



OXFORDSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL

FULL STATUTORY PROPOSAL

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

Expansion of Benson Church of England Primary School

1. School and LA details

School: Benson CE Primary School

Address: Oxford Road, Benson, Wallingford, Oxfordshire, OX10 6LU

LA: Oxfordshire County Council

2. Description of alteration and evidence of demand

Description:

Oxfordshire County Council, working with the leadership team of the school, proposes to increase Benson CE Primary School's published admission number in September 2019 from 30 to 45 on a permanent basis. This means that each year group that starts at the school from September 2019 onward would consist of up to 45 places, making a maximum total of 315 pupils in Reception to Year 6 across the whole school eventually. Children will still be taught in classes of a maximum size of 30 pupils.

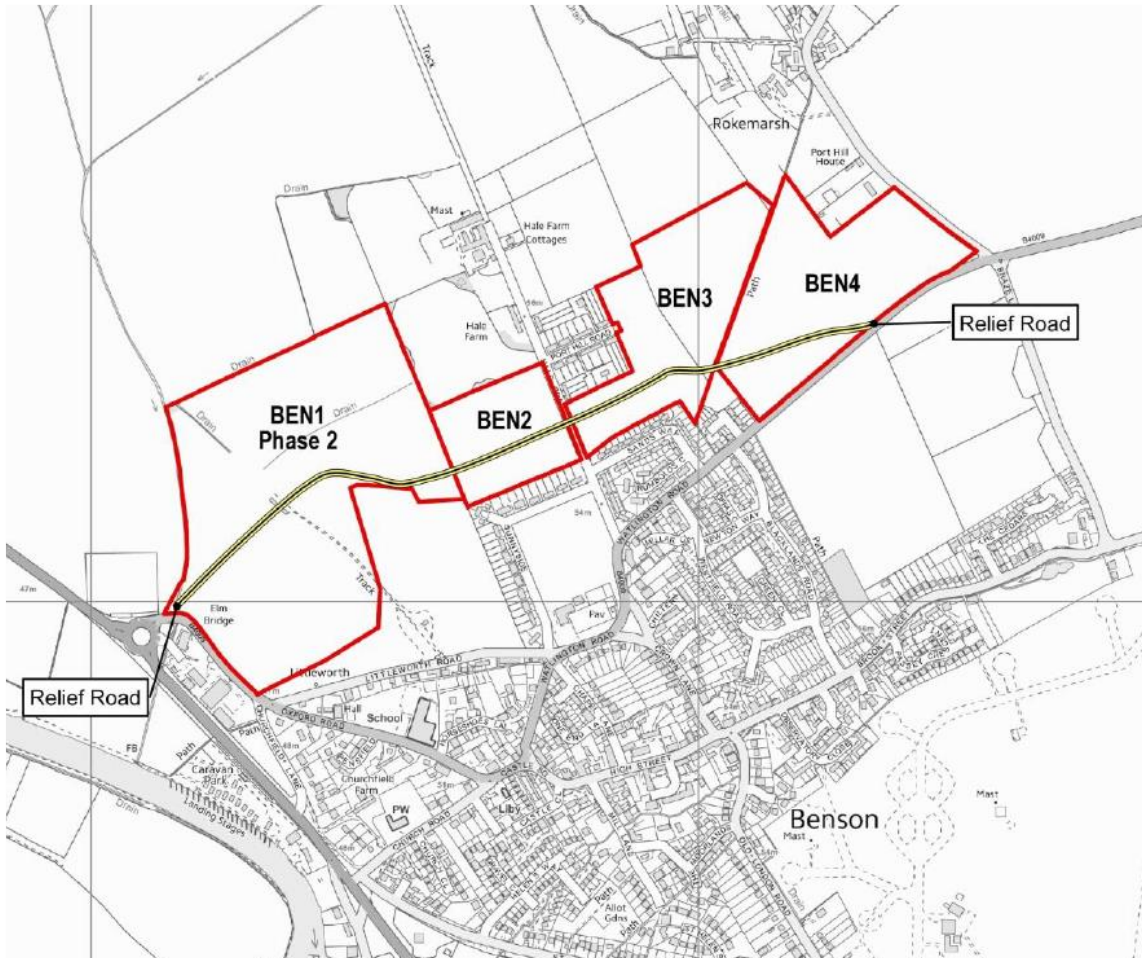
The school's total numbers would grow gradually each year as 45 children are admitted into the Reception classes, allowing the school to adjust to the larger size. Should there be a demand for places in older year groups as a result of children moving into the village and needing school places, the school will review whether it is able to expand the older year groups too.

