



## **HIGHLAND COUNCIL**

### **CARE AND LEARNING SERVICE**

#### **REVIEW OF THE PROPOSAL TO REPLACE TAIN ROYAL ACADEMY, CRAIGHILL PRIMARY SCHOOL, KNOCKBRECK PRIMARY SCHOOL, AND ST. DUTHUS SCHOOL, WITH A NEW 3-18 CAMPUS**

This report has been prepared following a review of the proposal to replace Tain Royal Academy (TRA), Craighill Primary School, Knockbreck Primary School, and St. Duthus School, with a new 3-18 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 at Tain Royal Academy Community Campus on 18 June 2018;

The report from Education Scotland;

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

The report recommends that the Council should establish the new 3-18 campus, and that the site chosen should be the current Craighill Primary School site.

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## 1.0 Background

1.1 Highland Council's Care, Learning and Housing Committee, at its meeting on 30 May 2018, agreed that a statutory consultation be undertaken on the proposal to replace Tain Royal Academy, Craighill Primary School, Knockbreck Primary School, and St. Duthus School, with a new 3-18 campus.

1.2 The Proposal Paper offered two potential sites for the location of the new Campus, at Tain Royal Academy or at a site adjacent to Craighill Primary School.

1.3 **Appendix B** is the original consultative paper and provides full details of the above proposal. **Appendices 1-6** are the appendices to the original proposal.

## 2.0 Consultation process

2.1 The formal consultation period ran from Tuesday 5 June 2018 to Tuesday 4 September 2018. Written representations on the proposal were sought from interested parties as defined within the Schools (Consultation) (Scotland) Act 2010.

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

- (i) Parents of pupils attending Tain Royal Academy;
- (ii) Parents of pupils attending Craighill Primary School; including parents of pre-school pupils;
- (iii) Parents of pupils attending Knockbreck Primary School;
- (iv) Parents of pupils attending St. Duthus School;
- (v) The Parent Councils of the above schools.
- (vi) The Parent Councils of Edderton Primary School; Gledfield Primary School; Hill of Fearn Primary School, Hilton of Cadboll Primary School; Inver Primary School; and Tarbat Old Primary School
- (vii) Members of Parliament and Members of Scottish Parliament for the area affected by the proposal;
- (viii) Staff of each of the schools listed above;
- (ix) Trade union representatives;
- (x) Tain Community Council
- (xi) Ardgay and District Community Council
- (xii) Balintore and Hilton Community Council
- (xiii) Edderton Community Council
- (xiv) Kilmuir Easter and Logie Easter Community Council
- (xv) Nigg and Shandwick Community Council
- (xvi) Tarbat Community Council
- (xvii) Inver Community Council
- (xviii) Fearn Community Council
- (xix) Ankerville Nursery
- (xx) Stepping Stones Nursery
- (xxi) Bòrd na Gàidhlig
- (xxii) Education Scotland;

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

2.4 A public meeting was held at Tain Royal Academy Community Complex on 18 June 2018. The meeting was advertised in advance on the Highland Council website, and in the *Ross-shire Journal*.

2.5 Prior to finalising this report and recommendation to elected members, the Council also attended Tain Gala day on Saturday 6<sup>th</sup> July, to capture further feedback, the outcome of which is reflected later in this report.

2.6 Following receipt of written representations received by Highland Council and consideration of oral representations made at the public meeting, officials reviewed the proposals.

- 2.7 The outcome of this review process is reflected in the response, conclusion and recommendations outlined below.

### 3.0 Responses received

- 3.1 A list of those who responded in writing during the public consultation is at **Appendix C**, whilst copies of the actual responses are at **Appendix C(1)-C(60)**. A broad range of mechanisms for gather views were used, including views captured during informal consultation and during a drop-in session (included as part of the consultation report), a public meeting and views captured in the note of that meeting, written responses during the consultation, pupil views, and finally there remains the statutory 3 week period prior to consideration by Committee during which further representations can be made.

#### Pupil Responses

- 3.2 Responses were received from pupils at Tain Royal Academy, Knockbreck PS and Craighill PS.
- 3.3 Pupils were asked whether they thought the 3-18 campus was a good or bad idea (with a range of responses available from “Really bad” to “Really good”). They were then asked which site they would prefer for the new campus.
- 3.4 Responses were as follows:

#### Knockbreck PS responses

Campus is good/really good idea – 123

Campus is bad/really bad idea – 40

Don't Know – 15

Preferred site if Campus is built

Craighill site - 127

TRA site – 50

No response recorded - 1

#### Craighill PS responses

Campus is good/really good idea – 126

Campus is bad/really bad idea – 41

Don't Know – 35

Preferred site if Campus is built

Craighill site - 92

TRA site – 101

No response recorded - 9

TRA responses (site location only)

Craighill site – 116

TRA site - 173

**Collated Pupil Responses**

Campus is good/really good idea – 249

Campus is bad/really bad idea – 81

Don't Know – 50

Preferred site if Campus is built

Craighill site - 335

TRA site – 324

No Response – 10

- 3.5 It can be seen that a large majority of pupils favoured the idea of a 3-18 campus. Those supporting the campus represented 65% of the total returns and 75% of those who expressed an opinion one way or another. Opinion amongst the pupils was more evenly divided in terms of the site to be chosen for the new campus, with 51% overall supporting the primary school site and 49% the TRA site. Amongst the primary school age pupils (who will be more likely to experience the new school) 57% favoured the Craighill site and 43% the TRA site.
- 3.6 Reasons given by the pupils for supporting the campus included, that the new and larger school would be better for mixing with others, and would provide a larger choice of friends. There would be better facilities and equipment in a new building, and all pupils would have the same lessons. Some pupils commented that moving to the Academy would be less scary because children would know the building and the secondary school pupils. Others said they would enjoy getting to know children from the other primary schools and that local children would get along better if they were all at the one school. Some pupils from Craighill PS highlighted the poor condition of that building.
- 3.7 Those children who opposed the new campus thought it would be too expensive, too crowded and noisy, or that the age range at the new campus might lead to more bullying. Others saw nothing wrong with their current school. Some felt the loss of sporting competition between the local schools would be a negative.

Written Public Responses

- 3.8 Prior to the statutory consultation, the Council had engaged with its local Stakeholder Group, conducted an open drop in day on site options, and also received feedback from Parent Councils and Community Councils on site options. The results of that informal consultation exercise were used to inform the reduction of four possible sites to the two that were advanced in the Proposal Paper. Appendix 5-5vi to the Proposal Paper included details of submissions received through the pre-consultation process. It was clear from the feedback provided that a majority of respondents felt that the Craighill PS site was the preferred option for a new 3-18 Campus. A summary of responses is shown in the table below. (Totals have not been shown given the separate nature of the informal consultation exercises).

	Responses-Highland Council Drop-in session single preference	Responses-Highland Council Drop-in session multiple preferences	Responses-Parent Council feedback single preference	Responses-Parent Council feedback multiple preferences	Stakeholder Group discussion March 2018
Craighill PS site	60	16	8	2	18
Tain Royal Academy site	6	7	1	1	12
Burgage Site	2	8	0	0	4
Kirksheaf Site	0	7	0	4	2
No preference	12	0	8	0	1

- 3.9 A total of 41 named individuals submitted written responses during the statutory consultation exercise. One of these expressed the author's personal view plus a summary of comments submitted via a drop-in session organised by the author of the response.

