



PROPOSAL DOCUMENT

Proposals:

- **To establish a new primary school on the identified site - N7 (see appendix 1 for location) within the Countesswells development, Aberdeen; and:**
- **To relocate pupils zoned to Countesswells School from their current temporary accommodation to the newly constructed school building at Countesswells following its completion; and:**
- **These proposals to take effect from August 2021 or as soon as possible thereafter.**

The Statutory Consultation Period commences on **Monday 22 April** and ends at 5.00pm on **Friday 7 June 2019** (inclusive), which represents 7 weeks, 33 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 7 June 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 parents of the pupils and children at Countesswells School (currently accommodated at Airyhall school)
- The Parent Council of Airyhall school
- Parents of children expected to be eligible to attend the proposed new school within 2 years of the date of publication of this Proposal Document
- The teaching and ancillary staff at Countesswells school (currently accommodated at Airyhall school)
- The trade unions representatives of the above staff
- The Community Councils of Cults and Braeside
- The constituency MSP
- List MSPs for the area
- The Constituency MP
- Community Planning Partnership Board
- Chief Operating Officer, Aberdeen City Council
- Chief Education Officer

A copy of this document is available from:

- Marischal College
- Central Library
- Airyhall Library
- Cults Library
- Culter Library
- Airyhall School
- Airyhall Community Centre
- Hazlehead Academy
- Airyhall Nursery

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 to locate and construct a new Countesswells 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 This proposal is to develop a new two stream primary school and early years provision within the new Countesswells development. This will provide a fit for purpose learning environment for children living within the new Countesswells community school zone, and it will help to provide sufficient school capacity as Countesswells continues to grow.
- 3.2 The Countesswells Development Framework and Phase 1 Masterplan (Parts 1 and 2) have been developed to allow for growth over a number of years in line with the aims of the Local Development Plan (LDP). The LDP includes an allocation of 3000 homes and 10 hectares of employment land within Countesswells by 2023. There are two local centres proposed for Countesswells, one around the central square and one to the north of the site. Both the local centres are in close proximity to the proposed new education provision.
- 3.3 The creation of a new community at Countesswells presents an opportunity to design education and early learning and childcare provision into the fabric of the place, recognising the central role which schools and learning play in the life of a community.
- 3.4 The new Countesswells primary school will play a central role in the life of the community. The new school will ensure that pupils living in the Countesswells development can attend school with their peers, where sustainable and viable pupil rolls will enable the schools to deliver the full breadth of the curriculum.
- 3.5 The proposed new primary school will be located as part of the neighbourhood centre to the north of Countesswells overlooking the Cults Burn corridor. Serving the northern part of the community, it is due to be constructed within the first phase of the Countesswells development. In this location the school will have a prominent and accessible position within the community, thereby encouraging a sense of place, safe active travel and promoting sustainability (see appendix 1 for site location).

Current Educational Arrangements for Countesswells pupils:

- 3.6 Following a statutory consultation in October 2015, new school catchment zones were created for the planned primary and secondary schools, and these have been in place since August 2016. An interim arrangement was agreed at the Education and Children's Services Committee in March 2016, whereby all primary aged pupils from the new Countesswells development would be educated within Airyhall School, and subsequently the nearby Braeside School building, to provide the required additional classroom space, until the first new school at Countesswells had opened.
- 3.7 A subsequent report to the Capital Programme Committee and Education Operational Delivery Committee in May 2018 approved the use of Hazlewood School instead of the Braeside building, to temporarily accommodate Countesswell's pupils, prior to the new Countesswells School building opening. The Hazlewood building has a maximum capacity for 120 pupils and as pupil numbers continue to grow, it will only serve the Countesswells zone for a limited time period.
- 3.8 **Current and future school roll projections for the Countesswells zone are as follows:**

	Current Roll	Forecast Rolls						
Year	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025
Total Roll	23	81	148	232	309	346	346	341

Aberdeen City Council is working with the housing developers at Countesswells to ensure that build rates and pupil projections are used to help determine the timeline for providing the new school within the Countesswells development.

4 THE IMPACT OF THE PROPOSAL

- 4.1 A new purpose-built school at Countesswells will provide pupils and staff with new, modern and efficient teaching facilities capable of promoting social inclusion by widening access to learning and encouraging lifelong learning in the wider community. The proposed new school presents an opportunity to design education provision into the fabric of the respective environment, recognising the central role which schools and learning play in the life of a community.

Early Learning and Childcare

- 4.2 In 2020 the entitlement for free ELC will increase from 600 to 1,140 hours per year for all three and four-year-olds and eligible two-year-olds. It is estimated that to meet the above new targets, approximately 60 full time early years places would need to be provided for the Countesswells community. The proposed new provision for Countesswells would therefore need to include this capacity for the creation of the additional early years places likely to be required.
- 4.3 The ELC policy intention is to ensure we deliver high quality Early Learning and Childcare services to improve outcomes for children and to remove barriers for working parents to support economic growth in Scotland. The proposed new school will support this extended provision and will ensure that key areas of focus for ELC e.g. outdoor learning are designed to enhance the learning experiences and outcomes for every pupil. The new provision will deliver purpose built ELC accommodation as part of the new school building.
- 4.4 The relative educational benefits of this proposal for Countesswells School are discussed in Section 5 below.

5 EDUCATIONAL BENEFITS

- 5.1 The above proposal would realise the following educational benefits for Countesswells school:
- Pupils at Countesswells School would benefit from a purpose-built school 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. A purpose new build school 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.

