# Education, Children's and Leisure Services Committee

Tuesday, 14 May 2024

## SUPPLEMENTARY AGENDA

The undernoted reports have been added to the Agenda for the meeting of the **Education, Children's and Leisure Services Committee** to be held at **Council Chambers**, **Council Office, High Street, Elgin, IV30 1BX** on **Tuesday, 14 May 2024** at **09:30.**

**BUSINESS**

**REPORT TO:** **EDUCATION, CHILDREN'S AND LEISURE SERVICES COMMITTEE ON 14 MAY 2024**

**SUBJECT:** **LEARNING ESTATE STRATEGY - PROGRAMME DELIVERY UPDATE**

**BY:** **DEPUTE CHIEF EXECUTIVE (EDUCATION, COMMUNITIES AND ORGANISATIONS DEVELOPMENT)**

## 1. REASON FOR REPORT

1.1 To provide the Committee with an annual update on the status of the Learning Estate Strategy Delivery Programme.

1.2 This report is submitted to the Council in terms of Section III (D) (1) of the Council's Scheme of Administration relating to all the functions of the Council as an Education Authority.

## 2. RECOMMENDATION

2.1 **It is recommended that Committee:**

**(i) notes the annual update on the status of the Moray Learning Estate Delivery Programme;**

**(ii) notes the planned Capital budget investment to deliver the Programme;**

**(iii) approves the requirement for additional workforce resources to deliver the programme; and**

**(iv) agrees to recommend to the Corporate Committee approval of the allocation of funding from the transformation reserve to meet the costs of posts that require revenue budget for up to 3 years.**

## 3. BACKGROUND

3.1 'The Learning Estate Strategy 2022 to 2032' was approved by Moray Council on 28 September 2022 (para 15 minute refers). The Strategy took account of the themes within the previous 'Developing a Strategic Approach to the Learning Estate', and of current and developing priorities, including the Climate Change targets, and set out how the new Learning Estate Team would manage investment in our Learning Estate over the next 10 years to deliver the strategic vision for a Learning Estate "that is flexible and

inspirational that supports excellence and equity for all in Moray, building a better future for our children and young people, provision of life-long learning opportunities and provides the foundations for a growing and diverse sustainable economy'.

3.2 To meet these principles and determine the investment strategies in line with the Council's 10 year capital plan the following factors are considered:

- Sufficiency - School Estate and Capacity Need
- Quality - School Condition and Suitability
- Efficiency and Sustainability – Energy, Net Zero Carbon and Repair and Maintenance
- Affordability

The location, as well as the design of facilities, contributes to energy reduction and achieving net zero, and local living; where people can meet the majority of their daily needs within a reasonable distance of their home, preferably by walking, cycling, wheeling or sustainable transport modes. This reflects the policies within the Scottish Government's National Planning Framework 4 (NPF4) which aim to create sustainable communities where services are located within a walkable catchment which promotes healthier lifestyles and reduces the need for people to drive.

## 4. STATUS

### Current Learning Estate Assessment

4.1 Currently the Moray Learning Estate consists of:

- 8 Secondary Schools
- 46 Primary Schools (1 currently mothballed)
- 63 Early Learning Centres – 24 are local authority managed (23 are in within Council settings with the exception of Lady Cathcart) and 39 partner provided (13 of these are tenants within school grounds or community buildings - with the exception of VIP)

**Determining School Capacity - Primary Schools**

4.2 An Information Report on Primary and Secondary School Capacity, Occupancy and General Purpose Spaces for 2023/24 was submitted to the Education, Children's and Leisure Services (ECLS) Committee on 20 February 2024. It highlighted a change in methodology, to better align with Scottish Government's 2014 Determining Primary School Capacity guidance and provide a more accurate indicator of current and future school capacities for planning.

4.3 Working Capacity is now used to determine annual school staffing resource need, the planning the methodology change does not impact this process. The Planning Capacity is the trigger for Developer Obligations currently where an intervention is required i.e. placement restrictions, rezoning, refurbishment, extension or new build then the threshold at which money will start to be taken from developments is currently 80% as set out within the Developer Obligations Supplementary Guidance 2020.

**Determining School Capacity - Secondary Schools**

4.4 The determination of Secondary School capacities follows a formula developed across a number of Scottish local authorities and is based on space standards, use of specific rooms and maximum class sizes.

4.5 The calculation is more complex as: the number of pupils in each year group changes each year; pupils make different subject choices each year; and, each subject area requires different and specific space (eg science v social subjects). Furthermore, it is impossible to have every classroom in a secondary school occupied 100% of the time – and to do so would severely restrict the curriculum.

4.6 The formula used to determine the number of usable spaces in a secondary school is dated and does not fully reflect the current curriculum. The Learning Estate team is currently reviewing the formula, in collaboration with our Northern Alliance partners, and wider Association of Directors of Education Scotland, to better inform our secondary school capacity calculation in the future. In addition, in order to better inform the Elgin High School extension project we have conducted analysis of the current timetabling and teaching space utilisation to determine future design improvements, effective space utilisation and better 'ways of working'. The same methodology will be adopted for future secondary school new builds and refurbishments.

**Determining School Capacity – Additional Support Needs**

4.7 Additional Support Needs (ASN) provision is provided within mainstream schools. Capacity for ASN provision is not currently detailed within Moray schools capacity reporting. There is no national guidance on how to calculate this; however, there are Scottish Negotiating Committee for Teachers (SNCT) recommendations on the number of children and young people in a class outlined in Annex 2.9 of the SNCT Handbook and is dependent on specific needs. The Learning Estate team are working with the ASN Team to determine the actual capacities of each school and to formalise assumptions and/or develop a formula for forecasting future requirements that could influence future school working capacities.

4.8 The Programme is cognisant that there has been a recent increase in numbers of children and young people that require some level of ASN support and this increase is anticipated to continue in the future. This need is already evidenced at Elgin High School, where the re-purposing of mainstream space to support ASN reduced the overall mainstream capacity of the school and necessitated a requirement for temporary modular accommodation and accelerated the need for a permanent capacity extension at the school.

4.9 The Learning Estate asset management and capital investment planning remain cognisant of the developing infrastructure requirements for ASN education support and are working with both Education and Property colleagues to determine these requirements that will align with the maturing Moray ASN Strategy.

**School Roll Forecasts**

4.10 The December 2023 School Census reports the planning capacity for the primary school estate is now 9913. There are 6677 primary children (in 2021 this was 6889) and therefore, in theory, 3236 surplus places. This gives an

average occupancy of 67.4% (68% in 2021). The primary school roll is forecast to further decrease to 6591 by 2031. This is not consistent across the 8 Associated School Groups (ASG) with some areas forecasting an increase in primary school children, by nearly 14% (Elgin HS ASG) and others have a declining primary school roll of 10% (Lossiemouth ASG), over the next 6 years. Other factors will impact on the overall surplus that can be incorporated into future operational planning including increasing ASN space provision and utilisation.

4.11 The same Census reports the planning capacity for the secondary school estate is now 6724. There are currently 5458 young people in secondary schools (5328 in 2021) and therefore in theory there are 1266 surplus spaces (1400 in 2021). This gives an average occupancy of 81.2% (79% in 2021). Again, there are differences across the 8 ASGs from a forecast increase of over 11% (Elgin HS) to small decreases of between 4% (Elgin Academy) and less than 2% (Lossiemouth HS, Milnes HS, and Speyside HS) over the next 6 years.

4.12 It is inevitable that there will be variations in capacity across the Learning Estate. However, pupil intake from catchment areas, placing requests (from out of catchment), proposals for new housing and local birth rates all have an impact, and this varies between the 8 ASGs in Moray. The Learning Estate team continue to review and analyse the school roll forecast every 6 months to identify any areas of concern – in terms of both increasing and decreasing future demands. This information will inform the development of any necessary future intervention actions for consideration by Committee.

4.13 Birth rates have declined (11%) over the last 4 years from a high of 825 registered births in 2018 to 736 in 2023.

4.14 The building output rate across Moray did decline during and after the COVID pandemic. Although the future forecast appears to show a recovery to pre-pandemic levels it is uncertain given a number of factors that will influence it including: the cost of construction; availability of skilled labour, both locally and nationally; and the increases and current uncertainty with residential mortgage rates and therefore housing demand.

4.15 The Learning Estate team, working with Planning (and local developers), will continue to regularly review the build out rate across a number of major housing developments in Elgin, Buckie and Forres and undertake sensitivity analysis and scenario planning to ascertain any changes and impacts on school rolls.

4.16 There are currently 9 primary schools in Moray operating with capacities below 50% planning capacity and forecasts indicate this number will rise to 11 schools over the next 5 years with a further 2 schools just above 50% (29% of all primary schools).

4.17 A key factor in managing current and future school roll capacity is out of catchment placing requests.

4.18 In Moray, 30% of primary school and 10% of secondary school pupils attend a school outwith of their catchment area. At the individual school level, 12

primary schools have between 30-50% of pupils from out of catchment and 4 schools have over 50% with one of these school operating with 74% of children from out of catchment. Detail on out of catchment numbers is set out on a school-by-school basis is at **Appendix 1.**

**Building Condition**

4.19 Building condition is concerned with the current state of the fabric of the school and with safety and security. Condition has a direct impact on what goes on in the school. Schools in good condition – irrespective of age or design – signal to all users (pupils, teachers, staff and community) that learning is a values activity, that the learning environment is a priority and often gives that all important 'feel good' factor.

4.20 The Property Asset Management team is currently engaged in completing Core Condition surveys for all schools. The surveys commenced in early 2022 and are planned to complete by February 2025. They are undertaken in line with the Scottish Government Condition Core Fact assessment methodology which considers a range of components and elements from the structural frame, mechanical and electrical equipment, through to the décor. Each component is consider separately and an overall rating is determined that range from:

| | |
|---|---|
| A: Good | Performing well and operating efficiently |
| B: Satisfactory | Performing adequately but showing minor deterioration |
| C: Poor | Showing major defects and/or not operating adequately |
| D: Bad | Economic life expired and/or risk failure |

A summary of overall Condition ratings for schools in Moray is set out in the table below.

| No of Schools | A Condition | B Condition | C Condition | D Condition |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| 53* | 5 | 16 | 30 | 2 |

* 11 school surveys that that are 9 years or older

4.21 A more detailed breakdown of the current school conditions is set out in **Appendix 2.**

4.22 The Condition rating is a key factor in determining and directing forward improvement works planning and informing prudent and timely decisions on ongoing maintenance to enable delivery and sustainment of the quality and asset value of school buildings over the long term. For the past 10 years, the council has followed a "make do and mend" approach. However, over the last 12 months there has been a commitment for capital funding for school condition improvement. In order to address improvement across the whole Learning Estate this has been at the determined minimum level of annual investment (index linked) that is required for at least the next 15 years. Spend will be focused on the areas of highest need (with major fabric and component renewal focus together with health and safety and other statutory building requirements a priority) taking account of the sustainability of investment, complimenting any investment within the capital programme and general maintenance costs.

**Building Suitability**

4.23 Suitability assesses the usability of the school building and how the internal space and layout of the building helps support learning and teaching.

4.24 The assessment of Suitability covers a wide range of aspects in relation to learning and teaching, community use and health promotion. It takes into account the following physical issues:

- Internal environment (temperature, ventilation, lighting, finish, cleanliness etc.);
- The size, flexibility, accessibility and number of different types of accommodation;
- Location of spaces; and
- Fittings and fixed furniture.

4.25 Suitability assessment are undertaken in line with the Scottish Government Suitability Core Facts guidance that assesses each school against an A to D category, with:

A: Performing well and operating efficiently;
B: Performing well but with minor problems;
C: Showing major problems and/or not operating optimally; and
D: Does not support the delivery of services to children and communities

A summary of Moray schools is set out in the table below.

| No of Schools | A Suitability | B Suitability | C Suitability | D Suitability |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| 53* | 39 | 14 | 0 | 0 |

* Majority of current assessments completed in 2019/20 so due reassessment over next 2 years.

4.26 There has been an improvement in the suitability over the last few years as there has been a focus of capital investment around the accessibility and the safety and security aspect of schools. Investment in further improvement and maintenance is a key focus for the future delivery programme.

4.27 A more detailed breakdown of the current school suitability assessments is set out in **Appendix 3.**

**Affordability**

4.28 A report to Moray Council on 24 January 2024 on the 2024-25 Capital Plan (para 11 of minute refers) noted a £40m capital budget requirement for financial year 24/25 and an overall 10 year capital investment in the Learning Estate of £383m to deliver new build projects, BB Condition/Suitability upgrade and refurbishment and repair and maintenance projects. Further significant capital investment in the BB Condition/Suitability upgrade projects would be required for a further 5 years (out to 2039). A breakdown of these capital costs is at **Appendix 4**.

4.29 The report stated that the prime cost driver for the Capital Plan is asset management and so the focus for reviewing the 10 year plan was asset management based. The potential areas of focus were identified as:

- Reduce the asset base
- Reduce the asset standard
- Lengthen the period over which capital is spent (effectively increasing the asset life)

4.30 In applying that focus to the Learning Estate the asset standard (condition and suitability) for schools is mandated as a B (satisfactory) minimum. In addition, if there is a reduction in planned upgrade works there is a risk the assets will continue to deteriorate and the risk likelihood of building failure will increase. The realistic options for the Learning Estate is therefore to reduce assets or lengthen programmes of work. The BB upgrade programme plan has now been extended from 10 to 15 years.

4.31 The 24 January 2024 Council report concluded the need to cap capital expenditure to contain the cost of borrowing within the agreed limit of affordability. A report on how the cap might operate will be brought to a future meeting of the Council. However, as the most significant element of the indicative 10 year plan is the Learning Estate the cap is likely to be brought most heavily to bear on planned investment in the Learning Estate and that without significant levels of Scottish Government funding the Council is unlikely to be able to achieve its aspirations.

**Status - Conclusion**

4.32 The overall status of the Moray Learning Estate is one of that reflects change and decline. Recent year-on-year falls in birth rates and minimal population growth leads to a forecast future reduction in a significant number of primary school rolls and under-utilisation of buildings. In a small number of schools there is a risk of short and longer term capacity issues that need to be fully assessed and mitigated. Capacity planning across Moray is further exacerbated by the significant number (17%) of primary school pupils on the school roll of out of catchment schools at parental request. A majority of these same schools are currently operating below the minimum condition standard required and need significant financial investment to upgrade and maintain, through informed and planned preventative asset management, and, in some cases, replacement of buildings and equipment, in order to avoid serious building failure and compromise education continuity. There is a requirement to review and rationalise the current learning estate, seeking options to ensure greater utilisation of school buildings and prioritise investment to achieve maximum and timely benefit and ensure that the future learning estate is affordable and sustainable - including meeting net zero commitments.

4.33 To be successfully accepted, any proposed future changes to deliver the future learning estate will require ongoing engagement and statutory consultation with stakeholders.

## 5. STRATEGY DELIVERY PROGRAMME

### Strategy Update/Assessment

5.1 The requirement for the establishment of a Learning Estate Delivery Programme was in response to the approval of the 'Developing a Strategic

Approach to the Learning Estate' by Council on 16 December 2020 (para 5 of minute refers) and a number of key steps and actions detailed therein. A number of which have already been implemented or are address within in-progress projects or activities.

5.2 The adoption of a programme approach assigns accountability and responsibility to the delivery of the aims and objectives of the strategy and supports a robust governance framework to monitor progress against these and time and cost to ensure that at completion of the programme that Moray has a sustainable learning estate that is fit for purpose, sustainable and affordable.

5.3 The programme has a defined themes framework for a range of projects and supporting activities of work delivered individually and collectively to ensure an alignment of effort and to reduce the likelihood of duplication. The key programme themes are:

- New Build and Major Refurbishment
- Asset Management
- Net Zero Carbon Intervention
- Estate Rationalisation
- Engagement and Consultation
- Estate Transformation

**Progress Updates**

**New Build and Major Refurbishment**

5.4 A major capital cost to the Learning Estate Programme over the next 10-15 years will be associated with new build or major refurbishment projects to meet the future primary and secondary capacity requirements or to replace and/or refurbish an entire school or component buildings as that asset has reached or is close to life expired.

5.5 A number of new build projects are in various stages of design and development and a number of other new build and/or significant refurbishment projects will need to be considered over the next 10 years. These are:

| Capital Project | Planned/Earliest Operational Date | Status |
|---|---|---|
| Elgin Academy Capacity Extension | Aug 2026 | Detailed design phase |
| Future Forres Academy | Jan 2028 | Design Brief/Site Selection |
| Future Buckie High School | Aug 2029 | Design Brief |
| Findrassie PS | Aug 2029 | Concept design (Paused) |
| Elgin South Primary Capacity Expansion (Glassgreen PS) | Aug 2028 | Options appraisal |

5.6 The current estimate of capital required to deliver these projects is £259m. The Elgin High School Capacity Extension and the Future Forres Academy projects will receive financial support from Scottish Government under the Learning Estate Investment Programme (LEIP). It is estimated this could contribute up to £50m of funding although it should be noted this would be provided via a Revenue Based Funding Model over the first 25 years of the operational life of the new buildings rather than an upfront capital contribution.

**Asset Management**

5.7 As noted earlier in this report 32 out of the 53 schools in the Moray Learning Estate have been assessed as poor (C) or bad (D) Condition – an increase of 2 schools from previous years reporting. The Learning Estate Asset Management Group has been established to develop and manage a long-term condition and suitability upgrade programme of works that will take up to 15 years to deliver. It is also seeking to develop a long-term asset management plans for every school that will consider a planned preventative maintenance approach.

5.8 A priority list for condition upgrade works has been created based on an assumption of a £5m budget for financial year 2024/25 and year-on-year annual capital investment of £10m from financial year 2025/26 onwards and for at least the next 15 years. This investment will focus on building refurbishment and component replacement, together with any statutory requirement standards, and detailed works planning is in progress. It is estimated that the capital investment required to upgrade and maintain the school estate over the next 15 years could be as high as £190m.

5.9 Planned BB upgrade works for this year includes:

- Keith Grammar – Upgraded fire alarm system
- East End Primary School – Replacement Windows and External Doors and External Wall Insulation
- Milnes High School - Windows and lighting replacement and roof upgrade
- Speyside High School - Windows and door replacement
- Forres Academy - Toilet upgrades
- East End Primary School, Millbank Primary School, Seafield Primary School and Aberlour Primary School - Drainage improvements
- Bishopmill Primary School - sports hall floor replacement
- Greenwards Primary School – air quality/ventilation improvements
- Cullen Primary School B upgrade refurbishment (Phase 1 - design)
- Mortlach Primary School (Phase 1 – design)

Final costings for each of the projects and affordability this year is still be determined. Any surplus will be allocated to BB upgrade design works to support 2025/26 and 2026/27 works planning.

**Net Zero Carbon**

5.10 The Learning Estate is acknowledged as a major contributor of carbon through inefficient energy buildings and use of fossil fuel heating sources. The programme is committed to meeting the Council targets for next zero through the adoption of a ‘fabric-first’ approach together with a phased replacement of

fossil fuel heating sources. The location of facilities also plays an important role in reducing or increasing carbon emissions.

5.11 In order to understand the 'fabric-first' requirements 5 primary schools (Cullen, Kinloss, Pilmuir, West End and Burghead) have been selected as building architypes. This is a proof of concept cost benefit assessment of net zero invention opportunities. The technical approach adopted to do this is informed Enerphit retrofit analysis which has been successfully used by other local authorities in Scotland to benchmark their assets, including schools, for net zero carbon interventions.

5.12 Enerphit is a defined standard of thermal comfort, energy efficiency and climate protection that can be adopted and retrofitted to current infrastructure with specific reference to fabric, heating and ventilation refurbishment that would delivery net zero building performance. The analysis undertaken will provide a detailed assessment of the cost and performance value of various intervention strategies that can be evidenced to support future investment decisions.

5.13 No specific budget has been provided to support net zero intervention project; but it could add an additional £20m or more to the school condition upgrade programme. The challenge is to combine both upgrade design with net zero intervention strategies to achieve maximum benefit of capital investment e.g. upgrade/replacement roofing works is synchronised with roof insulation works. The Property Asset Management team is also exploring opportunities to bid into future funding schemes that support public sector building energy efficiency improvements.

