



ABERDEEN CITY COUNCIL

CONSULTATION REPORT Airyhall School and Hazlehead School Rezoning

This Consultation Report has been compiled in response to the recent public consultation on the proposal to make changes to the school zones for Airyhall School and Hazlehead School in Aberdeen. The document summarises the responses received on the proposals set out below and Aberdeen City Council's response to the verbal and written comments submitted by interested parties, in compliance with the Schools (Consultation) (Scotland) Act 2010 and the Children and Young People (Scotland) Act 2014.

Proposal:

To rezone the area of housing known as the Macaulay Estate, from Hazlehead School to Airyhall School, and to adjust the Airyhall and Hazlehead school zone boundaries to accommodate the Pinewood / Hazledene housing development, with effect from 1st August 2016.

1. METHODOLOGY

This consultation was conducted in accordance with the Schools (Consultation) (Scotland) Act 2010 and the Children and Young People (Scotland) Act 2014. All requirements of the legislation have been met.

2. INVOLVEMENT OF STAKEHOLDERS

2.1 Public Event

A public consultation event was held on 2nd February 2016 to discuss the proposals:

<i>Date</i>	<i>Time</i>	<i>Venue</i>	<i>Recorded Attendees</i>
2 nd February 2016	7- 8 pm	Airyhall School	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• 7 parents of pupils at Airyhall School• 3 parents of pre-school aged children• 3 Aberdeen City Councillors• 3 Aberdeen City Council Officers

2.2 Comments Received

The following written submissions were received:

<i>Format</i>	<i>Number of submissions</i>
E-mail	15
Letters	0
Comment Forms	11

The submissions, anonymised as necessary, are available on the Council's website:
<http://www.aberdeencity.gov.uk/airyhallhazlehead2016>

2.3 Issues Raised

The main issues raised in the responses to the consultation are summarised as follows:

- Seven respondents to the consultation stated that overall they were in support of the proposals put forwards. Their comments focused primarily on the proposal to rezone the Macaulay estate from the Hazlehead School zone to the Airyhall School zone; they welcomed the fact that this would allow children living in the Macaulay estate to walk or cycle safely to school.
- Seventeen respondents to the consultation, however, stated that they were not in support of the proposals put forwards. Their comments focused primarily on the proposal to zone the whole of the Pinewood and Hazeldene estate to the Hazlehead School zone. The respondents highlighted the fact that there is no

vehicular access from the Pinewood section of the estate in the south, through to the northern side of the estate, which would mean that when driving their children to Hazlehead School, parents would be required to drive past Airyhall School, as the only road exit from this section of the estate is to the south.

- Several of these respondents also commented on the fact that the pedestrian route through the northern section of the estate, which pupils could use to walk to Hazlehead School, is through a poorly lit wooded area, and would not represent a safe walking route after dark.
- A small number of respondents highlighted concerns about the increasing pupil roll at Airyhall School, and suggested that if the proposals put forward in this consultation are not accepted, the school is likely to reach its pupil capacity relatively quickly.
- Some of the feedback received included queries regarding the timing of this consultation, and questioned why the consultation had been launched prior to the conclusion of a previous consultation on the creation of a new school zone for the Countesswells development, which had the potential to impact on Airyhall School's pupil capacity.

Comments from Airyhall School Parent Council

The response received from Airyhall Parent Council was broadly in line with the comments from other respondents summarised above. The Parent Council welcomed the proposal to rezone the Macaulay Estate to Airyhall School, as this would remove the need for residents of this estate to make out of zone placing requests to Airyhall School.

However, the response also pointed out that zoning the whole of the Pinewood and Hazeldene estate to Hazlehead School would be likely to create similar issues to those experienced by the Macaulay residents, in that parents would need to travel past Airyhall School when taking their children to Hazlehead School by car. It was noted that six families had contacted the Parent Council expressing an objection to the zoning of the Pinewood / Hazeldene estate to Hazlehead School.

The Parent Council felt that it was difficult to state whether or not they were in support of the proposals, given that the outcome of the Countesswells consultation, and the potential impact of this on Airyhall School's capacity, was not yet known.

