



Delegated Decisions by Cabinet Member for Education

***Tuesday, 24 January 2017 at 9.00 am
County Hall, Oxford OX1 1ND***

Items for Decision

The items for decision under individual Cabinet Members' delegated powers are listed overleaf, with indicative timings, and the related reports are attached. Decisions taken will become effective at the end of the working day on _____ unless called in by that date for review by the appropriate Scrutiny Committee.

Copies of the reports are circulated (by e-mail) to all members of the County Council.

These proceedings are open to the public

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Peter G. Clark." with a horizontal line underneath.

Peter G. Clark
Interim Chief Executive

January 2017

Contact Officer: **Deborah Miller**
Tel: (01865) 815384; E-Mail: deborah.miller@oxfordshire.gov.uk

Note: Date of next meeting: 21 February 2017

If you have any special requirements (such as a large print version of these papers or special access facilities) please contact the officer named on the front page, but please give as much notice as possible before the meeting.

Items for Decision

1. **Declarations of Interest**
2. **Questions from County Councillors**

Any county councillor may, by giving notice to the Proper Officer by 9 am two working days before the meeting, ask a question on any matter in respect of the Cabinet Member's delegated powers.

The number of questions which may be asked by any councillor at any one meeting is limited to two (or one question with notice and a supplementary question at the meeting) and the time for questions will be limited to 30 minutes in total. As with questions at Council, any questions which remain unanswered at the end of this item will receive a written response.

Questions submitted prior to the agenda being despatched are shown below and will be the subject of a response from the appropriate Cabinet Member or such other councillor or officer as is determined by the Cabinet Member, and shall not be the subject of further debate at this meeting. Questions received after the despatch of the agenda, but before the deadline, will be shown on the Schedule of Addenda circulated at the meeting, together with any written response which is available at that time.

3. **Petitions and Public Address**
4. **Expansion of Launton CE Primary School** (Pages 1 - 18)

Forward Plan Ref: 2016/109

Contact: Diane Cameron, School Organisation Officer Tel: 07795 301254

Report by Director for Children's Services (**CMDCEF4**).

This report follows a public consultation and Statutory Notice period relating to a proposal to expand Launton CE Primary School to 1 form entry. The proposal was requested by the school's Governing Body, and the capital investment which would be required has been assessed by the county council's property consultants.

Launton village is part of the Bicester partnership of schools, where pupil numbers have risen and large strategic housing developments are planned. To ensure sufficient pupil places are available a number of new schools are planned, and some existing schools are being expanded. Within Launton village there has been some housing development permitted.

This report summarises the response from the public consultation, and the conclusions of the feasibility assessment into how the school's accommodation could be expanded. It outlines the expected consequences of either approving or rejecting the proposed expansion.

The decision-making power in terms of determining the proposal in this case lies with the Cabinet Member for Education.

The Cabinet Member is RECOMMENDED to reject the proposal to expand Launton CE Primary School at the current time.

(This is because the cost of the options currently identified for the physical expansion of the school's capacity do not represent good value for money.)

5. Expansion of West Witney Primary School (Pages 19 - 32)

Forward Plan Ref: 2016/110

Contact: Diane Cameron, School Organisation Officer Tel: 07795 301254

Report by Director for Children's Services (**CMDCEF5**).

This is a proposal to expand West Witney Primary School to increase the formal published admission number from 45 to 60, on a permanent basis starting from September 2017. This will eventually increase the school's total capacity from its current 315 places in year groups Reception – Year 6 to a maximum of 420.

The objective of the proposal is to ensure the County Council can continue to ensure sufficient primary school places for children living in the west Witney and surrounding area, to meet a rapid rise in demand for primary school places in the town. This expansion is required ahead of and in addition to the planned new primary school on the housing development permitted in nearby north Curbridge.

West Witney Primary School has admitted over its Admission Number in September 2016 in order to ensure sufficient places are available, and the plan is to make this growth permanent by constructing additional accommodation at this popular school.

The Cabinet Member for Education is RECOMMENDED to approve the proposed expansion of West Witney Primary School.

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Division(s): Ploughley (also of interest to Bicester divisions.)

CABINET MEMBER FOR EDUCATION 24 JANUARY 2017

REPORT ON THE PROPOSED EXPANSION OF LAUNTON CE PRIMARY SCHOOL

Report by Director for Children's Services

Introduction

1. This report follows a public consultation and Statutory Notice period relating to a proposal to expand Launton CE Primary School. The proposal was requested by the school's Governing Body and the county council commissioned an option appraisal to assess the additional accommodation requirements.
2. The initial public consultation ran from 14 September – 12 October 2016. The consultation leaflet is attached at Annex 1 and was circulated to all parents/carers of pupils at the school, staff and governors, appropriate county council teams, District, Council and Parish councillors, the local library and others. It was also available on the county council consultations webpages through its "current consultations" listing.
3. Following completion of the consultation, and pending the final conclusions of the feasibility assessment undertaken by the council's property consultant, county council officers made the decision to proceed with publishing a Public Notice. This was done to ensure that, if the expansion were to be approved, this would be decided in time to inform the 2017 Reception allocations.
4. The Public Notice is attached at Annex 2. It was published in the Bicester Advertiser on 3 November 2016 and was also posted at the school's entrance and on the school website and county council website. The Notice period ran until the 1 December 2016. It was accompanied by a Full Proposal document, which is attached at Annex 3, and which was available to read online at the Oxfordshire County Council public website, with paper copies by request.
5. The decision-making power in terms of determining the proposal in this case lies with the Cabinet Member for Education.
6. For the reasons outlined below, the recommendation of this report is to reject the proposal to expand the school at this time.

The Proposal

7. Launton village is part of the Bicester partnership of schools, where pupil numbers have risen and large strategic housing developments are planned.

To ensure sufficient pupil places are available a number of new schools are planned, and some existing schools are being expanded. Within Launton village there has been some housing development permitted.

8. This proposal was to expand Launton Primary School from its current Planned Admission Number (PAN) of 20 to one of 30 (growing the school to a full 1 form entry) on a permanent basis from September 2017. Ahead of this, the school had chosen to admit over its PAN in some years in order to meet the demand for places, most notably in 2015 when it admitted 30 children into the Reception year.
9. The Governing Body of Launton CE Primary School fully supports the proposed school expansion.