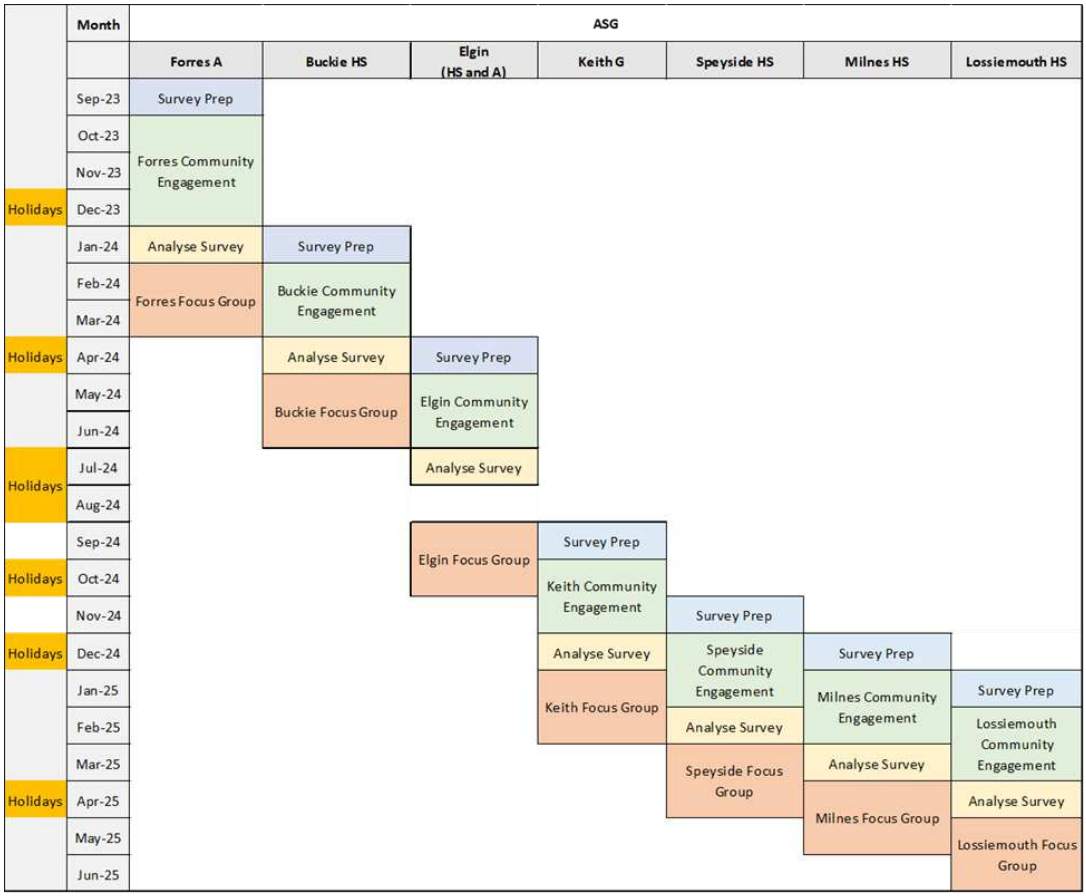
5.14 Cullen Primary School is a pilot project to combine B condition upgrade and Enerphit retrofit building efficiency works. A detailed analysis report is expected in April to support detail design and planning in financial year 2024/25 and refurbishment works in financial year 2025/26. The project also bid for Scottish Government 2024/25 SALIX funding to support the energy efficiency elements of the upgrade. Although the Council's detailed application was not successful at this time the option was given to convert to a concept application. This has been done and the application has been successful. This means that funding has been reserved for the project however the funding is conditional on the submission of an updated detailed application and a full technical assessment of the revised application which will be submitted before the deadline of 19 May 2024.

**Estate Rationalisation and Engagement**

5.15 The Learning Estate rationalisation project seeks to determine what form a future sustainable and affordable learning estate will take. It takes account of the factors discussed earlier in this report such future school rolls, capacity and need, building utilisation, condition, suitability, efficiency and affordability. This determination of the future learning estate will be undertaken in collaboration with all stakeholders to support the development of options for recommendation to elected members for consideration and approval. This could see options to repurpose spare capacity in schools, rezoning to better utilise capacity across ASGs, mothballing of schools that are not able to deliver equitable education benefit and school mergers or any combination of those. School closures options cannot be ruled out but are a considered a

final option if all other options to deliver a sustainable and affordable school are not viable.

5.16 The Learning Estate team are currently engaged in an extensive stakeholder engagement exercise across the 8 ASG to support the collaborative development of future options. This takes the form of briefings, online surveys, drop-in community information sessions and stakeholder focus groups together with the sharing of all detailed data and information relevant to the learning estate. Forres ASG and Buckie ASG engagements are currently in progress and the details of future engagement activity dates is set out below.




5.17 Options and recommendations will be reported to Elected Members at various stages over the next 18 months for review and approval of next step options.

**Consultations**

5.18 Some proposed future changes (e.g. rezoning, merging and closure) to the Learning Estate would require formal consultation in accordance with the Schools (Consultation)(Scotland) Act 2010. Although the Council will be responsible for approving the final recommendation for change the final decision with Scottish Government Ministers who need to be convinced of the education benefits of change.

5.19 Anticipated formal consultations expected take place over the next 12-18 months, dependent on resource available to support, are:

- Future of Crossroad Primary School
- Rezoning of Cluny Primary School and Millbank Primary School
- Future Forres Academy change of location

5.20 Any additional formal consultations will be dependent on proposed outcomes of the ongoing ASG engagements on estate rationalisation.

**Estate Transformation**

5.21 With the current and expected future under-utilisation of some areas of the Learning Estate there is an onus on the programme to ensure the best use of the existing assets and to review opportunities for shared use and multi-tenancy models in the future that could provide revenue savings or income generation and offset the cost of ownership of the learning estate assets.

5.22 Due to resourcing constraints, this programme theme has not been progressed beyond initial meetings with other Council services and partner organisations. With proposed additional resource there would be a renewed focus and effort over the next 12 months in this area in order to inform any future new build and refurbishment activity so that it considers the creation of adaptable and flexible spaces within some schools together with delivery of shared access security models.

5.23 Initial engagement will target the other Council Services, Community Planning Partnership and Blue light services – some of whom have previously expressed some interest in shared use of school buildings.

**Programme Progress Status**

5.24 The Learning Estate programme delivery themes are linked dependent on a detailed understanding of a number of key factors that will impact investment decisions and their priority. These factors are capacity, condition and suitability. It has already been noted that the Moray Learning Estate programme environment is one that reflects change and decline both of which need to be managed.

5.25 The current new build capital investments, the extension at Elgin High School and a new build Forres Academy, reflect interventions to address capacity need and failing building condition respectively. These major investments by the Council are financially supported by up to 50% of the construction costs as part of the Scottish Government's Learning Estate Investment Programme. This funding is outcome-based funding over 25 years and the Council will meet the full initial capital cost.

5.26 Future new build capital investments requirements include Future Buckie High School and potential new build primary schools in Elgin (Glassgreen and Findrassie), and these would also address capacity need and failing school building. However in light of affordability challenges the future design and options for delivery need to be fully justified and evidenced.

5.27 The poor condition of the majority of existing schools reflects the low investment in asset management over many years. The ongoing condition survey activity is providing detailed information to support the development of short, medium and long term asset management plans and these surveys will be complete in early 2025. A number of schools have been prioritised for condition upgrade work for 2024/25 and 2025/26 and further asset management plans will be developed over the next 12-24 months to facilitate

upgrade and maintenance planning over the next 5-10 years. However, progress in this area assumes the support provided by the appointment of a dedicated learning estate asset manager.

5.28 The cost of ownership of the current learning estate is significant. The in-progress ASG level engagement with all learning estate stakeholders is informing the estate rationalisation task and options development process and although some early options may be presented to councillors for consideration some will take longer to develop. As part of this, the promotion and adoption of shared use assets are an option to address under-utilisation of the estate. With support from other services and partner agencies opportunities for share used will be jointly investigated over the next 6 months.

## 6. PROGRAMME STAFF RESOURCING

6.1 The initial staffing plan for the Learning Estate team only considered the development of the strategy not the actual capacity to delivery it. The current team configuration is unable to deliver all aspects of the strategy as the programme develops for implementation of multiple projects. Without additional staff resource a number of programme activities will be delayed or deferred – with the risk of incurring ongoing Learning Estate costs elsewhere. The table below indicates the current team resource and proposed additional resource.

| | FTE | 2024 | 2025 | 2026 | 2027 | 2028 | Funding | Responsibility |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Current | | | | | | | | |
| Learning Estate Programme Manager | 1.0 | | | | | | Revenue | |
| Senior Project Officer - New Projects | 1.0 | | | | | | Capital | LEIP3 Project Manager Forres Academy |
| Senior Project Officer - Existing Schools | 1.0 | | | | | | Revenue | Schools B Upgrade Projects/ASN/ELC/PPP Schools Management |
| Community Support Officer | 0.6 | | | | | | Revenue | Engagement and Consultation Community and Stakeholder Management |
| Communications and Engagement Officer | 1.0 | | | | | | Revenue | Programme and Project Communications and Engagement |
| Total | 4.6 | | | | | | | |
| Future | | | | | | | | |
| Asset Manager | 1.0 | | | | | | Capital | BB Upgrade and Maintenance Management and Planning |
| Project Manager - New Projects | 1.0 | | | | | | Capital | Elgin HS Extension Project Manager/ELC Projects |
| Education Support Officer | 0.5 | | | | | | Revenue | Statutory consultation education support |
| Design and Delivery Support (Education) | 0.5 | | | | | | Capital | New build projects design support and operational readiness planning |
| Project Support Officer | 0.5 | | | | | | Revenue | Programme and Project Admin |
| Community Support Officer | 0.4 | | | | | | Revenue | Engagement and Consultation Community and Stakeholder Management |
| Revised Total | 8.5 | | | | | | | |

Permenant
Term
Option to Extend

6.2 The Community Resource Officer (0.4xFTE) is already budgeted from within the Learning Estate staffing resource budget and recruitment is in progress. The Project Support Officer role will be fulfilled by the reallocation of current resources from the corporate Project Management Office which can be accommodated as a result of the conclusion of a number of projects. This

may require to be reviewed in future should there be an expansion of the corporate transformation work but would be considered at the appropriate time. These posts, together with the additional 0.5FTE Education Support Officer will facilitate the existing learning estate rationalisation projects – including future options appraisals and the associated statutory consultation processes associated with Crossroads future, possible rezoning within Buckie ASG and potential rezoning of Elgin HS primary school catchment.

It is proposed that the 0.5 ESO post is funded from the Transformation Reserve for a temporary period of up to 3 years.

## 7. SUMMARY OF IMPLICATIONS

**(a) Corporate Plan and 10 Year Plan (Local Outcomes Improvement Plan (LOIP))**

This report supports the LOIP outcomes of building a better future for children and young people in Moray and growing a diverse and sustainable economy. Together with the aims of the Corporate Plan to review and transform the learning environment.

**(b) Policy and Legal**

The Schools (Consultation) (Scotland) Act 2010 sets out the legal requirements for consultation on relevant proposals that will result in major change to schools. Any engagement and consultation activity focussing on options within ASGs and for individual schools will follow the legal requirements as set out in this Act.

The principle of seeking developer obligations for education infrastructure is not altered by revising the methodology to calculate capacities in accord with the Scottish Government's 2014 guidance. The impact is that this will likely result in a differential between the planning capacity and the current physical capacity. In the majority of cases the planning capacity is lower than the physical capacity which means there is less capacity available in schools to accommodate pupils arising from new developments, and this may impact on the level of developer obligations sought.

**(c) Financial implications**

**Capital**

The Council at its meeting on 24 January 2024 noted the need to cap capital expenditure to contain the cost of borrowing within the agreed limit of affordability. A report on how the cap might operate will be brought to a future meeting of the Council. However, as the most significant element of the indicative 10 year plan is the Learning Estate the cap is likely to be brought most heavily to bear on planned investment in the Learning Estate and the report on 24 January noted that without significant levels of Scottish Government funding the Council is unlikely to be able to achieve its aspirations for the Learning Estate.

**Revenue**

When the Council approved the budget for 2024/25 on 28 February 2024 (paragraph 7 of the Minute refers) it balanced only by using reserves.

The indicative 3 year budget shows a likely requirement to continue to make savings in the order of £13 million in the next two years. All financial decisions must be made in this context and only essential additional expenditure should be agreed in the course of the year. In making this determination the committee should consider whether the financial risk to the Council of incurring additional expenditure outweighs the risk to the Council of not incurring that expenditure, as set out in the risk section below and whether a decision on funding could reasonably be deferred until the budget for future years is approved.

As the budget has been balanced using reserves and reduced free general reserves to the policy minimum, this would use further earmarked reserves of approximately £40,000 in 2024/25 and increase savings required in 2025/26 if approved.

The proposed increase in Learning Estate staffing resource would cost a minimum £266,125. This is broken down into estimated capital cost (that can be accommodated within specific project budgets) of £198,208/year and an estimated minimum revenue cost of £67,917. A breakdown of these costs is set out in the table below. The table in Para 7.2 identifies permanent or temporary status for these expanded Learning Estate team roles.

| Role | Grade | FTE | Annual Cost | Revenue/Capital |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Asset Manager | 11 | 1.0 | £75,920 | Capital |
| Project Manager | 11 | 1.0 | £75,920 | Capital |
| Education Support Officer | ESO 3 | 0.5 | £ 37,175 | Revenue |
| Dep Head Teacher | Point 8 Scale | 0.5 | £46,368 | Capital |

The 0.4FTE community support officer is already funded through Learning Estate staffing budget although the post has not yet been established and the Project Support Officer is met from existing resources.

It is proposed that the funding for the Education Support Officer is taken from the Transformation Reserve, subject to approval from the Corporate Committee.

**(d) Risk Implications**

The following risks are already identified and should be noted:

- Project indicative costs take account of current market uncertainty and inflationary forecast. There is a risk of continuing market uncertainty through the life of the programme, with a consequential

impact on costs. With the programme duration extended to 15 years there is an increased risk of future market uncertainty.

- The affordability risk has been identified within the Finance implications.

- The programme anticipates and is planning for change. The majority of change within the Learning Estate will need to be undertaken in accordance with the 2010 Statutory Guidance. There is a risk of local stakeholder challenge, non-agreement to change by elected members and Scottish ministers overturning a Council recommendation. To mitigate this risk, consistent and persistent robust stakeholder communication and engagement is key to ensure all parties are aware and supportive of the benefits of change.

- Changes to current proposals for new schools, extensions or rezoning as a result of changing school roll forecasts may result in developer obligations having to be paid back to developers.

- Changes to current proposals may result in the inability to deliver on NPF4 policies in regard to local living, placemaking, health and well-being and the transition to net zero.

**(e) Staffing Implications**
Increased staffing proposals are set out in the body of the report.

**(f) Property**
The property implications are set out in the body of the report.

**(g) Equalities/Socio Economic Impact**
The quality of the learning environment can impact on learning and attainment by as much as 16%. The condition and suitability of our learning estate, and capacity challenges associated with both growth and population decline in some areas, give rise to unequal opportunity across Moray.

The Learning Estate Strategy requirement is that all school buildings meet minimum standards and are fit for purpose.

Any future change to the Learning Estate that would come under the 2010 Statutory Guidance will be required to have completed an Integrated Impact Assessment.

**(h) Climate Change and Biodiversity Impacts**
All aspects of the Learning Estate programme will be aligned with current and future Council policy on climate change and biodiversity.

**(i) Consultations**
Head of Governance, Strategy and Performance, Chief Financial Officer, Head of Education (Chief Education Officer), Head of Housing and Property, Head of Economic Growth and Development, Legal Services Manager, Equal Opportunities Officer and Caroline O'Connor,

Committee Services Officer have been consulted and the comments received have been incorporated into the report.

## 8. CONCLUSION

8.1 **The Committee is asked to note the current status of the Moray Learning Estate and the ongoing programme to deliver a sustainable and affordable school estate that meets the educational needs of the future. A significant capital investment spread over at least 15 years is required to support the programme and the detailed investment is qualified and quantified for review. Finally, to assist in the effective and efficient delivery of the projects within the strategic programme the Committee is asked to agree the request for additional staff resources for the Learning Estate Team.**

Authors of Report: Andy Hall, Programme Manager (Learning Estate)

Background Papers: Information Report to ECLS Committee on 20 February 2024: Primary and Secondary School Capacity, Occupancy and General Purpose Spaces 2023/24

Ref:

**Appendix 1 - Primary School In-Out Catchment**

| 2023/24 (Census 2023) | | School | In catchment | | Outside catchment | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| School | Catchment | Roll | | % | | % |
| Aberlour | | 105 | 79 | 75% | 26 | 25% |
| Alves | | 77 | 24 | 31% | 53 | 69% |
| Anderson's | | 259 | 77 | 30% | 182 | 70% |
| Applegrove | | 278 | 99 | 36% | 179 | 64% |
| Bishopmill | | 381 | 304 | 80% | 77 | 20% |
| Botriphnie | | 18 | 16 | 89% | 2 | 11% |
| Burghead | | 107 | 100 | 93% | 7 | 7% |
| Cluny | | 318 | 253 | 80% | 65 | 20% |
| Craigellachie | | 46 | 28 | 61% | 18 | 39% |
| Cullen | | 102 | 90 | 88% | 12 | 12% |
| Dallas | | 30 | 21 | 70% | 9 | 30% |
| Dyke | | 72 | 47 | 65% | 25 | 35% |
| East End | | 175 | 112 | 64% | 63 | 36% |
| Findochty | | 58 | 54 | 93% | 4 | 7% |
| Glenlivet | | 16 | 16 | 100% | 0 | 0% |
| Greenwards | | 326 | 277 | 85% | 49 | 15% |
| Hopeman | | 141 | 120 | 85% | 21 | 15% |
| Hythehill | | 287 | 207 | 72% | 80 | 28% |
| Keith | | 325 | 281 | 86% | 44 | 14% |
| Kinloss | | 221 | 199 | 90% | 22 | 10% |
| Knockando | | 44 | 30 | 68% | 14 | 32% |
| Lhanbryde | | 156 | 144 | 92% | 12 | 8% |
| Linkwood | | 295 | 170 | 58% | 125 | 42% |
| Logie | | 42 | 11 | 26% | 31 | 74% |
| Millbank | | 212 | 145 | 68% | 67 | 32% |
| Milne's | | 196 | 151 | 77% | 45 | 23% |
| Mortlach | | 125 | 120 | 96% | 5 | 4% |
| Mosstodloch | | 179 | 150 | 84% | 29 | 16% |
| Mosstowie | | 56 | 28 | 50% | 28 | 50% |

| 2023/24 (Census 2023) | | School | In catchment | | Outside catchment | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| School | Catchment | Roll | | % | | % |
| New Elgin | | 364 | 198 | 54% | 166 | 46% |
| Newmill | | 67 | 46 | 69% | 21 | 31% |
| Pilmuir | | 124 | 108 | 87% | 16 | 13% |
| Portessie | | 121 | 88 | 73% | 33 | 27% |
| Portgordon | | 43 | 33 | 77% | 10 | 23% |
| Portknockie | | 67 | 62 | 93% | 5 | 7% |
| Rothes | | 80 | 72 | 90% | 8 | 10% |
| Rothiemay | | 55 | 41 | 75% | 14 | 25% |
| Seafield | | 358 | 232 | 65% | 126 | 35% |
| St Gerardine | | 300 | 158 | 53% | 142 | 47% |
| Tomintoul | | 29 | 27 | 93% | 2 | 7% |
| West End | | 185 | 119 | 64% | 66 | 36% |
| St Peter's | | 102 | | | | |
| St Sylvester's | | 95 | | | | |
| St Thomas | | 38 | | | | |
| | Moray Roll | 6675 | | | | |
| | Less RC pupils | 235 | | | | |
| | Totals | 6440 | 4537 | 70% | 1903 | 30% |