Alternative Proposal

Many of the respondents to the consultation who expressed their opposition to the zoning of the Pinewood and Hazeldene estate suggested an alternative proposal, to zone the northern section of the estate (Hazeldene) to Hazlehead School, and the southern section of the estate (Pinewood) to Airyhall School.

It was suggested that this would be a more appropriate solution as there is a vehicular exit to the north from Hazeldene, and parents living in this area would have easy access to Hazlehead School. Zoning the Pinewood area to Airyhall School would, it was felt, also make it easier for parents living in this area to take their children to school.

2.4 Education Scotland Report

An essential element of the statutory consultation process is involvement of Education Scotland whose report is provided as Annex A of this Consultation Report.

In its report, Education Scotland noted that the proposal put forward in this consultation has clear educational benefits for children attending Airyhall School and Hazlehead School, and that as a result of the proposal, both schools are likely to have sustainable and viable school rolls which will allow for the delivery of a broad curriculum. The report also stated that the proposal has the potential to avoid difficulties of overcrowding and should provide children at both schools with a variety of opportunities to learn and play with their peers.

The report noted that almost all of the stakeholders who met HM Inspectors were in support of the proposal, and that the provision within the proposals for existing pupils and their younger siblings to continue to attend the same school was welcomed.

Finally the report highlights the concerns expressed by some stakeholders regarding the distance which some parents and children living in the Pinewood and Hazeldene estate would be required to walk to Hazlehead School, and stated that the Council should provide details about safe walking routes to school for those living in the new development.

3. THE COUNCIL'S RESPONSE TO ISSUES RAISED DURING THE CONSULTATION PERIOD AND CONTAINED WITHIN THE EDUCATION SCOTLAND REPORT

The following paragraphs provide responses to the significant points raised during the consultation period:

3.1 Lack of easy vehicular access to Hazlehead School from the Pinewood and Hazeldene estate

- Whilst it is acknowledged that there is no direct vehicular route through to the north of the site for those living in the southern section of the Pinewood and Hazeldene estate, a pedestrian route is available. This would provide access to Hazlehead School with a maximum walking distance of approximately 1.5 miles from any point within the Pinewood and Hazeldene estate. This would be deemed an acceptable distance for primary school pupils to walk or cycle to school, where there is a safe route available.

3.2 The pedestrian route to Hazlehead School is poorly lit

- If the proposal to zone the whole of the Pinewood and Hazeldene estate to Hazlehead School is approved, the Council would be required to ensure that there is a safe route available for pupils living in the estate to walk to school.
- Any improvements required to be made to the existing pedestrian route and street lighting in order to make it a safe route to school, would therefore be carried out.

3.3 Questions about the timing of the consultation

- It is acknowledged that carrying out this consultation prior to the conclusion of the previous consultation on the new Countesswells school zone arrangements, may have made it more difficult to illustrate the likely impact of the proposals on the pupil roll at Airyhall School.
 - Both of these consultations were the result of decisions made following the review of Aberdeen's primary school estate, which was carried out in 2013. This review generated a large number of recommendations on rezoning and other changes to the school estate, all of which required a formal consultation. Due to the number of consultations required to be carried out, it has been necessary to run several of these concurrently, with consultations starting before a decision had been reached on the previous proposals, in a programme which is running over several years.
 - Had the consultations been run consecutively, i.e. making it necessary to wait for a decision on the previous consultation before starting the next, the duration of the consultation programme would have been extended considerably, and this would have significantly delayed the implementation of many of the changes which were required.

3.4 Alternative Proposal

- Officers have carefully considered the alternative proposal put forward by respondents to the consultation, to zone the northern section of the Pinewood and Hazeldene estate to Hazlehead School, and to zone the southern section of the estate to Airyhall School.
 - Whilst in practical terms this may appear to be a workable solution, in that parents and children living in the respective areas of the estate would be able to travel directly to their zoned school by car as well as on foot, there is not sufficient capacity at Airyhall School to accommodate the numbers of pupils expected to be living in the southern section of the Pinewood and Hazeldene estate.
 - The existing boundary line between the Hazlehead School zone and the Airyhall School zone runs through the middle of the Pinewood and Hazeldene estate. This means that currently most of the southern section of the estate is zoned to Airyhall School, and this is reflected in the current pupil roll forecasts for the school.
 - As illustrated below, the pupil roll forecasts show that, if the Macaulay estate is added to the Airyhall School zone, and the southern section of the Pinewood / Hazeldene estate also remains within the zone, the school would be over its capacity of 393 pupils by 2017:

