

Education, Children and Families Committee

10am, Tuesday, 9 December 2014

Primary School Capacity Pressure in South Edinburgh

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| Item number | 7.5 |
| Report number | |
| Executive/routine | Executive |
| Wards | 8 (Colinton/Fairmilehead), 9 (Fountainbridge/Craiglockhart), 10 (Meadows/Morningside), 11 (City Centre) and 15 (Southside/Newington) |

Executive summary

The area to the south side of the city centre has traditionally experienced pressure for primary school places with schools having had high occupancy levels during a period of declining rolls. Three primary schools - South Morningside, James Gillespie's and Bruntsfield - are predominantly affected by this issue; all operate from constrained sites with no dedicated playing fields and the scope to extend capacity on their existing sites is severely limited.

This issue was the subject of a report to Committee on [4 March 2014](#) which detailed the capacity and accommodation issues facing the three schools in the area and identified a range of potential options to address these in both the short and long term. Extensive consultation has been undertaken with each school community regarding these options and any other potential solutions identified.

The purpose of this report is to update Committee on the outcome of the consultation regarding the long term issues in this area and the proposed next step to undertake a statutory consultation regarding the three options which have been identified to address these issues. A further report will be taken to Committee on 19 May 2015 to set out the detail of each option and seek approval for the proposed statutory consultation.

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Primary School Capacity Pressure in South Edinburgh

Recommendations

- 1.1 Note the content of this report and the intention to take a report to Committee on 19 May 2015 to provide a further update and seek approval for a statutory consultation process to be undertaken regarding options to address the long term accommodation issues in this area.
- 1.2 Note the intention to undertake discussions with Health and Social Care regarding arrangements for the transfer of the Deanbank Resource Centre and Oaklands residential care home sites so that site options are available to deliver whatever solution is the approved outcome of the statutory consultation process.

Background

- 2.1 The area to the south side of the city centre has traditionally experienced pressure for primary school places with schools having had high occupancy levels during a period of declining rolls. This necessitated the requirement for additional accommodation; including the provision of temporary units and annexes, some of which still remain.
- 2.2 Three primary schools - South Morningside, James Gillespie's and Bruntsfield - are predominantly affected by this issue; all operate from constrained sites with no dedicated playing fields and the scope to extend capacity on their existing sites is severely limited.
- 2.3 This issue was the subject of a previous report to Committee on [4 March 2014](#) which set out in detail the capacity and accommodation issues facing the schools in the south Edinburgh area and identified a range of potential options to address these in both the short and long term. Committee noted that solutions require to be found to address both the short and long term accommodation pressures in the south Edinburgh area and that consultation and engagement would be undertaken with the three school communities to consider options to address these pressures.
- 2.4 Since March extensive consultation and engagement has been undertaken with each school community regarding these options, and any other potential solutions which were identified, to establish preferred options to address both the interim and long term issues. Working groups consisting of Council officers, school management and parent council representatives were formed at each school to consider possible solutions.

- 2.5 On [20 May 2014](#) Committee received an update on the progress made by each working group to identify solutions to the immediate accommodation pressures facing each of the three schools. Committee approved that accommodation may require to be provided in future years in all three schools to respond to capacity pressures and also approved the proposed interim solution to address the accommodation pressures each school was expected to face in August 2015 and beyond.
- 2.6 An update regarding the interim solutions developed for potential delivery by August 2015 at the three schools to address potential accommodation pressures should they be expected to arise is provided in a separate report on the agenda for this Committee. That report also seeks final approval of the proposed interim solution for South Morningside Primary School.
- 2.7 The purpose of this report is to update Committee on the outcome of the consultation regarding the three options which have been identified to address the long term issues and the proposed next step which is to undertake a statutory consultation during 2015 on all three options. A further report will be taken to Committee on 19 May 2015 to set out the detail of each option and seek approval for the proposed statutory consultation.

Main report

Interim Solutions Identified to Address Accommodation Pressures

- 3.1 Interim solutions have been developed, in consultation with each respective working group, for potential delivery by August 2015 at the three schools, to address accommodation pressures should they be expected to arise. These can be delivered within short timescales and existing site constraints however, in the long term, they do not address some of the more fundamental accommodation issues which exist at some of these schools. The issues that remain, or are created by the interim solution for each school, are set out below.