- 3.10 In terms of location, responses were as follows:

Preference for the Craighill site – 25  
 Preference for the TRA site - 4  
 Preference for the Kirksheaf site – 1  
 No opinion on site preference, or no clear opinion - 11

- 3.11 Of the 11 responses not offering a site preference, the majority (8) were opposed to the idea of a 3-18 campus. In that sense these respondents preferred a split site, though that was not an option set out for consultation. Of the remaining 3 responses, one suggested more information was required before an opinion could be offered, and one thought the whole proposal was

badly thought out and the Council should “go back to the drawing board.” The other offered no substantive comment.

3.12 In summary therefore, 30 out of 41 written responses from named individuals (73%) favoured the campus model in some form, whilst 10 out of 41 (24%) opposed it. One response did not offer a substantive comment. Locating the new campus on the Craighill site was supported by 25 of the 41 responses (61%) and by 25 of the 30 who actively favoured the new campus (83%). The TRA site was favoured by 4 of the 41 overall responses (10%) and by 4 of the 30 who favoured the campus (13%)

3.11 There were, in addition, a further 15 written responses submitted anonymously, and feedback forms received from the Parent Councils of Tain Royal Academy and Knockbreck Primary School. Some of these may have been submitted by the same individuals described at paragraph 3.7 above.

3.12 In terms of location, the 15 anonymous responses indicated preferences as follows:

Preference for the Craighill site – 9  
 Preference for the TRA site - 0  
 Preference for the Kirksheaf site – 1  
 Preferred two site option – 5

3.13 The feedback submitted by the Parent Councils of TRA and Knockbreck contained 20 anonymous comments. It is clear from the content that some of these are duplicates of responses already considered. In terms of preference for site location, these 20 responses split as follows:

Preference for the Craighill site – 10  
 No Positive Preference Expressed, but “Not TRA site” - 6  
 Preference for the TRA site - 0  
 Preferred two site option – 2  
 No preference indicated – 2

3.14 The Council also attended Tain Gala day on Saturday 6th July, to capture further views, prior to finalising recommendations for consideration by elected members. Feedback forms were used to capture views on preferred site for a new Campus, and any other comments the public wished to make. In total, 235 feedback forms were completed on the day, the results of which are summarised below.

Preferred Campus Site - Craighill Primary Site	161	68.5%
Preferred Campus Site – TRA Site	59	25.1%
No site preference	5	2.1%
Neither site	1	0.4%
Don't agree with the 3-18 Campus	9	3.9%
Totals	235	100%

- 3.15 While there were a range of mechanisms used to capture views, and a range of opinions expressed, a clear majority of the responses favoured the 3-18 campus and the Craighill PS site. This is also borne out in Education Scotland's report of the Council's proposal, which is discussed later within this report, with their report concluding the Council's proposal is of clear educational benefit. The majority of stakeholders who submitted responses were supportive of the 3-18 campus with a clear preference expressed for the Craighill site.

#### 4.0 Issues raised during the consultation period

- 4.1 The main arguments are summarised below, together with the responses from the Council. In many cases, different responses have made the same or very similar arguments, and where this occurs the arguments have been grouped together and addressed only once.

##### Issue 1

The forecast is that Craighill would cost in capital terms an extra £2 million. This is clearly an estimate and could be more or less, but must be treated with more uncertainty than TRA, existing given the detailed design and phasing/planning work already undertaken for the latter.

What are the professional costs, for design, architectural, and engineering etc for the existing TRA site, as these will need to be spent again for Craighill, and represents an additional cost for development to give a true comparison? These are already spent for the existing TRA site. The annual revenue cost difference in the report equates to a senior teaching post annually, whether in Tain or elsewhere.

It would also be pertinent to provide figures for the value of both the Craighill site and the existing TRA site as development sites as both are in the Council ownership. It's unlikely they would be valued the same. In terms of Craighill this would include the existing primary school site.

##### Response 1

A decision to choose the TRA site would not necessarily imply the same brief would be used as was previously the case. It is likely that the project would have a revised scope, design and cost.

Were the Academy site chosen for the new campus, the site of the existing Craighill Primary would be disposed of, whilst the large adjacent site would be developed for Housing, as is currently detailed in the local Development Plan.

In the event the Craighill site was chosen, the new campus would be built on the large area adjacent to the current school, with the site of the current school itself being disposed of. The existing TRA site would be earmarked for housing, to replace the housing development land lost at Craighill.



The capital costs included in the Proposal Paper were estimates and were based on estimated prices at the time of publication in 2018.

### **Issue 2**

The TRA site would be the best as it is central to the town and has the community facilities of TRACC next door.

### **Response 2**

Whilst the TRA site is the most central, that is only one issue to be weighed against others. The proposal is that the new 3-18 Campus would include community facilities at its location, whichever site is chosen.

### **Issue 3**

Compared to the TRA site, the Craighill site would be safer for the young people during construction.

The safety of the students should be paramount, and students and site traffic do not mix.

### **Response 3**

Highland Council has a great deal of experience and success in delivering new schools on sites adjacent to existing ones. Appropriate health and safety measures will be put in place during construction, whichever site is chosen.

### **Issue 4**

The TRA site is too small for the proposed new school.

The layout does not give enough outdoor space that primary school children truly need. The Craighill site will offer this.

The TRA site should be discarded as it is simply too small and cramming the proposed campus development onto the site has created and highlighted the following hugely significant issues:

- The space available for expansion of the schools is minimal and from widespread experience across the country is highly likely to be inadequate during the course of the campus' 60 year lifespan. Estimating for 15 years ahead is just not enough. What happens if the campus is built at TRA and it is too small a site in future - all the other sites could well be built on by then? The current proposals for limited future expansion would make the impact of the TRA site proposals on material issues affecting surrounding residents even worse;
- There is no space available for adding additional facilities in future when money is more readily available again;
- The outdoor space available for each school is absolutely minimised

and mixed and has raised huge concern in the community;

- The scale of the building as proposed or if moved to any other part of the site would dominate the site and overpower the surrounding area on the edge of the conservation area in this historic town;
- The impact on the amenity of surrounding residents is absolutely maximised. Serious material considerations such as noise and light pollution and overlooking are all maximised. E.g. the council's own environmental health department have warned the floodlit sports pitches at the proposed TRA site could become unusable, as has happened elsewhere across the UK at sites much further from residential properties. The council has been made fully aware of serious issues raised at numerous other sites and it is clear these will apply even more significantly to the TRA site. Yet they have deliberately chosen to include no effective mitigation measures whatsoever in their proposals. The council team has ignored guidance/warnings given to them by their design consultants and the environmental health department in their proposals for the site;
- The extremely cramped nature of the TRA site effectively precludes the use of modular construction which is currently preferred by the council and which, if adopted, could lead to significant reductions in construction cost and timescale. A high level cost estimate prepared using facility cost information from Sport England and manufacturers of modular educational facilities elsewhere would suggest that the Craighill site could reasonably be developed for less (possibly significantly less) than £33m, i.e. possibly well over a third lower than the £52m+ quoted for the TRA site. This scale of potential savings in developing the Craighill site is understood to be supported by a separate, independent cost estimate prepared by the Tain Community Council and Civic Trust;
- The traffic impact on the town centre location will be hugely significant at peak times; and
- Re-configuration of the TRA site will not allow any improvement in the facilities and space available for the pupils or any reduction in the effect of the development on the amenity of surrounding residents, it would simply move hugely influential material considerations around the site.

