

## **Appendix B3 – Consultation Meeting Record (Public) Forres Academy 4 November 2025**

### **Forres Academy – Relocation Consultation**

#### **Community**

**Date: 04 November 2025**

**Time: 18:30**

**Venue: Forres Academy**

**In Attendance:** Karen Greaves, Chief Executive; Edward Thomas, Head of Housing, Properties and Communities; Vivienne Cross Head of Education; Andy Hall Service Manager Education Estate; Stewart McLauchlan, Quality Improvement Manager; Shona Leese Senior Project Officer; Jane Martin Community Support Officer (Learning Estate); Gillian Bailey Community Support Officer (Learning Estate); Pragya Rathore Communications and Engagement Officer; Balfour Beatty: Atholl McKay; Jackie Lumsden.

**Attendance:** 23

#### **Meeting Notes**

Edward Thomas welcomed everyone and introduced Council and Contractor attendees. Andy Hall provided a 16 slide PowerPoint presentation on the Forres Academy Relocation Proposal highlighting that the public consultation meeting and the consultation process overall would be managed in accordance with the School(Consultation)(Scotland) Act 2010 – a statutory process that should be followed for every major change to a school, including relocation, and that the process was to be open, robust, transparent and fair.

It was highlighted that the focus of this public consultation was the education impact and benefits of the proposed relocation of Forres Academy and that there were separate statutory processes underway with respect to other aspects of the Forres Academy project, specifically the planning application and proposed use of common good land, that although would be noted during this consultation would be directly as part of those other processes.

Attendees were reminded that the Relocation Consultation Survey would be open from Thursday 18 September 2025 to Thursday 13 November 2025.

#### **Discussions**

Questions from attendees

<b>Questions</b>	<b>Answers</b>
<p><b>Q1</b> Nothing wrong with the existing site for redevelopment</p> <p>Flooding – not the burn, it is due to downpipes.</p> <p>RAAC can be removed and replaced.</p> <p>No need for new utility services</p> <p>New site too tight</p> <p>A flat roof design should not be used.</p>	<p>Flooding - the current site is a flood plain and current school acts as a flood barrier. There would be issues with gaining planning application given current planning legislation regarding development on flood risk areas. However, even if these were able to be overcome the building would require to be on a raised platform which would present accessibility issues and not meet the reduced embodied carbon targets set to receive Scottish Government funding through Learning Estate Improvement Programme.</p> <p>The RAAC is not restricted to small areas of the existing building it is throughout the school. To address would need to take whole school down to basic steel infrastructure to refurbish.</p>

	<p>The timescale to conduct a phased refurbishment build on the current school site would put the SFT funding at risk as would not be able to complete within the specified timescale. Pupils would also face serious disruption to their education due to the requirement for phased build and decant accommodation. The proposed site does not have these issues. The new school project will look to improve flood alleviation around the Mosset Burn and improve drainage on the preferred Applegrove/Roysvale and surround location.</p> <p>The project will deliver a new modern building fit for purpose for the next 60 years.</p> <p>The new build will have a 4-degree pitch roof – it is not flat.</p> <p>The preferred Applegrove site is tight for construction purposes hence the proposal for use of Common Good for contractor laydown which we will seek court approval to do so; however, it is more than suitable for a new build school.</p>
<p><b>Q2</b> Parking – use car park opposite school on Orchard Road</p>	<p>The proposed new school car park will be for teachers, and it will be a school management issue to ensure that this is adhered to.</p> <p>The understanding is that Applegrove PS staff currently use the public car park off Orchard Road and do not see any change to this.</p>
<p><b>Q3</b> Applegrove PS Playing field is fenced, Roysvale is not fenced</p>	<p>Moray has a “no fencing” approach to schools unless there is an H&amp;S risk that dictates the requirement – e.g. existing fence along Sanquhar Road to prevent Applegrove pupils running onto the road.</p> <p>The existing Applegrove PS playing field has a simple post and wire fence – it is not a security fence but delineates the school from the path and common good land.</p> <p>Andersons use outdoor space that is not fenced – use is supervised. Similarly, the use of the Roysvale site by Applegrove PS for active play and outdoor learning will be supervised.</p>
<p><b>Q4.</b> What about other users of Roysvale Park?</p>	<p>Access to Roysvale for supervised outdoor activities will be managed through the existing booking system, or something similar, currently managed by the Council Leisure and Library team.</p> <p>Both schools will have scheduling/timetables for using the space, this will be rigorously adhered to in the future.</p>

