

Brian V Cockbill - Written Statement Session 1Subject: Education (*Paras. 4*) **2 Development Strategy Pages 8-12****Introduction**

1 As a Unitary Authority Swindon Borough Council has a statutory duty to plan for the provision school places to meet demographic and population changes. Due to the lead times required to acquire sites, funding and actual building times it is essential that forward planning to meet these basic needs to identify site(s) in advance of any housing applications. The absence of any reference to primary and secondary education provision in the **Development Strategy** renders the Action Plan "unsound".

Reasons

2 The Action Plan whilst acknowledging schools in the Central Area of Swindon are nearing capacity offers no indication that any site(s) are to be earmarked for new schools.

3 The response given in the **Regulation 31 Statement** that the Planning Department is in discussion with the Education Department is unsatisfactory. For 15 years, 1970-85, I was a group spokesman for Education on Wiltshire County Council, which included Swindon, I recall that sites were considered, identified and acquired for up to 10 years in advance of any housing development. Even then schools were not always in place when required. With a developed area plans should be much more advanced than what they appear to be.

4 Estimates derived from birth records, population movements and housing mix ought show some indication of the actual additional primary school places needed, whilst the secondary numbers may be more accurately determined from actual primary school roles. Without these figures a guesstimate that at least one new 2-form primary school will be required to meet the needs of the Central Area would seem reasonable.

5 There is little or no opportunity for any new school without taking some of the sparse open space land, as it is likely redeveloping a built up site would receive the necessary funding.

Changes Necessary

6 Any sites under consideration should be indicated in the Action Plan and protected.

7 The Spring Gardens site could be an option although a pit used to occupy the eastern end and may not be suitable building land.

Key

Red - Submission Paper Ref

(Italics Bold) - Original Representation Form objection panel paragraph