Bruntsfield Primary School

- 3.2 A feasibility study has been completed to consider how three further classroom spaces might be delivered at Bruntsfield Primary School which may be necessary to address rising rolls and has identified that these could be created through the internal reconfiguration of existing spaces. The outcome of this study has been discussed and agreed with members of the working group.
- 3.3 Whilst roll projections suggest that the delivery of an additional classroom space will not be required until August 2016, plans to undertake the necessary work will be developed for delivery by August 2015 should that ultimately prove necessary. This work could eventually provide Bruntsfield Primary School with a 21 classroom capacity.

James Gillespie's Primary School

- 3.4 The working group at James Gillespie's Primary School concluded that the provision of a permanent four classroom building over two storeys would be the appropriate interim solution to accommodation pressures. This would increase the capacity of the school from 16 to 18 classes and provide two additional General Purpose spaces. A design for the new building has been developed with the planning application having recently been submitted.
- 3.5 As will be the case with all schools involved in the rising rolls programme approval to proceed with the construction of the new building will be granted only if P1 registrations in January 2015 indicate that additional accommodation will definitely be required to allow the P1 intake in August 2015 to be accommodated.
- 3.6 However, while the new building would provide the school with the accommodation necessary to provide sufficient places for its current and projected catchment demand, there will remain an ongoing requirement to accommodate classes in the existing temporary unit. Suitability issues would also remain regarding the size of some of the classrooms in the main building. The working group welcomed the new building as part of a strategy that would eventually allow the school to return to a 14 class capacity (double stream) in the future through:
- removing the existing two class temporary unit; and
 - re-configuring the six small classrooms in the main building to create four standard size classrooms.

South Morningside Primary School

- 3.7 The Working Group at South Morningside Primary School identified two feasible options to address the accommodation issues that have existed at the school for a number of years and which have been exacerbated by rising rolls in the area. These were either the replacement of the two existing temporary units on the South Morningside site with a new unit incorporating six classroom spaces or the establishment of a P1 and P2 annexe building at the Deanbank Resource Centre. Detailed consideration of both options is provided in a separate report on the agenda for this Committee which also seeks final approval of the proposed interim solution for South Morningside Primary School to be the creation of a temporary annexe at Deanbank.
- 3.8 The Deanbank Resource Centre is a day centre for adults with learning disabilities and autism which is owned and managed by Health and Social Care. The Centre is approximately a 1km walk from the South Morningside Primary School site and will become vacant from the end of March 2015 when the services it provides are relocated to new accommodation. The building will then undergo significant internal reconfiguration and refurbishment to provide the necessary school accommodation for P1 and P2 classes from August 2015.

3.9 While this interim solution is preferable to the current position and will improve the quality and standard of accommodation available at South Morningside Primary School, the creation of a new annexe building is contrary to Council policy which has been to withdraw from annexes to improve management, pupil integration and the security of establishments.

Long-term Accommodation Issues in the South Edinburgh Area

3.10 The last report to Committee on [4 March 2014](#) set out in detail the capacity and accommodation issues facing schools in the south Edinburgh area. In summary it identified the following key factors:

- The existing capacity within the area includes South Morningside Primary School operating with two classes in an annexe building (Cluny Church), four classes in temporary units and nursery provision in a leased church hall (Fairmilehead). It also includes James Gillespie's Primary School operating with two classes in temporary units and six class spaces which are smaller than the standard size which would be expected;
- All three primary schools – particularly Bruntsfield and South Morningside – operate from constrained sites with small play areas, no dedicated playing fields and limited opportunities to extend the on site accommodation;
- There are only minor opportunities for catchment review with neighbouring schools which, on their own, would be insufficient to address the pressure on these schools;
- High P1 intakes are expected to remain steady before declining; however the impact of these intakes will be increasing school rolls until 2019. The most recent population projections published earlier this year suggest P1 intakes may remain at a higher level for longer before starting to decline.

3.11 The interim accommodation solutions identified for each school in the south Edinburgh area address several of these issues e.g. the projected demand for places can now be met through the additional accommodation to be provided at each of the schools. However, while this is an improved position, subject to the final approval by Committee of the preferred interim option for South Morningside Primary school the capacity in the area from August 2015 will still include six classes in an annexe building, two classes in temporary units and the same reliance on a leased church hall to provide nursery places.

3.12 The previous report to Committee on [4 March 2014](#) set out some of the complexities associated with identifying a long-term solution to the accommodation issues in the area and identified three possible options to address these issues:

1. Create a new primary school in south Edinburgh.
2. Create a permanent annexe for South Morningside Primary School.
3. Identify capacity solutions at each school.

