

The City of Edinburgh Council

10.00am, Thursday, 8 February 2024

Outcome of the Statutory Consultation Process on the Proposal to Replace St Catherine's RC Primary School on the South Neighbourhood Office site on Captain's Road

Executive
Wards

8 Colinton / Fairmilehead, 10 Morningside, 16 Liberton
/ Gilmerton

1. Recommendations

- 1.1 Approve the proposal to replace St Catherine's RC Primary School on the South Neighbourhood Office site on Captain's Road.

Paul Lawrence

Executive Director of Place

Contact: Robbie Crockatt, Strategic Asset Planning Manager

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EDINBURGH
THE CITY OF EDINBURGH COUNCIL

Outcome of the Statutory Consultation Process on the Proposal to Replace St Catherine's RC Primary School on the South Neighbourhood Office site on Captain's Road

2. Executive Summary

- 2.1 On 5 September 2023, Education, Children and Families Committee approved that a statutory consultation be undertaken regarding the proposed relocation of St Catherine's Roman Catholic (RC) Primary School to a new site on the South Neighbourhood Office site on Captain's Road. Following the consultation, this report recommends that the proposal, as set out in the statutory consultation paper, is progressed.

3. Background

- 3.1 On 5 September 2023, Education, Children and Families Committee approved that a statutory consultation be undertaken regarding the proposed relocation of St Catherine's Roman Catholic Primary School to a new site on the South Neighbourhood Office site on Captain's Road.
- 3.2 In summary, the statutory consultation paper proposed the following:
- A new 11 class primary school would be established on the South East Locality Office site on Captain's Road (see map in [Appendix 2](#));
 - The new school would be designed so that it can be extended to 14 classes in the future;
 - All staff and pupils from St Catherine's Roman Catholic Primary School would relocate to the new school building on its completion;
 - The new St Catherine's Roman Catholic Primary School would include a 64 place nursery;
 - Feasibility work would be undertaken to consider whether the school would reuse part or all of the existing South East Locality Office or be an entirely new building with new office spaces incorporated;

- The design of the new building would be informed by ongoing community engagement;
 - The Council will consider alternative uses of the existing St Catherine's Roman Catholic Primary School site and make recommendations as part of the Outcomes of the Consultation Report to the Council meeting in February 2024.
- 3.3 The proposal does not include any changes to existing secondary feeder arrangements.
- 3.4 The proposal does not include changes to any catchment areas.

4. Main report

- 4.1 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.
- 4.2 The statutory consultation period ran from Monday 11 September 2023 to Tuesday 31 October 2023. The full statutory consultation paper is available online at the following link: [Statutory Consultation Proposing a Replacement St Catherine's RC Primary School](#) and a summary paper is provided in [Appendix 1](#).
- 4.3 The consultation included an online questionnaire, a public meeting, and a workshop with pupils at the affected school.
- 4.4 Respondents were encouraged to use a response questionnaire which was available online using the Council's consultation hub. Responses to the consultation could also be submitted by email or letter. 22 representations were received, 18 of which were submitted via the online consultation hub and four which were submitted via email. The tables in [Appendix 3](#) provide a summary of the issues that were raised and the Council's response. The full submissions are available on request.
- 4.5 The majority of the submissions were from parents or local residents.
- 4.6 Those who responded using the online questionnaire on the consultation hub were asked whether they support the proposal. Of the 18, 12 responded that they did support the proposal and six responded that they did not.

Key Issues and Council Response

- 4.7 The main themes and issues that were raised by the online questionnaire or written representations include:
- The safety of pupils and traveling to school beside roads;
 - Loss of sports pitches and providing facilities for community groups; and
 - Council services delivered from the South East Neighbourhood office.

Public Meeting

- 4.8 A public meeting was held on Thursday 12 October 2023 at St Catherine's RC Primary School which approximately 20 members of the public attended. Council officials answered questions following a short presentation. A minute of the meeting is provided in [Appendix 4](#), setting out the issues that were raised and the Council response.
- 4.9 Issues that were discussed include:
- Access to the school and traffic safety measures;
 - Cost of construction increases;
 - Library services and access for the community;
 - Safe decommissioning of the old school building;
 - Parking provision for new schools;
 - Continuing the character and history of the school in a new and larger school building;
 - Timescale to opening the new school;
 - Design of the new school; and
 - The proposed new Gilmerton Station Road school.

Pupil Consultation

- 4.10 A consultation workshop with pupils at St Catherine's RC Primary School was carried out by a Learning Estate Planning Officer (LEPO).
- 4.11 The LEPO spoke with the children in the P4 to P7 year groups about the proposal and carried out an exercise to gauge pupils' opinions about how their route to school might change. Some of the pupils also provided comments on their opinion. [Appendix 5](#) has a summary of the discussions.
- 4.12 Going forward, the Council will consider how to involve pupils from the school in developing the design for the new primary school and mitigate concerns about pupils' routes to the new site.

Education Scotland

- 4.13 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 the school directly affected by the statutory consultation and discussed the educational aspects with staff, parents and pupils before producing their final report. The purpose of the report is to provide an independent and impartial consideration of the proposal.
- 4.14 Education Scotland's report is attached as [Appendix 6](#).

- 4.15 The conclusion of Education Scotland is the HM Inspectors agree with the educational benefits set out in the proposal and the Council's approach to engaging with stakeholders to tackle challenges and concerns. The report also says that the Council should continue to engage stakeholders during the design phase to help ensure that the new school meets, where possible, their aspirations.

The Act requires that the Council's Outcome of Consultation report include 'a statement of the authority's response to Education Scotland's report'. In summary, no key issues were identified, and the Council's response is to acknowledge HM inspectors agreement with the educational benefits and the council will continue to engage with stakeholders during the next phase to tackle challenges and concerns.

Conclusion

- 4.16 It is recommended that the Council proceeds with the proposed new primary school site as set out in the statutory consultation paper.

