

## PART 2 DESIGN GUIDELINES

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### 2.1 Concept

The design of a secondary school should provide:

- opportunity for pupils to learn through contacts both within the school and from the wider community;
- a pleasant and motivating environment indoor and outdoor for both pupils and staff;
- efficient use of accommodation and resources; and
- flexibility for possible future development.

Planning for new provision or alteration should take account of the needs of the whole school and its curriculum, rather than merely seek short-term solutions to particular problems.

Subject to it being cost-effective, it is necessary to provide flexibility for the current and possible future use of the teaching spaces. For example, the provision of electrical trunking should take into account the need to maximise the use of the accommodation, the need to use new technologies, and the possibility of future adaptations in such usage.

### 2.2 Design Considerations

The design should take account of the following important factors:

- adherence to the brief including the Department's approved schedule of accommodation, limit of internal area and target cost;
- the location of the library and its related spaces as the central resource in the school, see Appendix 5;
- the relationship of subject suites, where possible and cost effective;
- the consideration at outline planning stages of possible alternative planning options and the cost implications thereof;
- the need for cost effectiveness in the upgrading of existing accommodation;
- the need for possible future extension both in layout and use of the site that is neither wasteful nor restrictive;

- the avoidance of excessive circulation space;
- the appointment of a landscape architect at the initial stage in new schemes, and as otherwise considered appropriate by the Department;
- the requirement in many cases for limited built-in furniture; and
- the need for areas for community use to be separately controlled.

2.3 Development Constraints

As many development schemes for secondary schools consist of extension and alteration to existing buildings, some constraints are automatically placed upon school management and design teams. In such cases and in those involving alternative use of accommodation, the general content of the guidelines should, where possible and cost effective, be arranged to provide the required facilities. See also Paragraph 2.5.

It is however acknowledged that the guidance in this section refers mainly to the Department's recommended or required provision in the desired or "green field" situation, and that in certain circumstances, some of the guidance may not be possible or economically achievable.

2.4 Development Options

In most cases where substantial extension/alteration is envisaged, alternatives will exist. In order to ensure that a development is based upon the most satisfactory and cost-effective solution possible, it is highly desirable that alternative planning options are considered, as part of the Outline Proposals stage.

2.5 Room Layouts

Sketch room and suiting layouts for the various subject areas are examples only of how the recommendations can be achieved. Variations will be acceptable within reasonable limits provided that the general principles are observed.

2.6 Exterior Aspects of Design

The school grounds should be economically designed for educational and recreational value or potential. The aesthetic value is also important in how the school is perceived from outside its boundaries as well as within. As pupils will spend a substantial part of their time within the school and its grounds, the value of attractive surroundings is apparent in providing a sense of pride of place and respect for the building and the immediate and wider environment.

2.7 Accommodation  
and Gross Target  
Cost

Accommodation requirements are referred to in Paragraph 4.3 and Appendices 3 to 5. For new build cases, the Department's target cost will be based upon the recommended limit of internal area (LIA) with regard to the nature of the accommodation proposed. Where substantial use of existing buildings is involved, the figures in the economic appraisal should be used initially and reviewed at Outline Proposals stage.