

Consultation Report

Proposal to Relocate Beauly Primary School

9 March 2026

Introduction

This report has been prepared following a review of the proposal to relocate Beauly Primary School to a new school building on a site west of Cnoc na Ràth.

The Highland Council has prepared this document having had regard to:

- relevant written representations received by the Council (from any person) during the consultation period
- oral representations made at the public meeting held on 10 December 2025
- the report from Education Scotland

This report is issued under the requirements of the Schools (Consultation) (Scotland) Act 2010.

Background

At the meeting of The Highland Council's Education Committee on 19 November 2025, Members agreed to proceed to statutory consultation on a proposal to relocate Beauly Primary School to a site west of Cnoc na Ràth.

This decision reflected the long-standing need to replace the current school buildings, which are rated as being in poor condition and of limited suitability. The existing accommodation spans multiple buildings, creating constraints around accessibility, maintenance, supervision and the availability of appropriate learning and breakout spaces.

The introduction of the Highland Investment Plan in 2024 reaffirmed Beauly as a priority location for Phase 1 investment. This supported the reinstatement of a replacement school within the Council's Capital Programme and formed the basis for progressing the relocation proposal.

The proposal paper set out that the relocation would provide a modern, purpose-built school designed to improve the quality of learning and teaching environments, enhance accessibility, and support a wider range of curricular and outdoor learning opportunities, as detailed within the Educational Benefits Statement.

The original Proposal Paper forms Appendix 2A to this report.



Consultation Process

The formal consultation period ran from 1 December 2025 to 23 January 2026. This exceeded the statutory minimum requirement of six weeks and included at least 30 school days, in accordance with the Schools (Consultation) (Scotland) Act 2010.

The Proposal Paper was made available online via The Highland Council website and in hard copy at Beauly Primary School and other appropriate local venues.

Notification of the consultation was issued to all statutory consultees, including parents and carers, school staff, pupils, the Parent Council, relevant community bodies and trade union representatives.

A public meeting was held on 10 December 2025 at Beauly Primary School, providing stakeholders with the opportunity to hear more about the proposal and to raise questions and concerns directly.

During the consultation period, stakeholders were invited to submit written responses to the Council. All responses received by the closing date have been considered as part of this report.

Issues Raised and Highland Council Response

One written response was received during the consultation period, in addition to representations made at the public meeting.

Overall, there was strong support for the proposal to relocate Beauly Primary School, particularly in relation to the need to replace the existing accommodation. The main issues raised by stakeholders related to site safety, traffic and access arrangements, design considerations, and opportunities for outdoor learning and community use.

The key issues raised during the consultation, along with the Council's response, are set out below.

Safety concerns relating to the inclusion of a public building on the shared site

A respondent expressed concern about the proposal to include a public-facing building within the wider site. They highlighted that the school supports children who may be at risk of absconding, and felt that increased public access could heighten safeguarding risks. They also noted wider changes in community dynamics, including the relocation of individuals with offending histories into rural areas, and stated that this added to their anxiety about potential interactions between pupils and the public.



Council response: The Council recognises the importance of safeguarding and will ensure that any public-facing facility is completely separated from school areas. Access to school zones will be controlled and limited to authorised staff, pupils and approved visitors only.

Final layouts will include discrete entrances, secure lines and enhanced supervision. Safeguarding needs specific to Beaulieu Primary, including support for children who may be at risk of absconding, will be fully considered during detailed design stages.

Concerns regarding the safety of routes to school, particularly via Croyard Road

Concerns were raised that while the Braeview Park entrance benefits from a crossing patrol, the Croyard Road route does not. The respondent reported regular incidents of vehicles failing to stop at the traffic lights and felt this posed a significant risk to pupils walking from this side of the village. These concerns have been raised previously with Police Scotland and local community officers. The respondent emphasised the need for safer, supervised routes away from the main road where possible.

Council response: The Council acknowledges the concerns about Croyard Road and agrees that safe routes to school must be prioritised. A Safer Routes to School assessment will be undertaken and will review pedestrian safety across both current and future access points.

Safe pedestrian access will be built into the new school's design, including options to reduce reliance on the main road as part of transport planning.