5. Next Steps

- 5.1 If the recommendation set out in this paper are approved, then a commission will be raised to appoint a design team and begin the feasibility and design work for the replacement school. The design will be developed through engagement with the school and wider community.
- 5.2 Further engagement with stakeholders will also be carried out to address issues raised during the consultation.
- 5.3 The design team for the new school will engage with the ongoing study of office space needs and provision for services based in the South East Neighbourhood office.
- 5.4 The existing St Catherine's RC Primary School site will be considered as part of a master-planning exercise exploring opportunities to improve the built environment and service delivery across the Council and partner assets clustered in that area. Accordingly, it will be subject to future community engagement and a further report at the appropriate time.

6. Financial impact

- 6.1 A budget of £20.3m for the St Catherine's RC Primary School replacement project is currently included in the Council's Capital Investment Programme.
- 6.2 The replacement school will not lead to immediate teaching staff cost increases as existing staff will move over to the new building. There will be an increase in support staff costs due to the larger facility size.
- 6.3 The new building will have low maintenance and repair costs but these are expected to increase over time.

- 6.4 A business case outlining the additional revenue costs has been developed and revenue provision will be included in the necessary future budgets.

7. Equality and Poverty Impact

- 7.1 The recommendations in this Committee report have been made following a statutory consultation undertaken according to the requirements of the Schools (Consultation) (Scotland) Act 2010 as amended by the Children and Young People (Scotland) Act 2014. This Act is designed “to provide strong, accountable statutory consultation practices and procedures that local authorities must apply to their handling of all proposals for school closures and other major changes to schools. These consultation processes are expected to be robust, open, transparent and fair, and seen to be so.” (Schools (Consultation) (Scotland) Act 2010: guidance).
- 7.2 Accordingly, by following the established process set out in the Act, the Council has provided those stakeholders most affected by these proposals with an opportunity to have their say and raise any concerns or issues. This Outcomes Report sets out the Council’s response to the issues raised during the consultation and suggests any mitigating measures that may be required.
- 7.3 Equality Duty covers the protected characteristic of age, which refers to a person having a particular age or being within an age group. The age group most directly impacted by the proposal to establish a new school is young people and children. The Educational Benefits statement in the statutory consultation paper sets out the ways in which the Council believes that children and young people could benefit or be disadvantaged by these proposals. In addition, letters providing information and inviting responses to the statutory consultation were made available to the parents and carers of all pupils in the affected area. Separate pupil consultations were also undertaken to understand the issues important to young people and children. The Council has provided responses to these issues in this Outcomes Report.
- 7.4 This statutory consultation has been undertaken at a formative stage of the project to provide early confirmation of its deliverability. No detailed design work has taken place and the full scope of the project is yet to be confirmed through further stages of public engagement. Approval of the proposals outlined in the statutory consultation will provide the Council with the right to establish a school on the proposed site and implement catchment changes when that new school opens, however; the delivery of a new school and related catchment changes will only be progressed subject to committee approval of a full Business Case and planning permissions.
- 7.5 Approval of the location of a new school will allow the development of a design through engagement with the school community and the wider community, addressing key issues that may only be addressed through this process. The

Council's Corporate Property Strategy requires that a school be more than just a school – that it becomes a focus for community activity and wider service delivery. For example, community engagement would include consideration of the services a new school should offer with opportunities to collocate or integrate other services on the school site. Transport and active travel links would also be a key focus for community engagement.

- 7.6 It is on conclusion of this further engagement work, at the point where a brief for the new facility has been set, that the impact a new school or community hub may have on different population groups may fully be assessed and documented.
- 7.7 Accordingly, a more detailed Integrated Impact Assessment (IIA) will be undertaken to address the specific changes proposed by the project as part of the formal planning process.

8. Climate and Nature Emergency Implications

- 8.1 If the proposal is approved, design and feasibility work will determine if a new building, retrofit of the existing buildings, or a mixed strategy will best meet the requirements of a new school.
- 8.2 The new school will be designed to meet the environmental standards required at the time of its design and with cognisance of the Council's Net-Zero targets. The design will promote Active Travel opportunities to minimise the impact on carbon emission and energy consumption.
- 8.3 Outdoor play, learning and exploration are at the heart of Edinburgh's Primary and Early Years settings. New schools and nurseries are designed with high-quality outdoor settings.
- 8.4 Internal spaces are designed to biophilic principles with easy access between indoor and outdoor spaces promoting exploration of external environments.
- 8.5 The heavy focus on the design of outdoor spaces and natural environments is to embed within children's learning and experiences an appreciation and understanding of nature and the outdoors. It is recognised that one of the single most effective ways of addressing climate and nature emergencies is through education.

9. Risk, policy, compliance, governance and community impact

- 9.1 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.

- 9.2 Although concerns were raised about traffic and pitch provision there is support within the wider community for the replacement of St Catherine’s RC primary school and the proposed new site.
- 9.3 The recommendation could see the creation of a new building or the retrofit of the existing building but whichever strategy is progressed, the purpose is to create fit for purpose accommodation to meet demand, facilitate inclusion and community use and alleviate accommodation pressures at existing schools. The new school will be designed to meet the Councils energy efficiency standards and promote Active Travel opportunities to minimise the impact on carbon emission and energy consumption.
- 9.4 If the proposal is approved there is a risk that continuing changes to market conditions may escalate costs beyond the approved budget. Initial feasibility work followed by cost analysis at each RIBA stage of the design will inform the project development to ensure financial risks are mitigated and the design of the building Meets expectations.
- 9.5 If the proposal is rejected the existing school will require additional expenditure to keep the building operational until a new site is selected.
- 9.6 The recommendations in the report do not impact on an existing policy of the Council.

10. Background reading/external references

- 10.1 Education, Children and Families Committee, 5 September 2023, '[Learning Estate Update: Statutory Consultations required for St Catherine’s RC Primary School, a new Primary School in Queensferry and a new Kirkliston High School](#)'.

11. Appendices

- Appendix 1 [Summary of the Statutory Consultation Paper](#)
- Appendix 2 [Map of the Proposed Site](#)
- Appendix 3 [Questionnaire and Written Representations - Issues Raised and Council Response](#)
- Appendix 4 [Minute of the Statutory Consultation Public Meeting](#)
- Appendix 5 [Summary of Pupil Responses](#)
- Appendix 6 [Education Scotland Report](#)

Consultation on the Proposal to relocate St Catherine's Roman Catholic Primary School to a new site on Captains Road

Summary Paper

GIVE US YOUR VIEWS: www.edinburgh.gov.uk/newstcatherines

What is being proposed?

