

PROPOSALS FOR PRESCRIBED ALTERATIONS OTHER THAN FOUNDATION PROPOSALS:

The School Organisation (Prescribed Alterations to Maintained Schools) (England) Regulations 2013:

In respect of an LA Proposal: School and local authority details

1. The name, address and category of the school and a contact address for the local authority who are publishing the proposals.

The proposal to extend the age range and increase the number of places at Ribblesdale High School (Community), Queens Road, Clitheroe, Lancashire, BB7 1EJ from 1,425 to 1,635 pupils is published by Lancashire County Council (LCC), the relevant local authority. The authority can be contacted at the following address: Asset Management, School Planning Team, 2nd Floor, Christ Church Precinct, PO Box 100, County Hall, Preston, PR1 0LD, Lancashire.
AllThroughSchoolProposal@lancashire.gov.uk

2. Implementation and any proposed stages for implementation

- (a) The date on which the proposals are planned to be implemented, and if they are to be implemented in stages, a description of what is planned for each stage, and the number of stages intended and the dates of each stage.
- (b) Where the proposals relate to a foundation or voluntary controlled school a statement as to whether the proposals are to be implemented by the local authority or by the governing body, and, if the proposals are to be implemented by both, a statement as to the extent to which they are to be implemented by each body

The implementation date for this proposal 1st September 2023.

Support, objections and comments

3. A statement explaining the procedure for making representations, including:
 - (a) the date prescribed by which objections or comments should be sent to the local authority; and
 - (b) the address of the authority to which objections or comments should be sent.

These proposals have been prepared following discussions with a wide range of partners and other stakeholders. Within five weeks from the date of publication of these proposals any person may object to, or comment on the proposals by sending their representations to Asset Management, School Planning Team, 2nd Floor, Christ Church Precinct, PO BOX 100, County Hall, Preston PR1 0LD. Responses can also be emailed to AllThroughSchoolProposal@lancashire.gov.uk. To be considered as part of the decision making process to determine the proposals, responses must be received no later than 4th November 2021.

Alteration description

4. A description of the proposed alteration showing evidence of demand. In the case of special school proposals, a description of the current special needs provision.

Pupil projections indicate a significant shortfall of primary school places in the Clitheroe primary planning area from September 2023. Whilst the underlying birth rate in Clitheroe has stayed fairly stable over recent years, the effect of significant housing development is impacting upon school intakes and is expected to continue to increase over the foreseeable future.

LCC has already taken steps to address growth as a result of housing development in the neighbouring Langho and Whalley School Planning area, where a total 175 additional primary school places have been provided across 4 schools. However, housing development in the Clitheroe area will require additional mitigation, particularly to accommodate the pupils yielded by the 1,040 dwelling development underway on Land at Higher Standen Farm, Pendle Road, Clitheroe.

From December 2020 to January 2021 LCC carried out an informal consultation on a proposal to establish a new primary school as part of the new housing development at Higher Standen Farm in Clitheroe. As part of the informal consultation Ribblesdale High School expressed an interest in providing the additional primary school places by expanding its age range to become an all through school. Ribblesdale High School is situated adjacent to the new school site.

On 10th June 2021 Lancashire County Council's Cabinet approved the commencement of an informal public consultation on the Ribblesdale all through school proposal, to take place between 28th June 2021 to 23rd July 2021. On 2nd September 2021 the Cabinet considered the responses to the

informal consultation and approved the publication of the Public Notice.

Should the permanent expansion be approved, it will be enabled by additional permanent accommodation located on the school site at Higher Standen Farm.

If the permanent expansion is approved Ribblesdale High School would expand its age range to 4 to 16 aged pupils and the capacity of the school would increase from 1,425 to 1,635.

Ribblesdale High School has a 'Good' Ofsted rating. For the September 2021 intake there were 273 first preference applications for 290 offers.

5. School capacity

- (a) details of the current capacity of the school and, where the proposals will alter the capacity of the school, the proposed capacity of the school after the alteration;

The current capacity of the school is 1,425 which would increase to 1,635 from September 2023.

- (b) details of the current number of pupils admitted to the school in each relevant age group, and where this number is to change, the proposed number of pupils to be admitted in each relevant age group in the first school year in which the proposals will have been implemented;

The current published admission number for the school is 285. Should the proposal be approved the school would continue to admit 285 pupils to year 7 and would also admit 30 pupils to reception each year. 30 of the 285 year 7 places are anticipated to be pupils moving from primary provision to secondary provision at the all through school.

