

Minutes Of Meeting 8
Nairn Academy Stakeholder Group

Thursday 7 December 2023 at 7 pm

Via Microsoft Teams

Attendees	Initials
Highland Council – Members	
Paul Oldham – Chair	PO
Barbara Jarvie	BJ
School Representatives	
Julie MacDonald, Head Teacher, Nairn Academy	JM
Sarah Abenheimer, Depute Head Teacher, Nairn Academy	SA
Parent Council Representatives	
Mark Gunn, Nairn Academy Parent Council	MG
Sally Gunn, Nairn Academy Parent Council	SG
Jamie Forsyth, Rosebank Primary Parent Council	JF
Community Representatives	
Alastair Noble, Nairn West & Suburban CC	AN
Ian Booth, Nairn Access Panel	IB
Highland Council – officials	
Robert Campbell, Service Lead - Capital Planning & Estate Strategy	RC
Susannah Holmes, Estates Leam Leader	SH
David Walker, Estates Officer	DW
Fiona Shearer, Education Area Manager	FS
High Life Highland	
Simon Swanson, Head of Investment and Programme Management	SS
Balfour Beatty	
Tom Brady, Project Director	TB
Apologies	
Councillor Michael Green, Councillor Laurie Fraser, Finlay MacDonald, Sharon Barrie, Philip Shannon, Lewis Hannah, James Cook, Lisa Campbell, Sarah Bisland, Angela Selkirk, Grace Chisholm, Joanna Surtees, Mandy Lawson, Hamish Bain	
Minute	
David Walker	

Item	Discussion and comment	Action
1.	Recording of the meeting	
1.1	PO noted that the meeting would be recorded to aid with the preparation of the minutes. There were no objections.	
2.	Introduction and apologies	

Item	Discussion and comment	Action
2.1	PO welcomed everyone to the meeting and attendees introduced themselves. Apologies as above.	
3.	Minutes of previous meeting	
3.1	The minutes of the previous meeting were approved.	
4.	Project update – Highland Council	
4.1	RC shared a presentation which covered progress since the previous meeting, a recap of the design process, key project risks/mitigations and the next steps for the project.	
4.2	PO noted that the original intention was to take the project to the September 2023 South Planning Committee and asked which Committee date was now being targeted.	
4.3	RC confirmed that there are options, and the key dates are the award of contract and start on site dates. SH confirmed that ideally the project would go to the March Committee meeting but there are further meetings in April and June.	
4.4	MG asked whether an assumption was being made that the project would achieve planning permission without any substantial issues and asked how confident the project team were that if the project is taken to a later Committee meeting that this won't have an impact on the contractor's mobilisation period and start on site. TB noted that there is a 3-month contingency period built into the programme to dispense with any planning conditions and noted there has been ongoing pre-engagement with planning and survey work conducted and substantive issues are not foreseen with the application. SH confirmed that Planning have been consulted throughout the design process, so they are aware of what is coming and have not raised any major concerns to date. RC added that everything has been done avoid any major issues and discussions are taking place with senior management to ensure adequate resourcing in Planning for the project. The design is progressing, market testing will continue and any changes from Planning are not expected to drastically change the design. TB confirmed that the project has now been formally registered on the planning portal as of tonight which is a milestone for the project.	
4.5	IB asked whether the accessibility requirements that were discussed before the design changes such as having two lifts in the building, door widths for wheelchair users and dropped kerbs were being taken forward in the current design. SH confirmed that this was the case. There are two lifts in the building and the building is fully DDA compliant.	
4.6	AN raised the issue of the public library and that a decision needed to be made soon and asked about the future use of existing buildings on the site. RC confirmed that the existing building will be demolished but there are potentially opportunities to develop the existing school site once the demolition is complete. There may be areas of the site that could be reviewed for alternative uses. Initially there will be discussions with the school over the use of these spaces, but this will be kept separate from the planning application for the new school building. PO noted that all four Ward Councillors were against the public library moving out of the town centre.	

Item	Discussion and comment	Action
4.7	<p>BJ asked about how soon the existing building would be demolished after the new building is complete and in use as residents are concerned that the building may be left and not demolished and whether the demolition was still part of this project.</p> <p>RC confirmed that the existing building would be demolished. The increased budget included for the demolition costs and there are ongoing discussions with Balfour Beatty about whether this will form part of their contract or whether the Council arrange this separately.</p>	
5.	Project update – Balfour Beatty	
5.1	<p>TB shared a presentation with the group which detailed the challenges in segregating the works from the existing school and the project phasing plan with programme dates.</p>	
5.2	<p>PO noted there is currently an issue with water run off from the school which has caused flooding in Duncan Drive and noted concerns about additional tarmac in this area for the new access road from Duncan Drive which may exacerbate this issue.</p> <p>TB confirmed that they were aware of the issue and permanent drainage is to be installed to take any outfall back to an attenuation area on the site.</p>	
5.3	<p>PO asked whether there were plans to use the land to the west of the existing rugby pitch to store earth.</p> <p>TB confirmed that this was considered but is not currently the plan as after reviewing the quantities the plan is to keep the surplus on site and use it in the mounded areas.</p>	
5.4	<p>MG asked whether consideration has been given to keeping the section of the new access road that will not be retained to allow segregation of traffic in the new school given the current difficulties with access in and out of the current school.</p> <p>TB confirmed that they have been working with a Transportation Consultant, and they are aware of the current congestion issues. These are draft proposals, and further discussions will be had with the Roads department now that the planning application has been submitted to develop the plans and reiterated that their priority is providing complete segregation between construction activities and school activities.</p>	
5.5	<p>BJ asked whether the earth mounds were now situated closer to the residential houses.</p> <p>TB confirmed that they were not any closer than before but may be slightly longer and thinner than the previous iteration after a review of the earth modelling.</p>	
5.6	<p>BJ asked about the noise from stone sorting during construction due to concerns about its impact on nearby residents.</p> <p>TB confirmed that extensive site investigation works have been conducted and there will be an environmental management plan in place which means than things such as noise and dust must be dealt with on site and not become an issue for neighbours.</p>	
5.7	<p>AN noted the positivity around the project moving forward and noted that a one-way traffic system in and out of the school may improve congestion.</p>	
6.	AOCB	
6.1	<p>As there was no further business, the meeting was concluded at 19:41.</p>	