

**Statutory consultation on the proposal to close Merkland School and
Campsie View School, and establish a new build Additional Support
Needs School in Kirkintilloch**

Consultation Report

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SECTION 1 - BACKGROUND

- 1.1 In 2016, East Dunbartonshire Council carried out a review of the provision for children and young people with additional support needs (ASN). This was informed by working with parents, teaching staff, school management, educational psychologists and other professionals. This review led to the development of a new strategy for the provision of additional support needs within East Dunbartonshire. The Strategic Review of Provision for Children with Additional Support Needs was approved by Council in February 2017.
- 1.2 This proposal is one of several changes to provision for children with additional support needs as a result of the ASN strategy. The strategy documents are attached as **Appendix 1**.
- 1.3 Since May 2017, officers worked with staff and parents from Merkland School and Campsie View School to discuss what a new specialist ASN provision should provide for children and young people. A working group was established, comprising parents and staff from both schools. There were a number of meetings held, as well as visits to other authorities and schools. Consultation and engagement work was replicated online to provide an opportunity for all parents to engage in the process. This recognised the particular circumstances of both schools and the challenges for parents to attend meetings. A record of this consultation work, including timelines, presentations, meeting notes, and technical information is available on the ASN consultation webpage:

<https://www.eastdunbarton.gov.uk/council/consultations/additional-support-needs-consultation>
- 1.4 In March 2018, based on this work with stakeholders, the Council instructed officers to proceed to consultation on proposals to close Merkland School and Campsie View School and establish a new build ASN school in Kirkintilloch.

SECTION 2 - CONSULTATION PROCESS

2.1 A process for consultation was established under the Schools (Consultation) (Scotland) Act 2010 and a proposal document was developed that included information on:

- The proposal;
- The consultation process;
- The public meeting;
- Educational benefits; and
- Issues anticipated in the proposal.

The document also included information on how to respond to the consultation. The consultation started on the 23rd April 2018 and was due to conclude on the 8th June 2018. Following requests from consultees, it was agreed to extend the consultation by a further week to ensure all consultees had adequate time to respond. The consultation closed on Friday 15th June 2018 at noon. See **Appendix 2** for a consultation timeline.

2.2 The proposal document was sent to all consultees identified (see Section 2.9). The pack included a consultation document and a letter from the Chief Education Officer explaining the process and how to respond. The proposal document is attached as **Appendix 3**.

2.3 The proposal documentation was issued to both Head Teachers and the Parent Councils of Campsie View School and Merkland School.

2.4 The proposal information was circulated to Elected Members, the Chief Executive and the senior management team.

2.5 The proposal document was distributed to each identified consultee by post and by email on the 23rd April 2018 and information was available on the website for that date. Proposal documents were also made available at both schools, and at Council offices and libraries.

2.6 Details of the proposal were made available on a dedicated section of the Council's website (www.eastdunbarton.gov.uk/consultations).

2.7 Four public meetings were held, two in each school. An informal drop-in session was held for parents to allow them to discuss specific concerns in relation to their child, as some parents commented that they did not feel comfortable doing this at the public meeting. There was a request for a further public meeting in a local community facility. (See Section 3.5).

2.8 Pupils who attend Campsie View School and Merkland School were consulted and their views were gathered and recorded. (See Section 3.6).

2.9 Consultees

Consultees were identified according to Schedule 2 of the Schools (Consultation) (Scotland) Act 2010, under the schedule for 'closure'. All consultees were sent a copy of the consultation document and a covering letter. The consultees contacted included:

- **Parent Councils**
The Parent Councils of Campsie View School and Merkland School were consulted.
- **Parents of pupils at affected schools**
Parents and carers of pupils attending Campsie View School and Merkland School were contacted using information held by the schools.
- **Parents of any children expected by the education authority to attend affected schools within two years**
Parents and carers of children attending Campsie View nursery were contacted using information held by the school.
- **Staff at affected schools**
All staff of Campsie View School and Merkland School were consulted.
- **Anybody which has been established by a local authority, whether formally or informally, for the purpose of assisting it in carrying out its functions under Part 2 of the Local Government Act 2003**
Members of the Community Planning Partnership Board were consulted.
- **Any other users of any affected school that the education authority considers relevant**
Frequent users of the schools were contacted using the letting information held by the Council.
- **Community Councils**
Waterside Community Council was contacted directly.
- **Trade Unions**
All relevant Trade Unions were consulted.
- **Pupils**
Consultations were held within Campsie View School and Merkland School, see Section 3.6 for details.

SECTION 3 - RESPONSES TO THE CONSULTATION

3.1 Consultation information was sent to 437 stakeholders and 235 representations received.

3.2 There were 101 representations received from statutory consultees and 134 received from members of the public, who are not statutory consultees.