	<p>It is expected that the current commonsense trust approach that other members of the community will not encroach onto the area of group use will continue in the future. This is the existing situation with current use of Roysvale common good by Forres Academy for sports and health and wellbeing use.</p>
<b>Q5</b> Bus Lane – distance between car park to new school not significant, teachers can walk but not children?	<p>The bus lane ensures that the substantial number of pupils that use Council transport safe access to school as directed for health and safety reasons by Council Roads and Transportation colleagues.</p> <p>The new car park is not considered a significant distance for teachers to walk.</p> <p>Town-based children will exit the new school from the south via existing safe/active travel routes.</p>
<b>Q6</b> Accessibility parking?	<p>Accessibility parking is incorporated into the north side of the school for staff and visitors who require this.</p>
<b>Q7</b> Can you build on Applegrove Playing Fields – is it Common Good Land	<p>The land that Applegrove PS occupies was originally common good; however, this has been Council-owned lands since late 1950s.</p> <p>Roysvale Park is Common Good</p> <p>The project is not looking to change the use of the common good except for the areas that have been identified for long term appropriation (bus drop off) or short-term use (site management) which has been detailed within the common good consultation and will be the subject of a future court application.</p>
<b>Q8</b> With respect to September Council paper Susan Slater – EIS Union Rep – stated that schools do not need to be located together to achieve collaborative working.	<p>The comment is one view.</p> <p>Council view is that it is correct that staff can collaborate when not collocated, however, the proximity of two schools makes it easy to facilitate collaborative staff working especially within the framework of the existing Working Time Agreement (Scotland)</p>
<b>Q9</b> What if threatened with removal of funding?  Tight timescale  Small site  Drainage – surface water	<p>The inference of the question is that there is a project delay – there is not and the project is currently working to planned timescales for operational delivery in Oct 2028</p> <p>There is a risk that there may be a delay in obtaining any of the statutory approvals required to go ahead with construction towards the end of May/June 2026.</p> <p>Any issues of extended project time will be discussed with Scottish Government but do not expect this will see loss of funding - especially given will be fully funded by the Council through Capital borrowing with the Scottish Government Learning Estate</p>

	<p>Improvement Programme providing Outcome Based Revenue funding over 25 years which should be over 50% of the project costs.</p> <p>The preferred Applegrove site is tight for construction purposes hence the proposal to use Common Good for contractor laydown which we will seek court approval to do; however, it is more than suitable for a new build school.</p> <p>Drainage – Civil engineers have worked alongside planning, SEPA, Scottish Water and are also statutory consultees of the planning application. Design will have a dedicated rainwater management that will improve the condition of the park and where the school will be built.</p>
<p><b>Q10</b> Timescales for Statutory Processes</p> <p>If one or all fail what happens?</p>	<p>Planning application process expects to be completed by early February.</p> <p>Common Good court application to be submitted – still understanding timescales as these will be determined by the court however expectation is that they fall within the project programme timescale.</p> <p>The project is progressing in expectation of statutory approvals. If these are not forthcoming, then alternative will be pursued; however, it is cost prohibitive to progress with more than one option.</p>
<p><b>Q11</b> Is this something Balfour Beatty has built before and met timelines?</p>	<p>Balfour Beatty has experience in constructing both Primary and Secondary schools in Scotland; this is their core business.</p> <p>Across Moray/Aberdeenshire/Aberdeen City spend is £500 million on Education facilities. This is the fourth school project with Moray Council. Balfour Beatty are confident with the program, design, and buildability. All schools have distinctive designs however able to use metric information to calculate timescales for building.</p> <p>During detailed design – confirm/review timescales.</p> <p>Learning &amp; Teaching in ASN – predict future differences, lessons learnt from Lossiemouth High School and Elgin High School have been incorporated in the design, we have also visited schools across Scotland. There is consistent feedback on requirements that flexible &amp; adaptable spaces are required. The Forres build is benefiting from lessons identified from local and national projects and improvements incorporated within the design.</p>