The relocation of St Catherine's RC Primary School to a new building on the South East Locality Office site on Captain's Road.

Where will the new St Catherine's RC primary school and nursery be located?

It is proposed that St Catherine's RC Primary School is rebuilt on the South East Locality Office site on Captain's Road. This site is located on the north side of Captains Road next to Gracemount Leisure centre.

The map in Appendix 1 shows the proposed school location.

Why do we need a new primary school for St Catherine's?

Investigations in the summer of 2018 considering how best to upgrade St Catherine's RC primary school concluded that the building needed to be replaced rather than upgraded.

The existing building has 7 classrooms. We will build the new school with 11 classrooms to accommodate pupils being generated by new housing developments.

What are the implications for existing secondary schools?

There will be no change to existing secondary school arrangements. St Catherine's will continue to feed to Holy Rood RC High School.

Who will the changes affect?

The catchment area will not change. Addresses within the catchment area will continue to be served by St Catherine's RC Primary School in its new location.

When would the changes come into effect?

If the proposal is approved by the Council, the new school could open in August 2027 at the earliest.

Why are we consulting?

We want to hear the views of anyone affected by the proposal. There is also a legal obligation to carry out a statutory consultation under the Schools (Consultation) (Scotland) Act 2010 as amended by the Children and Young people (Scotland) Act 2014.

How will I know if my views have been considered?

All comments made during the statutory consultation period will be recorded and represented in a final 'Outcomes of the Consultation Report' that we expect to be considered by Council in January 2024. The report will be published three weeks in advance of the Council meeting and parents of pupils attending affected schools and anyone who has responded to the consultation will be notified of its publication.

How can I find out more about the proposal or make my views heard?

If you want more information you can find the full consultation paper and other supporting information at www.edinburgh.gov.uk/newstcatherines.

We have also organised a public meeting which anyone can attend, as below:

Venue	Date	Time
St Catherine's RC Primary School	Thursday, 12 October 2023	6.30pm – 8.30pm

The meeting will open with a short presentation about the consultation and what is proposed, followed by a question and answer session. We will take a note of the meeting and all of the points made will be captured in the final 'Outcomes of the Consultation Report'.

Please email newstcatherines@edinburgh.gov.uk by Friday 6 October 2023 if you need translation services at the meeting.

Give us your views by 5pm on Tuesday, 31 October 2023.

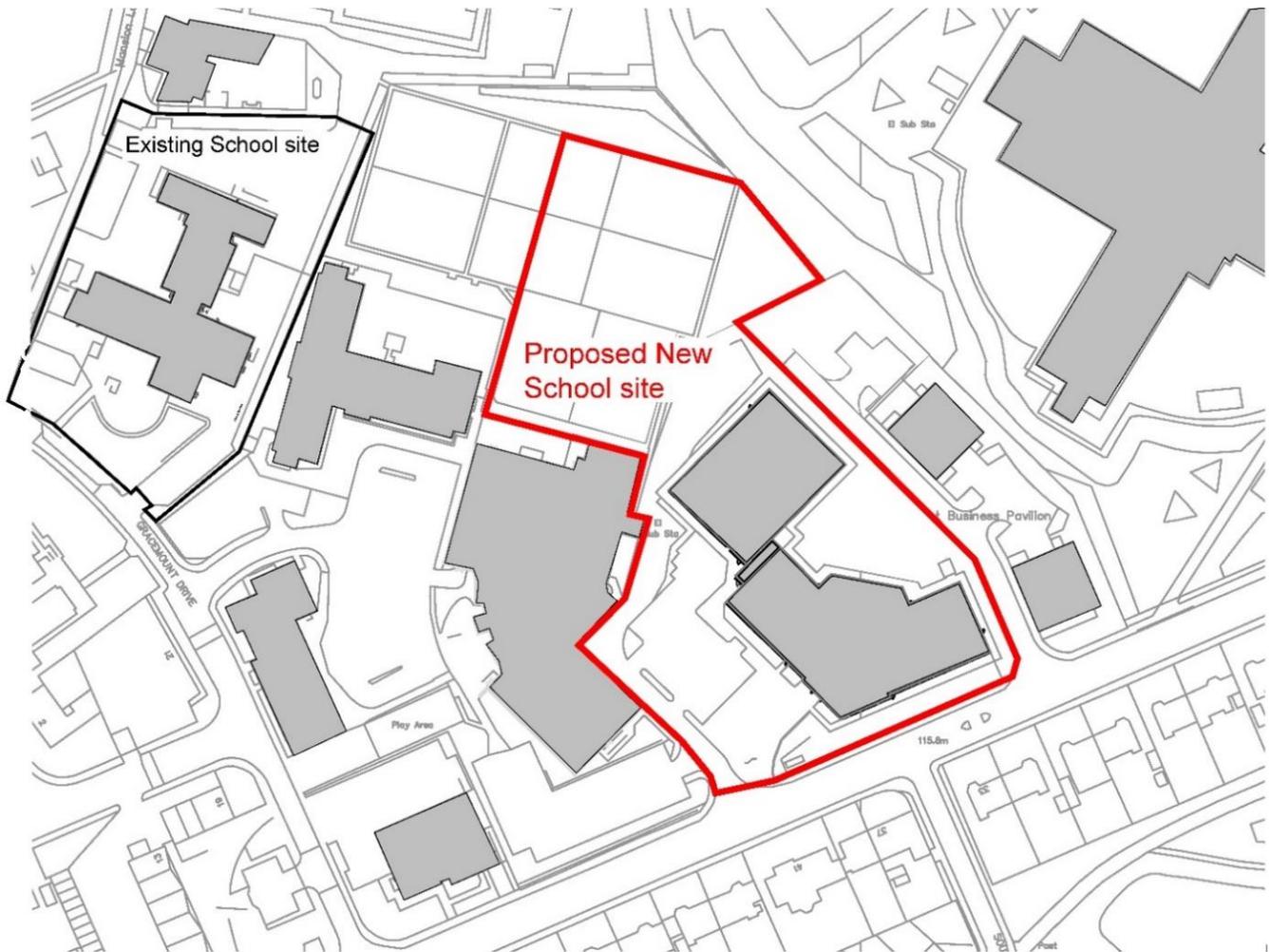
It would be helpful if you could take time to complete our short survey – you can find it easily online at www.edinburgh.gov.uk/newstcatherines. If you don't have internet access then you can view the full consultation paper at the South East Locality Office Library or St Catherine's RC Primary School.