# Appendix 2 - School Condition

| Name | ASG | Report Date | Roofs | Floors & Stairs | Ceilings | Ext. Walls, Windows & Doors | Int. Walls & Doors | Sanitary Services | Mechanical | Electrical | Decoration | Fixed Int. Facilities, Furniture & Fitting | External Areas | Outdoor Sports Facilities & Permanent | Overall Score | Condition Category |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | | 15% | 7% | 1% | 20% | 7% | 5% | 14% | 11% | 2% | 5% | 10% | 3% | | |
| Buckie High School | Buckie | Oct-21 | D | D | C | C | C | D | C | C | C | B | C | B | 45.25 | C |
| Cluny Primary School | Buckie | Apr-22 | C | C | B | C | C | B | B | A | C | B | D | B | 60.00 | C |
| Cullen Primary School | Buckie | Jun-22 | C | C | C | D | B | C | D | C | C | C | D | B | 41.50 | C |
| Findochty Primary School | Buckie | Jul-22 | C | C | B | C | B | B | C | B | C | B | C | C | 57.25 | C |
| Millbank Primary School | Buckie | Jul-22 | C | C | B | B | B | B | B | B | C | B | C | B | 66.50 | B |
| Portessie Primary School | Buckie | Aug-22 | C | C | B | C | C | B | C | B | C | B | C | B | 56.25 | C |
| Portgordon Primary School | Buckie | Sep-22 | C | C | C | C | C | B | D | C | C | B | C | NA | 48.97 | C |
| Portknockie Primary School | Buckie | Oct-22 | B | C | C | B | C | B | C | C | C | C | C | B | 60.75 | B |
| St Peters Primary School | Buckie | Dec-22 | C | B | C | C | C | B | D | C | C | B | B | NA | 53.35 | C |
| Bishopmill Primary School | Elgin Ac | Aug-23 | C | B | C | C | C | C | C | C | C | D | C | C | 50.50 | C |
| East End Primary School | Elgin Ac | Apr-23 | C | C | B | C | B | C | B | B | C | B | D | B | 57.75 | C |
| Elgin Academy (PPP) | Elgin Ac | Apr-12 | A | A | A | A | A | A | A | A | A | A | A | A | 100.00 | A |
| Seafield Primary School | Elgin Ac | May-23 | B | B | B | B | C | B | A | A | B | B | C | B | 77.00 | B |
| St Sylvesters Primary School | Elgin Ac | Jun-23 | B | C | B | C | B | B | C | D | C | C | D | B | 52.50 | C |
| West End Primary School | Elgin Ac | Jul-23 | C | C | B | C | C | C | C | B | C | C | C | B | 53.75 | C |
| Elgin High School (DBFM) | Elgin High | Aug-17 | A | A | A | A | A | A | A | A | A | A | A | A | 100.00 | A |
| Greenwards Primary School | Elgin High | Nov-22 | C | B | B | B | B | B | C | B | C | B | C | C | 64.00 | B |
| Linkwood Primary School | Elgin High | Jan-21 | A | A | A | A | A | A | A | A | A | A | A | A | 100.00 | A |
| Mosstowie Primary School | Elgin High | Apr-23 | C | B | B | B | B | B | D | C | D | B | B | B | 60.50 | B |
| New Elgin Primary School | Elgin High | Jan-23 | C | B | C | C | B | B | B | B | C | C | C | B | 61.75 | B |
| Andersons Primary School | Forres | Feb-22 | B | B | B | B | B | C | B | B | B | B | B | B | 73.75 | B |
| Applegrove Primary School | Forres | Feb-22 | C | B | B | B | C | B | A | A | B | B | C | C | 72.50 | B |
| Dyke Primary School | Forres | Oct-21 | C | C | C | D | C | A | D | C | B | B | C | B | 46.50 | C |
| Forres Academy | Forres | Oct-21 | D | D | D | D | D | D | B | C | C | C | C | C | 39.75 | D |
| Kinloss Primary School | Forres | Mar-22 | C | C | B | B | B | C | C | C | C | B | D | B | 56.50 | C |
| Logie Primary School | Forres | Oct-21 | D | C | B | C | B | C | C | C | D | B | C | B | 49.75 | C |
| Pilmuir Primary School | Forres | Mar-22 | C | C | B | C | B | B | B | B | C | C | B | B | 62.75 | B |
| Alves Primary School | Forres | May-22 | D | D | C | D | C | B | C | C | C | B | D | C | 39.50 | D |
| Dallas Primary School | Forres | May-22 | C | C | B | B | B | B | B | C | C | B | C | B | 63.75 | B |
| Botriphnie Primary School | Keith | Aug-23 | C | C | B | C | B | B | C | C | C | B | C | NA | 54.64 | C |
| Crossroads Primary School | Keith | Oct-22 | D | C | C | D | C | C | C | C | C | C | C | NA | 40.98 | C |
| Keith Grammar School | Keith | Jan-24 | C | C | B | C | B | B | B | B | C | C | C | B | 60.25 | B |
| Keith Primary School (PPP) | Keith | Jan-12 | A | A | A | A | A | A | A | A | A | A | A | NA | 100.00 | A |
| Newmill Primary School | Keith | Sep-23 | B | B | C | B | B | B | C | C | C | C | C | B | 64.25 | B |
| Rothiemay Primary School | Keith | Sep-23 | C | B | B | C | C | B | C | C | C | C | C | B | 54.00 | C |
| St Thomas Primary School | Keith | Jan-24 | D | B | B | C | B | C | C | C | C | B | C | NA | 51.29 | C |
| Burghead Primary School & Public | Lossiemouth | May-23 | C | C | B | C | C | C | C | C | C | C | B | NA | 52.84 | C |
| Hopeman Primary School | Lossiemouth | Jan-14 | B | B | B | B | B | B | C | A | B | B | B | B | 74.25 | B |
| Hythehill Primary School | Lossiemouth | Jan-14 | C | C | C | C | B | C | C | C | C | C | B | B | 55.00 | C |
| Lossiemouth High School | Lossiemouth | Apr-22 | A | A | A | A | A | A | A | A | A | A | A | A | 100.00 | A |
| St Gerardines Primary School | Lossiemouth | Sep-13 | B | A | B | B | B | B | A | A | B | B | C | B | 80.50 | B |
| Lhanbryde Primary School | Milnes | Oct-13 | B | B | B | B | B | B | C | D | B | B | B | B | 66.00 | B |
| Milnes High School | Milnes | Dec-14 | D | C | B | C | B | C | C | C | C | C | C | B | 49.00 | C |
| Milnes Primary School | Milnes | May-14 | C | C | B | C | B | B | C | D | C | B | B | B | 55.00 | C |
| Mosstodloch Primary School | Milnes | Feb-23 | C | C | B | D | C | D | C | C | C | C | B | B | 47.25 | C |
| Aberlour Primary School | Speyside | Feb-24 | B | B | B | B | B | B | C | B | C | B | B | B | 71.00 | B |
| Craigellachie Primary School | Speyside | Mar-24 | B | B | B | C | C | C | C | C | C | C | C | B | 56.50 | C |
| Glenlivet Primary School | Speyside | May-13 | C | B | B | C | B | B | D | D | B | B | B | NA | 53.09 | C |
| Knockando Primary School | Speyside | Jun-13 | D | B | C | D | B | B | B | D | C | B | B | B | 51.25 | C |
| Mortlach Primary School | Speyside | Feb-24 | D | C | B | B | C | C | C | C | C | B | C | NA | 52.84 | C |
| Rothes Primary School | Speyside | Jun-13 | B | B | B | B | B | B | C | C | B | B | B | B | 68.75 | B |
| Speyside High School | Speyside | Sep-14 | B | C | C | D | C | C | C | B | C | C | C | B | 52.25 | C |
| Tomintoul Primary School & Public | Speyside | May-13 | C | B | B | C | B | B | B | D | B | B | C | B | 58.25 | C |

| cat. | val. | Definition |
|---|---|---|
| A | 1.00 | Good - Performing well and operating efficiently |
| B | 0.75 | Satisfactory - Performing adequately but showing minor deterioration |
| C | 0.50 | Poor - showing major defects and/or not operating adequately |
| D | 0.25 | Bad - Life expired and/or serious risk of imminent failure |
| NA | | Not Applicable |

| Name | Last Survey | Due Date | Functionality | Accessibility | Environment | Safety & Security | Fixed F&F |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | | 50% | 15% | 15% | 10% | 10% |
| Aberlour Primary School | 12.03.20 | 12.03.25 | A | A | B | A | B |
| Alves Primary School | 20.10.20 | 20.10.25 | A | A | B | A | B |
| Andersons Primary School | 28.10.20 | 28.10.25 | A | B | B | A | B |
| Applegrove Primary School | 28.10.20 | 28.10.25 | A | A | B | A | B |
| Bishopmill Primary School | 04.03.24 | 04.03.29 | B | B | B | B | B |
| Botriphnie Primary School | 11.03.20 | 11.03.25 | B | B | C | B | B |
| Buckie High School | 24.01.23 | 24.01.28 | A | B | B | A | B |
| Burghead Primary School | 15.01.24 | 14.01.29 | B | A | B | B | B |
| Cluny Primary School | 01.03.20 | 01.03.25 | A | B | B | A | B |
| Craigellachie Primary School | 01.03.20 | 01.03.25 | B | B | C | B | B |
| Crossroads Primary School* | 01.03.20 | 01.03.25 | B | B | C | B | B |
| Cullen Primary School | 29.01.24 | 28.01.29 | B | A | C | B | B |
| Dallas Primary School | 29.10.20 | 29.10.25 | A | B | B | A | B |
| Dyke Primary School | 28.10.20 | 28.10.25 | A | A | B | A | B |
| East End Primary School | 01.10.20 | 01.10.25 | A | A | B | A | B |
| Elgin Academy | 01.04.18 | 01.04.23 | A | A | A | A | A |
| Elgin High School | 01.04.18 | 01.04.23 | A | A | A | A | A |
| Findochty Primary School | 01.03.20 | 01.03.25 | A | A | B | A | B |
| Forres Academy | 22.05.23 | 21.05.28 | A | A | B | A | B |
| Glenlivet Primary School | 01.03.20 | 01.03.25 | A | B | B | A | B |
| Greenwards Primary School | 01.10.20 | 01.10.25 | A | A | B | A | B |
| Hopeman Primary School | 01.10.20 | 01.10.25 | A | A | B | A | B |
| Hythehill Primary School | 01.10.20 | 01.10.25 | A | A | A | A | A |
| Keith Grammar School | 11.03.20 | 11.03.25 | A | A | B | A | B |
| Keith Primary School (New) | 01.10.20 | 01.10.25 | A | A | A | A | A |
| Kinloss Primary School | 24.01.24 | 23.01.29 | B | B | B | B | B |
| Knockando Primary School | 01.10.20 | 01.10.25 | A | A | B | A | B |
| Lhanbryde Primary School | 01.01.21 | 01.01.26 | A | A | A | A | A |
| Linkwood | 01.10.20 | 01.10.25 | A | A | A | A | A |
| Logie Primary School | 01.03.20 | 01.03.25 | A | B | B | A | B |
| Lossiemouth High School | 01.03.20 | 01.03.25 | A | A | A | A | A |
| Millbank Primary School | 24.01.23 | 24.01.28 | A | A | A | A | A |
| Milnes High School | 26.02.24 | 25.02.29 | B | B | C | B | B |
| Milnes Primary School | 01.03.20 | 01.03.25 | A | A | B | A | B |
| Mortlach Primary School | 20.03.24 | 20.03.29 | B | B | C | B | B |
| Mosstodloch Primary School | 01.10.20 | 01.10.25 | A | A | B | A | B |
| Mosstowie Primary School | 01.10.20 | 01.10.25 | A | A | B | A | B |
| New Elgin Primary School | 01.03.20 | 01.03.25 | A | A | B | A | B |
| Newmill Primary School | 01.10.20 | 01.10.25 | A | A | B | A | A |
| Pilmuir Primary School | 16.02.24 | 15.02.29 | B | A | D | B | B |
| Portessie Primary School | 01.03.20 | 01.03.25 | A | B | B | A | B |
| Portgordon Primary School | 01.03.20 | 01.03.25 | B | B | A | A | B |
| Portknockie Primary School | 01.03.20 | 01.03.25 | A | A | B | A | B |
| Rothes Primary School | 12.03.20 | 12.03.25 | A | A | A | A | A |
| Rothiemay Primary School | 01.10.20 | 01.10.25 | A | A | B | A | B |
| Seafield Primary School | 01.10.20 | 01.10.25 | A | A | B | A | B |
| Speyside High School | 12.03.20 | 12.03.25 | A | A | B | B | A |
| St Gerardines Primary School | 01.03.20 | 01.03.25 | A | A | A | A | A |
| St Peters Primary School | 01.10.20 | 01.10.25 | B | B | B | A | B |
| St Sylvesters Primary School | 01.03.20 | 01.03.25 | A | A | C | A | B |
| St Thomas Primary School | 01.03.20 | 01.03.25 | A | A | B | A | B |
| Tomintoul Primary School & Public Library | 01.10.20 | 01.10.25 | A | A | B | A | B |
| West End Primary School | 11.01.24 | 10.01.29 | B | B | B | A | B |

Appendix 4 - Learning Estate (Indicative) Capital Plan

| Area | Capital Project | Project Details | 2023/24 £000s | 2024/25 £000s | 2025/26 £000s | 2026/27 £000s | 2027/28 £000s | 2028/29 £000s | 2029/30 £000s | 2030/31 £000s | 2031/32 £000s | 2032/33 £000 | Total £000 |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Schools H&S | Legionella works - Schools | | 15 | 15 | 15 | 15 | 15 | 15 | 15 | 15 | 15 | 15 | 150 |
| Schools - H&S | Schools -Fire, Safety and Security - Minor Works | Improvements to meet safety and security standards (incl. fire) | 200 | 150 | 150 | 150 | 150 | 150 | 150 | 150 | 150 | 150 | 1,550 |
| Schools Estate | Schools accessibility | | 40 | 40 | 40 | 40 | 40 | 40 | 40 | 40 | 40 | 40 | 400 |
| School Estate | Learning Estate Strategy | Total of refurb/new builds - to be drawn down as strategy is developed | 1,008 | 32,508 | 52,758 | 55,750 | 44,000 | 27,500 | 18,410 | 37,000 | 10,000 | 10,750 | 289,684 |
| Schools Estate | Building element replacement | Transition to BB | 1,000 | 1,000 | | | | | | | | | 2,000 |
| School Estate | Schools - BB | Investment to bring all schools to B for condition and B for suitability | 3,000 | 6,500 | 10,000 | 10,000 | 10,000 | 10,000 | 10,000 | 10,000 | 10,000 | 10,000 | 89,500 |
| | | Total | 5,263 | 40,213 | 62,963 | 65,955 | 54,205 | 37,705 | 28,615 | 47,205 | 20,205 | 20,955 | 383,284 |

**Breakdown of line 5 (Max Risk)**
**Learning Estate Strategy**

| Area | Capital Project | Project Details | 2023/24 £000s | 2024/25 £000s | 2025/26 £000s | 2026/27 £000s | 2027/28 £000s | 2028/29 £000s | 2029/30 £000s | 2030/31 £000s | 2031/32 £000s | 2032/33 £000 | Total £000 |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| School Estate | Elgin HS Modular Unit | 2 classroom unit planned on site until 2026 | 8 | 8 | 8 | | | | | | | | 24 |
| Schools - New Build | Extension to Elgin High | Capacity increase to 1150 - internal refurbishment and new annex (LEIP 2) | 500 | 6,750 | 11,050 | 1,000 | | | | | | | 19,300 |
| Schools - New Build | Future Buckie Campus | Secondary community campus - hybrid approach with new build and refurbishment) | 250 | | 1,000 | 29,750 | 39,500 | 17,500 | 1,500 | | | | 89,500 |
| Schools - New Build | Future Forres Academy | Secondary community campus - new build (LEIP 3) | 250 | 25,750 | 40,000 | 20,000 | 1,500 | | | | | | 87,500 |
| Schools - New Build, Extension, Refurbuishment | Capacity Extension - Elgin South | Options for justification:<br>1. Extension of Greenward PS Extensions (2025-2028)<br>2. New school - Glassgreen (2029-2033) | | | 350 | 2,500 | 1,500 | | 11,750 | 12,500 | 2,500 | | 31,100 |
| Schools - New Build, Extension, Refurbuishment | Capacity Extension - Elgin North | Options for justification:<br>1. Extension of Seafield PS Extensions (2025-2028)<br>2. New school - Findrassie (2029-2033) | | | 350 | 2,500 | 1,500 | | 5,160 | 14,500 | 7,500 | 750 | 32,260 |
| Schools - Refurbishment | Milnes HS refurbishment | Conditon and Suitability Upgrade/Maintain | | | | | | 10,000 | | | | | 10,000 |
| Schools - Refurbishment | Keith Grammar refurbishment | Conditon and Suitability Upgrade/Maintain | | | | | | | | 10,000 | | | 10,000 |
| Schools - Refurbishment | Speyside HS refurbishment | Conditon and Suitability Upgrade/Maintain | | | | | | | | | | 10,000 | 10,000 |
| | | **Total** | 1,008 | 32,508 | 52,758 | 55,750 | 44,000 | 27,500 | 18,410 | 37,000 | 10,000 | 10,750 | 289,684 |

**REPORT TO:** **EDUCATION, CHILDREN'S AND LEISURE SERVICES COMMITTEE ON 14 MAY 2024**

**SUBJECT:** **LEARNING ESTATE PROGRAMME UPDATE - FUTURE FORRES ACADEMY SITE SELECTION**

**BY:** **DEPUTE CHIEF EXECUTIVE (EDUCATION, COMMUNITIES AND ORGANISATIONAL DEVELOPMENT)**

## 1. REASON FOR REPORT

1.1 To inform the Committee on the outputs from the recent community engagement on the site selection for the Future Forres Academy new build project and seek agreement on a preferred site that can be recommended to Council for final decision.

1.2 This report is submitted to Committee in terms of Section III (D) (17) of the Council's Scheme of Administration relating to the School Estate to consider and make recommendations on capital and minor works programmes within the remit of the Committee.

## 2. RECOMMENDATION

**2.1 It is recommended that Committee:**

**i) note the outcome of the option appraisal by the design team regarding the location of a new school (Para 3.8-3.10);**

**ii) note the outcome of the public engagement regarding the location of a new school (Para 4.1- 4.3); and**

**iii) agree that the Applegrove/Roysvale option is the preferred site for the new school for recommendation to Moray Council on 22 May 2024 for approval (Para 5.1 to 5.5).**

## 3. BACKGROUND

3.1 Following approval at the Education, Children's and Leisure Services Committee on 19 September 2023 (para 16 of the minute refers), a feasibility study to support Future Forres Academy Project was instructed and undertaken by Hub North Scotland supported by JM Architects, Goodson Associates (Civil and Structural Engineers, Rybka (Mechanical and Electrical

Engineers), Currie and Brown (Quantity Surveyors), The Learning Crowd (Educationalists) and Ryder (Consultation). The final report is at **Appendix 1.**

3.2 In addition to new build proposals, consideration was given to refurbishment of the current building. This would have entailed a significant cost and disruption to the school users over a 3 year period with all or a majority of the users required to be decanted into temporary school accommodation (in either the school car park and/or adjacent Roysvale common good land). The study concluded that a refurbishment option would not offer value for money and be unlikely to meet the aspirations of the local community. It was therefore decided to progress with a new build solution.

3.3 A further objective of the feasibility study was to complete an appraisal of three site options suitable for a new build school - (1) Applegrove/Roysvale (Central), (2) Lochyhill (East) and Grantown Road (South) - against fourteen factors weighted with respect to national policies that Moray Council are aligned with. This includes the National Planning Framework 4 (NPF4), local living and 20 minute neighbourhoods, climate change and reducing carbon emissions policies. Overall project costs were not a factor considered at this stage. These initial 3 sites options are shown in Figure 1.


