

## **Note of Elected Members' Pre-Application Briefing**

**Thursday 1 June 2023, Civic Space, Church Street, Dumbarton at 2pm**

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**Present:** Councillors Karen Conaghan, Diane Docherty, Lawrence O'Neill, Martin Rooney, and Gordon Scanlan.

**Officers Attending:** Pamela Clifford, Planning, Building Standards and Environmental Health Manager (Chair); James McColl, Development Management Team Leader; Michelle Lynn, Assets Coordinator; Andrew Brown, Senior Education Officer; Nigel Ettles, Section Head – Litigation (Legal Officer) and Nicola Moorcroft Committee Officer

**Others Attending:** Ruaridh Nicol – Architect (Homes Miller) and Representatives from Morrison Construction (Developer)

### **1. Apologies**

Apologies for absence were intimated on behalf of Provost Douglas McAllister and Councillors; Jim Bolland, Ian Dickson, David McBride, Jonathan McColl, James McElhill, John Millar, Lauren Oxley and Clare Steel.

### **2. Declarations of Interest**

None.

### **3. Formation of new educational and community campus accommodating co-located primary schools, early years centre, library and community services and associated works at St Joseph's Primary School, Faifley Road, Faifley, Clydebank**

A report was submitted by the Planning, Building Standards and Environmental Health Manager, Chair, providing Members with information in relation to the redevelopment of the St Joseph's Primary School site which is situated on Faifley Road, Faifley, Clydebank to create a new educational and community campus.

The purpose of the briefing is to advise Members of pre-application consultation taking place regarding the redevelopment of the St Joseph's Primary School site which is situated on Faifley Road, Faifley, Clydebank to create a new educational and community campus.

This briefing also gave members an opportunity to highlight any issues which they consider any future planning application ought to address. The merits of the proposals are not being considered, and no decisions will be made at this stage.

The agreed procedures and protocol for Elected Member involvement at the pre-application stage are attached as Appendix 1

## **a) Background**

The current St Joseph's Primary School site extends to an area of just over 2 hectares with the current school building dating from 1969. Due to their condition, the current primary school buildings at both St Joseph's Primary School and Edinbarnet Primary School require to be replaced. The Skypoint Centre which provides for various local community facilities is also in poor condition and has reached the end of its servicable lifespan.

The Council proposes to construct a new educational and community campus on the current St Joseph's site which will replace the current buildings and will co-locate St Joseph's Primary, Edinbarnet Primary and Lennox Early Years, Auchnacraig Early Years together with community facilities to replace the Skypoint Centre and a new library. . The new facility will be a significant investment by the Council and is designed to improve services for local people by co-locating education and community facilities at a single location. The new building will be designed with a focus on being low carbon and environmentally sustainable, with a Passivhaus energy efficient design. The new campus will be constructed as a tandem build on the site with the current St Joseph's primary school buildings remaining until the completion of the new buildings. Thereafter it will be removed as part of the later stages of the development of the site.

Regular pre-application meetings between the design team and the Planning Service have taken place through the Planning Service's pre-application framework process. A Place and Design Panel was also held on 25th October 2022 with the Panel focusing on the scale, mass, detail and material palette of the proposed building, landscape and public realm and the initial architectural proposals.

## **b) Site Description**

The site is situated to the eastern part of Faifley and is positioned on the southern side of Faifley Road. It extends to an area of just over two hectares and comprises the existing school buildings, playground, grassed areas and associated access and parking. The site is relatively level with only very modest level changes across the site. A small number of individual trees are found within the site and these would have been planted as part of the landscaping scheme associated with the original building.

A variety of houses situated on Quarryknowe Street, Hart Street and Langfaulds Crescent bound the site to the south and east with St Joseph's Church situated across Faifley Road to the north. A small local shopping parade situated on Faifley Road also adjoins to the east. Knowes woodland is located to the west of the site and features a variety of pathways traversing through the woodland to the south. Overall, the locality features a varied streetscape in respect of both design and also the scale and massing of buildings.

## **c) Development Details**

The new building would be sited to the rear portion of the existing school site, behind the position of the current buildings on an area currently maintained as mown grass. The building will extend to three storeys in height at the highest point but the design concept features a varied arrangement with a single storey

element to the Early Years section of the building extending to two storeys to the north games hall block. The principle section of the building is three storeys and will accommodate the main campus accommodation. A variety of roof mounted plant inclusive of photovoltaic panels will be accommodated on the building with screening of this an integral part of the design. The building will have an external footprint of 3290 square metres and be to a height of just over 13 metres to the roof parapet.