You can also email comments to us directly at newstcatherines@edinburgh.gov.uk or if you prefer they can be posted to:

FAO N. Thomson-Jack
Strategic Asset Planning (St Catherine's Replacement)
Business Centre 1.6
City of Edinburgh Council
Council Headquarters
Waverley Court
Level 1:2, 4 East Market Street
Edinburgh EH8 8BG

All comments should arrive by Tuesday 31 October 2023.

Appendix 2 – Map of the Proposed Site



APPENDIX 3 – Questionnaire and Written Representations

Issues Raised and Council Response

1	Issue: Access and Travel Routes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Safe walking and cycling routes are needed to get pupils to school safely. • Location of the recommended site on Captains Road is close to a busier road.
	Council Response	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The school will have a Travel Plan to encourage pupils to walk to school by identifying ways that routes could be made safer and prompting initiatives such as ‘walking buses’. • The Council will work with St Catherine’s RC Primary School to update its Travel Plan to reflect its revised location and encourage pupils to walk to school. This will take account of pedestrian and cycle considerations required as part of the planning permission for the new building which will link the new primary school building to the wider community.
2	Issue: Loss of sports pitch provision	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The recommended site includes the existing 5-a-side pitches behind the leisure centre.
	Council Response	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The new school will have an area of outdoor play space. • The outdoor play space will be designed to best serve the requirements of the school community which may include new pitch provision.
3	Issue: Affect on Council services delivered from the South East Neighbourhood office	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Library service provision. • Avoid interruption to services. • Continue a multi-agency approach. • Integration of the school with the community.
	Council Response	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Council is reviewing service delivery models as part of a wider strategy. • Locality buildings will be focused on provision of key services required by local people. • A new or retrofit building will be designed with provision for the key services operating from the South East locality office with the intention of creating a Hub Facility.

4	Issue: School - Catchment Area	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Review the catchment area to include Gilmerton so that pupils can attend their closest RC school.
	Council Response	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Catchment changes are not planned as the new schools' additional capacity is likely to be needed for new housing development in the catchment area. A mechanism exists for out of catchment pupils to apply to St Catherine's using the Councils out-of-catchment placing request.

Record of Meeting

- **Proposal to relocate St Catherine’s Roman Catholic Primary School to a new site on Captains Road**
- **Public Consultation Meeting held at 6.30 pm, Thursday 12 October 2023, St Catherine’s RC Primary School, Edinburgh**

Present: Approximately 20 members of the public

In Attendance: Tom Wood (Independent Chair), Councillor Margaret Graham (substituting Councillor Joan Griffiths - Convener of the Education, Children and Families Committee), Robbie Crockatt (Strategic Asset Planning Manager), Peter Garner (Learning Estate Planning Officer), Nicola Thomson-Jack (Portfolio Planner), Lesley McMillan (Strategic Asset Partnership Manager), Lynn Paterson (Head of Education and Early Years) and Joanna Pawlikowska (Committee Services).

- **1. Introduction**

Tom Wood introduced the proceedings and himself as a former policeman. He indicated that this was a proposal to relocate St Catherine’s Roman Catholic Primary School to a new site on Captains Road. He stated he was the independent chair for the meeting and would ensure that those in attendance could hear what was said tonight and would ensure that they got answers to questions. This would form part of the report which would help Councillors to make a decision. It was necessary to have proper minutes, therefore, people must speak clearly and there should be one question at a time. He pointed out that this would be a decision for the future generations. He introduced Councillor Margaret Graham, Lynn Paterson, Robbie Crockatt, Peter Garner, Nicola Thomson-Jack and clerk. The Head Teacher of St. Catherine’s RC Primary School was also present.

The Schools (Consultation Scotland) Act 2010 requires the Council to conduct a public consultation ahead of a report on the proposals going to the City of Edinburgh Council for

consideration in January 2024 . The public consultation will provide people with the opportunity to express their views and feed directly into the consultation process.

Officers that represented the Council gave a presentation, as described below.

• 2. **Presentation/Proposal**

Peter Garner (Learning Estate Planning Officer) introduced himself and delivered a presentation that provided the rationale for the proposed school relocation.

He stressed the importance of the consultation due to the future projected school population and making provision for this population.

The event started with a presentation that provided some background information on the reasons behind the Proposal to relocate St Catherine's Roman Catholic Primary School to a new site on Captains Road.

Background

Investigations in 2018 concluded the building needed to be replaced rather than upgraded and this was a priority due to the condition of the building. The initial budget of £12.802m was approved in 2019 but after some changes the budget had been revisited and expanded to £20.3m in April 2023 to reflect the changes in the construction market and updated cost estimates. On the 5th of September 2023 Education & Families Committee approved that a consultation would be undertaken. Statutory consultation means the legal obligation to consult the views of everyone affected by the proposal.

Currently this school has 7 classes but is operating close to its capacity and the new housing development means the school would need to expand. The replacement school is planned to provide the expansion to 11 classes with the ability to extend to 14 classes if that would be required in the future, it also would have 64 places in the nursery.

As a part of discussion about this school relocation there was a previous report published in 2019 and this report was based on community engagement to identify the key community values and the considerations for future buildings. The report identified several priorities.

