

Agenda



Elected Members' Pre-Application Meeting

Date: Tuesday, 27 August 2019

Time: 10:00

Venue: Civic Space,
Council Offices, 16 Church Street, Dumbarton

Contact: Craig Stewart
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Dear Member

Please attend the **Elected Members' Pre-Application Meeting – Proposed Renton Campus including primary school, language and early education and childcare centre** as detailed above. The business is shown on the attached agenda.

Yours faithfully

JOYCE WHITE

Chief Executive

Distribution:-

Provost William Hendrie
Bailie Denis Agnew
Councillor Jim Bollan
Councillor Jim Brown
Councillor Gail Casey
Councillor Karen Conaghan
Councillor Ian Dickson
Councillor Diane Docherty
Councillor Jim Finn
Councillor Daniel Lennie
Councillor Caroline McAllister
Councillor Douglas McAllister
Councillor David McBride
Councillor Jonathan McColl
Councillor Iain McLaren
Councillor Marie McNair
Councillor John Millar
Councillor John Mooney
Councillor Lawrence O'Neill
Councillor Sally Page
Councillor Martin Rooney
Councillor Brian Walker

Strategic Lead - Regulatory

Date issued: 20 August 2018

ELECTED MEMBERS' PRE-APPLICATION MEETING

THURSDAY, 27 AUGUST 2019

AGENDA

1. APOLOGIES

2. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Members are invited to declare if they have an interest in the item of business on this agenda and the reasons for such declarations.

3. PROPOSED RENTON CAMPUS INCLUDING PRIMARY SCHOOL, 5 – 13 LANGUAGE AND COMMUNICATION UNIT AND EARLY EDUCATION AND CHILDCARE CENTRE

Submit a briefing note by the Planning & Building Standards Manager:-

(a) advising of the forthcoming major planning application for a proposal; and

(b) giving Members an opportunity to highlight any additional issues which they consider the application ought to address.



Renton Campus comprising primary school, language and communication unit and early education and childcare centre at Main Street, Renton

Elected Members Pre-Application Briefing Meeting: 27th August 2019

1. Purpose

The purpose of this briefing note is to advise Members of pre-application consultation taking place regarding proposals for a new Renton Campus which will replace the existing Renton Primary School which includes an integrated Language and Communication Unit for pupils in mainstream education with additional support needs. Riverside Early Education and Childcare Centre, currently located within the building at Place of Bonhill shared with St Martins Primary School in Renton, will also relocate to the new campus.

This briefing is also to give 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 appendices.

2. Background

The existing Renton Primary School building opened in 1974. The requirement for a new, purpose built replacement Campus was agreed by the Council's Educational Services Committee in March 2018. It was agreed that the new campus building will be located within the boundaries of the existing Renton Primary and Language and Communication Unit site. Renton Primary School and Language and Communication Unit will continue to operate from the existing building and will, together with Riverside Early Education and Childcare Centre, relocate to the purpose built campus once construction work is complete. The existing building will then be demolished and a Multi Use Games Area (MUGA) pitch and playground area constructed in its place. Subject to the necessary permissions, construction is programmed to start in February 2020 with pupils and staff planned to move to the new campus in August 2021.

3. Site

The existing Renton Primary School and Language and Communication Unit site is located within the centre of Renton directly west of Main Street and occupies an area of approximately 8569m². On the site perimeter to Main Street there is a

small square comprising the Category “A” listed Smollet Monument and the Category “B” listed War Memorial. A curved sandstone wall forming part of the school boundary surrounds the western aspect of the square. To the north of the site is a private residential property once associated with the school, 13 Station Street owned by West Dunbartonshire Council and leased to Dumbarton District Pipe Band and the residential properties on Station Street. Back Street runs along the western boundary of the site and beyond this is a mix of industrial units and houses. To the south lies Renton Bowling Club, a parking area and further residential properties. In addition to the school building, the site has a number of hardstanding areas including parking and a blaes sports pitch. The site is relatively level with an established groups of trees at the south west corner. There are pockets of grass and a small number of individual trees to the north east of the site.

4. Development Details

The new building would be sited on the existing blaes sports pitch to the north west of the existing school and Language and Communication Unit building and would have a footprint of approximately 1,367m². The building will be predominantly three storey in height which allows for greater outdoor space for play and learning. It will also allow for the construction to be phased; the existing school/ Language and Communication Unit can continue to operate from the site while construction of the new building is ongoing. Once the new building is occupied, the existing school building will be demolished and a multi-use sports pitch (MUGA) and playground area constructed in its place. Accommodation within the three storey building will provide a progression of learning up through the campus with Early Education and Childcare Centre and early level provision on the ground floor and remaining learning and teaching and Language and Communication Unit accommodation shared between the upper floors.

