



**County Hall
Hertford, SG13 8DF**

Tel: 0300 123 4043

My ref: School Planning

Date: 23 January 2014

Dear Consultee

Consultation on the proposal to enlarge the premises of Garden Fields JMI School, Townsend Drive, St Albans, AL3 5RL.

Consultation Overview

We are consulting you on the following proposal:

the enlargement of the premises of Garden Fields JMI School, Townsend Drive, St Albans, AL3 5RL by 1 form of entry from September 2015.

The proposal will support a permanent increase in the size of this school by 1 form of entry*. This means the school will then have the capacity to admit 90 reception aged children in September 2015 and in each subsequent year thereafter, making it a 3 form entry school. The current capacity of the school is 420 and the eventual capacity will be 630 pupils (excluding Nursery pupils).

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

Why is this being 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 important 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

* a form of entry is 30 pupils per year group

meet the rising demand for school places and our methods for forecasting at www.hertsdirect.org/schoolplaces.

The position in St Albans

Across three primary planning areas, Central, West and South-West, the total number of permanent reception places available is: **487**

The following table shows the forecast demand for places and the surplus or shortfall based on the current number of permanent reception places available.

Autumn Term 2013 forecast	2014/15	2015/16	2016/17	2017/18
Demand	471	506	561	535
Surplus/Shortage	16	-19	-74	-48

It is not possible to permanently expand any of the schools in these primary planning areas and in order to ensure that demand can be met as locally as possible, the county council is proposing to increase the number of reception places available at Garden Fields JMI School from 60 to 90 from September 2015.

The county council will put in place temporary arrangements for additional places across the area as required for September 2014 following receipt and analysis of primary places in the spring term.

Why this school has been chosen for enlargement

The proposal to enlarge this school has been assessed against, and is considered to meet, the Director of Education and Early Intervention's *Four Tests*. These are:

- Does it provide the right number of places in the right location?
- Does it support and not undermine school effectiveness?
- Are the implications for buildings, environment and cost feasible and affordable?
- What are the transitional implications?

Garden Fields JMI School has been selected as it is located close to the area of demand and the site is capable of accommodating an enlargement.

For further information on the possible options that were considered, please see www.hertsdirect.org/schoolplaces. Frequently asked questions are also available through this link.

The alterations required for enlargement

If a decision is made to enlarge this school, The county council would work closely with the school to provide the additional accommodation required. This may involve the relocation of St Albans Music School. We would work hard to make sure that the accommodation supports pupils' needs whilst also

ensuring that good value for money is achieved in the context of restrictions on public sector finance. The work would be managed by the county 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 will be required for any additional building work which would mean that there would be a separate consultation locally through the town planning system on the details of any proposed building work. Any specific town planning matters associated with this school site would need to be addressed as part of the planning application, including highways, parking and conservation issues.

Have your say

The county council believes that the enlargement of Garden Fields JMI School will have a positive impact for its existing pupils, staff and local community by improving access to school places, providing for enhanced education opportunities and for improved facilities in new buildings.

You have seven 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 <https://consult.hertsdirect.org/consultations>. You can tell us if you agree or disagree with the proposal and leave your comments.

If you do not have access to the internet you can visit your local library where free access is available to all Hertfordshire residents. Should you wish to request a hard copy of the response form, you can email hertsdirect@hertfordshire.gov.uk or alternatively you can call us on **0300 123 4043**. 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 **12 March 2014**. 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. Responses may be made 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. 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 at: http://www.hertsdirect.org/your-council/civic_calendar/.

Process	Date
Public consultation	23 January – 12 March 2014
Education Panel*	April 2014 (date to be confirmed)
Cabinet*	14 April 2014
Statutory notice period (4 weeks)	Week commencing 21 April 2014
Cabinet * (for final approval if objections received)	14 July 2014
Implementation	September 2015

Yours sincerely



Justin Donovan
 Director of Education and Early Intervention
 (Children's Services)