3.3 Of the 101 respondents who are statutory consultees, 97 agreed with the proposal, and 4 disagreed.

Of the 134 respondents who are not statutory consultees, 35 agreed with the proposal, and 99 disagreed.

3.4 A summary of responses received and issues raised is included in Section 5 of this report.

3.5 Public meetings

Five public meetings were held in May and June 2018. In order to allow as much participation by stakeholders as possible, and recognising the challenges faced by parents in attending meetings, two meetings were held in each school. One meeting was held at 3.30pm, and second meeting was held at 6.30pm. Schools provided activities for young people, whose parents wished to attend the meetings.

In addition, a further meeting was held in the Waterside Miners' Club, at the request of the Waterside Community Council.

At each meeting, a presentation was given introducing the proposal, and a question and answer session was held.

The presentation and a note of the issues discussed at the meeting are attached as **Appendix 4**.

3.6 Pupil consultation

In accordance with the Schools (Consultation) (Scotland) Act 2010, East Dunbartonshire Council planned and engaged in a consultation with the pupils affected by this proposal within Campsie View School and Merkland School. In view of the range of needs of the pupil population, this consultation was led by the schools. Pupils took part in discussions in assembly or in class, where appropriate to their needs. Discussion of the consultation was led school staff, and involved the completion of a response form allowing pupils to indicate if they agreed or disagreed with the proposal and with a comment box for use as appropriate.

SECTION 4 - EDUCATION SCOTLAND REPORT

- 4.1 In June 2018, Inspectors from Education Scotland reviewed the consultation responses, and visited schools to discuss the proposal with staff, pupils and parents. Inspectors then prepared an independent evaluation of the educational impact of the proposal. This is reproduced in full below:

Report by Education Scotland addressing educational aspects of the proposal by East Dunbartonshire Council to close Merkland and Campsie View Schools and establish a new build additional support needs (ASN) school in Kirkintilloch.

1. Introduction

1.1 This report from Education Scotland has been prepared by Her Majesty's Inspectors of Education (HM Inspectors) in accordance with the terms of the *Schools (Consultation) (Scotland) Act 2010* ("the 2010 Act"). The purpose of the report is to provide an independent and impartial consideration of East Dunbartonshire Council's proposal to close Merkland and Campsie View Schools and establish a new build ASN school in Kirkintilloch. 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.

1.2 HM Inspectors considered:

- the likely effects of the proposal for children and young people of the 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.

1.3 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 site of Merkland and Campsie View Schools, including discussion with relevant consultees.

2. Consultation Process

2.1 East Dunbartonshire Council undertook the consultation on its proposal(s) with reference to the *Act 2010*.

2.2 The consultation ran from 23 April until 15 June 2018 having been extended for one week to allow a sufficiency of time for respondents. The council made appropriate arrangements to consult with stakeholders. The council announced the consultation in local press and information, including the proposal paper, was placed on the council website, council buildings and libraries. Copies of the proposal were made available to relevant consultees by post. Stakeholders were invited to respond to the proposal through a consultation response form. Public meetings were held on 8 May 2018 in Campsie View School with 80 attendees and 15 May 2018 in Merkland School with 36 attendees. During the consultation period the council received 101 responses from stakeholders including parents. Almost all were in favour of the proposal. A further 134 responses were received from members of the public. Most opposed the proposal.

3. Educational Aspects of Proposal

3.1 Merkland and Campsie View Schools provide education for children and young people who have complex needs across East Dunbartonshire. The proposal is one of several changes to the provision for children and young people who have ASN as a result of the local authority ASN strategy. It sets out the rationale to close both schools and establish a new build ASN school in Kirkintilloch.

3.2 HM Inspectors agree that the proposal has educational benefit. The council outlines clearly the educational benefits which it believes will be brought about by establishing a new ASN provision. The Merkland School building is in poor condition and does not offer the range of suitable permanent learning and wellbeing environments children and young people can benefit from. Campsie View School is cramped and does not offer a sufficiency of appropriate spaces for learning or health and wellbeing needs. Neither school offers quality social spaces and a choice of vocational learning environments which young people desire. Whilst transition arrangements for children are well-managed, they would be enhanced by a single standalone building. Increased pupil numbers at the schools have made transport arrangements more challenging. A new provision with appropriate bus and car parking facilities would ease transport arrangements for young people and their families.

3.3 Stakeholders at Merkland School welcome the proposal. Young people expressed the desire to have flexible learning spaces which are adaptable but similar to the environments enjoyed by teenagers in mainstream settings. They would like a wider range of life skill and vocational opportunities which would broaden their senior phase. HM Inspectors feel these views are justified. Families agree that the Merkland building is in poor condition and places restrictions on their children, young people and staff. Families would like adaptable learning spaces which facilitate a broad, rich curriculum. Staff welcome the proposal to provide a bespoke learning environment which enables high quality, creative teaching approaches designed to meet the needs of individual children and young people.

