

HIGHLAND COUNCIL

CARE AND LEARNING SERVICE

REVIEW OF THE PROPOSAL TO ESTABLISH A NEW 3 TO 18 COMMUNITY CAMPUS ON THE SITE OF THE EXISTING TAIN ROYAL ACADEMY, COMPRISING EARLY YEARS, PRIMARY, SECONDARY, ADDITIONAL SUPPORT NEEDS (ASN) AND GAELIC MEDIUM PROVISION, TO REPLACE ALL OTHER LOCAL AUTHORITY EDUCATION PROVISION WITHIN TAIN, INCLUDING THE EXISTING TAIN ROYAL ACADEMY BUILDING AND COMMUNITY COMPLEX.

This report has been prepared following a review of the proposal:

- To discontinue education provision at the following campuses – Tain Craighill Primary School, Tain Knockbreck Primary School and St Duthus Special School and to relocate provision to a new 3 to 18 campus to be established on the site of the existing Tain Royal Academy;
- As an interim measure, until the proposed 3 to 18 campus is available, to relocate current Pre School provision from St. Duthus School campus (English Medium) and the Tain Knockbreck Primary School campus (Gaelic Medium) to temporary modular accommodation on the current Tain Craighill Primary School campus;
- To establish a new 3 to 18 community campus on the site of the existing Tain Royal Academy comprising Early Years, Primary, Secondary, Additional Support Needs (ASN) and Gaelic Medium provision to replace all other local authority education provision within Tain, including the existing Tain Royal Academy building and Community Complex;
- To combine the existing school catchment areas of Tain Craighill Primary School and Tain Knockbreck Primary School to become the catchment area of the new combined Primary School within the 3 to 18 campus.

Having had regard (in particular) to:

- Relevant written representations received by the Council (from any

person) during the consultation period.

- Oral representations made to it (by any persons) at the public meeting held in Tain Royal Academy on 15^h September 2014.
- Oral representations made to it (by any persons) at the public meeting held in Tain Royal Academy on 8th October 2014.
- The report from Education Scotland.

This document has been issued by the Highland Council under the requirements of the Schools (Consultation) (Scotland) Act 2010, as amended.

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1.0 Background

1.1 The Education, Children and Adult Services Committee (ECAS) at its meeting on 28 August 2014 agreed that a statutory consultation be undertaken on the proposal to establish a new 3 to 18 community campus on the site of the existing Tain Royal Academy comprising Early Years, Primary, Secondary, Additional Support Needs (ASN) and Gaelic Medium provision to replace all other local authority education provision within Tain, including the existing Tain Royal Academy building and Community Complex.

1.2 **Appendix 1** is the original consultative paper and provides full details of the above proposal.

1.3 A summary of key facts from the original proposal paper is set out below.

		TRA	Craighill PS	Knockbreck PS	St. Duthus School
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Buildings					
Condition		C	C	C	C
Suitability		C	C	C	D
Planning Capacity		845	296	150	18
Roll - August 2014		487	241	165	14
Occupancy		57.63%	81.42%	110.00%	77.78%

Primary School roll projections					
English Medium school roll - August 2014		456	208	165	14
Gaelic Medium school roll - August 2014		31	33	0	0
Combined projected school roll - August 2019		592	223	153	NA

Combined projected school roll - August 2024		617	230	168	NA
Combined projected school roll - August 2027		634	249	181	NA

Placing requests - based on August 2013 enrolments					
Number of pupils residential in school catchment area		480	242	130	NA
Number of pupils from catchment area who attend local school		440	186	75	5
Number of pupils from out-with catchment area who attend local school		54	61	81	9

School meals					
Average daily paid uptake		129	80	51	8
Average daily FSM entitlement		65	39	29	2
Average daily FSM uptake		30	28	16	2
Additional uptake as a result of universal FSM for P1 to P3 pupils		NA	58	39	0
Premises issues associated with FSM policy implementation		NA	Y	Y	N

- 1.4 Since the publication of the proposal paper the school roll projections have been updated (as part of Highland Council's regular exercise to do so). The new projected rolls, equivalent to the figures above, are:

	Tain Royal Academy	Craighall PS	Knockbreck PS	St. Duthus
Actual School roll August 2014	477	241	162	17
Estimated School Roll 2019/20	566	240	171	Not available

2.0 Consultation process

2.1 The formal consultation period ran from Monday 1 September 2014 to Wednesday 29 October 2014 and written representations on the proposal were sought from interested parties as defined within the Schools (Consultation) (Scotland) Act 2010 as amended. Some follow up consultation also took place in the period from 2 December onwards, following receipt of Education Scotland's report.

