

School Places and Catchment Areas

Report of the Head of Planning, Transportation and Environment

Please note that the following recommendation is subject to consideration and determination by the Committee before taking effect.

Recommendation: It is recommended that the content of this report be noted.

1. Summary

The report confirms the protocols and process for the management of schools designated areas and the potential impact of the Teignbridge Local Plan on school provision.

2. Introduction

From 2010 to 2011 Area Reviews were undertaken on all Devon Local Learning Communities and included a specific focus on strategic planning of school places. The reviews considered the potential implications of District Council Local Development Frameworks and changes to designated areas. In Teignbridge the following Area Reviews were held, which Local Members were invited to:

Dawlish LLC:	16 June 2011
Newton Abbot LLC:	2 July 2010
Teignmouth LLC:	22 September 2010
Teign Valley:	29 June 2011

Since August 2011, officers have attended Local Learning Community meetings as a follow up to these reviews.

3. Designated Areas/Teignbridge Local Plan

Designated areas form part of the Local Authority's annual consultation on Admission Arrangements. Schools are consulted on their admission arrangements and designated areas each year from December to March and have the opportunity to respond. It is essential that the number of pupils living in a school's designated area each year broadly matches the number of places available at that school as each school has a duty to ensure there is a reasonable chance of all local children being admitted if they seek a place at the school.

Changes in designated areas to reflect new housing development were highlighted during the Area Review process. Appendix I details the policies and protocols for the management of school designated areas and highlights how Local Members will be involved and consulted through any proposed changes.

At this time, the Teignbridge housing proposals are not confirmed but clearly the main focus of development is likely to be at Newton Abbot and to the South West of Exeter. In respect of Newton Abbot, after taking account of existing capacity and the possibility of expanding existing schools where appropriate, it is anticipated there will be a need for two additional primary schools and additional land/resources to support secondary provision. There is also

a need for additional primary capacity at Kingsteignton. To the South West of Exeter, there will be a need for new primary and secondary provision.

Elsewhere in Teignbridge, it is not anticipated there will be the need for any new school provision but in some areas existing schools will need to expand in order to support the anticipated local growth in pupil numbers.

4. Consultations

The statutory procedures involved in changes to schools including enlargement or proposed new schools will be followed and will be subject to consultation - including changes to designated areas.

5. Financial Considerations

There are no financial implications in respect of this report.

6. Sustainability Considerations/Carbon Impact Considerations

The strategy for pupil places planning is to provide local schools for local children and encourage walking and cycling to schools where achievable.

7. Equality Considerations

Any proposals coming forward will comply with relevant policies relating to Admissions, Transport and Special Educational Needs to ensure equitable entitlement for all. In addition school sponsors will need to demonstrate equality of opportunity and access.

9. Legal Considerations

The statutory processes will be followed in line with mainstream schools guidance as required by the Department for Education.

10. Risk Management Considerations

The proposals will be assessed and all necessary safeguards or action will be taken to mitigate risks and issues.

11. Public Health Impact

There are no specific implications in respect of this report but will be assessed as individual proposals come forward.

12 Discussion

Members will be kept fully informed on the progress of Teignbridge's Core Strategy and the future requirements for educational provision in the area.

13. Options/Alternatives

No options have been considered for this report as it is not requesting a decision.

14. Conclusion

The report confirms the policies and protocols for the management of school designated areas and provides an overview on the implication of the emerging Teignbridge District Council's Local Plan and will form a the basis of a discussion at the meeting.

Dave Black
Head of Planning, Transportation and Environment

Electoral Divisions: All in Teignbridge

Local Government Act 1972: List of Background Papers

Contact for enquiries: Simon Niles

Room No. AB2 Lucombe House, County Hall, Exeter. EX2 4QD

Tel No: (01392) 383149

Background Paper	Date	File Reference
------------------	------	----------------

Nil

sn200612tcc
sc/cr/school places & catchment areas
03 hq 260612



DESIGNATED AREAS

Protocol and Processes

Definition: Designated Area: The geographical area served by a school – children living in a school's designated area will have a higher priority for admission. Sometimes called the catchment area. Designated areas are also used by the Local Authority to help in planning school places.

Designated Areas form part of the Local Authority's annual consultation on Admission Arrangements. Schools are consulted on their admission arrangements and designated areas each year from December to March and have the opportunity to respond.

Once admission arrangements have been determined by an admissions authority - either the local authority or the Governing body of a voluntary aided, foundation or trust school or the ACADEMY TRUST for an Academy, they can only be varied BY REQUEST TO THE OFFICE OF THE SCHOOLS ADJUDICATOR OR, FOR ACADEMIES, THE SECRETARY OF STATE.

Where an admission authority considers that the arrangements should be varied because of a major change in circumstances, that authority must refer the proposed variations to the School's Adjudicator, notifying all the bodies which were or should have been consulted before the arrangements were determined. A major change in circumstances is considered to be a serious and unexpected event affecting the provision of education at the school.

