

EAST RENFREWSHIRE COUNCIL31 October 2018Report by Director of EnvironmentLOCAL DEVELOPMENT PLAN 2: IMPACT ON EDUCATION PROVISION**PURPOSE OF REPORT**

1. To update Council on the results of recent research and analysis carried out to ensure that in terms of long term planning there will be sufficient education provision for our resident population as a result of any future residential developments planned in the Proposed Local Development Plan 2.

RECOMMENDATIONS

2. It is recommended that the Council notes:
- (a) the work that has been carried out to date and the approach taken towards meeting the education needs and provision for the Proposed Local Development Plan 2 given existing pressures on some parts of the Education estate;
 - (b) that further analysis may be required depending on any future Council decision in relation to new housing development at Braidbar Quarry;
 - (c) that work is ongoing to identify suitable locations for new schools and that proposed safeguarded sites for education will be incorporated into the Proposed Local Development Plan 2 which will be reported to Council in early 2019; and
 - (d) that this matter will be referred to the already established Local Development Plan Member/Officer working group.

BACKGROUND

3. This report reflects the Council's approach and commitment to long term planning in relation to housing and educational provision.
4. The Council's current Local Development Plan (LDP1) was adopted in June 2015. LDP1 set out a long term vision and Development Strategy of the area up to 2025.
5. The Council commenced a review of its adopted Local Development Plan (LDP) in October 2016. A ten week consultation was then carried out on the Main Issues Report (MIR) setting out the 'main issues' the Council felt needed to be addressed in the forthcoming Proposed Local Development Plan 2 (LDP2). The results of this public consultation were reported to Council in December 2017 and are currently being fed into the preparation of the Proposed LDP2.

6. Scottish Planning Policy requires Development Plans to set out a settlement strategy to provide a long term context for development. The purpose of this is to guide the distribution and timing of new homes, jobs and services in the area and also consider the infrastructure needed to support development.

7. The MIR promotes a long term development strategy up to 2029 and beyond which supports consolidation and regeneration alongside controlled edge of settlement growth to deliver a broader distribution and flexible supply of land for housing around all communities and to assist with the provision of affordable and particular needs housing in areas where it is limited.

8. However, the MIR is not only about housing. Issue 7.1 in the MIR recognises the importance of well designed green networks as a fundamental component of successful placemaking and healthy living. It seeks to provide more detail in relation to open space provision and promotes preparation of local greenspace strategies for LDP2.

9. The MIR identified an increase in the Council's housing land requirements from 4100 residential units to 4350 residential units to be delivered over the period 2012 – 2029.

10. This was in accordance with set regional targets for housing as set out in 'Clydeplan' Strategic Development Plan 2 (July 2017).

11. 13 sites were identified in the MIR as new preferred housing sites.

12. In addition a further 6 sites not previously considered or assessed were put forward by interested parties (developers/landowners) through the MIR consultation.

13. Meeting educational needs was raised in the MIR as a key issue for LDP 2.

14. To address this it was proposed in the report to the Council in December 2017 to undertake further detailed needs analysis and forecasting of future educational needs. It was agreed to push back the preparation of LDP2 to allow for this.

15. LDP1 indicated that the Environment and Education Departments would continue to review school provision:

Extract

5.19.2 Any increased pressure on the school estate which results in additional requirements, and future needs, for both secondary and primary provision and/or extensions, will continue to be monitored through the Action Programme and review of the Local Development Plan. Options will also continue to be explored for a new primary school in Newton Mearns and potential extensions to secondary schools in the Eastwood area post 2025.

16. This joint work has continued between Environment and Education departments including reviews of the mechanism to project the number of school aged children emerging from new housing developments, resulting in the agreement to revisit the pupil product ratio on a biennial basis. This ongoing partnership work allows the Council to take a long term strategic approach to planning for education provision. The Council continues to explore how to more accurately project numbers of pupils from existing stock through, for example, gathering data regarding the need for schooling from those buying or renting properties in the Council area.

REPORT

17. East Renfrewshire's educational estate has been developed to date in a planned and phased way to ensure sufficient pupil places to meet increasing demand (for early learning and childcare establishments, primary and secondary schools) according to planned new residential development scheduled in the LDP and for windfall sites (being sites which have not been specifically identified as being available for housing in the Local Development Planning process).

18. The need to continue to monitor the demand for education places and future school estate requirements remains a key issue for LDP2. New schools/extensions will be required to accommodate future planned increases in housing.

19. All local authorities must ensure effective management of their school places and have a statutory duty to provide sufficient pupil places for their resident population under education legislation.

20. Since the report to the Council in December 2017 considerable detailed further research and analysis has been carried out in relation to future education needs and provision for LDP2. It is critical to ensure there are future sufficient places for our resident population and it was therefore decided to undertake additional analysis to model future education requirements.

