

Ness Castle stakeholder group meeting 14 minutes

Microsoft Teams

20 April 2022 at 6:30pm

In attendance	Initials
Councillors Cllr Alasdair Christie (Chair)	AC
Parent Council Representatives Donna Grant, Lochardil Parent Council Andrew Martin, Holm Parent Council Stuart McLean, Ness Castle Interim Parent Council	DG AM SML
Community Representatives Gail Beveridge, Holm Community Council Murray McCheyne, Holm Community Council Scott McRoberts, Resident	GB MMC SMR
Holm Primary Janine Webb, Acting Head Teacher	JW
Lochardil Primary Audrey Kellacher, Head Teacher, Lochardil Primary	AK
Ness Castle Primary Craig Conon, Head Teacher Helen Mudie, Principal Teacher	CC HM
Highland Council Representatives Robert Campbell, Estates Strategy Manager Dorothy Gibb, Principal Estates Officer Ian Graham, Road Safety Officer Evelyn Miller, Cleaning & FM Manager Alan Paul, Estates Officer Fiona Sangster, Estates Co-ordinator Liz Scott, ELC Commissioner Garry Smith, Principal Engineer Gordon Stewart, Education Adviser	RC DMG IG EM AP FSa LS GSm GS
Kier Construction Lindsay McNaughton, Corporate Responsibility Manager	LMN
Apologies Sandra Reynolds, Education Officer Liz MacIntyre, CSR Co-ordinator, Keir	SR LMI

Item	Discussion and comment	Action
1.	<p>Welcome and apologies</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> AC welcomed everyone to the meeting. DMG introduced GS who had agreed to attend the meeting to discuss the offsite works required as a Planning condition for the project. GS shared an image of the area surrounding the new school and explained some traffic calming measures that will be put in place including a raised junction on Dornoch Road, 20mph signage and signalising the junction from Dores Road towards the roundabout. A contract has been prepared for the works and will be put out to tender on receipt of approval of designs by Planning. Aiming for these works to be completed for mid August. SML enquired about the Pelican crossing for the Ness Side Distributer Road. GS noted this was not part of scope and DMG confirmed not part of Ness Castle Primary School planning conditions and noted this was likely related developer requirements for the Ness-side housing. IG to speak to the Traffic Management Team and get back to SML. 	IG
2.	<p>Update</p> <p>The Highland Council Contingency Plan</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> DMG gave an update on the contingency plan being developed to establish Ness Castle Primary School temporarily at Holm Primary School if the new building is not completed in time for the new school session in August. There are some vacant classrooms at Holm at present, so with some relocating of classes and the installation of two modular units, Ness Castle can have their own block within the Holm Primary campus. A meeting has taken place with the ELC team and the Care Inspectorate and they are happy with the plans for the temporary nursery set up. Both DMG and RC expressed thanks to all at Holm Primary for their help and co-operation in making it possible to create this temporary solution for Ness Castle staff and pupils. AM noted that Holm Parent Council has expressed concern about congestion and asked if start and finish times would need to be altered to avoid this. DMG explained that consideration of this potential issue was part of the Planning Application process for the temporary units. 	

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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Arrival and departure times will be somewhat staggered because both schools will be operating breakfast and after school clubs so some pupils and staff will arrive before 9 am and will stay on (up to 5.45/6pm) after the 3 pm end of the school day. AM also enquired when the temporary units will be removed when no longer needed, and if any damage to the playground would be rectified. DMG confirmed that there were already plans in place for the units to be removed to another site as soon as possible after Ness Castle have moved in to the new building. The ground surface in the proposed location is not good at present and a commitment has been made to the Head Teacher for this to be addressed with the possibility of a hard play area replacing the current grass when the temporary units are removed. AM asked if the Parent Council could be consulted on any plans for this area. DMG agreed that this would be possible and offered to attend a Parent Council meeting if necessary. JW wanted to reassure AM on his concerns about the increase in traffic. It is likely that there will only be an additional 10 ELC pupils after August, although there would also be a slight increase in primary pupils. JW also noted that she has been working with IG on promoting active travel to school and hoped that more pupils could be encouraged to walk to school rather than coming by car. RC noted that there was a numerical error in his presentation at the last meeting so the increase in pupil numbers looked larger than it actually will be. RC to amend and re-circulate. AC asked CC about communication with parents regarding the delay with the new school building. CC noted that a Parent Council meeting was held after the last Stakeholder meeting and it was well attended. Parents' main concern was when they would know for definite if the temporary accommodation would be required and if the new school will open at Holm or in the new building. It is important to be able to make arrangements for transition work with children and staff. CC and HM have already been discussing the transition element and agree that it has to be done correctly regardless of where the school is opening. 	RC DMG

