

Strategic estate documents

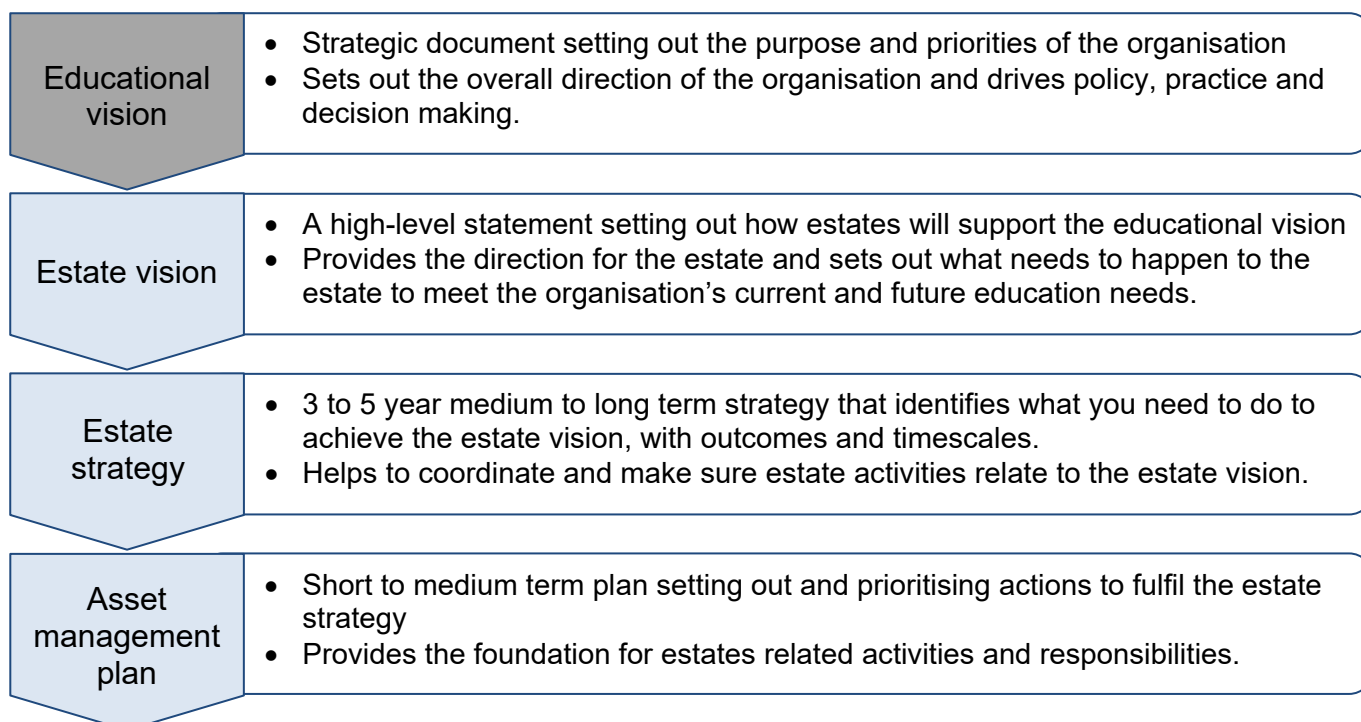
To understand the principles of strategic estate management, you should read the relevant guidance in good estate management for schools (GEMS) about [strategic estate management](#).

This document is intended to help you produce some of the strategic documents referred to in GEMS – the estate vision, estate strategy and asset management plan, as summarised in the process map below. Strategic estate planning should be led by the board and senior leaders, and these estate documents should be approved at board level.

There is no right way to set out and document your approach to strategic estate management. It must reflect the context, governance and needs of your organisation and the size and complexity of the estate. Your organisation may have its own preferences in terms of style or layout.

What is important is that you have a structured approach and follow the process and set out clearly your vision/policy context, strategy and action plan.

The strategic estate management process



The following outline documents are not intended as templates, but to serve as illustrations of the sort of detail that might be seen in these strategic documents and to help you follow a methodical process. Some suggestions are prefaced with 'should' to reflect good practice.

Estate vision – outline illustration

An executive leader responsible for the estate should produce the vision. The process is not an issue just for the property or school business professional. They should work with relevant stakeholders, including:

- the local authority
- other education providers
- community groups

1. Introduction

This could be a brief statement about the commitment of the organisation to ensure that the estate is managed to reflect the overall objectives and support the organisation's educational vision, and how this will be done.

2. The estate vision

Include reference to:

- your organisation's key directions and aspirations and the educational vision
- how the estate can be used to support the educational vision and achieve your organisation's objectives

Whilst your estate vision must align with and support your own organisation's vision and objectives, it is likely there will be some reference to ensuring the estate provides a safe, secure and stimulating learning environment, provides value for money, is fit for current and future needs and reduces environmental impact. You could present this as a series of headings with explanatory text to explain way the estate contributes to meeting your various aspirations.

You should make it clear how the estate vision will be used to provide the strategic direction and culture under which the estate will be managed across the organisation. This should provide clear principles under which the estate will be managed and operated and set out what needs to happen in the estate in the medium to long-term.

These will then be used to help you produce the estate strategy.

3. Formal approval

Your estate vision is a strategic document and should be formally approved by the board as part of business planning. In schools with a religious character, this will be the trustees of the school and the relevant Church of England or Catholic diocese.

4. Review

You should periodically review your estate vision to ensure it reflects any changes in educational priorities.

Estate strategy – outline illustration

An executive leader responsible for the estate should produce your estate strategy. The process is not an issue just for the property or school business professional.

They will need input from various stakeholders.

1. Purpose and introduction

Set out a brief summary of the purpose of the estate strategy and its context.