Site Options

- 3.13 One of the key requirements for options 1 and 2 is a site in a suitable location which is of sufficient size to accommodate either a new primary school or an annexe. Investigatory work regarding possible sites has continued however options in the area are very limited and some possibilities have no certainty regarding availability and the timescales within which this might arise.
- 3.14 The best site option in the area has emerged only relatively recently and would be a combination of the site of Deanbank Resource Centre and the directly adjacent site on which the Oaklands residential care home is currently located. This site is considered to be appropriate for an educational establishment and, as it is in Council ownership through Health and Social Care, would offer a high level of certainty and control regarding both availability and the timescales to deliver a new annexe or school.
- 3.15 Oaklands is one of Health and Social Care's older facilities and there is a desire to replace it with a new facility on a different site. Whilst the business case for the provision of a new facility assumes a receipt for the combined Oaklands and Deanbank site; no business case has yet been considered, or approved, by the appropriate Committee and the full funding package which would allow this to be progressed is not yet in place. It is fully recognised that a new care home would have to be delivered before the Oaklands site could be vacated.
- 3.16 In order to implement the interim accommodation solution for South Morningside Primary School, it has been recommended that Children and Families lease the Deanbank Resource Centre site from Health and Social Care. It is proposed that discussions commence between Children and Families and Health and Social Care to consider options, value and timing for the purchase of the combined site which will also allow Health and Social Care to progress the business case which will be required for the provision of a new facility.
- 3.17 The size of site for any new (or replacement) school is prescribed in the School Premises (General Requirements and Standards) (Scotland) Regulations 1967 and the 1973 and 1979 amendments to those regulations. For a new double stream primary school with capacity for a further 40 pupils in the nursery, the total site size should be 1.9 hectares comprising two elements for which the appropriate sizes are defined separately:
- A main school site on which the actual school buildings are located of not less than 1.3 hectares (of which 0.1 hectares relates to the nursery); and
 - An area for playing fields of not less than 0.6 hectares.
- 3.18 In certain circumstances, a smaller site area for either element can be provided with the consent of the Scottish Government subject to it being agreed that it would be impractical or unreasonable to apply the standards within the legislation. For the provision of an annexe a smaller minimum site area may apply depending on the number of pupils for which it is intended.

- 3.19 The regulations do not actually require that playing fields (or pitches) are adjacent to the actual school building but that they are *available* to the school i.e. could be elsewhere and off-site. In Edinburgh there are many schools where the maximum areas for playing fields are not met however the city complies with the regulations by virtue of the extensive alternative pitch provision which is available to schools throughout the city. The potential to share the adjacent pitch/grassed area with St Peter's RC Primary School also exists. Taking the area of such off-site facilities into consideration the minimum requirement would therefore be a site of 1.2 hectares for a primary school alone, 1.3 hectares including a nursery.
- 3.20 The total area of the combined Deanbank and Oaklands site is approximately 0.9 hectares. As this would not comply with the relevant minimum school site size regulations for a double stream primary school, or that including a nursery, the consent of the Scottish Government would be required. The position regarding any annexe option would be dependent on the intended pupil capacity however the consent of the Scottish Government may also be required.
- 3.21 However it is considered that a case can be demonstrated that it would be impractical or unreasonable to apply the standards within the legislation on this occasion. Recent experience in considering design options for other primary schools in the city has suggested that a site size of 1.3 hectares could provide an appropriate environment for a primary school and nursery of this size and also incorporate provision for a small pitch adjacent to the school buildings. Excluding the provision of a pitch, a site area of 0.9 hectares should be sufficient to provide an appropriate environment for a double stream primary school and, if necessary, an associated nursery.
- 3.22 While there are significant issues which remain to be resolved in determining the funding for the acquisition of any site and agreeing an appropriate method of transfer, securing the Deanbank and, depending on the option, also the adjacent Oaklands site would remove a major obstacle to the feasibility of all three options for a long term solution being delivered.
- 3.23 On the assumption that either the Deanbank or the combined site can be secured, the three options identified in the report to Committee on [4 March 2014](#) have been developed to take account of the proposed site and are summarised as follows:
1. Establish **a new primary school in south Edinburgh** on the combined Deanbank and Oakland sites. The existing Deanbank building could either be incorporated into the design or demolished once an entirely new school had been constructed.
 2. Establish **a permanent annexe for South Morningside Primary School** with the school increasing to become four streams with P1-P3 classes being based at an expanded annexe on the combined Deanbank and Oakland

sites. The existing Deanbank building could either be incorporated into the design or demolished once an entirely new annexe had been constructed.

