

# A New High School on the Kirkliston Leisure Centre site

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## GIVE US YOUR VIEWS

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In January 2023, we asked people to give us their views on the future of secondary school provision in Queensferry and Kirkliston. People told us that there should be a new high school in Kirkliston. Some people said that we should redevelop the existing Kirkliston Leisure Centre site for a new high school.



We have appointed an architect to write a report telling us whether a high school for up to 1,200 pupils could be built on the Kirkliston Leisure Centre site. This new school would include public leisure facilities.

**We would like to share with you information about this work as it progresses. We would also like to hear your views.**

- Do you think Kirkliston Leisure Centre is a good site for a new high school?
- Are there other sites in or around Kirkliston that we should be considering for a new high school?
- How could we make a new school on the Kirkliston Leisure Centre site a facility for the whole community?
- What do you think about replacing older buildings like Kirkliston Leisure Centre, Kirkliston Library and Kirkliston Community Centre with a single community hub at a new high school?

Your feedback will help us decide whether to recommend to the Council's Education, Children & Families committee on 5 September 2023 that a statutory consultation should be undertaken. A statutory consultation would be required before we could build a new school.

For more information and to give us your views visit:

[www.edinburgh.gov.uk/kirklistonhs](http://www.edinburgh.gov.uk/kirklistonhs)

**You can also email:** [kirklistonhs@edinburgh.gov.uk](mailto:kirklistonhs@edinburgh.gov.uk)

**Or write to:** New Kirkliston High School, 1.7 Waverley Court, 4 East Market Street, Edinburgh, EH8 8DG

Get your views to us by 5pm on Friday 30 June 2023.

We will also be holding a drop-in information event where you can come along and speak to Council officers and the architects, find out more and give us your views:

Date	Time	Venue
Wednesday 14 <sup>th</sup> June	13:00 – 18:00	Kirkliston Library

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## FURTHER INFORMATION

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### Background

High school pupils from Kirkliston currently attend Queensferry Community high school. However, the 2022 school roll projections estimate that the notional capacity of 1,200 pupils for this school is likely to be exceeded in 2025 due to housing growth in the area.

In January 2023 we asked people for their views on two potential solutions:

- extend Queensferry High School to accommodate up to 1,800 pupils; or
- build a new secondary school in Kirkliston or West Edinburgh for pupils from Kirkliston.

On 27 April 2023 a report to the Council's Education, Children and Families Committee summarised the responses we received. You can now [download a copy of the full committee report](#) including recommendations and the summary response report.

The report said that the key message arising from the engagement with the Queensferry and Kirkliston communities was that there should be a new secondary school built in Kirkliston. Several people had also suggested Kirkliston Leisure Centre as a potential site for a new high school.

The report said that options to deliver a Kirkliston High School on the Kirkliston Leisure Centre site would be developed and outcomes reported to the Education, Children and Families Committee on 5 September 2023.

We have appointed an architect to tell us whether a high school for 1,200 pupils could be built on the Kirkliston Leisure Centre site. This new school would include public leisure facilities. The architect will produce a feasibility report in early August 2023.

We would like views from Kirkliston residents on the use of the Kirkliston Leisure Centre site for a new high school.

We will use the feedback we receive from people and the report from the architects to decide on the recommendations we make to the Education, Children and Families Committee on 5 September 2023.

We cannot build a school on the Kirkliston Leisure Centre site (or any other site) until a statutory consultation has been undertaken. This current engagement is not a statutory consultation, it is only to shape the proposals that may appear in a future consultation.

### **Finding a Site for a new Kirkliston High School**

In January 2023 we identified a number of sites around Kirkliston that may have the potential as the site for a new High School. However, further investigation shows that most of these sites are not appropriate for a new school.

This is because all of the sites large enough for the development of a new high school are privately owned or controlled by developers who will not release the land without agreement that they can also build new houses.

Current Planning Policies prevent the development of most of the land around Kirkliston as it is designated as greenbelt land. This means that houses cannot be built here. It also means that the development of a school on one of these sites would not be accepted by Planning.