*Figure 1. Potential locations for Future Forres Academy*

3.4 This scoring matrix and outcomes from the site appraisal are set out in the table below.

3.5 The outcome of the appraisal supported the decision to discount the Grantown site as a viable option. There were a number of factors contributing to this decision not least its edge of town location (both now and in the future),

the presence of high pressure gas pipes, low voltage mains and services cables within the site boundary and the poor transport infrastructure to and around the site that to improve would incur significant cost.

| Criteria | Weighting | Lochyhill | | Applegrove/Roysvale | | Forres - Grantown Road | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | % | Score | Weighted Score | Score | Weighted Score | Score | Weighted Score |
| Context (scale, location, civic presence,opportunities for joining up services) | 15 | 2 | 30 | 3 | 45 | 1 | 15 |
| Place (SMART Objectives) | 15 | 3 | 45 | 4 | 60 | 2 | 30 |
| Transport (existing infrastructure, safer routes to schools, car parking) | 10 | 1 | 10 | 3 | 30 | 1 | 10 |
| Flood Risk | 10 | 3 | 30 | 2 | 20 | 3 | 30 |
| Sustainability (reuse of buildings) | 5 | 1 | 5 | 2 | 10 | 1 | 5 |
| Landscaping & Ecology (existing topography/ trees) | 5 | 3 | 15 | 3 | 15 | 3 | 15 |
| Planning Considerations (LDP, policies, settlement boundary, listed buildings, conservation areas) | 5 | 3 | 15 | 3 | 15 | 2 | 10 |
| Utility Infrastructure (drainage separate) | 5 | 1 | 5 | 3 | 15 | 1 | 5 |
| Underground Risks (non utility services, archaeology) | 5 | 2 | 10 | 2 | 10 | 3 | 15 |
| Construction (access, disruption, decant) | 5 | 3 | 15 | 2 | 10 | 3 | 15 |
| Orientation, massing and shading | 5 | 3 | 15 | 2 | 10 | 3 | 15 |
| Ground Conditions | 5 | 3 | 15 | 3 | 15 | 3 | 15 |
| Drainage | 5 | 3 | 15 | 2 | 10 | 2 | 10 |
| Future Expansion | 5 | 4 | 20 | 2 | 10 | 4 | 20 |
| | | | | | | | |
| **Total** | **100** | | **245** | | **275** | | **210** |
| | | | | | | | |
| **Ranking** | | | **2** | | **1** | | **3** |

| Score | |
|---|---|
| 4 | Fully Delivers |
| 3 | Mostly Delivers |
| 2 | Delivers to a Limited Extent |
| 1 | Does not Deliver |

Site Appraisal Scoring Matrix

3.6 It should be noted that for the design team appraisal, 30% of the score was shared between the Context and Place criteria. This took account of the key national and local strategies and policies as defined in National Planning Framework 4 and Moray Local Development Plan 2020 and adopted by Moray to improve people's lives by making sustainable, liveable and productive spaces. These support 20 minute neighbourhoods, reducing car-based and maximising active travel journeys and town centre economic sustainability. It was the two key criteria of Context and Place that favoured the central location of the Applegrove/Roysvale site and scored it higher than the Lochyhill situated on the eastern boundary of the town.

3.7 In terms of the other criteria both sites scored equally overall – with some criteria favouring a Lochyhill site over an Applegrove/Roysvale site. Both sites were considered viable options for a new build development, with the differences between them, considered within the selection criteria, viewed as design challenges and/or project risks and issues and not indicators of non-viability. The following is noted as key supporting information in determining a preferred site for construction:

**Lochyhill**

- Supports a design solution that would incorporate a new build secondary school constructed with an associated 3G pitch and car park on site;
- Provides minimal design constraints and meets the education strategic objectives;
- Would not meet the Moray place-based policy.
- Would see the current school demolished with the exception of the swimming pool, hydrotherapy pool and fitness suite which would remain as a standalone self-sufficient asset;
- Delivers an affordable design within an area of 5.8 hectares (58,000 sqm). This would not support a requirement for future expansion - further land would need to be acquired to facilitate this;
- The site is not Council owned and would need to be purchased from the current landowners – at market rate for development land;
- Limited flooding risk given the lower groundwater table supporting a simpler groundworks design;
- Site drainage not complex on site but would still require works to connect to Forres Waste Water Treatment site to the west;
- Requires the development of new safer routes to school:
- Does not provide an opportunity to develop a 5-18 campus model with existing primary school;
- Requires road improvements including potential requirement for a new roundabout on the A96 to provide overall site access from the school and future residential site;
- Improvement and upgrade to site utility connections to meet increased demand; and
- Could impact local businesses due to edge of town location.

**Applegrove/Roysvale Park**

- Supports a design solution that would incorporate a new build secondary school and accessible parking constructed on the new site together with the retention and improvement of the majority of current Roysvale Park playfields and repurposing of existing school site to accommodate a 3G pitch, main car park and soft landscaping;
- Meets the educational strategic objectives and place-based policy
- Would see the current school demolished with the exception of the swimming pool, hydrotherapy pool and fitness suite which would remain as a standalone self-sufficient asset and the current school site redeveloped with a 3G pitch and car park;
- The Council owns the site for new school building;
- Plans for the bus drop off and playing fields are on inalienable common good land. Its appropriation would require legal consent following a statutory consultation;
- Would maintain the majority of the common good as green space for community use with mitigations planned to improve current surface water drainage issues;
- Options to use or improve existing safe routes to school;
- Opportunity to develop a 5-18 campus with adjacency of existing primary school with benefits of shared management, curriculum and pastoral transition (mainstream and ASN), shared PEF investment and access to extended learning for primary
- Supports a pedestrian priority campus with a dedicated bus/coach drop off which would avoid road congestion;
- Provides a central location for the school with a good opportunity for a united civic presence;
- Provides links to other existing green/health and wellbeing spaces providing both educational and community benefit; and,
- Provides good opportunities for educational links during construction and maintains the economic benefits to the surrounding businesses.

3.8 The options for 'future proofing' have been considered within the options appraisal with Lochyhill scoring higher than the Applegrove/Roysvale site. This accounted for the fact that more land is be currently available on the Lochyhill site as there was no existing residential property constraints. This will change should residential development progress in the future in accordance with the Local Development Plan (LDP). However, there is no allowance for this within the planned site footprint or the associated additional land acquisition costs. School roll forecasts indicate that even with a 100% increase on current maximum forecast housing output rate over the next 15 years (equating to 1600 new houses) the planned school capacity will be more than adequate and no extension is foreseen. Should the situation change there is provision within the current LDP for land to be available for a new primary school on the wider Lochyhill development site which would allow the Applegrove site to be considered for any future expansion of the new Forres Academy.

3.9 The Applegrove/Roysvale site is owned and administered by Moray Council while Lochyhill is privately owned. The Council would need to formally acquire the Lochyhill site land at market value in order to develop on it. However, a major area of the Applegrove/Roysvale site is classed as inalienable Common Good and hence the Council would need to remove the constraints this

imposes to allow a main contractor to commence works on site in accordance with the programme.

3.10 The current intended use of Common Good land is as temporary construction site access, laydown and project 'life support' area for the duration of the construction project (estimated around 32 months). This same area would be improved to support long term use as a green playing field site within the final school design. It is intended that a 12m landstrip adjacent to the Sanquhar Road would be repurposed and developed as a bus drop off lane. There are other site options that could be considered as alternatives to the Common Good (within the proposed new car park or on Burdsyard Road to the south of the site), however these would be further from the new school building. Work is underway to consider this further and an update will be provided at the Committee meeting.

3.11 The feasibility report concludes that if the Council is confident that the Common Good constraint can be removed prior to the planned start of construction on site (programmed for July 2025) then the recommendation, based on all the selection criteria considered, is that the Applegrove/Roysvale site would offer the best option for Moray Council to deliver a new build school.

3.12 Currie and Brown prepared high level cost models for each of the 3 sites as part of the feasibility study. The estimated construction costs for each site option have not been provided within this report due to their commercial sensitivity; however, a comparison of additional authority costs is provided in the table below. The additional cost to develop the Lochyhill site and anticipated off site works is estimated at £3,372,300 above that for the Applegrove/Roysvale site.

| Site Option | Authority Costs | Detail |
|---|---|---|
| Applegrove/Roysvale | £4,286,500 | Design and project risk allowance, legal costs/fees, IT equipment, furniture |
| Lochyhill | £7,658,800 | As above +<br>Off site works: cost of land for development, improvement to access roads (including A96) and pathways, and improvements and upgrades to site utilities (water, drainage, electricity). |

3.13 Given the future importance of the site selection to young people, parents/carers and residents of Forres, it was agreed at the Special Education, Children's and Leisure Services Committee on 27 March 2024 (para 5 of the minute refers), to undertake a public engagement on the location for the new Forres Academy, with two site options, Lochyhill and Applegrove/Roysvale Park, presented.

3.14 The public engagement was completed between 28 March - 25 April 2024 with the objective to share information available and seek views on the two sites for location of the Forres Academy new build. It consisted of: an online survey and an equivalent paper version (available from the Forres Post Office and Forres Library); an information session for Forres Academy staff and

pupils held on 17 April 2024; and a community drop in session held on 18 April 2024 at Forres Town Hall. A copy of the online/paper survey is at **Appendix 2.**

## 4. PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT

4.1 The output from the public engagement online survey is summarised below with more detail analysis provided at **Appendix 3;**

- A total of 1,191 online survey submissions were received;
- The overall breakdown is 54.7% to 45.3% preference for the Lochyhill site;
- 330 respondees identified as a parent/carer of a child attending school – the breakdown within this group was 52.1% to 47.9% in favour of the Applegrove/Roysvale site;
- 518 respondees were from the Applegrove PS catchment where Applegrove/Roysvale site is located – the breakdown within this group was 62% to 38% preference for the Lochyhill site;
- 951 respondees were from within the Forres town boundary (Applegrove, Andersons and Pilmuir Primary School catchments) – the breakdown of these was 53.9% to 46.1% preference for the Lochyhill site; and,
- The total size of the respondee groups encompassing Primary and Secondary school pupils and staff was 131 – only the primary school pupil group (39 respondees) preferred the Applegrove/Roysvale site (59% to 41%). The remaining secondary school pupils (51 respondees) had a preference for the Lochyhill site (57%) over Applegrove/Roysvale (43%) and similarly the staff (41 respondees) were in favour of Lochyhill (63%) over Applegrove (37%)

4.2 The output from the public engagement paper survey is summarised below with more detailed analysis provided at **Appendix 4:**

- A total of 89 paper surveys were received;
- The preference was 85% for the Lochyhill site;

A significant number of paper surveys were completed within the last week of the engagement and there is r evidence of multiple surveys with identical content which could call into the question the validity of the results.

4.3 During the Public Engagement process a number of questions, queries and observations were submitted with respect to both sites. These were received within the survey responses, as direct e-mail correspondence to the Council and during the in person engagements. These were collated into key themes and responses provided in the form of Frequently Asked Questions list. These can be found on the Moray Council website at http://www.moray.gov.uk/moray_standard/page_151261.html

## 5. PREFERRED SITE SELECTION

5.1 In determination of the preferred site for new build Future Forres Academy a number of factors, and the risk and issues associated with these, were considered.

5.2 The feasibility report acknowledges there are a number of issues and risks associated with developing either of the 2 sites. The technical risks have been identified and the civil and structure engineers appointed to the design team have considered robust mitigation strategies that will be confirmed during the concept design stage. The construction project costs have incorporated a related risk contingency factor for both sites. Therefore the key remaining site differentiators relate to land ownership status.

5.3 The feasibility report conclusion is that if the Council are able to gain consent to use the Common Good then the Applegrove/Roysvale site is the best option for a new build school. The common good land transaction would require the consent of the Sheriff Court following a Public Consultation and due consideration by the Council. The outcome of the public consultation will be an influential consideration but the whole perspective on all of the process followed and issues, including any improvements to the site for the benefit of the community will be considered. If the Court was to reject the application the Council would need to purchase an alternative piece of land, which would increase the project delivery timescales. This is an important consideration in the context of the current condition of the Forres Academy building. Currently an allowance of 6 months has been incorporated into the project plan timeline. If consent is not forthcoming, and the Council need to pursue an alternate site (Lochyhill) then this would incur a 6 month delay to the project (moving the operational date from January 2028 to July 2028).

5.4 With the Lochyhill site the Council would need to acquire the development land at market rate and accept that the project costs would increase to near £4m to cover this acquisition and significant off site development costs and additional construction costs.

5.5 Although there is a risk that the Council will not gain legal consent for any use or development of the Roysvale site and this will result in a minimum 6 month delay while an alternate site is proposed (Lochyhill would be the alternate), There may be other options on the use of the site that would remove or significantly reduce that risk and this is being considered. There are a number of reasons to support the selection of the Applegrove/Roysvale site, summarised as:

- Central location better meets the place-based and strategic context requirements for a new community school, aligning with the NPF4 and Scotland's Learning Estate Strategy – Connecting People, Places and Learning guidance and principles;
- More cost effective option at a time when the current and future challenges on the Council capital budget are significant;
- Retains flexibility to respond to future school roll growth if required as the Lochyhill site is identified for a primary school;
- Offers educational benefits of a 5-18 campus - with adjacency of existing primary school with benefits of shared management, curriculum and pastoral transition (mainstream and ASN), shared PEF investment and access to extended learning for primary; and
- Benefit of the improvement of the Roysvale land and drainage improvement to improve community use of the green space/playing fields for the future.

5.6 The Applegrove/Roysvale site is therefore proposed as the preferred development site for the new Forres Academy and it is recommended that this site option is taken to the meeting of Moray Council on 22 May 2024 for approval.

## 6. NEXT STEPS

6.1 The proposed next steps are dependent on the Council decision on 22 May 2024. It would be to either:

- **Lochyhill**: Consult regarding the relocation of the school in accordance with the Schools (Consultation)(Scotland) Act 2010 or;

- **Applegrove/Roysvale** - consult the public regarding the Common Good use to support school construction for the duration of the project and for permanent development of bus drop off areas.

## 7. SUMMARY OF IMPLICATIONS

### (a) Corporate Plan and 10 Year Plan (Local Outcomes Improvement Plan (LOIP)

This report supports the aims of the Corporate Plan to:

- **Build thriving, resilient, empowered communities:** Learning estate fit for the future and financially sustainable - tackle the affordability and standard of our learning estate to ensure sustainability while meeting climate requirements.

and supports the LOIP outcomes:

- Building a better future for children and young people in Moray; and,
- Empowering and connecting communities.

### (b) Policy and Legal

The Lochyhill site is outside the current school boundary and therefore consultation regarding the relocation of the school in accordance with the Schools (Consultation)(Scotland) Act 2010 would require to be undertaken.

Roysvale Park is categorised as inalienable Common Good and if it is not possible to progress an alternative site layout that avoids long term use of the common good land, the Council would require to obtain consent of the Sheriff Court in terms of the Section 75(2) Local Government (Scotland) Act to appropriate the land. Section 222(2) of the Local Government (Scotland) Act 1973 requires the Council to have regard to the interests of the inhabitants of the former Burgh of Forres when administrating Common Good land.

In addition, Section 104 of the Community Empowerment (Scotland) Act 2015, which came into force on 27 June 2018, requires that before taking any decision to appropriate a Common Good asset, the Council must publish details about the proposed disposal. In publishing these details, the Council must also:

(i) notify the relevant community council and any community body that is known to have an interest in the property; and

(ii) invite those bodies to make representations in respect of the proposals.

In deciding whether or not to appropriate the land, the Council must have regard to any representations made, whether by those invited or by some other relevant party. The proposal, along with the summary of any representations received, would then form the basis of a further report to this Committee to allow it to make a decision regarding the appropriation of the site and submission for court approval.

**(c) Financial implications**

The short term financial implications of the site selection have been addressed within the report.

Although the project will receive outcome based revenue funding from the Scottish Government through Phase 3 of the Learning Estate Investment Programme (LEIP) this is calculated against the project construction costs and does not take account of any Authority Costs outwith this which would include a site acquisition and off site development costs.

**(d) Risk Implications**

The majority of risks are already covered within the report. The key risk is related to project timing delay (and associated inflationary pressures) and apply to both site options.

**Applegrove/ Roysvale**

A currently allowance of 6 months has been incorporated into the project plan timeline for the Applegrove/Roysvale site. If the legal consent to use Common Good land is refused, the Council need to pursue an alternate site (Lochyhill). This would incur a further 6 month delay to the project (moving the operational date from January 2028 to July 2028).

As discussed earlier in the report the risk of non-consent could be reduced if the final design seeks to minimise or remove the requirement to permanently repurpose and develop the land strip adjacent to Sanquhar Road.

**Lochyhill**

The Council would need to negotiate the acquisition of the site from the current owner. There is a risk that the owner would be unwilling to sell, or that the price sought would not meet affordability criteria. With similar situations in other projects the Council has promoted a compulsory purchase order (CPO) in tandem with landowner negotiations. As part of

the CPO process the Council would need to justify its requirement for that particular site (with reference to alternatives) and 18 months minimum would need to be allowed for this process (moving the operational date from January 2028 - with current 6 month contingency - to January 2029).

Early engagement with the current landowner is required to fully determine the likelihood of this.

**(e) Staffing Implications**

The requirement to undertake a form of statutory consultation on either site selection option will result in a 3-6 month increase in workload that may require external support to ensure project timescales are met. A legal cost factor has been included in the cost model.

**(f) Property**

The property implications are set out in the body of the report.

**(g) Equalities/Socio Economic Impact**

The quality of the learning environment can impact on learning and attainment by as much as 16%. The condition and suitability of our learning estate, and capacity challenges associated with both growth and population decline in some areas, give rise to unequal opportunity across Moray.

This proposal supports the Learning Estate Strategy requirement that all Learning Estate buildings meet minimum standards and are fit for purpose.

**(h) Climate Change and Biodiversity Impacts**

Whichever site is chosen there will be a requirement to consider embodied carbon within construction and whole life operational carbon generated. The scale of this overall impact will be assessed in detail as the project progresses to full business case and this will be balanced against the current operational carbon budgets. The LEIP 3 standards for both operational carbon (energy efficiency) and embodied carbon require the new build design to minimise carbon. A whole life carbon assessment and community wealth building statement will be provided during the planning application stage.

**(i) Consultations**

Head of Governance, Strategy and Performance, Chief Financial Officer, Acting Head of Economic Growth and Development, Equal Opportunities Officer and Caroline O'Connor, Committee Services Officer have been consulted and the comments received have been incorporated into the report.

