Wokingham Secondary Strategy Consultation results

# Key messages

High response level – 830 responses

Strong support for additional places in:

* Twyford (at Piggott)
* Arborfield (but largely relates to 6th form provision)
* Wokingham Town / Evendons area

Also mentioned (by 20 or more people):

* Shinfield
* Earley

Support was expressed for STEM provision and sixth forms, with more limited support by SEND provision. Faith based provision was opposed (but by 51 respondents).

High level of support for the analysis (84% with 51% strong support).

Concerns were expressed about the lack of local area focus, and the reliability of the modelling, by 20 and 18 people.

# Basic facts

This was an online consultation conducted by the Council Communications Engagement and Marketing Team that completed on 24/10/2021.

Number of responses received: 830

Breakdown of responses:

Parents 767 (93%)

Other 50 (6%)

School Governing Body 6 (1%) (NB this is responses from individuals on a GB and is not the total of GB responses)

Support for the strategy:

84% agreed with the analysis of need (51% strongly and 33% somewhat)

8% disagreed (3% strongly, 4% somewhat)

# Reasons for disagreeing with the analysis

Only a minority of parents disagreed with the analysis, but 60 of these took the time to write critiques of the analysis. These answers were given in free text, but some common themes can be identified.

These can be summarised as follows:

**20 were concerned that the analysis was insufficiently local**, and that the two planning areas were too big, and so did not lead to planning for schools children can walk or cycle to.

For example:

*“South area comprises two very different situations according to location and should not be grouped as one.”*

*“Children should not be shuttled around the borough from one school to another. Both for social and for environmental reasons”*

*“For me the huge increase in new housing near Spencers Wood and Shinfield demands more capacity in the east of the borough.”*

*“The strategic development plan is very broad and needs to be more localised in terms of planning provision.”*

**18 were concerned about the reliability of the modelling**, with particular focus on housing impacts.

For example:

“*I think more detailed analysis should be performed using the Council's knowledge on expected incremental housing developments in the borough and these assumptions should be built into the model to provide a more realistic picture of the issues at hand.”*

*“Graphs in the background document show a fall in school population from 2024. Given the number of new houses being built in the area I find it hard to believe that this will happen.”*

*“Once again the need has been underestimated as has been previously and not enough consideration has been factored in to the decision with regards to the higher rate of build that seems to be happening in the borough”*

*“It has massively under estimated the number of places needed for year seven.”*

*“we are quite concerned about the discrepancy between the Borough's projections and the ONS projections………*

**9 were concerned about the analysis of the need for 6th form places,** with particular reference tothe need for a new **Bohunt Sixth Form.**

For example:

*“Roads are already congested, by making people travel far and wide, it just adds to this congestion. There should without doubt be a sixth form for Bohunt for now and for future years given the increase in population.”*

*“to ensure the council meets its environmental objectives on traffic and transport, provision for education needs to be targeted specifically at the locations of acute shortage both now and in the future.”*

*“This has a massive impact on the continuity of their education as well as environmentally as families who have moved to the area are now having to commute and travels, often really quite far”*

The remaining 13 dealt with a range of concerns, including school admissions issues, lack of consideration of the impact of the Forest School, gender-based analysis and the document not being comprehensible, with only one respondent mentioning analysis of SEND.

# Area where additional places were required

While the response were invited in free text, respondents mentioned particular schools and areas. The following analysis takes account of some known variants for particular areas and schools (so “Maiden Erlegh” and “Earley” are grouped) and some variations in spelling (e.g. of “Piggott”)) some eccentricities in spelling will have lead to locations being omitted from the summary data. Some respondents have named a number of areas, and each area mentioned is captured separately, but once only for each area. So:

* there are 855 mentions of Piggott and Twyford, Bohunt, the area south of Wokingham Towns, Shinfield or Earley, with 73 responses not identifying areas at all, out of 830 responses received);
* where respondents have mentioned both items (e.g. a school and a place) in a group (e.g. Piggott and Twyford) this is counted as one response.

Three areas or schools were of particular concern:

The Piggott School and Twyford – 331 mentions (40% of the 830 responses).

Bohunt and Arborfield – predominantly about the need for a Bohunt sixth form - 263 mentions (32% of the 830 responses)

Wokingham town and the area to the south – 226 mentions (27% of the total)

Shinfield and Earley also received mentions, but at 35 and 26 respectively (less than 5% of the 830 responses individually, 7% together), these are far less significant responses.

# School Features

While respondents were prompted about issues they might wish to consider, the response was a free text box.

Two issues received significant levels of support:

* **Sixth form provision** in any new school (179 / 22% of the 830 responses)
* **STEM** (137 / 17% of the 830 responses)

Specialist **SEND** provision was supported by 67/ 8% of the responses

**Faith provision** was mentioned by 61 / 7% of respondents, but with the overwhelming ***majority of responses being opposed*** to Faith provision (51 out of the 61 responses).

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