<p><b>Q12</b> Have lessons on school design been learnt from previous projects to incorporate into the design?</p>	<p>The Forres build is benefiting from lessons identified from local and national projects and improvements incorporated within the design. Lessons learnt from Lossiemouth High School and Elgin High School have been incorporated in the design. Project, Education and School staff have visited recent schools across Scotland to see best practise in design. There has been emphasis on designing flexible and adaptable spaces to meet future pupil cohort needs – included focus on increase ASN design support.</p> <p>The design team have worked hard on using spaces as much as possible. With the use of space as close to 100% as possible including factoring in the needs of ASN requirements with an Enhanced Provision base for forty pupils and ASN support spaces throughout the mainstream school design.</p>
<p><b>Q13</b> New build issues of noise, vibration, traffic, and dust</p> <p>New building will block out the light to local properties.</p> <p>The design is not in keeping with the area</p>	<p>All these issues have been addressed in the detail Planning Application documentation submitted that was made available as part of that statutory consultation which the public have had the opportunity to comment. Council Planning Officers will review these and make any recommendations.</p> <p>The building design has taken account of the height of the planned new school, and its impacts on daylight to existing buildings. A review was undertaken in relation to the Veteran's Housing Scotland properties, and this information is in the planning application, no other properties will be impacted.</p> <p>The building design seeks to use materials and colours that replicate the sandstone and slate roofs of the traditional properties along Sanquhar and Orchard Road</p>
<p><b>Q14</b> Area around the proposed site floods – with some area sewage smells</p>	<p>Acknowledged issue with standing water on Roysvale Park due to high water table. Planning application submission provides detail on site drainage improvements which includes a dedicated new rainwater sewer to reduce water entering the combined sewer in the future. This will address issues around the current Applegrove PS site but not the bottom of Tolbooth Street which is a wider Scottish Water issue</p>
<p><b>Q15</b> Parents pick up/drop off and will park anywhere creating issues along Orchard Road</p>	<p>Options to address any parking issues along Orchard Road will be agreed with Roads and Transportation colleagues – and may take form of a project planning obligation.</p> <p>Enforcement of any parking restrictions to be agreed</p>

<p><b>Q16</b> Can the new Forres Academy continue to use the Plasmon and Mannachie fields?</p>	<p>The distance to Mannachie Fields from the new school and condition of access paths make this area unsuitable. This is already an issue with the existing Academy site and why the school already uses Roysvale.</p> <p>The school may continue to use the Plasmon green space for some sports activities in addition to the future of Roysvale</p>
<p><b>Q17</b> Veterans Housing representative raised numerous issues like Q13.</p> <p>Veteran's garden – pupils will use as short cut to school.</p> <p>Issues of parking – and use of public car parks by staff and on street by parents (as per Q15)</p>	<p>Q13 response applies.</p> <p>There has already been a multi-agency meeting with Veterans Housing Scotland residents in the cottages adjacent to the Applegrove site. Balfour Beatty will continue to organise similar meetings in the future to communicate project status and plan and listen to and seek to address any future concerns.</p> <p><i>Audience response that the last meeting was only communicated by the Council at the last minute. This was corrected as the communication error was with Veteran Housing Scotland, who have since apologised.</i></p> <p>Pupils will be entering the school from the south so the gardens will not be a shortcut. However, any issue of trespass or anti-social behaviour should be report to the school now and in the future.</p> <p>Parking – reiterated answer already given at Q15.</p> <p>Academy Teacher car parking will be in similar place to now</p>
<p><b>Q18</b> Questioned previous public consultation meeting (Planning) that stated that Applegrove Primary School already used Roysvale playing field for outdoor activities</p>	<p>Acknowledged this was an incorrect statement because of a miscommunication. Applegrove PS use of Roysvale Park to date has been minimal.</p>
<p><b>Q19</b> Sanquhar Road double parking – how can this be prevented?</p>	<p>There may be conditions of planning application. Access to bus drop off outside school times should reduce double parking on Sanquhar Road.</p> <p>Statement that this would be teachers in the future cannot be proven – however as Moray Council employees' teachers would be directed to use the dedicated school car park.</p>
<p><b>Q20</b> Bus Lane when waiting – can they switch off their engines?</p>	<p>This is a valid point; this would be taken up with bus operators who are currently going through procurement for new contracts – this can be added to the contract requirements.</p>
<p><b>Q21</b> Albert Street – cannot get out as it is a death trap. Getting out of the house, at bus drop off right there!</p>	<p>Cannot comment on personal experience. Any current 'dangerous' experiences should be reported to the Council Roads and Transportation team to respond.</p>

