



PROPOSAL DOCUMENT

Proposal:

- **To relocate St. Peter's Roman Catholic Primary School to the existing Riverbank School building, after the new replacement Riverbank School has opened, with effect from August 2022 or as soon as possible thereafter.**

The Statutory Consultation Period commences on **Monday 4th February** and ends at 5.00pm on **Friday 22 March 2019** (inclusive), which represents 32 School Days.

All submissions expressing views on the proposals detailed in this document should be made in writing or by email by 5.00pm on Friday 22 March 2019.

A Consultation Report, summarising the submissions received and the Council's response to those submissions, will be presented to the Education Operational Delivery Committee in Autumn 2019.

This Proposal Document has been prepared in compliance with the Schools (Consultation) (Scotland) Act 2010 as amended.

STATUTORY CONSULTATION

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1. LIST OF CONSULTEES

Notice of this Proposal Document's issue will be provided to:

- The Parent Council of St Peter's RC school
- The parents of the pupils and children at St Peter's RC school
- Parents of children expected to attend St Peter's RC school within 2 years of the date of publication of this Proposal Document
- The pupils at St Peter's RC school
- The teaching and ancillary staff at St Peter's RC school
- The trade unions representatives of the above staff
- The Community Councils of Old Aberdeen and Tillydrone
- The constituency MSP
- List MSPs for the area
- The Constituency MP
- Community Planning Partnership Board
- Chief Operating Officer, Aberdeen City Council
- Chief Education Officer
- The Director of Resources, Aberdeen City Council
- Aberdeenshire Council
- Roman Catholic Diocese of Aberdeen

A copy of this document is available from:

- Marischal College, Broad Street, Aberdeen
- Public libraries in the vicinity of St Peter's RC school
- St Peter's RC school

The Proposal Document is also available on the Aberdeen City Council website:

www.aberdeencity.gov.uk/schoolsconsultations

This document is available in alternative formats or in translated form for readers whose first language is not English. Please apply to Corporate Landlord, Marischal College, Broad Street, Aberdeen, AB10 1AB, by telephone on 01224 522273; or by e-mail:

schoolestate@aberdeencity.gov.uk

2. BACKGROUND

- 2.1 Aberdeen City Council is currently reshaping its service delivery model, aiming to deliver its services in a more collaborative, joined-up way. The model is underpinned by the principles of strengthening transparency, accountability, engagement, inclusiveness, shared vision and values, and a commitment to joint learning. This will allow us to ensure that decisions are taken holistically, taking into account the impact on the direct delivery of services and the wider potential benefits to the citizens of Aberdeen.
- 2.2 Under this model, the Council is reviewing and forward planning for its entire estate holistically, rather than considering the education estate in isolation. This approach will ensure that our financial responsibilities and educational responsibilities are fully met whilst providing opportunities for the delivery of public statutory services in the future. It will also maximise the use of available resource in delivering statutory services, and the priorities outlined within the Local Outcome Improvement Plan.

Local Outcome Improvement Plan

- 2.3 The Local Outcome Improvement Plan sets out a vision for Aberdeen City where all people can prosper. This reflects our desire to help all people, families, businesses and communities to do well, succeed and flourish in every aspect.
- 2.4 This proposal for the relocation of St. Peter's Roman Catholic (RC) School contributes to the key priorities and themes for Aberdeen, as they are set out in the Local Improvement Plan:
- **Prosperous Economy:** Through **investment in our school infrastructure**, we can help deliver on the priority to ensure that **Aberdeen prospers**.
 - **Prosperous People:** Through ensuring children have access to high quality facilities, we can assist in ensuring they have the **best start in life**, that they are **safe and responsible**, and **respected, included, and achieving**.
 - **Prosperous Place:** Through engaging and consulting with communities on the future of the school estate within their localities, we can help to develop **empowered, resilient and sustainable communities**.
 - **Enabling Technology:** By making use of technology throughout our school estate, and through ensuring our buildings benefit from **digital connectivity**, we can contribute to the development of **children's digital skills and education**.

National Improvement Framework

- 2.5 The National Improvement Framework identifies a number of priorities for improving services to children and young people:
- **Closing the attainment gap between most and least disadvantaged children:** The National Improvement Framework outlines the need for local authority areas to improve educational outcomes for all children and young people, by closing the gap between those who are in most and least need of support. It also reflects the need to improve health and economic outcomes for children and their families. This can only be achieved through multi-agency working.