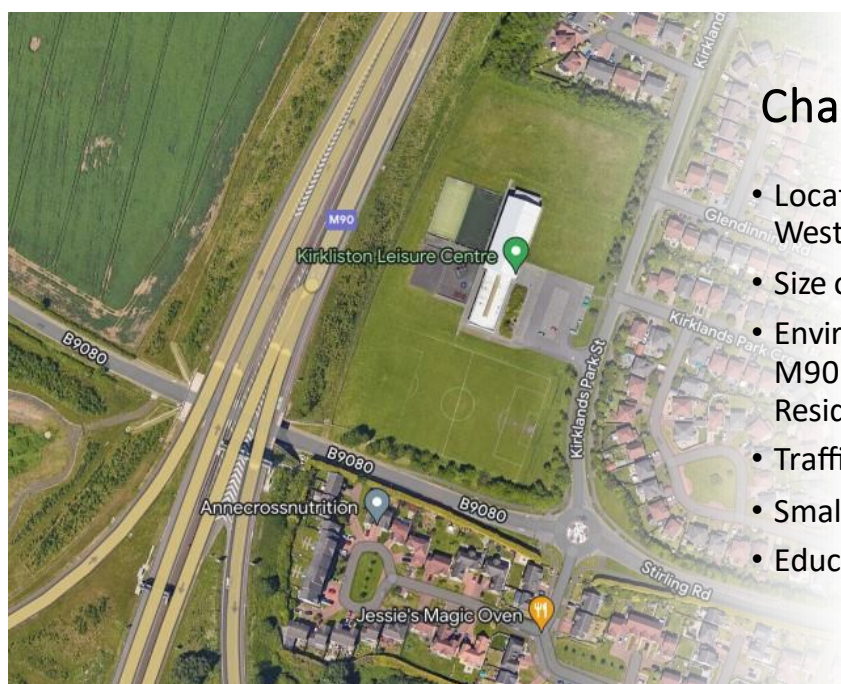
The option of acquiring land by Compulsory Purchase Order (CPO) is still being explored. This would mean that a private land owner would have to sell their land to the Council. The Council would have to build a robust case to justify acquisition of land by this means. A CPO would also be a lengthy process. Even if it were successful, current Planning Policy would still prevent development of this land.

We had previously ruled out the use of the Kirkliston Leisure Centre due to its small size, its proximity to the motorway and existing residential properties, its location on the west of Kirkliston and the loss of Kirkliston's leisure facilities. These issues are considered further in the section that follows.

However, the big advantage that this site has is that it is in Council ownership and could therefore potentially be developed as a new high school quite quickly.

The northern part of the Kirkliston Leisure Centre site is already under development as an Early Years facility and Primary 1 annexe, within 5 minutes' walk from the main primary school. While this reduces the space available for a high school, it also provides opportunities to create strong links between Early Years, Primary and Secondary. This could have both social and educational benefits. Construction of the Kirkliston Primary School Early Years Campus is scheduled for completion in November 2023.

### **New High School at Kirkliston Leisure Centre site: Key Considerations:**



### **Challenges:**

- Location - Western edge of town
- Size of Site - 1.7 hectares
- Environmental Factors - M90 Motorway Residential Area
- Traffic Management
- Small 600 School Roll
- Education Operating Model

### ***Location***

It would be preferable to have a site for a new high school in the centre of Kirkliston. This would provide easier and more equitable access from all areas of Kirkliston. However, there are no sites large enough.