It is incredible that the existing school site is still being proposed. To undertake a major building project effectively 'wrapped around' an existing operating school is fraught with problems. This is a restrictive town centre site. There will be considerable heavy haulage vehicles coming and going daily. The safety implications for pedestrians and motorists in the town will be considerable. The safety risks for students and staff will be significant. At exam times the school goes through considerable effort to maintain as quiet an environment as possible at these times. This is a period of approx 8 weeks in each year and the school project is likely to extend over 2 of these periods. Can you honestly expect contractors to maintain quiet working for that period of time. No, its impossible. And that is just the exam periods, the noise and disruption throughout the year will be intolerable. The existing building is devoid of sound insulation. The community, the silent majority are in favour of

the Craighill site, There is no doubt that it is the best option. The existing school site is ideally suited for housing.

The current Tain Royal Academy site should be forgotten and the school should be placed at the Craighill site, where there is more room, it would have better access for all children and could be the start of a lovely community with the Health centre and dentist nearby.

The Tain Royal Academy site should not feature even as a second choice. It is surprising that, even after overwhelming public opposition to this site, it should be considered at all. We suggest that it should be acknowledged that a mistake was made and the TRA site should be dumped. If an alternative, or second choice, to Craighill is required it should be the Burgage site.

Objections to the TRA site have been put forward on previous occasions. Most of them relate to the small size of the site. In brief they are as follows:-

1. The site leaves no room for future expansion.
2. There is inadequate play space.
3. The ability to provide outdoor sports is severely restricted.
4. The plans show no provision for spectators at swimming events.
5. Because of the constraints of space the plans show tall, ugly buildings more appropriate to terminals at a second-rate airport. An ancient Royal Burgh like Tain deserves better than this.
6. Because of their positioning the proposed tall and ugly buildings would dominate the skyline, including that of the nearby Tain Conservation Area.
7. There are likely to be severe traffic and parking problems.
8. Construction on a site already in use is likely to be more expensive than on a greenfield site. It would also distract pupils.

All of these problems could be avoided by using a larger greenfield site such as the Craighill and Burgage ones. It has been demonstrated that these could have huge cost advantages if modular building techniques were used.

The school should not be built on the current TRA site, if at all. Whilst it is central to the town, the impact of having a campus that large is going to be a nightmare for homes and businesses. I can't imagine the amount of traffic, both on foot and vehicular, that could end up using the town centre roads in order to access the campus.

Is it wise to educate our children in a building site environment for at least 2 years?

Increased traffic would be a major problem for the safety of the children. Hartfield Road is at present very busy during School hours. Parking is limited at present and could only become worse.

The TRA site has no room for future expansion.

Students would not be able to study safely whilst a major construction project took place on site.

Judging from the plans the new complex would be very close to Scotsburn Road and as the building is of some length this would create a corridor effect, overlooking the houses opposite.

There is not enough space on the TRA site for the amenities proposed.

Building on the TRA site beside an existing functioning secondary school is totally unacceptable. There were many local objections when the previous plans were brought forward and the reasons for these are still valid:

- Small size of the site.
- Lack of room for future expansion.
- Lack of play areas.
- Lack of adequate external sports facilities.
- Lack of viable assembly/performance areas for a multi-age school.
- Impossibility of proper separation of different age groups and language groups.
- Chaos of first building and then demolishing beside an existing functioning school.
  - Dust
  - Asbestos
  - Noise
  - Children's urge to explore

My main concern for the TRA site is that having a building site/ big heavy machinery which will be noisy will be detrimental to the children's learning especially during exam and study times. I also feel as though it could be an accident waiting to happen, would the school grounds be sectioned off would the workers have PVG's if they were having regular access into the school grounds and working over such a long period?

Why when struggling with obesity on the rise would the Council build a superschool without adequate/generous exercising space?

It is with dismay that I hear that the Highland Council is considering building the new SuperSchool on the TRAC campus, using the playing fields for the extra building. Tory cuts are forcing many schools in London to sell off their exercise spaces with the consequent rise in obesity that is so well documented. That a Highland Council, with sites available that would give children space to play, would consider creating the same misery as the Tories have in London out of laziness and simple political expediency beggars belief.

#### **Response 4**

Sections 4.4 and 4.5 of the Proposal Paper (Appendix B) acknowledged the limitations of the Tain Royal Academy site.

**Issue 5**

The school design needs to be based on best practice and not on how to squeeze in the maximum number of classrooms at the lowest cost.

Generous green/outdoor space should also be drawn into the plans along with well thought out, clear segregation of nursery/primary and high school pupils.

In such a busy campus, how would the needs of the special school pupils be met in respect of quiet spaces etc?

The roll at TRA has increased significantly since the plans were last drawn up, showing that a much larger school needs to be designed this time.

What play area space will you have for all age ranges?

I know the plans were to be looked at again but creating smaller class rooms and packing in more children should not be an option.

New school must be big enough to take into account expansion of Tain and surrounding areas. Must have lots of disabled access / lifts for disabled students. Plus a proper sized swim pool (25m length with decent depth to allow for diving off blocks).

**Response 5**

Should the new school be approved, there will be discussion with stakeholders about the layout and design requirements. The Stakeholder Group will provide an ongoing role in relation to the ongoing delivery of the new Campus project.

**Issue 6**

The Council is only interested in the financial aspects. It is cheaper to build one new campus rather than two and there is also the prospect of selling off the other site.

**Response 6**

The Council's proposal is clear that there are educational benefits to the proposed 3-18 campus. These were set out in detail in the Proposal Paper. Education Scotland has expressed the view that the Proposal offers clear educational benefits to children and young people in Tain.

However, the Council also has a duty to make arrangements to secure best value, and to act responsibly in the way it uses taxpayers' money.

**Issue 7**

The Proposal Paper should have offered the choice of a 3-18 campus or a 2-site solution that would involve the secondary school on one site and a primary/nursery school on the other. Parents are concerned at the bad language and bad behaviour young children will be exposed to by being co-located with the secondary school.

5-year olds will be exposed to the drug dealing of TRA pupils. St. Duthus pupils will be mocked and picked on.

Why not fix the schools we currently have?

The majority of people in Tain would like to see a spread of school buildings and are opposed to concentrating all the town's schools on a single site. This will be detrimental to education.

In what way would the single campus support the educational ethos set out within "Building Better Schools 'Smarter Scotland'"?