A formal frontage and public entrance area to the building would be provided from Main Street and Station Road with a covered entrance area. Stepped external roof terraces are proposed to provide educational benefits with external learning and teaching directly accessible from internal learning and teaching zones. The terraces are located to the south to reduce the overall building mass adjacent to the listed monuments whilst maximising natural daylight and ventilation into the deep floorplan. They also provide views out to the east towards the River Leven and the landscape beyond. The natural ashlar stone colour of the adjacent Smollett Memorial has influenced the colour and material selection for the building. At ground level buff facing brickwork will provide a robust plinth to the building. A material palette of warm tones to external cladding, window frames and flashing have been selected to complement the brick work and the memorial. The proposals aim to celebrate and re-activate the memorial square for the campus and community.

To the north end of the site close to the main entrance to the campus, 21 parking spaces including 3 accessible bays are proposed. This area is also a one way drop - off zone from Station Street exiting at Back Street. A further 41 formal parking spaces are provided with 15 of these along Back Street and 26 within a

designated parking area at the south west of the site. A dedicated service area within the building is provided for refuse storage and deliveries/ collections and will be accessed from Back Street. The arrangement is to ensure there is no conflict with service vehicles and traffic flows and that service vehicles do not need to enter the school grounds. A pupil access to the playground will be via the memorial square on Main Street.

The grassy mounds and established groups of trees to the south west of the site are to be retained, subject to a detailed tree survey, and access provided to these areas so that they can be utilised for forest school type outdoor activities. The mature beech hedge along the south east of the site is also to be retained. Spaces for outdoor learning, socialising and physical activity have been identified to create a stimulating variety of settings with differing characteristics including natural play and interactive equipment, seating areas and spaces to grow fruit and vegetables that can be cooked at the campus, encouraging healthy choices.

5. Planning Policies

In the Adopted West Dunbartonshire Local Plan 2010, Public Services policy PS1 supports the continued use of the site as a public service. This policy also seeks to protect amenity of surrounding neighbourhoods. Policy GD1 outlines the need for all new development to be of a high design quality. Policy R1 presumes against the loss of sport provision such as sports pitches. In this case whilst Renton Campus is proposed to be constructed on the existing blaes pitch, a replacement and improved provision of a MUGA pitch and playground is proposed in the location of the existing school.

The site is identified within an existing neighbourhood in the West Dunbartonshire Local Development Plan: Proposed Plan (2016) and similarly to policy PS1 above, policy BC4 presumes against development that would harm the amenity, including character or appearance of existing neighbourhoods. Policy BC5 supports public services and community facilities in appropriate locations. Policy DS1 sets out general expectations for the quality of new development, including that it be distinctive, adaptable, resource-efficient, easy to get to and move around, safe, pleasant and welcoming. The principles of policy R1 in the Adopted plan have been carried over to policy GN1 of this plan and apply in this case.

Local Development Plan 2: Proposed Plan 2018 - the site is again identified as being within an existing neighbourhood where policy H4 applies and seeks to protect residential areas from any development which would adversely affect its amenity. Policies CP1, CP2 and CP4 are all related to enhancing the quality of design across West Dunbartonshire. Similarly to policies R1 and GN1 of the preceding plans, Policy G11 seeks to safeguard playing fields but also supports upgraded and replacement play/ sports provision of greater benefit in a convenient location.

6. Main Issues

The re-development of the existing Renton Primary School and Language and Communication Unit and the construction of a purpose built campus to accommodate these uses and the relocation of Riverside Early Education and Childcare Centre is supported in principle by the framework of planning policy. The main issues requiring to be addressed as part of any planning application will include the following:

Placemaking - The proposed design, layout, massing and materials require to be carefully considered with a view to providing a high quality building that contributes to the regeneration of Renton and enhances the area while providing an excellent educational environment with opportunities for outdoor learning and play.

Relationship with existing area - Consideration needs 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 the construction phase and when the school is in use.

Accessibility, Parking and Refuse - The site requires to be accessible with good connections to the surrounding area including footpath network and nearby bus stops and Renton train station. 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 the Early Education and Childcare Centre and school and for Language and Communication Unit children that arrive to school by taxi. Adequate parking is required to be achieved to minimise on street parking and congestion on the local road network and arrangements for servicing and refuse collection that does not impact on day to day operation of the campus.

