

The City of Edinburgh Council

10:00, Thursday, 12 March 2020

Outcomes of the Statutory Consultation Proposing to Realign the Catchment Areas of Clovenstone Primary School, Sighthill Primary School and Wester Hailes Education Centre to Accommodate the Proposed Edinburgh Park and Curriemuirend Development Sites.

Item number
Executive/routine
Wards
Council Commitments

1. Recommendations

- 1.1 Approve that the catchment boundaries of Currie Primary School, Gylemuir Primary School, Broomhouse Primary School, Sighthill Primary School, Juniper Green Primary School, Clovenstone Primary School, Forrester High School, Wester Hailes Education Centre and Currie High School be realigned as per those set out in the consultation paper.

Alistair Gaw

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2. Executive Summary

- 2.1 On 16 August 2019 the Education, Children and Families Committee approved that a statutory consultation be undertaken proposing to Realign the Catchment Areas of Clovenstone Primary School, Sighthill Primary School and Wester Hailes Education Centre to Accommodate the Proposed Edinburgh Park and Curriemuirend Development Sites. A statutory consultation was undertaken between 26 August 2019 and 7 October 2019. The purpose of this report is to advise on the outcome of the consultation and make recommendations regarding how the proposals should be progressed.
- 2.2 The report recommends that the consultation proposals should be progressed, and the changes proposed be implemented from 2 April 2020.

3. Background

- 3.1 The Edinburgh Park and Curriemuirend Park development sites are both identified in the Local Development Plan as potential housing sites. Neither of these sites is currently occupied by a residential address. The changes proposed by the Council are to make sure that any future developments would be better aligned with available school capacity.
- 3.2 On 16 August 2019 the Education, Children and Families Committee approved that a consultation be undertaken proposing that the catchment Areas of Clovenstone Primary School, Sighthill Primary School and Wester Hailes Education Centre be realigned to accommodate the Edinburgh Park and Curriemuirend Development sites.
- 3.3 In summary, the statutory consultation paper proposed the following:

- The Edinburgh Park area of Currie Primary School and Currie High School's catchment area would be realigned with Sighthill Primary School and Wester Hailes Education Centre;
- The Bankhead Industrial Estate area of Broomhouse Primary School and Forrester High School's catchment area would be realigned with Sighthill Primary School and Wester Hailes Education Centre;
- A minor section of Gylemuir Primary School and Forrester High School's catchment area would be realigned with Sighthill Primary School and Wester Hailes Education Centre;
- The Curriemuirend Park area of Juniper Green Primary School and Currie High School's catchment area would be realigned with Clovenstone Primary School and Wester Hailes Education Centre;

4. Main report

- 4.1 The statutory consultation period ran from 26 August 2019 to 7 October 2019. The [full statutory consultation paper](#) is available online. A copy of the full statutory consultation paper is also available in the Elected Members lounge for reference.
- 4.2 A public meeting was held during the consultation period at Wester Hailes Education Centre on 19 September 2019. Only one member of the public was in attendance. The meeting was independently chaired and Council officials answered questions from the attendee following a short presentation. Minutes of each meeting are included in Appendix 1.
- 4.3 Representations on the proposal were invited by letter, email or through a specifically designed online response questionnaire. 6 representations were received. The number of completed online questionnaires was 3, with 3 comments also received by email. Two of the email submissions have been excluded from consideration as they were general queries regarding personal circumstances rather than a direct response to the consultation proposals themselves. The remaining email response was from a developer with an interest in the area while the 3 online responses were from local residents and parents.

Further Analysis of Responses Received

- 4.4 One of the online responses received was in support of the proposals but contained no comment. The remaining two online responses were opposed to the proposal but only one contained a comment. However, this comment was an appeal for Curriemuirend Park not to be developed which is outside the scope of this consultation.
- 4.5 The email received from the interested developer was supportive of the consultation and did not express an opinion either way other than to requested that, should Scottish Ministers be minded to support the development at East Millburn Tower consideration be given to aligning Edinburgh Park with that new school as it would be closer than Sighthill Primary School. This is outside the scope of this

consultation as currently East Milburn Tower is an unallocated site. However, should the East Milburn Tower development progress a statutory consultation would be required to allow the establishment of a new school and its catchment areas.