3.4 Stakeholders at Campsie View School also welcome the proposal. Pupil numbers have grown. Staff and visiting professionals no longer have appropriate spaces to meet pupil's wellbeing needs, talk with families privately and ensure children and young people have large enough learning environments for them and essential equipment. HM Inspectors agree with these views. Families feel the building places restrictions of staff who they acknowledge make a tremendous effort to compensate for the facilities each day. Children, young people and staff are in favour of the proposal. HM Inspectors believe they are justified in their desire for more space, appropriate sports facilities and dedicated learning spaces which will enhance their curriculum.

3.5 Stakeholders at both schools wish to continue to be consulted as the new building is designed and constructed. Overall, they are pleased with the level of consultation from East Dunbartonshire Council to date and believe they have been kept informed through the process. Parents would like this to continue and for their children and young people to have a strong say in the indoor and outdoor environments of the proposed new

school. HM Inspectors believe this is a reasonable expectation. In its final report, the council will need to reassure stakeholders that they will continue to be consulted as the new building is planned and constructed.

3.6 Most residents who live close to the preferred school site at Waterside oppose the proposal. They are concerned at the loss of a green field site and increased traffic. In its final report, the council will need to reassure residents that current users of the site will be involved in seeking alternative spaces.

4. Summary

- HM Inspectors believe the proposal has educational benefit and is justified. We are assured that the council has consulted appropriately. HM Inspectors agree that the current arrangements at both Merkland and Campsie View Schools can no longer continue to meet the needs of children and young people who have ASN in the future. In particular, HM Inspectors agree with the desire of children and young people to have a bespoke learning environment on which they have been consulted. In its final report, the council needs to set out how it will continue to reassure them, their families and staff that their views will be taken into account.
- HM Inspectors note the local opposition regarding the preferred site at Waterside. In its final report, the council needs to set out how it will continue to work with them to alleviate their concerns.

**HM Inspectors
Education Scotland
June 2018**

SECTION 5 - ISSUES IDENTIFIED IN THE CONSULTATION

5.1 A number of issues were raised by Education Scotland in the course of its report. These are discussed below, and potential actions that could be considered if the proposal was to proceed are identified:

Issue Raised	Education Scotland Comments	Discussion and Potential Mitigation Actions
<p>School Design</p> <p>Education Scotland noted a need to assure stakeholders that the high level of consultation will be continued through the design process.</p>	<p>Stakeholders at both schools wish to continue to be consulted as the new building is designed and constructed. Overall, they are pleased with the level of consultation from East Dunbartonshire Council to date and believe they have been kept informed through the process. Parents would like this to continue and for their children and young people to have a strong say in the indoor and outdoor environments of the proposed new school. HM Inspectors believe this is a reasonable expectation. In its final report, the council will need to reassure stakeholders that they will continue to be consulted as the new building is planned and constructed.</p>	<p>There has already been a very high level of stakeholder involvement in the initial phases of scoping and feasibility work. Through a joint working group, staff and parents from both schools were involved in the establishment of the fundamental principles of the scope and future design. An initial design statement was created, which will be the basis for future design works involving all stakeholders, and a reference point to ensure that the design and development meets both the needs of the school users and wider community. It is important that the new building and its facilities provide a high quality education environment tailored to meet the additional support needs of the pupils.</p> <p>The Council is committed to involving all stakeholders in any future design, including staff, parents, pupils and the community. Each stage of any design process will involve each of these groups in workshops to ensure that all aspirations are considered. These workshops will be led by the project architects and the wider design team, ensuring that stakeholders have direct access to discussions with designers and decision makers. This is a tried and tested approach, which has been used for other school designs to ensure they make best use of the sites chosen and the relationship with the outdoor space and wider community. The Education Officer and officers leading the project will also work with both schools and local stakeholders to resource and facilitate this. The Council firmly believes that consultation with users will lead to more suitable and more useable development, ensuring the outdoor space and the buildings and best integrated into the wider site and community.</p>