Existing Pressures

21. Currently, the schools within the Eastwood area of the authority have increasingly high occupancy levels. This is due to a number of factors.

22. School population and reputation is leading to a net migration of preschool and primary age children moving into the area. New build housing is in part facilitating this increase but pupil numbers are also increasing in more established residential areas as a result of the rental market and changing demographics as houses in established communities change ownership. This has led to an increase in the pupil product ratio (ie the anticipated propensity of residential units to generate children of school age).

23. There is also a requirement to provide modular classroom accommodation at St Ninian's High School for sessions 2021-22, 2022-23 and 2023-24. This will ensure that the transitional measures agreed by Education Committee in December 2016 can be enacted, honouring the Council's commitment to children and families already attending our schools who would otherwise have been affected by the change to the admissions arrangements.

24. Although the number of children can fluctuate year on year, pupil numbers in East Renfrewshire have risen by 14% from 1992 to 2016 and based on the National Records of Scotland (NRS) projections the school age population is expected to grow by a further 5.4% by 2025.

25. Members will also be aware that school rolls may remain fairly static due to the need to accept placing requests within the legislative framework.

Research and Analysis

26. Critical research and analysis work completed to date includes:

- A full review of Pupil Product Ratios has been carried out for Primary, Secondary, Early Years and Additional Support Needs; and
- Population increase and LDP2 site impact forecasting and school roll projection work.

27. This analysis has determined that the impact of existing pupil numbers together with the higher pupil GM product ratio and the introduction of proposed new housing sites through LDP2 would have a significant impact on the education estate within the Eastwood area of the authority.

Proposed Mitigation – Requirement for New Schools

28. The long term trends and strategic analysis has shown that in order to ensure there are sufficient pupil places to meet future demands as a result of the inclusion of new sites within the Proposed LDP2 and migration as a result of the buoyant rental and second hand market, the following mitigation would be essential in the East of the authority:

- A new denominational primary school with early years nursery by August 2024;
- A new non-denominational primary school with early years nursery and an additional support needs unit by August 2028; and
- A new denominational secondary school by August 2029.

29. Alongside the new schools, the Education Department will require to undertake a full review of the primary and secondary school catchments. This will ensure the supply of pupil places matches demand in both the Eastwood and Levern Valley sectors. Any changes to the school estate which may subsequently be part of approved plans would be subject to education statutory consultation at the appropriate time. In addition and as indicated above, the Education and Environment departments will review the Pupil Product Ratios every 2 years to ensure they remain relevant and up to date. This may result in the need to provide an extension to non- denominational primary schools in the Levern Valley.

Critical Site Exclusions

30. Whilst the proposed mitigation will relieve pressure resulting from adopted LDP1 housing sites and the majority of those new sites identified for inclusion within LDP2, there remain a number which are difficult to accommodate.

31. The proposed mitigation solution only takes into account the education requirements associated with the previously approved LDP1 and the following proposed residential sites from LDP2: MIR 1-5, MIR 7-13.

32. In addition the proposed solution does not include any residential development at the former Braidbar Quarry site (identified in LDP1 as a long term development opportunity). This would have an impact on education provision, especially the denominational sector.

33. However, the site at Braidbar could not be taken forward until an appropriate and implementable remediation strategy has been developed and an agreed solution found regarding meeting educational provision.

34. Also the above mitigation solution specifically does not address the proposed residential development at Patterton, included in the MIR as site reference MIR6. There are significant existing school pressures across the whole of the education estate in this area (Crookfur). Given the particulars of this proposal and its specific location, the Education and Environment Departments have not at this point in time found an identifiable capacity solution that would allow it to be accommodated in LDP2. However, work is ongoing in an attempt to find a potential solution.

New Schools – Locational Considerations

35. The delivery of the overall strategic approach to growth, as set out in the MIR under option 2A, will be wholly dependent on safeguarding suitable sites for, and the delivery of, the school proposals.

36. These sites would require to be safeguarded for education purposes only. No enabling residential development could be accommodated alongside the new educational facilities as the Proposed MIR sites identified (excluding MIR6) are the maximum that the school estate plus the 3 new schools could accommodate.

37. Potential site options within the Eastwood area which might adequately accommodate the size of the proposed new schools, required to support the delivery of LDP2, and which would result in operational catchments, are extremely limited.

38. The Council has little or no land appropriate for this purpose within its ownership. A secondary school would require a site of around 20 acres and a primary school would require around 10 acres. Land ownership or rather the lack of it within the Eastwood area is clearly an issue for the Council in the future.

39. Discussions at a strategic and collaborative level are currently ongoing with developers and landowners to identify possible appropriate locations.