This should:

- make reference to the estate vision and the way that the estate strategy will help achieve the organisation's aspirations
- summarise any opportunities that could be taken to deliver the vision

2. The estate

Set out a short history of your estate and your current position.

This could include:

- a description and details of the current estate
- a short history of the estate including any recent changes to the estate, how they happened, the purpose of the changes, the outcome and implications going forward – explain if the changes were part of a planned programme of change and what stage it is at.

You should establish a current baseline position referencing a comprehensive analysis of the current estate and its performance. You need to ensure this provides sufficient detail to identify an overall direction for the estate within the context of the organisation's vision and objectives.

3. Goals and objectives

Set out what you want to achieve in the next 3 to 5 years.

This could include:

- specific aims and targets – such as an aim to reduce the size or change the makeup of the estate or to improve particular areas of estate performance
- setting out specific outcomes you want to achieve and a timescale

4. Options for consideration

Set out the options that could help you meet your objectives and deliver the estate vision.

This could include options already identified or work that needs to be undertaken in order to identify options, such as feasibility studies. You may need to seek professional advice to develop some of the options.

Summarise any challenges or barriers likely to be faced in delivering the estate vision, and set out any factors that will influence the selection of options.

This could include:

Financial issues

- budget or financial constraints
- identified of potential sources of funding or budget and time constraints

Educational issues

- impact on existing school operation or facilities and how these need to be addressed

Legal and land title issues

- land ownership and potential restrictions or impact on projects
- additional land requirements and approvals or consents needed

Community expectations

- expectations and support of communities and stakeholders
- wider educational need across the local area

Organisational impact

- potential conflicts at organisational level and competing demands on the estate

5. Formal approval

Your estate strategy is a strategic document and should be formally approved by the board as part of business planning. In schools with a religious character, this will be the trustees of the school and the relevant Church of England or Catholic diocese.

6. Review

You should periodically review your estate strategy. You should review the document if your estate vision is reviewed to ensure it reflects any changes in educational priorities.

Asset Management Plan – outline illustration

Your asset management plan should be produced by an executive leader. They should be responsible for the estate and could be a school business or property professional.

They will need information and support to produce the asset management plan which will involve a range of stakeholders to reflect the size and complexity of the estate and your business planning processes.

1. Purpose and introduction

Set out a brief summary of the purpose of the asset management plan and its context.

This should:

- refer to the estate vision and key objectives
- refer to the estate strategy and the direction of the estate

2. Organisational framework

Make it clear how the estate is managed in the context of your organisation. This document does not need to include full details, but if not, it should refer or link to relevant policies and documents.

This should refer to:

- an overview of your approach to strategic and operational estate management
- your governance arrangements
- the key roles and responsibilities for estate matters
- the policy framework under which the land and buildings are used and managed

3. Estate management policies and procedures

Identify the policies and procedures that relate to the way the estate is managed in your organisation. This document does not need to include full details, but if not, it should refer or link to relevant policies and documents.

These could include:

- decision-making processes for estate matters – a clear hierarchy for decision making
- estates management policies – to cover the range of estate functions
- the estate performance measures you are using and the reporting route
- relevant operational procedures – to cover the range of estate functions and make clear who is involved and responsibilities

4. The estate and estate performance

Set out information about your estate. This does not need to include full and comprehensive details, but should include key information and a reference to further detail, possibly in appendices or supporting documents. This section should coordinate and analyse the makeup and performance of the estate to enable budget planning, establish cashflows and inform longer term plans for the estate.

This should set out or reference:



- a summary of all the land and buildings (assets) in the estate – locations and numbers of sites, buildings, types, what they are used for, ownership etc
- what is required of the estate – high level expectations, targets or specific expectations for individual sites or buildings
- how the estate (and individual assets) is performing – against key performance indicators that you use
- if there are any performance shortfalls and the reasons for this – and how these are reflected in the priorities for the estate
- the condition of the estate, including reference to prioritised and costed works

5. Estate priorities

Set out the key priority actions to deliver the estate strategy. These should be realistic taking account of resourcing and practical issues.

This should include:

- details of various planned estates activities and projects – why they have been identified as priorities and how they will support the estate strategy; this should include a range of activities such as planned maintenance works, capital projects, feasibility studies, development of policies or procedures and relocations
- what resources are available and how these will be sourced, such as finance, time, expertise
- a prioritised action plan with estimated resource implications – how this will be undertaken over a defined time period, key milestone dates and who will be involved

6. Estate management implementation or action plan

Set out the detailed action plan of estate activities for the coming 12 months (or longer period subject to annual review).

This should set out (or refer to):

- Your maintenance plan – this may cover a number of years but should schedule a more detailed list of works to be undertaken across the estate in each year, including regular planned preventive maintenance works (PPM) and any cyclical maintenance works
- A detailed action plan for other priority activities – this could be a simple year plan with activities identified each quarter or month, or could be more detailed to reflect the complexity of the estate or planned activities
- Any planned capital or investment projects showing activities over a time period
- The arrangements for the monitoring and review of your progress – you need to ensure the action plan is effectively managed and that reporting lines are established and understood

This is for guidance only. You may already have a comprehensive maintenance plan and data management system that enables you to manage your estate data and supports your asset management planning. Different types of organisation will use different approaches with different levels of complexity.

7. Review

You should review your asset management plan annually to reflect any changes in organisational, financial and estate circumstances.

Appendices or supporting documents

If you have referred to various policies or documents in your asset management plan, you may find it helpful to list them all and include links.

This should include:

- any relevant organisational policies and procedures
- a detailed list of all the land and buildings in the estate
- detailed property performance information for each asset
- any operational guides and handbooks that you may use to manage the estate
- any procedural templates that you may use to manage the estate