## 8. CONCLUSION

**8.1 The Committee is asked to consider the Future Forres Academy project feasibility report and the preferred development site identified for a new build Forres Academy. It is also asked to consider the outputs from the**

**public engagement on the 2 site options – Applegrove/Roysvale and Lochyhill. Finally, it is asked to consider and agree with the recommendation that the Applegrove/Roysvale site be the preferred development site that is recommended to Moray Council on 22 May 2024 for review and final approval. Thereafter, a statutory consultation, dependent on the site selected and any alternative options as set out in the report will commence.**

Authors of Report: Shona Leese, Senior Project Officer (Learning Estate)
Andy Hall, Programme Manager (Learning Estate)

Appendices:
1. SSPS Project Feasibility Report
2. Public Engagement Survey
3. Online Survey Results
4. Paper Survey Results

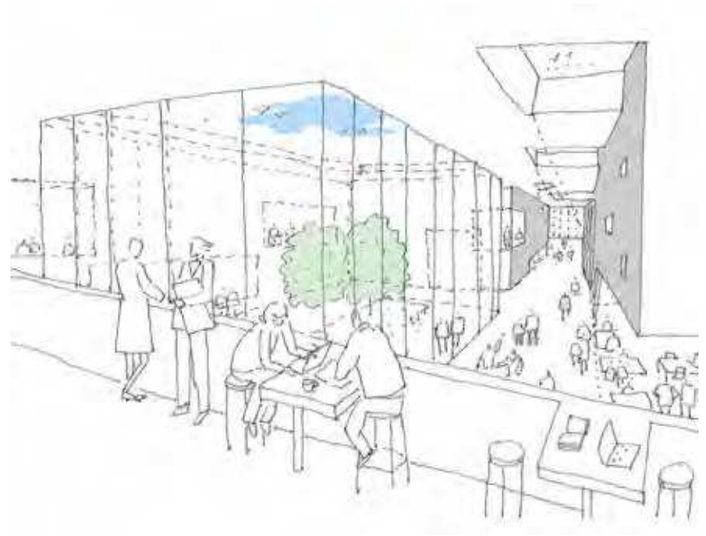
Background Papers:
SSPS Report Appendix A - Consultation
SSPS Report Appendix B - Brief
SSPS Report Appendix C - Utilities
SSPS Report Appendix D - Engineering
SSPS Report Appendix E - Site Investigations
SSPS Report Appendix F - Site Appraisal
SSPS Report Appendix G -Energy Carbon
SSPS Report Appendix H – Programme
SSPS Report Appendix J – Cost (Commercially sensitive) – available to Councillors on request

Ref: SPMAN-9425411-360

# FORRES ACADEMY

## MORAY COUNCIL

"WRAPPING A BUILDING AROUND YOUR COMMUNITY"



# FORRES ACADEMY

## MORAY COUNCIL AND HUB NORTH SCOTLAND

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|---|---|
| Project: | FORRES ACADEMY |
| Project Code: | FOR |
| Project Number: | 7118 |
| Document Title: | SSPS Phase A & B Report |
| File Name: | FOR-JMA-XX-XX-T-A-000001 |
| Revision: | P02 |
| Date: | FEBRUARY 2024 |

jmarchitects

64 Queen Street
Edinburgh, EH2 4NA
edinburgh@jmarchitects.net
t 0131 464 6100

www.jmarchitects.net
info@jmarchitects.net

# Executive Summary

This document has been prepared by jmarchitects in conjunction with Hub North Scotland Ltd., Currie and Brown, Goodson Associates, Rybka, Ryder Architecture and The Learning Crowd on behalf of Moray Council to summarise the Strategic Support Partnering Service (SSPS) Phase A and B work undertaken to date on the development of the vision for a new Forres Academy.

Over the course of the last four months the project team have worked closely with Moray Council, Forres Academy and the wider community to develop this vision which has built upon initial work undertaken as part of the pitch book authoring for the Scottish Future's Trust LEIP Phase 3 funding bid.

This document seeks to outline the SSPS Phase A and B work; visioning and strategy definition, existing information analysis, development of education briefing, lessons learnt analysis, desktop appraisal of site options, site option appraisals and recommendations as well as proposed development programme and cost plan.

Existing Forres Academy

# The Team

**Participant and Authority Client**
Moray Council - Education Department
Moray Council Office
High Street
Elgin
IV30 1BX

**Delivery Partner**
hub North Scotland
Enerco House
18 Albert St,
Aberdeen
AB25 1XG

**Architect**
jmarchitects
64 Queen Street,
Edinburgh
EH2 4NA

**Civil and Structural Engineer**
Goodson Associates
46 Carden Place
Aberdeen
AB10 1UP

**Mechanical & Electrical Engineer**
Rybka
24 Rutland Street
Edinburgh
EH1 2AN

**Quantity Surveyor**
Currie & Brown
Onyx
215 Bothwell Street
Glasgow
G2 7EZ

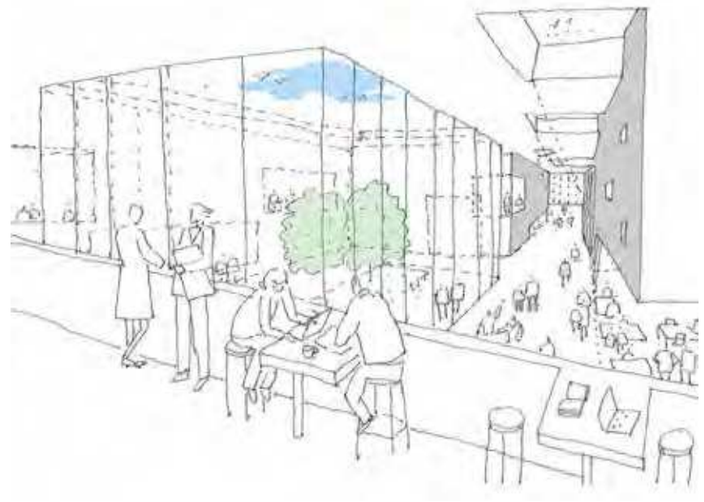
**Landscape Architect**
Ryder Architecture
Cooper's Studios
14-18 Westgate Road
Newcastle upon Tyne
NE1 3NN

**Educationalist**
The Learning Crowd
9 Hemdean Road
Caversham
Reading
RG4 7SY

**Consultation Specialist**
Ryder Architecture
Cooper's Studios
14-18 Westgate Road
Newcastle upon Tyne
NE1 3NN

# Contents

# 1.0 INTRODUCTION



# 1.1 The Need

**The Strategic Fit**

There is evidence that attainment and post-school destinations vary across Moray communities and in some areas are below average. Investment in the learning estate will respond to these issues and support the aspirations of the wider community. The Moray Council Learning Estate Strategy 2022-2032 aligns with the local priorities set out within the Local Outcome Improvement Plan (LOIP) and the Moray Council Corporate Plan. A future school will align with what is expected of infrastructure for the future and offer sustainability for both the asset and communities they serve; enabling multi-organisational working to ensure that public services are joined up and resources are used most effectively.

**Existing Condition and Suitability**

Following the criteria outlined by the Scottish Government's Condition Core Facts Survey, Forres Academy was assessed as overall Condition D – life-expired and/or at serious risk of imminent failure. There is a trend of increasing reactive maintenance spend on the existing asset and a rising sum of investment required to make much needed fabric improvement. Considerable sums have already been spent over the last few years and these have only maintained the low condition ratings and indeed not prevented further deterioration in condition.

The current Forres Academy, which originally opened in 1969, was designed for an earlier approach to educational provision and no longer reflects the needs of the community for the integration of education, skills and jobs that will support long-term resilience and sustainability.

The continued drain on resource to simply maintain the current Forres Academy at low condition and suitability standards in unsustainable.

**RAAC**

Following updated guidance regarding reinforced autoclaved aerated concrete (RAAC) from the UK Government in late 2022 Moray Council conducted desktop reviews of their whole building estate, including 54 schools. This progressed to a physical investigation in a number of buildings over the summer of 2023, which confirmed that there was RAAC present in the flat roof structure of Forres Academy.

# 1.2 The Response

In November 2022 Moray Council announced that Forres Academy was listed as its priority school to receive the Scottish Government Learning Estate Improvement Programme (LEIP) 3 funding. Consultation and engagement work was undertaken to prepare a ‘pitch book’ outlining the strategic case for funding for a new Forres Academy and the Scottish Government indicated that they would consider LEIP 3 funding bids with RAAC in mind.

Moray Council’s Education, Children’s and Leisure Services Committee decided on Tuesday 19th September 2023 to progress Forres Academy quicker by accelerating the Outline Business Case approval and to bring in external consultants (‘the project team’) to move the initial stages on to be as ready as possible when any funding announcement is made.

On 30th October 2023 the Scottish Government confirmed that the funding bid for a replacement Forres Academy had been successful.

Over the course of the last four months the project team have worked closely with Moray Council, Forres Academy and the wider community to develop a vision which has built upon the initial work undertaken as part of the pitch book authoring.

# 1.3 The Conversation

**Design Charrettes**

As part of the engagement programme for Forres Academy, two sets of design charrettes were held on 4th and 14th December 2023. Charrettes are a collaborative and hands-on way to engage with stakeholders who may not have decision-making influence over a project, but often have a wealth of knowledge, interest and enthusiasm as they represent the end users of the building and/or the wider community in which it is set.

Our charrettes were attended by three groups: staff from the existing school; pupils from the existing school; and community / elected members including parents and carers of current pupils. On the first day, each group was given an overview of the project context before completing exercises focusing on shared and large spaces, such as the grounds and approach to the school, sports facilities, dining, assembly and drama. Each group lasted approximately one hour.

The second charrette was attended by staff and pupils only, as it focused on core spaces such as classrooms, breakout space, circulation and flexible working spaces, which are not typically accessed by members of the public.

The methodology was consistent across each charrette. Attendees were split into small groups of around five to eight people, and a member of the client or design team sat with each group to facilitate discussion and take notes. The groups were presented with precedent images from existing schools, each page addressing a different type of space, and were invited to put coloured dots on the images to indicate their likes and dislikes. This was used as a prompt for further discussion to capture qualitative feedback on what could work in the new school, and what may not work so well.

It also gave the team an opportunity to ask why people held certain preferences – for example: personal preference / taste; concerns about safety, capacity, functionality, etc; or simply being presented with something new or different that may take time to get used to. This helps to assess the feedback in more depth and understand more about the aspirations and culture of the school.

Key themes included:

- Safe access routes to the school for pedestrians, reduced congestion from cars and buses, and supporting active travel where possible
- A well-defined entrance which clearly displays the name of the school, and has sufficient width to avoid bottlenecks at the start and end of the day
- Shelter, seating and activity space to make the most of the outdoors
- Larger spaces such as assembly, performance and dining should work hard and be multi purpose / flexible where possible. However, the design should ensure that flexibility, noise and adjacent circulation spaces do not distract from their function
- The school should be welcoming, light and bright, accessible and inclusive
- Sports provision should be a community asset, offering a range of sports and the ability to use facilities out of school hours
- Whilst pupils are not encouraged to loiter in the school during lunch and breaks, there is a desire for more social spaces and areas where both staff and pupils can relax or work in comfort
- Classrooms and breakout spaces should be as bright and spacious as possible, with good storage. There is a desire for robust furniture that will not easily break
- In spaces used for flexible working, breakout and socialising, attendees strongly favoured images showing different types of furniture which could support a variety of learning styles and types of work. This includes quiet / individual spaces or small booths through to larger spaces for collaborative work in bigger groups

A full report of the charrette findings, including key themes and feedback from each group on each space type, is included in Appendix A.

**Partner Survey**

In December 2023/ January 2024, a short online survey was sent to potential partners who may wish to use working space or community facilities in the school, to begin dialogue about what their requirements may be. To date, four responses have been received from Scottish Ambulance Service, NHS Grampian (x2) and Police Scotland. There has been a request for space from the latter two services, including dedicated space, drop-in desks, collaboration space, meeting rooms and a treatment room for the nurse when visiting. Other considerations include the ability to have confidential meetings / calls, secure storage and parking for operational vehicles. For partners, the benefits of shared facilities include being more visible and available to pupils and the community, and more joint working opportunities with other partners to improve service delivery overall.

# 1.4 The Brief

The Education Design Brief sets out the proposal for a new building for Forres Academy. The 'Learning Village' will provide high quality, flexible and future-proofed spaces for 1200 pupils and 40 ASN pupils in a non-denominational six year secondary school. The total proposed GIFA for the project is 14,520m2.

The term 'Learning Village' is used here to show that this is a new type of campus that is designed specifically to a set of agreed Moray Council principles that will maximise the use of the learning estate now and in the future.

The brief demonstrates how the project will deliver national and local priorities, in particular :

- National Policy including the Learning Estates Strategy and National Improvement Framework;
- Moray Council Learning Estate Strategy 2022-2032; and
- The Forres Academy Vision, Values and Aims.

The Education Design Brief has been developed closely with Moray Council and Forres Academy Senior Leaders and involved engagement with school stakeholders including staff, pupils, parents and community representatives. It takes account of their aspirations but is grounded in ensuring the project :

- Delivers the Scottish Futures Trust Space Standards and is within cost metrics for a project of this size;
- Sets clear Strategic Objectives and success measures that provide a framework for delivery and for monitoring impact;
- Takes account of the school context in terms of curriculum, ways of working, pastoral care and additional needs, partner services and community use. At the same time, it ensures flexibility and future-proofing to meet long term needs; and
- Has a set of overarching education design objectives that will translate into agreed adjacencies and an accommodation schedule that ensure clarity about the purpose and requirements of the spaces.

It also draws on Post Occupancy Evaluations of recent Moray Council education projects at Lossiemouth High School and Elgin High School and from visits to other new community schools.

The Education Design Brief and proposed Schedule of Accommodation can be found in Appendix B.

# 1.5 Lessons Learned

A “Lessons Learned” workshop was held on 25 October 2023 (Lossiemouth, Elgin High School + Linkwood Lessons Learned Summary Paper was referenced), and those attending the workshop talked about experiences learned from construction projects in general, and not just specific schools. From the workshop, a number of key points were raised and discussed which are summarised below:

- The requirement to do Site Investigation works at the earliest opportunity was discussed.
- It is important to get early FM involvement – the internal team from MC needs to be signed up to the project early on, in design stages as well as in construction.
- Pitched roofs would be preferable to flat roofs where possible/applicable albeit it is understood that it is not always the more cost-effective solution.
- Design to minimise damage caused by seagulls on flat roofs and in particular protecting exposed insulation on pipework or similar.
- Careful design is required whereby access to ceiling voids is required to make sure a robust solution is put in place, especially where regular maintenance inspections required, in corridors for instance.
- There is a preference not to have ceiling tiles in classrooms.
- Exposed trunking is probably the best solution for IT/electrical outlets within classrooms however vertical drops should be kept to a minimum.
- When designing lamps/lighting in atrium’s, consideration should be given as to how maintenance is to be carried out and where possible avoiding the use of scissor lifts.
- An important appointment pre contract is the Tier 1 Design Manager, and preferably someone with experienced in education projects should be appointed where possible.
- Any Value Engineering changes required should be fully broken down to allow evaluation/ scrutiny by the Cost Manager
- Any VE changes that are proposed should consider all long-term considerations for the participant particularly in terms of ongoing maintenance requirements.
- There is continued debate whether MVHR units in classrooms is a preferable solution opposed to centralised plant. Careful consideration is required as to the long-term maintenance requirements and not just initial capital costs, and full consideration of associated costs needs to be scrutinised including increasing building heights, increased GIFA for service risers etc. Participant/FM team need to be consulted also.
- FF&E coordination required to ensure account taken of items such as surface mounted pipe drops or surface mounted conduit etc. Consider use of independent FF&E consultant as part of design team.
- Window opening systems need to be carefully designed and also take account of potential furniture layouts that might affect access.
- Care is needed with RDD reviews as this needs to occur before Financial Close where possible.
- Clarity is required as to what elements of M&E are CDP and what is M&E consultant designed.
- A careful review of the benefits versus costs of “fibre to the room” is recommended.
- Early engagement with insurers “Zurich” is recommended to obtain clarity on the final specification of sprinkler heads within classrooms and what protection is required.
- Careful programming is needed at tender package reviews stage to ensure adequate time is allocated for fully assessing tender returns and reviewing alternative solutions.
- Market testing period in programme needs to be sufficient to allow Tier 1 risk allocation to be reduced if appropriate.
- Tier 1 supply chain needs to be thoroughly tested at Tier 1interview stage.
- ACR’s require thorough review including aspects including adjacencies for instance.
- Consideration should be given early on in the design process as to what public (community use) access required, and to which parts of the building to assist in design of access control, security strategy, lockdown strategy and CCTV monitoring.
- There does not seem to be a standard approach within Scottish schools as to the design/layout of WC’s; consideration should therefore be given to reviewing new schools that are constructed and in operation to see which layouts function best.
- Head Teacher involvement in school design is welcome and necessary however consideration should also be given to layouts generally on newly built schools to see what functions and layouts work well.
- Design and specification to mitigate wall scuffs (shoes/heels as well as bags), corner protection to be carried out pre contract, including anti-graffiti material specification.
- Colours for interior design is subjective, however participant should review other newly built schools for inspiration.
- Flexibility for future changes in partitions should be considered at design stage including potential for including mullions at strategic points within the frame.
- Car parking needs to take account of potential community use as well as day to day school use.

A number of the above points raised suggested that much could be learned from visiting newly built school projects. To this extent, jmarchitects were able to assist representatives from Moray Council on a number of site visits to new schools in the Central Belt giving the participant the opportunities to consider alternative design solutions to some of the points raised in the above. The following schools were visited on 20th and 21st November 2023:

- Jedburgh Intergenerational Campus
- Castlebrae Community Campus
- Wallyford Learning Campus

Elgin High School

Lossiemouth High School

# 1.6 Strategic Options

In additional to the new build design proposals contained within this SSPS Report, Moray Council also explored the following two options in relation to the existing Forres Academy building: 'do nothing' and 'refurbish and extend'.

**'Do Nothing'**

The Forres Academy building is assessed as overall Condition D – life-expired and/or serious risk of imminent failure. The current school was designed for an earlier approach to educational provision and no longer reflects the needs of the community for the integration of education, skills and jobs that will support long-term resilience and sustainability. There is a trend of increasing reactive maintenance spend on the existing building and a rising sum of investment required to make much needed fabric improvements.

Considerable sums have already been spent over the last few years and these have only maintained the low condition ratings and indeed not prevented further deterioration in condition. The continued drain on resources to simply maintain the current Forres Academy at low condition and suitability standards is unsustainable.

**Refurbish and Extend**

Moray Council commissioned a high-level appraisal of Forres Academy in 2023 to ascertain whether it would be practicable and cost effective to refurbish and extend the existing school building. As part of this exercise several key criteria were considered including: the existing condition of the school premises; LEIP 3 compliance; any challenges that a refurbishment scenario may present including functionality and quality issues; whole life carbon; and cost implications. Whilst a refurbishment scenario can meet a number of the LEIP 3 requirements, two issues present significant if not insurmountable challenges; the existing span between the structural floor slabs (which is significantly less than in modern education facilities) would pose a challenge with the mechanical ventilation required to meet LEIP 3 as well as the probable requirements to insulate under the existing ground floor slab.

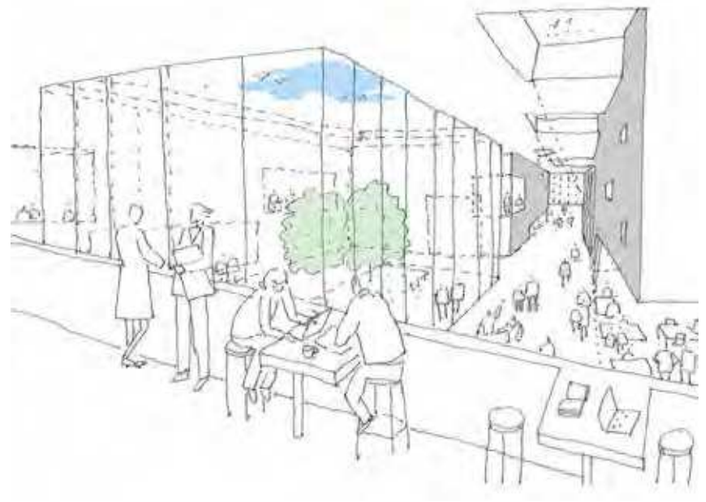
Based on benchmark data the construction cost to refurbish a school is generally around 90% of the cost of a new build however the additional costs pertaining to the Forres Academy project, such as temporary accommodation for decant, the extent of RAAC and concerns over fire engineering would mean that the cost for delivering a refurbished Forres Academy would be likely to exceed the cost for delivering a new build Forres Academy with the risk that the final building could be compromised in some aspects.

**Conclusion**

One of Moray Council's learning estate strategy aspiration and key drivers is that "All learners to be educated in high quality buildings (minimum level B for condition and suitability)" given the financial challenge of simply maintaining the existing building without ever being able to improve its condition it would not be acceptable to 'do nothing' at Forres Academy. When consideration is taken of a compromised design solution that may have to be accepted for a refurbished school in comparison to a new build without any cost benefit, it was concluded that a refurbishment solution would not offer good value for money to Moray Council and the end product would unlikely meet the aspirations of the local community. It was therefore decided that Moray Council would proceed with a new build solution for the replacement Forres Academy.

Existing Forres Academy

# 2.0 PLACE



# 2.1 Forres

The town of Forres is located within the council of Moray, approximately 26 miles east of the city Inverness.

