

LONDON BOROUGH OF BRENT

**Meeting of the Planning Committee
16th November 2005**

Report from the Director of Planning

For action

Wards affected:All

**Report Title: POPULATION GROWTH & NEW SCHOOL
REQUIREMENTS IN THE BOROUGH**

1.0 SUMMARY

- 1.1 This report informs Members of the initial work being undertaken to assess the need for new school places as a result of current and future population and new housing growth. This has fed into some site allocations within the Local Development Framework (LDF). This report shows how different growth options currently being considered as part of the LDF Issues and Options stage, will require a differing number of new school places and will therefore have implications over sites required for new schools over the next 10-15 years.

2.0 RECOMMENDATION

That the Committee:

- 2.1 Supports the initial approach of the Planning Service to the issue of increased demand for school places and the allocation of potential sites within the Local Development Framework;
- 2.2 Asks officers to bring forward further school site allocations (within the LDF) where necessary based on housing growth and an agreed school expansion strategy; and
- 2.3 Notes the importance of protecting existing school sites within current UDP policy.

3.0 DETAIL

Introduction

3.1 In the 1980's Brent had an oversupply of school places and school sites were sold off, but as a result of improvements in school performance, in-migration and housing growth, the borough has moved quickly into a position of school place shortages. With future housing growth it is necessary to identify new sites for schools and school expansion sites within the Council's emerging Local Development Framework (LDF). The Planning Service's approach, working with colleagues in the Children and Families Department (CFD) is set out below and includes a number of different processes and stages:

- 3.1.1 Assess need for extra school places in the light of agreed housing growth options currently being considered during the Issues and Options stage of the LDF
- 3.1.2 Re-evaluate the current methodology for predicting school places and include more up-to-date costing for building new school facilities feeding both these changes into revisions of UDP policy CF6 and S106 practice
- 3.1.3 Consider the implications of reports into school place need in the borough from the Children and Families Department (CFD)
- 3.1.4 Identify first phase school sites in the LDF Preferred Options stage (particularly to meet likely growth needs to 2011)
- 3.1.5 Monitor, manage and review school place supply and needs beyond the first phase with review of LDF notably against actual and predicted growth beyond the 2011 period.

3.2 The growing school population in Brent can be attributed to a number of factors in recent years:

- 3.2.1 The significant improvement of Brent schools-more households are choosing Brent schools
- 3.2.2 The increase in population through new housing development
- 3.2.3 The prevalence of a young population with larger than average households
- 3.2.4 In migration to the borough particularly of younger households

The result is that practically all secondary and many primary schools have full school roles or in some cases are operating over their capacity. Brent has also been successful in attracting new school provision: JFS (although less than 10% of Brent resident's attend) and the City Academy (at Willesden) and other faith based school provision, but these alone are unlikely to meet the projected growth in the school population.

3.3 The population growth (and in particular school age population growth) witnessed in the last ten years is forecast to continue, and is more likely to accelerate as a result of housing growth. The Council supports housing growth through its current UDP housing targets. The Mayor of London would like to significantly increase future housing targets (see elsewhere on this agenda). The table below shows the effect of new housing growth over the next ten years and the likely effects of such growth on new school place needs. If the Council adopted a medium to high growth housing growth strategy, this is likely to require the equivalent to 3-4 new primary schools and 2 new secondary schools in the borough. The Mayor of London is proposing higher growth housing which would increase school demand still further.