- **Improvement in attainment, particularly literacy and numeracy, youth engagement and inclusion:** Children and young people have clearly expressed their desire to be included in the decision making processes around issues that affect them. Opportunities to impact on decision making in schools (e.g. pupil councils and the Imagineers initiative) have been positively received, but we need to increase their influence in supporting Aberdeen's ICS Partnership. We also need to improve opportunities for more vulnerable young people to feedback their views and ensure that they can see more clearly how these views help to shape their community and the services provided for them.
- **Improvement in children and young people's health and wellbeing:** Mental wellbeing impacts across a child's or young person's lifespan, even into adulthood, affecting various areas of their lives, including social and academic development and confidence in their own independence on leaving school. Children and young people expressed concern about bullying, anxiety and depression. They described feelings of isolation, as well as difficulties in accessing help.

In addition to this, stakeholders have indicated a need for more opportunities for outdoor activities and play spaces, together with more information on improving their health.

- **Improvement in employability skills and sustained, positive school leaver destinations for all young people:** Parents and young people expressed a desire to feel safer in their community. Issues such as anti-social behaviour and dirty environments restrict young people's desire to engage in activities in their local communities and create anxiety on the part of parents or carers in allowing or encouraging them to do so. We also need to ensure we meet our responsibilities to ensure the safety of all children at home.

Our Vision for the School Estate

2.6 Aberdeen City Council's vision is for the school estate to enable the efficient delivery of the above priorities, by providing the highest standards of facilities which allow staff and partners to deliver high quality learning experiences to all children and young people, families and communities in their local school.

2.7 To achieve this vision the school estate will be utilised to provide:

- safe, nurturing and inclusive environments for all;
- stimulating and inspiring learning environments which encourage curiosity and a commitment to lifelong learning;
- flexible and adaptable spaces which can respond to the changing needs of pupils and communities;
- buildings which are environmentally and economically sustainable;
- appropriate multi-agency spaces to support close partnership working.

3. THE PROPOSAL

General Information

- 3.1 St Peter's Roman Catholic (RC) School is one of three denominational primary schools in Aberdeen. It is situated in Old Aberdeen and serves Catholic parishes in the north east of the city, extending into Aberdeenshire. A map indicating the extent of the catchment zone for the school is provided at Appendix 1.
- 3.2 The school moved into its present building, which originally comprised of four classrooms and associated ancillary spaces, in 1983. Access to the school is via a one-way street which is relatively narrow and with restricted on-street parking. This can create challenges with traffic build-up at the start and end of each school day, which has an impact on local residents.
- 3.3 The city's two other Roman Catholic primary schools, St Joseph's RC School and Holy Family RC School, provide denominational education for the remaining parts of the city.
- 3.4 The pupil roll at St Peter's RC School has expanded over time, leading to three more classrooms being established in the adjacent Old Aberdeen House building, and subsequently the installation of a modular unit housing two further classrooms. General purpose spaces within the main building have also been converted into classroom spaces to meet the demand for pupil places, and a range of short-term improvements to the building have been carried out over recent years. It is now no longer feasible to add further classes to meet any additional pupil roll increases in the future, due to the limited available space within the school site.
- 3.5 The current condition of the school building is rated as "C – Poor" and the suitability of the building is also rated as "C – Poor". Aberdeen City Council's Property Asset Management Policy states that the minimum standard for both condition and suitability should be "B – Satisfactory". An explanation of the ratings used for the condition and suitability of buildings is provided at Appendix 2.
- 3.6 The number of pupils attending the school currently exceeds the published capacity of the building, and the school is forecast to remain over-capacity until at least 2024. A need has therefore been identified to improve the learning and teaching environment for pupils and staff at this school, whilst also addressing the lack of pupil capacity in the building.
- 3.7 There is a need to strategically rethink how best we can deliver the future educational provision at St. Peter's RC School and consider the best options for determining the future sustainability and growth of Roman Catholic educational provision within Aberdeen. Capacity pressures alongside the condition and suitability of the building will remain an issue for the future unless we can provide a fit for purpose solution to address this in the long term.

Previous Decisions Regarding the Future of St Peter's RC School

- 3.8 Following an instruction from the former Education and Children Services Committee on 1st March 2017, a full appraisal was carried out which explored all possible options for the future of St. Peter's School. This work also investigated the option for a new build replacement two stream school building.