Key community priorities were identified in consultation with the Gracemount community in the 'My Gracemount' report. Priorities included access to affordable physical activities & connectivity of public space that supports walking & cycling. Playparks, bins & improvement to the public space was also a priority. Youth Services involvement was considered to support employment and address anti-social behaviour. There was some abuse of the football pitches which would be addressed in this project to avoid vandalism and anti-social behaviour. Creating a community links like community hub would be a way to make a

difference and work together. Traffic and parking would be designed to improve the connection and create safe, green spaces.

Priorities from the 'My Gracemount' report are broadly grouped into eight themes:

- Affordability/Access to /Awareness of services
- Safety & anti-social behaviour
- Youth Services & Opportunities
- Community Hub
- Traffic & Parking
- Public Space
- Green Space
- Connectivity
- Transport

Identifying and concentrating on these themes ensures that the investment addresses the communities' priorities and is built on previous engagement with the community.

Proposal

It was proposed to relocate the St. Catherine RC Primary School to new site on Captains Road. After an initial engagement with community three options were considered by Officers:

- First option was existing site.
- Second option a football pitches at the back of the Leisure Centre
- Third option CEC building on Captains Road

Based on those three options the proposed site was developed. The most popular option based on responses was the football pitch site, but this site wasn't big enough.

Slides of the areas chosen were presented to members of the public. The proposed site would be spacious and would be a combination of street frontage and open space located on 1.2 hectares. This space would give an opportunity to build school, playfields and create office space. Some responses raised an issue about access from Captains Road and suggested alternative ways children could safely access school. Other options to access the school, for example from a Community Hub or visitor centre will be considered. If the site will be approved, then school and community services will be consulted about different aspects such as accessibility or football pitch usage.

The following implications of the Proposal were presented:

- An 11-class primary school would be established on the new site.
- All staff and pupils would relocate to the new school on completion.

- No change to existing secondary feeder arrangements
- Council will consider alternative uses for the existing site.

The process was described and consultations closure on 31 October 2023. Everyone could express views by submitting comments on the council website or by email. All comments would be recorded and summarised. A report would be then submitted to Education Scotland and an Outcomes of Consultation Report would be presented in Council meeting in January 2024. Members of public were invited to consider proposal and give own opinions.

Next Steps

The six-week statutory consultation would come to an end at 5pm on 31st October 2023. Any comments that the Council received would have to be considered and responded to in an Outcome of Statutory Consultation Report which would be put to the full Council most likely in January 2024. Once the public consultation phase had finished, details of the representations received would be issued to Education Scotland for their consideration. Education Scotland would issue a report on their findings which would be included in the final Council report on the consultation.

Tom Wood thanked Peter Garner for the presentation and asked for any questions or comments. He prioritised questions from parents who have young children in St. Catharine RC Primary School as they will attend new school in 2027.

• 3. Questions and Comments

Question 1 – I think that one of our concerns that has been addressed anyway is an access to the school because Captains Road is chaotic at that time in the morning. This is my school and I still remember, there should be traffic lights on the Captains Road anyway so especially now if this would be a proposed site we need to think about traffic measures. I don't know what the situation with that is, but the boxes have been taken away from the road out there and the kids are used to those boxes being there. They just go out to the road, even I do it, because they are used to the boxes being there, that would be a huge thing. Is there any way that parents, children, and the staff could be and active part and involvement in this school?

Answer (Peter Garner) - We definitely can see those concerns because Gracemount Drive is still relatively busy the same as Captains Road, so that is the case. At the moment nothing is decided or planned but that would be definitely a part of engagement to say

what makes the safe route and how to create this safe route to get to the site. I think it would be a chance for pupils to get involved in that so there will be an engagement in design.

Answer (Head Teacher) – We've got a date set – it is 25th of October when the team will come to work with P4, 5, 6 and 7 so there is a timetable in place.

Answer (Robbie Crockatt) – We are here today to discuss the site but if the site will be accepted and approved and moved to designed stage, we will come back to people to discuss the design. That's the best part of our job when it comes to design stage and we can speak with kids about it, to show other buildings and how things fit together based on different examples.

Answer (Peter Garner) – They can see examples of other schools and we always get some surprising and interesting ideas from kids, that's for sure, it is like how to design Minecraft.

Comment (Tom Wood) – This reminded me about one consultation about Primary School in Portobello when someone came up with an idea to bring school to the River Forth and build school on a big island. There were some costs implications.

Answer (Robbie Crockatt) – We did a lot of work with St. Margarets Primary School in Queensferry we've got plenty of work with kids in Queensferry, Lesley did it, we've done quite a lot of work with children there and river was the main thing they actually wanted, river running through the centre of school so that's where the fun starts.

Comment – I think that younger children have some brilliant ideas, and we cannot underestimate them.

Answer (Robbie Crockatt) – yes, absolutely. They've got great involvement, even simple things. In Victoria School we had this competition where they designed where to put glass and this was a great manifestation, its good when kids are actively involved in architecture design, so they think about colours and things like that.

Question 2 (Tom Wood) – I was terrified watching presentation about the cost increase from 12 to 24?

Answer (Peter Garner) – It's been a case across the Edinburgh that cost was dramatically increasing, and this might be settling down but that's the cost provided by cost consultants. In case of St. Catherine's School, the fund is coming entirely from Council, and this is based on the condition of this school so it's a part of Council priorities. There are number of ways of doing that – a lot of schools have been rebuilt as part of Scottish Government scheme but this one is entirely Council funded.

Chair – The Chair noted that a few members of public joined the meeting at this point, he summarised what has been discussed – safe routes to school, children involvement in design process and funding.

Question 3 – A member of public asked about a library and its accessibility for the community.

Answer (Robbie Crockatt) – The intention is that with this site there is some service provision with the neighbourhood office. I don't think this library as it stands right now is going to continue but the school has its own library and it depends what space we will have – this could be considered in designing process if community can have a library outside the school, it's a part of design process we will go through.

Supplementary Question (Nicola Thomson-Jack) – So this conversation is still going to happen, its to explore what facilities, services could be based there and what will work better. Will there be a facility where many services are in the same building, like a swimming pool, library etc, all in one.