Each school could be updated and retained rather than moving everyone on to one site. Knockbreck Primary school in particular is such a beautiful building and it would be a real shame for that to be lost. Is there no chance that the existing buildings could be retained, updated/extended? Having children aged 3-18 on one campus is not ideal. A three year old should not be subjected to the language and behaviour of a much older child. Teens and young adults explore language, different words and behaviour etc, and it's part of growing up and being that age. But there's no way the same behaviour/language is appropriate for a child of three or four. There's no way that the different aged children could be kept separate enough that these types of behaviours wouldn't be witnessed by much younger children. We need to do something about the state of our schools (all of them), but a 3-18 campus is not necessarily a better option for Tain than just doing works/extensions on our existing buildings. There's a lot of history attached to the local schools and it would be a shame to lose it.

The best solution would be a split Campus, using both the TRA and Craighill sites, both of which are in HC ownership. SSFTF funding is not dependent upon a 3-18 campus, so HC could choose a split campus, solving many of the anticipated problems.

The secondary school could be built first at Craighill, avoiding disruption to pupils studying for SQA exams. Once completed, the TRA could decant to the new building and the existing TRA razed. The new primary school, nursery, St. Duthus, and the Gaelic school could then be built on that site. Football would be spread, traffic would flow, and the Ancient and Royal Burgh could continue to function.

The campus should be split over two sites as this disperses so many of the issues that are causing so many concerns. Looking at the HC list of the 42%

schools needing attention why is Tain the only one to receive a campus and putting eight amenities in it? This is making the project a very complex matter as it is no different from trying to fit eight families into one house! Under the duress of being given no other option than to choose from the two, I would have to opt for the site that has more land area, Craighill as it is vital the children have as much space as possible.

A single site raises a concern about the sheer number of pupils walking to cycling to school and arriving at the same time as buses and cars (of both parents and staff).

Having all the children under one roof would be too many and would lead to a bigger potential impact if there were events such as fires or terrorism.

Is there any evidence that a 3-18 campus is the best model?

What studies show that a 3-18 campus would be beneficial to the children?

My preference is for massive investment in the present 3 sites.

Under the proposal a child will enter the campus at 3 and could easily spend the next 15 years there. Surely that has to have a negative impact?

Repair what we have with the Scottish Government money and use empty buildings for anything else, before going down the 3-18 route.

Our children should not be put into a 3-18 campus situation. We should be pushing all options instead of pushing one predetermined agenda.

Concern has been raised regarding the consequential increase in traffic expected should HC's current proposal of a single site 3-18 Campus be implemented. It's disappointing HC appear to be showing no incentive to consider either of the two paths highlighted that could alleviate this issue: a. Consider a 'spread campus' that would spread the traffic b. Push for direct access from the A9 to the Craighill site

Knockbreck is a perfectly good building, is it appropriate during times of budget deficits for HC to vacate it, whilst spending significant sums of money to build an equivalent floor-area elsewhere? Duthac House has lain empty and deteriorating over the last four years, unless HC have a confirmed purchaser or alternative planned use for Knockbreck surely it should be utilised within their education estate?

It has been intimated that a 3-18 Campus is essential to secure Scottish Government funding for the much-needed new educational facilities in Tain, however responding to a Freedom Of Information request, the Commercial Director of Scottish Future's Trust clarified their position as follows:

*'...regardless of the how the school is funded, either directly by the Council or as part of the Scottish Government's Scotland's Schools for the Future*

*(SSFTF) Programme, it is up to the Council to determine what facilities are required as part of their learning estate. The SSFTF Programme funding has been used to support primary, secondary, ASN, community and campus facilities.'*

Would a two campus be an option? One for academy and one for pre-school and primaries or is it one huge building. I fear for the children of the future that being in one institute and not having to move or transition to another setting could be detrimental, there is no evidence yet that this will be beneficial to the children as those being built in rural areas are still at early stages and the children have not gone through the whole process yet, when it comes to moving to college/uni or even getting a job as they are no longer in the safety net of their cocoon that they have been in since pre-school

Two schools would be a better fit...a new academy/community complex on its current site, and new bigger primary/ Nursery/SEN school on Craighill site? That would offer more room for expansion? Personally, I'm not overly keen on the idea of a 4 year old sharing the same space (or within earshot of) an 18 year old!

### **Response 7**

The issues around the 3-18 campus were considered during the previous statutory consultation in 2014/15. Education Scotland, in their report (see Appendices E and F), conclude that the Council's proposal offers considerable educational benefits for children and young people. These include improved transitions for children and young people at key points in their learning journey.

Only a small minority of the responses received expressed opposition to the 3-18 campus proposal.

### **Issue 8**

The major issue with the Craighill site is traffic access.

There would be have significant concerns about the Craighill site being chosen unless there is proper consideration given to traffic and parking. You have noted both issues in the consultation document, and they should be considered in great detail.

The traffic situation at the end of the school day is already very difficult at times. The parents of Craighill school tend to use the Health Centre access road as a parking facility, meaning that cars leaving the Health Centre have to drive on the wrong side of that access road. Couple that with the fact that cars on Craighill Terrace are allowed to park on the road directly opposite the Health Centre access road, and the fact that there is often heavy traffic congestion at that time because of the pedestrian crossing and school patrol, and it can often be very difficult for motorists to safely navigate these roads. Put simply, there are cars everywhere, many of which are on the



wrong sides of Craighill Terrace and the Health Centre access road. This is a significant safety risk for the school children, and also impedes access to and from the health centre for patients and NHS staff alike (including on-call doctors and nurses who may need to leave urgently, and ambulances who may need to access the Health Centre or Innis Mhor care home via the same access road). This situation could become even worse if the 3-18 campus is to be housed on Craighill Terrace.

If the site is to have further school capacity added, it is imperative that cars are able to get into the school site quickly and safely, and that there is ample (not just adequate) parking on the site to house them there and away from the roads.

Having the Health Centre, Innis Mhor, and a 3-18 campus with community complex and library, all requiring a degree of separation between its various elements, would not be the best option for Tain, since there would be traffic chaos with the amount of people heading for the same corner of town at peak times. The ASDA site would be a much more spacious option and there should be a rethink on which sites are made available for consultation.

If, at the end of the consultation process, the Highland Council decides on the Craighill site, Highland Council should prevail upon the Scottish Government to create a roundabout on the A9 to allow access to the new campus without creating a traffic management problem for the Ancient and Royal Burgh of Tain.

### **Response 8**

It is important to consider that, whilst the new site design will aim to have enough parking, the Council will also be looking at creating off-site routes that provide an incentive to walk and cycle, not just for pupils but for staff who live nearby. Providing enough public transport, and a decent design for public transport, will be another factor that might reduce car use. We will also implement measures to try and prevent people from acting irresponsibly, for example people stopping in the middle of the road to let their kids out. It's a combination of measures.

Should the Craighill site be chosen, there will be intensive discussion with stakeholders about the detailed design requirements, including issues around access. The Stakeholder Group will provide input to the design, specification and construction of the new facilities. This process has been followed in other new school builds in Highland.

### **Issue 9**

On the matter of vehicular access at Craighill, we would like to ask the Highland Council to undertake serious consultation with Transport Scotland to secure a direct access onto the A9 Trunk Road, if not for the entire Campus development at least for the larger buses and service vehicles. This would have the effect of minimising traffic impacts on Craighill Terrace and nearby

streets which we appreciate may have a limited capacity to tolerate significant traffic flows. Currently, the Community Council is pressing Transport Scotland for a reduction to the by-pass speed limit from 60mph to 40-50mph in an attempt to reduce the incidence of road traffic accidents at the north and south junctions. If we can influence this change then that should make the prospect of a direct Campus access more attainable.