The town is also geographically close to the towns Elgin, Nairn, and Burghead as well as Findhorn, Auldearn and Kinloss.

The first historical indication of the existence of the town may be that shown as Varis on a map. It is suspected that “Forres” may be derived from this or a combination from the Gaelic words “fo” (below) or “far” (where) and “ras” (underwood).


The town of Forres in its wider context with the surrounding towns and cities

# 2.1 Forres

Forres has a deep-rooted history dating back centuries, with its burgh charter granted in 1153. This historical backdrop is reflected in heritage assets like Sueno's Stone, an ancient Pictish monument.

While the town has historical ties to trade and industry, notably in textiles and brewing, its contemporary identity is shaped by the acclaimed whisky production.

The bustling High Street, with various elements of history and portrayed throughout, stands as the heart of the area and define Forres' connectivity and community.

In addition to its architectural and historical significance, Forres prioritises community and recreational facilities. The town hosts various sports amenities, with golf courses at its periphery, and community centres that foster social engagement.

Forres demonstrates a commitment to preserving its heritage, fostering community bonds, and offering recreational spaces that enhance the quality of life for its residents.

Overview of the town of Forres

# 2.2 A Place Specific Vision

It is important to provide a school which is both physically stitched into the fabric of Forres and reflects what is important to the town; a true community hub which is developed for, used by and owned by the people of Forres.

The school should allow young learners to become better learners, grow values, develop skills and enhance the community whilst also reinforcing the values of effort, respect and ambition. The school will facilitate high quality learning and teaching that leads to improved levels of attainment and achievement and creates an environment which enables the development of leadership skills at all levels.

The building should form a strong connection to its immediate external environment and that beyond its site boundaries to encourage community engagement, develop and enhance inclusive practice and improve partnerships and family learning.

# 2.3 Local Development Plan

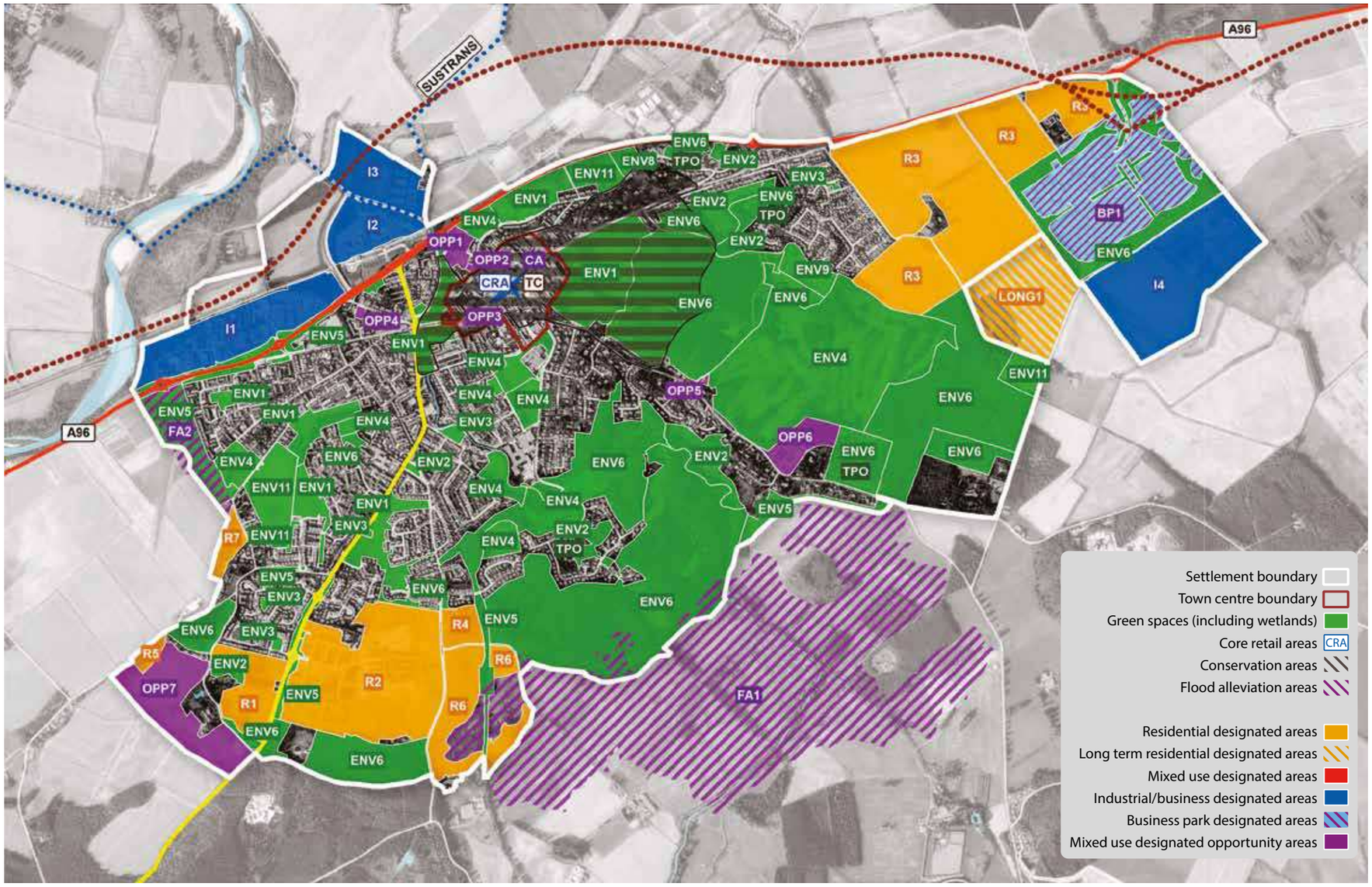
The policies for development of the area in and around Forres are covered by the Moray Local Development Plan 2020 and provides guidance on how the Council sees the area developing over the next 10 years.

The Local Development Plan (LDP) identifies that development proposals must reflect the traditional settlement character in terms of siting and design. It also states that design should enhance Forres' distinctive built heritage and the integrity of the Conservation Area.

The LDP notes the requirement of long term growth areas, including new neighbourhoods at Ferrylea, Lochyhill and Dallas Dhu which would aid in supporting and enhancing the vitality and viability of the town centre.

The LDP states the necessity for an additional 12ha of land for employment and support proposals for business development, which in turn would supplement the proposed new neighbourhoods.

The LDP also recognises the importance of protecting and enhancing the existing network of open and green spaces and to identify a network of new park and play areas within the development boundary of Forres.



Forres Local Development Plan Map, courtesy of Moray Council

# 2.4 Place Based Review

Place is a key pillar of public policy and investment in Scotland. A place-based approach is about joining up infrastructure, services and partnerships to better meet the needs of local communities; providing better opportunities and improving the impact of combined energy, resources and investment.

During SSPS Phases A and B, Moray Council and the Design Team commenced engagement with the existing school, stakeholders and the local community and partners in Forres. A 20 minute neighbourhood study was undertaken on the three site options; looking at both Council and partner assets.

The three sites have also been assessed against Moray Council's Strategic and SMART Objectives. A community event was held at the end of October to present and discuss the 20 minute neighbourhood analysis and strategic assessment outcomes. A survey has been issued to blue light services with responses received from Police Scotland, Scottish Ambulance Service and NHS; it is also proposed to re-issue the survey to a wider pool of partners.

As part of the wider North Schools Programme, Moray Council propose to work alongside Hub North Scotland and the other participants to further develop the Place Based Review.

## The Place eight-stage process

# 2.5 The Existing Site

The existing Forres Academy site is split into two areas. The main site lies adjacent to Roysvale Park, is bisected by the Mosset Burn and occupied by the school buildings, Forres Swimming and Hydrotherapy Pool, car parks and other external hard and soft sports pitches. There is also a satellite site to the south, accessible by footpaths from the main site which contains additional grass playing fields.

**School - Guidance**

The School Premises (General Requirements and Standards) (Scotland) 1967 states:

The area of site for a 1121 pupil secondary school (current pupil capacity) shall not be less than 6.5 acres (2.63 hectares), excluding sports pitches, roads, pathways and areas not generally suitable for use as school grounds.

The area of pitches for a 1121 pupil secondary shall not be less than 9 acres (3.64 hectares).

Total required site area, according to The School Premises (General Requirements and Standards) (Scotland) 1967 is 15.5 acres (6.27 hectares).

**School – Site**

The existing Forres Academy site is approximately 7.96 hectares.

**School - Footprint**

The existing Forres Academy footprint is approximate 10,100sqm/ 1.01 hectares (not including the swimming or hydrotherapy pools).

Existing school site boundary and the wider settlement boundary

# 2.6 Potential Locations for a New Community Hub

Moray Council has engaged with Hub North Scotland and a Design Team to begin work on designs for a new Forres Academy.

One of the first steps was to decide where the new school should go. From a list of five possible sites, three have been short-listed as suitable locations for the new Forres Academy (Roysvale Park, Lochyhill and Grantown Road).

Following the creation of this short-list, a more detailed site analysis and appraisal has been carried out for the three potential locations. The design team has also been able to assess the various sites against the project's strategic objectives.

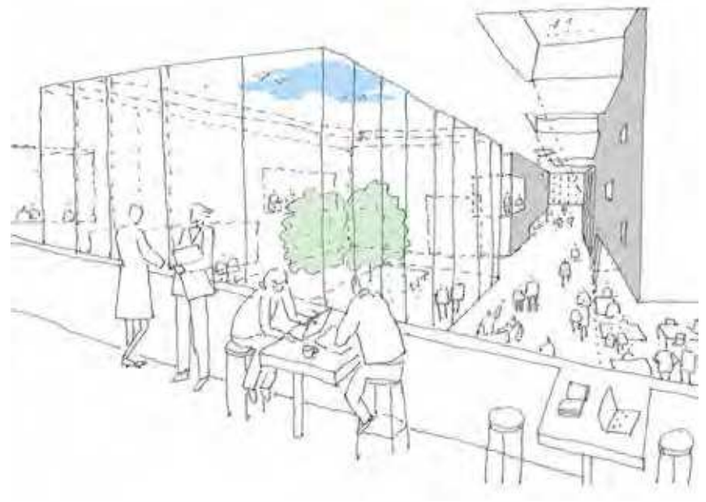
Potential locations to accommodate school

1. Roysvale Park & Existing Site 6.1 Ha
2. Lochyhill / Enterprise park 5.8 Ha
3. Grantown Road 5.9 Ha

Forres Settlement Boundary


Potential locations for new Academy

# 3.0 ROYSVALE PARK



# 3.1 Location Overview

Roysvale Park site within the context of Forres

# 3.2 Historical Analysis

Forres is one of the oldest of Scotland's royal burghs with the charter granted in 1153. In the 12th century, Forres, along with Inverness, Auldearn, Nairn and Elgin formed part of a defensive chain along the south coast of the Moray Firth.

Throughout the 15th and 16th centuries, Forres thrived as a market town, capitalizing on its strategic location and burgeoning trade networks.

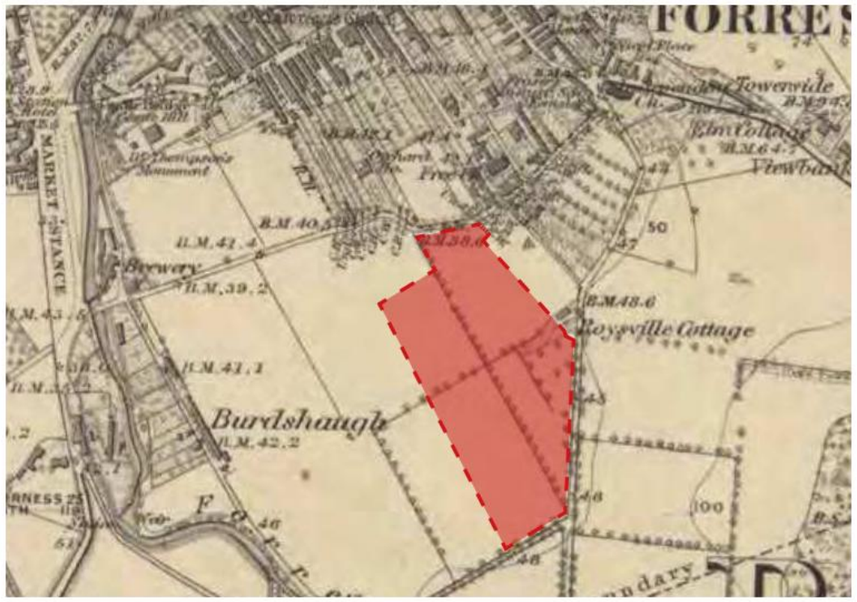
By the 18th and 19th century, the site still remained largely untouched. However the main town, particularly along the High Street, began to rapidly develop and became commercially and socially significant for the area.

During the late 19th century and mid-20th century, the towns growth continued, expanding away from the High Street and particularly along Burn of Mosset, with new roads and public footpaths appearing, allowing new housing and amenities to emerge.

**Roysvale Park**

There has been a primary school on the ground adjacent to the park since the mid 20th century and has been expanded several times to accommodate the requirements of modern education.

The park has remained largely untouched since transitioning into a public space in the 19th century.




c1870


c1930


c1970

c2023

# 3.3 Photographic Survey


View of the Roysvale Park site looking north

# 3.3 Photographic Survey


Aerial view of the Roysvale Park site

# 3.4 20 Minute Neighbourhood

Roysvale Park is located slightly to the south, whilst still remaining quite central, to the majority of the towns facilities.

Several community and amenity facilities are in close proximity to the site, such as the Forres Swimming Pool and Fitness Centre which adjoins to the existing school building. There are also several green spaces and public parks which are a 10-20 minute walk from the site.

Various food retailers are located along the town's High Street, as well as two supermarkets, Spar and Co-op, which are both, approximately 10 minute walks from Roysvale Park. A larger supermarket - Tesco - is along Nairn Road, which adjoins the High Street and is approximately a 16 minute walk.

The main public transport network for the town, the bus service, has several services and routes which are nearby to the site. The train station is to the north of the site and is a 17 minute walk.

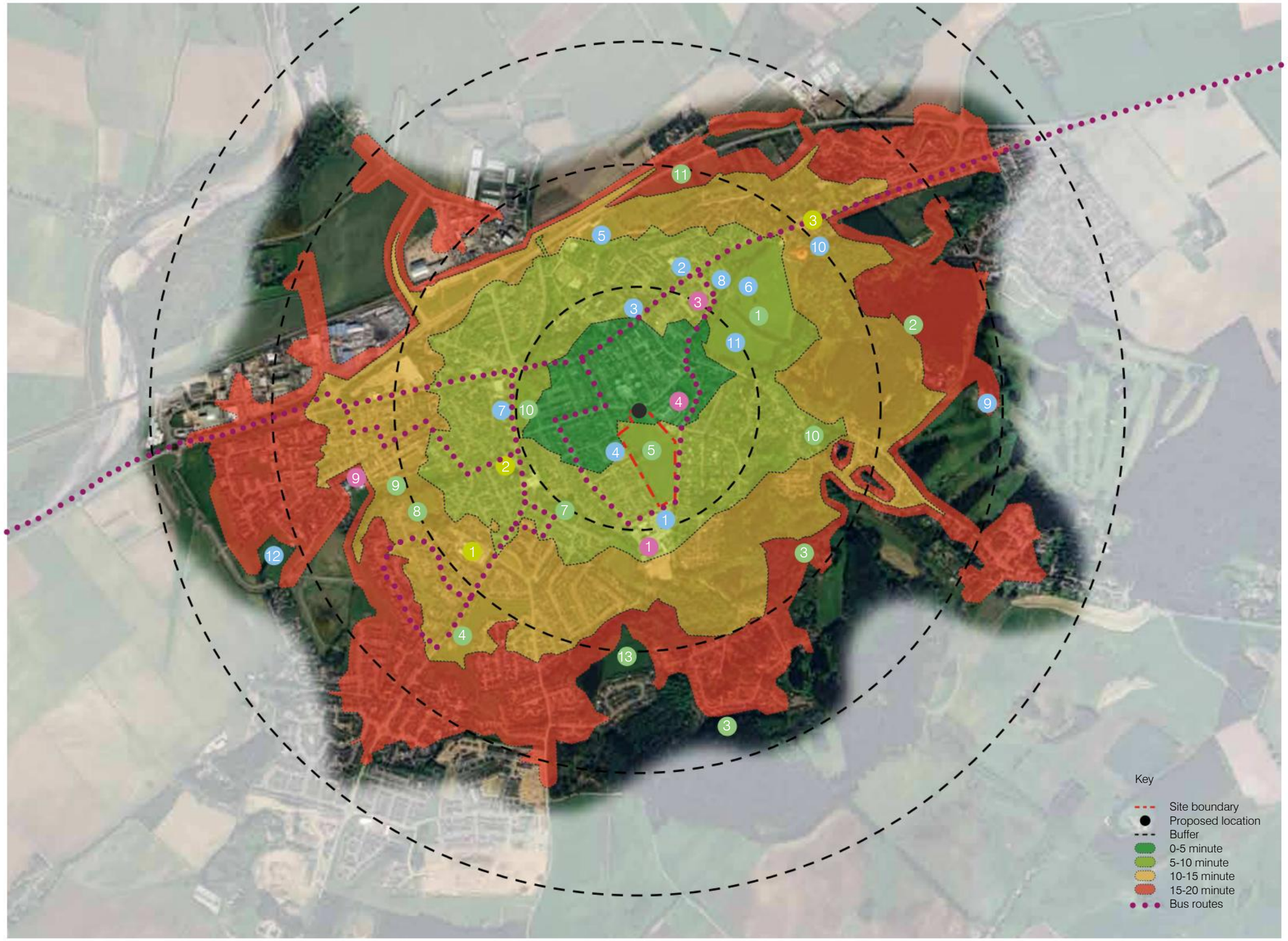
KEY

Parks & Green Spaces
- 1 Grant Park
- 2 Cluny Hill
- 3 Sanquhar Loch & Woodlands
- 4 Mannachie Park
- 5 Roysvale Park
- 7 Fleurs Park
- 8 Thornhill Playing Field
- 9 Pilmuir Playing Field
- 10 Mosset Burn Park
- 11 Bogton Road Park
- 13 Academy Playing Field

Community & Sports Facilities
- 1 Swimming Pool & Leisure Centre
- 2 Forres House Community Centre
- 3 Forres Town Hall
- 4 Forres Tennis Club
- 5 Forres Mechanics Football Club
- 6 Forres St. Lawrence Cricket Club
- 7 Forres Bowling Club
- 8 Grant Park Bowling Club
- 9 Forres Golf Club
- 10 Forres Squash & Fitness Club
- 11 Forres Area Soccer 7s
- 12 Forres Thistle Football Club

Schools
- 1 Forres Academy
- 3 Anderson's Primary School
- 4 Applegrove Primary School
- 9 Pilmuir Primary School

Healthcare & Emergency Services
- 1 Forres Health & Care Centre
- 2 Forres Community Fire Station
- 3 Forres Police Station




Map showing the public amenities in relation to Roysvale Park

# 3.5 Existing Utilities

Record drawings indicate that the proposed Roysvale Park site is clear of Electrical, Gas, Mains Water and Communications utilities infrastructure.

The utilities for the proposed new development would comprise of Electric, Mains Water and Communications Infrastructure. Records show that existing infrastructure for each of these services are located in close proximity to the site.

Utility capacities and the ability for local infrastructure to serve the site without significant network reinforcement will be confirmed as the design develops and applications are made. Notwithstanding that we believe the Roysvale Park site presents the option with least risk on the basis that the capacities associated with the existing school will be removed from the infrastructure locally and can be assigned to the proposed new school development.

The record drawings received will be verified through a Ground Penetrating Radar Survey (GPRS) during the next stage of the project should the site be selected as the preferred option.

With regard to drainage, the surrounding network is a fully combined system. A Pre Development Enquiry has been submitted to Scottish Water to establish if sufficient capacity exists to allow for both surface and foul water to be discharged to this network. In the event that there is insufficient capacity for the surface water, it should be noted that an offsite connection to the Burn of Mosset may be required.