Airyhall School Current and Forecast Pupil Numbers (capacity – 393)
Including southern section of Pinewood and Hazeldene estate (currently zoned to Airyhall School), and Macaulay estate

Current	Forecast Pupil Numbers							
	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022

346	387	401	401	405	411	415	407
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- If the alternative proposal were to be accepted, then the existing boundary line between the Hazlehead School zone and the Airyhall School zone would be adjusted to include some additional houses from the southern section of the estate which are currently zoned to Hazlehead School. This would only increase the numbers in the pupil roll forecasts shown above.
- By proposing to zone the whole of the Pinewood and Hazeldene estate to Hazlehead School, and as noted in the Education Scotland report on these proposals, it would be possible to ensure that Airyhall School would remain within capacity and avoid difficulties with overcrowding, as illustrated below:

Airyhall School Current and Forecast Pupil Numbers (capacity – 393)
Including Macaulay estate and excluding southern section of Pinewood and Hazeldene estate

Current	Forecast Pupil Numbers							
	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	
346	365	372	373	378	386	391	384	

- For the reasons outlined above, officers were unable to put forward this proposal as a viable alternative to the original proposal contained within the consultation document.

4. COMPLIANCE WITH SECTION 9(1) OF THE SCHOOLS (CONSULTATION) (SCOTLAND) ACT 2010 AND CONSIDERATION OF THE PROPOSALS

Following the conclusion of the consultation period, Section 9(1) of the Schools (Consultation) (Scotland) Act 2010, requires the Council to review the relevant proposal, having had regard to any written representations that have been received by it during the consultation period, oral representations made to it at the public meeting held on 2nd February, and Education Scotland's report.

In terms of Section 10(2) (e) of the said Schools (Consultation) (Scotland) Act 2010, the Consultation Report requires to contain a statement explaining how the Council complied with its duty under the above Section 9(1) of the Act.

With relation to Section 9(1) of the 2010 Act and having considered all of the information received during the consultation process, officers are satisfied that no comments have been received which would have caused them to revise the proposals to: rezone the area of housing known as the Macaulay Estate, from Hazlehead School to Airyhall School, and to adjust the Airyhall and Hazlehead school zone boundaries to accommodate the Pinewood / Hazledene housing development, with effect from 1st August 2016.

5. RECOMMENDATION

It is recommended that the Education and Children's Services Committee agrees to implement the proposals to:

Rezone the area of housing known as the Macaulay Estate, from Hazlehead School to Airyhall School, and to adjust the Airyhall and Hazlehead school zone boundaries to accommodate the Pinewood / Hazledene housing development, with effect from 1st August 2016.

Gayle Gorman
Director of Education and Children's Services
May 2016

REPORT FROM EDUCATION SCOTLAND

Report by Education Scotland addressing educational aspects of the proposal by Aberdeen City Council to rezone the area of housing known as the Macaulay Estate, from Hazlehead School to Airyhall School, and to adjust the Airyhall and Hazlehead school zone boundaries to accommodate the Pinewood/Hazledene housing development, with effect from 1 August 2016.

1. Introduction

This report from Education Scotland has been prepared by HM Inspectors in accordance with the terms of the *Schools (Consultation) (Scotland) Act 2010* and the amendments contained in the *Children and Young People (Scotland) Act 2014*. The purpose of the report is to provide an independent and impartial consideration of Aberdeen City Council's proposal to rezone the area of housing known as the Macaulay Estate, from Hazlehead School to Airyhall School, and to adjust the Airyhall and Hazlehead school zone boundaries to accommodate the Pinewood/Hazledene housing development, with effect from 1 August 2016. Section 2 of the report sets out brief details of the consultation process. Section 3 of the report sets out HM Inspectors' consideration of the educational aspects of the proposal, including significant views expressed by consultees. Section 4 summarises HM Inspectors' overall view of the proposal. Upon receipt of this report, the Act requires the council to consider it and then prepare its final consultation report. The council's final consultation report should include a copy of this report and must contain an explanation of how, in finalising the proposal, it has reviewed the initial proposal, including a summary of points raised during the consultation process and the council's response to them. The council has to publish its final consultation report three weeks before it takes its final decision. Where a council is proposing to close a school, it needs to follow all legislative obligations set out in the 2010 Act, including notifying Ministers within six working days of making its final decision and explaining to consultees the opportunity they have to make representations to Ministers.