### **Response 9**

The Council is more than happy to consider dialogue with Transport Scotland over this issue, although the solution to the traffic issues at the Craighill site does not depend on it, with the site assessment work undertaken to date being based on a scenario where direct access to the A9 was not in place.

### **Issue 10**

The Craighill site is in useful proximity to the care home and health centre which will allow meaningful community relationships to be built.

There are benefits to the Craighill site being located close to emergency services.

The Craighill site for the new campus would provide access to numerous facilities including the dentist and health centre and is within walking distance of the town. The site is much larger and would allow much ease of building as opposed to the existing Tain Academy site. The road network is well served at this side of the town with direct access from Craighill Terrace to the A9.

The Craighill Site would be better for the children and the local community as a whole. It would appear to be a bigger site, and thus more work potentially could be completed without the total destruction of the external playing areas, at the existing site of TRA there would be a generation of children not having access to playing fields during the build.

It also would appear to have a better route for not only the builders almost direct from the A9 past the health centre, but once built, a lot more traffic might well be able to bypass the town centre which would be a benefit long term for all living in Tain.

The existing site of TRA once the new campus was in service would give a better return on investment to the council once it was out of service and available for re development. It is closer to the town centre and all the amenities which should be of benefit if it was used for a mixture of housing types for the growing population of the area.

Craighill offers a better drop off, pick up and access e.g. there is less resident housing so close to the school and direct access to A9.

The Tain 3-18 campus should be developed on the Craighill site as this site:

- would allow much greater room for future expansion of the individual schools;
- would allow space for addition of new facilities on the campus should money become available during the course of the campus's 60 year lifespan;
- would allow much larger, separate external spaces for each school;
- would allow modular construction to be adopted which would reduce the cost and timescale of the building works substantially and allow much more attractive and smaller scale buildings to be provided on the campus. It is reasonably estimated that the Craighill site could potentially be developed with modular construction systems for more than a third lower cost than the TRA site proposals; and would have space to include simple, relatively cheap and effective measures for avoidance or adequate mitigation of noise and light pollution and overlooking that are huge issues for the TRA site. These measures could include physical separation of the facilities from neighbouring properties and landscaping bunds formed from site materials.

Also, public opinion clearly significantly favours the Craighill site, and this is consistently demonstrated by feedback received from various sources.

Other than popular support, the Craighill site has a number of significant benefits which help make it our preferred candidate

- The physical capacity (10.6 Ha) to accommodate the scale of development expected of it
- Potential access and pupil drop-off/pick up alternatives to help spread traffic, including a possible direct link to the A9 town by-pass
- Greenfield site with ample space to accommodate construction traffic
- Proximity to significant residential areas
- Good links between the proposed community sporting facilities and the NHS Health Centre
- More potential for future-proofing than TRA

The proposal for the new 3-18 Tain Campus at Craighill gives the community a great opportunity to create a school for the future, in the right location. It will create a hub for all of the community. I would ask that the council take into consideration the separation of the age and abilities of the pupils who would attend. If the road speed could be reduced on the A9 between the two junctions turning into Tain this would allow a second entrance from the A9 into the school, thus relieving traffic concerns for Craighill Terrace.

The results of recent surveys reveal that the majority of parents, teachers, and residents are in favour of the Craighill Site.

It is very important that children must have ample areas for play and exercise, bearing in mind how concerned the Government is regarding obesity. Our students deserve the best.

Craighill is a much better space with beautiful views over the Dornoch Firth. There is also more potential for future development.

The Craighill site is bigger with more space for car parking.

The Craighill site is larger and a complex build there would have less impact on existing housing.

The Craighill site is the better option as it leads to a wider community base including health centre/dentist, library, sports facilities etc in one area. I attended the Community council drop-in and felt that out of the 4 proposals they put forward there was nothing about the Asda/Kirksheaf options that made me think they were better alternatives. Let's just go with the stakeholders proposals and move forward

My preferred site would be the land at Craighill, I know that it is not without its faults with poor site access but I am sure that architects could come up with a suitable solution. The site is considerably larger, it will provide much more playground space, the school could be positioned a lot better therefore allowing it to be built bigger reducing the possible need for expansion, and, the fact that the site is largely bare it will make any build safer and less disruptive which could also provide a faster build.

### Response 10

The drop-in sessions, Stakeholder sessions and the results of the statutory consultation, have made it clear that the Craighill site is favoured by a majority of those who responded.

### Issue 11

Annoyed at the unprofessional organisation and the very poor quality of the **Tain site options presentation** on 18<sup>th</sup> June and the earlier "drop-in session" on 10<sup>th</sup> May 2018 and in all the previous "consultation" events. The 18<sup>th</sup> June presentation was only attended by 35 local people, mostly of the older generation, and was held in an entirely unsuitable venue, the large gym of the academy. Presentations were poorly structured and the speakers, who lacked public speaking skills, had considerable difficulty making themselves heard in the terrible acoustics of the hall.

All the information made available to the public to date should be presented clearly on a website that is easy to find and doesn't involve downloading multiple PDFs with drawings that don't scale and barely legible notes written in a tiny font (I refer to the documents I downloaded before the last public meeting). A timetable and a representation of public opinion so far would also be ideal.

This process has been poorly put together and has not allowed locals with kids to give their honest view. There must be further community drop-in meetings before coming to a final decision.

This consultation has been a big disappointment. The main issue is the 3-18 campus, but the Council is not allowing that discussion to take place because they are limiting the scope to the actual location.

HC's proposal document for this consultation informs us the principle of a 3-18 campus for Tain was decided in November 2012. At HC's evening drop-in on 10th May 2018 one mum pointed out that she 'didn't even have children when that decision was made'. Today's younger children will be the ones most affected by that decision taken **six years ago**, before they were even born: a. how can HC deem it appropriate not to consult the parents of these young children on what will be a significant change to the educational environment available for their children? b. during this 'consultation process' HC's refusal to embrace concerns raised, outside their pre-determined 'site selection' boundary could surely leave their process open to criticism?

There is no doubt Craighill does offer adequate space to accommodate a 3-18 campus. I'm sure that by providing direct access from the A9 and a carefully planned layout an effective outcome could be achieved, however to facilitate this HC must surely engage in a more open and inclusive dialogue to alleviate the very real concerns being raised.

### **Response 11**

The present proposal has been subject to extensive consultation in the local area, which has included a drop-in session and regular consultation with a Stakeholder Group, in addition to the statutory consultation. Aside from the public meeting itself, the statutory consultation has involved letters being sent to all parents of the affected schools, as well as the Parent Councils of all schools in the Associated School Group (ASG), and all local community councils. Pupils in the affected schools have also had the opportunity to submit their views. The consultation process has exceeded the legal requirements, and could objectively be described as one of the most extensive school consultations undertaken in Highland.

The venue for the public meeting was suggested by local people.

Highland is always willing to reflect on its processes and will do so in the light of the comments submitted. Nevertheless, the Council has been open and inclusive in conducting this consultation.