Representations

10. The initial public consultation generated 27 responses. 25 of these raised concerns about the proposal to expand the school, 2 supported the proposal without raising any concerns, while 11 gave reasons for support, but also raised concerns about it. One of the responses raising concerns was from Launton Parish Council, with others from local residents, and parents of pupils at the school.
11. The main concern raised by respondents was the impact the expansion of the school would have on traffic and parking in the village and the consequent implications for the safety of children and other pedestrians. Examples of existing traffic issues, lack of parking facilities for school staff and poor parking by parents were cited by 20 respondents.
12. The other most common concern was the insufficient external play space at the school, with the existing space deemed by respondents to be already small for the number of children currently at the school.
13. Three formal representations (responses) were made to the subsequent Public Notice, which was published following the initial consultation. All objected to the proposal. One was a formal objection from Launton Parish Council and is attached at Annex 4. The other two were from a local resident and a parent of a child at the school. All cited concerns about the impact on traffic and parking as their reason for objecting.
14. There are, therefore, significant local concerns about the proposed expansion and limited evidence of local support at this time.

Capital investment and school planning implications

15. Prior to 2016, the school operated from five classrooms, providing 150 places in total and supporting an admission number of 20. In some years the school admitted more than 20 children, in order to meet the demand for places; in 2015 it admitted 30 children into the Reception year.
16. To provide flexibility for the school to manage pupil numbers, the council undertook internal alterations during 2016 at a cost of £27,500. These

improved the layout of the area being used as a Reception classroom and a room previously used for withdrawal. A new external walkway around the school was created to remove the previous circulation route through a classroom. This work has provided a better working environment for the school, and created the flexibility for the school to now operate out of 6 classrooms rather than 5, giving a total capacity of 180 places. If the school expanded permanently to 1 form entry, these works would form phase 1 of the expansion, but they also in isolation provide sufficient accommodation to enable the school to admit more than 20 children in years when there is particularly high demand for places.

17. For the proposed permanent expansion to an admission number of 30, a second phase of capital works would be required to provide one further classroom space. This additional classroom would increase the school capacity to 210.
18. Oxfordshire County Council's property consultant (Carillion) was requested to identify options for how the physical expansion of the school could be achieved on the site. Their initial assessment had identified that it should be possible to meet the need by constructing a small extension to provide a classroom and library/withdrawal room. As part of this solution additional playground area would also be provided. The Options Appraisal estimated the cost of both phases (the internal alterations already carried out in 2016 and the additional classroom/playground) at £580k (inclusive of allowances for risk and contingency). On this basis, more detailed feasibility assessment was commissioned, and it was decided to proceed with the statutory consultation process into expanding the school to 1 form entry.
19. Since the Statutory Notice consultation, further feasibility assessment has identified significant constraints which prohibit the additional necessary accommodation being provided as initially proposed. Several alternative solutions for the second phase have been explored but all of these result in a much higher cost than had been initially estimated. The preferred option is to provide the required space by constructing 2 new classrooms on top of the existing hall/classroom building (one of the classrooms being to reprovide an existing classroom on the ground floor which would be converted to provide the staircase to the new first floor and a library/resource area). The cost of doing this, and providing additional playground, has been estimated as £1.1m. The other options explored, including providing the classroom accommodation in a relocatable modular building, range in cost from £0.8m to £1.2m.
20. As the phase 2 capital works would add 30 places to the school's capacity, the cost per pupil place of the options identified would be in the range £28k-£41k, with the preferred option costed at £35k per additional place created.
21. In comparison, the cost used by the county council for the purposes of seeking developer contributions towards primary school expansion is £12,688 per pupil place (@3rd Quarter 2015), based on Department for Education (DfE) advice weighted for Oxfordshire.
22. Due to the unusually high cost of the capital works currently identified as necessary to allow the school to expand, and in the context of local concerns

about the school's expansion, it is the recommendation of officers that the proposed expansion does not represent good value for money, and should be refused at this time. Should a better value solution be identified, or should additional funding become available, or should the need for additional places increase, a new proposal to expand could be initiated.

23. The consequence of refusing this proposed expansion would be that the school's admission number remains at 20. The internal alterations recently carried out will provide the school with flexibility to sometimes take over this number, in years when there is particularly high demand for places. As a result, the school is expected to have sufficient capacity for its designated area population, including already permitted housing growth. If there is significant further housing growth approved for the village, the school may not have sufficient capacity, but expansion possibilities could then be reassessed in that light.
24. Without expansion, as local housing development leads to population growth in the village, there will be reduced opportunities for families living outside of Launton CE Primary School's designated area to secure places at the school. Sufficient capacity exists at other schools in the Bicester area for these children, but there may be a reduction in the number of parents who secure a place at their preferred school.
25. Without expansion, while children moving into Launton village before starting school would be expected to be able to secure places at the school, there is a risk that older children may find their particular year group is full and have to travel to school elsewhere. However, this risk has been partly mitigated by the internal alterations which increase the governors' ability to be flexible in how the school manages pupil numbers to meet local demand.

Legal background

26. Local authorities have a statutory duty to ensure sufficiency of school places. This duty will be met without the expansion of Launton CE Primary School, as sufficient places existing across the Bicester partnership.
27. The expansion of a maintained school is subject to the "*Guidance*", as set out in "*Making Prescribed Alterations to Mainstream Schools*" published April 2016. The Guidance states that the statutory proposal must contain sufficient information for interested parties to make a decision on whether to support or challenge the proposed change. The proposal should be accessible to all interested parties and should therefore use 'plain English'. The full proposal must be published on a website (e.g. the school or LA's website) along with a statement setting out:
 - how copies of the proposal may be obtained;
 - that anybody can object to, or comment on, the proposal;
 - the date that the representation period ends;
 - and the address to which objections or comments should be submitted.

A brief notice (including details on how the full proposal can be accessed e.g. the website address) must be published in a local newspaper. Within one

week of the date of publication on the website, the proposer must send a copy of the proposal and the information set out in the paragraph above to the governing body and any other body or person that the proposer thinks is appropriate.