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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Unfortunately none of the project staff from Keir were in attendance at the meeting and so no update was provided. DMG to get an interim update report from Keir to circulate to the group. 	
3.	<p>Safer Routes to School</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The draft Travel Plan has been circulated to the group and DMG has shared it with the contractors to forward to Planning. IG expressed thanks to the parents for completing the recent survey. The Travel Plan is similar to others submitted to Planning for other projects so it is expected to be accepted. IG has been working with JW with regards to the Holm Primary car park and is arranging for 5mph speed signs to be introduced. IG is to meet with the local Roads team to discuss the possibility of creating a pedestrian access via the steps at Boarstone Avenue. DMG suggested that additional car parking spaces could be created in the staff parking area if it was lined. IG to work with JW on a map of the car park and to speak to the Roads team about this. 	IG/JW
4.	<p>Transition</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> HM is now in post as Principal Teacher of Ness Castle Primary School. CC has visited all the future Ness Castle Primary pupils in their current schools and will be visiting ELC pupils in the coming weeks. Liaison with existing teachers is to begin to establish where pupils who will be transferring to Ness Castle are in terms of learning in order to prepare for the new term in August. Ness Castle staff will be working closely with staff in other schools to take this forward. 	
5.	<p>Community benefits</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> LMN explained that LMI has now been appointed to support projects in the North of Scotland and will be based in Inverness, but unfortunately was unable to attend the meeting. Plans are under way for some engagement sessions with classes at Holm Primary on structures, bridges and modern methods of construction to tie in with class projects. 	

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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> It is hoped to also work with the ELC at Holm, to promote health and safety and also to possibly hold a local school event, for example a World of Work Day. Discussions have taken place with the DYW Co-ordinator for IRA to support pupils with maths. LMI is working with the job centre to create work experience placements for unemployed people who would spend 2 weeks on a live site to help them progress into employment. An information session is to be held shortly. One of Keir's Sub Contractors has also supported local students on work placements in the hope this may lead to apprenticeship opportunities. Keir will be supporting the Inverness Science festival 7 May 2022. Keir are currently liaising with the Inverness Botanic Gardens to look at opportunities to work with them. For example, volunteering with the Orchard Development and purchasing some of their Green Health Packs for local schools. FN has been liaising with the supply chain on the provision of Community Notice Boards and it is hoped this will be confirmed at the next meeting. Foodbank collection points have also been set up on the project. CC to contact LMN regarding transition events to link with the new school and it's construction. An open day for pupils is to be arranged nearer completion. CC to email LMN. 	CC/LMN CC/LMN
6.	AOCB <ul style="list-style-type: none"> DMG to speak to CC regarding communication with parents about the contingency plan. DMG noted that information on this would also be done through Corporate Communications. AC expressed the importance of keeping parents informed. SML asked if the school was established at Holm, would it be October before they moved into the new building? Noted that it could be earlier, and that consideration would be given to this if it was possible. DMG to issue statement to Stakeholder Group on the duration of the temporary school at Holm when it is confirmed. JW wanted to raise concerns about Holm staff not being able to prepare for the new term if there was uncertainty about where their classes would be in August. Packing up of classrooms etc. to be considered as well as storage and furniture requirements. 	DMG/CC DMG

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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> DMG informed the group that she would be working on this along with FSa and AP. EM also confirmed that Facilities Management will assist where possible but that advance communication would be required. EM also suggested that there may be spare furniture available at recently mothballed schools. DG noted that during a recent nursery project, a school was given an extra closure day to allow for the move and also metal storage containers to use during the project. RC noted that these were things that would be picked up with Fiona Shearer but asked JW to think about storage and furniture and to let Estates Team know what was required. 	JW
7.	<p>Date of next meeting</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Wednesday 18 May 2022 at 6.30pm via Microsoft Teams 	