2.2 In accordance with statutory requirements, the following were consulted:

- (i) Parents of pupils in the catchment areas of all schools within the Tain Associated School Group, including parents of pre-school pupils;
- (ii) Members of Parliament and Members of Scottish Parliament for the area affected by the proposal;
- (iv) The Parent Councils of all the schools within the Tain Associated School Group
- (v) Staff of the schools within the Tain Associated School Group
- (vi) Trade union representatives;
- (vii) The community councils for the areas within the Tain Associated Group
- (viii) Education Scotland;
- (ix) Highland Youth Convenor;
- (x) Bòrd na Gàidhlig;
- (xi) Pupils in the affected schools.

2.3 The proposal document was also advertised and on the Highland Council website.

2.4 Public meetings were held in Tain Royal Academy on the 15th September and 8th October 2014. The meetings were advertised in advance on the Highland Council website. The minutes of the meetings are at **Appendices 2 and 3**.

3.0 Review of proposals following the consultation period

- 3.1 Following receipt of written representations received by Highland Council and consideration of oral representations made at public meetings held during the consultation period, officials reviewed the proposals.
- 3.2 The feedback from the consultation was considered by a range of Council Officials. This ensured that the Council met the requirements of the 2010 Act.
- 3.3 The outcome of this review process is reflected in the response, conclusion and recommendations outlined below.

4.0 Responses received

- 4.1 Details of the written submissions received during the consultation period are appended – **Appendices 4A to 4L.**

5.0 Issues raised during the consultation period

- 5.1 During the consultation period views both for and against the proposal were put forward. The issues identified by those supporting the proposal can be summarised as follows:

The proposal is an exciting prospect for Tain and offers the opportunity to take education to the next level.

The new campus would be a boost to the morale of staff and pupils, and should assist with future staff recruitment.

Parents are enthused about the prospect of engaging with the detailed design process.

The new arrangements offer the prospect of flatter and more versatile school management arrangements.

The shared campus model works well in Dornoch, and would work well in Tain.

Pupils would be happier at being in the same campus as their brothers and sisters.

The new school would be bigger, have better facilities and would offer pupils the opportunity to make more friends.

Transition arrangements would be better under the campus model.

The new campus would raise the profile of Gaelic Medium education in Tain and would open opportunities for Gaelic Medium education to families who would not previously have considered this as they live outside the Craighill PS catchment.

Establishing a sizeable Gaelic-medium provision can make it attractive to staff in terms of collegiality and career long professional learning.

There will be opportunities for closer transition working between early years, primary and secondary staff to develop Gaelic education in the proposed campus. The development of a new modern state of the art building will also open opportunities for the campus to take advantage of the national Gaelic virtual school currently being scoped.

The proposal would address long standing accommodation problems with respect to the schools in Tain.

- 5.2 The issues identified by those opposing the proposal have been summarised below. Individual issues raised that are similar to one another have been “grouped.”

Issue 1

It is undesirable to co-locate secondary and primary age pupils. The primary age pupils will be exposed to behaviour and language that is inappropriate.

Younger children might be scared of the secondary age pupils.

Has any assessment been made of the effects of mixing primary and secondary age children?

Response 1

There are a number of other locations in Highland where primary and secondary age pupils are co-located on a shared site. This happens at Dornoch Academy and Primary, Kinlochbervie High School and Primary, Kinlochleven High School and Primary; Kilchuimen Academy and Primary; and will also be a feature of the new Wick Campus. Experience from these other locations indicates that co-location is very successful and that no significant issues arise between secondary and primary age pupils sharing the same site.

As indicated at the public meeting on 8 October, the proposed 3-18 campus would be an opportunity for senior pupils to set the tone and standard of behaviour in the campus. The opportunities to build better relationships between older and younger pupils would assist in positive whole school behaviour/ethos. This would also link with the community and provide leadership skills for senior pupils that would be of benefit to them progressing to university and into the world of work.