3. Deliver **capacity solutions at each school** with the interim solutions proposed at each school becoming the long-term solutions other than the additional requirement to provide a new gym at the Deanbank annexe which would require to be retained as a permanent annexe. Development of the existing South Morningside Primary School site has been considered but discounted.
- 3.24 Further information regarding each option is provided in Appendix 1. Detailed feasibility studies now require to be progressed to fully inform each option and the associated costs.

Early Years and Childcare

- 3.25 The Children and Young People (Scotland) Act 2014 sets out the requirement to expand free nursery provision from 475 hours to 600 hours a year for all three and four year olds and for certain two year olds.
- 3.26 The Scottish Government has provided additional capital funding to respond to the necessity to deliver additional capacity across the estate as a result of these new requirements. The additional capital funding already confirmed as being available is £7,498,218 with further funding likely to be provided. On [11 September 2014](#) Committee approved the use of part of this additional funding to progress priority projects involving the replacement and/or expansion of the early years provision at five key locations across the City.
- 3.27 An officer working group is carrying out further analysis to review early years provision across the city and establish recommendations for use of the remaining funding which will be reported to the next meeting of the Education, Children and Families Committee on 3 March 2015 for consideration.
- 3.28 This analysis will focus on the expansion of services to meet demand combined with, where feasible, any possible rationalisation of the number of sites and facilities currently in operation. The area in south Edinburgh is part of this review to identify the capacity required to provide early learning and childcare in the future. The outcome of this review will inform the extent to which either existing or future accommodation will require to be expanded or created and will be considered during the preparation of the statutory consultation paper for south Edinburgh.

Catchment Changes

- 3.29 For each option an initial analysis has been undertaken to consider the scale and area of the catchment changes which would be required. Further detailed analysis now requires to be undertaken to allow the exact implications of all options to be determined.
- 3.30 Under option 1 the level of catchment change necessary would be the most significant requiring that the catchment areas of Bruntsfield, James Gillespie's

and South Morningside Primary Schools all be realigned to create the catchment for the new primary school. All three existing primary catchment areas would be reduced in size; James Gillespie's and South Morningside by approximately a third. The inclusion of Bruntsfield Primary School is largely for reasons of geography rather than to address accommodation pressures at that school.

- 3.31 Under option 2 the required catchment change would result in approximately one third of the James Gillespie's Primary School catchment population transferring to an enlarged South Morningside Primary School. However, as Deanbank/Oaklands would be an annexe rather than the main school site, the building's position on the catchment boundary with Bruntsfield Primary School would be less of an issue. Accordingly, there would be no requirement to involve Bruntsfield Primary School in the catchment changes.
- 3.32 Under option 3 the catchment change proposed would simply be to realign the boundary between South Morningside and James Gillespie's Primary Schools so that the Deanbank/Oaklands site fell within the South Morningside Primary School catchment area. No other properties would be affected.
- 3.33 For all options there would also be implications for secondary school catchment boundaries.

Pupil Transfer

- 3.34 Only option 1 would require that some pupils had to transfer from their existing school to a new school; this would be necessary to allow the new school to be populated at all year stages. Catchment change alone would not be sufficient to achieve this as conventionally a catchment change affects only pupils arriving at P1 stage. The mechanisms by which pupils would transfer will require to be developed in consultation with each of the primary school working groups.

Statutory Consultation

- 3.35 Each option would involve a change which would require a statutory consultation to be undertaken and the Schools (Consultation) (Scotland) Act 2010, as amended by the Children and Young People (Scotland) Act 2014, sets out the statutory consultation requirements.
- 3.36 The breadth and depth of the consultation process which will be required for each of the options considered in this paper is extensive. Due to the number of issues which require to be addressed, the differing impact which some options will have on each school and the number of people affected, it is recommended that a full statutory consultation process encompassing all three options is progressed in order to get as full a representation of views as possible from the school communities of all affected schools.
- 3.37 The statutory consultees for such a consultation are prescribed as follows:
- the Parent Council of the affected school;
 - the parents of the pupils at any affected school;