<p>Waterside Site</p> <p>Education Scotland noted that the majority of residents in Waterside are opposed to the proposal</p>	<p>Most residents who live close to the preferred school site at Waterside oppose the proposal. They are concerned at the loss of a green field site and increased traffic. In its final report, the Council will need to reassure residents that current users of the site will be involved in seeking alternative spaces.</p>	<p>The Council will commit to involving the Waterside community in work to identify the needs of the community. Officers from the Education and Assets Services will meet with user groups to understand their needs and develop proposals. The aim will be to make best use of the overall site to maintain key elements of open space and to deliver a new school that is integrated into the site but that also introduces opportunities for enhancements to the existing greenspace and facilities across the site. Officers from the Education and Assets Services will work with colleagues in the Council's Place Team to build on existing engagement with the local community to understand and incorporate their aspirations within the overall development.</p> <p>In addition, the Council will encourage and support the local community and site users to take part in the design process to ensure the best use of the overall site, the retained greenspace and a building within the site that can provide as much benefit to the local community as possible. The Council would, through the design process, look to maximise the greenspace available on the site and expect that the school building and its facilities would have areas which can be used by the local community, as appropriate. This could include sports facilities, café, community garden, and facilities for community events. Community involvement in the design process will ensure that the building and outdoor space has the appropriate facilities to support community activities.</p> <p>Parents and staff have also expressed a strong desire to ensure that there are strong links between the community and the school, and it is hoped that the community will be closely involved in school activities.</p>
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5.2 In the course of the consultation, a large number of issues were raised that have been considered in detail. The table below lays out issues raised during the consultation. These are discussed, and potential actions that could be considered if the proposal was to proceed are identified:

Issue Raised	Sample of comments received through consultation process	Discussion and Potential Mitigation Actions
School Design	<p>Comments received included:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Will the design and architect take into account children with sensory needs? ○ Can this be orientated towards community use? ○ How will EDC future proof the school in terms of rolls? ○ Is there a plan in place to provide purpose-built surface to facilitate sport in the school curriculum. ○ Staff absence levels are higher in Merkland and Campsie View than in other schools. The quality of the environment should be given the highest consideration. ○ There should be a home economics facility with industrial style kitchen. ○ There should be a kitchen that will cook meals for pupils. 	<p>The briefing document for the school project includes a set of draft design requirements, developed jointly by officers with staff and parents. Although the design will develop over the course of the project, the fundamental educational requirements that the architects and design team must meet are captured in that document (see attached as Appendix 5). This document includes detailed requirements around sensory needs and other pupil needs, vocational education facilities, community spaces, and other functions of the school. Through the next phase of the design process there will be a focus on how these elements are developed within the context of the wider site, taking account of community views, considering orientation and positioning of buildings and a desire to deliver the best possible development, including outdoor space and access to wider greenspace.</p> <p>As the detailed design progresses, each stage of the design process will involve staff, pupils, parents and the local community in workshops to ensure that all aspirations are considered and wherever possible met. These workshops will be led by the project architects and the wider design team, ensuring that stakeholders have direct access to discussions with designers and decision makers. This is a tried and tested approach which has been used for other school designs. The Education Officer and officers leading the project will also work with both schools and the community to resource and facilitate this. The Council believes that consultation with users will lead to more suitable facilities within the new school campus for the school and the community.</p> <p>With regard to the school roll, Council officers have reviewed carefully population projections for the short, medium and long term, and have had extensive discussions with staff and parents on this matter. The capacity of the proposed school has been increased from 150 to 200</p>

		<p>through this review process and this is expected to be sufficient to meet demand, in as much as can be planned in the short to medium term. The size of a special school with the complex needs of the children has to be taken into account in any planning. Long term demand planning is dependent on projections of demographic change in East Dunbartonshire, and on projections of the level of need in the population. These factors are necessarily based on estimates, and can change over time. The ASN strategy adopted by the Council aims to reduce the need for places in specialist provision, through the building of capacity within mainstream schools and the establishment of enhanced provision on a locality basis within the early years, primary and secondary sectors.</p>
Transition	<p>Comments received included:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ How will schools be merged and needs be managed in one school? ○ Will there be the same level of staff to pupil ratio? ○ Would familiar staff transfer to the new school? ○ Concern that tier 2 pupils will not receive adequate input from specialist teachers ○ Concern that staffing levels in Merkland and Campsie View are maintained with no displaced staff. ○ Keen to know that there is a commitment to continue to link with local mainstream schools which help pupils with ASN to have real links with young people from their local communities. ○ Some staff concerned about the bringing together pupils from two very different settings. Ensure that work will be done in advance of build to relieve the fears of the staff and ensure a stress free and smooth transition. ○ Consider resources allocated to mainstream. 	<p>Enhanced transition planning will begin as soon as the project is approved and this will involve parents, staff and pupils. Transitions are well managed in the current schools, including between the two schools, with mainstream and within stages at each school. Staff would develop individual transition plans based on each pupil's needs, and these could involve pupils participating in the design process, familiarisation visits, joint educational and social activities across the schools etc.</p> <p>As part of the early consultation, staff and parents visited special schools within other local authorities to see new school builds. The next phase would involve learning from other local authorities, who have successfully merged two or more special schools to ensure that there is very careful transition planning for staff, pupils and parents taking account of the special nature of the provision.</p> <p>Staff have already begun joint professional and collegiate work. Joint working would be planned and implemented throughout the design and build process. This would ensure that the transition to the new school was as smooth as possible.</p>

