

# Technical Guidance

## New School Site Requirements

January 2026

### 1.0 Purpose

- 1.1 This guidance is technical information for developers when considering new school sites and section 106 developer contributions.
- 1.2 This guidance is the County Council's baseline standard and minimum requirements for proposed new school sites and any deviation from these is the basis of additional section 106 contributions needed to address characteristics and resolve technical challenges with specific sites.
- 1.3 This Technical Guidance should be read in conjunction with the [Worcestershire Education Obligations Policy Document](#) and the [Worcestershire County Council Streetscape Design Guide](#).
- 1.4 The County Council will require the site to meet the requirements as set out in the following sections.

### 2.0 Site Requirements

The site must meet the following:

- 2.1 Be sufficient for the size of school required and with space for a future 1 Form Entry (30 places per year group) expansion in accordance with the latest guidance from the relevant bodies including:
  1. The Department for Education Area guidelines for schools<sup>1</sup> - Building Bulletins or any such guideline that may replace Area guidelines for mainstream schools building bulletin 103 and/or Area guidelines for SEND and alternative provision: building bulletin 104;
  2. The Department for Education Baseline Design Guidance<sup>2</sup> for schools or subsequent relevant central government guidance; and
  3. Local Planning Requirements and related legislation such as but not limited to Bio-diversity Net Gain, sustainable drainage etc., should be provided on site and therefore the site should be of suitable site in scale and type to deliver these elements or provided as part of the

<sup>1</sup> [Area guidelines and net capacity - GOV.UK](#)

<sup>2</sup> [School buildings and land guidelines - GOV.UK](#)

overall masterplan for the development area and delivered by the developer if part of offsite works.

- 2.2 Free from all constraints and obstructions e.g., covenants, contamination, overhead or underground utility lines and cables and, any associated wayleaves, rights of way, conservation areas, Tree Preservation Orders, mine workings and/or mine shafts and fissures. This should be proven with search and survey reports including Radon.
- 2.3 Free of all significant planning constraints which could add delay and costs to the projects or prevent the grant of planning permission. Any proposals which are in or in the setting of a listed building, national landscape (formerly area of outstanding natural beauty) should be pre-screened by the local planning authority to confirm their acceptability and that these designations do not prevent the school proposal proceeding. Sites which include statutory or non-statutory biodiversity designations or significant other biodiversity constraints are not acceptable.
- 2.4 Free from invasive plant life, free from hazardous substances or to the extent that where there are any the relevant parts of the site has been remediated and evidence provided that appropriate biodiversity surveys for protected/notable flora/fauna have been undertaken and that any mitigation/compensation measures required have been satisfactorily addressed.
- 2.5 Have no adverse ground conditions including but not exhaustive of peat, running sand. This should be proven with ground investigation and testing reports. The National Planning Policy Framework and Minerals Planning Authorities set a requirement for minerals safeguarding, because minerals can only be worked where they are present. Sites for new schools should be outside of any identified minerals safeguarding requirements or where this is not possible pre-screened and exempted from any requirements. In the event that any minerals resource assessments and prior extraction is required, this should be undertaken in advance of the site being allocated as a suitable location for a school. This is overcome the significant time delays this process would incur and the enable education facilities to be delivered in a timely way to meet the needs of the community
- 2.6 Of regular shape, level, flat with a fall not exceeding 1 in 20, drained sufficiently so as not to require specialist dewatering. This is to be proven with topography and drainage survey reports.
- 2.7 Not located on a flood plain or be subject to flooding. New school sites are to be no higher than flood zone 1. This is to be proven with flood risk assessment report, including surface water / pluvial flooding and the flood plain. Flooding risk to be discussed with WCC where required.

- 2.8 All tree removals agreed with the Local District County Council and undertaken prior to site transfer. This is to be proven with survey report and evidence of agreement.
- 2.9 Located with good means of access to encourage walking, cycling and agreed by the County Council in line with current Active Travel Planning. The location of the site within the overall development should be discussed and agreed with the County Council at the earliest point in the design/master planning process.
- 2.10 Be aware of relevant air quality standards and the appropriateness of the location for a school in line with current legislation. This should be proven with assessment report.
- 2.11 The site should be provided with 300mm of suitable quality topsoil throughout. This should be proven with testing report.
- 2.12 Be fenced (with suitable pedestrian and access points) using fencing equivalent to British Standard BS1722-14:2006 part 14, in line with current legislation suitable for a school development. This should be proven with product specification and evidence of work undertaken.

### **3.0 Site Access**

The site must:

- 3.1 Prior to land transfer have unrestricted access to the site for construction traffic and this will include temporary haul roads.
- 3.2 Prior to the school opening have lit access roads and paths completed to an adoptable standard, to ensure that pupils, parents, visitors, and staff can access the school safely and easily. There must a separate pedestrian and vehicle access into the school site.
- 3.3 Prior to the school opening have a 3 metre wide footway and cycle path in front of and adjacent to the entrance of the new school with guard rail, thermoplastic road markings and appropriate signage. Highways signage within the development is also required.
- 3.4 Prior to the school opening have off school site crossing zones to ensure safe means of access for all staff, children, parents and visitors.
- 3.5 For mainstream schools, the provision of vehicular parking and drop off points for parent carers to use within the curtilage of new school sites is not provided except where there may be a requirement to provide disability parking.

## **4.0 Utilities and Services**

The site must be fully serviced with all utilities, the capacity of which will be specified depending upon the size and age range of the education provision, including but not limited to:

- 4.1 Water, waste (storm and foul) and electricity services to be provided to an appropriate location to the site boundary to enable construction of the school. This will be done sufficiently in advance to ensure that the services are available prior to the handover of the site. The utility usage costs will be paid by County Council or their representatives.
- 4.2 Potable / drinking water, sprinkler water supply, electricity, gas, gravity fed foul sewers, gravity fed surface water drainage to a Sustainable Urban Drainage System or mains drains, telecommunication and fibre optics (broadband) connection points. The position of these will be agreed on a site specific basis.
- 4.3 New schools will be completed and handed over to WCC or the Academy Trust at May half term prior to the school opening for the new academic year in September.
- 4.4 All temporary services should therefore be available at the boundary prior to site being made available. All finalised services should be provided at least 12 months prior to the opening date for the school.
- 4.5 The Developer should allow sufficient services for the size of proposed school with future capacity of additional 1 Form Entry (30 pupils per year group) expansion.
- 4.6 County Council will provide details of the capacity requirements and position for final drainage, sewerage, telecommunications, fibre optics (broadband), electricity, gas and water as referred to above during the design development phase of the school.

## **5.0 Buildings Delivered by Developer**

- 5.1 All new schools designed and constructed by a developer must be agreed in advance with the County Council and the progress should be presented on a regular basis to County Council by agreement.