

Statutory proposals for a prescribed alteration

School and Local Authority details:

School: Benton Park School, Harrogate Road, Rawdon, Leeds, LS19 6LX

Local Authority: Leeds City Council, The Director of Children and Families, PO Box 837, Sufficiency and Participation Team, Children and Families, Leeds, LS1 9PZ

Description of alteration:

The proposal is to permanently increase the capacity of Benton Park School (secondary school) from 1225 to 1500 pupils with effect from September 2021. The current admission number for the school is 245 into Year 7 each year and the proposed admission number for Year 7 each year is 300. This permanent increase would apply to Year 7 classes from September 2021 and it would, therefore, take several years for the school to reach its full capacity.

The proposed scheme for Benton Park School is to demolish and rebuild part or all of the school on the existing school site. The rebuilt school would be larger to accommodate the proposed increase in pupil numbers. Funding streams for the proposed scheme would be primarily through Basic Need Grant, council borrowing, Community Infrastructure Levy and School Condition funding. An approach will be made to Central Government for additional funding support based on our latest survey information.

The proposed scheme would be subject to planning permission, which would need to be granted prior to the commencement of construction works. The scheme would also be subject to and guided by relevant stakeholder consultation.

Evidence of demand:

In 2017 and 2018 it was necessary to provide some additional temporary secondary places at several schools in North West Leeds due to increasing need. Projected growth in demand for secondary school places continues to rise significantly over the next 6 years, however, there are currently insufficient places available across schools located within the Guiseley and

Rawdon, Otley and Yeadon, and Horsforth ward areas to absorb any increase. Although there is wider movement between other schools, both inside and outside the Leeds Local Authority area, an increase of 55 places at Benton Park School will contribute towards meeting the increasing level of demand for places across the wider North West area.

Effect on other schools:

Creating 55 additional permanent places each year at Benton Park School will provide more choice for local families and help ease the ongoing increase in demand for places. Based on the expected growth in demand for school places within the North West Leeds area, Leeds City Council would anticipate that an increase in places at this school will not have a negative impact on other local schools.

Objectives:

The council has a duty under the Education and Inspections Act 2006 to secure diversity in the provision of schools and increase opportunities for parental choice. The council also has a duty to ensure that there are sufficient school places. To this end, providing places close to where children live allows improved accessibility to local and desirable school places, is an efficient use of resources and reduces the risk of non-attendance. Creating 55 additional permanent places each year at Benton Park School will also provide more choice for local families and help ease the ongoing increase in demand for places.

Benton park school's Governing Body and Senior Leadership Team are keen to support the planned expansion at Benton Park School and to help ensure young people are able to be provided with a place in a good school in their local area.

This proposal contributes to the city's aspiration to be the best council, the best city in which to grow up and a child friendly city. The delivery of pupil places through the Learning Places Programme is one of the baseline entitlements of a child friendly city. By creating good quality local school places we can support the priority aim of improving educational achievement and closing achievement gaps. In turn, by providing young people with the skills they need for life,

these proposals provide underlying support for the council's ambition to produce a strong economy by compassionate means. A good quality school place also contributes towards delivery of targets within the Children and Young People's Plan such as our obsession to improve behaviour, attendance and achievement. It is important when bringing any proposal forward that there is a degree of certainty that any change would not have a negative impact on teaching and learning. The Governing Body and Senior Leadership Team are confident that they can manage the expansion of the school whilst maintaining current good standards.

Implementation and any proposed stages for implementation:

The proposal is to permanently increase the capacity of Benton Park School, a local authority maintained secondary school, from 1225 to 1500 pupils with effect from 1 September 2021. The current admission number for the school is 245 into Year 7 each year (aged from eleven) and the proposed admission number for Year 7 each year is 300 (aged from eleven).

The proposed scheme for Benton Park School is to demolish some or all of the existing school building and rebuild a new larger school on the cleared site. Any retained buildings would also require some refurbishment and remodelling as part of the overall programme of works. Building work would be phased in agreement with the school to minimise disruption for pupils and staff and would be subject to the normal planning permission process.

Project costs:

Any scheme would be subject to relevant consultation at the appropriate juncture as informed by the key stakeholders and local ward members and any design/proposals would be drawn up in full consultation with the school based on area schedules provided by the Education and Skills Funding Agency. Planning permission would be required prior to the commencement of any construction.

The cost of the proposed scheme is anticipated to be circa £20m, funded from a combination of the Learning Places and Planned Maintenance Programmes, reflecting the increase in admission numbers whilst addressing existing building condition issues. Funding streams would be primarily through Basic Need Grant, council borrowing, Community Infrastructure Levy and School Condition funding. An approach will be made to Central Government for additional funding support based on our latest survey information. The proposed schemes would be subject to planning permission which would need to be granted prior to the commencement of construction works. Once the feasibility stage was complete and schemes proceeded to the detailed design phase, budgets would be realigned to reflect that all parties have agreed the final design and cost estimates, which would take account of site investigations and survey information, in accordance with standard project and risk management principles. Schemes would also be subject to relevant stakeholder consultation.

The proposal to increase secondary provision in North West Leeds has been brought forward in time to allow places to be delivered for 2021. Bulge places are likely to be required ahead of this to ensure a sufficiency of places in 2019 and 2020. A decision not to proceed with this proposal could result in a fresh consultation on new proposals, with the risk that places could not be delivered in time to meet the need. The LA's ability to meet its statutory duty for sufficiency of school places in the short and longer term would be at risk. There is also a corporate risk associated with failing to provide sufficient school places in good quality buildings that meet the needs of local communities.

Support, objections and comments:

Within four weeks of the date of publication of this proposal, i.e. by 4pm on 16 December 2018 any person may submit comments, support or objections on the proposal to PO Box 837, Sufficiency and Participation Team, Children and Families, Leeds, LS1 9PZ or email educ.school.organisation@leeds.gov.uk