### **Issue 12**

Research needs to be done on how many parents from outwith the campus catchment would wish to send their children to the 3-18 school, to avoid it becoming oversubscribed.

### **Response 12**

Any requests for enrolment in the new primary school from outwith the

campus catchment would be subject to the placing request process. Placing requests are approved by the Area Care and Learning Manager and can be refused where they would cause an unreasonable cost to the taxpayer. This would include any situation where the school accommodation had to be expanded in order to accommodate pupils on placing requests.

### **Issue 13**

The biggest concern is how long this is going to take. The buildings are dilapidated now and if the TRACC facilities are representative, barely acceptable. What on earth will they be like in 4/5 years' time? What is the plan for the children and teachers in the meantime?

### **Response 13**

The Proposal Paper made it clear that there was currently no specific funding to create a 3-18 campus in Tain, and that the timetable for the new build would be dependent upon clarification of the funding position. In the intervening period the Council will continue to address any maintenance issues with the current school buildings. The priority will be to ensure the school buildings are kept "wind and watertight".

### **Issue 14**

In response to concerns expressed within the wider community and some education experts, significant work will need to be done with outlying feeder schools to ensure their pupils are wholly familiar with the Campus before they are due to move to it full time.

It is to be hoped the outlying schools will not be left in the Dark Ages when the new super school is constructed.

### **Response 14**

Similar points were raised at the public meeting and are addressed at Response 24 below.

### **Issue 15**

The amalgamation of the Public Library with TRACC facilities is a huge mistake. We have a dedicated Public Library that was gifted to the town by Carnegie in perpetuity for use as a public library.

Shoving the public library in with TRACC and expecting staff to be interchangeable between the two facilities is to completely underestimate and misunderstand the value of dedicated library staff, whose duties encompass an enormous amount more than just stamping out and discharging books. That is probably the least important aspect of their job, and it would be an immense loss to dispense with that expertise and be handed our books by leisure centre staff who have no interest in books or reading, could not

recommend a book if their lives depended on it, and have zero personal interaction with people who have been going to the library all their lives and regard it and the staff there as friends on which and whom they can rely on through thick and thin.

Would the library be open to the public? Does that not raise issues with the public being in the school?

Tain has a perfectly good public library as is.

Is it really necessary to move the Public Library from its current location in the centre of town? Could HC make public any consultation feedback / survey results showing support from library users, particularly those adults who will not necessarily be daily users of the school facilities?

### **Response 15**

All library staff will be retained – no staff will be dispensed with. All staff will undergo a fully integrated training programme with regards to reader development and customer care and the library team will have the opportunity to share their experience with colleagues who are new to the role. This process happens when any new member of staff joins the library team. Customer interaction will be of the utmost importance and will be delivered and measured through the ongoing commitment to retaining the libraries' accreditation for Customer Service Excellence.

The Library would function as a facility for the whole community and as such would always be open to the public as well as the school. This model has worked successfully for a number of years in facilities throughout the Highlands.

Usage of Tain Library has declined by 13% in the last 5 years. Book issues have dropped by 36% in the same period. Tain Library is severely restricted in terms of design and space. A new purpose-designed Library would allow us to deliver a new programme of events and activities that would benefit the whole community. The library would receive investment in new books and perhaps most importantly the library opening times for the whole Tain Community would increase from 25 hours per week to 82 hours per week. There is an opportunity to offer the people of Tain one of the best libraries, not only in the Highlands, but in the country.

The Council's 1902 title deed for Tain library is a Disposition in favour of the Council's statutory predecessors the Provost, Magistrates and Councillors of the Burgh of Tain (the Town Council")

The deed states that the Town Council were to hold the subjects "in Trust as aftermentioned" and later in the deed it states "And we the said Provost, Magistrates and Councillors of the Burgh of Tain agree and bind ourselves and our successors in office to hold the said subjects only for the erection of a Public Library by Doctor Andrew Carnegie of Skibo, said Library to be

managed in all time coming as a public library by the Joint Library Committee of the Royal Burgh of Tain and Parish of Tain: To be Holden the said subjects of His Majesty in Free Burgess”.

The Council have however clarified the issue of altered library provision in the case of a parallel scenario in Wick, where there was another “Carnegie Library”. In that case it was concluded that the existing Disposition would not be an impediment if there were alternate library provision that was to be provided in the new build.

#### **Issue 16**

It would be great having the library beside one school assuming the opening hours would be compatible with school times and plenty of parking was made available.

#### **Response 16**

The Council notes and agrees with this response.

#### **Issue 17**

What those, most of whom have moneys extorted from them to pay the elected officials’ salaries, bonuses, allowances and pensions, are being asked is to opine on is the locating of four schools, each of which enjoys its own campus at present, onto a single campus. This, notwithstanding the results of experimentation with such practice in the USA, Switzerland and even up the road in Wick which have all been far from satisfactory. Thus, we are asked to opine on the location of something which should not be considered seriously in the first place. (Let us not go into whether or not we, the community offered the choice to air its views, is being insulted by those posing the question).

Two sites only, we are told, will be considered.

The one, Craighill, is quite unsuitable because of springs, water logging and water flows which would necessarily adversely affect properties in Stagcroft, Moss Road and PFD. The effects of locating the Medical Centre and Innis Mohr Care Home in that location should surely sound an alarm, as should the soggy, squelchy playing field, part of the existing Craighill Primary School site.

The other, the existing Tain Royal Academy Site, by the council’s own admission, fails to meet the minimum standards, particularly qua area per pupil. It fails on that score now; as pupil numbers increase this failure will become even more abject.

So, you want to know what the community think about siting an unsuitable type of school on an unsuitable site! What do you take us for?

Your request entitled “Have Your Say” becomes even more cynical, for, it is stated that the determination of the site “will of course ultimately be dictated



by the funding available for the project” – which one could take to mean that, irrespective of the community view, the powers that be have already decided, and, should the community favour the alternative, the funding card will be played. Is there a point in asking the question in the first place?

To be of a useful service to the community, a thorough rethink is required with respect, not just in finding a suitable site, but, more fundamentally, selecting campuses that best suit the interests of educating the groups of pupils concerned.

Conclusion: the council needs to go back to the drawing board and take the best interests of the community and of pupils, now and to come, into account.

### **Response 17**

As mentioned at Response 11 and at other places in this Report, the site selection process has been the subject of very extensive consultation, which has exceeded the legal requirements and is one of the most extensive school consultation exercises ever undertaken in Highland. Taking both the informal and formal consultation exercises together, the Craighill site was favoured by a large majority of those who responded.

### **Issue 18**

Hugely supportive of the new campus, having previously lived near a school redevelopment in Edinburgh and witnessed the enormous benefits of a new school both to the children and the community.

Progress should be made as soon as possible. Location is not a particular concern but the Craighill campus looks excellent.

Of course, there will always be some compromises but having seen the upsides of a new school, the benefits far outweigh the downsides.

### **Response 18**

Highland Council agrees that the benefits of a new campus outweigh any disadvantages.

### **Issue 19**

The previous plans for the new campus did not take account of the needs of the Gaelic Medium pupils, who should be kept separate from the English Medium pupils in order to protect the Gaelic environment. As the Gaelic Department has its own core literacy and numeracy resources, as well as topic resources, adequate storage should be created for them. Ideally a separate building would be created.

