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Municipal Projects

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Planning for Schools DPD – Evidence Note Phase 2

Prepared for
London Borough of Ealing

Draft Report

February 2015

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1. Introduction

1.1 This Report

This Report presents the findings of Phase 2 of the Planning for Schools DPD Evidence Note, as commissioned by Ealing Council. This report follows the Planning for Schools DPD Evidence Note published in October 2013, and responds to the Brief provided, together with the Project Proposal and subsequent Inception Report.

This report contains the following sections:

- Section 1 includes a summary of the agreed approach and methodology used in the study
- Section 2 describes the site selection process, including sources of information and the criteria against which they were tested in both phases of the process
- Section 3 presents the results of the Phase 2 site selection process

1.2 Context

It is a statutory duty of the local authority to provide sufficient school places for children in the Borough. Schools in Ealing have been under increased demand for places as a result of rising birth rates and population increases in the borough. A programme of investment has investigated options in terms of extending and investing in current sites, but despite these additional schools will need to be found. The suspension of the Building Schools for the Future programme has put additional constraints on the delivery of new schools and the need to meet demand for places.

The planning process, through the Local Plan, is partly responsible for delivering new schools through allocating sites for new schools should they be required. This is recognised by the National Planning Policy Framework, which states:

“The Government attaches great importance to ensuring that a sufficient choice of school places is available to meet the needs of existing and new communities. Local planning authorities should take a proactive, positive and collaborative approach to meeting this requirement, and to development that will widen choice in education. They should:

- give great weight to the need to create, expand or alter schools; and
- work with schools promoters to identify and resolve key planning issues before applications are submitted.”

This provides for the context for the commissioning of this study, and the basis for further work.

1.3 Purpose of the Study

The purpose of the study was to reduce the long-list of sites identified in the October 2013 Evidence Note down to a shortlist of sites for inclusion into the Submission Version of the Planning for Schools DPD.

The long-listed sites were to be assessed against a set of criteria expanded from those used in the October 2013 study. The outcomes of the consultation of the Issues and Options stage of the Planning for Schools DPD was also to be taken into consideration.

It is understood that the outputs from this report should be written in such a way that the approach, analysis and results can be used as evidence and justification to support the identification of sites for the Planning for Schools DPD. This has been an important consideration in the study, drawing upon lessons learnt elsewhere.

1.4 Approach and Method

The methodology used was designed in order to result in providing evidence that meets the definition of soundness as defined by the National Planning Policy Framework and the London Plan (specifically Policy 3.16).

A criteria approach was used to underpin the selection and assessment of possible schools sites, which resulted in the selection of a number of sites which will have been tested against all reasonable alternative sites. A clear audit trail of all data sources used and the process by which they have been assessed will provide this certainty.

The criteria approach has been undertaken in two Phases.

Phase 1 (October 2013)

An initial number of criteria were used for site selection purposes, which reduced a master list of development sites down to a long-list of sites capable of delivering a new primary school, new secondary school, or expansion of an existing school. These sites were then consulted on as part of the Issues and Options stage of the Planning for Schools DPD.

Phase 2 (February 2015)

This long-list of sites has been further assessed against an additional number of criteria which take into account a number of planning and delivery considerations. This assessment identifies a shortlist of sites which may be suitable for a new primary school, new secondary school, or expansion of an existing school, that are considered deliverable for education purposes following assessment against these criteria and recommended for selection in the Planning for Schools DPD.

2. Site Selection

This section describes the criteria that have been applied to the long-list of sites contained within the Issues and Options report in order to produce a shortlist of sites recommended for selection in the Planning for Schools DPD. These criteria take into account a range of planning and delivery factors.

2.1 Phase 2 - Site Assessment Criteria

Phase 2 applied a further set of criteria to the long-list of sites from the Planning for Schools DPD Issues and Options stage to assess the suitability of each site for the allocation of a school. The output of this stage is a shortlist of sites which are those which are considered the most appropriate for inclusion in the Planning for Schools DPD.