28. The county council confirms that it has adhered to the above Guidance.
29. The *Guidance for Decision-makers* sets out factors which should be considered in deciding this proposal. Of particular relevance to this proposal are the following factors.
30. **Education standards and diversity of provision:** Decision-makers should consider the quality and diversity of schools in the relevant area and whether the proposal will meet or affect the needs of parents; raise local standards and narrow attainment gaps. In considering whether to formally approve the proposal, the Cabinet Member should be satisfied that the proposals will contribute to the accessing of excellent education provision and consider the impact on safeguarding and wellbeing. He should pay particular attention to the effect on groups that tend to under-perform including children from certain ethnic minorities and deprived backgrounds.
31. Launton Primary School is an Ofsted-rated “Good” school, and (based on 2016 performance data) is in the top quartile of Oxfordshire primary schools. Expansion would therefore increase the number of places available at good schools, but other nearby schools are also rated “Good”. Without expansion of this school there may be a reduction in parents securing their first preference school, but there is not expected to be a detrimental effect on education standards.
32. **Demand v. need:** In assessing the demand for new school places the decision-maker should consider the evidence presented for any projected increase in pupil population (such as planned housing developments) and any new provision opening in the area. The decision-maker should take into account the quality and popularity of the schools in which spare capacity exists and evidence of parents’ aspirations for places in the school proposed for expansion.
33. The alterations already carried out at Launton Primary School provide it with the flexibility to meet the local demand for places, without the school permanently expanding to 1 form entry. It may be that the school is unable to fully meet the demand from parents living outside the school’s designated area. There is not a basic need at this time for further expansion at Launton, as the school currently is able to admit some children from Bicester, and sufficient school places in the Bicester area can be provided from already implemented expansions and new schools. This assessment would need to be revised if significant additional housing growth is permitted in Launton.
34. **School size:** Decision-makers should not make blanket assumptions that schools should be of a certain size to be good schools, although the viability and cost-effectiveness of a proposal is an important factor for consideration.

35. Permanent expansion of the school would be expected to eventually increase the revenue cost-effectiveness of its operation, but this must be balanced against the high capital cost of the proposed expansion. Expansion would also enable it to teach in single age classes, rather than the current mixed age classes, but there is not clear evidence that this would improve education standards.
36. **Travel and accessibility:** Decision-makers should satisfy themselves that accessibility planning has been properly taken into account and the proposed changes should not adversely impact on disadvantaged groups. The decision-maker should bear in mind that a proposal should not unreasonably extend journey times or increase transport costs, or result in too many children being prevented from travelling sustainably due to unsuitable walking or cycling routes.
37. Launton Primary School is expected to have sufficient places for the local community. At this stage, further expansion would create places which might attract families living further away, and thus has potential to increase road traffic related to the school, which was the major concern of the local residents who objected to the expansion.
38. **Funding and land:** The decision-maker should be satisfied that any land, premises or necessary funding required to implement the proposal will be available and that all relevant local parties (e.g. trustees or religious authority) have given their agreement.
39. The intention was that this expansion would be largely funded from developer contributions resulting from local housing growth. With the current level of housing growth, these contributions would fall significantly short of the revised project costs, and the consequent funding gap would have to be covered by the county council.

Decision

27. In considering the proposals for a school expansion, the Cabinet Member can decide to:
 - reject the proposals;
 - approve the proposals without modifications; or
 - approve the proposals with such modifications as the local authority think desirable, having consulted the governing body.

RECOMMENDATIONS

28. **The Cabinet Member is RECOMMENDED to reject the proposal to expand Launton CE Primary School at the current time.**

This is because the cost of the options currently identified for the physical expansion of the school's capacity do not represent good value for money.

LUCY BUTLER

Director for Children's Services

Annexes: Annex 1: Consultation leaflet
 Annex 2: Public Notice
 Annex 3: Full Proposal document
 Annex 4: Formal objection from Launton Parish Council

Contact Officer: Barbara Chillman, Pupil Place Planning Manager
 Education Sufficiency & Access, CEF.
 Tel: 07554103418

December 2016

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Consultation on a proposal to expand Launton CE Primary School

14 September 2016 – 12 October 2016

Launton Church of England Primary School is located in the village of Launton, just outside Bicester in Cherwell District. The school is part of the Bicester area partnership of schools and currently has a Published Admission Number of 20 (i.e. the school admits up to 20 children each year in to the Reception class). The school was last inspected by Ofsted on 12 September 2013 and was graded Good.

The total number of children on roll at the start of September 2016 academic year was 148 (including the Nursery children) as shown below:

Year Group:	Nursery	Reception	Y1	Y2	Y3	Y4	Y5	Y6
Number of Pupils:	Proposed 6	24	31	23	16	18	18	18

What is being proposed?

Expansion

The Governing Body of the school, working with Oxfordshire County Council, propose to increase the school's Published Admission Number (PAN) in September 2017 from 20 to 30 on a permanent basis from September 2017.

This means that each year group that starts at the school from September 2017 onward would consist of up to 30 places, making a maximum total of 210 pupils in Reception to Year 6 across the whole school eventually.

The school's total numbers would grow gradually each year as 30 children are admitted into the Reception class, allowing the school to adjust to the larger size. However, should housing development lead to large numbers of older primary children moving into the village and needing school places, the school will review whether it is able to expand the older year groups as well.

It is not anticipated that there would be any change to the number of early years places offered on site.

Class organisation

Where possible, county council policy is to organise and expand primary schools in multiples of 15 or 30 per year group (i.e. half or a full form of entry) at a time. This helps schools organise more easily their classes across the year groups. An advantage of this proposal to increase the Admission Number from 20 to 30 is that the children would be admitted in a full form of 30 and would stay in that single age class as they progressed up through the school.

There are many schools across the county that operate with an admission number of 30 as standard. The exact organisation of the classes would be managed by the school.

Reasons for proposal

Launton CE Primary School wants to be able to meet the needs of the local community. There has been an increase in demand for primary school places in Launton and the school has in past years decided to admit above its formal Admission Number; most notably in September 2015 when 30 children were admitted. The school is full in most year groups.

The most nearby primary schools are also operating close to their full capacity: Langford Village Primary School is full in most year groups, Longfields Primary School is expanding to meet demand, and Glory Farm Primary School has very few spare places.

There is housing development permitted within Launton CE Primary School's designated (catchment) area, in addition to some that has already been constructed and occupied. This will further increase the demand for primary school places over the next few years.

To meet the needs of the growing population in Launton and the surrounding area, an expansion in primary school capacity is now required.