Open space and play provision - Consideration is required to ensure the provision of high quality outdoor sports, play and learning spaces for both the Early Education and Childcare Centre school/ Language and Communication Unit together with the incorporation of existing groups of trees into the development layout.

Listed Monuments - The relationship between the proposed development and the existing Category A and B listed monuments requires careful consideration. The setting of the monuments require to be sensitively enhanced and well integrated with the new campus to reactive this important civic space. Restoration works will likely be required to return the mosaic flooring and surrounding wall to their former condition.

Contamination – A Site Investigation has been carried out by the applicant who is working closely with the Council’s Environmental Health team in terms of the scope of work and information required to be submitted with the planning application.

7. 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 their planning application for submission and address any comments received during this meeting. On receipt of any such application it would 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 Planning Committee for consideration and determination in due course.

Pamela Clifford

Planning, Building Standards and Environmental Health Manager

Date: 20 August 2019

Appendices:

“Protocol 3 – Elected Member involvement in Pre-Application Discussions”

“Planning Procedures for Councillor Involvement in the Pre-application Stage”

Site plan

Wards affected:

Ward 2 - Leven

PROTOCOL 3 - ELECTED MEMBER INVOLVEMENT IN PRE-APPLICATION DISCUSSIONS

Background

West Dunbartonshire Council is committed to engaging with developers at the pre-application stage. This Council has agreed procedures for elected member involvement in the pre-application stages of major development proposals. Recently, the Scottish Government has issued guidance on the role of Councillors in pre-application discussions. Councillors are encouraged to engage at the pre-application stage and to add value to the process while continuing to act within the terms of the Councillors Code of Conduct.

Purpose

To engage Councillors at the pre-application stage on major and complex developments that are key to the Council's strategic priorities and objectives. Appropriate local development may also benefit from this process.

Role

To allow early engagement with elected members to identify key and significant local issues at an early stage of the planning process rather than only emerging in the course of a planning application.

Function

To achieve high quality development as efficiently and effectively as possible by engaging elected members at an early stage.

- To better inform Councillors of development that would be subsequently presented to Planning Committee;
- To give a degree of certainty and confidence to developers by identifying key and local issues earlier;
- To reduce abortive costs by failed applications or redesign work;
- To assist officers to negotiate on key issues;
- To foster greater efficiency in the processing of the subsequent application.

What you can expect of us:

- Offered for all major or complex development or other local development which we would consider would benefit from early input from elected members;
- Consistent and transparent procedure for involving all elected members;
- Ensuring that pre-application meeting is arranged for the earliest date at the end of a Planning Committee meeting;
- Briefing note prepared by officers of the main issues and development policies and circulated before the meeting;
- Invitation to all Planning Committee members and ward members to the presentation;
- Opportunity to hear from the elected members directly;
- Clearly identified on the agenda of Planning Committee as different from other items;
- Elected members being open-minded to all material considerations and are prepared to change their views if persuaded they should;
- Meeting will be minuted and will be available publicly;
- Advised of all the relevant procedures. With procedures regularly reviewed to ensure openness and accountability.

What we expect of you:

- Openness and transparency regarding your development proposal;
- Commitment to provide as much information at this early stage;
- Opportunity to make a short presentation of draft proposals;
- Commitment to give weight and consideration to issues raised by elected members.

Contact

If you require more information about this service please contact:

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West Dunbartonshire Council

Planning Procedures for Councillor Involvement in the Pre-application Stage

1. A pre-application meeting will take place either at the conclusion of the Planning Committee or a Special Meeting will be set up.
2. A briefing note will be produced by planning officers. This will detail the main issues of the proposal together with the relevant development plan policies. No recommendation will be provided.
3. The developer will be offered the opportunity to make a short presentation. This allows members to hear directly from the developer and discuss issues with guidance from officers.
4. The briefing note will be circulated at least 3 working days before the relevant meeting.
5. Members will be advised by the Planning and Building Standards Manager or their representative of the purpose of the meeting and that no decision is sought and no matters should be determined.
6. The meeting will be chaired by the Planning and Building Standards Manager or their representative.
7. The meeting will be open to the public. However members of the public will not be able to make representations or participate. They will be advised that after an application has been submitted they will be entitled to make representations.
8. All Councillors will be invited to attend and they will be able to participate in the meeting.
9. Councillors should have regard to the Councillors Code of Conduct that they can provide a provisional view however any opinions or views expressed must be mindful of the overarching requirements of fairness and impartiality and of keeping an open mind.
10. Councillor should have regard to all material considerations and be prepared to change their views which they are minded towards if persuaded that they should.
11. The minutes of the meeting will be recorded and will be available publicly.