The evidence from Education Scotland ('Opening Up Learning in All Through Schools) confirmed at the meeting on 8th October 2014 refers to 40 all-through schools in Scotland and notes that inspections at such provisions have identified "climate and ethos, including the quality of relationships" as key strengths. The report further endorses a number of benefits of single campus schools and notes the similar support/view expressed by Ofsted based on evidence in England.

Issue 2

The current proposals do not take sufficient account of likely future increases to the population of Tain, particularly given possible business developments in the Cromarty Firth. The existing Tain Royal Academy has doubled in size in the last 40 years.

The projected accommodation for ASN pupils is likely to be insufficient to meet future demand.

Does the proposal take account of Scottish Government proposals to provide funded childcare for 2-year-olds. Do we need a 2-18 campus?

Response 2

Since 1975 the roll at Tain Royal Academy has risen from 558 to a peak of 845 before falling back to 476 today. Given the current age profile of our population, our ageing population and lower fertility rates, population projections indicate we are unlikely to see a repeat of the 800+ peak.

The current roll projections include assumptions for future house building and therefore the effect on population from economic developments, as far as they can be forecast. These assumptions take all of the primaries in the ASG into account. The current projections assume a house building rate in accordance with past annual figures up to 2016, a house building rate of 46 per year from 2017 to 2020, 66 per year from 2021-2026, and 62 per year in 2027 and 2028. These figures are significantly higher than the historic rate of house building in the area, which has been 29 houses per year.

Highland Council has been undertaking consultation with parents to gauge if the current arrangements for early learning and childcare best meet parental needs. Part of this process is to allow Highland Council to form a clearer picture of how the provision for two year olds could develop. In the consultation meetings undertaken so far the general view of parents (and staff) is that they would prefer to see provision for two year olds that is separate from school nurseries.

Issue 3

It is not appropriate to accommodate ASN children with highly complex medical needs with the new shared campus. The needs of these children would be better met by a separate specialist facility.

There is a lack of understanding about the highly complex needs of the children who currently attend St. Duthus School.

Response 3

The Highland Council believes that inclusion in education is one aspect of inclusion in society. The principles of inclusion have been reaffirmed in recent legislation, including:-

- The Standards in Scotland's Schools etc Act 2000
- The Education (Scotland) Act 2004 and as amended 2009
- The Equalities Act 2010

The Council attaches great importance to meeting the needs of all pupils in local schools, and fully recognises that careful thought needs to be given to ensuring the needs of ASN pupils are addressed. Within Highland there are a large number of pupils with highly complex needs and life threatening medical conditions, who are very successfully integrated into their local mainstream schools.

The design of the new ASN facilities will be part of the detailed consultative process that will follow any decision to implement the proposal (see Response 4 below) and the parents of pupils with ASN will have the opportunity to contribute their ideas and suggestions to the Stakeholder Group set up as part of that process. This will include the need for specialist accommodation for those pupils who are unable to sustain mainstream education.

Issue 4

The new campus needs a separate area for Gaelic Medium provision.

External areas should be as large as possible.

The new community facilities make a high demand on the available space. Should these be moved elsewhere?

There is a need to address issues around high traffic volumes and parking demand. The present document does not include any detailed transport proposals.

Numerous detailed design issues need to be addressed in respect of

the proposed ASN accommodation.

What will the new school be called?

There is no mention of the environmental standards to be applied to the new build.

Health and safety issues may arise from building the new campus so close to the existing TRA site and demolishing the existing site next to the new school. The existing building may contain asbestos.

What assessment has been made of potential disruption during the construction phase?

Will there be segregated playground and corridor spaces for the primary and secondary age pupils? The shared canteen is unfair to pupils.

The public should not be allowed access to the schools areas during the day.

There are widespread concerns about the appearance, height and design of the new campus.

Flat roofs are a bad idea.

A multi-storey building is not the best option for Early Years and ASN pupils.

Realistically, is there room for this building on the present TRA campus? The site of Craighill Primary offers a better location.

