

**County Hall
Hertford, SG13 8DF**

To : Consultees

Tel: 01438 737350

Fax:

My ref: School Planning

Your ref:

Date: 10 January 2011

Dear Consultee

Consultation on the proposal to enlarge the premises of Fairlands Primary School and Nursery School, Pound Avenue, Stevenage, SG1 3JA.

We are consulting you on the proposed enlargement of the school premises to support an increase in the size of this school by 1 form of entry. This means the school will then have the capacity to admit an additional 30 reception aged children each year from September 2012.

The school does not currently have enough classrooms to accommodate the extra children. It is therefore proposed to provide additional accommodation to support the increased number of children.

Why is this proposed?

In line with recent national trends we are now seeing a significant increase in the demand for reception class places in parts of Hertfordshire and this is forecast to increase further. The county council considers it vital to ensure that there are sufficient places available for very young children as near as possible to their homes. There is more information on how we plan to meet the rising demand for school places and our methods for forecasting at www.hertsdirect.org/schoolplaces.

The position in Stevenage Town North

The following table shows the number of permanent reception places available in the north of the town, and the forecast number of reception pupils.

Total number of permanent reception places currently available = 643

April 2010 Forecast	2010/11	2011/12	2012/13	2013/14
Demand	599	702	720	693
Surplus/Shortage	44	-59	-77	-50

A shortage of places is forecast for the north of Stevenage Town of over 2.5 forms of entry (75 reception places). However these forecasts include some pupils expected to be generated by the housing development in the West of Stevenage which, when it is developed, will include its own primary school provision. Excluding the West of Stevenage the forecast need is around 2 forms of entry.

A separate consultation is also underway to enlarge the premises of Martins Wood Primary School permanently from September 2011, to support an increase in reception places from 60 to 90. Details of this and other expansion proposals can be found at www.hertsdirect.org/schoolplaces.

Why this school was chosen for expansion

A detailed feasibility exercise has been carried out across the area to assess the capacity of schools to expand to help meet the demand for school places. Many of the schools in Stevenage are on sites which are not capable of supporting enlargement for various reasons; for example site capacity, topography or highways issues. It is also important that the extra places are provided at schools as near as possible to the areas of high demand.

As a result of this exercise, Fairlands Primary School and Nursery has been selected as it is close to the area of high demand and the site is capable of expansion.

For further information on all the sites that were considered, please see www.hertsdirect.org/schoolplaces.

The alterations required for enlargement

The county council would work closely with the school to provide the additional accommodation required. We would work hard to ensure good value for money is achieved in the context of restrictions on public sector finance while ensuring that the accommodation supports pupils' needs. The work would be managed by the council using contractors who would ensure a safe environment for pupils and staff, and minimise the impact of any building works at the school. Planning permission may be required which would mean that there would be a separate consultation on the details of any proposed building work.

Have your say

You have six weeks from the date of this letter to let us know your views. The easiest way you can do this is by completing the online form on our website at: www.hertsdirect.org/schoolplaces. You can tell us if you agree with the proposal and leave your comments. Frequently asked questions are also available through this link.

If you do not have access to the internet you can visit your local library where free access is available to all Hertfordshire residents. Alternatively you can call us on 01438 737350 to request a hard copy of the response form. This information can be made available on request in other formats including large print, Braille, audio and other languages.

Your comments must be received by 21 February 2011. We will not be able to acknowledge or respond individually to your comments but they will be taken into account, as explained below.

How the decision will be taken

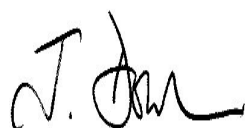
This is a consultation and no decision has yet been made. All comments received will be made available to elected members who make the final decision. All responses may be available in public reports, although personal details will be removed to respect individual privacy.

The following timetable outlines the decision-making process. Please note that meetings marked with * will be open to the public. Full information on the decision making process can be found on the school planning website.

Process	Date
Public consultation	10 January – 21 February 2011
Education Panel*	15 March 2011
Cabinet*	21 March 2011
Statutory notices	Week commencing 21 Mar 2011
Decision if no objections to statutory notice (delegated to Director of CSF)	Week commencing 25 April 2011
Decision if objections to the statutory notice (Cabinet*)	20 June 2011

Although it will not be possible to inform everyone individually of the decisions made, you will be able to access this information throughout the process on the school planning website.

Yours sincerely



Justin Donovan
Chief Education Officer