- 3.9 The outcomes of this study were reported to the Education and Children Services Committee in November 2017, when it was agreed by the Committee that the current Riverbank School building (which is due to be vacated following the planned construction of a new replacement Riverbank School building) was the most suitable location for St Peter's School and its long-term delivery of Roman Catholic education.
- 3.10 Officers were therefore instructed by the Committee to report back on proposed improvements to the existing Riverbank School building and the associated costs, including the costs of bringing the condition of the building up to an A rating, with a view to St Peter's School relocating to this building after it becomes vacant, and after improvement works have been carried out (subject to the outcomes of the statutory consultation).
- 3.11 A report detailing the outcome of this feasibility study and associated investment options was presented to the Education Operational Delivery Committee in November 2018. After considering the report, the Committee instructed officers to formally consult on the proposal to relocate St Peter's RC School to the current Riverbank School, after the new replacement Riverbank school is operational, and agreed the recommendation to refer the proposals for improving the Riverbank School building to the budget process.

Proposed Improvements to the Riverbank School Building

- 3.12 A clear set of objectives were established to ensure that all proposed improvement options for the existing Riverbank School building fulfilled both the current and future requirements of St. Peter's RC school. The proposed improvements are based on assessments of the condition and suitability of the building, and the way in which these assessments were carried out is explained at Appendix 2.
- 3.13 The objectives were as follows:
- To operate from a building rated as "A" for condition and suitability;
 - To deliver a long-term educational provision for the St. Peter's School zone, which will enable future sustainable and viable pupil rolls and support the effective delivery of the full breadth of Curriculum for Excellence;
 - To ensure that the educational provision is large enough to accommodate the current and predicted roll for St Peter's RC School.
 - To provide an Early Learning and Childcare provision that meets the requirements for the 1140 hours expansion programme;
 - To be supported in principle by the St. Peter's School sub-group¹;
 - The educational provision will adopt the principals of the Target Operating Model considering the wider potential benefits to the citizens of Aberdeen.
- 3.14 An investment option which would improve the condition of the Riverbank building from a "B" to an "A" rating has been recommended by officers, and would include a range of works as follows:
- Redecoration of teaching classrooms / breakout spaces
 - External redecoration
 - Upgrade of toilets that didn't form part of extension and refurbishment works in 2012

¹ Officers have and continue to work and liaise with a representative group from St. Peters since April 2017. The membership of this group includes representation from the Roman Catholic church, Head Teacher and members of the Parent Council. This group has acted as a liaison between the St. Peter's community and the Council to date which has allowed work to progress regarding this option.

- Window replacement that didn't form part of 2012 extension and refurbishment works
- Upgrade of car park/drop off/set down areas
- ICT upgrade
- New furniture
- Catering kitchen upgrade
- New 3G all-weather pitch
- Redecoration of Nursery area
- External works (including drainage upgrade)

3.15 These investment works would ensure that the condition of the Riverbank building is improved to an "A" rating and would provide a future long-term investment for the building, minimising the need for additional works to be carried out at a later date.

3.16 During the previous statutory consultation on proposals for St Peter's RC School, when relocation to the Riverbank School building was presented as an option, concerns were expressed about the condition and suitability of the Riverbank building. Undertaking these works takes cognisance of the outcome of the comments received at the previous consultation and would help to address the concerns raised previously.

3.17 If, after considering the outcomes of this statutory consultation, the Education Operational Delivery Committee approves the proposal to relocate St Peter's RC School to the Riverbank School building, the implementation of the above proposed improvement works for the Riverbank building will be subject to further committee approvals, in line with the Council's governance processes for major capital projects.

4. THE IMPACT OF THE PROPOSAL

Condition and Suitability

- 4.1 By relocating to the Riverbank building, pupils at St Peter's RC School would have access to an improved learning and teaching environment.
- 4.2 The objective of the feasibility work described in Section 3 above, was to investigate what improvement works could be made to further enhance the current Riverbank School building to provide a future fit for purpose learning establishment conducive to the delivery of the Curriculum for Excellence (CfE) and which can meet the future growing needs of St. Peter's RC School for years to come. The proposed investment works if approved would change the current condition and suitability ratings from "B" to "A", providing further benefits for the pupils at St Peter's RC School, should the decision be taken to relocate the school to the Riverbank building.

Early Learning and Childcare

- 4.3 Currently, St Peter's is the only Aberdeen City Council primary school which has no provision for Early Learning and Childcare (ELC) closely associated with the mainstream P1 to P7 provision. This proposal provides an opportunity to make ELC provision for St Peter's available for local children. The proposal will also take account of the ELC expansion programme from 2020. The Children and Young People (Scotland) Act 2014 made 600 hours of free Early Learning and Childcare available for all three and four-year-olds and eligible two-year-olds in Scotland from August 2014. By 2020 the entitlement for free ELC will increase from 600 to 1,140 hours per year.