		<p>Well trained and knowledgeable staff is a key element in the Strategic Review of Provision for Children with Additional Support Needs. A comprehensive professional learning programme has been developed for the staff working at Tier 2 and those in Merkland and Campsie View. This is being led by the Educational Psychological Service.</p> <p>There is no expectation of financial savings projected against this project. Teaching and support staff would transfer to the new school with the same staffing ratio as at present. A new management team will be appointed to the new school in advance of the opening. Any changes to staffing will be managed through the relevant transfer and redeployment policies.</p> <p>The link to mainstream schools was one of the educational benefits for the location of the school in Waterside. These links would continue when the new school opens.</p> <p>One of the other key elements in the transition planning will be working with the local community to build linkages during the design and development period to create the relationships between school and local community. As part of this, the Council will seek to develop joint activities, including design, development and site visits works to bring school and community together.</p>
Pupil Transport	Comments received included: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Will pupil transport remain the same? 	<p>There will be no change to transport arrangements as a result of this project. Pupils will continue to be entitled to transport on the same basis as at present.</p>
Traffic	Comments received included: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ There would be more traffic, since all children attending such schools arrive by bus or taxi. There is only one road in and out of the village (Bankhead 	<p>A traffic impact assessment will be submitted as part of any future planning application process and any changes assessed as necessary through a technical assessment to the roads network to accommodate the proposal would be</p>