	Housing Growth (2006-2016)
	Medium-High housing growth
Number of homes	10,000
Number of extra people generated	25,000
Numbers of extra Affordable Homes built	4,000
Number of extra Primary school Children*	2150
Number of extra Secondary school children**	1800
No. of extra Primary schools(3FE) required	3-4
No. of extra Secondary schools required (6FE)	2
S106 contributions for education(max)	£40m

- 3.4 The Council's new Children and Families Department (CFD) have commissioned studies in 2005 to assess the likely demand for school places in view of the projected number of new homes in the borough and also to sustain the Council's objective to increase the proportion of the boroughs child population it educates (there was a net outflow of around 1200 pupils in 2003). These reports estimate that by 2014 an additional 14 forms of entry (2100 pupil places) could be required in secondary school provision. A study is also underway to look at demands for primary school provision and initial indications are that there will be a shortage of 9 forms of entry in the primary sector (1890 pupil places) by 2014 unless new provision is built. The recommendations flowing from those studies are to be reported to the Council's Executive on 14 November 2005. The recommendations are to establish a school on the former LT Sports Ground site at Wembley Park that combines primary and secondary school provision. The aim would be to open the school by 2009.

Predicting School populations

- 3.5 It is both an art and science to predict the number of school age children arising from developments of different sized dwellings. Policy CF6 of the UDP sets out the formula by which the number of school children generated from developments (of different house and flat sizes) are estimated. This is multiplied by the average cost of expanding existing school provision to arrive at a sum that developers are required to pay to fund school expansion. The current UDP formula is based on the 1991 Labour Force Survey which had good information concerning average child yields in dwellings of different sizes. While the survey remains a good predictor of child population in affordable housing it would appear to overestimate the number of children in market housing. Your officers will bring forward revised child yield figures that will improve the predictive capability of the child yield model. At the same time, the costs of school provision need to be updated as currently historic costs are used. Moreover these costs did not allow for land acquisition costs as it was expected that most school expansion would be accommodated on existing school sites. As seen from the work above this is not always likely to be the case in the future.

Priorities for New School Provision

- 3.6 Officers in the Planning Service have assisted in two assessments in areas that are likely to face the greatest short and medium term pressure for new school facilities: notably, South Kilburn and Wembley. The table below shows that a significant proportion of all of the borough's new housing capacity will be in and around the Wembley area. Of the 10,300 dwelling potential, 6,100 (59%) could be located in the Wembley-Alperton area.

Table 2: Major new Housing Development Potential in Brent

Wembley	3700
South Kilburn	1500
Edgware Road	1200
Church End	1200
Unisys	600
Wembley town Centre	1000
Alperton	800
Total	10000

3.7 In view of the above, officers have concentrated initial searches particularly in this area. A new secondary school for example requires most of the following:

- 3.7.1 at least 1.2ha of land for school building- related play areas require significantly more site area
- 3.7.2 good public transport access to encourage non-car modes of access
- 3.7.3 good road access to avoid where possible local traffic congestion
- 3.7.4 a site that does not prejudice significantly other planning objectives
- 3.7.5 have playing fields adjacent or nearby
- 3.7.6 A site that is near to areas of population/housing growth but preferably not near other schools
- 3.7.7 be available to develop before 2009

3.8 There are few sites in Wembley and indeed in the whole of the borough that could accommodate a large school. Planning officers carried out an initial assessment of potential sites and the initial list is set out in Appendix 1. Officers have considered sites in the process of drawing up Site Allocation options for the LDF. Only sites that met most of the criteria set out above were included in the Local Development Framework (LDF) Issues and Options paper (reported elsewhere on this agenda) as potential secondary school sites. These were:

- 3.8.1 Former LT Sports Ground, Wembley Park
- 3.8.2 Chalkhill Open Space (St Davids Close)
- 3.8.3 Gwyneth Rickus Centre & Swaminaryan school
- 3.8.4 Unisys site & Bridge Park, Stonebridge

Other sites that could act as sites to extend existing schools or may be potential primary school sites were also added to the LDF list:

- 3.8.5 Land next to John Kelly High School, Dollis Hill (for school extension)
- 3.8.6 117-119 Malvern Road
- 3.8.7 1-3 The Mall, Kingsbury