Is it worth revisiting the idea of a stand-alone Gaelic Medium school in the Knockbreck building? There are some really strong advantages for the

Gaelic-educated kids in a stand-alone environment. The GME unit is currently growing in pupil numbers and is expected to continue to do so in coming years, requiring additional classroom space (which would reduce playground space) and may well pull in extra children from out with the Tain area. (There are kids currently travelling from the catchment areas of Dornoch, Bonar Bridge, Fearn, Hilton and Invergordon primaries to GME at Craighill). I understand not all current GME parents currently see the benefits of a stand-alone Gaelic language school, but it could be a really strong thing for the kids and for Tain to have this school, and I am making my preference known at this point because I think adopting a Gaelic school in the Knockbreck building will ease the lack of space/number of kids/classroom footprint at the TRA site. I understand the Highland Council has given this option consideration in the past, and I would fully support it if they looked at it again.

### **Response 19**

Highland Council would normally consider a separate Gaelic Medium school only where there are enough pupils for 4 classes. There 43 pupils enrolled at for GME at Craighill for session 18/19, who are educated in two classes.

Therefore there are insufficient pupil numbers to justify the creation of a separate GM school for Tain.

In their report, Education Scotland noted that almost all stakeholders of GME felt that the proposed 3-18 campus could facilitate the sharing of staffing and resources for Gaelic to enhance the delivery of the GME curriculum.

### **Issue 20**

The Knockbreck Road/ASDA site is large with an existing roundabout for vehicular access. There is easy pedestrian access from multiple routes. There would be no disturbance of any of the existing schools during construction, and there is a suitable area for car parking at the NE end of the site, with the remainder large enough to permit spacing of Primary, Secondary, Gaelic, St.Duthus and Nursery School areas.

This has to be the best site in the town despite the minor electrical and drainage considerations raised in the presentation. However it appears to have been ruled out by the un-elected and self-selected Stakeholders Group.

### **Response 20**

The Knockbreck Road/ASDA site was ruled out after extensive informal consultation, which included but was not limited to the Stakeholder Group.

### **Issue 21**

What happens to the 3-18 model in 2020 when more funded childcare hours become available and for 2-year-olds? Would you move to 2-18?

**Response 21**

It is anticipated that funded childcare for 2 year-olds will be provided by childminders rather than in the school setting. The new campus will nevertheless be designed to allow for future expansion, in the event of future legislative changes.

**Issue 22**

Leisure facilities should be separate from school facilities.

**Response 22**

There are many advantages to co-location of school and leisure facilities, and such arrangements have worked well in many other locations in Highland

There will be an appropriate design to ensure separation of school pupils from the public, during school hours.

- 4.2 The note of the public meeting is at **Appendix D**. Fifty-five questions and comments are recorded. The majority of these questions were answered during the discussion and can be found in the note. Further responses to two of the issues are provided below. These should be read alongside the answers provided in the note of the meeting at Appendix D (at questions 1-3 for Issue 23, and question 16 for Issue 24).

**Issue 23**

Concern was expressed about the implications for Tarbat, Inver and the other rural feeder schools, and whether pupils will not see the same benefits from those pupils in the town who will already be familiar with and well-integrated into the Campus. And what consideration the Council has given to those pupils from rural feeder schools?

**Response 23**

It is inevitable that pupils coming from primary feeders beyond Tain, will be less familiar with the campus than those at the campus. It is important therefore, that planning for transition should start before the end stages of Primary 7. There will be many opportunities for all schools within the associated school group to have the "campus experience", both socially and academically, before starting secondary education. This might include swimming, social events, shared use of staff (both primary and secondary), and school projects. The head teachers and staff of the associated school groups, along with Highlife Highland, will develop these opportunities as a normal part of their planning meetings.

More formal transition arrangements during Primary 7 will be developed to take account of the campus facilities and its learning and social opportunities.

Again, the detail of this will be planned by the associated school group and will evolve over time.

#### **Issue 24**

Concern was expressed that we could be making transition for pupils too smooth, and leaving them unprepared for life when they leave school. If pupils have been in the same campus from the ages of 3-18 they will never have had to deal with change. All of sudden they will be thrown out in the real world and will not have had the experience of dealing with challenges. Has any thought been given to that?

#### **Response 24**

Transitions are regular features of human life and, when approached successfully, enhance our life experiences. Schools play an important part of helping young people to cope with change, and transition between school settings and even between academic years can be exciting, challenging and sometimes scary. The World Bank Development report identifies the transition to secondary school as one of five important life stage transitions for young people.

The Nuffield Foundation report, "Identifying factors that predict successful and difficult transitions to secondary school" notes:

- A successful transition involved functioning well in two areas:
  - 1) being academically and behaviourally involved in school
  - 2) feeling a sense of belonging to school.
- Parents were an important source of support over the transition period and results suggested it was helpful for parents and pupils to discuss their concerns.
- In particular, the use of systemic strategies at primary school which involve building links and continuity between primary and secondary school (e.g. bridging units - work projects that children begin in primary school and complete in secondary school) was related to lower school anxiety.
- Finally, a range of practices that secondary schools employed to support friendships was identified given that this was an area of persistent concern for pupils.
- A period of nervousness around transition is expected for most pupils but for the majority of pupils, those concerns are relatively short-lived and abate during the first year of secondary school (Rice et al., 2011)

[http://www.nuffieldfoundation.org/sites/default/files/files/STARS\\_report.pdf](http://www.nuffieldfoundation.org/sites/default/files/files/STARS_report.pdf)

## 5.0 Summary of the issues raised by Education Scotland

- 5.1 In line with legislative requirements, Education Scotland was invited to submit comments on the Council's proposals. A copy of the report from Education Scotland is appended – **Appendix E**. (Gaelic language version at **Appendix F**).
- 5.2 In their report, Education Scotland concluded that the Council's proposal is of clear educational benefit. The majority of stakeholders who submitted responses were supportive of the 3-18 campus with a clear preference expressed for the Craighill site. The council's proposal would see children and young people benefit from a well-located, well-resourced single site which retains capacity to meet any future needs as they arise. The single site offers more effective use of resources, and reduces duplication and travel costs. Opportunities for older pupils to take on leadership and mentoring roles across the whole campus will be improved. The Craighill Primary School site offers scope for the 3-18 campus to be part of a 'community hub' building mutually beneficial links with other service providers such as the NHS.
- 5.3 Education Scotland commented that, in taking forward the proposal, the Council needs to set out how it will ensure safe routes to school addressing potential vehicle access/congestion issues. The council needs to involve fully parents, staff, children and young people and the wider community in the final design and layout of the proposed 3-18 campus, and should also seek the view of Bòrd na Gàidhlig. The council should include discussions with parents and relevant Gaelic organisations on ensuring that the campus enables the delivery of effective GME and immersion practice as laid out in statutory guidance on Gaelic Education, 2017. It has to ensure that children from the Tain Royal Academy ASG fully benefit from the 3-18 campus development.

## 6.0 Responses to the Issues Raised by Education Scotland

### Issue 25

The Council needs to set out how it will ensure safe routes to school addressing potential vehicle access/congestion issues.

