

Service and Community Impact Assessment (SCIA)

Front Sheet:

Directorate and Service Area:

**People
Sufficiency & Access**

What is being assessed (e.g. name of policy, procedure, project, service or proposed service change):

Expansion of Longworth Primary School

Responsible owner / senior officer:

Barbara Chillman

Date of assessment:

November 2019

Summary of judgement:

Oxfordshire County Council, working with the governing body of the school, proposes to expand Longworth Primary School to 0.5 form entry, which would involve increasing its admission number from 10 to 15 from September 2020 onward. Expansion of Longworth Primary School is necessary to ensure the provision of sufficient school places across the Longworth, Kingston Bagpuize and Southmoor areas, to accommodate increased demand for school places as a result of planned and permitted housing growth.

The proposed expansion would improve access to education for the local community, and would therefore have a positive impact for the local community.

Detail of Assessment:

Purpose of assessment:

Due to population growth and an increase in demand for school places across the Longworth and Kingston Bagpuize with Southmoor areas, expansion of Longworth Primary School to 0.5 form entry is proposed. This SCIA is intended to provide an assessment to guide the process of expanding the school.

You should also include the following statement to clearly set out the reasons and context for undertaking the assessment:

Section 149 of the Equalities Act 2010 (“the 2010 Act”) imposes a duty on the Council to give due regard to three needs in exercising its functions. This proposal is such a function. The three needs are:

- Eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation and other conduct prohibited by the Equality Act.
- Advance equality of opportunity between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not.
- Foster good relations between people who share a protected characteristic, and those who do not.

Complying with section 149 may involve treating some people more favourably than others, but only to the extent that that does not amount to conduct which is otherwise unlawful under the new Act.

The need to advance equality of opportunity involves having due regard to the need to:

- remove or minimise disadvantages which are connected to a relevant protected characteristic and which are suffered by persons who share that characteristic,
- take steps to meet the needs of persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and which are different from the needs other people, and
- encourage those who share a relevant characteristic to take part in public life or in any other activity in which participation by such people is disproportionately low.
- take steps to meet the needs of disabled people which are different from the needs of people who are not disabled and include steps to take account of a person’s disabilities.

The need to foster good relations between different groups involves having due regard to the need to tackle prejudice and promote understanding.

These protected characteristics are:

- age
- disability
- gender reassignment

- pregnancy and maternity
- race – this includes ethnic or national origins, colour or nationality
- religion or belief – this includes lack of belief
- sex
- sexual orientation
- marriage and civil partnership

Social Value

Under the Public Services (Social Value Act) 2012 the Council also has an obligation to consider how the procurement of services contracts with a life value of more than £173,934¹ might improve the economic, social, and environmental well-being of the area affected by the proposed contract, and how it might act to secure this improvement. However, it is best practice to consider social value for all types of contracts, service delivery decisions and new/updated policies. In this context, 'policy' is a general term that could include a strategy, project or contract.

Context / Background:

School capacity is being planned strategically across the Kingston Bagpuize, Southmoor and Longworth area, which contains two schools, Longworth Primary School and John Blandy Primary School. Approximately 400 new homes have been built in this area in the last 5 years, and a further 300 are permitted. As a result, with Longworth Primary School already at full capacity, pupil numbers at John Blandy Primary School have risen rapidly, and that school has now also exceeded its previous capacity.

Expansions of both the primary schools in this area are therefore planned so that, between them, these schools will jointly serve the needs of housing planned and permitted across these parishes and the schools' designated areas. The expansion of John Blandy Primary School from 1 form entry to 1.5 form entry has already been approved and is underway. John Blandy's site area would not support further expansion.

Proposals:

The expansion of Longworth Primary School is proposed to meet the current and future demand for places at the school, including the forecast demands of the growing population in the area, and to allow for population fluctuations and movement into the area by new families, including into new homes planned and permitted to be built across the parishes of Longworth and Kingston Bagpuize with Southmoor.

¹¹ [EC Procurement Threshold for Services](#)

Longworth Primary School has consistently exceeded its current capacity of 70 places over the last 5 years. Current pupil forecasts (calculated summer 2019) indicate that numbers are expected to grow further in the future, with the school remaining consistently above its current capacity.

Expansion of the school would also enable the school to move from a 3-class structure to a 4-class structure, resulting in a narrower range of year groups in each class and better alignment of classes to Key Stages. As such, the proposed expansion is expected to improve the effectiveness of teaching at the school. It will also help improve the school's financial viability in future, due to increased pupil funding and economies of scale, and thus support one of the county's smaller rural primary schools.