- 3.9 The Children and Families Directorate have recommended Wembley Park as the site that needs to come forward now to plan for shortages that will become acute by 2009. It is likely that other sites will need to come forward to meet demand arising notably beyond 2011. It may be that some future site selection would come forward in revisions of the LDF, bearing in mind that the LDF process is intended to be more flexible so that changes can be made without having to revise the whole plan. It remains open for members of the public or the Council to put forward alternative school sites for consideration during the current LDF process.
- 3.10 South Kilburn is another area identified for significant new housing growth. The Supplementary Planning Document for South Kilburn allows for at least 1500 new homes to be built in the next 15 years. Members and others have expressed concerns over the impact of a new population and whether existing schools can cope with the expanded population. The South Kilburn Masterplan Education Impact Study shows a junior school capacity of 248 in the 4 local schools against a possible new population of 531 post development. The rise in secondary school numbers was also considered by the consultants undertaking the study and they concluded that the number of new secondary school pupils generated by the new development could be accommodated.
- 3.11 In respect of primary school provision the masterplan study concluded that the school population generated would require probably around 3 Forms of Entry (that is 7 extra classrooms for each form of entry at primary school level-including nursery). This could be accommodated in local schools such as Carlton Vale, Kilburn Park and St Mary's RC School. Concerns have been expressed that existing schools cannot physically accommodate this growth without seriously compromising existing play provision as new classrooms would need to be accommodated on playgrounds. The Planning Service has confirmed from an initial assessment that some local schools could accommodate extra forms of entry and could fit school expansion on site. This is very much an initial assessment and seeks only to confirm that physical space exists.
- 3.12 It is also worth remembering that new house building on South Kilburn will also be followed by decanting which could keep school numbers static or even reduce school numbers in the short to medium term. New school provision would probably therefore be required until the completion of the first two phases of the masterplan development from 2011. It is however recommended that options for expansion are considered now because of the implications on land take on land that may be earmarked for other uses.
- 3.13 The Council is currently assessing bids by the two 'delivery vehicles' that will redevelop South Kilburn. Following selection of one delivery vehicle early in 2006 there will be a period of negotiation where matters such as new school provision can be considered. This may be a good point to explore in more depth how the provision will work in practical terms before more formal consideration at planning application stage.

Planning for new school development

- 3.14 Brent's Local Development Framework will need to be based on as accurate assessments of new school needs as possible and what are the true costs of new provision, which have been underestimated in the past. It will be necessary therefore to consider what core policies will be required in order to secure a reasonable contribution towards provision on existing school sites (particularly in the primary sector) and how many new (probably secondary) school sites would be required. Any core policy will need to refer to a formula to determine the extent of S106 payments that would be sought. LDF Site Specific Proposals will also need to firm up which school sites would be required now to deliver school provision of sufficient quantity to satisfy likely shortfalls, especially by 2009. It must be stressed that this initial analysis of shortfall is a forecast and is not a certainty. It will be dependent on a range of factors –house building rates (dependent on the housing market), the proportion of family sized dwellings built, relative school popularity and capacity between surrounding boroughs
- 3.15 The Council's Child and Family, Planning and Housing services have been working closely together in order to put in place realistic and robust plans that can respond to changing patterns of school need. A Child Place Planning Group has been set up at officer level to keep the situation under careful review as part of the Council's 'plan, monitor and manage' approach. It is clear that aside from the recommendation to secure the Wembley Park site, there is much work to be done to produce a school expansion strategy that relates (flexibly) to housing and population growth and identifies potential sites in the time period of the current LDF and beyond to further review periods.

4.0 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 4.1 The need for school places will in part be funded by S106 planning obligations, by Council capital expenditure and through Central Government programmes and initiatives. It is clear that new development which in the main gives rise to the demand for new school provision will only fund part of full capital costs of school provision (through S106 agreements). Detailed capital and revenue implications will be considered as schemes develop.
- 4.2 Members should note however, that the Council's Capital Programme is fully committed and demands on capital resources include the need to modernise the SEN service, meet demands for additional schools places, replace hatted classrooms, meet repairs identified in the schools asset management plan, and ensure curriculum needs are met. Thus there are competing priorities that any council funding to meet the need for school places would need to be set against and the various priorities addressed through careful management of the programme. The Capital Programme Monitoring report submitted to Executive on 14th November 2005 gives full details of the current position on the Council's Capital Programme for 2005/06 and the 2006/07 to 2009/10 Capital Programme is being constructed as part of the budget setting process.