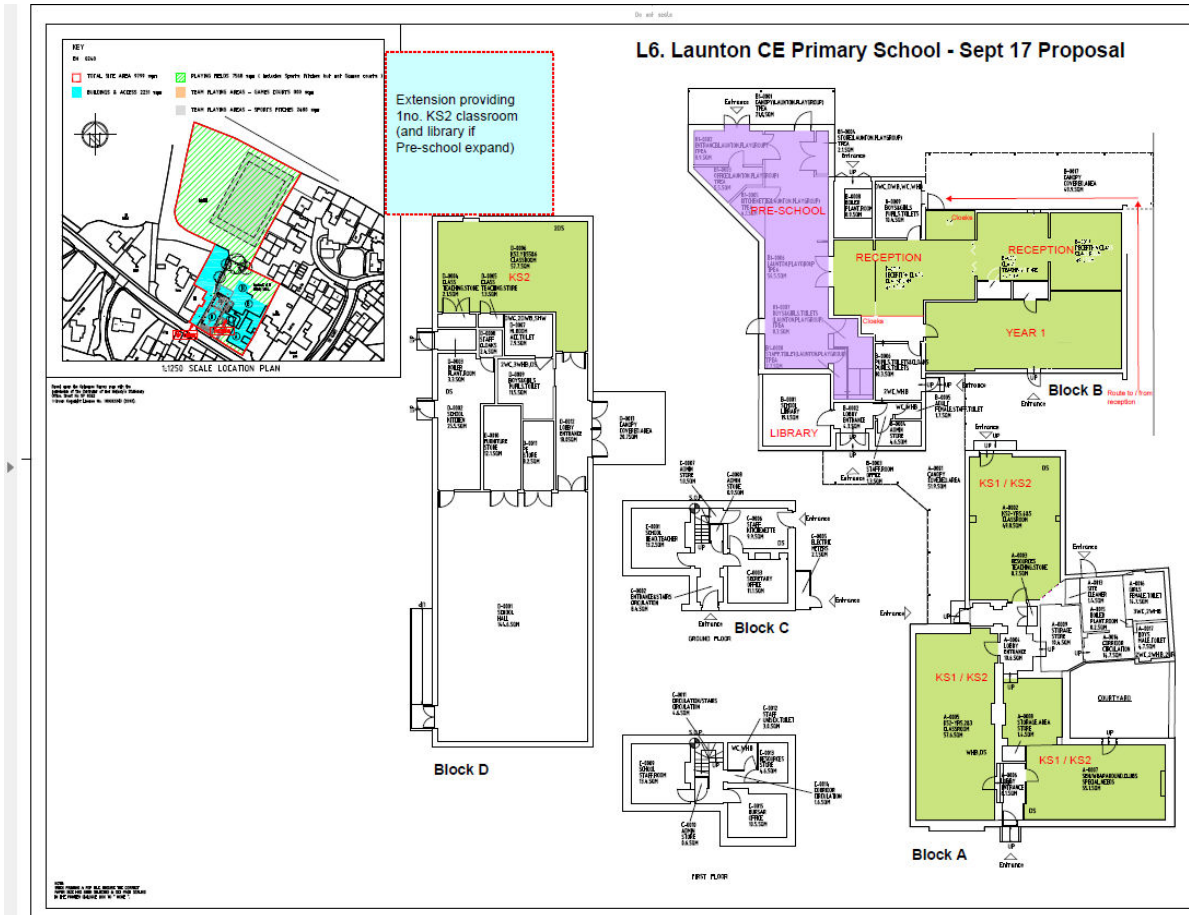
If Launton CE Primary School expands to 1 form entry (PAN 30) it will have sufficient places to meet the scale of population growth expected within its designated area.

Buildings

To accommodate the extra children, the county council is planning to provide new classroom accommodation and associated areas.

It is expected that the cost of extending the school will be met from money the county council has secured from developers building houses in the local area. It may also require contributions from any future developments not yet applied for.

A feasibility study, managed by the county council, will identify how the school could grow in a manner which is cost-effective without compromising the high quality of education provided. One indicative way of expanding the school is shown in the plan below but it should be noted that this is not a final scheme or as yet an agreed way forward:



Important points to remember

- The Governing Body of the school have made the following statement:
The Governing Body of Launton CE Primary School fully supports the proposed school expansion. This expansion has formed part of our strategic plan as it will give us greater flexibility to offer the best education to the pupils on our growing school roll.
- This consultation is about **the principle of expanding Launton CE Primary School**. It is **not** about any decisions to allocate housing development to the area made by Cherwell District Council. Comments on housing development proposals need to be made direct to Cherwell District Council.
- This consultation is taking place until **12 October 2016**. You have until midnight on that date to give us your views. All responses received will then be considered.
- The next step, after consideration of consultation responses, would be for the publication of a Statutory Notice, which offers another opportunity for interested parties to respond to the proposal. The Oxfordshire County Council Cabinet Member for Children, Education & Families would then formally decide whether to approve the proposal.

How you can respond to this consultation

This information is available online at the county council's website in the consultations section: <http://myconsultations.oxfordshire.gov.uk>. We would like to hear from you if you support this proposal as well as if you have any concerns. There are several ways you can submit your views:

- respond online at the above web address using the online form for this consultation, on the Oxfordshire County Council current consultations webpage
- email your response to: diane.cameron@oxfordshire.gov.uk putting **LAUNTON EXPANSION** in the subject line;
- hand in your response at Launton CE Primary School's office, to be passed on to the county council.

You must respond by 12 October 2016



**OXFORDSHIRE
COUNTY COUNCIL**

PUBLIC NOTICE

Proposed Expansion of Launton CE Primary School

Notice is given in accordance with The School Organisation (Prescribed Alterations to Maintained Schools) (England) Regulations 2013 that Oxfordshire County Council intends to make a prescribed alteration to Launton CE Primary School, Bicester Road, Launton OX26 5DP from 01 September 2017.

The Local Authority is proposing to expand Launton CE Primary School to a standard 1 form entry size, rising from the current Planned Admission Number (PAN) of 20 to one of 30 from September 2017 onward.

This Notice is an extract from the full proposal, which can be viewed under the Current Consultations listings on the Oxfordshire County Council public website at <http://www.oxfordshire.gov.uk/consultation>. Copies can also be requested by contacting:

Diane Cameron (School Organisation Officer)

Tel: 07795301254 or Email: diane.cameron@oxfordshire.gov.uk

Oxfordshire County Council, Education Sufficiency & Access, 3rd Floor, County Hall, New Road, Oxford OX1 1ND

Within four weeks from the date of publication of this Notice, any person may object to or make comments on the proposal by sending them to the Local Authority using the online feedback form located on the Oxfordshire County Council website as detailed above, or by email or post to the above addresses.