- the parents of any children expected to attend any affected school within two years of the date of publication of the proposal paper;
 - the pupils at any affected school (in so far as the education authority considers them to be of a suitable age and maturity);
 - the staff (teaching and other) at any affected school;
 - any trade union which appears to the education authority to be representative of the staff (teaching and other) at any affected school;
 - the community councils (if any);
 - the Roman Catholic Church; and
 - any other users of any affected school that the Council considers relevant.
- 3.38 As the catchment areas of South Morningside, James Gillespie's and Bruntsfield Primary Schools and those of the related secondary schools would all be affected by one, or more, of the three options these would all be affected schools and would be statutory consultees. In addition due to its proximity to the Deanbank/Oaklands site, the potential for shared use of facilities (e.g. the playing field) and shared responsibility for developing school travel plans for the area St Peter's RC Primary School would also be statutory consultee.
- 3.39 Any proposed statutory consultation would require the approval of Committee prior to being undertaken. On conclusion of the consultation process a report would be produced which must be publicly available at least three weeks prior to its consideration by Council with whom the final decision regarding any proposals which were subject to consultation would ultimately rest. The report would include a summary of written representations received during the consultation period and representations made at any public meetings along with Officer's responses to representations made.
- 3.40 A comprehensive consultation paper will require to be produced to inform the consultation process. This will take some time to produce due to the complexities involved and the considerable further work which is required to complete the necessary feasibility studies; determine the exact changes which would be required to existing primary and secondary catchment boundaries; assess the implications for early learning and childcare and determine the mechanisms by which pupils would transfer from existing classes if necessary.
- 3.41 It is proposed that the consultation paper will be taken to the meeting of the Education, Children and Families Committee on 19 May 2015 for consideration at which formal Committee approval would be sought to undertake the statutory consultation. This report will set out the timescales for the statutory consultation process and the arrangements for the public meetings which will be required.
- 3.42 Primary school rolls across the city are now projected to continue rising until 2030. However, the interim measures put in place at each of the three schools are projected to be sufficient to provide the area with the accommodation

necessary to address growth for at least the next five years. The necessity to deliver a long-term solution for this area is not driven by a requirement to provide additional capacity within a given timeframe but by a need to address the suitability of some of the interim arrangements which remain in place. In considering the detail for the long-term options, the latest population projections will be taken into consideration to ensure the accommodation provided will be sufficient.

Measures of success

- 4.1 The delivery of fit for purpose accommodation solutions in the south Edinburgh area to ensure the capacity of each primary school is appropriate to meet the level of demand for places from its catchment population.

Financial impact

- 5.1 Detailed feasibility work requires to be undertaken to identify the capital and revenue cost implications associated with each option. This will now be progressed with the outcome being reported to the Education, Children and Families Committee on 19 May 2015.
- 5.2 The capital costs including those associated with site acquisition will be significant but will vary considerably depending on the option. The most expensive option would be the delivery of a new primary school which is estimated would cost in excess of £16m.
- 5.3 There is provision of £14.902m in the Children and Families Capital Investment Programme to 2017/18 for the capital funding necessary to respond to the challenges arising from rising primary school rolls. A separate report on the agenda for this Committee advises that there is currently an estimated funding deficit of approximately £5m to deliver the accommodation solutions which may be required over the next five years to respond to the challenge of rising rolls.
- 5.4 Additional resources will need to be identified to meet this deficit however this excludes any costs associated with providing a long term solution to the specific challenges in the south Edinburgh area (Bruntsfield, James Gillespie's and South Morningside Primary Schools). Further additional resources will require to be identified to meet any costs arising to resolve the long-term issue.

Risk, policy, compliance and governance impact

- 6.1 The options considered in this paper address the Council's policy of ensuring sufficient accommodation for catchment pupils to secure a place at their catchment school. Option 1 would also address the Council policy to ensure the suitability of the school estate through withdrawal from both annexe and temporary accommodation in the area.
- 6.2 All options are subject to the successful procurement of a permanent site. Early discussions with Health and Social Care regarding the possibility of acquiring

both the Deanbank and the adjacent Oaklands site have been positive. However, until a business case and the appropriate funding has been identified and approved for the provision of a new care home to replace the existing facility on the Oaklands site the transaction may not take place and this remains a risk to the delivery of two options.

- 6.3 While addressing the sufficiency issues arising from rising school rolls remains the highest priority for Children and Families, it must be noted that in addition to the above until the appropriate funding has been identified there remains a risk to the delivery of the options outlined in this report.