5.0 STAFFING IMPLICATIONS

5.1 None specifically arising from this Report.

6.0 ENVIRONMENTAL IMPLICATIONS

6.1 Further school provision will be a further competing land use in a developed borough where there are few large available sites.

7.0 LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

7.1 The Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 has changed the statutory basis for drawing up development plans. Development Plan Documents will replace the UDP. It is open to the Council to allocate sites within DPDs for certain purposes.

7.2 Agreements made under section 106 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (planning obligations) are intended to mitigate the impacts of development and allow developments to go ahead that would not otherwise be approved. They are not intended to supplement the Council's General Fund or be a "price" for development. Circular 1/97 on Planning Obligations sets out rules for their use, notably that they must serve a planning purpose and be reasonably related in scale and kind to the development. The Government is currently reviewing the role and scope of planning agreements as was reported to Planning Committee on the 26 January 2005.

7.2 A developer can challenge a council's insistence on planning benefits by way of an appeal to the Planning Inspectorate, and once concluded can legally challenge the Council if S106 funds have been spent on items not set out in the agreement or if the time limit for spending the funds (where one is specified) has passed.

8.0 DIVERSITY IMPLICATIONS

8.1 Consideration of requirements for future school places will better enable effective planning to meet the particular needs of Brent's diverse communities as it will assist the identification of any ethnic, gender or other culturally specific, positive or negative, development trends.

9.0 CONCLUSIONS

9.1 As a result of increased housing development and the objective to educate more of the borough's pupils within Brent, extra new primary and secondary school provision is certain to be required. While it may be possible to expand some primary school provision in situ (rather than providing new schools) it is very likely that at least one new secondary school and new primary school is likely to be required, alongside expansion at existing secondary schools as a first phase. The recommendation to Executive is that should be at the former London Transport Sports Ground site at Wembley Park.

- 9.2 Further sites for new and expanded schools will need to be considered, some in the forthcoming LDF and some will be contingent on future housing growth materialising in the longer term (and therefore will be dealt with in future LDF reviews). The Council's LDF process will bring forward policy options to develop policies so that developers meet a reasonable proportion of the costs involved in school expansion and also offer options for new school sites if and when they are required. It is important that there is a strategy for school expansion modelled on housing growth outcomes so that the Council can put into place long term school place planning.
- 9.2 A significant amount of work is needed to ensure that land is available for the expansion of schools affected by the increased population in South Kilburn. Work including assessments of fit on site needs to be considered soon along with details of how such expansion will be financed through the new development.

10.0 BACKGROUND INFORMATION

Details of Documents:

- 10.1 Brent Unitary Development Plan, 2004
 LDF Issues and Options Papers 2005
 South Kilburn Masterplan & SPD, 2005
 South Kilburn Masterplan Technical Appendix 3: Education Impact Assessment Report to Executive 14 November 2005, Expression of Interest for a second City Academy
- 10.2 Any person wishing to inspect the above papers should contact Dave Carroll, The Planning Service, Brent House, 349 High Road, Wembley, Middlesex HA9 6BZ, Tel: 0208 937 5202

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**APPENDIX 1: POTENTIAL SECONDARY SCHOOL SITES IN BRENT–INITIAL STUDY
SHORTLIST**

- Wembley Park sports ground
- Chalkhill O S + Y & C Centre
- Brent Town Hall
- Palace of Arts/Industry
- John Billam playing field
- Sudbury Hill sports ground
- Gladstone Park sports ground
- Gwenneth Rickus Building
- Bridge Park / former Unisys
- Land at Dudden Hill Lane