Following completion of the new building, the new accommodation will allow the existing St Joseph's building to be decommissioned and removed from site as part of the later phases of the development. Accommodation within the new building will provide a progression of learning through the campus from the Early Years Centre through to Primary 7 level.

Key elements of the design include community spaces on arrival at the building, with distinct entry points to each school, the community library and games hall. The design will create a dedicated Early Years block with separate entrance and reception area. Arrangement of teaching spaces will be based on the principles evolved at Renton Campus, with year groups arranged in stimulating learning environments that are interconnected and linked across levels.

The proposed building will utilise a limited palette of high quality, durable and robust materials, and is designed to present a modern, refined and efficient building form. At ground level buff facing brickwork will provide a robust plinth to the building with a material palette of complementary tones to external cladding and window frame detailing. Window detail will additionally include attractive shading panels adding further design interest. The tones utilised in the material palette take influence from the Cochno Stone ensuring a local context for the design of the new Campus.

Access to the building will principally be from Faifley Road and is designed around there being separation between pedestrian and vehicular areas. From Faifley Road, a new plaza will provide a well-defined and attractive entrance to the area assisting in creating a high quality setting for the building and a sense of place. Separate vehicle entrances will be located to the east of the plaza with access to a pick up and drop off area to the front of the building. A further entrance will provide access to staff and visitor parking. The proposed car parking zones provide a total capacity of 95 spaces. This includes 6 accessible parking bays, 10 electric vehicle parking bays and future electric vehicle ducting to a further 38 bays. The drop-off zone can accommodate 10 cars and is also designed to accommodate a fire appliance. Soft landscaping is provided as an integral part of the parking area to minimise the visual impact. A new all-weather pitch and MUGA will be provided to the east of the site together with a community allotment adjacent to Faifley Road.

A south facing outdoor area will provide for a diverse outdoor environment with playground space, outdoor learning spaces and outdoor dining space all designed around a high quality hard and soft landscaping arrangement creating a stimulating variety of settings with differing characteristics including natural play areas.

## **d) Planning Policies**

### **National Planning Framework 4**

National Planning Framework 4 (NPF4) was adopted by the Scottish Ministers on 13th of February 2023 and now forms part of the Development Plan.

Policy 1 relates to tackling the climate and nature crises. When considering all development proposals significant weight will be given to the global climate and nature crises. Policy 2 also relates to climate in the form of climate mitigation and adaptation. Policy 3 seeks to protect biodiversity, reverse biodiversity loss, and deliver positive effects from development and strengthen nature networks. Major developments require to meet a range of criteria set out in the Policy.

Policy 9 supports the sustainable reuse of brownfield land. Policy 13 supports development where it can be demonstrated that the transport requirements have been considered in line with sustainable transport hierarchies, with a focus on active travel and public transport access. Development proposals for significant travel generating uses will not be supported in locations which would increase reliance on the private car. Policy 14 sets out the requirement for development proposals to be designed to improve the quality of an area and embed the six qualities of successful places. Policy 15 requires consideration to be given to the interconnectivity of the development with the surrounding area. Policy 19 requires development to support decarbonised solutions to heat and cooling demand and ensure adaptation to more extreme temperatures. Policy 22 requires development not to increase the risk of flooding and manage surface water through Sustainable Drainage Systems (SuDS).

### **West Dunbartonshire Local Plan 2010**

In the adopted Local Plan, Policy PS1 addresses public services and supports the continued use of the site as a public service. This policy also seeks to protect amenity of surrounding neighbourhoods. Policy GD1 seeks to ensure that all new development enhances the Plan area and environmental quality in general through an emphasis on high quality design. Proposals are required to meet a number of criteria. The site lies within an area that is largely residential in character and Policy H5 seeks to ensure that residential amenity is not adversely impacted upon by new development. Policy T4 aims to support sustainable travel and reduce the need for car travel, stating that developers should ensure that sites are well integrated into walking, cycling and public transport routes.

