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Our Ref:

Date: 13 January 2021

Chris Kiernan
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Dear Medway Council Planning Department,

Re: Rebuild and relocation of St John Fisher RC Comprehensive School – MC/20/2839

Medway Council Education Department fully supports the total rebuild of St John Fisher Catholic Comprehensive School. The current buildings are in extremely poor condition despite the best efforts of the school and diocese to maintain them.

The majority of the Local Authority's LCVAP allocation of around £500k per annum, has in recent years been allocated to the school just to keep it operational, but as each year passes the general condition of the fabric of the building declines.

The school was subject to a successful PSPB2 bid to rebuild the block in the worst condition, but that has extended into a full rebuild as the remainder of the school buildings will continue to deteriorate and the fear is that the buildings are becoming dangerous and there is a real risk that some parts of the building may have to be taken out of use for the health and safety of the pupils and staff in the coming years.

Under these extreme circumstances, The DfE has agreed to fund the rebuild on the school's detached playing field on City Way, which would enable the school to function in the current buildings decanting when the new accommodation is ready.

This would also allow the school, which currently operates from two sites, to consolidate onto a single site, making teaching and learning more effective and efficient, as well as removing the cost of maintaining two old and dysfunctional sets of buildings. This would also benefit other Voluntary Aided schools in the area, as more condition and maintenance funding would be available across the estate, rather than concentrating in the main on one school.

Furthermore, the lease on the Maidstone Road site expires in 2023, at which point all pupils would need to relocate onto the Ordnance Street site, which is neither practical nor viable. This new school building provides a fantastic opportunity to improve the learning environment for the pupils, to bring the school together as one, improve community links and make better use of public funds.

Yours faithfully,



Chris Kiernan
Assistant director, education and SEND