4.4 Aberdeen's ELC City Plan focuses on the provision of outdoor learning to support wellbeing, on accessibility to increase uptake and on the provision of a 'localised offer' to meet the needs of families within each community. The Riverbank building includes purpose-built Nursery facilities and can support the ELC expansion programme, providing nursery places for St Peter's RC School for the first time.

Pupil Rolls

- 4.5 A key measure of the school estate is its capacity to accommodate the anticipated number of pupils expected to require school places in any given year. Insufficient capacity in schools can lead to overcrowding and a resulting adverse effect on learning and teaching, which frequently results in a negative impact on outcomes for learners.
- 4.6 The Council continually analyses the available data on birth rates, migration and housing development in the city to produce school roll forecasts, which are then used to inform school estate planning.
- 4.7 Historically, the pupil rolls at St Peter's RC School has shown a rising trend from 2010 to 2017. This has led to areas of the school which have previously been used for general purpose activity being used as classrooms, and additional modular classrooms have been installed to help meet the growing demand for school places.
- 4.8 St Peter's School's current pupil roll is 232, whilst the published pupil capacity for the building is only 217. Forecasts indicate that the school will remain over capacity until at least 2024.
- 4.9 The Riverbank building comprises 14 classrooms and associated ancillary space, and would provide sufficient places for the current St. Peter's pupil roll whilst allowing for the future expansion of denominational education in the north of the city. The building would allow the school to make flexible use of the available teaching areas and ancillary spaces within a more modern environment, to deliver high quality learning and teaching.
- 4.10 The site has access to both hard and soft landscaped play areas and onsite parking for staff and visitors.
- 4.11 The relative educational benefits of this proposal for St Peter's RC School are discussed in Section 5 below.

5. EDUCATIONAL BENEFITS

- 5.1 The above proposal for consultation would realise the following educational benefits for St. Peter's RC school:
- Pupils at St Peter's School would benefit from a more modern, congenial and healthy learning and working environment for the primary and pre-school stages. This would result in a much improved environment for the delivery of Curriculum for Excellence, resulting in improved outcomes for learners. The improvement works would offer wide and flexible learning opportunities including greater opportunities to participate in outdoor learning which have well documented benefits to the wellbeing of children and young people;

- St Peter's would benefit from early learning and childcare facilities on site, leading to smoother transitions from Nursery to Primary 1 and the opportunity for learners from age 3 – 11 to develop friendships;
- A larger school would attract additional staff and financial resources. This would increase the head teacher's ability to create flexibility in learning and teaching and ultimately better meet the needs of individual pupils;
- The increased footprint of the building would enable the school to make use of a variety of spaces and approaches to support children who require a level of personalisation due to their additional support needs;
- Pupils would benefit from increased social interaction with a larger number of children and staff. There would be opportunities for the two schools in Tillydrone to work collaboratively on joint projects, enhancing the educational opportunities for all children, along with the potential for improved professional learning opportunities for staff;
- Moving to the new school building would eradicate the present anticipated maintenance costs for the existing St Peter's School building in terms of component renewal;
- The proposal would assist in reducing long term capacity pressures within St Peter's RC School and allow for the growth of the provision of RC education within the north of the city.
- Sustainable rolls ensure that effective teacher staffing levels are maintained and led by a range of promoted teaching staff. Effective year group numbers would be maintained and children would be able to learn within a variety of peer group settings, both formally and informally;
- A more pleasant learning environment is likely to raise staff and pupil morale, resulting in more effective learning and teaching and better outcomes for learner;
- Improved outdoor learning spaces, compared to the current provision. The existing outdoor space at St Peter's School is very limited. At the Riverbank site there would be enhanced outdoor play spaces and PE facilities to promote health, fitness and wellbeing, as well as better opportunities for outdoor curricular learning and social interaction, leading to improved mental health.

6. ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

To assist stakeholders in accessing relevant information, a dedicated area of Aberdeen City Council website has been populated with all information within this consultation document and further detail on the consultation process and data relating to the proposal.

The relevant web pages can be accessed at:

www.aberdeencity.gov.uk/schoolsconsultations

Please contact us on the telephone number below if you want this document in Braille, large print or on an audio CD, or if you want the document translated into another language.

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01224 522273

A copy of this statutory consultation document will be available for public consultation during the period of consultation at the following venues:

- Marischal College
- Central Library
- Tillydrone Library
- St. Peter's RC School
- St. Machar Academy
- Sunnybank Nursery

7. PUBLIC MEETINGS

Public meetings to discuss the proposals will take place on:

- Monday 4 March 2019 – St Peter's RC School at 2pm to 3pm
- Tuesday 12 March 2019 – Riverbank School at 7pm to 8pm
- Wednesday 13 March 2019 – St Columba's Church, Bridge of Don at 7pm to 8pm

Members of the public are invited to attend any one of the above meetings; it would not be necessary to attend more than one meeting.