Answer (Robbie Crockatt) – That's kind of feel we want to create, not that the swimming pool is part of it, although there is a swimming pool next door. There are opportunities there to have a look how to create a closer links in terms how this school can be a partner of Edinburgh Leisure and the school can directly benefit from having access to those facilities so that's all the things we want to explore as all those services should be provided. And that's why Keith started the conversation about Gracemount because you can take that example and see that people may want a bit more from their services, a bit more connectivity. And it is all very broken up, in terms of having Gracemount Primary School, St Catherines here and Gracemount High School and the maze of car parks with different entrances etc. We can think about this as an opportunity, we might not solve all the world's problems with the redesign of St Catherines, but we can use that budget we to create a new St. Catherines and address some issues along the way, then I think we should definitely do that, it's a part of a bigger picture.

Question 4 – There is no plan what is going to happen with an existing site and from the experience every abandoned buildings in this area are set in fire so it's a bit worrying for people who live here.

Answer (Robbie Crockatt) – I think process would be part of this project which includes a demolition of this building because there are some aspects of this building which won't make is easy to be used so part of the process would be to look how this building will be safely dismantled. This is a building from the late 60s so we will be taking the building down and this will be an empty site which can be used and there will be a further discussion how to use it.

Question 5 – Councillor Lezley Marion Cameron asked to recap on the boundary for the people that have just came in.

Answer (Robbie Crockatt) – Officer explained the location of the Leisure Centre using slide.

Supplementary Question (Councillor Cameron) – Where the arrows are going from the green to the red, is that pitches?

Answer (Robbie Crockatt) – At the moment this is where the soccer pitches are, the areas here are based on an access – to the school site. If the school is developed, then the pitches

will be cleared for part of the playground space, what happens here is still up to be designed.

Chair - The Chair noted that a few members of public joined the meeting at this point, he reminded the purpose of the meeting and briefly summarised what has been discussed.

Comment (Head Teacher) – I've got a couple of things that staff wanted to raise. Firstly, I like that idea to be visiting other schools, I think that would be great. And Robbie I know there is couple we really want to look at like Benidorm, Lanzarote. The consultation paper was really well received by the staff, what wasn't was a completion date. Staff really like an idea of the school as a part of the community hub, and I think a couple of questions we have are already related to that. The proposal of the school seems to be an opportunity to have a school not only as a school but almost as a heart of the community and this was something that staff were enthusiastic about it. The other thing we talked about was the idea of so many cross-purposes for the school as it would be a heart of the community but will be there for the community, there is an opportunity for the resource for the community and one thing I was really involved in my engagement project and kids were repeatedly saying about the things for them to do and for the things to attract them to stop burning the hotel, to stop them from doing things like that so that's the thing that came up. It's the opportunity for a resource that can be used by the community for many purposes not just for school, an opportunity to have a multiuse meeting area we spoke about that before that dance or youth clubs can use, we can have events there, council can have big events there and attracting people to it. But the major bugbear - and I said that to put in a record – is a parking provision for staff and that was one of the big things as very few of our staff stay in local area, many of us are from Midlothian, East Lothian and wider areas where is just not possible for us to cycle. And we totally understand the green agenda for this but its just to be realistic as a community we need to have an attached resource with it.

Question 6 – A member of the public asked about change and school transition, she said it would be lovely and important to keep as much as possible of small school.

Answer (Robbie Crockatt) – Definitely, also that's a part of the discussion how to keep a character of the small school to be a part of community as it is and how this can be transferred to the new building.

Question 7 - There is a bigger issue and it's an expansion of classrooms, when will you bring plan on that and how will you do that? Are you going to expand this plan?

Answer (Robbie Crockatt) – yes, the site is mapped out to be the size required for a 14-class primary school. This is definitely going to the design stage and there are different ways you can look at it as you've got an area of playground which sits at site and we need to consider for how many years its required and there is an expansion to build it. But also, that expansion has a definite date, it's a case to look into projections. Potentially down the road it might be expanded up to 14 but how that expansion happens its very stimulated doing that and it might be a temporary expansion that will be required, some extra units to give this extra space. Initially you build a core facility which you can expand so this conversation is going to happen.

Answer (Nicola Thomson-Jack) – The design stage is still to take place.

Answer (Robbie Crockatt) – Usually double streamed schools we develop as two storeys, it depends how site works sometimes it might go to three, we tend to keep two storeys, like in Frogston Primary School which is not so far away from, this is a new school but there are schools with similar design like Victoria School in the North of the city – small school with a lot of history and heritage behind it, they went through that process of carrying heritage into modern building so it would be interesting to visit to Victoria to learn how they made this transition.

Question 8 – I want to have more ideas about the timescale. When we can expect this new development?

Chair – I think the projection was 2027.

Question 9 – When are you planning to have a plan of this school? How long it will take for project and when the building will start? 2027 is not so far away.

Answer (Robbie Crockatt) – The school will probably take about 14 months to build so to finish in 2027 we need to start to build in April 2026. There is a long period that feels like nothing is happening but there is a process of appointing a contractor, procurement process, that's probably will be the end of 2025, and there is a year of design process between now and 2025 we will be engaging with school and community on what the design looks like. You would be assuming that what comes out from this consultation is that a site is identified and I assume that the Education, Children and Families committee in January will approve the recommendations. At that point we will start appointing the design team and start working on concept work from early 2024 school.

Answer (Councillor Graham) – Councillor Graham highlighted the importance of this consultation and encouraged everyone to access the website and leave comments which will be a crucial part of taking a decision.

Answer (Robbie Crockatt) – Any comments are welcome. Any ideas and suggestions about project will be considered.

Answer (Peter Garner) – And also if you are happy with proposal and want to support proposal, it's also welcome.

Chair – These consultations can change the plan in the future, that's why we are here this evening.

Question 10 (Councillor Cameron) – Councillor Cameron asked about plans related to the school in Station Road and asked what implications this will have to other schools in terms of demand if the Gilmerton school won't happen.

Answer (Robbie Crockatt) – So Gilmerton Station Road will happen, the Primary School, there is a site for it, and we will begin consultations on it very soon. But in the meantime, there will be pressure on this school, actually there are lots of houses and new developments sitting with this school rather than with St. Cathrine but St Catherine is closer so it's a very strange set up but there is still space in Gilmerton and Frogston School. In the long term what we can find its that the lag between new houses arriving and pick of future generation is something between 8 to 11 years before we can start seeing a pick generation, so we actually still have got the time.