Equalities impact

- 7.1 There are no negative equality or human rights impacts arising from this report.
- 7.2 By providing additional capacity at local schools the Council is responding to parental choice and endeavouring to offer all catchment pupils from all equalities groups the opportunity to attend their catchment school. The Council will continue to ensure that the needs of pupils who have a disability are met by the accommodation available at the schools affected by these proposals or, where catchment changes are proposed, appropriate alternative accommodation. The provision of facilities offered to school users with learning and behavioural support needs will be unaffected.
- 7.3 Accordingly, these proposals have no significant impact on any equalities groups and provide greater opportunities for catchment pupils to attend their catchment school. For these reasons, the overall equalities relevance score is 1 (out of a possible 9) and a full Equalities Impact Assessment is not required.

Sustainability impact

- 8.1 There are no impacts on carbon, adaptation to climate change or sustainable development arising directly from this report. Whilst the options set out in this report would see the expansion of existing facilities or the creation of new buildings, the purpose is to create fit for purpose accommodation to meet demand. Any new buildings would be designed to minimise the impact on carbon emissions and energy consumption.
- 8.2 The creation of additional accommodation at local schools so that children can access their catchment school also ensures that travel to school patterns are minimised.

Consultation and engagement

- 9.1 This report identifies solutions to address the accommodation pressures in South Morningside, James Gillespie's and Bruntsfield Primary Schools. A process of consultation is ongoing with each school community regarding these options. It is proposed to also establish a working group with St Peter's RC Primary School.

9.2 The options in this paper will ultimately be the subject of a statutory consultation process undertaken according to the procedures set out in the Schools (Scottish) (Consultation) Act 2010 as amended by the Children and Young People (Scotland) Act 2014.

Background reading/external references

On 8 May 2013, the Estate Strategy and Rising Rolls Working Group considered an initial report regarding potential capacity pressures in primary schools in the south side of the city centre. There was a further report to the Education, Children and Families Committee on [4 March 2014](#) which detailed the capacity and accommodation issues facing the three schools in the area and identified a range of potential options to address these in both the short and long term.

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Detailed Information on Options

Option 1 – A New Primary School in South Edinburgh

- 1.1 This option would result in the establishment of a new school for the South Edinburgh area located on the combined site of the proposed new Deanbank annexe and the adjacent Oaklands residential care home. It would be a double stream (14 class) school with a catchment area formed from sections of the existing South Morningside Primary School, James Gillespie's Primary School and Bruntsfield Primary School catchment areas. The school could potentially include a new nursery however the requirement for this is still to be determined.
- 1.2 The new school would be populated by transferring pupils from both South Morningside and James Gillespie's Primary Schools as a result of changes to their catchment boundaries. The mechanisms by which this transfer would take place would be developed through discussions with each of the schools.
- 1.3 The effect of the new school would be to reduce both South Morningside and James Gillespie's Primary Schools to two streams (14 classes) and return Bruntsfield Primary School to being an 18 class organisation.
- 1.4 There would be no change to the existing South Morningside or Bruntsfield Primary School buildings or sites. The existing nursery associated with South Morningside Primary School is located at Fairmilehead; what the future arrangements would be to provide early learning and childcare in the area for both South Morningside Primary School and the new primary school have still to be determined.
- 1.5 At James Gillespie's Primary School, once the school organisation had been reduced to 14 classes, the temporary unit would be removed and the six small classrooms in the main building would be reconfigured to form four standard sized classrooms.
- 1.6 The annexe at Deanbank and the availability of the adjacent Oakland residential care home site allow two general approaches to the design of the new school:
 - (i) incorporate the existing Deanbank building in the design; or
 - (ii) construct a new school and then demolish the existing Deanbank building

A new primary school incorporating the Deanbank building

- 1.7 Incorporating the Deanbank annexe into the new school design would have the advantage of reducing the number of new classrooms required. If the large activity area and dining room within the Deanbank annexe were to be converted for classroom space the extent of the new accommodation which would require to be constructed could be eight new classroom spaces rather than the 18 briefed for a new double stream school. A new gym hall, dining area and administration/support areas would still be required however 10 fewer

classrooms and the associated circulation space would significantly reduce the area of new build required. This option would maximise the investment made in Deanbank Resource Centre as an interim solution.

- 1.8 The disadvantage of incorporating the Deanbank annexe accommodation into a new school design would be the disruption caused on the Deanbank Annexe site during construction with the likelihood for some decant requirements. The extent of this disruption would be dependent upon the final design of the new building or extension. However, the final design itself would also be restricted by a need to maintain a relationship with the existing building.

