(iii) REQUIRE FULL ACCESS FOR PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES AND THE PROVISION OF FACILITIES FOR CHILDREN;

(iv) IDENTIFY PRIORITY AREAS AND NEW SITES.

Justification

3.147 The Council generally wishes to encourage health facilities which are a valuable service to the community, but it needs to ensure they are well located and are not at the expense of other policies of this Plan. The Policy will ensure that valuable opportunities are not lost to provide additional health facilities on sites which might otherwise be developed for less suitable uses, while reducing the cost of providing these facilities by making use of planning gain opportunities. The opportunity to secure such facilities will be sought in appropriate cases through planning obligations with developers, in accordance with the provisions of government guidance. The Council wishes to ensure that full access and facilities are provided for people with disabilities and children. The Council in partnership with Sutton and Merton Primary Care Trust and the South West London Support Services Partnership will seek suitable sites for health facilities and may produce planning briefs on these sites.

EDUCATION

POLICY C.10: DISTRIBUTION OF SCHOOLS

PROPOSALS THAT RESULT IN LOSS OF SITES IN EDUCATIONAL USE WILL NOT BE PERMITTED EXCEPT WHERE:

(i) AN APPROPRIATELY LOCATED ALTERNATIVE SITE IS AVAILABLE, OR IT CAN BE DEMONSTRATED THAT THE EDUCATIONAL FACILITY IS NO LONGER REQUIRED AND THERE IS NO LIKELIHOOD OF THE LAND OR BUILDINGS RETURNING TO EDUCATIONAL USE IN THE FUTURE AND

(ii) THE NEW DEVELOPMENT WOULD MEET AN IDENTIFIED DEMAND FOR COMMUNITY, RELIGIOUS OR RECREATIONAL USE.

Justification

3.148 These educational uses include Nursery Units, Primary and Secondary age range Schools, as well as the Sixth-Form College and Special Schools. Utilising surplus educational land or buildings for other purposes enables the best use of land and building resources. In many cases schools and buildings could be easily and cheaply converted to provide other social, recreational or community facilities to satisfy the needs identified either in the immediate locality or Borough-wide.

3.149 Demographic changes and the effect on school rolls is under constant review. In rationalising the provision of schools in the Borough, it is necessary to ensure good accessibility for students of all ages. However, particular care is necessary for younger children who ideally should be able to attend a school in their...
neighbourhood. It is essential that the accessibility of schools is given priority so that children only need to walk a short distance to school, preferably without having to cross any main roads and thus consistent with the requirements of PPG13. The avoidance of the dangers from heavy or fast flowing traffic coupled with the health effects of vehicle emissions is also a major concern and will be taken into account when alternative education sites are assessed.

Primary Schools also serve as a focal point of educational and community activity in a neighbourhood. For Primary and Secondary age range Schools an `acceptable' geographical distribution is one that reflects the distribution of these age groups throughout the Borough and offers good accessibility to where students live. Part of this overall education provision includes independent schools, particularly in the north-eastern part of the Borough.

3.151 Under the requirements of the Town and Country Planning (Playing Fields) Direction 1998, The Office of the Deputy Prime Minister must be notified by local authorities where a planning permission is proposed which conflicts with the views of Sport England. The application of this Direction relates to all local authority-owned playing fields and all others currently used or previously used in the past five years by educational institutions.

**POLICY C.11: YOUTH SERVICES**

The Council will seek to maintain and improve a network of youth centres throughout the Borough in accessible locations, as well as making use of other Council facilities where appropriate. Meanwhile support for the development of new facilities by voluntary organisations will be given greater priority.

**Justification**

3.152 The Council is endeavouring to provide a good spread of high quality youth facilities throughout the Borough in accessible locations such as town centres and local centres. However, it is not possible to cover all areas and, to maintain and improve Youth Service facilities, greater reliance therefore needs to be placed on the support of the voluntary organisations. Better use of other Council facilities is also desirable to meet the demands of this expanding area of need.

**POLICY C.12: COMMUNITY USE OF EDUCATIONAL FACILITIES**

The Council recognises the benefits to be derived from the use of educational facilities and playing fields for other community purposes and will seek to identify opportunities for, and encourage, such uses. It must, however, be recognised that such uses are secondary to the educational use of the facility. In considering future designs and adaptations account should be taken of community use requirements (see also Policy L.7).
Community schools identify and respond to the needs of the individual communities which they serve and so there is no single, nationally agreed model for them. However there are several ideas which are common to those established in other Local Education Authorities. Community schools broaden the focus of their work to include the wider community around the school as well as its pupils and teachers. They seek to operate through a network of partnerships within their community although responsibility for the quality of the education delivered to pupils remains with the school and its governors.

POLICY C.13: PLANNING OBLIGATIONS FOR EDUCATIONAL PROVISION

WHERE A NEW HOUSING DEVELOPMENT WILL LEAD TO A NEED FOR IMPROVED OR ADDITIONAL EDUCATIONAL PROVISION, SUCH PROVISION, OR FINANCIAL CONTRIBUTIONS TOWARDS THE FACILITY, WILL BE SOUGHT AND SECURED THROUGH THE USE OF A PLANNING OBLIGATION.

Government guidance contained in Circular 1/97 (Planning Obligations) states that it is reasonable to seek or take account of a planning obligation where a need for particular facilities would result from the implementation of a development proposal. It is recognised that new housing developments create increased pressure and demand on educational provision. This policy is aimed at reducing this pressure by encouraging financial contributions towards the provision of educational facilities as part of new housing schemes.

POLICY C.14: NON COUNCIL SCHOOLS / OTHER EDUCATIONAL FACILITIES

APPLICATIONS FOR OTHER NEW EDUCATIONAL FACILITIES (E.G. PRIVATE SCHOOLS) OR EXTENSIONS / IMPROVEMENTS TO EXISTING ONES WILL BE CONSIDERED FAVOURABLY SUBJECT TO:

(i) OTHER PLAN POLICIES;

(ii) THE PROPOSAL MEETING AN IDENTIFIED NEED;

(iii) THE PROPOSAL MEETING THE COUNCIL’S CAR PARKING STANDARDS AND NOT HAVING AN ADVERSE EFFECT ON ROAD SAFETY OR TRAFFIC FLOWS;

(iv) THE PROPOSAL NOT RESULTING IN ADVERSE IMPACTS ON RESIDENTIAL AMENITY OR THE SURROUNDING AREA.

There has been an increasing trend in the provision of non-Council schools and educational facilities such as independent, private and language schools. It is considered that criteria in this policy will assist in providing clearer guidance for applicants submitting proposals for these facilities.