Each site was assessed against a series of criteria developed with planning policy and education colleagues, to reflect those issues considered when searching for sites for new schools.

In the absence of formal guidance relating to identifying appropriate locations for secondary schools, the following criteria have been informed by similar studies undertaken elsewhere in planning policy documents to determine the allocation of sites for new primary school, new secondary school, or expansion of an existing school site. The site assessment criteria used are described below:

Site size

Following analysis of the DfE Guidance document Building Bulletin 98, sites above 1 hectare are considered as being capable of delivering a secondary school, subject to the individual constraints and characteristics of each site. For this study sites over 0.55ha. have been included to ensure all sites capable of delivering a school, even on constrained sites, are considered.

Availability of playing fields

Although providing on-site playing fields for secondary schools is preferred, it is widely recognised that in the context of urban sites, especially in London, this is unlikely to be practical. Therefore the location and proximity to off-site playing fields has been considered, using the Sports Facility Study (2012-2021) – Final Draft.

To determine the location of the proximity of playing fields to each site, the Sports Facility Strategy (2012-2021) has been used, specifically the nearest 'strategic multi sport multi pitch priority site'. These are sites which comprise a number of pitches, and accommodate a range of sports, often used by a significant number of organisations and clubs and include pitches as well as ancillary facilities such as changing rooms.

Transport accessibility (to be measured using PTAL)

Unlike the location of primary schools, whilst desirable, it is not essential or practical for secondary schools to be within the catchment of the area of need. Secondary school pupils

often use public transport to travel to school. Public Transport Accessibility Levels (PTAL) have been determined for each site.

Surrounding uses

Land uses or development in the immediate context of each site was considered to identify any potential conflict with educational uses.

Planning issues

A short analysis of each site has been undertaken against a series of potential planning issues including site constraints, neighbouring uses, proximity to other uses such as community facilities, or conservation issues.

Delivery issues

Issues affecting the deliverability of each site has also been considered, including site ownership, existing use constraints, redevelopment opportunities which may affect redevelopment, the potential for mixed use developments or complimentary uses, and the existing / future use value which may affect the delivery of the site for secondary school use. Further viability and deliverability evidence has been prepared as part of the evidence base to underpin the DPD, following consideration of such issues within this report.

3. Site Selection – Phase 2

Figure 1 below shows sites comprising of the Long List of sites from the Planning for Schools DPD Issues and Options stage, which resulted from the filtering of the Master List as part of Phase 1. This Figure shows the justification for determining whether sites are shortlisted, using the criteria described in section 2.2. This results in a shortlist of sites recommended for inclusion in the Planning for Schools DPD.

A separate Appendix 1 shows all sites assessed as part of this commission, including the criteria used in both Phase 1 and Phase 2 of the work.

Figure 1: Assessment of Long-List

Site Name	Planning for Schools DPD ref.	Transport Accessibility (PTAL)	Availability of Playing Fields	Surrounding uses	Planning Issues	Delivery Issues	Viability assessment	Site Selected? (Yes, No, Further Consideration)	Justification
Land at Greenford High	S-GNP2			Residential, school, open space	Site is next to an existing secondary school.	Site is Council owned		Y	Site is adjacent to existing Secondary School, consider for school extension. Site is Council owned; as such minimal risk to delivery.
49-69 Uxbridge Road	S-EAL1	6a	Old Actonians Sports Ground	Offices, town centre uses	Site is in a high PTAL area designated for office-led mixed use development including increase in B1 floorspace.	Site is in multiple private ownership, and the central location with a high PTAL and a designation for a commercial scheme means site assembly would be at high land values.		N	Multiple site ownership, high land values and identification of site for office led development mean deliverability of school as part of a mixed use scheme would be unlikely, particularly within required timescale to

									meet identified need.
91-109 Uxbridge Road	S-EAL2	4	Old Actonian Sports Ground	Offices, residential, town centre uses	Policy context would generally promote commercial or town centre uses. Site is allocated in the Development Sites DPD for office-led redevelopment with ancillary commercial uses on the ground floor. 111-113 Uxbridge Road is pending redevelopment.	High vacancy levels suggest opportunity for redevelopment		N	Forms part of Development Sites DPD site ref EAL10 for mixed use office-led development. High land values. Deliverability of school as part of smaller site would be unlikely within required timescale to meet identified need.