Within the site boundary a 225mm drainage tail exists running north/south. It is understood that this redundant, however CCTV works will be required to confirm. Additionally, a below ground surface water storage trench exists to the boundary with Applegrove Primary School. This is identified on the constraints plans provided.

For further details and utility record drawings please refer to Appendix C.

# 3.6 Engineering Review

**Earthworks and Site Levels**

**Existing Site Topography**

The topographical survey was undertaken by Douglas Land Surveys Ltd in November 2023.

The data shows minimal level change throughout the site, there is a 3m level change from south to north, undulating between 14mAOD and 12mAOD.

**Proposed Levels and Cut / Fill Strategy**

In general, the existing topography is relatively flat, the site falls gently to the north, however, there is a slight valley in the levels through the centre of the field.

The FFL of the proposed school will require to be 600mm above the 1:1000 year flood level, which will need to be demonstrated through a detailed flood risk assessment. However, based on an initial assessment the building footprint and surrounding areas will need to increase in level by approximately between 400mm and 1.6m above existing topographical levels. At this stage it should be assumed that this will require to be built up with imported engineered fill.

Any water which is displaced by proposed development, up to the 1 in 200 year event, will need to be stored within the site boundary through a compensatory flood scheme. An area has been identified within Roysvale park, where levels will be shaped to ensure that flooding is controlled and no additional flooding outwith the site boundary occurs due to the development.

The current earthworks strategy allows for an approximate compensatory flood water volume of 5000 - 7000m$^3$. The area identified to act as compensatory storage is displayed by the blue hatch in Figure 1, however this will be further developed though detailed flood modelling.
It should be noted that this flooding will be a rare event, and will not prevent the day to day use of this space outwith these extreme weather events.

Furthermore, the current earthworks model highlights that 8000m3 engineering fill is required under the building footprint. However, there is a cut fill balance within the remainder of the site.

**Retention and Levels**

Due to the requirements for compensatory storage and raising the finished floor level of the school, areas for low level retention and banking will be required in the design.

Resolving this level difference can be accommodated in a number of ways, and through careful consideration of the layout and landscape design this can be included in such a way as to not act as a constraint.

**Transportation/ Parking**

Subject to agreement with the roads department, the proposed main entrance location is proposed to be located along Orchard Road.

Locating accessible parking at the front entrance makes sense from user access requirements, it does present difficulties in terms of managing the parking to prevent misuse of the spaces and will need to be considered carefully in the next stage of design.

To further understand the traffic and parking patterns in the local area, parking surveys will be required to inform any future planning application. Initial discussions regarding the scope of these have been undertaken with Moray Council.

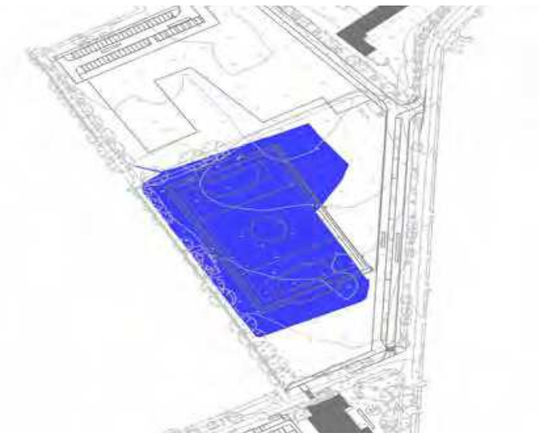


Figure 1. Proposed Area of Controlled Flooding During 1 in 200 year event

Figure 3. Moray Council Adoption Plan

Figure 2. Image from site walkover

# 3.6 Engineering Review

**Geotechnical Review ans Site Investigation**

During the feasibility stage we have carried out an initial desktop review of the prevailing ground conditions on the site, taking cognisance of both BGS records and historic site investigation information from the surrounding area. This was followed up by a detailed site investigation the site works for which were completed in November 2023.

**Previous land use**

A review of the 1830-1880 historic map shows that the site was previously used for agricultural purposes. No major structures were recorded within the site boundary prior to the construction of the school. See Figure 4.

The primary school – Applegrove Primary - within the site boundary was officially opened in the 1950s.

From previous land use, the assumption is that overall risk of contaminants is low, however, results from the SI report will clarify the presence of contaminants.

It is assumed the current primary school building envelope will contain asbestos contaminants. An asbestos register will be required to address this fully.

**Geology**

From the recent site investigation works, borehole information generally shows a sand and gravel strata below a layer of topsoil. See Figure 8.

The lithological description from the British Geological Survey is gravel, sand and silt which further corroborates the borehole information.

The Coal Authority GIS database identified that the site is not within an area coal mining reporting or where coal outcrops are present. Based upon this information, it is concluded that coal mining will not affect the proposed development.

**Foundations**

The ground conditions on-site should, mostly, allow for conventional solution using an allowable bearing pressure of 150kPa. Further confirmation of this value will be received within the full SI report.

However, the foundation solution will have to be investigated further to the north east of the site, within the pink hatch in Figure 9. The ground conditions between WS01 and CP01 will not support a shallow foundation solution and localised ground improvement may be required in this area.

Based on 2000kN maximum column load the allowable bearing pressure of 150kPa would lead to relatively large pads, furthermore, there is a looser stratum of silty sand (WS02-05) around 2.3-3.1mbgl which will need to be considered in the settlement calculations once the location and levels of the proposed foundation and loads are understood.

An additional point of note is the presence of a very localised poorer deposit at 2mbgl at WS12, see Figure 9. However, as this is out with the area of the current development proposals, this is not considered to be a constraint.


Figure 4. Extract from 1830-1880s historical map


Figure 5. Extract from 1900s historical map

Figure 6. 2004 Aerial view

Figure 7. 2023 Aerial view

# 3.6 Engineering Review

**Groundwater**

The preliminary boreholes show that the water table varies from 0.69-1.96mbgl. Instantaneous recharge is noted which indicates that standing water table is present. Further examinations are ongoing to log these levels.

Based on this, it is likely that the contractor will encounter ground water during foundation and drainage excavations, and an allowance for dewatering should be considered as part of any cost appraisal.

**Radon**

A review of UK Radon mapping has indicated that the site is within an area of 1% of homes are affected by Radon. Therefore, based upon this dataset and in accordance with BRE 211(2015), the minimum level of Radon Protection is required for any future development at the site.

**Ground gas risk**

A full ground gas risk assessment is being prepared as part of the detailed site investigation. For this site, the primary potential sources of ground gas is considered to be:

- Potential generation and migration of ground gas (primarily carbon dioxide (CO2) and methane (CH4) attributable to microbiological decomposition associated within organic rich soils and strata.

Further considerations to these potential sources also depend on the potential for significant volumes of ground gas to be generated in addition to the concentration of ground gases and the capacity for organic material degradation.

All natural soils contain a proportion of organic material and have a biome of micro organisms that will degrade and cycle organic material as part of the natural soil cycle, with CO2 and CH4 respired as by-products depending on the prevailing ground conditions.

However, based on the results received to date, limited ground gas has been encountered and the site is considered to be low risk (CS1).

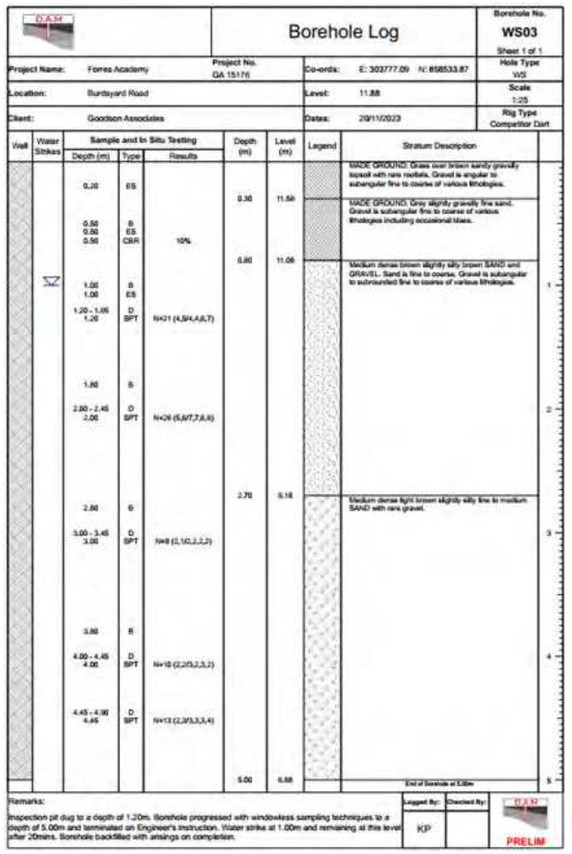



Figure 8. Example Borehole log

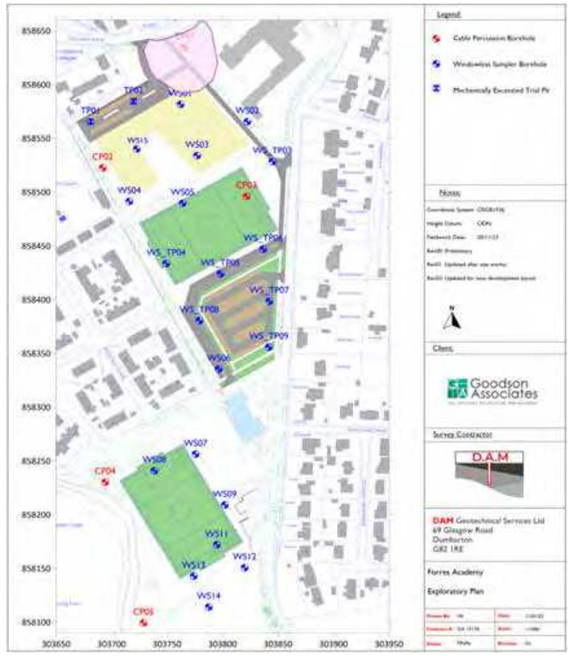



Figure 9.Exploratory plan with area of loose ground highlighted in a pink hatch

# 3.6 Engineering Review

**SUDS Strategy**

**Surface Water Discharge**

The existing surface water run-off is 17l/s, this was concluded using a 4.9ha area of greenfield.

The main impact of a development is to increase the proportion of impermeable surfaces (e.g., roofs and paved areas) within the site and without careful planning this can increase peak rate runoff. Sustainable Drainage Systems (SUDS) aim to mitigate this effect by emulating natural drainage systems and the provision of storage.

Treatment must be provided in accordance with the recommendations of The SUDS Manual (CIRIA Document C753), SEPA and other relevant guidance. To determine surface water treatment requirements, The SUDS Manual (CIRIA Document C753) initially requires identification of the various land use classifications involved in the development. Using Table 4.3 (Page63), the following classifications are considered relevant:

- Non-residential parking with infrequent change (e.g. schools, offices, < 300 traffic movements a day)
- Commercial/Industrial roofing: Inert materials

The guidance confirms that the various land use classifications identified require use of the Simple Index Approach. This involves a comparison between indices of likely pollution levels against SUDS performance capacities. To deliver adequate treatment, the selected SUDS components should have a total pollution mitigation that equals or exceeds the pollution hazard index. There are several options for treatment, however, the best choice will need to consider the site constraints and space available.

For this reason, it is anticipated that options such as SUDS basins and ponds will not be viable for this site due to their large land take.

As such, options such as porous paving, filter strips and linear swales which can be accommodated within the landscaping will be preferred. It is also assumed that to attenuate the additional storm water runoff from the development, a below ground storage tank will also be required.

The connection for the surface water is yet to be approved by Scottish Water. However, the preferred option is to connect to the combined sewer to the north of the site, although, combined sewer connections are not favoured by Scottish Water. In the instance that a combined connection is rejected, a surface water sewer will have to be installed along Orchard Road with an outfall into the Burn of Mosset, this option would involve installing an offsite sewer approximately 350m long in adopted land. See Figure 11.

Based on a 5l/s run off rate for the site, which is yet to be approved by Scottish Water, it is estimated approximately 1600m3 of storage will be required to store the 1:200 year storm with 37% climate change. This may vary depending on area of proposed hard standing and potentials for capturing the 1:200 year storm on site.

The primary method of attenuation will be provided by below ground attenuation tanks as it is anticipated that options such as SUDS basins and ponds will not be viable for this site due to their large land take. Depending on the final location and depth of the tanks, due to the high ground water further measures to reduce the buoyancy of these tanks may need to be considered in the detailed design.


Figure 10.Existing surface water and foul water (combined) system as displayed on Scottish Water maps.


Figure 11.Potential surface water sewer along Orchard Road

# 3.6 Engineering Review

**Foul Water**

A Pre-Development Enquiry has been submitted to Scottish Water to determine the effect of the proposed development on the local sewer network.

**Flooding**

Existing flooding occurs within the site boundary with both the 1 in 200 and 1 in 1000 year storm. A flood risk assessment completed by Moray Council in 2021 depicts the flood extents of both the Burn of Mosset and River Findhorn considering their flood prevention schemes. The flood extent from the 2021 flood risk assessment is corroborated by the SEPA flood maps. See Figures 12&13.

The 1 in 200 year storm flood risk assessment carried out during the works for the Findhorn flood prevention scheme display no flooding within the site. Therefore, the 1 in 200 year fluvial flooding occurs on the site due to flooding of the Burn of Mosset. See figure 14.

Further Flood risk assessments required in order to understand the flood risk within the site, however as noted in the previous sections, it is proposed that any flood water displaced by the development will be offset through an on site flood compensation scheme, subject to detailed design and approval by Moray Council Flood Team and SEPA.

Full reports can be found in Appendix D.

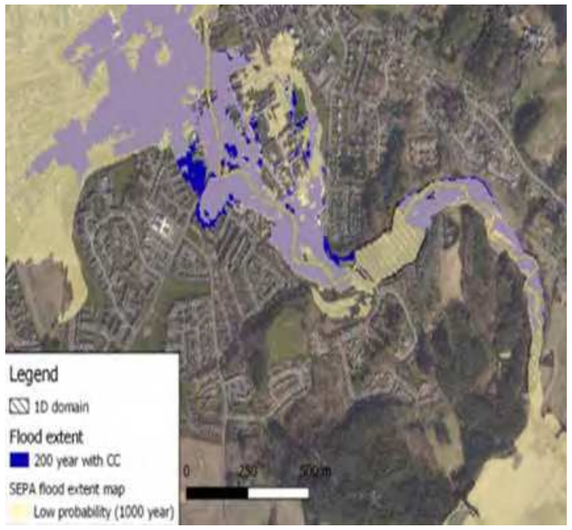


Figure 12. Flood risk Assessment showing both a 1 in 200+CC year flood and 1 in 1000 year flood map undertaken by Moray Council in 2021

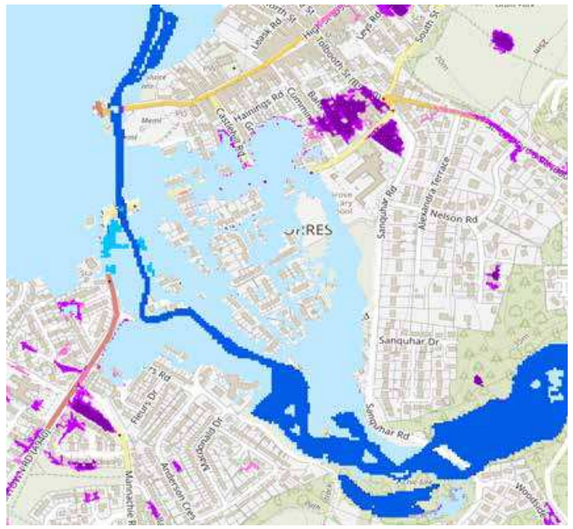


Figure 13. SEPA flood map

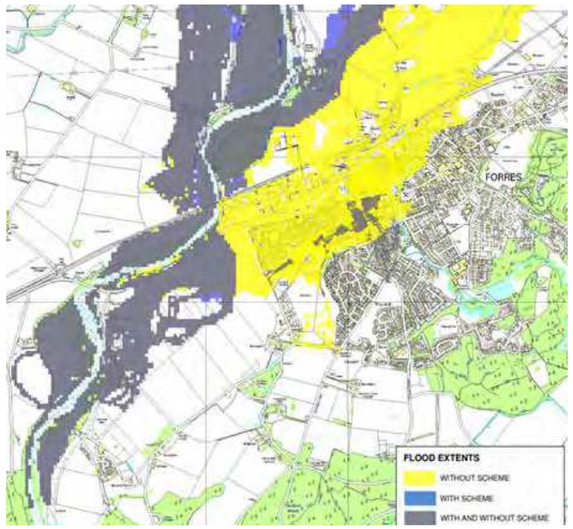


Figure 14. Flood risk Assessment 1 in 200 year flood map undertaken in 2008

# 3.7 Existing Land Use

**Existing Site and Land Use**

The site is currently formal parkland. To the northern boundary is the existing Applegrove Primary School. The playing fields associated with the school form part of the site and are currently unfenced and accessible by the public. Orchard Road runs east west to the north of the site and is currently used to access the existing Primary School and several public car parks. There is an area to the north of the primary school which currently public open space.

To the western boundary of the site there is an avenue of mature trees which run along Roysvale Place and in front of the Forres Tennis Club. There are a number of residential properties which overlook the site and screening is provided by the mature avenue of trees.

The southern part of the site which is existing park land know as Roysvale Park is bounded to the east by residential properties and Sanquhar Road. The existing Forres Academy lies to the south of Roysvale Park. The site consist of single storey buildings and parking areas as well as mature trees and vegetation.

View looking at the Roysvale Park site

# 3.8 Opportunities

### Community Facility

The building shall be a facility for the whole community. Located to be as accessible and welcoming as possible. It shall also look to create links with existing community facilities within the area. As well as creating new links, there is also a potential to utilise and retain facilities from the existing school such as the swimming pool, parking areas and playing fields.

### Intergeneration Learning

Opportunity for the building to link with the existing primary school (Applegrove Primary) and develop intergenerational learning opportunities. Furthermore, there is an additional opportunity create and develop and educational programme linked to the construction process.

### Access

The approach and routes which pupils and other pedestrians shall take will be considered. There is an opportunity to give the approach and access at various positions, either on Orchard Road, Sanquhar Road or Roysvale Place.

### Environment / Biodiversity

Opportunities to position the new building within a central position on the site to maximise the amount of sun it will get throughout the year. The existing mature trees provide a mature landscape setting and there is an opportunity to further enhance the biodiversity by introducing new native planting.

### Public Transport Links

The new building should link with existing public transport and road infrastructure and minimise pedestrian travel distance, and time, from the existing town. This will promote active and sustainable travel as well as developing ‘safer routes’ to school initiative.


Site Opportunities

# 3.9 Constraints

### Proposed Access

On the east edge of the site, there is an existing junction along Sanquhar Road which serves the houses behind. Any vehicular access/ egress points for the proposed school are to be a minimum of 25m from the existing junction opposite.

### Existing Services

There are several existing services within the site boundary as well as existing attenuation tanks. The proposed building needs to consider the location of these services.

### Privacy

The design and construction of the new school building must prioritise privacy considerations for neighbouring houses, especially given the dense urban setting. Strategic placement of windows, landscaping, and architectural features should be implemented to minimize visual intrusion.

### Trees

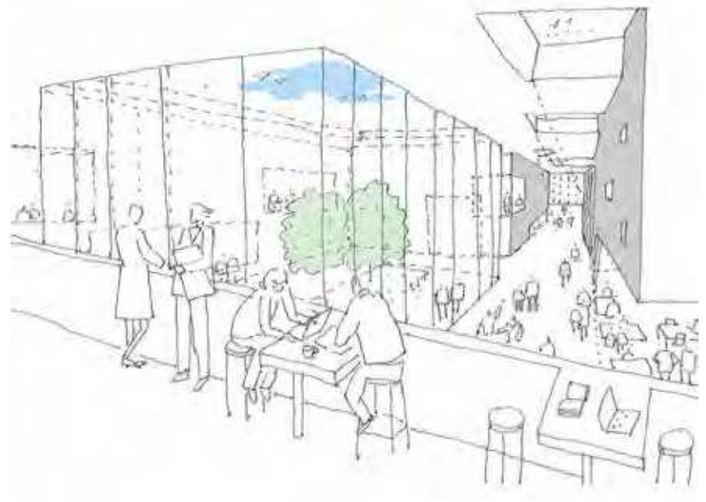
The site features multiple areas of mature trees, necessitating careful consideration during the design and construction of the new school building. Ensuring the preservation of these trees is crucial, with attention given to factors such as visibility and proximity to existing junctions as well as the potential for bat roosts and other protected species.