Education Scotland

- 4.6 As required by the Schools (Consultation) (Scotland) Act 2010 as amended by the Children and Young People (Scotland) Act 2014, all the responses received during the public consultation were made available to Education Scotland for their consideration. Education Scotland visited schools directly affected by the statutory consultation and discussed the educational aspects with staff, parents and pupils before producing their final report. A report from Education Scotland providing their response to the proposal was submitted in November 2019. This report is attached in Appendix 2.
- 4.7 The conclusion of Education Scotland is that the proposal has clear long term educational benefits. The report states that “*The proposal is a sensible and practical solution to the possibility of increased population in the area as a result of potential future housing developments. Whilst there are few immediate educational benefits, there is potential for these to be realised in the future.*” The responses received by Education Scotland from stakeholders who met with their Inspectors were fully supportive of the proposals.

Response to Education Scotland

- 4.8 The Act requires that the Council’s Outcome of Consultation report include ‘a statement of the authority’s response to Education Scotland’s report’. However, Education Scotland noted no requirement for the Council to make any changes to the proposal, suggested no changes or actions and were fully supportive of the proposal. Accordingly, no statement is provided other than to acknowledge Education Scotland’s support in this matter.

Conclusions

- 4.9 As the proposals in the consultation document affect no existing residential properties, no existing families, no existing pupils or even nursery pupils; and as the long-term benefits of managing the school estate in this way are recognised by Education Scotland, it is concluded that the proposals should be progressed as set out in the consultation paper.

5. Next Steps

- 5.1 If the recommendations set out in this paper are approved by Council, the catchment boundary changes proposed would be implemented on 2 April 2020, providing the minimum 3 week window required by the Schools (Consultation) (Scotland) Act 2010 as amended by the Children and Young People (Scotland) Act 2014 between the decision to approve the proposals and their implementation.

6. Financial impact

- 6.1 There are no financial implications arising directly from these proposals.
- 6.2 However, an effectively managed estate will minimise surplus space and reduce revenue costs. It will ensure that demand for school places can be better accommodated within the existing estate and reduce the potential requirement to invest in the reorganisation or expansion of facilities in future years.

7. Stakeholder/Community Impact

- 7.1 The statutory consultation to which this paper refers has been undertaken according to the requirements set out in the Schools (Consultation) (Scotland) Act 2010 as amended by the Children and Young People (Scotland) Act 2014.
- 7.2 Should the Council reject the recommendations in this paper the status quo will remain.
- 7.3 Should the Council wish to implement a significant variant of the proposals that have been the subject of this consultation process a new consultation process would be required.

8. Background reading/external references

- 8.1 Education, Children and Families Committee, 16 August 2019, "[Statutory Consultations Proposing to Establish a new Maybury Primary School, Replace Newcraighall Primary School and undertake catchment changes at Edinburgh Park and Curriemurend](#)"

9. Appendices

- 9.1 Appendix1 Minutes of Public Meetings
- 9.2 Appendix 2 Education Scotland Report

Record of Meeting

Proposal to Realign the Catchment Areas of Clovenstone Primary School, Sighthill Primary School and Wester Hailes Education Centre to Accommodate the Proposed Edinburgh Park and Curriemuirend Development Sites

Public Consultation Meeting held at 6.30 pm, Thursday 19 September 2019, Wester Hailes Education Centre, Edinburgh

Present: 1 member of the public

In Attendance: Tom Wood (Independent Chair), Robbie Crockatt (Learning Estate Planning Manager) and Blair Ritchie (Committee Services).

1. Introduction

Tom Wood introduced himself and advised that he had been invited by the City of Edinburgh Council as an independent person to chair the public consultation meeting. Mr Wood thanked everyone for coming along and explained his role as well as introducing the key officers in attendance. It was explained that the consultation would continue until 7 October 2019 and the public had the opportunity to feed in comments until then.

The Schools (Consultation) (Scotland) Act 2010 required the Council to conduct a public consultation ahead of a report on the proposals going to the City of Edinburgh Council for consideration in March 2020. The public consultation would provide people with the opportunity to express their views and feed directly into the consultation process.

2. Presentation/Proposal

Robbie Crockatt delivered a presentation that provided the rationale for and the implications of the proposal to realign the catchment areas of Clovenstone Primary School and Wester Hailes Education Centre to accommodate the proposed Edinburgh Park and Curriemuirend Development Sites.

Requirement for Change

The Council's Local Development Plan identified the Edinburgh Park and Curriemuirend sites as appropriate for mixed use or residential development. Despite being located more than 3 miles away and on the opposite side of the M8, the majority of the Edinburgh Park development site was currently within the catchment areas of Currie Primary School and Currie High School.

Currie High School was due to be rebuilt and extended as part of the Council's Wave4 programme. Accordingly, projections suggest that it would have the capacity to accommodate the Edinburgh Park and Curriemuirend developments. However, in addition to the geographic advantages of realigning these areas with Wester Hailes Education Centre, there remained considerable scope for future growth within Currie High School's catchment area and it was considered that making better use of the capacity available in Wester Hailes Education Centre would be a more efficient solution.

