

**Central and Western District Council
Culture, Leisure & Social Affairs Committee
Redevelopment of Island School
at 20 Borrett Road, Mid-levels, Hong Kong**

Purpose

The English Schools Foundation (ESF) needs to redevelop the Island School at 20 Borrett Road, Mid-levels, Hong Kong, in order to improve the existing conditions of the school premises and learning environment. This paper seeks to consult the Culture, Leisure & Social Affairs Committee (CLSAC) of the Central and Western District Council on this redevelopment proposal.

Proposal

2. The Education Bureau (EDB) recommends CLSAC to support the proposed redevelopment project.

Justification

3. The Island School is an international school under ESF offering secondary curriculum. The school premises was built in 1974 and is over 40 years old, with a site area of about 12,000 square metres. The location plan of the school premises is at **Annex 1**. The Island School currently operates 42 classes. It has provided 1,272 places in the 2016/17 school year with 1,128 students enrolled. To cater for the school's continuous development, ESF has reviewed and assessed the existing school facilities, and considered that there was inadequate teaching space which adversely affected daily school operation and teaching effectiveness.

4. Moreover, there has been concrete spalling from the ceilings and exterior walls from time to time due to ageing of the school premises. Protective netting has been installed at the school building to prevent spalling concrete from accidentally injuring teachers and students. ESF has earlier on engaged a consultant to inspect the structural conditions of the school premises. The inspection report reveals that owing to the continuous ageing of the

building, some steel bars have started to corrode, and spalling of concrete and exposure of steel bars would likely accelerate. Continuing maintenance of the existing building would be costly but could not slow down much its ageing.

5. ESF has attempted to look for suitable sites or vacant school premises on the Island side for re-provisioning but failed. Therefore, in-situ redevelopment is the only feasible alternative. After considering the information provided by ESF, EDB agreed in principle its proposal to redevelop the Island School to improve the existing conditions of the school premises and learning environment.

Project Scope and Schedule

6. ESF has engaged a consultant for the design and will engage a contractor for the construction works. The scope of works includes demolition of the existing building and construction of an eight-storey secondary school premises on the site (including two levels of basement and an underground parking area). The conceptual design of the new school premises is at **Annex 2**. The new school premises will provide 42 classrooms, 15 small group teaching rooms, 13 science laboratories, 17 special rooms, an indoor swimming pool and other ancillary facilities. The number of students that can be accommodated is similar to that of the existing school premises. According to the prevailing policy, the amount of capital grant from the Government will be equivalent to the cost for constructing a standard-design public sector school for the same student population, and ESF will bear the costs for all the non-standard facilities or those parts exceeding the standard provision.

7. During the redevelopment works, the Island School will need to move to temporary school premises to continue classes. In this regard, EDB has temporarily allowed the Island School to use two vacant school premises in Sha Tin (i.e. the premises of ex-HKCCPA Ma Chung Sum Secondary School and ex-Shatin Tsung Tsin Secondary School) as temporary school premises until the completion of the in-situ redevelopment project. Since the accelerated ageing of the existing school premises is posing a potential risk to the safety of teachers and students, there is a need for the school to move to the temporary premises as soon as possible to ensure their safety. ESF is now carrying out renovation works at the two decanting premises. It is expected that the Island School will move to the temporary premises for operation by January 2018.

8. We plan to consult the Legislative Council (LegCo) Panel on Education in the first quarter of 2018, and seek funding approval from LegCo Finance Committee (FC) afterwards. Subject to obtaining funding approval from FC, the construction works are expected to commence in the second quarter of 2018 the earliest and complete in the first quarter of 2022. The Island School may operate at the new school premises at the Borrett Road by the 2021/22 school year the earliest.

Environmental Implications

9. The proposed redevelopment project is not a designated project under the Environmental Impact Assessment Ordinance (Cap. 499). ESF has engaged a professional consultant to conduct a Preliminary Environmental Review (PER) at the design stage which has been approved by the relevant department. There are 144 trees within the project boundary, of which 53 will be preserved and 91 will have to be removed under the proposed works. All of those trees are not important trees. ESF will incorporate planting proposal as part of the project, including the planting of about 91 trees. The professional consultant will also stipulate clauses in the relevant contract to be signed with the works contractor requiring the works contractor to implement mitigation measures to strictly control noise, dust and surface run-off that may be generated during the construction stage to satisfy the established standards and guidelines of the Environmental Protection Department. It is expected that the school building works would not have any negative impact on the surrounding environment during the construction. The new eight-storey school premises (including two levels of basement and an underground carpark) will be built along the hillside, which is of similar height to the existing school premises and is shorter than the neighbouring residential blocks. Therefore, the visual impact on the nearby residential blocks would be minimal.

Traffic Implications

10. The professional consultant engaged by ESF has conducted a Traffic Impact Assessment and consulted the Transport Department. Currently, most of the students go to the Island School by school bus. As there are no laybys for school buses at the existing school premises, school buses would usually pick up and drop off students along the Borrett Road. Upon the completion of the redevelopment, there will be adequate parking space for school buses within the school site for student pick-up and drop-off. School buses would no longer require to park on the roadside. Therefore, the redevelopment project should be able to improve the current traffic condition in the vicinity

during the before and after school hours. Besides, to minimise the impact on nearby road users during the construction stage, the professional consultant will implement measures to closely monitor the vehicular access arrangements at the works site.

Advice Sought

11. Members are invited to comment on and support the project.

**Education Bureau
October 2017**

Location Plan of the Island School



Conceptual Design of the new school premises of the Island School