<p>239-265 Acton Lane (Acton Crossrail station)</p>	<p>S-ACT1</p>	<p>3</p>	<p>North Acton Playing Fields</p>	<p>residential, open space</p>	<p>Proposed for residential (including student accomodation) and commercial as part of redevelopment, to be compatible with new Crossrail Station. Adjacent to railway line and industrial uses (waste and aggregates)</p>	<p>Educational use potentially viable as part of mixed use development.</p>	<p>Y - viable for secondary school as part of mixed use scheme but only with 100% affordable housing.</p>	<p>N</p>	<p>Whilst potentially viable to deliver secondary school as part of mixed use scheme would not include any affordable housing. Other sites more likely to deliver school within area of need within required timescale.</p>
<p>Craven House, Bilton House, and land to rear of Cavalier House</p>	<p>S-EAL3</p>	<p>5</p>	<p>Warren Farm, Old Actonians Sports Ground (outside of 1 mile catchment)</p>	<p>Residential / Commercial / town centre uses</p>	<p>Currently proposed for office-led redevelopment and residential in Development Sites (DS) DPD. Site contains a retail frontage which may need to be retained to ensure policy compliance.</p>	<p>Current use includes offices and residential, would require redevelopment as current buildings not suitable for refurbishment. Multiple ownership</p>	<p>Y - viable for secondary school as part of mixed use scheme but only if 100% private housing.</p>	<p>N</p>	<p>Whilst potentially viable to deliver a secondary school as part of mixed use scheme, would not include any affordable housing, contrary to Local Plan policy. Multiple ownership (8 owners) also presents risk to delivery; other</p>

									sites likely to deliver schools within area of need within required timescale.
Eastman Road, W3	S-ACT3	4	Old Actonian Sports Ground	Industrial, open space, residential	May not be compliant with LSIL designation.	Site currently fully occupied.		N	Site not considered suitable due to delivery constraints including multiple ownership and policy conflicts.
Eversheds Sports Ground	S-HAN1		Could be provided on-site	Residential	Site is designated as MOL and Community Open Space. Use of part of the site as school use would not be policy compliant unless special circumstances can	Site is in single private ownership		Y	MOL. Existing building may however be appropriate for temporary use as a contingency site for secondary provision or school extension.

					be justified.				
Former Barclays Sports Ground	S-EAL4		Could be provided on-site	Residential	Site is designated as MOL. Use of part of the site as school use would not be policy compliant unless special circumstances can be justified.	Site is in single private ownership.		Y	School could potentially be accommodated along with playing fields.
Former BT Telephone Exchange	S-EAL5	2	Trailfinders Sports Ground	Residential	Site is in a predominantly residential area and such any development may be restricted by the predominant building heights (2 storeys in the vicinity), though the topography of the site could allow higher buildings.	The site is currently a BT Switching Centre and so may include equipment which is difficult to dispose of. Redevelopment of the building may be possible. Predominantly residential area may mean that redevelopment for residential uses is the preferred option should the	Y - viable for primary or secondary	N	Whilst potentially viable as part of mixed use scheme, delivery issues mean wouldn't be delivered in time to meet the currently identified need. Alternative sites within the area of need more likely to deliver a school in the required

						owner wish to dispose. Query if could be delivered within timescale to meet need.			timeframe. Potential site to re-consider if following monitoring, a review of the DPD is required.
Former King Fahad Academy	S-EAL6	5	North Acton Playing Fields	Residential	Located in a primarily residential area. Part of existing building is listed.	Building has previously been used as a school so conversion may be viable. Site is in single private ownership.		Y	Site suitable subject to delivery constraints.