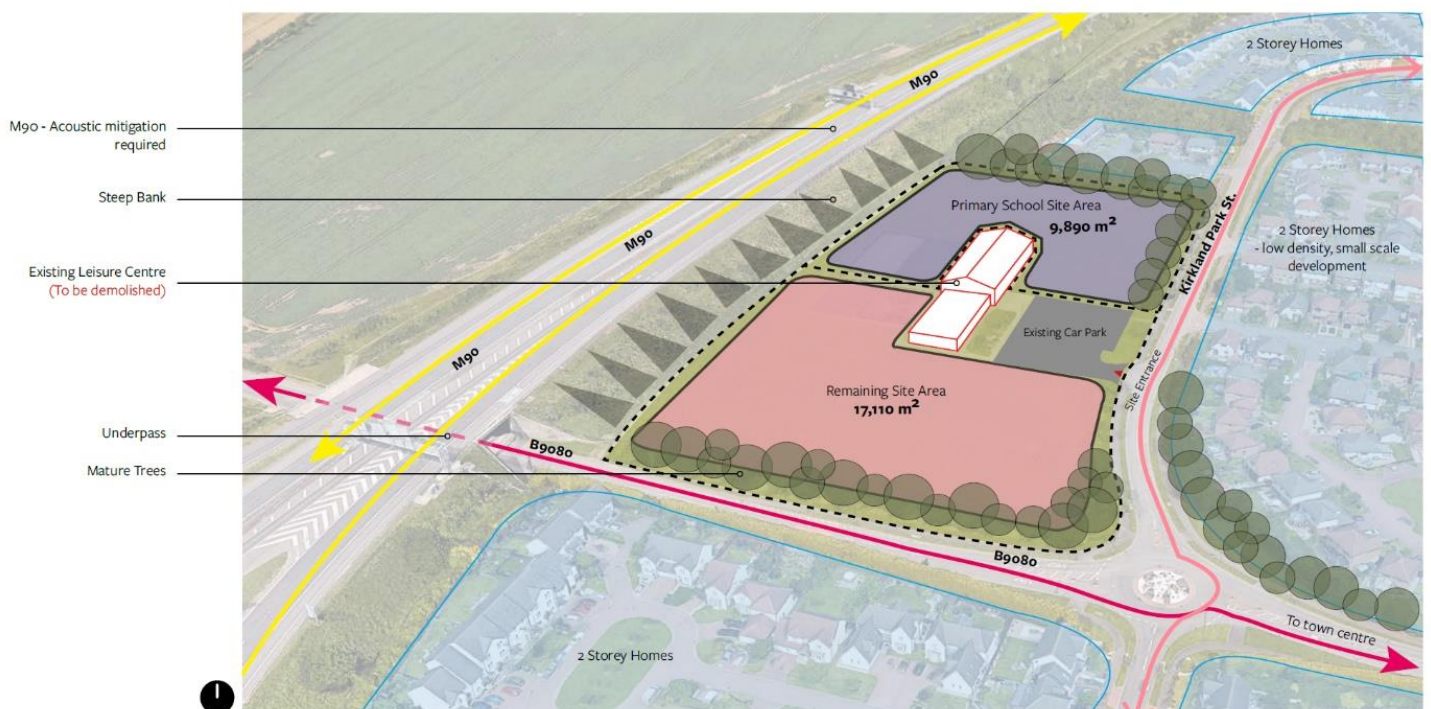
The Kirkliston Leisure Centre site is located on the most westerly edge of the village. Several of the housing developers want to build

homes on the east side of the town. If Planning Policy changes in the future and developers are allowed to build homes on the east side of Kirkliston then it will be important to plan active travel options to the new high school from these locations.

### **Size of site**

The Early Years facility and Primary 1 annexe occupies the northern part of the Kirkliston Leisure Centre site. The remaining part of the site is 1.7 hectares (17,110m<sup>2</sup>). The School Premises Regulations stipulates a minimum school site area of 2.4 hectares (24,000m<sup>2</sup>) for a 600 pupil capacity school and a minimum of 2.6 hectares (26,000m<sup>2</sup>) for a 1,200 school roll. This is for the school building and does not include sports pitches.

This means that the Kirkliston Leisure Centre site is not big enough to accommodate the required size of school building and sports pitches to meet the Regulations. However, we think there is sufficient space for a school building and are exploring how we can provide access to sufficient pitch space.



The information in [Appendix 1](#) shows how a 4 storey building large enough for 600 pupils, extending to 1,200 pupils, could be built on the Kirkliston Leisure Centre site. This is not a final design – it is concept work to demonstrate that there is sufficient space for the building required.