Response 4

The Council undertook an extensive site selection process, including public consultation, in arriving at the proposed site for the Campus. The criteria considered as part of the site selection process included the following factors; site location (accessibility and traffic, location and orientation, Safer Routes to School); site condition (environment and soils, services and utilities, size and shape, topography); cost (capital cost, timescale and availability, whole life costs); and community considerations (community, demographic, educational, planning/environmental impacts, and public acceptance).

Within the original consultation report, what was included was an illustrative layout of the Campus purely to demonstrate how a Campus could potentially be accommodated on the site. This is not a final or conclusive layout or design.

Should the proposal be agreed, the implementation phase of the

proposal will include an extensive consultation process with parents and local community representatives. The process will include discussion on the detailed design. This process has been followed in other new school builds in Highland and would be further refined to fit the circumstances in Tain. All Stakeholders will have the opportunity to contribute to the process.

The design of the new building will of course be subject to planning permission.

The names of the new schools will be decided on after consultation with parents and pupils.

The design and construction of the new campus will comply with all relevant legislation and Council policies with respect to environmental standards and sustainability.

Issue 5

The statutory consultation was a “tick-box” exercise and did not engage with the community and parents in a meaningful way.

Response 5

The Council’s consultation process, both formal and informal, has been lengthy and comprehensive, and has complied with the legislative requirements. A detailed rationale of educational benefit under-pinning the proposal has been provided, as well as consideration of other factors including financial, transport and travel implications.

An additional public meeting (8th October 2014) was organised to specifically discuss the educational benefits of the proposal to ensure parents and the local community had an additional opportunity to discuss this aspect of the proposal in more detail. All of the issues raised in writing during consultation, and all those identified in the public meetings, have been considered in the preparation of this final report.

Issue 6

The proposal document contains insufficient details of future management arrangements and staffing entitlements.

The proposal document suggests that the Depute Head Teacher in charge of the Special School will report to the Primary Head Teacher. However some of the pupils with ASN attending the campus will be of secondary age.

Response 6

Section 8.1 and Appendix 13 of the original proposal document Set out detailed information on the management structure. Tain RA will retain a Head Teacher and 2 Depute Head Teachers, in accordance with HC staffing levels for a school of that size. It is envisaged that the Primary School will initially retain its own Head Teacher.

After consideration of comments made in response to the Consultation, the Council now proposes that the new campus will have a Depute Head Teacher with responsibility for all ASN matters. This Depute will report to either of or both the Primary Head Teacher or the Secondary Head Teacher, depending on the age of any individual pupil being discussed, or on circumstances. They will also have the support of the Area ASN Manager and his or her team.

Detailed considerations about the management structure of the new campus would form part of the consultative process that will follow any decision to proceed with the proposal.

Issue 7

How is the capital cost to be funded and what will be the effect of the proposal on current Highland Council running costs?

Response 7

At this time it is planned that the Tain Campus, if agreed, would be delivered by the Council through traditional means, with the Council financing and procuring the capital project, and owning the operating the Campus buildings once completed.

The Council has a long-term capital plan, with capital funding in place to resource delivery of the Council's 'Sustainable School Estate Review' capital projects. The project would be funded from within the existing capital programme and through additional financial support the Council has received from Scottish Government for the 'Scotland's Schools for the Future Programme'.

Further details of the financial implications of the proposal were set out in Appendix 12 of the original report.

Issue 8

The 3-18 model should not be used to justify the future closure of rural schools.

Is the adoption of the 3-18 model intended to "pave the way" for the closure of rural primary schools?

Response 8

The current proposal is only concerned with the proposed 3-18 campus for Tain, and the implications on the specific schools listed within the proposal.

All significant proposals affecting schools, including all proposals for school mergers and closures, are subject to the provisions of the Schools (Consultation) (Scotland) Act 2010. The Act sets out the consultation process that a local authority must undertake in respect of such proposals. These provisions of the Act must be followed in every individual case and cannot be circumvented.

Highland Council is undertaking an in-depth review of its school estate. Any proposal advanced as part of that review is put forward only after a careful assessment of its potential educational, community and financial impacts. Proposals for 3-18 schools will only be advanced where they offer the prospect of educational and/or community benefit.

Issue 9

Keeping children on the same site from ages 3-18 runs the risk of “institutionalising” them.