	<p>Rd). It is already congested at rush hour; there are three coach companies operating out of the village.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ During construction work, villagers and the three coach companies would be likely to be particularly inconvenienced, as they would not be able to avoid the one route in and out of the village. Should this road become jammed with traffic either during construction or once any school was operational, this could well have implications for speed of access by emergency vehicles. ○ Parking in the village would be even more difficult and staff may park in the village 	<p>incorporated within any proposal. The Council will take all necessary measures to minimise disruption to residents during the build process.</p> <p>Staff and visitor parking will require to be provided within the development site as well as consideration for turning circles to remove vehicles from the immediate road network during drop off and pick up times. Levels of staff and visitor parking will be independently assessed via the Planning process. Other traffic measures including potential crossing points and the use of signalised junctions would again form part of any future design process and traffic and transport assessment.</p>
Waterside Location	<p>Comments received included:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ The Waterside site includes a highly valued local playing field - an open green space - which separates the village from Kirkintilloch. ○ Development at that site would present a significant loss of amenity. It would significantly change the character of Waterside village, closing the remaining gap between the village and Kirkintilloch. ○ Scout group established in the Hillhead area for 50 years now. By rebuilding the school in Waterside it will break this up. Area mainly SIMD 1-3. ○ Loss of valued field and football pitch would have the following consequences: children lose the only grassed area where they can play on, Gartconner Primary would lose access to an area they use for cross-country, Rosebank United Football Club might have to close. ○ Sports area is currently well used by Rosebank United and other clubs. Sports Scotland expressed gratitude when we informed them of the proposal and will monitor the current situation with this. The field had a good balance of bookable areas and free places to use. 	<p>The Council recognises the importance of the greenspace within Waterside and the key role that this plays in providing a degree of separation between the settlements. Within the initial consultation phase the community has already highlighted this and officers have sought to provide reassurance that any future development on this site can maintain elements of open greenspace, facilities for the new school and the right blend of open, play or other spaces.</p> <p>Through the consultation, it was clear there was a need to ensure that the needs of the Waterside community was taken into account in the design of the new school. There requires to be engagement with the community to ensure the needs of the community are considered within the design process. This could include a new pitch, if seen as a priority, for use by the community as well as the school. There is scope to include community facilities as part of the design. There is very good practice within a number of special schools in other local authorities, including a café, community play area, community allotment etc. and this is an element that the Council would commit to exploring and developing with the school and local communities through any design stages. This model reflects the practice carried out by the Council as part of its development of Auchinairn</p>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ The field has an enclosed aspect with a well-designed path access which gives it a lovely public park aspect and is regularly used for this purpose. ○ Play space is currently a large and very valued safe space for young people from the local houses, or indeed for visitors from further away. Especially valued after losing good children's play park space at Taig Road. ○ Impact on loss of play area for children and specifically those with special needs. ○ Disruption to wildlife/impact on air pollution. ○ Waterside is a strong community with a very strong and healthy sense of its own identity. We do not have many amenities (only the playing fields, the village shop and the Miners Club), but value our environment (the playing field, the old weavers' cottages, the Luggie Water, the "Horse's Field"). ○ East Dunbartonshire walking and cycle network passes next to the field. The field is also ideal for the Waterside and local community groups and schools, to continue their effort in creating create the environment as outlined by the delectation by Central Scotland Green Network which EDC as signed up for. ○ The south facing aspect of the slope at the north of the park provides excellent sunbathing and especially when there are no sports and is used picnics and kickabouts. 	<p>Community Centre and other community and educational facilities.</p> <p>As part of the detailed design process, architects and designers will meet regularly with representatives of school users and community groups to make sure that the design meets their needs</p> <p>Work would take place with all community groups, which may be impacted by the proposed development to develop transition and alternative arrangements for current activities supported in the two existing schools and the local Waterside area. These include the Scout group and Rosebank United FC. Gartconner Primary would have access to the new facilities provided through the proposed new development and would be supported to develop and introduce alternative cross country routes.</p> <p>Typically, this works best for all parties where the Council and community actively engage with one another throughout the design process - community benefits will seek to reflect the needs and aspirations of the local community.</p> <p>Any development proposal would seek to maximise open green space, biodiversity and general amenity for the whole community, not just the school community itself.</p> <p>Incorporating high quality outdoor play space, access to a sports / playing field facility or other such facilities as considered a priority, as well as ensuring good physical linkages to the surrounding community will all be important elements of the design to be considered for the new school,</p> <p>Parents and staff of Merkland and Campsie View Schools have expressed a strong desire to ensure that there are strong links between the community and the school, and it</p>
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		is hoped that the community will be closely involved in school activities.
Alternative Locations	<p>Comments received included:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ More centralised area would equalise the travelling for pupils who live in the Bearsden/Milngavie area. ○ Consider use of brownfield site at Merkland Farm/site intended for cemetery. ○ Also consider site at Pit Road across from derelict Springwell Inn as a replacement sports facility. ○ Consider building on the Tom Johnstone site ○ Consider building on ground behind the convent ○ Consider disused ash pitches to the north of Waterside Road ○ Consider build on the site behind the deaf blind building ○ Consider Brownfield sites 	<p>The Council carried out a detailed technical assessment of a number of alternative sites, using a set of criteria to consider each, including risks and constraints before also considering the educational benefits of assessed sites, prior to progressing with the proposal to construct on the Waterside site.</p> <p>As part of the above process, sites not within the ownership of the Council were discounted given the risk to the project failing if acquisition of the site cannot be secured. Beyond these sites there were no suitable, unallocated brownfield sites within the Council's ownership that could accommodate the proposed facility and meet the educational requirements for the pupils and their additional support needs.</p>
Option Appraisal	<p>Comments received included:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Not easy to follow how the "Option Appraisal Report" evolved into "Appraisal Summary and Recommendation". ○ Of 13 sites considered only Campsie View, Hilton Depot and Merkland School received zero points for feasibility. ○ In recommendation, 2 sites deemed feasible. Waterside scored 24 points for feasibility, there were 5 other sites that scored the same or better on that issue and others were just behind. ○ Can understand from summary document why some of these sites were excluded but it is not clear in all cases why sites were ruled out. For example the Boghead Road site scores almost identically to Waterside, and it is not clear why officers decided the "risks" identified there were sufficient to rule it out, while the risks identified for the Waterside and Auchinairn sites were not. 	<p>The full Option Appraisal Report, which contains details for each site considered, has been summarised in a separate document –Appraisal Summary and Recommendation.</p> <p>Sites, which were too small to accommodate the scale of the proposed facility, received a zero score.</p> <p>Some sites have constraints which require a greater degree of risk to be attributed to them. In the case of the Boghead Road site, there is a large tunnel running directly beneath the site which is the drain for the nearby Gadloch. The tunnel is in poor condition and as such represents a significant technical and financial risk to delivering a new facility at that site.</p> <p>The link road site was included as it was a site that was initially available for acquisition when the appraisal process commenced however this was sold during the process to a third party. The cost associated with the acquisition of a site out-with the Council's ownership was</p>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Link Road site appears to have been ruled out from the final recommendation because it is not owned by the council. If ownership was really a definitive consideration, why were the design team asked to look at it? ○ Why was purchase of the Link Road site ruled out only after originally being included in the appraisal scheme? ○ What research has been done about how much it would cost to purchase additional land for other feasible sites – in particular the Link Road site? ○ The assessment criteria the team were applying included weighting reflecting a “preference towards EDC-owned sites”. ○ It would also be useful to know how much thought was given to the option of decanting Merkland to redevelop that site. Fully appreciate that this could represent a huge and possibly insurmountable challenge, but just as with the Link Road site, the design team were asked to look at the possibility so it seems not to have been ruled out from the outset. ○ The ranking system used in the options appraisal was faulty. The reasons for Waterside playing fields moving from 6th position to preferred site are unacceptably opaque, and officer’s wrong to dismiss Auchinairn. 	<p>less of a consideration when compared with the risk of progressing consultation on such a site with no guarantee that the site could be acquired. As such greater weight within the option appraisal process has been given to sites within Council ownership.</p> <p>The Merkland School site is not large enough to accommodate the scale of the new facility. The former Auchinairn Primary School site topography presents a design challenge that would, if developed, create a new building with pupil facilities over 2 levels. This is contrary to the requirement to provide teaching space for this particular school population of pupils with special additional support needs, some extremely complex and including sensory and mobility issues.</p>
EDC Local Development Plan/ Policy Framework	<p>Comments received included:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Any plan to build a school on this proposed site is entirely contrary to both Scottish Government and East Dunbartonshire green space protection policies. It will destroy the efforts of a unique community life that has responded creativity and effectively over many years to council policies and wishes. ○ Note that under Section 153 of the Scottish Planning Policy, it states that “only where there is strong justification should open space be developed 	<p>Subject to the outcome of the current statutory education consultation, any potential formal development proposal submitted for planning consent would require to be assessed against the Council’s Local Development Plan and demonstrate how the design and site arrangement seek to respond to the Design, Place-making and other policies contained within the Local Development Plan and supporting guidance.</p> <p>The Council has a demonstrated commitment to consulting with the local community and other stakeholders throughout the design process for any of its Major Projects and this proposed project would follow this model.</p>

