

**Central Area Office
51/53 Sean Mac Dermott Street
Dublin 1**

27th January, 2017.

**The Chairperson and Members
of the Central Area Committee**

RUTLAND STREET SCHOOL

Introduction



The former Rutland Street School is an early 20th Century (circa. 1910) four-storey building, with lower ground / part basement, upper ground floor, first and second floor levels totalling approximately 3,744 sq mtrs. The building is not a protected structure, however it is considered to be of significant architectural interest. The site fronts on to Rutland Street Lwr. which is a main thoroughfare from Sean MacDermott Street Lwr. to Summerhill. The site and buildings are in Dublin City Council ownership having been formally acquired under an exchange of lands with the St. Laurence O'Toole Diocesan Trust in January 2013.

The building is currently partly occupied (1,200 of 3,744 sq. mtrs.), under licence agreement with Dublin City Council by the following groups:

- Lourdes Youth and Community Services (LYCS) at Lower Ground Floor, Lower Ground Floor Mezzanine and Ground floor levels.
- Adventure Sports Project (ASP) at Lower Ground Floor and Lower Ground floor Mezzanine levels.

First and second floor levels are unoccupied – Total unoccupied area 2,544sq. mtrs.

The same licensees, together with a third group NYP1, are also currently occupying part of the adjacent building known as the School on Stilts which is also in Dublin City Council ownership. While both buildings have been in constant community use by these groups for a number of years it is considered that the buildings have not been designed to best cater for these uses in addition to its age and state of disrepair.

This project is a priority for Dublin City Council to support long term economic and social regeneration of the North East Inner City. We believe it is appropriate to explore the option of a

complete re-development of the site which has the potential to provide considerable additional space for a range of community, enterprise and other uses. The preliminary costing on this option i.e. retention of the entire façade of the School with 4 new floor levels designed to be subdivided for community / office / flexible use together with a vertical core with lifts and toilets to serve all floors; is in excess of €12M.

While no source has yet been identified for this level of funding the full re-development of the site may represent a better value for money investment in the longer term and therefore warrants further consideration by potential funding bodies.

In the meantime the condition of the Rutland Street School building will continue to deteriorate and it is inevitable that alternative accommodation will have to be found for the current occupiers LYCS, ASP and NYP1 with the First Steps Crèche (LYCS) to be facilitated as a priority and a plan must be put in place for this as soon as possible.

The nearby Dublin City Council owned site adjacent to Our Lady of Lourdes Church on Sean MacDermott St. currently contains a cluster of community facilities i.e. Sean Mac Dermott Street Swimming Pool, Lourdes Daycare Centre for the Elderly and Lourdes Parish Hall. It also contains a vacant building, formerly occupied by a pre-school facility, that is now being considered as a potentially suitable location for re-accommodation of the LYCS First Steps Crèche. This would involve a complete fit for purpose re-furbishment of the existing building, environmental improvements and upgrade of the surrounding area including development of an outdoor play/activity area.

Dublin City Council's City Architects Division has prepared draft drawings in this regard for consultation with LYCS who will be given an opportunity to input into design and specification so that the plan can proceed to a costing phase without delay.

It is considered that the plan to re-accommodate the Crèche on this site would complement the existing community uses and contribute towards the potential to develop that location as a local community services hub. There is also scope within the boundary of the overall site to accommodate the other LYCS, ASP and NYP1 Services currently being provided from the Rutland Street School and the School on Stilts. Options for discussion with these user groups are currently being considered by City Architects Division in this regard.

The agreements with the current occupiers of the Lourdes Daycare Centre and the Lourdes Parish Hall i.e. Francesca Arkins Dance Academy and the Taekwon-Do Club will not be adversely affected by the proposal but will be party to any discussions that take place. If re-accommodation to the Lourdes site could be progressed it would leave the two school sites available and unrestricted for future re-furbishment or re-development. To this end it would be advantageous if a masterplan was developed in consultation with public representatives, community organisations and other stakeholders to secure funding/investment to deliver on the creation of a multi faceted hub in this area.

Dublin City Council under the auspices of the Central Area office are happy to meet the Rutland Street groups immediately to move the project forward through structured engagement with all stakeholders and to ensure a coordinated approach and ongoing communications with regard to the future development of the overall site.

Rose Kenny
Executive Manager