



Barbara Chillman
Pupil Place Planning Officer
Oxfordshire County Council
County Hall
New Road
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VIA EMAIL

23 October 2020

Dear Barbara,

St Edburg's Expansion

You will recall that I wrote to you on 12 July 2020 as part of the previous consultation on school expansion in South West Bicester. I am writing to reiterate my support for the expansion of St Edburg's Church of England (VA) School.

As the consultation proposal makes very clear, Bicester is one of the fastest growing towns in the country. In recent years we have been building almost three houses per day. I have always felt very strongly that the relevant infrastructure must be in place to support growth and the challenges it brings. Given the population forecast for the Bicester South MSOA, particularly in the 0-4 year old cohort, it does seem as though there will be sufficient demand for additional school places in the coming years. Those living within the designated catchment area of the school should stand a realistic chance of securing a place for their child.

For some time now I have been concerned that growth does not produce neat packages of thirty four-year old children ready to fill a Reception class. The ages of children looking for school places tend to span across year groups. It strikes me that this has been considered in the plans to extend the age range of the school to accommodate two-year olds in the nursery. I welcome the suggestion that consideration will be given to open additional classes at age ranges, other than Reception, if there is sufficient demand.

In my response to the previous consultation, I expressed concern about the potential impact of any expansion on associated infrastructure. Some residents had told me that they were worried about an increase in traffic and parking in the area. The plan for a Walking Bus and flexible start times does seem to go some way to addressing this.

Going forward, I hope that a decision can be made in good time to enable the opening of a new primary school as soon as possible. I am very happy to engage with the Council further as it develops its plans.

Yours,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Victoria Prentis".

Victoria Prentis MP

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