- (c) A statement of the number of pupils at the school at the time of the publication of the proposals.

In January 2021, the number of pupils on roll was 1,336. It should be noted that the current number on roll is lower than the current capacity of the school. The reason for this is that in 2019/20 Ribblesdale increased its published admission number from 255 to 285 through the provision of additional accommodation. The increased numbers have not yet worked through each year group.

6. Additional site

A statement as to whether any new or additional site will be required if proposals are implemented and if so the location of the site if the school is to occupy a split site.

The primary school provision of the all through school would be provided by building new accommodation on the school site at Higher Standen Farm (adjacent to the high school).

The primary phase places will be enabled by building on the Higher Standen Farm site,

which backs onto the High School Site. In the event of any delay to the building works on that site, the additional places would be made available in suitable separate accommodation on the Ribblesdale High School site for a temporary period.

Objectives

7. The objectives of the proposals (including how the proposal would increase education standards and parental choice).

The objective of the proposal is to expand the age range of the high school and permanently expand the school to admit 30 pupils to each reception year with effect from September 2023, by providing additional primary accommodation.

Increases in pupil numbers as a result of the significant level of housing development planned in the area within the next five years would mean that there will be a shortage of primary school places. Significant demand for primary school places is expected to come from the 1,040 dwelling housing development at Higher Standen Farm. This proposal would provide additional places that were local and accessible to pupils from the Higher Standen Farm development. The school site was secured as part of a planning obligation from the housing development, which is projected to generate the need for up to 216 additional primary places.

Ribblesdale High School is a 'Good' school which is currently experiencing a significant demand in terms of applications for places, with 273 first preference

applications in 2021 against 290 offers, with 273 first preference applications against 284 offers in 2020.

Need or demand for additional places

8. If the proposals involve adding places:
- (a) a statement and supporting evidence of the need or demand for the particular places in the area;

Increases in pupil numbers as a result of the significant level of housing development planned in the area within the next five years will result in the number of school places currently available not being sufficient to meet the increased demand in the Ribble Valley area. Therefore, additional permanent places are needed in this area. The approval of the proposal to permanently expand the age range of Ribblesdale High School from 11 -16 to 4-16 will help to address this demand and ensure so far as is reasonably possible that every child is provided with a school place in close proximity to their home.

9. Expansion of successful and popular schools

Proposals must include a statement of whether the proposer considers that the presumption for the expansion of successful and popular schools should apply, and where the governing body consider the presumption applies evidence to support this. The effect of the proposal on the schools, academies and educational institutions within the area.

LCC does consider that the presumption for the expansion of this school should apply. In line with the DfE guidance 'Making significant changes ('prescribed alterations') to maintained schools', the new places are proposed to be created at Ribblesdale High School which has a 'good' Ofsted rating.

Demand for places at Ribblesdale High School may indicate a level of popularity within Ribble Valley. In September 2019 the school increased its admission number from 255 to 285. This resulted in 285 offers with 253 first preferences, 263 second preferences and 204 third preferences. In September 2020, there were 284 offers, with 279 first preferences, 249 second preferences and 191 third preferences. September 2021 figures indicate offers of 290 places, with 273 first preferences, 244 second and 178 third preferences.

LCC does consider that the presumption for the expansion of this school should apply. Due to the increased demand for school places in the area and

the gradual growth of the primary phase of the school, it is considered that the proposed expansion will have no adverse effect on other schools, academies and educational institutions within the area.

Informal Consultation

10. Evidence of the informal consultation before the proposals were published including—

- (a) a list of persons who were consulted;
- (b) minutes of all public consultation meetings;
- (c) the views of the persons consulted;
- (d) a statement to the effect that all applicable statutory requirements in relation to the proposals to consult were complied with; and
- (e) copies of all consultation documents and a statement on how these documents were made available.

Although there is no longer a statutory informal consultation period, Department for Education Guidance: 'Making Prescribed Alterations to Maintained Schools' advises a strong expectation that the LA will consult interested parties in developing their proposal

prior to publication, as part of their duty under public law to act rationally and take into account all relevant considerations. Therefore, LCC has undertaken informal consultation.

An informal consultation was carried out in 7th December 2020 and 15th January 2021 regarding the establishment of a new school at Higher Standen Farm. The informal consultation documentation also provided details of the need for additional primary school places in Clitheroe.