### **West Dunbartonshire Local Development Plan 2 (2020, as amended)**

In proposed Local Development Plan 2, the site is identified as being within a wider residential area and Policy H4 aims to protect and enhance the residential character and amenity of existing residential areas. There is a presumption against the establishment of non-residential uses within, or in close proximity to, residential areas which potentially have detrimental effects on local amenity or which cause unacceptable disturbance to local residents. Policy CP1 requires new development to take a design-led approach to creating sustainable places, which put the needs of people first and demonstrate the six qualities of successful places and Policy CP4 addresses developments that have been considered by the Place and Design Panel. Policy CON1 requires new development to prioritise

active travel by incorporating new, and providing links to, existing footpaths, cycle routes and public transport routes.

#### **e) Main Issues**

The construction of a new education campus together with community facilities and a library is supported in principle by the Development Plan. The main issues requiring to be addressed as part of any planning application will include (but not be limited to) the following:

**Placemaking** - The proposed design, layout, massing and materials require to be carefully considered with a view to providing a high quality landmark building that will significantly enhance the local area and have the potential to act as a catalyst for future investment in the wider area. The design and layout also requires to provide for a high quality educational environment with opportunities for outdoor learning and play.

**Relationship with existing locality** - Consideration requires to be given to the relationship with the surrounding residential area including separation distances between buildings, overlooking, boundary treatments and the control of noise and disturbance during both the construction phase and when the school is in use. The impact of floodlighting from the new sports pitch on adjacent residential properties will also require to be assessed.

**Accessibility, Parking and Servicing** - The site requires to be accessible with good connections to the surrounding area including footpath network and nearby bus stops. Equally the site requires to be secure given the nature of its users and so boundary treatment, access and egress requires careful consideration. A drop off and short stay area is required for children attending the Early Years Centre and school together with users of the community facilities within the development. Adequate parking is also required to minimise on street parking and congestion on the local road network. Arrangements for servicing and refuse collection also requires to be considered. Ensuring that the development is designed around there being separation between pedestrian and vehicular areas is also key.

**Open space and play provision** - Consideration is required to ensure the provision of high quality outdoor sports, play and learning spaces for the new facility together with incorporating elements that will benefit the wider community such as the allotment growing area.

**Contamination** – As with any brownfield redevelopment site, matters relating to possible ground contamination will require to be addressed. A Site Investigation has been carried out by the applicant and this together with the wider development proposals will be considered by the Council's Environmental Health team in terms of the scope of work and information required to be submitted with the planning application. This engagement has already commenced during the pre-application stage.

**f) Next Steps**

All Elected Members are invited to attend a presentation on the proposals by members of the design team, and to participate in a subsequent discussion.

Following this pre-application meeting, the applicant intends to prepare the planning application for submission and address any comments received during this meeting. On receipt of any such application, neighbour notification will be issued and it will be advertised in the press, weekly list and the Council website, to allow the public to view the plans and make representation. The application would then be presented to a future Planning Committee for consideration and determination in due course.

Meeting closed at 14:48

**West Dunbartonshire Council**

**Procedure for Elected Member Briefing –**  
**Development of Faifley Campus, at the site of the existing St Joseph's**  
**Primary School, Faifley.**  
**1 June 2023**

1. The briefing will take place in person in the Civic Space, Church Street, Dumbarton. All Elected Members of the Council will be invited to attend and they will be able to participate in the meeting.
2. The Planning, Building Standards and Environmental Health Manager, Legal Advisor and Committee Clerk will be present in the Civic Space, Church Street, Dumbarton.
3. A briefing note will be circulated prior to the meeting and this will give the details of the development, the main issues together with the relevant development plan policies. No recommendation is provided and no decision is required.
4. Members should have regard to the Councillors Code of Conduct that they can provide a provisional view however opinions or views expressed must be mindful of the overarching requirements of fairness and impartiality and of keeping an open mind until the application is presented to a future meeting of the Planning Committee for determination.
5. The meeting will be chaired by the Planning, Building Standards and Environmental Health Manager.
6. The Planning, Building Standards and Environmental Health Manager will welcome members and participants to the meeting and will advise Members and participants of the arrangements for this meeting.
7. The Planning, Building Standards and Environmental Health Manager will make a direction that no photography or recording of the proceedings will be made by any party.
8. The Planning, Building Standards and Environmental Health Manager will advise that attendance and any apologies for absence will be recorded.
9. The Planning, Building Standards and Environmental Health Manager will give a short introduction about the briefing paper.

10. The applicant's agent will make a short presentation about the development proposals and there will be an opportunity for members to ask questions of the applicant's agent at the conclusion of the presentation.
11. The Planning, Building Standards and Environmental Health Manager will bring the meeting to a close.
12. The minutes of the meeting will be recorded and will be available publicly.

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