We had considered whether sports pitches could be provided on the fields to the east of Kirkliston. However, the Planning Department have advised that they would not look favourably on the development of these fields as sports pitches as they are protected from development by Countryside Policy.

As it does not meet the regulatory size, to build a school on the Kirkliston Leisure Centre site would require approval by Scottish Ministers. If people think building a school on the Kirkliston Leisure Centre site is a good idea, we would write to Ministers for their approval before we begin a statutory consultation.

It is not unusual for a school to be smaller than the regulations. Few city centre schools meet regulatory site size requirements. For example, Boroughmuir High School in Fountainbridge has a capacity of more than 1,500 pupils and is on a site of less than 1.0 hectare.

### ***Environmental Factors***

The site is located within a residential area and adjacent to the M90 motorway. Careful consideration would be given to the orientation of a new high school's footprint, as well as any treatments required to reduce the impact of pollution and noise.

### ***Traffic Management***

Traffic congestion has already been reported as an ongoing issue in this area of town and a full Traffic Impact Assessment will be carried out and the outcomes and recommendations will be included in the report to Committee in September.

### ***Small 600 School Roll***

Initially a new high school on the Kirkliston Leisure Centre site would be built with capacity for 600 pupils. This is because, based on the

data currently available, it is estimated that the demand for high school places in Kirkliston would be in the region of 330 to 515 pupils. This is based solely on Kirkliston Primary School's catchment area. A high school in Kirkliston would be the only school in Edinburgh fed by a single primary school.

A limited informal engagement is proposed with the Ratho, Ratho Station and Newbridge communities to determine whether there is any support for realigning the Ratho Primary School and Hillwood Primary School catchment areas with a new Kirkliston High School. Indications from a previous engagement in 2018 exploring realigning Ratho Primary School and Hillwood Primary School with a new West Edinburgh High School would suggest that any proposal of this type is likely to be unpopular in these communities.

The outcome of this engagement with the Ratho, Ratho Station and Newbridge communities will also be reported to the Education, Children and Families committee in September 2023.

An expansion strategy to allow expansion of a new high school to 1,200 pupils would be built-in from the start. The first phase of construction would include Learning and Teaching spaces for 600 pupils only would but deliver all the shared spaces required for a 1,200 pupil school. This would allow the school to be more easily extended at a future date if that became necessary.

### **Education Operating Model**

A new high school in Kirkliston would initially be very small. We need to consider carefully how best to populate the school and support it as it grows. For example, we need to consider whether the small numbers likely to attend initially would make provision of upper stages viable in its first few years.

We plan to develop an education operating model for a new Kirkliston High School. This will include an assessment of the Educational benefits and disbenefits of a new High School in Kirkliston. This statement will be available as part of the report to



the Education, Children and Families Committee on 5 September 2023.

In the meantime, your views on how the school should operate and the things we need to consider are welcome. Submit your thoughts here: [www.edinburgh.gov.uk/kirklistonhs](http://www.edinburgh.gov.uk/kirklistonhs)

## **Opportunities**

Strategically a new high school in Kirkliston makes sense in terms of the Council's 20-minute Neighbourhood approach and promotion of Active Travel. The responses received to the engagement in January 2023 also highlighted the opportunity a new high school could provide to create a community hub offering a range of Council and partner services.

The Council needs to carefully manage its property portfolio in an efficient, effective, and sustainable manner to reduce costs, reduce the environmental impact of our buildings whilst also meeting the needs of residents locally.

This means that we need to ensure that the significant level of investment required to provide a new school delivers the right size of facility, in the right location, and provides the most appropriate service improvements to meet the communities current and future needs.

