> Student Council Staff Governors	3.00pm – 3.30pm 3.45pm – 5.00pm 5.00pm – 6.00pm	Wednesday 22 October	St Bernard's School
<b>Walney School</b> Student Council Staff Governors	2.15pm – 2.45pm 2.45pm – 4.00pm 5.15pm – 6.15pm	Thursday 23 October	Walney School

### Meetings for parents and the general public

Meeting at	Time	Date
<b>Thornccliffe School</b> Parents and public	6.30pm – 8.30pm	Wednesday 15 October
<b>The Alfred Barrow School</b> Parents and public	6.30pm – 8.30pm	Thursday 16 October
<b>Parkview School</b> Parents and public	6.30pm – 8.30pm	Monday 20 October
<b>Walney School</b> Parents and public	6.30pm – 8.30pm	Thursday 23 October

These are aimed at parents with children of **all ages** and you are invited to attend whichever meeting is most convenient. These meetings will be run so that everyone can contribute to the discussion about the two options and ask questions about them.

## What happens after the consultation process?

Once the responses to the consultation process have been analysed, we will prepare a report for the county council's Cabinet. The report will include feedback from the consultation meetings, a summary of comments received from individuals in the form of completed questionnaires, letters or emails and photocopies of written responses from recognised organisations. We will treat all responses received from individuals in confidence and personal details will not be included in the final report. The report will be a public document, so will be available to the media and on the county council website.

The Cabinet will consider the response to the consultation and decide which of the two options to take forward. This is likely to occur on **Tuesday 6 January 2009**.

There are legal processes to follow so that we can make the agreed changes to the current provision. This will involve publishing what are called statutory proposals to close Alfred Barrow, Parkview and Thorncliffe Schools to pave the way for the establishment of the Academy. We anticipate this will happen in late January 2009 and that it will be followed by a six week period for objections or comments to be made. We expect that a decision on the potential closure of the three schools will be taken by the county council's Cabinet in April 2009.

## How can I find out more?

Members of the School Organisation Team will be more than happy to discuss with you any of the issues covered in this document or anything else related to the Barrow schools. You might find this helpful before completing the questionnaire.

The number to ring is 01228 226013.

There is extra information available on our website. This includes the October 2007 consultation document, all of the Cabinet papers on school organisation in Barrow (7 September 2005, 28 November 2006 and 5 February 2008), 'School Organisation: A Strategic Approach', Ofsted inspection reports and links to the latest Academies evaluation reports.

These other documents are available to view or download on our website:

[www.cumbriacc.gov.uk/childrensservices/school-organisation](http://www.cumbriacc.gov.uk/childrensservices/school-organisation)

If you do not have access to the internet, we can provide you with a printed copy of any sections of the additional information. All you need to do is to call the School Organisation Team on 01228 226013. Alternatively, requests can be made by fax to 01228 606016, or by post to the following address:

Freepost RRBS – RLBG – GZGL  
CUMBRIA COUNTY COUNCIL  
School Organisation  
18 Portland Square  
CARLISLE  
CA1 1PE

## Translation services

### English

You can get a copy of this document in different formats such as large print, braille, audio, or in a different language by calling 01229 894401.

### Bengali

আপনি 01229 894401 -এই নম্বর ফোন করে, বিভিন্ন ফরম্যাট যেমন বড় প্রিন্ট, ব্রেইল, অডিও বা একটি ভিন্ন ভাষাতে এই নথিটির একটি কপি পেতে পারেন।

### Portuguese

Pode obter uma cópia deste documento em vários formatos, como por exemplo em Braille, áudio, ou numa outra língua. Para tal ligue para o 01229 894401.

### Cantonese

如果您想获取该文件的不同版本，如：大字体印刷、盲文、音频或不同语言版本，请致电：01229 894401。

### Lithuanian

Paskambinę telefonu 01229 894401, galite užsisakyti šio dokumento kopiją įvairiais formatais, pavyzdžiui, atspausdintą dideliu šriftu, Brailio raštu, užsisakyti garso įrašą arba gauti dokumentą, išverstą į norimą kalbą.

### Polish

Aby otrzymać kopię tego dokumentu w innych formatach, takich jak duży druk, druk Braille'm, audio, lub w innym języku proszę dzwonić pod numer 01229 894401.

### Turkish

01229 894401'u arayarak, bu dokümanın bir kopyasını büyük puntolu, körler için kabartmalı, ses dosyası gibi değişik formatlarda veya farklı bir dilde edinebilirsiniz.

### Tagalog (Filipino)

Maaari kang makakuha ng kopya ng dokumentong ito sa iba't ibat uri tulad ng nakalimbag sa malaking titik, Braille, audio, o sa ibang lengguwahe sa pamamagitan ng pagtawag sa 01229 894401

### Thai

ท่านสามารถขอรับเอกสารนี้ในรูปแบบอื่น อย่างเช่น ตัวพิมพ์ใหญ่ อักษรเบรลล์ เสียง หรือในภาษาอื่นก็ได้ เพียงโทรมาที่ 01229 894401





# Questionnaire

## Planning 11-16 education for Barrow

### The potential Academy - one site or two?

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This questionnaire is to help you put your views and comments in writing. All views will be made available to those taking decisions. Please continue on a separate sheet if required. Alternatively, complete your questionnaire online at [www.cumbriacc.gov.uk/consultation](http://www.cumbriacc.gov.uk/consultation).

Please complete, tear out and return to the address overleaf. The last date for responses to be received is Friday 21 November 2008.

**Q1** Assuming that an Academy is established in Barrow would you prefer it to be on one campus (Parkview site) or on two campuses (Parkview and Thorncliffe sites)?

- One campus .....  1
- Two campuses .....  2
- No preference .....  3

**Q2** Please give your reasons for your answer, and any additional comments you wish to make, on the question above.

**Q3** Please provide below any further comments you wish to make on the content of this consultation document or more generally.

**Q4** Please tell us the nature of your interest in the process, and which schools you are connected to.  
Please tick all that apply.

Interest	✓	At which school(s)?
Student	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Parent/Carer of current school student	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Member of support staff	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Member of teaching staff	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Governor	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Pre-school parent	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Local resident	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Other (please state)	<input type="checkbox"/>	.....

**Q5** Name .....

Address .....

.....

..... Postcode .....

**Q6** How old are you?

Under 20 .....  1      20-39 .....  2      40-59 .....  3      60+ .....  4

Signature .....

Thank you for completing this consultation questionnaire.  
Please now return it to the FREEPOST address below:

Freepost RRBS - RLBG - GZGL  
CUMBRIA COUNTY COUNCIL  
School Organisation  
18 Portland Square  
CARLISLE  
CA1 1PE





### School Organisation Team

Freepost RRBS-RLBG-GZGL  
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email: [school.organisation@cumbriacc.gov.uk](mailto:school.organisation@cumbriacc.gov.uk)  
[www.cumbriacc.gov.uk/childrensservices/school-organisation](http://www.cumbriacc.gov.uk/childrensservices/school-organisation)