Response 9

As mentioned above (response 1), there are already some schools in Highland where nursery, primary and secondary provision takes place within a shared campus. There is no evidence that pupils in these locations become institutionalised or are in any way less able to cope once they leave school. Indeed, the evidence from Education Scotland (response 1) identifies the key benefits of the 3-18 model and notes the success of existing single campus education arrangements in 40 schools in Scotland.

Issue 10

It is reckless to have all the town’s children on one site, as this would increase the harm caused by a disaster or act of terrorism.

Response 10

Fortunately such events are extremely rare. Nonetheless, the Highland Council has an Emergency Planning Service that advises on possible risks and each school provision has a business continuity plan to ensure arrangements are in place to respond to any risks or events which could arise.

Issue 11

If the proposals proceed, primary school children in the outlying schools within the Tain Royal Academy catchment may feel like outsiders compared to the primary school pupils within the campus itself. How will this be addressed?

Response 11

The other schools within the secondary catchment will still have the opportunity for regular transition and other visits to the 3-18 campus. There will be no reason for pupils from the outlying schools to feel like outsiders. At the public meeting on 8th October 2014 it was confirmed that there would be opportunities for primary schools in the wider ASG to utilise the new facilities in conjunction with their local peers.

Issue 12

Is the £44 million only for the building or does it include transport?

Response 12

The figure of £44 million quoted is the estimated capital cost associated with the construction of the Campus, and does not include transport or any other operational costs.

Transport and other running costs are shown separately in Appendix 1P.

Issue 13

Will the primary children's needs take precedence over secondary kids?

Response 13

No. Access to shared facilities in the new campus will be arranged in a way that is fair to both primary and secondary pupils.

Issue 14

The new school will be too crowded.

Response 14

The new campus will be designed with sufficient capacity for the projected future school roll.

Issue 15

Will the proposed community library result in the closure of the existing library in the Town Centre?

Response 15

The future of the community library in Tain Town Centre has not been considered as part of this consultation.

6.0 Summary of the issues raised by Education Scotland

- 6.1 In line with legislative requirements, Education Scotland were invited to submit comments on the Council's proposals. A copy of the report from Education Scotland is appended – **Appendix 5**.
- 6.2 In their report, Education Scotland recognise that the proposal offers the prospect of considerable educational benefits to the children directly affected. These include improved transitions for children and young people at key points in their learning journey. It is recognised that the existing school buildings at Craighill Primary School, Knockbreck Primary School and St Duthus Special School have deteriorated to such an extent that they are no longer fit for purpose. The proposal would also resolve the current situation of education provision being spread across four sites. It would bring together Gaelic and English Medium Education from 3-18 on the one site. Working in this way has the potential to improve progression in pupils' skills. There is scope in a modern purpose-built campus to better meet the specific needs of children and young people, including those with severe and complex needs currently attending St Duthus Special School.
- 6.3 The report from Education Scotland identified further issues for consideration by the Council. These are detailed below, together with the Council's responses.

Issue 16

The council now needs to provide further information about the management structures for the new campus.

Response 16

See Response 6 above.

Issue 17

Should the proposal go ahead the council should ensure all concerned are fully involved in discussions to develop and work towards a final design for the 3-18 campus.

Response 17

The Council is in full agreement with this suggestion.

Issue 18

The council did not consult children and young people about the proposal during the formal consultation period.

Response 18

As set out within the legislation, the Highland Council has consulted the views of those children and young people who attend the affected schools, where the pupils were of a suitable age and maturity). The views of the pupils are summarised at Appendices 6-6B.

Issue 19

It is not clear from the consultation documentation if The Highland Council consulted with Bòrd na Gàidhlig. Under the terms of the *Schools (Consultation) (Scotland) Act 2010* and, in taking forward the proposal, the education authority needs to consider Bòrd na Gàidhlig's view.

Response 19

This has since been addressed and the views of Bòrd na Gàidhlig are at Appendix 7.

7.0 Alleged omissions or inaccuracies

- 7.1 The consultation process raised one alleged omission that has not already been addressed above in response to the issues raised.

Issue 21

The staffing tabled attached to the Proposal Paper as Appendix 13, neglected to mention Road Crossing Patroller (RCPs).