Signed: Jim Leivers, Director of Children's Services

Publication Date: 3 November 2016

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FULL PROPOSAL

Expansion of Launton CE Primary School

Notice is given in accordance with The School Organisation (Prescribed Alterations to Maintained Schools) (England) Regulations 2013 that Oxfordshire County Council intends to make a prescribed alteration to Launton CE Primary School, Bicester Road, Launton OX26 5DP from 01 September 2017.

The Local Authority proposes to expand Launton CE Primary School to a standard 1 form entry size, rising from the current Planned Admission Number (PAN) of 20 to one of 30 from September 2017 onward. This means that each year group that starts at the school from September 2017 onward would consist of up to 30 places, making a maximum total of 210 pupils in Reception to Year 6 across the whole school eventually.

The school's total numbers would grow gradually each year as 30 children are admitted into the Reception class, allowing the school to adjust to the larger size. However, should housing development lead to large numbers of older primary children moving into the village and needing school places, the school will review whether it is able to bring forward expansion of the older year groups.

Children would be admitted into the Reception class in a full form of 30 and would stay in that single age class as they progressed up through the school. It is not anticipated that there would be any change to the number of early years places offered on site

Expansion will enable the school to meet increased demand for places: it is currently full in most year groups and has admitted above its PAN in several year groups. There has been housing development within Launton village and more is permitted. The nearest other schools are in Bicester town and are also operating close to capacity: one has already been expanded. Launton CE Primary School is popular and rated Good by Ofsted: expansion will ensure the element of parental preference can be maintained in the area as the population grows.

The school will benefit from investment in the expansion of the buildings, and the increase in pupil funding resulting from a rise in pupil numbers means the school can remain financially viable without compromising its standard of education.

The estimated cost of expansion is £600K, and this will primarily be funded from S106 developer contributions received from nearby housing developments. Future housing developments may also be required to contribute.

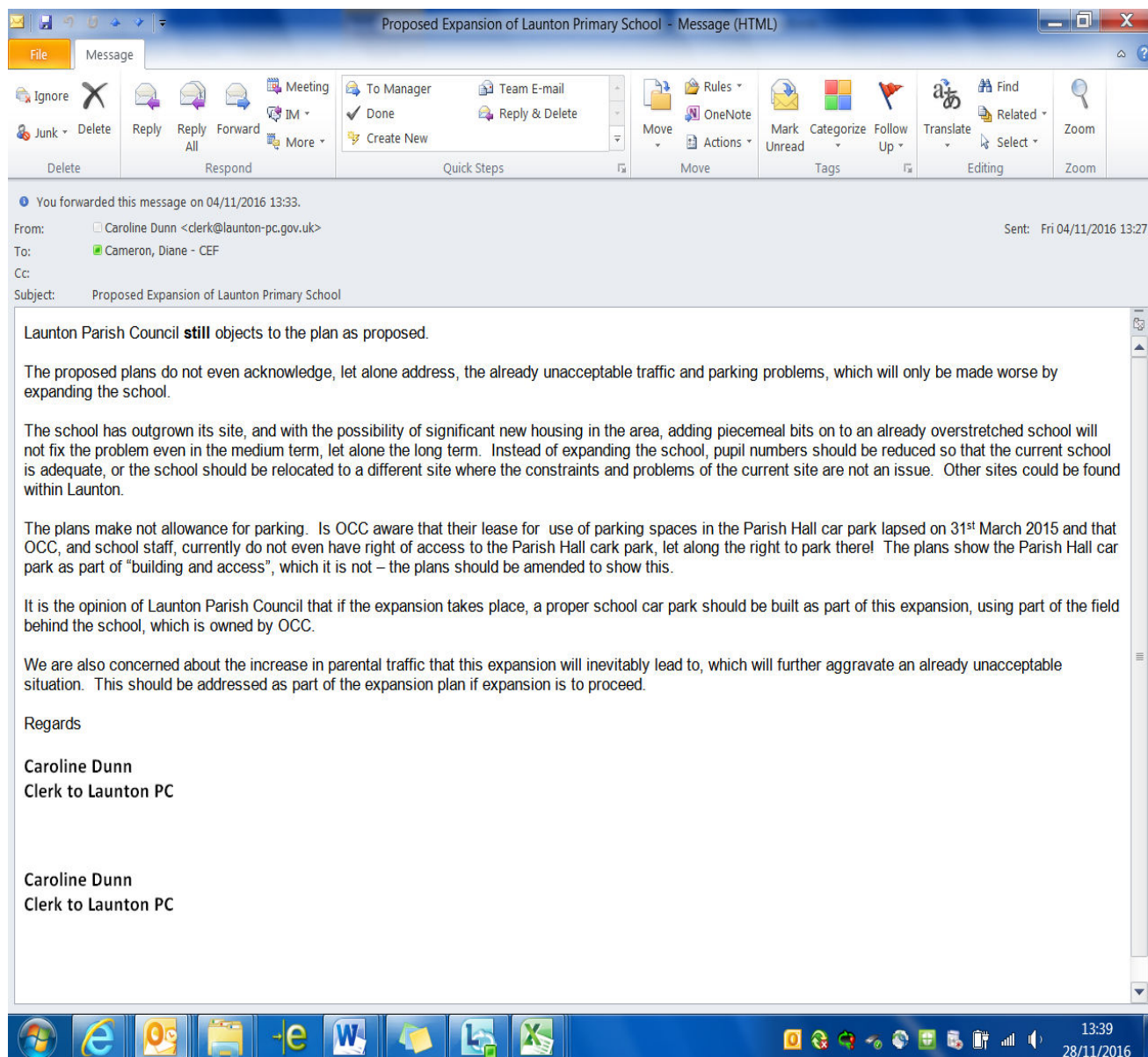
This full proposal can be viewed under the Current Consultations listings on the Oxfordshire County Council public website at <http://www.oxfordshire.gov.uk/consultation>. Copies can also be requested by contacting:

Diane Cameron (School Organisation Officer)
Oxfordshire County Council, Education Sufficiency & Access, 3rd Floor, County Hall, New Road, Oxford OX1 1ND
Tel: 07795301254 or Email: diane.cameron@oxfordshire.gov.uk

Any person may object to or make comments (representations) on the proposed expansion by sending them to the Local Authority using the online feedback form located on the Oxfordshire County Council website as detailed above, or by email or post to the above address.