Information about the consultation was widely circulated. A full list of consultees is provided below:

Children's Safeguarding Assurance Partnership (CSAP)
Department for Education
Diocese
Lancashire Parent Carer Forum
Landowner of school site
LCC County Councillors
Local libraries
Local MP
Nearby schools
Nurseries
OFSTED
Other planning authorities
Parish Council
Ribble Valley Borough Council Planning Department
Ribble Valley Borough Council Town Hall
Ribble Valley Borough Councillors

In addition to the above, a press release promoting the consultation was published in the local press and posters were displayed at the Higher Standen Farm housing development, on the Clitheroe town council notice board and at the Ribble Valley town hall. (Other opportunities to circulate and display information about the consultation were limited by the covid lockdown).

As part of the informal consultation local primary head teachers were invited to attend a virtual meeting regarding the proposal on 7th December 2020. An abbreviated version of the presentation was made available online and an online questionnaire seeking feedback was set up. Furthermore, stakeholders were able to email any feedback or enquiries to the School Planning Team throughout the consultation period.

A total of 84 consultation responses were received. Of the 84 responses 64% were

positive and 25% were opposed to the proposal. Feedback from the consultation was mainly positive, with overall agreement from the majority of respondents that additional places in the area were required.

Arising from the consultation, an alternative to the establishment of a new school was put forward as a potential option for providing the places. This was a proposal by Ribblesdale High School (the site of which adjoins the Higher Standen reserved school site) to extend the age range of their school to provide places for aged 4-11 pupils, thereby becoming an 'all through' school. They proposed to achieve this by utilising the reserved Higher Standen site to provide the primary age places.

On the 10th June 2021, LCC's Cabinet approved a period of consultation on the proposal to extend the age range of Ribblesdale High School to provide a 4-16 age all through school, providing 30 primary school places each year with effect from September 2023. The consultation period was from 28th June to 23rd July 2021.

LCC officers met with the headteacher and Executive headteacher prior to the commencement of the consultation. The Headteacher and Chair of Governors then discussed this at subsequent Governing Body meetings and the governors were reported to be in support of the proposals.

Information about the consultation was circulated to the consultee list above. Posters were displayed at the Higher Standen Farm development, on the Clitheroe town council notice board, in Ribble Valley town hall and at local supermarkets. A press release was also published in the local press. In addition, Ribblesdale High School wrote to all parents seeking feedback on the proposal.

A total of 23 consultation responses were received. Of the 23 responses 52% were positive and 35% were opposed to the proposal. The remainder were neutral. 57% of respondents indicated a "clear need for school places".

The written responses to the informal consultation, including concerns identified by respondents, are detailed and analysed in the report to the Cabinet that was considered on 2nd September 2021. This forms an integral element to these complete proposals.

Informal consultation information was widely circulated and was made available on the following website via the heading: 'School Organisation Reviews' at:

<https://www.lancashire.gov.uk/council/performance-inspections-reviews/children-education-and-families/school-organisation-reviews/>

This website has been updated and now allows access to the public notice and complete proposal documentation for these proposals.

Project costs

11. A statement of the estimated project costs of the proposals and an indication of how these will be met, including how long-term value for money will be achieved.

Should the proposal to expand the age range of Ribblesdale High School be approved, it would receive revenue funding assistance to reflect the fact that pupils would begin two terms before the increased numbers are reflected in the school budget. This funding would be provided through the Dedicated Schools Grant in accordance with the rules agreed by the Lancashire

Schools Forum. This will ensure that the school is not financially disadvantaged by the expansion.

It is proposed that the total capital cost of the proposal will initially be funded from the Basic Need confirmed allocation within the Schools Single Capital Pot Grant but part of the cost will be offset by s106 monies due to be received by the Authority from housing developers. In terms of housing contributions received that can be committed to the Higher Standen school accommodation, to date £124,997.18 have been received by LCC.

As the housing developer contributions are linked to the delivery and occupation of houses in most instances, there will be a time lag between the delivery of the school places and some of the developer contribution being received by the authority. Should a development fail to come forward in its entirety (or at all) before relevant 'trigger points' for payment are reached, there is a risk to the authority that some of the expected funding may not be recouped.

12. A copy of confirmation from the Secretary of State, local education authority and the Education Funding Agency (as the case may be) that funds will be made available (including costs to cover any necessary site purchase).

The authority can confirm that funds are available and have been identified to be used for the purposes of this project, subject to final determination of the proposal at the end of the representation period.