It is essential that the number of pupils living in a school's designated area each year broadly matches the number of places available each year at that school, as each school has a duty to ensure there is a reasonable chance of all local children being admitted if they seek a place at the school. THIS IS MADE CLEAR BY SECTION 1.14 OF THE SCHOOL ADMISSIONS CODE.

A change to a school's designated area will affect at least one other school's area and sometimes more so it is essential that the views of neighbouring schools are taken into account and the impact that the 'loss' or 'gain' of pupils will have upon that school. At secondary school level changes can be more significant. Any change to a primary school's area on the periphery of a secondary school will also affect that school as the areas should be coterminous. A major change to a secondary school's area is likely to involve a change to the primary schools and the secondary school they feed to.

CHANGES TO DESIGNATED AREAS CAN ALSO IMPACT ON ENTITLEMENT TO FREE SCHOOL TRANSPORT.

Where the Local Authority proposes a reduction in designated area, the following will be considered:

1. Are there more known children in the designated area than the school can accommodate?
2. Have there been in area refusals at normal intake for 2 consecutive years (years 1 and 2)?
3. Has a plan been approved to enlarge the school and would this resolve a shortfall of places?
4. Is there any residential development planned for the area which will compound the shortfall of places?
5. Can the PAN be increased with the current accommodation to resolve the shortfall of places?
6. Are there any local queries over the accuracy of the digital designated area maps and would correction affect the shortfall of places for in-area children?
7. Is the school itself asking for the area to be reduced?
8. Does preference data for the next intake (year 3) indicate in-area oversubscription?
9. Does forecast data for year 4 and 5 indicate likely in-area oversubscription?
10. Is there now a plan to increase accommodation?
11. Is there any further information regarding planned residential development?
12. Have there been any corrections to the existing maps which affect the numbers of in-area children?

The above will be discussed with the School and Governing Body, Local and Lead Members and the LLC to ensure wide consultation and the opportunity to respond and to put forward any other data considered relevant.

Area Review Process

The Area Review process looked strategically at the changes facing Schools and the impact on pupil place planning for the future. Changes in designated areas to reflect new housing development and changes to local areas have been highlighted by schools. It should be noted that this is a separate process to the Admissions consultation detailed above but has to be co-ordinated to be in line with those procedures and taking into account the overall strategic view of balancing pupil numbers and school places together with transport implications and Highways requirements.

What criteria should be used?

- A significant difference between pupil numbers and places.
- A school is successful and popular and attracts many pupils from neighbouring communities.
- A school has become smaller due to a fall in local numbers or local demand.
- There is a significant level of new house building planned in an area which may cause a school to be overcrowded if the school cannot be expanded.

What process should be used?

1. The Local Authority will lead of changes they wish to see implemented as a result of any new community. It is anticipated that these communities will be self-sustaining and the designated area confined to that development but where this impacts on nearby schools there will be discussion with the Local Learning Community.

2. Local Learning Communities should lead on the changes that they wish to see implemented.
3. Discussions need to take place with all schools within the Local Learning Community and neighbouring LLCs which are affected. This may be a lengthy process if major changes are proposed, timescales will need to be carefully planned and the LA should be kept aware of these discussions.
4. LLCs will have local knowledge of their areas. Some of the information as follows can assist in this process:
 - the number of pupils attending each school and the designated area they live in;
 - new housing developments planned under District Council Local Development Plans to 2026/31 (can be accessed on District Council websites)
 - forecast figures for all schools (available from Data Manager).
5. Once agreement is reached it will be necessary for any changes to be incorporated within the Admissions consultation process. [It should be noted that the Admissions consultation which commences at the end of 2010 will be for the years 2012/13.]
6. It is recognised that discussions can be delicate and of course parents and other stakeholders will have a view on any changes within their area and this will form part of the Admissions consultation process. Good practice would denote that there is an 'informal' consultation on proposed changes prior to formal consultation via the annual admissions consultation.
7. Local Authority officers can attend discussions with the LLCs, if required.

Changes to areas as a result of Strategic Planning by the Local Authority

The LA will take the lead on changes to designated areas which are needed as a result of Strategic Planning, these may include:-

- The need to establish an additional school to support the growth in pupil numbers.
- The need to change designated areas where a school cannot be expanded to ensure in-area pupils are able to attend a local school if they wish to.
- The establishment of an area school and the closure of existing schools.
- The closure of a school.
- The implications of planning places for the 14-19 agenda.

In these circumstances a change to a designated area may be established through the consultation process rather than the annual consultation about admission arrangements. Consultation and implementation of the changes could be at any time of the year and will override previously established admissions arrangements.

Christine McNeil
School Organisation (Policy) Manager
Tel: 01392 382328
Email: christine.mcneil@devon.gov.uk

FLOWCHART FOR CHANGE TO DESIGNATED AREAS