1.1 HM Inspectors considered:

- the likely effects of the proposal for children and young people of Airyhall and Hazlehead Schools; any other users; children likely to become pupils within two years of the date of publication of the proposal paper; and other children and young people in the council area;
- any other likely effects of the proposal;
- how the council intends to minimise or avoid any adverse effects that may arise from the proposal; and
- the educational benefits the council believes will result from implementation of the proposal, and the council's reasons for coming to these beliefs.

1.2 In preparing this report, HM Inspectors undertook the following activities:

- consideration of all relevant documentation provided by the council in relation to the proposal, specifically the educational benefits statement and related consultation documents, written and oral submissions from parents and others; and
- visits to the sites of Airyhall School and Hazlehead School, including

- discussion with relevant consultees.

2. Consultation Process

2.1 Aberdeen City Council undertook the consultation on its proposal with reference to the *Schools (Consultation) (Scotland) Act 2010* and the amendments in the *Children and Young People (Scotland) Act 2014*.

2.2 The consultation process ran from 13 January 2016 to 29 February 2016. During this period the council held a public meeting in Airyhall School. Statutory consultees were informed of the consultation in writing. Consultation documentation was published on the Aberdeen City Council website and copies were available for public consultation at various venues in the city during the consultation period, including the schools concerned and public libraries. A proforma and an email address were made available for submissions. The council received 11 submissions to the consultation. A majority of these submissions were in favour of the proposal. Fifteen email submissions, all opposing the proposal, were received. These submissions suggested an alternative splitting of the Pinewood/Hazledene development between the catchment zones of Airyhall and Hazlehead Schools.

3. Educational Aspects of Proposal

3.1 This proposal offers appropriate educational benefits for the children attending both Airyhall and Hazlehead Schools. As a result of the proposal, both primary schools are likely to have sustainable and viable school rolls which will allow for delivery of a broad curriculum in line with the entitlements of Curriculum for Excellence. This proposal has the potential to avoid difficulties of overcrowding and should provide children at both schools with a variety of opportunities to learn and play with their peers.

3.2 Almost all the stakeholders who met with HM Inspectors supported the proposal and agreed that it served the interests of both schools well. Arrangements made by the council to allow existing pupils and their younger siblings to continue to attend Airyhall and Hazlehead Schools following the implementation of this proposal are reasonable. Most stakeholders also felt that the proposal was timely, providing greater clarity about schools' catchment zones for those about to move to the Pinewood/Hazledene development.

3.3 Stakeholders of Airyhall School agreed that it made sense to include the Macaulay estate within their zone. The proposal has the potential to address these parents' concerns about increases to the school roll leading to overcrowding. Stakeholders of Hazlehead School also felt it was sensible to include the Macaulay estate in the Airyhall School zone. They also welcomed the modest increase in school roll which would result from the proposal.

3.4 While almost all stakeholders who spoke to HM Inspectors were in agreement with the proposal, several expressed concerns about the distance which some parents and children living in the Pinewood/Hazledene housing development might have to walk to Hazlehead School. In taking forward its proposal, the council should provide details about safe walking routes to school for those living in the new development.

4. Summary

Aberdeen City Council's proposal to address primary school capacity and accommodation issues in Airyhall and Hazlehead schools has clear educational benefits. As a result of this proposal, children at both schools should be able to enjoy a wide range of learning and play activities with a variety of peer groups in a sustainable environment, free from overcrowding. In taking this proposal forward, the council should engage with stakeholders to identify safe walking and transport routes for those living in the Pinewood/Hazledene development. It should also ensure that appropriate transition arrangements are planned and implemented in good time for those children moving to a new school in August 2016.

**HM Inspectors
Education Scotland
March 2016**