Construction of a new primary school and demolition of the Deanbank building

- 1.9 Perhaps the most logical approach to the construction of a new primary school utilising the combined Deanbank and Oakland sites would be to build on the Oaklands site with the Deanbank annexe then being demolished following the construction of the new school to provide the play area.
- 1.10 This would have the advantage of avoiding the need for decant and would limit disruption to the operation of the school during the construction period. However, it could possibly be more expensive (even taking into consideration any necessary decant costs involved in option1(i)) and would require demolishing a building that had, only a few years earlier, received significant investment.

Option 2 – Create Permanent Annexe for South Morningside Primary

- 2.1 A strategy that sought to address accommodation pressure for the whole south Edinburgh area through the expansion of South Morningside Primary School would require that a permanent annexe with sufficient space to accommodate a fourth stream be established.
- 2.2 The options considered below require that the annexe created be considerably larger than the interim solution in order to accommodate pupils who would have to be realigned from the James Gillespie's Primary School catchment area. However, no transfer of pupils from existing classes at James Gillespie's Primary School would be required as the necessary catchment changes would apply only to new P1 pupils.
- 2.3 The existing nursery associated with South Morningside Primary School is located at Fairmilehead; what the future arrangements would be to provide early learning and childcare in the area for South Morningside Primary School, including the annexe, have still to be determined.
- 2.4 Under this proposal the main South Morningside Primary School building would require to be extended by two classes to continue to accommodate P4-P7 (16 classes) and the new annexe would accommodate P1-P3 (13 classes). Including General Purpose space, the new annexe would require 16 classroom spaces in total. It would also require a gym hall, a dining hall and the necessary

support spaces (e.g. office space, tutorial space, medical room, toilets, plant, etc.). This would necessitate the use of at least a significant proportion of the adjacent Oaklands site.

- 2.5 As is the case for Option 1, the larger annexe solution could be achieved by either:
- (i) extending the existing Deanbank building; or
 - (ii) construct a new, purpose built annexe and then demolish the existing Deanbank building.

Create an annexe of a four stream South Morningside Primary School incorporating the Deanbank Building

- 2.6 Under this option the interim solution at Deanbank Annexe would be a part of the permanent solution. However, the annexe and its grounds would require to be extended to accommodate the additional classes and a new gym and dining hall.
- 2.7 If the large activity area and dining room within the Deanbank annexe were to be converted for classroom space, the extent of the new section to be constructed would be four new classroom spaces plus a gym hall, a dining hall and the necessary support spaces. Delivery of this option would develop the existing Deanbank annexe thus making best use of the investment already made in it.
- 2.8 The disadvantage of this option would be the disruption caused on the Deanbank annexe site during construction including the likelihood for some decant requirements. The extent of this disruption would be dependent upon the final design; this would also be restricted by a need to maintain a relationship with the existing building.

Construct a new building for the annexe of a Four Stream South Morningside Primary School and demolish the existing Deanbank building

- 2.9 Perhaps the most logical approach to the construction of a new annexe would be to construct an entirely new building on the adjacent care home site with the Deanbank annexe remaining operational and pupils moving into the new building on its completion. The new building would contain 16 classroom spaces (13 classes and three GP spaces), a nursery, a new gym/dining hall and the necessary support spaces e.g. office space, tutorial space, medical room, toilets and plant. It would, in effect be the equivalent of a double stream school in its own right.
- 2.10 This would have the advantage of avoiding the need for decant and would limit disruption to the operation of the school during the construction period. However, it could possibly be more expensive (even taking into consideration any necessary decant costs involved in 2(i)) and would require demolishing a building that had, only a few years earlier, received significant investment.

Option 3 – Deliver Capacity Solutions at Each School

- 3.1 This option would result in each school accommodating demand for places within the accommodation currently available to it and any additional accommodation made necessary by projected pupil numbers. The following sections consider the implications of this option for each school.

Bruntsfield Primary School

- 3.2 Bruntsfield Primary School has a capacity of 19 classes and is currently operating at its classroom capacity. Projections suggest that by August 2016 Bruntsfield will have reached a peak requirement for 20 classes. The level of General Purpose space provision required by the Council is greater for a 20 class organisation which may also necessitate the creation of a further class space for August 2016.
- 3.3 A feasibility study considering how a further three classroom spaces might be delivered at Bruntsfield Primary School which may be necessary to address rising rolls and has identified that these could be created through the internal reconfiguration of existing spaces. The outcome of this study has been discussed and agreed with members of the working group. This means that the necessary work may be undertaken as required following assessment of the number of registrations each January.
- 3.4 Accordingly the accommodation pressures projected to be experienced by Bruntsfield Primary School could be addressed through works which will require to be delivered regardless of any long-term solutions identified for the south Edinburgh area as a whole.