Accordingly, the draft consultation paper proposed that the catchment areas of Clovenstone Primary School, Sighthill Primary School and Wester Hailes Education Centre be extended to incorporate the potential housing development sites allocated in the Local Development Plan at Edinburgh Park and Curriemuirend.

Proposal

In August 2019 the Council agreed that a statutory consultation be carried out proposing that the potential development sites at Edinburgh Park and Curriemuirend Park be aligned with available school capacity.

At Edinburgh Park, there were currently no residential properties, it had been identified in the Local Development Plan as appropriate for mixed use or residential development and the Proposal of Application Notice received for 1,800 flats.

At Curriemuirend Park, there were currently no residential properties, it had been identified in the Local Development Plan as appropriate for mixed use or residential development, there was the potential for 150-180 new homes and there were no known proposals for development at this time.

The statutory consultation would be in place until Monday 7 October 2019 and the outcome of the consultation report would ultimately be considered by the Council in March 2020.

3. Questions/Comments

Question 1 – A member of the public indicated that he lived in Clovenstone Gardens and was interested in the Curriemuirend part of the proposals. He was asking for help to keep this area "green" as if more people moved in to the area, this would cause chaos. For example, he had been followed by two teenagers who wanted to take his laptop and when he refused they threw stones at him.

He thought that it was unrealistic to develop this area as housing for people in need. This area was not suitable for this and he had discussed this with the local inhabitants.

It was pleasant to see green fields and the sea. If other people moved in to this land, then it would be great disappointment to local community.

Answer – This meeting was not about planning consent, but about school catchment issues. At present, there were no plans to build houses. The question to be addressed was what schools would the children attend, if houses were built.

The Authority was not trying to make it easier to build more houses. This area was included in the Local Development Plan and if there was potential for development, the Authority had to ensure that there were schools to attend. The route from Clovestone Primary School to Currymuirend was straightforward, therefore, it made sense to allocate this area to Clovestone Primary School, which had capacity.

Question 2 – Was it the case that the Authority wanted to relocate Currie High School to this area?

Answer – This was not the case. Last year there was an informal consultation. Now there would be a rebuilding programme, whereby Currie High School would be re-built on its present site. Wester Hailes Education Centre was one of the of schools in programme for re-development.

Question 3 – For a catchment area, this area had good potential. However, instead of more houses, people needed greenspace. This area was beneficial to the local residents in its present state.

Answer – Any decision to build houses would be made by the Planning Committee. Questions about this should be made to them. The purpose of this meeting was to make a note of meeting, in respect of catchment issues, which would be passed to the Full Council.

Question 4 – Local people needed some area for recreational purposes. Instead of walking through the Plaza, teenagers needed somewhere healthier.

Answer – If there was development of the site, there would be provision for green space. The Authority would ask the all the residents of Wester Hailes what kind of facilities they needed, which might result in better facilities than those presently available. The wider consultation would encompass education and other issues, and would start early next year.

Comment – This was encouraging. Instead of using the land for residential purposes, it would be more beneficial for locals to have facilities such as more supermarkets. At present, it was necessary to walk half an hour to the nearest supermarket and the ones available were not ideal.

Answer/Comment – The member of the public was asked if he had any additional

questions/comments, which would be included in the note of meeting. It was important to emphasise that no-one had applied to build houses.

Question 5 – In the New Health Centre, there had been a number of photos of the vibrancy of the area. It was hoped that this consultation would not be a stepping stone to starting a development process.

Answer – This was not the case as the consultation process was meant to include contingency plans for the possibility of planning permission being granted. There was a legal requirement to hold these consultation meetings.

Comment – The member of the public indicated that he had bought his flat, but if houses were built, the prices might be marked higher to allow developers to make more profit. He also thought that high property prices, might deter people from moving in to the area. When he his son was four, he checked several schools and certain schools were better options.

Additional Comment – The member of the public indicated that if there was a housing development and the prices rose, it would not affect him as he had bought his flat. However, he thought that that a community school would not be option for half of the local population. He wanted his son to have a better school and he wanted him to transfer to Currie High School. Additionally, he thought that there were concerns over safety at some of the schools.

He indicated that he did not agree with the current proposals and at least two of his friends and neighbours agreed with him.

4. Conclusion

Mr Wood brought questions to a close and thanked the member of the public for his contributions which were extremely valuable and would be made part of the report.

Robbie Crockatt reminded everyone that they had until 7 October 2019 to make any further contributions.

APPENDIX 2 Education Scotland Report