Question 11 (Councillor Cameron) – So just to recap the Gilmerton Station is happening, its now the question of finding funding for?

Answer (Robbie Crockatt) — There is no funding in place at the moment so the intention is to develop the business case. With Gilmerton Station you are changing catchment so there would be few implications involved -the size of catchment and the size of school needs to be discussed, so there is a bit of work that needs to be done but the intention is that we start engaging on that very soon.

Comment – I think that everyone is waiting for an actual project now.

Answer (Robbie Crockatt) – Once we get to the point that committee approve this site in January and that this is coming soon, we can put more designing in project and involve in communication with the community.

Comment (Nicola Thomson-Jack)– 2027 sounds like it is a long way off, but it will come quickly, and children that have left the school may be able to visit the new building and use community facilities.

Comment – Member of the public stated that from the educational point of view there are opportunities for children to learn in the different ways and the new school can offer this opportunity. There is also an early years P1and P2 and nursery aspect and the design will have this flow and gives all opportunities to learn in modern way which is very exciting.

Chair – Asked if there are any other questions and thanked everyone for coming to this consultation, he also thanked the Headteacher for the hospitality.

Comment (Headteacher) –The Head Teacher said that new school is very important and exciting for staff, and everyone is looking forward bringing this new journey. He also thanked everyone for coming along.

• 4. Conclusion

Tom Wood brought questions to a close and thanked everyone for all their contributions which were extremely valuable. He also reminded everyone that they had until 31 October 2023 to make any further contributions on the website or in writing.

APPENDIX 5 – Summary of Pupil Responses

Pupil Opinions of their Travel Route

Pupils completed an exercise to indicate how they felt about 2 roads they cross on their route to the existing site and 2 roads they would cross on the route to the new site. Some of the pupils provided comments on factors that led to their opinion.

Responses		Total	
Improved	8	16	14%
Somewhat Improved	8		
No Data	3	3	3%
No Different	37	37	33%
Somewhat Worse	34	57	50%
Worse	23		
Total	113	113	

Travel Method	Existing Site	Proposed New Site	Change
Bicycle	11	18	7
Scooter	4	17	13
No Data	3	5	2
Walk	51	34	-17
Car	42	34	-8
Bus	2	5	3
Total	113	113	

Pupil Comments

No.	Comment	Notes on comment
1	It's further away so more challenging	
2	The cars park outside where I live which makes crossing the road hard	Cars were parked for pupils of Gracemount primary school
3	The road will need a new crossing at the school	Pupil crosses Captains road on an existing crossing
4	A road through the dip would make it better	The dip is part of birdiehouse burn on pupils route to school
5	I have to cross more carparks	Route to the proposed new site
6	My Dad will drive me	Distance to new site perceived as greater
7	Its closer on the bus	New site is closer to the bus route for pupil
8	I look at my phone and walk	Pupil aware that crossing busier roads needs more awareness
9	It's harder because I'll have to walk further	

10	You have to wait hardly any time	The crossing lights prioritise pedestrians
11	I'll take my scooter as it's a bit further	Distance to new site perceived as greater
12	I cross lots of roads to get there	Pupil was confident and used to crossing roads
13	I'll go the same way but a bit further and have to cross a carpark	carparks considered to be more challenging to cross
14	Its closer to my house	New school site is closer to pupils' house
15	I go through the high school to make it quicker	Pupil crosses high school site to shorten route
16	its tricky going between the cars	Cars parked to drop off pupils make the crossing more difficult on their route to school

Pupil Ideas for the Design of the New School

Pupil Building Ideas	Frequency	Pupil Site Ideas	Frequency
Swimming Pool	60	Football pitch	42
Gym hall	38	Big Playground	15
Bigger/Separate Halls	26	Basketball Court	12
Gaming Room	19	Garden	8
Library	18	Tennis Court	7
Art Room	15	Bike/Scooter Store	4
Good Cafeteria	12	Big Car Park	2
Bigger Classrooms	10	Outside Learning	2
Changing Room/Shower rooms	10	Shelter	2
Rock Climbing Wall	5	Volleyball Court	1
Soft Play	5	Bike track	1
Sensory Room	5		
Disco Room	5		
Drama/dance/stage	4		
Computer Room	4		
Party Room	4		
Sports Centre	1		
More Toilets	1		
Nursery	3		
Big Staff Room	1		

Pupil Equipment & Program Ideas	Frequency
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Outdoor Play Equipment; Swings, ziplines, bungee jumps, Jungle Gym	41
Desks/storage/Lockers	20
Clubs/After School Clubs	13
Trampolines	11
iPads	10
PE Equipment	9
Brain Break area	9
PC's/Laptops	7
Esports	7
More/Newer Books	5
Whiteboards/Smartboards	5
iPhones	3
Phones Allowed in Class	3
Water Fountains	2
Electives (High School Choices)	1
School Bell	1
More School Supplies; Art	1
More Male Staff	1
Electronics	1



Schools (Consultation) (Scotland) Act 2010

Report by Education Scotland addressing educational aspects of the proposal by The City of Edinburgh Council to relocate St Catherine's Roman Catholic Primary School to a new site on Captains Road.

November 2023

1. Introduction

1.1 This report from Education Scotland has been prepared by His Majesty's Inspectors of Education (HM Inspectors) in accordance with the terms of the [Schools \(Consultation\) \(Scotland\) Act 2010](#) ("the 2010 Act"). The purpose of the report is to provide an independent and impartial consideration of The City of Edinburgh Council's proposal to relocate St Catherine's Roman Catholic (RC) Primary School to a new site on Captains Road. Section 2 of the report sets out brief details of the consultation process. Section 3 of the report sets out HM Inspectors' consideration of the educational aspects of the proposal, including significant views expressed by consultees. Section 4 summarises HM Inspectors' overall view of the proposal. Upon receipt of this report, the Act requires the council to consider it and then prepare its final consultation report. The council's final consultation report should include this report and must contain an explanation of how, in finalising the proposal, it has reviewed the initial proposal, including a summary of points raised during the consultation process and the council's response to them. The council has to publish its final consultation report three weeks before it takes its final decision.

