

APPENDIX A

Principle of the School Places Strategy

The overwhelming priority of a school places strategy is to continue to deliver high quality and improving education to the young people of the borough. In addition any strategy should recognise the high levels of child obesity and poor levels of physical activity.

The principles of the emerging strategy are to:

- Prioritise expansion or delivery of schools to deliver maximise the benefit to Slough residents
- Support expansion of selective schools only where the expansion will not add to the imbalance between selective and non-selective places
- Allow for adequate playing fields on or very easily accessible to the site
- Maximise the available sources of funding or schemes? for delivery
- Be part of a holistic plan for future developments in the borough
- Recognise that land use pressures must result in provision being made outside the borough
- Be sufficiently flexible to respond to acceleration or deceleration in demand.

The development of a new strategy has involved site identification, initial consultations with a number of relevant schools and discussions with possible promoters.

Site identification has involved:

- Locating schools as close as possible to areas with the highest projected demand
- Examining existing school sites for expansion and/or ability to accommodate entirely new schools easily accessible to the site
- Examining sites within the Council's ownership
- Identifying sites adjoining or nearby secondary schools to create annexes
- Identifying suitable sites within the borough for new primary or secondary schools. This has included considering sites previously identified for the SRP.
- Identifying sites immediately outside the borough for new secondary schools.

In considering priorities on existing school sites the emerging strategy takes account of:

- Space available and particularly playing field area remaining after proposals
- Capacity to accommodate further responsibility and change
- Realistic capacity of a school to grow. For example, sites may be able to accommodate expansions but result in over large primary schools
- Discussions with heads and governors which are in their preliminary stages

On potential new sites

- Projected demand for places
- Land available by some means on or off the site for adequate playing fields
- Ownership constraints.

And on all sites existing or new:

- Land constraints such as flooding, protected status, major utilities

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- Traffic management issues, although virtually any development will exacerbate current congestion

The approach is to achieve a flexible and deliverable supply. Expansion on existing sites may be easier to achieve but this has been tempered by the recognition that this may create over-large schools unless an entirely new school or distinctive annex can be accommodated. To satisfy need, a combination of new schools and expansions will be required. To ensure flexibility, early or in principle agreement on new schools should be secured in company with a series of school expansions which can be brought forward as true pupil numbers become clear.