

Update on Schools Capital Portfolio Report – January 2014

Appendix 5 – Criteria for School Expansion Projects

This set of criteria describes the more detailed underpinning of the strategic principles described in paragraph 3.23 of the report. It explains the application of the principles in practice but cannot cover every eventuality for the reasons outlined in the report in relation to the individuality of each school. Items are shown in corresponding order to the individual circumstances shown in the Cabinet report:

External Play Space

On and off site mitigation for the loss of playing fields/playground to:

- i. provide the minimum on-site external play area required by BB99 for a confined site
- ii. satisfy the requirements of Sport England as a statutory consultee on the planning application

Examples include the provision of a rooftop play area, upgrade to surfacing of existing hard play area to an all weather Multi-Use Games Area to increase usage for a variety of sports throughout the year, improved drainage to the existing playing field to enable greater community use out of school hours and improvements to sport provision in local parks. No improvements will be made to external play space unless there is a requirement as described at i and ii above.

Traffic and Highways

On and off site mitigation to reduce the impact of increased vehicle and pedestrian traffic to the local area. Examples include identifying an off-site location for parents drop-off and pick up with the school and minor improvements if required to enable use for that purpose and highways works such as additional guard rails to new pedestrian entrances and increased signage. Examples of works that expansion projects do not usually include are the creation of a new vehicular entrance to the site, changing existing access arrangements and the introduction of changes to the local traffic arrangements e.g. a one way system or controlled parking zones.

Size of Existing School

Where the size of existing rooms in the school building do not meet current guidance they will not be changed unless the room is to be re-designated and combined within a design proposal to enable expansion. By way of example, a school could have 7 classrooms that are slightly undersized against current guidance, these would not be enlarged however a small library may be combined with a small ICT room to create a learning resource centre of a size that meets the current guidance. The size of all new rooms added will be in accordance with BB103 and the number of new rooms added will provide the BB103 requirement for the new size of school across both existing and new buildings. Schools will have flexibility over the use of that space so for example, if the school preferred not to have any small group rooms in an

extension (perhaps because there were already a number of them in the existing school) then the additional area required to accommodate the expansion that would notionally have been provided in small group rooms according to BB103 could be pooled together to create one larger space.

Suitability of Existing School

The suitability of existing school buildings is a subjective matter for the school leadership team however there are some broad principles of suitability to apply in relation to the school expansion programme. In the first instance, a schedule of accommodation will be prepared that takes account of the existing accommodation in relation to the overall requirements of the larger school so the whole school is considered together in that way and the additional accommodation required for expansion is not just added onto the existing. By way of example, school expansion projects will add additional classrooms in a way that enables all year groups to be clustered together. This may involve the re-designation of existing classrooms to be used by different year groups and clustering vertically around staircases (although the latter is not preferred). Where re-designation and clustering within existing accommodation takes place, at least Reception and Nursery children will have direct access to external play from all classrooms. This is extended to cover as many year groups as possible within the site constraints. In new buildings this is also a requirement.

Condition of Existing School

The primary source of capital funding for the provision of additional school places is insufficient to meet all requirements across all sectors and is not intended to be used to address condition issues in existing school buildings therefore the school expansion programme is unable to fully address all existing condition issues. As a general principle where expansion necessitates condition issues being addressed then those works will be included in the project. For example, if the boiler requires replacement and the expansion would require an increase in boiler capacity, then the boiler would be replaced at the appropriate size for the new expanded school rather than added to. The expansion programme will not address condition issues that are unrelated to expansion, for example there would be no refurbishment of classrooms that are used in exactly the same way post expansion as pre expansion. There will however be a strategic link between the school expansion programme and the schools asset management programme. Where a school has areas of buildings/blocks that are high priority condition issues that would mean that AMP capital funding would be allocated to that work, the funding streams will be combined into one project. In some cases, this could also mean a strategic view of anticipated future costs of significant items of work, for example the replacement of certain buildings on a school site. If this work would be likely to occur within a few years after expansion and/or there would be insufficient AMP funding to cover the cost, which could ultimately risk the closure of a part of the school building and therefore reduction in school capacity if not addressed, then that item of work would be considered to be included in the school expansion project as part of the business case.

School Educational Vision

The innovative design solutions and flexibility in design comes from the school's vision and priorities for maintaining and improving educational outcomes for all children. Providing the overall size of accommodation provided does not exceed the total BB103 requirement then schools can make choices about the way spaces are configured. A clear educational vision enables the architects to design to meet that need. The school expansion programme will not add additional spaces to meet a schools particular priorities but will work with the required accommodation to provide it in a way that has most impact for the school both now and in the longer term.

Temporary Accommodation and Decant

Where temporary accommodation and/or decant facilities are required to enable construction alongside the safe operation of the school then these will be provided by the school expansion programme in the most logical way for the school operation bearing in mind the constraints of construction and the temporary nature of the facilities. This may include off-site solutions where necessary.

School Financial Contribution

An expansion project is a large investment in a school and local community and the Council recognises that Schools often have a strong ambition for the school environment to support their vision and priorities which exceed the ability of the school expansion programme to fund it. In these cases the council will support the school in making its own financial contribution to the expansion project in order to increase the scope of the works. This could cover for example a main hall large enough for whole school assembly, where this is not a requirement for BB103 for larger primary schools but often a desirable facility for schools. Where new hall space is added, particularly in new build schools then the total hall space requirement in BB103 could be added together to create one large flexible hall. Where no new hall space is required but a school would like to provide a whole school assembly hall, then additional funds for the extra over costs could be provided by the school.

Environmental Performance

The Council will seek in all new work to reduce the running costs and maintenance requirements of the new school. Where possible this will improve the current situation as well. Planning requirements will dictate the level of environmental performance required. In all cases, even where the council has made capital investment, the revenue savings made on proportionately reduced utilities costs will be retained by the school.

Community Facilities

The revised School Expansion Strategy encourages the widening of community access to school facilities and the programme will include enabling elements of work to support this such as access control suitable for community use of certain zones of a building. The programme cannot however use Basic Need Capital Funding to re-provide or provide additional dedicated parent and community facilities. The

expectation is that accommodation required for the school can be provided in a way that means it can be shared by the wider community.

Furniture and ICT

The Council will use capital funding to purchase the furniture, equipment and ICT hardware required to operate the first years pupil intake of any expansion for the agreed number of classes/year groups that start in the first year of the new building. This will be against a standard offer. For future years, a capital reserve will be established to enable community schools to purchase the required additional furniture and ICT hardware. Where academies and VA schools have access to additional funding per pupil than community schools, then these schools will be required to fund the furniture, equipment and ICT directly for future years from their own resources.