All representations must be received by midnight on 1 December 2016.

Launton Parish Council's objection to the proposal to expand Launton CE Primary School



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Division: Witney West & Bampton. Also of interest to other Witney divisions.

CABINET MEMBER FOR EDUCATION - 24 JANUARY 2017

REPORT ON THE PROPOSED EXPANSION OF WEST WITNEY PRIMARY SCHOOL

Report by Director for Children's Services

Introduction

1. This report follows a public consultation and statutory Notice period relating to the county council's proposal to expand West Witney Primary School. The proposal has been made with the support of the school's Governing Body and planning of the proposed physical expansion is well advanced.
2. The public consultation ran from 14 September – 12 October 2016. The consultation leaflet is attached at Annex 1 and was circulated to all parents/carers of pupils at the school, staff and governors, appropriate county council teams, District, Council and Parish councillors, the local library and others. It was also available on the county council consultations webpages through its "current consultations" listing.
3. The consultation leaflet contains the reasoning behind the school's proposals, and council officers' support of it, therefore this is not duplicated in this report, being set out in Annex 1. The key information to note is that council officers have identified that an additional half form of entry in primary school capacity is now required in the area, in addition to and in advance of the planned new primary school for the 1000-home north Curbridge development.
4. Following completion of the consultation, county council officers made the decision to proceed with publishing a Public Notice. This is attached at Annex 2. The Public Notice was published in the Witney Gazette on 2 November 2016 and was also posted at the school's entrance and on the school website and county council website. The Notice period ran until the 30 November 2016. It was accompanied by a Full Proposal document, which is attached at Annex 3, and which was available to read online at the Oxfordshire County Council public website, or by request.
5. The decision-making power in terms of determining the proposal in this case lies with the Cabinet Member for Education.

The Proposal

6. The proposal is to expand the school from 1.5fe to 2fe (from a Planned Admission Number of 45 to one of 60) on a permanent basis from September 2017. This is to meet demand for primary pupil places in the school's catchment and immediate area, as detailed in Annex 1. It should be noted

that the school agreed to admit over its PAN for the September 2016 intake of pupils, in order to meet demand for places.

7. Within Witney town generally, demand for primary school places has risen rapidly, ahead of anticipated planned housing for the town which has not progressed as rapidly as previously forecast. The new school for the west Witney / north Curbridge 1000-home development is not expected to open before 2019, and is dependent on the progress of the housing, and in the meantime it may be necessary for other existing schools to increase capacity through “bulge” classes.
8. The Governing Body of West Witney Primary School wants to be able to meet the needs of the local community. The school now has very few spare places, and is completely full in most year groups.
9. The Governing Body has written a formal statement of its support for the proposal to permanently expand within Annex 1. Officers now seek formal approval for the proposal from the Cabinet Member for Education.

Representations

10. The public consultation generated only three responses. Two supported the proposal and one of these was a formal response from Witney Town Council.
11. One response, from a local preschool, raised concerns that with the school’s expansion its nursery class would also expand, and that this would threaten the local preschool’s financial viability. The county council’s proposal does not mention a plan to expand the school’s nursery class. No decision has been taken on this. Early years provision across the Witney area currently just meets the need of the local population, but additional capacity will be required to meet additional demand for places created by housing developments. New schools will include nursery classes. It is also worth bearing in mind that from September 2017 the free childcare entitlement will increase from 15 to 30 hours per week for working families. In many areas we expect there will be a shortfall in provision to meet this increased demand.
12. No responses to the Public Notice were received during the statutory four week representation period.

Legal background

13. The Education & Inspections Act 2006 and The School Organisation (Prescribed Alterations to Maintained Schools)(England) Regulations 2013 establish the procedures that must be followed when enlarging school premises.
13. Local authorities also have a duty to have regard to statutory guidance, in this particular case *“Making Prescribed Alterations to Mainstream Schools”* published April 2016.
14. The Guidance states that the statutory proposal must contain sufficient information for interested parties to make a decision on whether to support or

challenge the proposed change. The proposal should be accessible to all interested parties and should therefore use 'plain English'. The full proposal must be published on a website (e.g. the school or LA's website) along with a statement setting out:

- how copies of the proposal may be obtained;
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- the date that the representation period ends;
- and the address to which objections or comments should be submitted.

A brief notice (including details on how the full proposal can be accessed e.g. the website address) must be published in a local newspaper. Within one week of the date of publication on the website, the proposer must send a copy of the proposal and the information set out in the paragraph above to the governing body and any other body or person that the proposer thinks is appropriate.

The county council considers that it has adhered to the relevant legislation and statutory Guidance.

15. Local authorities have a statutory duty to ensure sufficiency of school places.
16. **The effect on safeguarding and educational excellence.** The Department for Education's stated relevant educational priorities are:
 - Safety and wellbeing: all children and young people are protected from harm and vulnerable children are supported to succeed with opportunities as good as those for any other child.
 - Educational excellence everywhere: every child and young person can access high-quality provision, achieving to the best of his or her ability regardless of location, attainment and background.
17. In considering whether to formally approve the proposal, the Cabinet Member should be satisfied that the proposals will contribute to the accessing of excellent education provision and consider the impact on safeguarding and wellbeing. He should pay particular attention to the effect on groups that tend to under-perform including children from certain ethnic minorities and deprived backgrounds.
18. **School characteristics.** The Cabinet Member should consider whether there are any sex, race or disability discrimination issues that arise and whether there is supporting evidence to support the extension and take into account the existence of capacity elsewhere. He needs to consider the accessibility of the provision for disadvantaged groups as the provision should not unduly extend journey times or cost.
19. **Need for places.** The Cabinet Member should consider whether there is a need for the expansion and should consider the evidence presented for the

expansion. There is a strong presumption that proposals to expand popular and successful schools should be approved. If surplus capacity exists in neighbouring schools he should ask how it is planned to tackle any consequences for other schools.

20. **Funding and land.** The Cabinet Member should be satisfied that any land, premises and capital required to implement the proposals will be available.