	<p>either partly or fully for a purpose unrelated to use as open space”.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ See Section 38 of the Scottish Planning Policy on location of new developments, we believe the proposal to build the school on Waterside playing fields, an area designated as both Open Space (Policy 7) and Green Belt (Policy 3) on the Local Development Plan, is short-sighted, misguided, and would be unacceptably damaging to our village and to the neighbouring community. ○ Policy 3 of the Local Development Plan (Supporting Regeneration and Protection of the Green Belt), “where brownfield or regeneration sites are outwith the ownership of the local authority ... the Council will consider the use of compulsory purchase powers.” ○ Policy 3 in the plan explains that Greenbelt should be used for: A. Protecting and enhancing the character, landscape setting and identity of towns and villages in East Dunbartonshire; B. Protecting and providing access to open space within and around built-up areas; and C. Ensuring that proposals within existing green belt development sites are compatible with established uses and respect the local landscape character”. ○ Building at the alternative feasible site – the former Auchinairn Primary – would appear more consistent with the plan which states “Prioritising the use of brownfield land before greenfield release is of importance, not just for the sustainability of East Dunbartonshire but for the wider Glasgow City Region.... The Council’s focus is therefore on the regeneration of previously developed sites” (Policy 3). ○ Building on the playing fields would also contravene Policy 7: Protection of existing facilities. ○ Note that in new developments there has been a move to incorporate green spaces that are “multi- 	
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	<p>functional, fit for purpose and support healthy outdoor recreation” (Local Development Plan, Policy 7B).</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Building proposal would be contrary to Design and Placemaking Policy 2A/2F/2G/2H. ○ Building proposal contrary to The Active Scotland Outcomes Framework (2014). ○ EDC signed up to the Central Scotland Green Network (CSGN) declaration committing East Dunbartonshire Council to following the CSGN principles ○ According to the Scottish Government: (http://www.gov.scot/About/Performance/scotPerforms/indicator/physicalactivity): Increasing the proportion of the population meeting physical activity levels is a key legacy aspiration for the Commonwealth Games 	
Consultation Process	<p>One submission raised questions regarding the framing of the consultation, and whether the proposals to close the two schools and establish a new school at the Waterside site should have been linked. The submission suggested:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ The council should have asked three different questions. Only in that way could those of us who are fully behind a new ASN school but at a different site express support for the two closure proposals, but opposition to the proposal for establishing a school on the green belt at Waterside. 	<p>Officers from the Education Service considered carefully the wording of the proposal, and it was decided to consult on one clear question.</p> <p>This is because no part of the proposal can be implemented separately. The Council could not agree to close the schools without also agreeing an appropriate replacement. The Council could also not consult on the establishment of a new school without proposing a site for consultees to consider, and discussing the educational benefits of a site. These are material considerations for consultees. Furthermore, following the options appraisal process, the Waterside site was identified as the only site that was a) viable and b) could provide a suitable facility to meet the educational aspirations for a new ASN school.</p>

SECTION 6 - ALLEGED OMMISSIONS OR INACCURACIES

6.1 No inaccuracies or omissions were identified.

SECTION 7 - EQUALITIES IMPACT ASSESSMENT

7.1 An equalities impact assessment has been carried out, which found that:

- a) There are benefits for members of groups with protected characteristics,
- b) The proposal could advance equality of opportunity between people which share a relevant protected characteristic and those who do not,
- c) The proposal could foster good relations between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not,
- d) No negative impacts could be identified for members of groups with protected characteristics.