If Longworth Primary School expands to 0.5 form entry (15 children per year group) on a permanent basis, the county council considers there will be sufficient places to meet the scale of currently forecast population growth in the area.

Longworth Primary School is rated Outstanding by Ofsted (last inspected December 2010), so the proposed expansion would be supportive of high educational standards and parental choice. It would also maintain parental choice for existing families and those moving into the village and the surrounding area, and prevent unnecessary increases in travel time and costs for families in the area, who might otherwise have to accept places at schools further away from where they live.

Evidence / Intelligence:

Approximately 400 new homes have been built in the Southmoor area in the last 5 years, and a further 300 are permitted. The total expected pupil generation from these developments is approximately 195 pupils. As a result, with Longworth Primary School already at full capacity, pupil numbers at John Blandy Primary School have risen rapidly, and that school has now also exceeded its previous capacity and is in the process of expansion. John Blandy previously had over 40 spare places, which have now been filled, and its expansion will add 105 places. It will therefore accommodate around 140-150 of the expected pupil generation from planned housing development.

Given the scale of local housing growth, further additional capacity is necessary to ensure parents have a satisfactory choice of local school places, and Longworth's expansion will offer an additional 35 places, increasing the total number of additional places provided to around 180. John Blandy's site area would not support further expansion. The additional 15 pupils expected to be generated by these new housing developments could be accommodated at the new primary school offered as part of a further development proposed in Kingston Bagpuize.

Annual pupil forecasts are calculated, based on demographic forecasts and planned housing growth, to identify where additional school places will be needed. These show that pupil numbers in the Faringdon planning area (in which Longworth is located) are expected to continue to increase.

School admissions data provide evidence of parental preference for schools, and show increasing numbers of first preference applications received for Longworth Primary School and John Blandy Primary School in recent years.

The Ofsted report on the most recent inspection of Longworth Primary School assesses the educational standards and effectiveness of provision at the school, which has been rated Outstanding since December 2010.

The school has carried out informal consultation into the proposed expansion, including sending a letter to parents in June 2019 regarding the proposed expansion, and holding a meeting to discuss this, ensuring the proposal is a standing item at governing body meetings and issuing a school survey to parents, which gives respondents the opportunity to request further information about the proposed expansion. Feedback received has been used to inform the proposal and judgements about impact.

Alternatives considered / rejected:

The county council has a statutory duty to ensure sufficient school places. Given the current and expected growth in the school age population in this area, doing nothing would have led to failure to meet this statutory duty.

The only other school within walking distance of the planned housing development is John Blandy Primary School in Southmoor. This is already expanding to 1.5 form entry, and its site area does not support further growth. Pupil generation estimates indicate this will not be sufficient to meet the needs of all the housing growth.

The number of additional places confirmed as being required in the area would not necessitate provision of a new school. (The strategic site allocated in the VOWH Local Plan includes a site for a new school, but there is no planning permission for this site and therefore no timescale for delivery.) To meet the needs of housing already underway, therefore, an expansion of Longworth Primary School is the most appropriate option.

Impact Assessment:

Impact on Individuals and Communities:

Age

The proposed expansion will help to enable pupils living in the areas of Kingston Bagpuize, Southmoor and Longworth to attend a school close to where they live, and will therefore have a positive impact. If school places are not available within the heart of the community for children living on new housing developments this can affect access to out of school activities, social contact with peers, travel patterns and community cohesion.

Disability

Longworth Primary School is a mainstream school. The expansion is not expected to have an impact on provision for children with disability and Special Educational Needs attending this school, or who may attend the school in the future.

Religion/belief

Oxfordshire's education providers include a balance of Church of England, Roman Catholic and non-faith schools. The only specific religions provided for, therefore, are CE and RC. Children of other faiths may choose a secular education or Christian education, or be educated outside the state sector. Longworth Primary School provides faith-based education, however John Blandy Primary School in Southmoor offers secular education. Expanding Longworth as well as John Blandy School will maintain the balance of parental choice.

Sex

Longworth Primary School offers coeducational provision, as do other nearby primary schools (the only single sex schools in the county are two secondary schools in Didcot), so the expansion is not expected to have an impact in this respect.

Rural communities

Rural communities, as a result of the more dispersed population, typically experience a smaller choice of schools within a reasonable distance than schools in urban areas. If rural parents are unable to secure a place at their local school, they are likely to face a longer journey to an alternative school than is the case in urban areas, and as a result may have to choose vehicular travel to school rather than walking or cycling. As a rural school, the expansion of Longworth Primary School would help improve the chances of parents living in the villages of Longworth, Kingston Bagpuize and Southmoor of securing a place at a nearby school, reducing travel distances and improving community cohesion. Rural schools, such as Longworth, are often small, and face more challenging financial circumstances. Expansion of small schools, where supported by local population growth, helps to maintain their viability and ensure continued village education provision.