Financial and Staff Implications

21. The physical expansion of West Witney Primary School would be funded using money the council has secured and expects to secure from housing developers, to mitigate the impact of new housing in the local area (known as Section 106 contributions). Oxfordshire County Council's contractors are working on a detailed feasibility study to identify how the physical expansion of the school can be achieved on site.
22. The accommodation requirements will be delivered by the county council. In accordance with OCC Capital Governance requirements this will be the subject to a separate Stage 2 – Full Business Case/ Project Approval in due course.
23. Where possible, subject to the constraints of Regulation 123 of the Community Infrastructure Regulations 2010 (as amended), retrospective S106 developer contributions will also be sought from planned and future housing development in the area.
24. There will be on-costs to the school for additional staff and for increased maintenance requirements. These will need to be funded from the school's delegated School Budget Share, which will increase in proportion to increases in pupil numbers. Resources for School Budget Shares are provided by government through the Dedicated Schools Grant, which will increase proportionately to increases in overall pupil numbers in Oxfordshire.

Equality and Inclusion Implications

25. The decision-maker must have regard to the Public Sector Equality Duty (PSED) of LAs/governing bodies, which requires them to have 'due regard' to the need to:
- eliminate discrimination;
 - advance equality of opportunity; and
 - foster good relations.
26. The Equality Impact Assessment of Oxfordshire's Pupil Place Plan (November 2016) identified that increasing school places at the heart of their communities has a positive impact on equalities through promoting social inclusion and minimising barriers to accessing education. There are not any sex, race or disability discrimination issues that arise from the changes being proposed.

Decision

27. Decision makers have to have regard to ‘Guidance for decision makers’ April 2016.
28. Decisions must be made within a period of two months of the end of the representation period or they must be referred to the Schools Adjudicator.
29. In considering the proposals for a school expansion, the Cabinet Member can decide to:
 - reject the proposals;
 - approve the proposals without modifications; or
 - approve the proposals with such modifications as the local authority think desirable, having consulted the governing body.

RECOMMENDATION

- 30. The Cabinet Member for Education is RECOMMENDED to approve the proposed expansion of West Witney Primary School.**

LUCY BUTLER

Director for Children’s Services

Annexes: Annex 1: Consultation leaflet
 Annex 2: Public Notice
 Annex 3: Full Proposal document

Contact Officer: Diane Cameron – School Organisation Officer, Education
 Sufficiency & Access, CEF. Tel: 07795301254

December 2016

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Consultation on a proposal to expand West Witney Primary School

14 September 2016 – 12 October 2016

West Witney Primary School is located in Witney town, in West Oxfordshire District and is part of the Witney area partnership of schools. It is a Local Authority run 1.5 form entry school, with a Published Admission Number of 45 (i.e. the school admits up to 45 children each year in to the Reception class). The school's most recent inspection by Ofsted was on 3rd February 2015 and the school was graded as Good.

The total number of children on roll at the start of September 2016 academic year was 310 from Reception to Year 6 plus a Nursery class as shown below:

Year	Nursery	Reception	Y1	Y2	Y3	Y4	Y5	Y6
Pupils	21	60	45	42	41	44	45	33

What is being proposed?

Expansion

Oxfordshire County Council, supported by the Governing Body of the school, proposes to increase the school's Published Admission Number (PAN) from 45 to 60 on a permanent basis from September 2017. This means that each year group that starts at the school would consist of up to 60 places, making a maximum total of 420 pupils across the whole school eventually in Reception to Year 6.

The year groups already in the school pre-expansion would be expected to stay at 45 in size as they move through the school, so classes of children already at the school would not need to be reorganised. The school's total numbers would grow gradually each year as 60 children are admitted into the Reception class, allowing the school to adjust to the larger size. However, should housing development lead to large numbers of older primary children moving into the area and needing school places, the school will review whether it is able to expand the older year groups as well.

Class organisation

It is the county council's policy to expand schools where possible in multiples of 15 or 30 per year group (i.e. half or a full form of entry) at a time. This helps schools organise more easily their classes across the year groups. There are many schools across the county that operate with an admission number of 60 as standard, and it means that each year incoming pupils are organised into two classes of 30 and then stay in those classes as they move up the school. The exact organisation of classes would be managed by the school. Class size is restricted by law in Key Stage 1 to a maximum of 30 children per class.

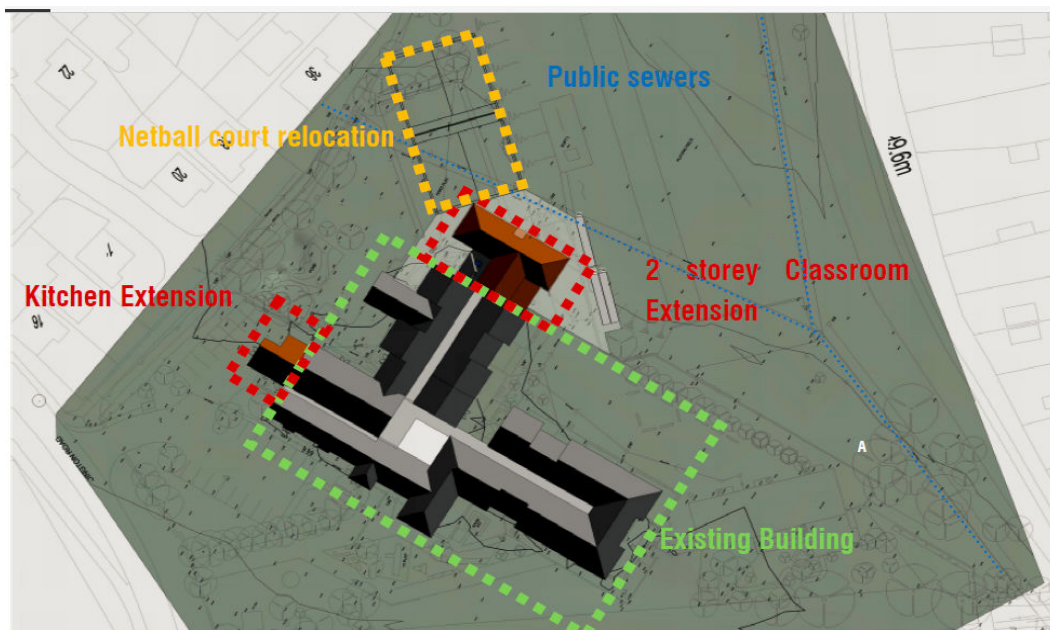
Reasons for proposal

West Witney Primary School wants to be able to meet the needs of the local community. There has been an increase in demand for places at the school and across the Witney area generally. The school now has very few spare places, and is full in most year groups. For September 2016, the school agreed with the county council to admit over its Admission Number; offering 60 places instead of 45, due to demand. All 60 places were allocated to children living half a mile or less from the school.