### Response 25

See Response 8 above (in the context of the Council recommending the selection of the Craighill site for the new campus)

### Issue 26

The Council needs to involve fully parents, staff, children and young people and the wider community in the final design and layout of the proposed 3-18 campus.

**Response 26**

See Response 5 above.

**Issue 27**

The Council has to ensure that children from the whole Tain Royal Academy ASG fully benefit from the 3-18 campus development.

**Response 27**

See Response 23 above.

**Issue 28**

The council needs to seek the view of Bòrd na Gàidhlig, and should include discussions with parents and relevant Gaelic organisations on ensuring that the campus enables the delivery of effective GME and immersion practice as laid out in statutory guidance on Gaelic Education.

**Response 28**

Bòrd na Gàidhlig were invited to respond to the statutory consultation exercise but did not do so. However, the council has contacted the Bòrd and made arrangements to engage with them over ensuring the effective delivery of GME in the new Campus

A parent representative of the children attending GME at Craighill PS currently attends the local Stakeholder Group.

**7.0 Site Selection**

- 7.1 The Proposal Paper offered two potential sites for the location of the new Campus. The background and rationale behind the selection of the two sites is set out in the Proposal Paper at **Appendix B**.
- 7.2 One of the two sites is the current site of Tain Royal Academy, and this site was chosen as the location for the new school after the consultation exercise in 2014-15. The other site is adjacent to Craighill Primary School.
- 7.3 The detail of the responses to consultation is set out at Section 3 above. Opinion amongst school pupils was split quite evenly between the Craighill site and the TRA site. Amongst the adults who responded, there was a clear majority in favour of the Craighill site.
- 7.4 Section 4 of the Proposal Paper set out the advantages and disadvantages of both sites.
- 7.5 Although the conclusion to the 2014-15 consultation exercise concluded that the TRA site was the most suitable, it is also acknowledged that since then

further capacity demands have arisen, for example, as a result of Scottish Government plans to expand the provision of funded early learning and childcare.

- 7.6 The Craighill site is a good, well-sized open area which would provide plenty of room for future expansion and also provide options for layout and construction logistics to cause only minimal disruption to pupils during the construction phase. The site also more readily offers the scope to consider a phased approach to a new Campus, should funding or other factors determine that to be the most appropriate means of implementation. The Education Scotland Report noted that the Craighill Primary School site offers scope for the 3-18 campus to be part of a 'community hub', building mutually beneficial links with other service providers such as the NHS.
- 7.7 Taking the above factors into account, and the overall responses to consultation, the Council proposed that the new 3-18 Campus should be located at the Craighill Primary School site.

## **8.0 Effects on the Community**

- 8.1 An assessment of community impact was included within the Council's original Proposal Paper at **Appendix B**.
- 8.2 The main comment arising from consultation, in respect of community facilities, was in relation to the Tain Public Library. A small number of respondents expressed concern about the proposed move of the library into the new campus.
- 8.3 The Council has considered this issue at some length, and concludes that the proposed move of the library offers the potential, of significant community benefit. The detail of this is set out at Response 15 above.

## **9.0 Effects on School Transport**

- 9.1 The Proposal Paper commented that new campus will be located a short distance from the 4 existing schools, and that the Council did not anticipate any significant variation to the existing school transport arrangements, in terms of the distances to be travelled by pupils. The new primary school catchment will be an amalgamation of the catchments of the two existing primary schools, and no transport issues arise from that. None of the responses to consultation raised any issues around entitlement to school transport.

## **10.0 Effects on Staff and School Management Arrangements**

- 10.1 Section 6 of the Proposal Paper at Appendix B contained an assessment of the potential effects of the merger in respect of staff and school management arrangements. No issues were raised in consultation over the future staffing or management of the campus.

## 11.0 Alleged omissions or inaccuracies

- 11.1 During the public meeting, it was alleged that the reference in the Proposal Paper to a “3-18 campus” was inaccurate in respect of pupils who would transfer to the new campus from St. Duthus, and that these pupils can remain at school until 19 years of age.
- 11.2 The Council has carefully considered the impact of this comment on the Proposal, but has concluded it does not represent a material consideration relevant to the Authority’s decision as to implementation of the proposal. The Council will continue to meet the educational needs of all pupils with Additional Support Needs, up until they leave school. The comment does not alter the options for consideration, i.e. it does not introduce a new option, nor fundamentally rule out an existing option.

## 12.0 Procedure for Call-in by the Scottish Ministers

- 12.1 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 an eight-week period from the date of that final decision on 5 September 2019 to decide if they will call-in the proposal. Within the first three weeks of that eight-week period, the Scottish Ministers will take account of any relevant representations made to them by any person. Therefore, anyone who wishes to make representations to the Scottish Ministers can do so up until midnight on 25 September 2019. The Scottish Ministers will have until midnight on 30 October 2019 to take a decision on the call-in of the Closure Proposal.
- 12.2 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 email [schoolclosures@gov.scot](mailto:schoolclosures@gov.scot) or to write to **School Infrastructure Unit, Learning Directorate, The Scottish Government, Area 2A South, Victoria Quay, Edinburgh EH6 6QQ by midnight on 25 September 2019.**
- 12.3 Until the outcome of the eight week call-in process has been notified to Highland Council, it will not proceed to implement the Proposal. If the Scottish Ministers call-in the proposal, it will be referred to a School Closure Review Panel.

## 13.0 Overall Review of Consultation Exercise

- 13.1 There is overwhelming agreement within Tain that the condition of the local school accommodation is unsatisfactory. Although some respondents to the consultation favoured the construction of a new High School and a separate merged primary school, the majority expressed support for the creation of the 3-18 campus. The Report from Education Scotland identified that a 3-18 campus would offer considerable educational benefits for children and young people in Tain.



- 13.2 In terms of location, a clear majority of those who expressed a view indicated a preference for the Craighill site.

#### **14.0 Legal issues**

- 14.1 Throughout this statutory consultation Highland Council has complied in full with the requirements of the Schools (Consultation) (Scotland) Act 2010.
- 14.2 As provided for in section 1 of the Education (Scotland) Act 1980, it is the duty of the Council to ensure adequate and efficient provision of school education within Highland. The above, and all other legislative requirements, have been taken into account in the preparation of this Report.

#### **15.0 Conclusion**

- 15.1 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 section 4 above.
- 15.2 The Education Scotland Inspector visited Tain Royal Academy, Craighill Primary School, Knockbreck Primary School and St Duthus Special School. Education Scotland also had the opportunity to review in detail the proposal document, all written responses, and the note of the public meeting.
- 15.3 The Highland Council, on reviewing all of the submissions, the note of the meeting, and the Education Scotland report; concludes that the Proposal to replace Tain Royal Academy, Craighill Primary School, Knockbreck Primary School, and St. Duthus School with a new 3-18 campus offers educational benefits and should be implemented. Having taken the responses to consultation into account, the Council further concludes that the Craighill site should be chosen as the site for the new campus. The reasons for this conclusion are set out above.

#### **16.0 Recommendation**

- 16.1 It is therefore recommended that Highland Council proceeds with the course of action set out at Paragraph 15.3 above.

**Brian Porter**  
**Head of Resources, Care and Learning Service**  
**25 July 2019**