Additional accommodation will be provided to support the school's growing numbers.

Evidence of demand:

Expansion of school capacity in Benson is needed to meet the forecast demands of the growing population in the area, and to allow for population fluctuations and movement into the area by new families, including into new homes planned to be built around the village.

Benson has an adopted Neighbourhood Plan which allows for 565 new homes across three strategic sites to the north of the village, shown on the plan below:



The Governing Body of Benson CE Primary School wants to be able to meet the needs of the local community. The school has already had children join the school from the new development, and pupil numbers are forecast to grow rapidly:

Year	R	Yr1	Yr2	Yr3	Yr4	Yr5	Yr6	Total
2017	30	28	29	30	21	24	16	178
2018	26	30	28	29	30	21	24	188
2019	32	28	32	30	31	32	23	208
2020	33	32	28	32	30	31	32	218
2021	44	34	33	29	33	31	32	236
2022	46	45	34	34	30	34	32	255

At this time, the county council is confident that the school will need to be at least 1.5 form entry size. It is likely that the school will need to grow further in the longer term to 2 form entry, but the timing for this cannot yet be confirmed. It is therefore proposed that the school expands from 1 form entry to 1.5 form entry in 2019, and that the design of the school's expansion allows for further expansion to 2 form entry if/when this is required. Any such further expansion would be subject to the relevant consultation and approval processes at the appropriate time.

To inform this expansion, the school has actively engaged with parents and the wider community, including:

- Meetings with trustees, the county council and the diocese
- Letters to parents/interested parties in community
- Ongoing general updates in the school newsletters
- Updates in the Henley Standard
- Meeting with local representatives regarding the Neighbourhood Plan
- New website Summer 2017 with dedicated tab
- Community meeting 13th August 2018
- Invitations to the community to see plans and ask questions at two meetings in October 2018.

3. Objectives (including how the proposal would increase educational standards and parental choice)

- Ensure the county council meets its statutory duty to secure sufficient school places.
- Benson CE Primary School is rated Good by Ofsted. Its expansion will be supportive of high educational standards and parental choice.
- Maintain parental choice for existing families and those moving into Benson.
- Reduction of travel time and costs for families in the area, who would otherwise have to accept places at schools outside Benson.

4. The effect on other schools, academies and educational institutions within the area

The school is expanding in line with growth in the area and will provide places for pupils from new developments that would otherwise be putting pressure on surrounding schools. It is not, therefore, expected to have a negative impact on other schools.

5. Project costs and funding

Additional accommodation will be required, and a planning application has been submitted for a new building that houses 3 classrooms and toilet facilities opposite the current main building. Comments on the building proposal should be submitted through the planning consultation process.

The new building will be built partly on the existing playground and sports field. The remaining playing field and hard play area will be sufficient for playtimes and physical education, but to supplement the site another sports field with amenities will be provided within the new housing development.

The Benson Church of England Voluntary School Trust owns much of the land on which the existing school, the hard play area, and the playing field are situated. The Trust holds that land with the object of “the provision of items, services, and facilities

for the school". Since the object of the Trust is to be responsive to the needs of the school, the Trust are in agreement to use the land for additional development as it meets with the overall object.

The cost of providing the additional accommodation will be met by the county council, including from infrastructure contributions required of housing developers to mitigate the impact of their development on the need for school places in the local area.

6. Implementation and any proposed stages for implementation

From 1st September 2019, the school will increase its intake into the Reception class from 30 to 45. It may choose to also admit into older year groups, if local population growth requires this.

7. Objections and comments

Comments or objections must be received by the local authority by **09/11/2018**

Respond using the online questionnaire at www.oxfordshire.gov.uk/consultations

or by emailing lucy.mills@oxfordshire.gov.uk *(please quote 'Benson's expansion' in the header)*

or in writing to Lucy Mills, School Organisation & Planning, Oxfordshire County Council, County Hall, Oxford OX1 1ND

8. Decision-making

The decision-maker for this proposed expansion is Oxfordshire County Council. The decision will be made by the Cabinet Member for Education and Cultural Services at a meeting which is open to the public, and publicised on the county council's website. The decision must be made within a period of two months of the end of this representation period, and is currently expected on 19th December 2018.