40. When opening a new school the Education Department is required to take full account of the Statutory Guidance issued by the Scottish Ministers in May 2015 in respect of the Schools (Consultations) (Scotland) Act 2010. Part of this guidance relates to the Education Benefits associated with any change in provision, specifically:

‘The 2010 Act reflects the Scottish Ministers’ view that educational benefits should be at the heart of any proposal to make a significant change to schools.’

41. Careful consideration will need to be given to the location of the new schools to ensure that they provide suitable educational benefits in terms of sustainable travel and access. Therefore consideration would also need to be given to amended catchments and the distance of the new school from current housing developments. Clearly, this presents major challenges.

FINANCE AND EFFICIENCY

42. Costs associated with the preparation of and consultation on the Proposed LDP2 will be met from within existing budgets.

43. The availability and demand of educational places throughout the authority will continue to be subject to regular monitoring and review.

44. Any future changes to the school/early learning and childcare estate would be subject of future committee and council reports, including any financial and efficiency implications and any necessary consultation.

CONSULTATION

45. The Proposed LDP2 is scheduled to be reported to Council early in 2019 with a full public consultation following thereafter. At that stage there will be the opportunity for stakeholders to comment on all policies and proposals within the Plan. It is anticipated that LDP2 will be adopted summer 2020. Further information on the timescales and stages for preparing LDP2 are set out in the Development Plan Scheme which is available on the Councils website www.eastrenfrewshire.gov.uk/ldp2

PARTNERSHIP WORKING

46. The approach towards education needs and provision for the Proposed LDP2 has been developed in close collaboration between the Education and Environment Departments.

47. The LDP2 preparation is and will continue to be the subject to on-going consultation with a wide range of both internal and external stakeholders.

IMPLICATIONS OF THE PROPOSALS

48. There are no new staffing, policy, IT, equalities or other implications at this point in time.

49. As way of exemplification, and based on known housing developments, current PPR calculations and pupil projections and proposed LDP 2 sites, a few case studies which may help to envisage the implications for a few families wishing to access denominational (RC) education are provided in Appendix 1.

50. Further case studies will be provided to exemplify the implications for other families in both non-denominational and denominational sectors depending on sites to be identified and confirmed and the implications for school catchment areas in both primary and secondary sectors.

CONCLUSIONS

51. This report sets out the proposed approach to education needs and provision for the Proposed Local Development Plan 2. Collaborative analysis and forecasting work led by Education has shown that the proposed new housing sites for LDP2 along with the housing sites from LDP1 and the impact of the second hand house market would require increased pupil places within the Eastwood area of the authority. In order to mitigate the impact of the proposed new housing sites (excluding MIR6) and to reflect the impact of increasing pupil product ratios, three new educational facilities would be required.

52. It is proposed to refer consideration of this matter and other LDP2 related issues to the already established LDP Member/Officer working group prior to any reports being brought back to the Council.

53. Work is ongoing to identify suitable locations for the new schools. It is intended that proposed safeguarded sites for education will be incorporated into the Proposed LDP2 which will be the subject of a full report with recommendations to the Council in early 2019.

RECOMMENDATIONS

54. It is recommended that the Council notes:

- (a) the work that has been carried out to date and the approach taken towards meeting the education needs and provision for the Proposed Local Development Plan 2 given existing pressures on some parts of the Education estate;
- (b) that further analysis may be required depending on any future Council decision in relation to new housing development at Braidbar Quarry;
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- (d) that this matter will be referred to the already established Local Development Plan Member/Officer working group.

Director of Environment

Further information can be obtained from: Andrew Director of Environment on 0141 577 3036 or Andrew.cahill@eastrenfrewshire.gov.uk

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Case Studies

As way of exemplification, and based on known housing developments, current PPR calculations and pupil projections and proposed LDP 2, a few case studies may help to envisage the implications for a few families wishing to access denominational (RC) education.

Annie lives with her parents in the east of the Council. As a baptized Catholic she is currently in Primary 1 in a denominational primary school, and will go on to attend St. Ninian's HS starting S1 in August 2025. Annie will finish her secondary education in St. Ninian's.

Jimmy was born in 2017, and is baptized in the Catholic faith. The family lives in the east of the Council and his parents want him to have a denominational education in both primary and secondary sectors,. He will go to primary school in 2022 and depending on his catchment area will attend either St. Ninian's or the new denominational secondary school from August 2029.

Jonny was born in 2015 lives in the east of the Council with his parents and younger brother, Peter who was born in 2018. Jonny currently attends a nursery close to his home and is due to start primary school in August 2020. When he transfers to secondary school in 2027 and, depending on his address and new school catchment areas, will have the option of transferring to the new denominational secondary for the start of his S3 in August 2029. His younger brother, Peter, will be expected to take up his catchment place in the new denominational secondary in August 2030.

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