

**Agenda Item No 7(i)**

**DERBYSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL**

**CABINET**

**22 September 2015**

**Report of the Strategic Director for Children and Younger Adults**

**PROPOSAL FOR THE EXPANSION OF STENSON FIELDS PRIMARY  
SCHOOL – (CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE)**

**1. Purpose of Report**

To report on the outcome of the consultation held with interested parties on the proposal for the increase in the capacity of Stenson Fields Primary School from 280 places to 420 places and to agree funding for the project.

**2. Information and Analysis**

On 3 March 2015, Cabinet agreed a Statutory Consultation on a significant enlargement of Stenson Fields Primary School. The consultation period ran from 16 March – 8 May 2015.

**Responses to Consultation**

There were five responses to the consultation, raising a number of issues with common themes to the concerns expressed. The range of issues relate to anti-social car parking, abuse of residents and their property, safety for residents and pupils with more traffic on the roads around the school, difficult access for Emergency vehicles, the risk to the future of the Play Group based at the school, and concern that older residents found it difficult to find information on the Local Authority's web site. There was a request to ensure that any expansion of the school enabled all pupils of the normal area of the school access to a place at the school. Each of these issues is addressed in turn in this report.

**Anti-social Car Parking**

All of the responses to the consultation made reference to the anti-social manner in which parents/carers park across residents' driveways,

on pavements, and on grass verges at the opening and closing times for the school. There was reference to the signage at the end of the school's road which states there is no parking for the school but this is apparently ignored. Reference is made to the fact that there is a turning place on the school site but this is no longer used as school gates are locked. One respondent asked for consideration of an alternative access to the site to allow use of the local ASDA car park at drop off and collection times for the school. Parking across people's driveways, loud car radios, and mobile phones on speakers causing disturbance to all residents were quoted as some of the anti-social behaviour. It was requested that a travel plan and/or risk assessment be undertaken to address these issues. The school has asked parents not to park in the local close but this caused double parking in other streets and therefore as much difficulty in those locations. When the police have attended to see the issues at the request of residents the behaviour is ameliorated but returns to blocking of drives when they do not attend. One respondent asked whether a system of residents-only parking and parking permits could be instituted to protect local residents close to the school.

The Local Authority is aware that these issues are common to locations near school sites. Schools are required to have Travel Plans to identify how pupils access the school site, and to encourage more appropriate and considerate ways of travelling to and from the school. The Local Planning Authority requires this travel plan as part of the Planning Application should the project proceed, and the school will seek to work with parents to find alternative ways of dealing with the issues. There is an agreement with the local pub to utilise their car park for drop off and collection as well as encouragement to parents to use the ASDA car park as well. The Highways Department will be consulted on measures that may be available to address the significant issues raised. In designing the access points to the school site, this will be considered if the proposal for expansion is agreed.

### **Abuse of Residents and their Property**

Two respondents had experienced abuse from those parking across their driveways when they had asked them to move to allow access from or to their property. Concern was expressed that rubbish is thrown into people's gardens, and when making a turning in the road cars have damaged planting and broken fences. Pupils have walked across unfenced front gardens and given verbal abuse to residents when challenged.

The Local Authority would agree that this is unacceptable behaviour towards residents, and would encourage residents to report these

incidents to the local police. There are powers for the police to deal with such public order offences.

### **Safety for Residents and Pupils**

The manner in which parents, staff and deliveries arrive and leave the school site was identified as a particular risk to the safety of pupils and residents as they walk along the street(s). The speed at which vehicles travel was the main concern.

The Local Authority is clear that safety for all who use the pavements and roads near schools is important. This will be raised with the Head Teacher as a general concern, but residents are able to report such instances to the police. There are community schemes to address such concerns, working in liaison with the police.

### **Difficulty of Access for Emergency Vehicles**

Two respondents outlined their concerns that the manner in which cars are parked on the roads to the school do not allow Emergency Vehicles to respond to any resident's need for emergency attention. Whilst neither response identified an occasion when these had been the case, both were concerned that the problems of anti-social parking could and would cause this issue in the foreseeable future.

### **Future of the Play Group**

Two respondents were very concerned that the future of the existing Play Group based within the school must be protected. This is seen as a valuable community facility that supports families and enables people to make a choice about continuing to work after they have had children.

The Local Authority is keen to ensure that this facility continues and thrives alongside the enlarged school. There have been discussions with the school and the Play Group to ensure that space for this community facility is maintained within the school site.

### **Access to the Consultation via the DCC Web Site**

Two of the respondents raised the issue that, for the older residents of the area, finding the information regarding this consultation on the Derbyshire County Council web site could prove difficult.

The Local Authority would wish to be inclusive in its consultation process and, alongside the publication of the material on the County Council's and on the School's respective web sites, the local press

included a notice giving details of access to the document as well as a press release by the local Councillor seeking to ensure that local residents were aware of the consultation and its timescale. This concern is noted and will be included in consideration of how future consultations are publicised.

### **Access to Places for All Pupils in the Normal Area**

One respondent made the request that, in planning the expansion of the school, the Local Authority should ensure that there are places available for the pupils of the whole of Stenson Fields, including the existing normal area and the new development and other parts of Stenson Fields not included in either of those currently.

The Local Authority has reviewed the numbers of current pupils within the area of Stenson fields, has undertaken pupil projections for the coming five years, and analysed the demand for places from the new housing. It is on this analysis that the Local Authority has planned the scale of the expansion of Stenson Fields Primary School. The Local Authority believes that the expansion will allow access to places for all those within the normal area, and can respond to expressions of parental preference.

### **3. Financial Considerations**

Negotiations with the housing developer secured a financial contribution of £1.5 million through a S106 Agreement to fund the provision of primary school places. In addition, £1.2 million was approved for this project as part of the 2015/16 Capital Programme. A project to deliver the required additional places has been developed if the expansion is approved by the Schools Adjudicator.

### **4. Legal and Human Rights Considerations**

Under The School Organisation (Prescribed Alterations to Maintained Schools) (England) 2013 and the School Organisation Maintained Schools: Guidance for Proposers and Decision Makers January 2014, Local Authorities must follow a statutory process if the proposed enlargement to the premises of the school is permanent (longer than three years) and would increase the capacity of the school by more than 30 pupils and 25% or 200 pupils (whichever is the lesser).

The legislation requires a decision to be made within 2 months of the end of the representation period. After this time, the decision is taken by the Schools Adjudicator. The representation period for this proposal closed on 22 May 2015. Final information on the cost of the expansion

project was not available at that time so the expansion proposal could not be determined by 22 July 2015. The financial considerations above show that the project can be funded from the resources available. It is therefore proposed that the Authority's support for the proposal along with other relevant information be referred to the Schools Adjudicator for a final decision.

5. **Other Considerations** In preparing this report the relevance of the following factors has been considered:- prevention of crime and disorder, equality of opportunity; and environmental, health, human resources, property and transport considerations.

5. **Background Papers** Papers are available in the CAYA Development Section.

6. **Key Decision** Yes

7. **Call-in**

Is it required that call-in be waived in respect of the decisions proposed in the report? No

8. **Strategic Director's Recommendations**

8.1 That Cabinet supports the expansion of Stenson Fields Primary School from 280 to 420 places and recommends approval to the Schools Adjudicator,

8.2 That Cabinet agrees to allocate a £1.5 million S106 contribution from Hallam Land, the housing developer of Stenson Fields, to support the expansion project to be used alongside the £1.2 million already allocated within the 2015/16 CAYA Capital Programme.

**Ian Johnson**  
**Strategic Director Children and Younger Adults**