	<p>The transport survey undertaken as part of the planning application – with the volume of traffic not expected to change during drop off and pick up. All contractor traffic movements planned to avoid these times.</p> <p>Recent school ‘hands up survey’ information demonstrates that there should be limited car drop offs as most Forres A pupils walk or cycle to school – and these vehicle movements will have been identified during transport survey.</p> <p>Project will continue dialogue with transport colleagues and communicate any issues with residents – focus on parking and access to and from Orchard Road and Sanquhar Road including parking outside Applegrove and Veteran Housing Scotland cottages.</p>
<p><b>Q23</b> Planning documents do not contain height of building</p>	<p>The detailed answer was not available so agreed to take query away and updated FAQ's and consultation document.</p> <p>Meeting follow-up:</p> <p><i>The highest point of the school building from floor level, excluding rooftop plant, is 13.8 metres, indicating the main structure's elevation.</i></p> <p><i>The absolute highest point of the school, including rooftop plant, reaches a max 16.6 metres.</i></p>
<p><b>Q24</b> Flooding is an issue around the Roysvale site, and an alternative site should be considered</p>	<p>Previous answers and the planning application provide full detail on the planned mitigation of flooding and high-water table levels issues on and around the preferred site.</p>
<p><b>Q25</b> Various consultations and engagements with the public, frustration that the public are not being listened too.</p>	<p>We are listening, you may feel we are not listening, but we are and providing answers. Many may not accept the Council response, but we have been open and transparent with information shared when available – either through the online FAQs or the statutory process – e.g. Pre Planning Application Notice and Planning Application itself</p>
<p><b>Q26</b> Could you shed some light on community access to facilities.</p>	<p>Community access is part of the design of every new school build. Facilities such as the assembly hall, dance studio, servery kitchen (with hot water and support for food serving) are all included to ensure the school supports the evolving needs of the community.</p> <p>In addition to these indoor spaces, the plans also feature multiple outdoor spaces around the new school that include an ecology garden, shared performance space, social and outdoor dining areas, sensory garden.</p>

	<p>The existing hydrotherapy pool, swimming pool and fitness suite will be retained to the south of the site, providing a variety of environments for recreation, health, and wellbeing.</p> <p>Community space is also a consideration within the existing school site landscaping plans post demolition.</p>
<b>Q27</b> Why are we not using the existing site which is protected by the existing flood alleviation scheme and has all the services required?	<p>Despite the flood alleviation scheme the existing site still within a designated flood plain and so is subject to specific planning limitations which the project does not consider will be met by a refurbished or new build on the existing site. It would require an excessive amount of concrete to raise the site and therefore not meet an embodied carbon requirement set within the Scottish Government LIEP 3 funding model. Any current site option would be extremely disruptive with a requirement to decant pupils and staff for extended periods of time – and find alternate long term staff parking options.</p> <p>The existing site would also require an upgrade to services – like the preferred site but without improvement of Roysvale/Applegrove drainage.</p>

Edward Thomas closed meeting **8:15pm**, thanked everyone for attending and advised if there were any further questions, to respond to the consultation, or email [learningestate@moray.gov.uk](mailto:learningestate@moray.gov.uk)