The assessment concluded that there was no requirement to change the proposal, and that it could go ahead (**See Appendix 6**).

SECTION 8 - FINDINGS OF THE CONSULTATION

- 8.1 There are two main types of response that are articulated through the consultation response, those being responses from the school community (statutory consultees) and responses from members of the public – mainly from the Waterside community (not statutory consultees).

Responses from the school community are overwhelmingly in favour of the proposal, with 97 agreeing with the proposal, and 4 disagreeing. Comments received in responses and at public meetings have been very positive, and have emphasised the need for a new school that fully meets the needs of the population. In addition, as noted by Education Scotland, consultees have been very positive about the level of engagement with the school community so far.

Issues raised by the school community focus on the transition to the new school, and how this would be managed in terms of the impact on staff, pupils and parents. In addition, the design and facilities of the new school were raised by consultees. These are discussed in Section 5 of this report and various approaches to manage these issues are discussed. A key part of these approaches is the commitment from the Council to continue meaningful engagement with staff, parents and young people to ensure these issues are appropriately resolved and that the school community has confidence to move forward with the proposal.

With these approaches in places, and a firm commitment to ongoing work with the school community, there are no barriers identified to the implementation of the proposal.

- 8.2 Responses from members of the public were more mixed. Although most disagreed with the proposal, a significant minority supported the proposal. Of the 134 respondents who are not statutory consultees, 35 agreed with the proposal, and 99 disagreed. The issues raised in these responses focussed on the impact of the proposal on the Waterside community. Respondents were keen to point out that they fully support the development of a new ASN school, but did not feel that the Waterside site was appropriate. Responses raised concerns about the impact of additional traffic, loss of community amenities, and the loss of a separate Waterside identity. They raised questions regarding the site selection and options appraisal process, as well as planning concerns. These issues are discussed in Section 5 of this report and management approaches are proposed. It is clear that establishment of a new build school at the site would have an impact on the community. However, there are opportunities for this impact to be positive, and to provide additional facilities for the community to access. The Council is committed to working with the Waterside community to understand their issues and to try to address these as part of the development of the school. The aim will be to ensure the school adds value to the community of Waterside.

With these approaches in places, and a firm commitment to ongoing work with the community, there are no barriers identified to the implementation of the proposal.

SECTION 9 - STRATEGIC ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT

- 9.1** The Environmental Assessment (Scotland) Act 2005 requires plans and strategies to be assessed for their environmental impact using a process called Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA). Used at a strategic level, SEA takes place at an early stage in the decision making process to make sure that unacceptable negative environmental impacts can be avoided rather than mitigated and that positive environmental impacts can be enhanced.
- 9.2** As part of the options generation and assessment process, a SEA screening report was produced on the various options that were considered at informal consultation. This was submitted to the SEA gateway. It was decided, in consultation with statutory consultees, that a SEA was not required

SECTION 10 - REVIEW OF THE PROPOSAL

- 10.1 Based on the findings of the consultation, it is not recommended that the proposal is reviewed or altered.

SECTION 11 - COUNCIL DECISION MAKING AND PROCEDURE FOR REPRESENTATION TO MINISTERS

- 11.1 Under the Schools (Consultation) (Scotland) Act 2010, this consultation report must be published for at least three weeks before the Council can decide whether or not to implement the proposal. This is known as the ‘extended consideration period’, and is intended to allow interested parties to read the report, and to make their views known to Councillors. To quote from the statutory guidance that accompanies the Act:

“The intention is that interested parties should have time to see and digest the contents of the consultation report and also have time if they so wish to voice concerns and approach and lobby the councillors who will shortly be deciding on the proposal(s).”

- 11.2 The report will be presented to the meeting of East Dunbartonshire Council on 15 November 2018.
- 11.3 For further information on the consultation process, contact the Primary School Improvement Programme Team:

Telephone: 0300 1234510

Email: primaryimprovement@eastdunbarton.gov.uk

- 11.4 If the Council decides to proceed with the proposal, a report on the consultation will be forwarded to the Scottish Government, in line with the Council’s obligations under the Schools (Consultation) (Scotland) Act 2010. Scottish Ministers will then have eight weeks to decide if they will call in the decision for review. For the first three weeks of this period, members of the public may make further representations to the Government by writing to:

E-mail address: Schoolclosure@scotland.gsi.gov.uk

or by post to:

The Scottish Government
School Infrastructure Unit
2A (South)
Victoria Quay
Edinburgh
EH6 6QQ

SECTION 12 - LIST OF APPENDICES

Appendix 1	Strategic Review of the Provision of Additional Support Needs
Appendix 2	Consultation Timeline
Appendix 3	Proposal Document
Appendix 4	Note of the Public Meetings
Appendix 5	Outline design statement
Appendix 6	Equalities Impact Assessment