Sandringham Mews (Lamertons site)	S-EAL7	6a	Old Actonians Sports Ground	Retail, town centre uses, car parking	Site is in a high PTAL area designated for mixed use development, which may mean redevelopment for education uses is not compliant with policy nor the vision for the town centre.	Site is in multiple private ownership, and the central location with a high PTAL and a designation for mixed use means site assembly would be at high land values.	Y - viable for secondary school as part of mixed use scheme but only with 100% private housing.	N	Potentially viable but only with 100% private housing so would fail to comply with affordable housing policy. Multiple land ownership and assembly issues would also make delivery unlikely in timescale required to meet identified need.
Park Royal Southern Gateway	S-ACT5	4	North Acton Playing Fields	Industrial, railway lines, commercial, open space, residential	Including a secondary school may not be in compliance with the Development Strategy or the Park Royal OAPF. Proximity to the A40 and major highways infrastructure may pose amenity issues	Site designation as mixed use would present significant viability issues if a secondary school could be justified in policy terms.	Y - unviable	N	Whilst potentially a school deliverable as part of mixed use scheme, significant viability issues and multiple site ownership (11 owners) rule this site out.

Southall Crossrail Station, Gurdwara Sri Singh Saba and Park Avenue	S-SOU2	4	Dormers Wells High School	Commercial, railway line, town centre	Proposed allocation in Development Sites DPD for comprehensive redevelopment for mixed use, with reprovision of existing Gurdwara. Adjacent to railway line and includes Southall Crossrail Station.	Would require relocation of Gurdwara as part of any redevelopment. Site constraints include location adjacent to railway line and associated infrastructure. Redevelopment would include residential / commercial uses.	Y - unviable	N	Unviable and school not considered deliverable as part of mixed use development within timescale to meet identified need.
Southall East	S-SOU1			industrial, residential				N	Multiple site ownership - School not considered deliverable as part of mixed use development within timescale to meet identified need.
Southall West (Southall Gas Works)	S-SOU3	0-3	Dormers Wells High School	Railway, canal, residential	Planning permission granted for new homes and community facilities, including the provision of a primary school	Delivery expected to be phased up to 2031		N	Delivery of primary school already agreed at outline planning stage & secured with legal agreement. Not necessary to

									include as site allocation in this DPD.
TWYFORD ABBEY	S-ACT4	2	On site, or North Acton Playing Fields	Residential	Designated as MOL and includes heritage Land. Redevelopment or use of part of the site as school use would not be policy compliant unless special circumstances can be justified.	Policy designations would prevent delivery of education uses subject to identifying special circumstances		N	Planning constraints - MOL and listed building. Unlikely to be deliverable in required timescale to meet identified need.
Wickes	S-HAN3	3	Warren Farm	Retail, open space, residential	Policy context suggests retail-led redevelopment as the site currently underuses a town centre site. Education-led redevelopment may be in conflict with policy and the vision for the town centre.	Site is in private ownership and so would require purchase and site assembly. Uses suggested by the Development Sites DPD would require purchase which includes hope value due to policy context	Y - unviable	N	Whilst was suitable for further consideration to fully consider delivery constraints, is unviable. Site assembly issues would also mean unlikely to be delivered in timescale required to meet

									identified need.
Acton Park Depot	S-ACT2	4	Potential to use North Thames Gas Board Sports Ground adjacent to the site. Within 1 mile catchment of Old Actonian Sports Ground	Residential, open space	MOL. Use of the site as school use would not be policy compliant unless special circumstances can be justified. Footprint of existing buildings should be utilised where possible by any proposed use.	Within Council ownership. Would require relocation of depot function. Funding agreed by Education Funding Agency for Primary provision - which could be delivered on this site subject to planning permission .	N	Y	Site is council-owned, presenting low risk in relation to deliverability. Is in area of need, and could be delivered within timescale required to meet identified need (subject to planning permission) as EFA funding has been secured .