- There will be increased outdoor space and enhanced facilities for staff, pupils, parents and the local community.
- Countesswells pupils would benefit from the early learning and childcare facilities on site, leading to smoother transitions from Nursery to Primary 1 and the opportunities 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 new school will have the potential to help staff improve learning and teaching for all children. The increased facilities within the building would enable the school to make use of a variety of spaces and approaches to support children who require a greater level of personalisation to meet their additional support needs.
- Pupils would benefit from increased social interaction with a larger number of children and staff.
- Moving to the new school building would eradicate the present anticipated maintenance costs for the existing Hazlewood School building in terms of component renewal.
- The proposal would assist in reducing long term capacity pressures within Airyhall/Hazlewood School and allow for sustainable growth within the catchment zone.
- 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 modern learning environment is likely to raise staff and pupil morale, resulting in more effective learning and teaching and better outcomes for learners.
- The new site would provide 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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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
- Airyhall Library
- Cults Library
- Culter Library
- Airyhall School
- Airyhall Community Centre
- Hazlehead Academy
- Airyhall Nursery

7 PUBLIC MEETINGS

A Public meeting to discuss the proposals will take place on:

- Tuesday 21 May 2019 - Airyhall School at 7pm to 8pm

Members of the public are invited to attend this 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:

Countesswells 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 7th June 2019.

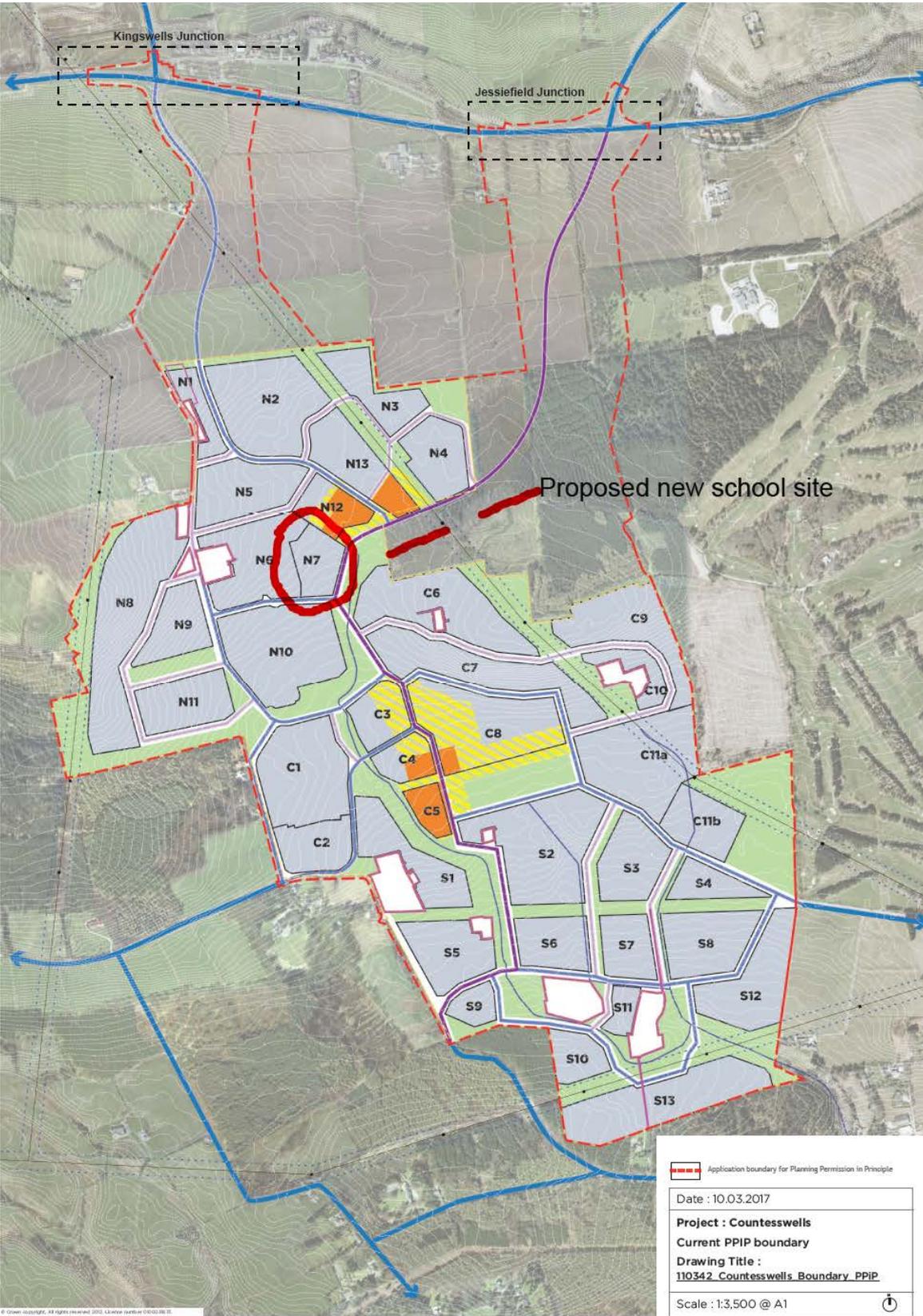
9 OUTCOME OF CONSULTATION

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.

Proposed site location (N7) for the New Countesswells Primary School



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