General emphasis on children's safety and condition of the current school

The respondent emphasised that safety is the highest priority and described the current school buildings as inadequate. They supported the need for a new school but stressed that safety on site and during journeys to school must be central to all future decisions.

Council response: The Council agrees that children's safety is paramount. The new school will provide modern, compliant accommodation designed to improve safety, accessibility and supervision. The Council will continue to work with parents, staff and stakeholders to ensure that the design and wider infrastructure reflect the needs of the Beaulieu community and support a safe, high-quality learning environment.

Suitability of Current Accommodation

Stakeholders highlighted challenges caused by the current multi-building layout, including supervision, maintenance difficulties, and limited breakout spaces.

Council Response: The Council agrees that the current estate is no longer suitable. A single-building modern school will address these issues and offer enhanced learning environments.



Land Acquisition Concerns

Parents noted that the Council had not yet secured the proposed site.

Council Response: The Council acknowledges this and confirms acquisition processes are underway.

Outdoor Learning and Access to Cnoc na Ràth

Stakeholders emphasised retaining access to Cnoc na Ràth for outdoor learning.

Council Response: The design will safeguard access to outdoor learning and maximise educational benefit.

Sports and Activity Provision

Concerns included pitch size, sports hall capacity, changing areas, and after-school club space.

Council Response: The design brief includes enhanced indoor and outdoor sports spaces, suitable for curricular PE and after-school activities.

Traffic and Safe Routes

Parents indicated the importance of safe walkways, including potential access via Braeview Park.

Council Response: A full transport assessment will be completed.

Security and Safety

Concerns included a private residential property within the current school grounds.

Council Response: The new site will address these concerns.

Stakeholder Involvement in Design

Stakeholders requested involvement in shaping the new school's design.

Council Response: Stakeholder engagement will continue.

Education Scotland Summary and Council Response

Education Scotland identified several key points, including the poor quality of the current accommodation and the clear educational benefits of a new purpose-built school.

Council Response: The Council agrees with HM Inspectors' findings and will continue working with stakeholders.

Alleged Omissions or Inaccuracies

No significant omissions or inaccuracies were identified during the consultation period that required formal correction to the Proposal Paper.



Any points raised by consultees were reviewed and considered as part of the overall assessment of the proposal but were not considered to materially affect its content or conclusions.

Overall Review of the Consultation Exercise

The consultation exercise demonstrated clear support for the proposal to relocate Beauly Primary School, particularly in relation to the need to replace the existing school buildings, which are widely recognised as being in poor condition and of limited suitability.

Stakeholders, including parents, staff and the wider community, highlighted a range of factors in support of the proposal, notably the opportunity to provide a modern, purpose-built learning environment, improved accessibility and enhanced opportunities for outdoor learning.

A number of concerns were also raised during the consultation, primarily relating to site safety, traffic management and safe routes to school, as well as design considerations including sports provision and community use. These issues have been carefully considered by the Council and will be taken forward through the detailed design, transport assessment and future engagement with stakeholders.

Education Scotland's report supports the educational benefits of the proposal and recognises the need to improve the quality of the existing accommodation. The Council has had full regard to this report in reaching its overall view.


Taking all of the above into account, the Council considers that the proposal represents the most appropriate way forward in addressing the current deficiencies in the school estate while delivering improved educational outcomes for pupils.

Legal Issues

The statutory consultation was carried out in accordance with the requirements of the Schools (Consultation) (Scotland) Act 2010. This included the preparation and publication of a Proposal Paper, a consultation period of the required duration, a public meeting, and consideration of the report prepared by Education Scotland.

Conclusion

The consultation has demonstrated a clear recognition among stakeholders of the need to replace the existing Beauly Primary School building, reflecting its poor condition and limited suitability.



There is general support for the provision of a new, purpose-built school, alongside constructive feedback on matters such as site safety, transport and design. These issues have been considered and will be addressed through the next stages of the project.

Education Scotland's report supports the educational benefits of the proposal and the need to improve the learning environment.

Overall, the Council is satisfied that the proposal provides an appropriate and effective solution to the issues identified and will deliver improved educational outcomes for pupils.

Recommendation

It is recommended that The Highland Council, having considered all consultation responses and the report from Education Scotland, proceeds with the proposal to relocate Beauly Primary School to a new school building on a site west of Cnoc na Ràth.

