

Draft Education Strategy for Middle Quinton

Stated Objective for Education:

1 Promote lifelong learning for the existing and new community through the Eco-town, new visitor attraction and the creation of new schools.

Concept and Technical Objectives

2 Three linked, walkable neighbourhoods are proposed. These are identified as Town Centre, Waterside and Woodland. Each will have its own character giving variety to the town. Some of the technical objectives of the town are relevant to education. In particular:

- The establishment of a university faculty on site providing a national centre of excellence for Eco - town science
- Schools, medical centre, police station, fire station, social services
- The creation of employment in and around the town will be of paramount importance in our objectives of reducing the use of the motor car by 50%
- Keen emphasis given to the use of the cycle with dedicated tree-lined cycle paths linked to all areas of the town and to Stratford-Upon-Avon via the existing, dedicated cycle track (the Greenway)
- Recreation, sporting facilities and parkland

Sustainability Appraisal Issues

3 The development of successful schools and other education facilities will support the provision of appropriate community infrastructure, and will also the sustainability of the development in many other ways including:

- Climate change and Transport
 - Good facilities and diversity available locally reducing motivation to travel further to nurseries, schools and other facilities
 - Community use and integration of services and facilities making more efficient use of buildings
- Community wellbeing
 - Availability of a wide range of facilities and activities raising the profile of the schools for residents who are not involved as parents
 - Community involvement with governance of schools and wider use of facilities encouraging ownership and participation

Approach to Education Provision

4 There are a number of models for school provision. Middle Quinton lies mainly in Warwickshire, and close to Gloucestershire. A two tier system of primary and secondary schools operates in both counties – and is the most common system for education in England. Part of the site is in Worcestershire which currently has a three tier system of first, middle and high schools in the area. The traditional solution for Middle Quinton would probably be one secondary school and three primary schools.

5 However, given the location of Middle Quinton, there is a clear opportunity to introduce a different approach. Government policy encourages diversity and choice in provision, and less traditional options are available including, academies, trusts, federations and all through schools serving the full age range. School size is a challenging issue, as is creating a new school and providing education for the first new residents.

6 In the long term Middle Quinton might sustain five to six forms of entry in schools. Traditionally that would be 1,260 primary pupils and about 900 secondary school pupils. Including early years the total of children will be over 2,300. We expect pupil numbers will build up slowly as housing is occupied, and the number of children may exceed long term expectations in younger age groups in some years, so flexibility in provision will be helpful. We think that an all through school model would assist. An example of an all through school is Darlington Education Village which caters for 1,400 students aged from 2 to 19. Another is The Caroline Chisholm Education Centre on the outskirts of Northampton.

7 We recognise the challenges ahead, and see the benefit of working with the local education authorities to develop a deliverable model for schooling that will complement existing schools. The closest existing school is Quinton Primary School (Warwickshire, CV37 8SA). Other schools within about two miles are Mickleton Primary School (Gloucestershire, GL55 6SD) and Pebworth First School (Worcestershire, CV37 8XA). These are all small village schools and they are not expected to play a role in providing for the needs of Middle Quinton. Village schools often attract considerable loyalty and the character of these schools is likely to be very different from the schools in Middle Quinton, so their success should not be undermined.

8 The nearest secondary schools are five miles away or more in Stratford-Upon-Avon, Chipping Campden and Evesham. These will be affected as some pupils from the rural areas between these existing towns will look to the new schooling opportunities at Middle

Quinton. The effects are unlikely to be of great concern, especially where schools are under pressure for places (as they are in Stratford-Upon-Avon).

9 We believe the authorities will be willing to work together and with us on developing the model for schools at Middle Quinton, and understanding the implications for existing schools.

Provisional Strategy

10 The provisional model for schooling is

- Two all through schools including a (non-compulsory) foundation stage from age 3 upwards, through to age 18. Each of these schools would be about the same size as the Darlington all through school
- One school in Waterside and one school in Woodland, creating a balance with the more commercial uses in Town Centre, and located to enable easy access
- The schools designed to be accessed on foot, and by bicycle with restricted access by vehicles (for deliveries, disabled, staff and visitors)
- The schools to open at an early stage, and probably alongside other community uses, primary health provision and a police presence
- The two schools to complement each other and existing Post 16 provision in terms of what they offer to older students, with the intention of specialist status. One might offer engineering and construction diplomas and other vocational courses linking with learning from the built environment of the town itself
- Include partnerships with existing schools if possible and Stratford College
- The two schools operating as a federation, under one governing body thus promoting choice and enabling diversity, while increasing flexibility and efficiency of resources and reducing the likelihood of damaging competition between the schools
- The Governing Body will have a strong community base
- Both schools to be more than a learning campus, also providing space for some daytime community use, as well as evening activities for young people and adults.
- It may be appropriate to propose foundation schools direct to the Secretary of State via the DCSF, with the support of the LEAs

Further Development

11 Further consideration is needed of the implications and options for trust, academy and foundation status, but these offer the possibility of fostering the development of individual ethos, character and areas of specialist expertise for the two schools.

12 We intend to take forward these ideas and gauge support for the approach described above initially through discussion with the local education authorities as the next step. The local authorities also hold key data on pupil movement that will help to judge the likely demand from the surrounding villages for the proposed schools, especially at the traditional school transfer times (primary to secondary, first to middle and middle to high, post 16).

13 Another strand of work is to model the timescale for provision of the schools, linking anticipated build out of the development with expected demand and financial modelling.

14 The success of Middle Quinton will ultimately depend on the people attracted to live at Middle Quinton, and their commitment to a sustainable lifestyle. The provision of a distinctive education offer will be one of the things that people will be either attracted to or not. The aim will be to make sure prospective residents understand what is on offer to help them make a choice and, if they choose Middle Quinton, a commitment.