1.2 HM Inspectors considered:

- the likely effects of the proposal for children of the school; any other users; children likely to become pupils within two years of the date of publication of the proposal paper; and other children and young people in the council area
- any other likely effects of the proposal;
- how the council intends to minimise or avoid any adverse effects that may arise from the proposal; and
- the educational benefits the council believes will result from implementation of the proposal, and the council's reasons for coming to these beliefs.

1.3 In preparing this report, HM Inspectors undertook the following activities:

- attendance at the public meeting held on 12 October 2023 in connection with the council's proposal;
- consideration of all relevant documentation provided by the council in relation to the proposal, specifically the educational benefits statement and related consultation documents, written and oral submissions from parents and others;
- consideration of further information on all schools affected; and
- visits to the site of St Catherine's RC Primary School, including discussion with relevant consultees.

2. Consultation process

2.1 The City of Edinburgh Council undertook the consultation on its proposal(s) with reference to the [Schools \(Consultation\) \(Scotland\) Act 2010](#).

2.2 The council undertook the consultation between 11 September to 31 October 2023. The council published the proposal on its website. Paper and electronic copies of the proposal paper were made available. Completion of an online questionnaire and written responses on the proposal were also accepted by letter or email. The council held a public meeting at St Catherine's RC Primary School, which was attended by approximately 20 members of the community.

2.3 Almost all of those who attended the public meeting were supportive of the proposal. However, they also highlighted a few concerns. There were 18 responses to the online survey and four written responses. Thirteen respondents were supportive of the proposal and eight were not. St Catherine's RC Primary School pupils and staff discussed the proposal and had a range of comments, which were mostly supportive. Overall, of those respondents who were supportive of the proposal, they recognised the poor condition of the current school building and the need for a new school. They noted the benefits of having increased capacity in the nursery and the primary school, access to improved information technology infrastructure and more accessible indoor space. They also welcomed opportunities to engage in the design process, including commenting on the use of the outdoor space such as inclusion of sports pitches for wider community use. Stakeholder concerns include the proposed location of the new school, which is next to a busy road. They also have concerns about access to the council services, that are currently located in the South East Locality Office, which is on the footprint of the proposed new school. The potential loss of access to outdoor sports pitches by the community or neighbouring schools. These services may be affected during the build period if the proposed location is approved.

3. Educational aspects of proposal

3.1 The council's proposal is to replace St Catherine's RC Primary School and build a new denominational primary school on Captain's Road. Investigations in the summer of 2018 considered how best to upgrade St Catherine's RC Primary School. It concluded that the building needed to be replaced rather than upgraded. The existing building has seven classrooms. The proposed new school will have 11 classrooms to accommodate children from new housing developments. The proposed new school will also have capacity for extension to 14 classes. The nursery places will increase from 20 to 64. The council is also considering including a community hub in the design. This has potential to provide additional opportunities to co-locate services, make efficient use of public space, including reducing the carbon footprint. The proposed timeline for the new school is August 2027. Children attending the nursery and primary school will transfer to the new school on its completion.

3.2 The council's proposal sets out a number of educational benefits for those affected. These include, improved facilities which will enhance the learning and teaching environment. Better access to information computing technology (ICT). Flexible indoor and outdoor learning and play facilities, which will provide opportunities for the delivery of an enhanced sports curriculum in line with national guidance. The expansion of the nursery facility and primary school will help to address current and future demand for places. The council recognises the challenges of maintaining the village school feeling of St Catherine's into a new building. They are engaging with stakeholders to help maintain this.

3.3 All children, parents and wider stakeholders who met with HM Inspectors were supportive of the proposal. They recognise the benefits of increased capacity in the nursery and the school, with further opportunities to expand in the future. Children and parents recognise that the new school could offer improved sports and ICT facilities, opportunities for increased after school activities and better outdoor facilities for learning and play. Parents also recognise the benefits of including a community hub, which may provide local access to public services. However, they have concerns about maintaining the school identity and ethos, should the proposed school roll numbers increase as projected. They are also concerned about safe routes to school, as the proposed location is on a very busy road. They noted that if the entrance to the school is located in the safest place with good signage, that this may help to tackle both of these concerns.

3.4 The headteacher and staff in the school all support the proposal. They recognise that a new school will bring education benefits. This includes an improved environment to support and enhance learning and teaching for all children, more flexible space to support better the delivery of

the wider curriculum, and enhanced ICT facilities. Staff welcome the opportunity for a purposely designed and integral early learning and childcare facility that could accommodate an increased number of children. Staff noted the benefits of any potential increase to the staffing complement, should the roll numbers increase. They recognise the need to ensure that the strong ethos and identity of the school is maintained. Staff noted that, should a community hub be included in the design, that it could strengthen opportunities for parental involvement. Staff also recognise the council's commitment to reducing impact on the environment. However, they had concerns regarding the lack of sufficient carparking spaces at the new school and around the vicinity.

3.5 Representatives of the Diocese of Edinburgh Roman Catholic Church and their primary school and religious education advisors are supportive of the proposal. They believe that a new school building will provide enhanced modern facilities for the delivery of education. They expressed to HM Inspectors that the school should be a stand-alone facility, which would help to maintain St Catherine's strong Roman Catholic identity.

4. Summary

The City of Edinburgh Council has set out a strong case to replace St Catherine's RC Primary School with a new denominational primary school on Captain's Road. All children, parents, staff and representatives of the Diocese who met with HM Inspectors support the proposal. The council's proposal, should it proceed, will result in a much improved environment for the delivery of Curriculum for Excellence and potentially improved outcomes for learners. As a result, HM Inspectors agree with the educational benefits set out in this proposal and the council's approach to engaging with stakeholders to tackle challenges and concerns. The council should continue to engage stakeholders during the design phase to help ensure that the new school meets, where possible, their aspirations.

**HM Inspectors
November 2023**