Response 20

The number of current RCPs in Tain was noted at Section 2.12 of the Proposal paper. At the present time it is not possible to estimate how many RCPs will be required for the new campus, as this will be part of the detailed Safer Routes to Schools Assessment.

8.0 Procedure for Call-in by the Scottish Ministers

- 8.1 As set out in The Schools (Consultation) (Scotland) Act 2010, Highland Council is required to notify the Scottish Ministers of its decision and provide them with a copy of the Proposal Paper and Consultation Report. The Scottish Ministers have a six-week period from the date of that final decision to decide if they will call-in the proposal. Within the first three weeks of that six-week period, the Scottish Ministers will take account of any relevant representations made to them by any person. Following a decision on this proposal, as required by legislation, the Council will publish a notice setting out its decision and the timescales for representations to be made to Scottish Ministers.
- 8.2 Anyone wishing to make a representation to the Scottish Ministers requesting them to call-in a local authority decision to close a school is asked to e-mail schoolestates@scotland.gsi.gov.uk or write to James Newman, School Estates Team, Scottish Government, 2-D (S) Victoria Quay, Edinburgh EH6 6QQ.

Until the outcome of the six week call-in process has been notified to Highland Council, the Council will not proceed to implement the Proposal. If the Scottish Ministers call-in the Proposal they may refuse to consent to the Proposal or grant their consent to the Proposal subject to conditions or unconditionally. Until the outcome of the call-in has been notified to Highland Council, the Council is unable to proceed to implement the Proposal.

9.0 Legal issues

- 9.1 Throughout this statutory consultation The Council has complied in full with the requirements of the Schools (Consultation) (Scotland) Act 2010, as amended.
- 9.2 As provided for in section 1 of the 1980 Act, it is the duty of the Council to ensure adequate and efficient provision of school education within Highland, such education to be directed towards the development of the personality, talents and mental and physical abilities of children or young persons to their fullest potential (Standards in Scotland's Schools Etc. Act 2000). That said, as with all Council duties, the Council has a duty to make arrangements to secure best value and in securing best value the Council is required to maintain an appropriate balance between, inter alia, the quality of its performance of its functions and the cost to the authority of that performance (Local Government in Scotland Act 2002, section 1). In coming to any decision the above factors should be taken into account.

10. Financial Implications

- 10.1 Both the revenue and capital implications of the proposal are summarised in Appendix 1p.

11.0 Equality Impact Assessment

11.1 An Equality Impact Assessment has been prepared and is at Appendix 8.

12.0 Conclusion

12.1 The consultation process has complied fully with legislative requirements and has provided an opportunity for all parties to identify key issues of concern. These issues have been fully considered and the Council's response detailed in sections 5, 6, and 7 above.

12.3 Education Scotland staff visited all 4 schools to speak to parents, pupils and staff. They also had the opportunity to review in detail the proposal document and all written responses.

12.4 The Director of Care and Learning, on reviewing all of the submissions, the Education Scotland report and the Equality Impact Assessment (Appendix 8) concludes that the best and most sustainable educational provision for the area currently served by Tain Royal Academy, Craighill, Knockbreck and St. Duthus Schools would be through a shared 3-18 campus to be constructed on the current Tain Royal Academy site.

13.0 Recommendation

13.1 It is therefore recommended that the proposal:

- To discontinue education provision at the following campuses – Tain Craighill Primary School, Tain Knockbreck Primary School and St Duthus Special School and to relocate provision to a new 3 to 18 campus to be established on the site of the existing Tain Royal Academy;
- As an interim measure, until the proposed 3 to 18 campus is available, to relocate current Pre School provision from St. Duthus School campus (English Medium) and the Tain Knockbreck Primary School campus (Gaelic Medium) to temporary modular accommodation on the current Tain Craighill Primary School campus;
- To establish a new 3 to 18 community campus on the site of the existing Tain Royal Academy comprising Early Years, Primary, Secondary, Additional Support Needs (ASN) and Gaelic Medium provision to replace all other local authority education provision within Tain, including the existing Tain Royal Academy building and Community Complex;
- To combine the existing school catchment areas of Tain Craighill Primary School and Tain Knockbreck Primary School to become the catchment area of the new combined Primary School within the 3 to 18 campus.

is approved.

Bill Alexander
Director of Care and Learning
20th January 2015