St Alban's Church	S-ACT6	3	Outside of 1 mile catchment of Old Actonians Sports Ground	open space, residential.	Site is restricted by its size in delivering a primary school, without extending into the surrounding public open space. Former church building is not listed and could be replaced or redeveloped.	Site would require acquisition. May require relocation of nursery to deliver a school	N	N	Site size could only deliver an extension to an existing school, not a 2FE new school.
Orion Park	S-EAL8	3	Outside of 1 mile catchment of Old Actonians Sports Ground and Warren Farm. Is close to other open spaces including parks, London Playing Fields, Gunnersbury Park, Northfields Recreation Ground	Railway lines, residential.	Narrow site with residential to north and railway line to south presents design / layout issues. Currently designated as industrial land and so would require re-designation or a planning justification to allow education use.	Sites in private ownership & would require acquisition, and potential relocation / compensation / CPO of existing businesses, affecting the potential for delivery as well as the timescale within which it could be delivered.	N	N	Planning designation, plus site acquisition and impact upon existing businesses present planning and delivery issues.

Perceval House car park	S-EAL9	6a	Outside of 1 mile catchment of Brentham Club, Old Actonians Sports Ground, Trailfinders Sports Ground	Offices, railway line, residential.	May conflict with development strategy.	Within Council ownership. Site part of larger site for redevelopment of Council offices.	Y - viable for primary	N	Size restricted. Site is within Council ownership and viable for primary school as part of a mixed use development but site is to be redeveloped for other mixed use as part of a larger scheme.
Phoenix Trading Estate	S-GNP1	3	Within 1 mile of Brentham Club	Residential	Site suitable for primary school, located in residential area and of sufficient footprint.	Site is in private ownership & would require acquisition, and potential relocation / compensation / CPO of existing businesses, affecting the potential for delivery as well as the timescale within which it could be delivered.	N	N	School not considered deliverable in timescale required which would meet policy objectives as part of mixed use development due to multiple site ownership and restricted site size

Ealing Education Centre	S-GNP3	4	Within 1 mile of Spikes Bridge Park	open space, residential	Potential as expansion site for Stanhope Primary school.	Site is in Council ownership, and could be delivered within timescale, subject to relocation of existing service.	N	N	Whilst site is potentially deliverable as an extension to Stanhope Primary School, XXXX....
Trumpers Way	S-HAN2	1b	Within 1 mile catchment of Warren Farm	Residential	Site is in industrial use, and so would require re-designation or planning justification for change in use. Site is relatively small for new primary school.	Site is currently in industrial use. Would require site acquisition as well as possible relocation costs of existing businesses.	Y - viable for primary (only if as part of mixed use scheme with 100% private housing)	N	Whilst potentially viable for primary would be only with 100% private housing (conflicting with affordable housing policy), also presents policy conflict in terms of LSIL, is small site size and alternative sites are more likely to be deliverable in required timescale to meet identified need.
42 Lower Boston Road	S-HAN4	3		School, residential	Site is suitable for bulge extension for existing adjacent primary	Site within Council ownership, and deliverable within required timescale.		Y	Site is small but appropriate for bulge extension to adjacent St

					school.				Mark's primary school.
Land to rear of Twyford School	S-ACT7	6a	Adjacent to playing fields	School, open space, residential	Justification for temporary education use required given community open space designation.			Y	In area of need. Potential contingency site for expansion of adjacent school, subject to planning issues. Subsequently revert to COS.
Acton College	S-ACT8	TBC	TBC	Residential, recreation ground	Existing college buildings surplus to requirements, to be vacated			Y	Existing education use and being disposed of, in area of need