

Key design criteria for Primary, Special and Secondary school sites

There are a number of factors that dictate the location, proportions and layout of a school sites within a housing development. The following are just a few that will help inform the design of the housing development to minimise abnormalities and ensure the schools can be positioned and laid out to achieve an appropriate school site and to deliver the educational requirements for the development.

Primary/special schools

- The school should be located on a quiet road at the centre of the housing development.
- If there is more than one primary school then they should be situated apart to ensure that each school sits within a clear catchment area. The special school could be situated abutting a primary school or secondary school.
- No dead end roads shall be situated adjacent to schools and the road layout should allow for circular routes to prevent the need to reverse in the road.
- Roads should be designed to enable coaches to visit the school sites, park in the layby, with a continuous circular route out of the development.
- To encourage sustainable travel initiatives schools should be accessible from at least two sides of the school site. See the 'Typical Example' at the end of the Educational Requirements Doc.
- Ideally there will be 3 vehicular entrances located strategically around the perimeter
- The developer will be required to produce a travel plan framework which will include the provision of pupil drop off parking spaces for parents. The number required will need to be agreed with highways based on the developers evidence based assessment of the schools requirements but could be around 90 spaces for a 2FE primary school. NB No parent drop off will be permissible on any school site except for special school sites in certain circumstances.
- For a special school there will be a requirement an on-site drop of facility for mini buses etc. This will require an in/out facility at the front of the school and the frontage of the school (along one side of the site) needs to be not less than 150m long.
- The frontage of a primary school (along one side of the site) needs to be not less than 110m long to allow for the facilities below to be positioned appropriately.
 - The main entrance should be close to parking facilities both for disabled and staff parking. However the parking should not be positioned in the front of the school.
 - Offsite coach drop off/ pick up facilities for up to 2 vehicles will be required adjacent to an entrance to the school.
 - The hall, extended schools facilities and the kitchen shall be adjacent to the main entrance for evening use and occasional daytime use. The staff parking and service area also need to be at the front of the site and to the side of the school building adjacent to the kitchen.
 - The nursery needs to be at the front of the school site on the opposite side to the hall. This is to ensure that the nursery has immediate access to the nursery garden and safeguarding is maintained during dropping off and picking up during school hours.
 - 8400m² playing field with the approximate dimensions of 110.5m by 76 m

- Safeguarding is an issue that needs to be taken seriously and the layout of the school frontage as set out above helps facilitate the school's ability to monitor visitors to the school site.
- Noise generation around school sites should be minimal. For example proximity to a railway, major road, energy centres etc. should be avoided. The noise level on a school site should not exceed 50 dB LAeq, 30 min.
- The design of school sites is bespoke such that the location of buildings or proximity of buildings to the boundary cannot be unreasonably constrained such as the school buildings being located on the corner of a site. This is to ensure that the school design can meet OCC educational, safeguarding and management requirements.
- Hedgerows/ditches across sites shall be avoided as they have the potential to compromise the economical layout of the school site, restrict supervision, restrict long term site flexibility etc. Site area may need to be increased or the ditch infilled prior to site transfer.
- Site boundaries should be located such that the fence is clear from any hedge or treeline.
- No existing services are to cross the site and for overhead high voltage power lines [ie greater than 1000 V (1000 V = 1 kV)] they are not to be within 200 metres of any school site.
- No services other than those directly related to the school site are to be positioned on the school site
- School sites should be as level as possible to limit the need for Abnormal cost

Secondary school

Most of the above items also relate to the secondary school but have been repeated for simplicity.

- No dead end roads shall be situated adjacent to schools and the road layout should allow for circular routes to prevent the need to reverse in the road.
- To encourage sustainable travel initiatives schools should be accessible from at least two sides of the school site.
- Ideally there will be up to 6 entrances located strategically around the site perimeter
- The road layout and the school site should allow for entrances that can facilitate an on-site coach drop off area. This will need to be strategically situated to enable the areas to double up for other functions once the school day commences, so it cannot be situated at the front of the school. NB This facility will not be used for parent drop off.
- Roads should be designed to enable coaches to visit the school site, park in the coach drop off area, with a continuous circular route out of the development.
- Noise generation around school sites should be minimal. For example proximity to a railway, major road, energy centres etc. should be avoided. The noise level on a school site should not exceed 50 dB LAeq, 30 min.
- Sites should generally be rectangular with the minimum site frontage being 200m. This may need to be increased, as might the site area, if the site is irregular in shape. However for remote playing fields and coach drop off areas this may be reduced to 120m.

- The location of buildings or proximity of buildings to the boundary cannot be unreasonably constrained and will need to take into account many conflicting factors once the design is commenced. However it should be possible to create a prominent frontage if an early proving layout is produced and dialogue with master plan designers takes place.
- Hedgerows/ditches across sites shall be avoided as they have the potential to compromise the economical layout of the school site, restrict supervision, restrict long term site flexibility etc. Site area may need to be increased or the ditch infilled prior to site transfer.
- Site boundaries should be located such that the fence is clear from any hedge or treeline.
- No existing services are to cross the site and for overhead high voltage power lines [ie greater than 1000 V (1000 V = 1 kV)] they are not to be within 200 metres of any school site.
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The above comments are by no means exhaustive and to enable an analysis of any site to be undertaken the following information should be reviewed.

Site information required:

- Topographical survey (CAD format) with flood zones and school sites boundaries marked on.
- Hydrological and flood risk assessment. - Flood risk assessments with plans showing the 1000 plus 40% climate change, 100 plus 40% climate change and 50year plus 40% climate change.
- Geo environmental desk top study
- Location, details and status of all existing services and drainage runs across the site and within 1 kilometre of the site
- Flood risk maps superimposed onto the masterplan to show clearly where there is flooding potential.
- Existing and anticipated noise levels plan
- Initial Search information including evidence that claimed rights of way, easements, wayleaves and the like do not exist upon the proposed site.
- Surface water strategy if available
- Site investigations if available