No specific impact has been identified on the following groups:

- Gender reassignment
- Pregnancy and maternity
- Sexual orientation
- Marriage and civil partnership
- Areas of deprivation

Impact on Staff:

Staff

Where schools have to turn away children due to a shortage of capacity, Admissions staff may experience stress, and negative behaviour from angry and upset parents.

Risks	Mitigations
Insufficient school places are created at the expanded school, resulting in staff experiencing negative responses from parents.	Annual pupil forecasting and close cooperation with district councils to forecast as accurately as possible future demand. The size of the proposed school expansion has been determined based on analysis of current and future demand for school places in the area.

Impact on other Council services:

Other council services

Transport – if school places are not available close to where children live, more parents will drive their children to school, exacerbating traffic problems. If children have to be allocated schools beyond walking distance, the county council will need to fund transport.

Strategic planning – if sufficient school places cannot be agreed to meet the needs of housing growth, there will be a detrimental impact on strategic planning links with local planning authorities.

Risks	Mitigations
There is a mismatch between where school places are available and where parents live, resulting in increased traffic and transport costs.	Expansion of school capacity serving the Longworth, Kingston Bagpuize and Southmoor areas will enable children living in these villages to attend schools closer to their home. The need for additional school capacity has been considered in line with housing growth across these areas.
Expansion of school capacity does not meet the needs of housing growth in the area.	Close working relationships between School Organisation & Planning, the county council strategic planning team, and district council planning teams to identify the scale and timing of the new school provision required and secure sufficient developer contributions.

Impact on providers:

Providers: schools

Where other school in the area have to turn away children due to a shortage of capacity, school staff may experience stress, and negative behaviour from angry and upset parents.

Insufficient school places in the area could require schools to take additional intakes at short notice, with negative organisational and financial impacts.

If surplus places are created, existing schools may see a reduction in pupil numbers, and hence budgets. Even where the creation of new places is in line with the scale of population growth, the initial impact of school expansions may have a destabilising effect on pupil numbers at other nearby schools.

Risks	Mitigations
<p>Insufficient school places are created at the expanded school, resulting in staff experiencing negative responses from parents.</p>	<p>Annual pupil forecasting and close cooperation with district councils to forecast as accurately as possible future demand. The size of the proposed school expansion has been determined based on analysis of current and future demand for school places in the area.</p>
<p>The school expansion may lead to a reduction in pupil numbers at other nearby schools, especially in the short-term</p>	<p>The demand and supply for school places in the area are monitored, considering planned and permitted housing growth. Admission data on preferences for schools in the area has been analysed. The scale of expansion in this case is small, and unlikely to have a significant impact on other schools given the scale of local housing growth.</p>

Social Value

If the Public Services (Social Value) Act 2012 applies to this proposal, please summarise here how you have considered how the contract might improve the economic, social, and environmental well-being of the relevant area.

How might the proposal improve the economic well-being of the relevant area?

The proposed expansion may require additional staff at the school, thus creating jobs in the area.

How might the proposal improve the environmental well-being of the relevant area?

Provision of additional school places within walking distance of families living in Longworth will reduce the need for pupils to travel to school by car or bus. For families living in Kingston Bagpuize with Southmoor, who may choose to attend the expanded school instead of one further away, travel distances will be reduced.

Action plan:

Summarise the actions that will be taken as a result of the assessment, including when they will be completed and who will be responsible. It is important that the officer leading on the assessment follows up to make sure the actions are completed, and updates the assessment as appropriate. Any significant risks identified should also be added to the appropriate service or directorate risk register, to ensure they are appropriately managed and reviewed.

Action	By When	Person responsible
Statutory notice on expansion consultation	4 November 2019 - 2 December 2019	Barbara Chillman
Decision on expansion consultation	18 December 2019	Cabinet Member for Education & Cultural Services
Increase in the school's admission (if approved by Cabinet Member for Education & Cultural Service)	1 September 2020	Barbara Chillman

Monitoring and review:

Try to be as specific as possible about when the assessment will be reviewed and updated, linking to key dates (for example when consultation outcomes will be available, before a Cabinet decision, at a key milestone in implementation)

Person responsible for assessment:

Version	Date	Notes (e.g. Initial draft, amended following consultation)
2019.1	November 2019	Initial draft
2019.2	December 2019	Review following statutory representation period