There is housing development anticipated to come forward in the Witney area, which is expected to increase the demand for primary school places over the next few years above that already seen. To meet the needs of the growing population in the West Witney and surrounding area, an additional half-form of entry in primary school capacity is now required. This is ahead of, and in addition to, a planned new primary school which will serve the permitted North Curbridge housing development.

Buildings

The simple site plan below shows the final approved scheme for the physical expansion of the school buildings, and is the result of collaborative working by the school governors and the county council through a feasibility study. There will also be internal remodelling works to the existing building. The scheme includes an enlarged school kitchen, additional classrooms and associated areas such as toilets, and external works.



It is expected that the cost of extending the school will be met from money the county council will secure from developers building houses in the local area.

Important points to remember

- The Chair of the Governing Body of the school has made the following statement:

On behalf of the Governing Body of West Witney Primary School, I endorse the proposal to expand the school, along the lines set out in this consultation document as part of our Strategic Intent. This includes a move to single year groups as a way to provide adequate provision for each child's development through their national curriculum year.

- This consultation is about **the principle of expanding West Witney Primary School**. It is **not** about any decisions to allocate housing development to the area made by West Oxfordshire District Council. Comments on housing development proposals need to be made direct to WODC.
- This consultation is taking place until **12 October 2016**. You have until midnight on that date to respond to us. All responses received will then be considered.
- The next step, after consideration of consultation responses, will be for a Statutory Notice to be published on the proposed expansion. Following this, the final decision rests with the county council's Cabinet Member for Children, Education & Families.

How you can respond to this consultation

This information is available online at the county council's website in the consultations section: <http://myconsultations.oxfordshire.gov.uk>. We would like to hear from you if you support this proposal as well as if you have any concerns. There are several ways you can submit your views:

- respond using the online form for this consultation, on the Oxfordshire County Council current consultations webpage at <http://myconsultations.oxfordshire.gov.uk>;
- email your response to: diane.cameron@oxfordshire.gov.uk putting WEST WITNEY EXPANSION in the subject line;
- hand in a written response to the school's reception office.

Please respond by 12 October 2016

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**OXFORDSHIRE
COUNTY COUNCIL**

PUBLIC NOTICE

Proposed Expansion of West Witney Primary School

Notice is given in accordance with The School Organisation (Prescribed Alterations to Maintained Schools) (England) Regulations 2013 that Oxfordshire County Council intends to make a prescribed alteration to West Witney Primary School, Edington Road, Witney OX28 5FZ from 01 September 2017.

The Local Authority is proposing to expand West Witney Primary School to a standard 2 form entry size, rising from the current Planned Admission Number (PAN) of 45 to one of 60 from September 2017 onward.

This Notice is an extract from the full proposal, which can be viewed under the Current Consultations listings on the Oxfordshire County Council public website at <http://www.oxfordshire.gov.uk/consultation>. Copies can also be requested by contacting:

Diane Cameron (School Organisation Officer)

Tel: 07795301254 or Email: diane.cameron@oxfordshire.gov.uk

Oxfordshire County Council, Education Sufficiency & Access, 3rd Floor, County Hall, New Road, Oxford OX1 1ND

Within four weeks from the date of publication of this Notice, any person may object to or make comments on the proposal by sending them to the Local Authority using the online feedback form located on the Oxfordshire County Council website as detailed above, or by email or post to the above addresses.

Signed: Jim Leivers, Director of Children's Services

Publication Date: 2 November 2016

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OXFORDSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL

FULL PROPOSAL

Expansion of West Witney Primary School

Notice is given in accordance with The School Organisation (Prescribed Alterations to Maintained Schools) (England) Regulations 2013 that Oxfordshire County Council intends to make a prescribed alteration to West Witney Primary School, Edington Road, Witney OX28 5FZ from 01 September 2017.

The Local Authority proposes to expand West Witney Primary School to a standard 2 form entry size, rising from the current Planned Admission Number (PAN) of 45 to one of 60 from September 2017 onward. This means that each year group that starts at the school from September 2017 onward would consist of up to 60 places, making a maximum total of 420 pupils in Reception to Year 6 across the whole school eventually.

The school's total numbers would grow gradually each year as 60 children are admitted into Reception, allowing the school to adjust to the larger size. However, should housing development lead to large numbers of older primary children moving into the area and needing school places, the school will review whether it is able to bring forward expansion of the older year groups.

Children would be admitted into two Reception classes of 30, and would stay in that single year group class as they progressed up through the school. Nursery class places will continue to be offered at the school and this current proposal does not set out any change relating to the Nursery class.

Expansion will enable the school to meet increased demand for places from the local population: the school is currently full in most year groups. For September 2016, the school agreed with the county council to admit over its PAN; offering 60 places instead of 45, as without this there would have been too few Reception places in Witney. All 60 places were allocated to children living half a mile or less from the school.

There is housing development anticipated to come forward in the Witney area, which is expected to further increase the demand for primary school places over the next few years above that already seen. To meet the needs of the growing population in west Witney and surrounding area, an additional half-form of entry in primary school capacity is now required. This is ahead of, and in addition to, a planned new primary school which will serve the Local Plan strategic North Curbridge/West Witney housing development.

The school will benefit from investment in expansion of the buildings, and the increase in pupil funding resulting from a permanent rise in pupil numbers means the school can remain financially viable long-term, without compromising its standard of education.

The estimated cost of expansion is £2.3m, and this will primarily be funded from S106 developer contributions received from nearby housing developments. Future housing developments may also be required to contribute.

This full proposal can be viewed under the Current Consultations listings on the Oxfordshire County Council public website at <http://www.oxfordshire.gov.uk/consultation>. Copies can also be requested by contacting:

Diane Cameron (School Organisation Officer)

Oxfordshire County Council, Education Sufficiency & Access, 3rd Floor, County Hall, New Road, Oxford OX1 1ND

Tel: 07795301254 or Email: diane.cameron@oxfordshire.gov.uk

Any person may object to or make comments (representations) on the proposed expansion by sending them to the Local Authority using the online feedback form located on the Oxfordshire County Council website as detailed above, or by email or post to the above address.

All representations must be received by midnight on 30 November 2016.