PROPOSAL TO EXPAND PALMARSH PRIMARY SCHOOL, ST GEORGE’S PLACE, HYTHE, KENT, CT21 6NE

Introduction
Kent County Council is proposing to permanently expand Palmarsh Primary School to 1FE by September 2018 (an increase of 105 places).

Contact Details
The proposal to expand Palmarsh Primary School is being published by Kent County Council, County Hall, Maidstone, Kent ME14 1XQ. Contact Name and Address: David Adams, Area Education Officer, Kroner House, Eurogate Business Park, Ashford, Kent, TN24 8XU.

School details and pupil numbers
Palmarsh Primary School, St Georges Place, Hythe CT21 6NE is a maintained community Primary School. There are presently 134 pupils on roll. Ordinarily the School would provide 105 places.

Description of alteration and evidence of demand
In accordance with section 19(1) of the Education and Inspections Act 2006 Kent County Council intends to make the following prescribed alteration to Palmarsh Primary School:

- To expand the School to 1FE (210 places) with effect from September 2018.

School rolls in Hythe schools have been increasing, a consequence of not just large Reception Year cohorts entering the schools, but also admission of older pupils. The Martello Lakes development at Nickolls Quarry in Hythe has permission for 1050 homes. This development will add to the pressure for school places over the next 10-15 years. It is expected to produce around 300 primary age pupils when the development is complete.

As pupil numbers have increased in Hythe, Palmarsh Primary School has restructured to enable it to admit further pupils and at present the School can accept up to 140 pupils across all year groups. However, this will not mitigate the demand for places arising from the 1050 new homes in Martello Lakes. Therefore a formal expansion of Palmarsh Primary School is required from September 2018 to ensure that children in Hythe can attend a school as local to their home as possible.

Palmarsh Primary School has 132 pupils on roll (as at October 2016). This is expected to rise to 150 by September 2017 and 164 by September 2018. At this point the School will not be able to accommodate the predicted pupil numbers in its present accommodation. The proposal is to expand Palmarsh Primary School, initially to 1FE, with the intention that the School will eventually become 2FE (420 pupils). Therefore, during the public consultation the Local Authority explained that this will be the first phase of a gradual expansion. This Phase will include the relocation of the principal access to Jubilee Close.

Phase 1 will provide accommodation for 210 pupils in total, by September 2018. Phase 2 will expand the School to 1.5FE; forecasts would suggest that this will be no earlier than 2020. The final phase will be to expand to 2FE. This final phase of construction will be to expand to 2FE. This final phase of construction will be
dependent on the rate of house building. Consultations and statutory proposals on expanding the School in line with Phases 2 and 3 will be initiated as appropriate.

The expansion will offer up to 105 additional places in the area which reflects KCC’s need to increase the number of school places across the Shepway District from 8,565 to 8,903 by 2019-20, as set out in the Commissioning Plan for Education Provision in Kent 2016-20, a copy of which is available at this link:


Objectives (and how the wider proposal would increase educational standards and parental choice)

The Shepway District section of the Kent Commissioning Plan for Education Provision 2016-20 has identified a significant pressure in primary places in Hythe with the development at Martello Lakes. Palmarsh Primary School was judged Good by OFSTED in April 2016. By expanding Palmarsh Primary School local families will be able to secure places at a local Good school.

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

The gradual expansion of the School would ensure a minimum impact on other schools and academies in the locality.

Impact on the community

More local families will be able to gain a place at a good local school and fewer families will need to travel to gain a school place thus reducing traffic on Hythe roads.

A new entrance is proposed through Jubilee Close. There will be a pick up and drop off facility. This will relieve some of the traffic pressures around the School site found at the beginning and end of the day. Additional parking spaces will be provided for staff on the School site. It is recognised that this will impact negatively on the residents of Jubilee Close, but will benefit a greater number of residents in St George’s Close, the current entrance.

Special educational needs (SEN) provision

As the roll increases staffing will be increased to provide the support needed by all pupils regardless of their needs.

Travel

The School will revisit their School travel plan as part of the planning process should the matter go ahead.

Consultation

A public consultation was carried out by the Governing Body between 12 September 2016 and 10 October 2016. A public meeting was held at the School on 19 September 2016. The outcome of the consultation was reported to KCC’s Cabinet Member for Education and Health Reform on 17 January 2017. The Report on the outcome of the consultation, including summaries of the public meeting and responses received, is available at this link:

http://consultations.kent.gov.uk/consult.ti/PalmarshSchool
Project costs and indication of how these will be met, including how long term value for money will be achieved
The cost of Phase 1 of the project is estimated to be in the region of £2.2m. £1.3m will be paid by the developer of Martello Lakes. Residual funding will come from KCC’s Education and Young People’s Services capital budget.

Implementation and any proposed stages for implementation
Should the Cabinet Member for Education and Health Reform agree that the proposal can go ahead the School will admit up to 30 Year R pupils with effect from 1 September 2018.

The procedure for responses: support; objections and comments
A Public Notice was published in a local newspaper on 8 February 2017. The Notice is displayed at all main entrances to the School, in Shepway District Council’s reception area and in the local library. It is also available on KCC’s website: https://www.kent.gov.uk/education-and-children/schools/school-consultations

Within four weeks from the date of publication, any person may send in a response supporting, objecting or commenting on the proposal to David Adams, Area Education Officer, Kroner House, Eurogate Business Park, Ashford, Kent TN24 8XU; or email school.consultations@kent.gov.uk. The final date for sending in written representations is 11am, 08 March 2017.