All new learning estate investment is designed based on a place-based approach that: creates a safe and welcoming place; meets everyone's health and wellbeing needs; and promotes shared learning and support for the whole community. Typically, there are four categories of services that form the basis of a community hub, but these will vary according to the local needs:

***Lifelong Learning** – secondary curriculum, after school clubs, adult learning programmes, outdoor learning.*

***Social and Recreational** – Sports, social and cultural activities, café, meeting or office space for small community groups or organisations, gardening.*

**Customer Services and Support** – Council and partner service (NHS, Police, EVOG, etc) delivery: library services, theatre, museums, information and 'sign-posting' services, community liaison, wellbeing, healthcare, family and other referral and support services;

**Administrative** – Council and partner services (NHS, Police, EVOG, etc) administrative functions, office space, "touch-down" facilities, meeting and counselling spaces.

Improved access to school facilities and resources creates the opportunity to consider integrating other Council and Partner Agency services and close poor performing buildings (ie Libraries, community centres, offices etc). Making more effective and efficient use of the Council's estate and resources will help achieve our Net -Zero carbon targets as well as reduce running and maintenance costs.

Further information on the Council's approach to new school buildings can be found here.

### **Things to consider**

- Do you think Kirkliston Leisure Centre is a good site for a new high school?
- Are there other sites in or around Kirkliston that we should be considering for a new high school?
- How could we make a new school on the Kirkliston Leisure Centre site a facility for the whole community?
- What do you think about replacing older buildings like Kirkliston Leisure Centre, Kirkliston Library and Kirkliston Community Centre with a single community hub at a new high school?

For more information and to give us your views visit:

[www.edinburgh.gov.uk/kirklistonhs](http://www.edinburgh.gov.uk/kirklistonhs)

## **Background Information**

- [Outcomes -Future Secondary school provision Kirkliston & Queensferry area](#)
- [Edinburgh's Learning Estate Strategy 2021 - Investing in New Buildings: Guiding Principles](#)
- [Secondary School Strategic Brief: High Level Principles March 2023](#)
- You can find more information about [school roll projections](#) on the City of Edinburgh Council website.

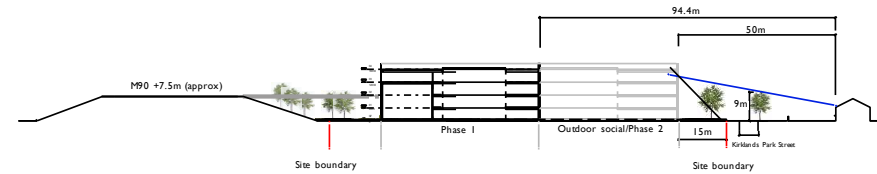
# APPENDIX 1: Early Feasibility Work for A New Secondary School on Kirkliston Leisure Centre Site

## Kirkliston High School

Site approach - Alternative 1



1 Site plan



Short section through site

1. Shared Public Realm
2. Shared Spaces
3. Social / Assembly Spaces (Less Noise Sensitive)
4. Teaching Spaces
5. Future Extension
6. Pedestrian Crossing
7. Cycle Storage
8. Sports Centre
9. Service / Emergency w/ Reversing Head
10. MUGAs
11. Social Spaces Outdoor Spillout
12. South Facing Outdoor Space



View from Stirling Road roundabout



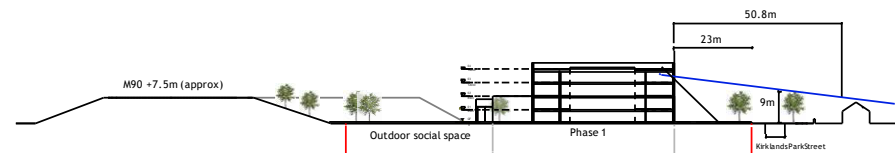
View from Kirkland Park Street looking south

# Kirkliston High School

## Site approach - Alternative 2



1 Siteplan



Short section through site

1. Shared Public Realm
2. Cycle Storage
3. Social / Assembly Spaces
4. Teaching Spaces
5. Future Extension
6. Pedestrian Crossing
7. Pedestrian Entrance
8. New linear car park
9. Sports Centre
10. Alternative Pedestrian Entrance for Students
11. Small 3G Pitch ( Not Sports Scotland Compliant)



View from Stirling Road roundabout



View from Kirklands Park Street looking south

# Kirkliston High School

*Layouts to support a Sport Scotland Pitch*