8. SUBMISSION OF VIEWS

Any interested stakeholders may respond to the consultation via the Council's Consultation Hub, at :

www.aberdeencity.gov.uk/schoolsconsultations

If you would prefer to send us your comments by post or email, you can request a written response form, by writing to:

St Peter's RC Consultation,
Corporate Landlord, Aberdeen City Council, Business Hub 10, Second Floor South,
Marischal College, Broad Street, Aberdeen AB10 1AB

or by email to:

schoolestate@aberdeencity.gov.uk

All responses should be submitted before 5.00pm on Friday 22nd March 2019.

9. OUTCOME OF CONSULTATION

A summary of submissions will be published on the council website at

www.aberdeencity.gov.uk/schoolsconsultations

A report on the consultation will be delivered to Education Operational Delivery Committee in September 2019. This will provide information for Elected Members to make a final decision on the proposal.

Appendix 1 : St Peter's RC School Catchment Zone



Appendix 2 – Explanation of Condition and Suitability Ratings

Condition Surveys

It is recommended as good practice to carry out condition surveys of schools at a maximum of 5 yearly intervals. The purpose of these surveys is to provide high level cost information as well as overall grades for the condition of the assets and their elements. It does not produce a comprehensive catalogue of repairs and detailed repair costs.

The surveys do identify problem assets/elements as well as high level required maintenance costs, with these costs being used for performance indicator purposes. The high level data is used to help prioritise capital spend and is also an important factor when carrying out asset reviews.

Surveys are based on a template and guidance created by the Scottish Government. A new version of the template has very recently been released. Riverbank School was last surveyed using the original template. However, it should be noted that the new template would have no impact on the investment requirements which have been identified.

The original template looks at 24 elements (roofs, walls, windows, etc) of each asset. Assets are split into blocks where the building is on multiple floors or construction types are different for particular parts of a building (e.g. an extension). Each element within a block is graded as follows:-

Good (Performing well and operating efficiently)

Satisfactory (Performing adequately but showing minor deterioration)

Poor (Showing major defects and/or not operating efficiently)

Bad (Life expired and/or serious risk of imminent failure)

An overall grade for each element is established. Then using a weighting system these grades are automatically converted into an overall grade for the asset. The weighting means that elements such as the roof and the external walls have a greater influence on the overall grade due to their importance to the asset as a whole. It should be noted that an asset may have an overall grade of A or B but still have elements that have been assessed as C or D.

Riverbank School Condition

Riverbank School was surveyed using the original template and has an overall grade of B-Satisfactory. Only the windows, external doors and roads/car park have been rated as C-Poor. All other elements are either B-Satisfactory or A-Good. This data was used to help identify investment options and to show how the overall condition grade would be changed by such investment.

Suitability Surveys

Suitability surveys are carried out every 3 years, or sooner in the event of a significant change in circumstance. The purpose of these surveys is to assess the asset's 'fitness for purpose', the purpose being for the delivery of a particular service.

These assessments are used to help prioritise capital spend and are also an important factor when carrying out asset reviews.

Schools are assessed using the Scottish Government suitability assessment proforma. As with the condition template a new suitability template has very recently been released. Riverbank School was assessed using the original template. Not using the new template does not have any bearing on the investment requirements identified for Riverbank School. Suitability grades are as follows:-

- **A: Good** - performing well and operating efficiently. The buildings support the delivery of the service and are considered suitable for use now and in the future.
- **B: Satisfactory** - performing well but with minor issues. The buildings generally support the delivery of services and would be considered suitable. There is room for improvement in certain areas but the property is fundamentally suitable.
- **C: Poor** - showing major problems and/or not operating optimally. The buildings impede the delivery of services and would not be considered suitable.
- **D: Bad** - does not support the delivery of services at all. The buildings seriously impede the delivery of services and would definitely not be considered suitable.

The template assesses the following 5 factors:- Learning & Teaching, Internal Social, Internal Facilities, External Social, External Facilities. In addition each of these factors is scored on Functionality, Accessibility, Environmental Conditions, Safety & Security and Fixed Furniture & Fittings. A weighting system automatically converts these into an overall grade for the asset. It should be noted that an asset may have an overall grade of A or B but still have factors that have been assessed as C or D.

Riverbank School Suitability

Riverbank School was assessed using the original template and has an overall grade of B-Satisfactory. All factors were assessed as either B-Satisfactory or A-Good. This data was used to help identify investment options and to show how the overall suitability grade would be changed by such investment.