James Gillespie's Primary School

- 3.5 James Gillespie's Primary School currently has capacity for 16 classes. Projections suggest that the high P1 intake experienced in 2014/15 will be repeated in 2015/16 but that the intake will fall sharply in 2016/17 before levelling out at around 72 pupils up to 2020. This level of demand may be accommodated within an 18 class capacity.
- 3.6 Through the rising rolls process James Gillespie's Primary School has been identified as having an immediate accommodation issue. Accordingly, should the number of P1 registrations in January 2015 suggest that the projection for August 2015 is accurate; a new classroom building will be constructed to increase the school's capacity from 16 to 18 classes by August 2015 and provide a further two General Purpose spaces. This will allow the high intake expected in 2015/16 and future projected intakes to be accommodated.
- 3.43 However, while the new building will provide the school with the accommodation necessary to provide sufficient places for its current and projected catchment demand, there will remain an ongoing requirement to accommodate classes in

the existing temporary unit. There also remain suitability issues associated with the size of some of the classrooms in the main building. The working group welcomed the new building as part of a strategy that would eventually allow the school to return to a 14 class capacity (double stream) in the future through:

- removing the existing two class temporary unit; and
- re-configuring the six small classrooms in the main building to create four standard size classrooms.

3.7 If the current proposal to increase the capacity of the school to 18 classes were to become the long-term solution, the temporary unit would require to be maintained in the long-term and the suitability issue created by the existing small classrooms within the main school building would not be addressed.

South Morningside Primary School

3.8 The creation of a temporary annexe at the former Deanbank Resource Centre to accommodate P1 and P2 pupils from August 2015 will address a number of the accommodation issues that have existed at South Morningside Primary School for many years by:

- Reducing the number of pupils on the main school site;
- Removing the two temporary units;
- Increasing the play area on the main school site;
- Removing the need for classes to be accommodated within the Cluny Centre.

3.9 If the long-term option chosen were to address accommodation pressures in the south Edinburgh area at each school individually, there would be two possible options available at South Morningside Primary School:

- (i) Retain the existing accommodation and the Deanbank annexe (as delivered for August 2015) and provide a new gym at this location; or
- (ii) Develop the existing school site.

Retain the existing accommodation and the Deanbank annexe (as delivered for August 2015) and provide a new gym at this location

3.10 When the Deanbank annexe is operational, South Morningside Primary School will have sufficient accommodation to address rising rolls. It will also be operating with less pressure on its supporting facilities e.g. dining space, General Purpose space and playground space.

3.11 However, while the Deanbank Annexe will address a significant number of issues with the school's present accommodation, it is a solution that presents a number of new issues.

3.12 While the 'gym' facilities provided at Deanbank will be adequate to allow the delivery of physical education, they do not provide the infant classes based there with the space or breadth of opportunities that a purpose built hall might. Hence a new gym would be required if this were to become a permanent solution.

- 3.13 The creation of the Deanbank annexe continues to split the school across two separate sites (three when the nursery is taken into consideration) and is contrary to the Council's objective to remove all annexe buildings.
- 3.14 If the Deanbank annexe was to be retained as a long-term accommodation solution, the statutory consultation proposed would establish the Deanbank annexe as a permanent educational establishment and include it within the South Morningside Primary School catchment area.

Develop the existing school site

- 3.15 In 2011 a feasibility study considering options to locate all of South Morningside Primary School's pupils in permanent buildings on the main school site was produced. A new gym and relocation of the nursery were also considered. The report proposed three options: an extension of the existing building; a two storey annexe building; and a single storey annexe.
- 3.16 Due to the significant planning risks inherent in the others, the single storey option was the recommended solution however the significant loss of playground space required made the double storey option the preferred option of the school community.
- 3.17 Earlier this year the costs of the two storey annexe proposals in the 2011 feasibility study were updated. Excluding any nursery provision the cost of the permanent two storey options (which included a gym) ranged from £3.6m to £4.0m.
- 3.18 However, the recent advice received from the Planning department has been that the height of the proposed buildings and their proximity to the common boundary would make planning issues difficult to overcome. This represents a significant risk to this proposal. In addition, any option to provide permanent accommodation for all classes on the main South Morningside Primary School site is likely to require a significant period of disruption to the school due to the loss of the majority of the playground area for the duration of the build period.
- 3.19 For the reasons outlined above this option is not considered to be a reasonable solution to the current accommodation issues at South Morningside Primary School and has been discounted.