### Right of Way

There are two 'rights of way' within the site boundary, one which bisects the site and one which sweeps around the boundary, both of which must be taken into account in the design of the new school. Communication with the council is imperative to ensure the proper integration of these easements into the proposed school layout.

Site Constraints

# 4.0 LOCHYHILL



# 4.1 Location Overview

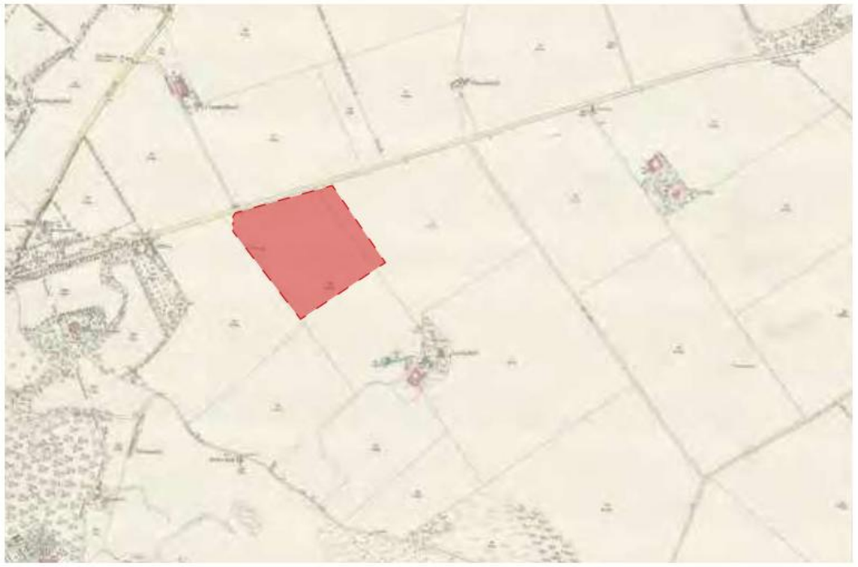
Lochyhill site within the context of Forres

# 4.2 Historical Analysis

The site at Lochyhill has been characterised by a rural setting with an agricultural farm on the adjacent land for the majority of its existence. The land to the west of Lochyhill underwent a gradual transformation into a residential community in the late 20th and early 21st centuries.

Emerging in the late 20th century to the east of the site, the Enterprise Park highlights Forres' dedication for economic growth and innovation. Crafted in response to the needs of contemporary industry, the park has a strategy to draw in businesses and develop employment opportunities within the town. Its architectural layout integrates contemporary industrial structures and facilities.

During this period, despite recent residential and enterprise park developments around the periphery of the site, the site itself has remained mostly untouched.



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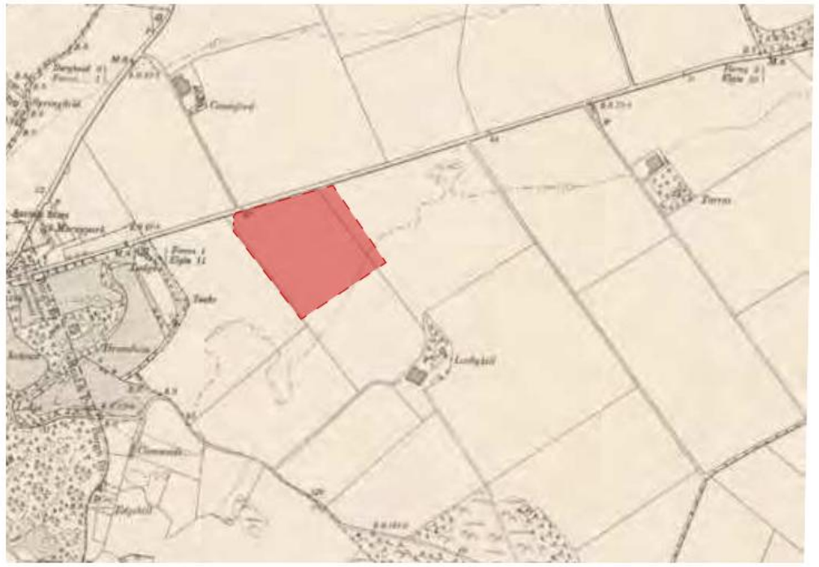

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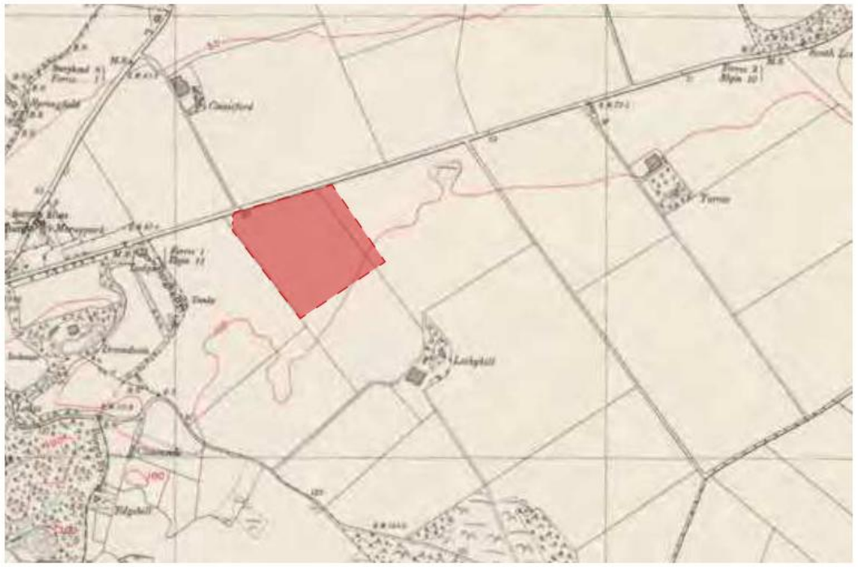

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# 4.3 Photographic Survey


View of the Lochyhill site looking south

# 4.3 Photographic Survey


Aerial view of the Lochyhill site

# 4.4 20 Minute Neighbourhood

The Lochyhill site is on the outskirts of the town and is located east to the majority of Forres' facilities.

The Forres Enterprise Park, which is located east of the site, is a 15 minute walk and accommodates several small and medium sized businesses.

Several community and amenity facilities are located around the site, such as the Forres Golf Club and the Forres Squash and Fitness Club. There are also a couple of public green spaces and woodlands which are in excess of a 20 minute walk from the site.

The majority of the food retailers are located along the town's High Street and the closest supermarket, which is the Co-op, is approximately a 20 minute walk to the west of the site.

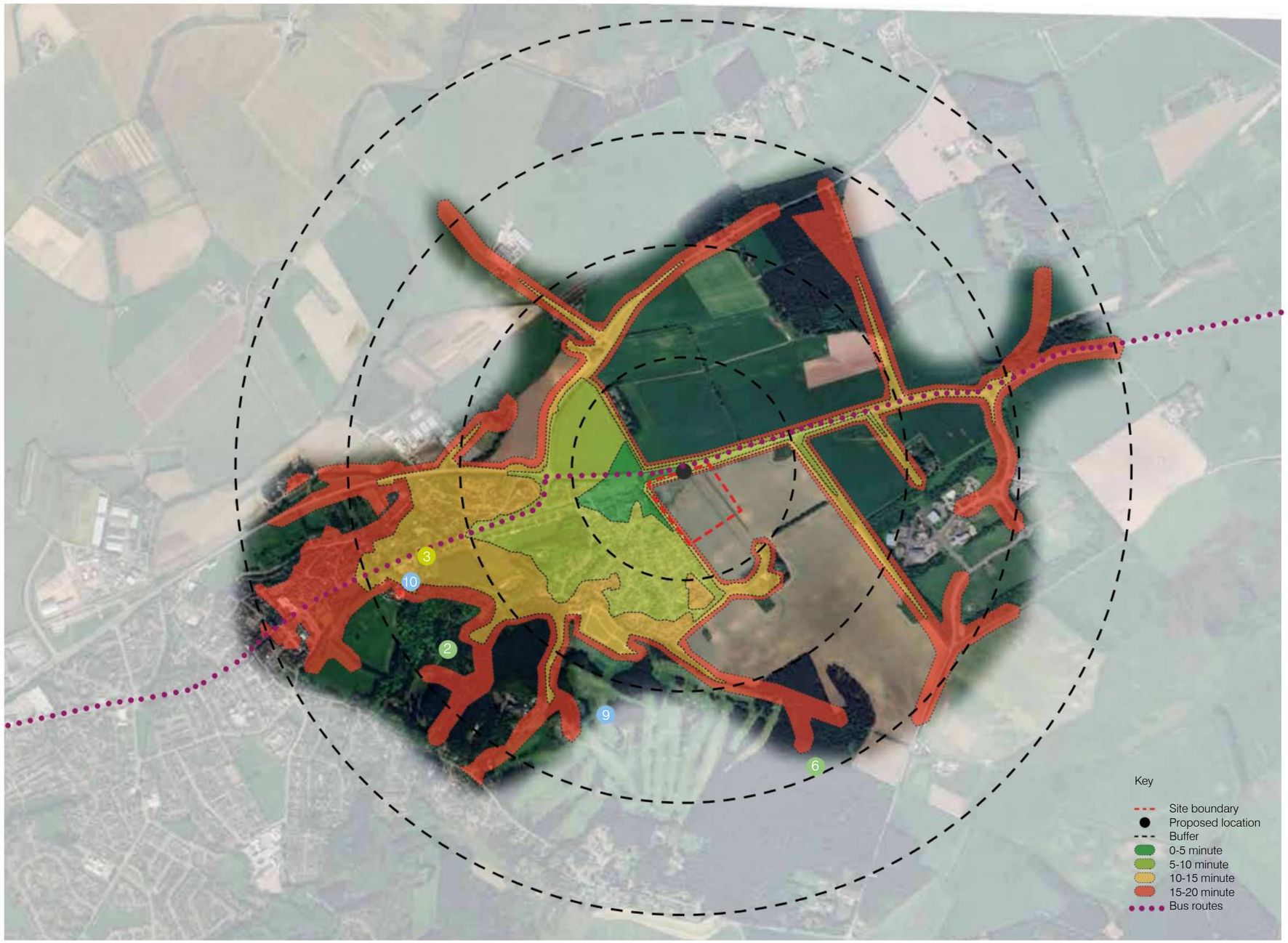
The main public transport network for the town, the bus service, has a service which runs along the A96, directly north of the site. The train station is to the west of the site and is a 30 minute walk.

KEY

Parks & Green Spaces
- 2 Cluny Hill
- 6 Muir, Newforres & Council Woods

Community & Sports Facilities
- 9 Forres Golf Club
- 10 Forres Squash & Fitness Club

Healthcare & Emergency Services
- 3 Forres Police Station




Map showing the public amenities in relation to Lochyhill.

# 4.5 Existing Utilities

Record drawings indicate the existence of Utility Infrastructure running across the wider development site in which the proposed school site sits. This comprises of Scottish Water Mains Water and overhead BT Lines that serve Lochyhill Cottages to the south of the development site. Initial proposals for siting the school site would result in the existing BT Infrastructure having to be diverted. The proposed school site is not affected by the existing Scottish Water infrastructure.

The utilities for the proposed new development would comprise of Electric, Mains Water and Communications Infrastructure. Records show that existing infrastructure for each of these services are located in close proximity to the site.

Utility capacities and the ability for local infrastructure to serve the site without significant network reinforcement will be confirmed as the design develops and applications are made. It should noted that the wider development plans will introduce further infrastructure capacity requirement and may impact on the network capacity review at the time of application for the school. Should Lochyhill's be identified as the preferred site we would encourage early engagement and co-ordination with the developer of the wider site and its infrastructure.

The record drawings received will be verified through a Ground Penetrating Radar Survey (GPRS) during the next stage of the project should the site be selected as the preferred option.

With regard to drainage, a public 225mm diameter vitrified clay foul water sewer runs through the site parallel with the A96. This sewer will require a 3m stand off to any proposed new buildings, unless otherwise agreed with Scottish Water. The closest surface Water Sewers are located within Drumduan Road to the west.

The capacity of the surrounding Scottish Water network will be confirmed through a Pre Development, however for surface water it is assumed that a connection would be made to the existing network at an Greenfield Equivalent rate. This will require a new adopted sewer to be constructed down Drumduan Road, approximately 200m long which would require a connection to an existing 600mm diameter concrete pipe.
For foul water it is assumed that any new connection will be formed to the existing sewer which passes through the site.

For further details and Utility record drawings please refer to Appendix C.

# 4.6 Engineering Review

**Earthworks and Site Levels**

**Existing Site Topography**

No topographical survey has been completed for the site.

The OS maps, seen in Figure 1, shows the south of the site sits at approximately 40mAOD at Lochyhill Farmhouse and falls north towards the A96 to approximately 25mAOD.

**Proposed Levels and Cut / Fill Strategy**

Earthworks will be required to form the new access road, parking and rear play areas.

At the appropriate time a high-level cut & fill exercise would be carried out using 3D Civils to minimise off-site disposal. However, as it is understood that any development is to be located adjacent to the A96, the overall level change in this area is unlikely to result in a significant cut/fill exercise to provide a development platform.

**Ground Conditions - Previous Land Use**

A review of the 1830-1880 historic map shows that the site was previously used for agricultural purposes. No major structures were recorded within the site boundary prior to the construction of the proposed school. See Figure 3.

From previous land use, the assumption is that overall risk of contaminants is low, however, results from the SI report will clarify the presence of contaminants.

**Geology**

An SI report was conducted for the site in 2008, 49no.trial pits and 4no.boreholes were carried out. These confirmed the following general strata:

- Dark brown sandy TOPSOIL (0.25-0.8m thick, average 0.4m)
- Loose to medium dense and dense fine to medium SAND with varying proportions of sub rounded to well-rounded gravel and cobbles, occasionally described as SAND & GRAVEL (proved to 7.0mbgl)

The distribution between loose and medium dense sand is highlighted in Figure 4. The light blue hatch displays trial holes with loose sand present to approximately 1.2-2mbgl, the green hatch highlights holes with loose sand present from approximately 0-1.2mbgl.

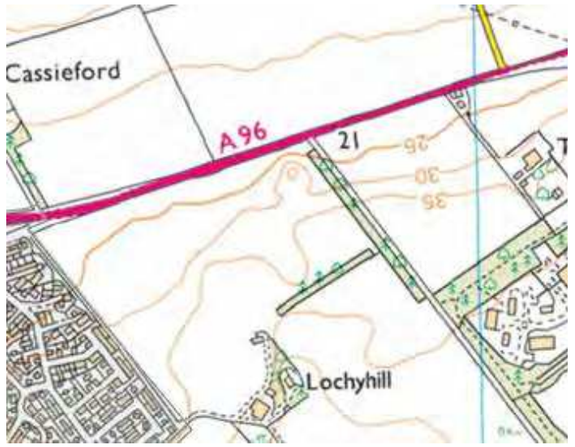


Figure 1. OS - Map Extract


Figure 2. Extract from 1830 - 1880s historical map


Figure 3. Aerial view 2022

Figure 4. The distribution between loose and medium dense sand. Blue hatch displays trial holes with loose sand present to approximately 1.2-2mbgl. Green hatch highlights holes with loose sand present from approximately 0-1.2mbgl.

# 4.6 Engineering Review

**Earthworks and Site Levels**

Nearby borehole information from the British Geological Survey archives shows sand and gravel layers above a sandstone bedrock throughout ground strata. The lithological description from the British Geological Survey details sand and gravel as superficial deposits and sandstone as the bedrock geology.

Further SI investigations will be required to supplement this information based on the detailed development proposals. Further testing will also be required to confirm there has been no change to any contamination levels on the site.

The Coal Authority GIS database identified that the site is not within an area coal mining reporting or where coal outcrops are present.

The site is within an area of 3-5% Radon potential. Therefore, Radon Protection is required.

**Groundwater**

Groundwater was recorded during the ground investigation in BH1 at 4.6mbgl and at 3.32mbgl and 3.26mbgl during subsequent monitoring visits on 08/04/2007 and 14/05/2007 respectively. Water strikes were recorded during excavation of trial pits 1 to 6 at the lowest point (NW corner) of the site at levels of 1.9 to 2.8mbgl. Based on this ground water may be encountered in deeper excavations.

**Foundations**

The interpretive report provided confirms that the medium dense granular soils will provide a suitable bearing stratum, with allowable bearing capacities of 100kN/m2, for standard strip foundations. In areas of loose sand, highlighted in blue in Figure 5, an allowance for additional trench fill should be allowed for so that adequate bearing strata can be reached. Further detailed SI investigations required in order to confirm this assessment.

**SUDS Strategy**

**Surface Water Discharge**

The connection for the surface water is yet to be approved by Scottish Water, and the area of hard standing is yet to be set, therefore, the outfall rate cannot determined. However, based on the assumption the school will have a similar layout to the proposals at Roysvale Park it is estimated approximately 1400m3 of storage will be required to store the 1:200 year storm with 37% climate change.

The primary method of attenuation will be provided by below ground attenuation tanks as it is anticipated that options such as SUDS basins and ponds will not be viable for this site due to their large land take.

Treatment will be provided by options such as porous paving, filter strips and linear swales which can be accommodated within the landscaping.

**Foul Water**

The capacity of the Scottish Water Network and treatment plant will need to be confirmed by Scottish Water through a Pre-Development Enquiry.

**Flooding**

Pluvial flooding observed on SEPA flood maps, however, this is not of concern as drainage design will take this into consideration.

No flood protection nearby, however, no risk of fluvial flooding from either Burn of Mosset or river Findhorn in accordance with the SEPA flood maps and the river Findhorn.

Full reports can be found in Appendix D.

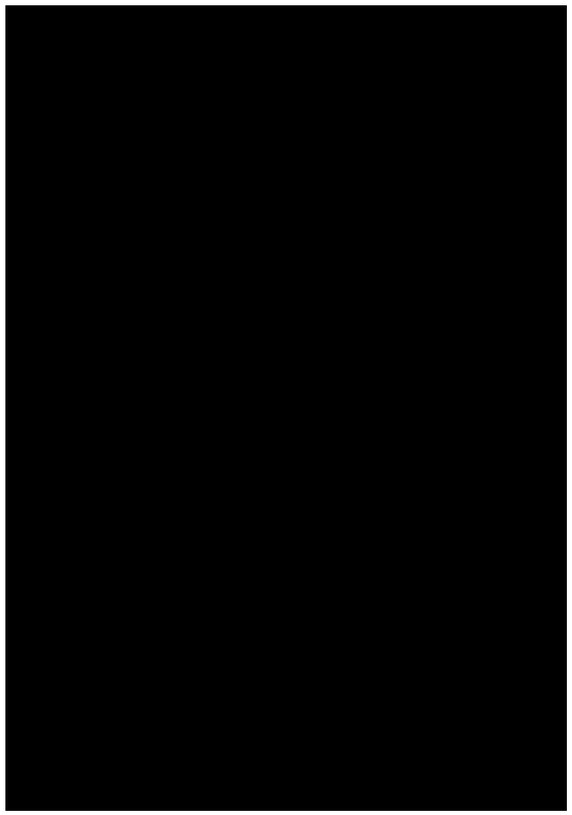


Figure 5. Borehole data from 2008 SI


Figure 6. SEPA flood maps showing pluvial flooding

# 4.7 Existing Land Use

**Existing Site and Land Use**

The site is located to the north east of Forres on the edge of the town It is best described as urban fringe. To the north of the site the A96 runs east to west. The site is currently a greenfield site - farmland and has a number of small farm buildings on the southern boundary.  It is also allocated as R3 – Residential in the LDP.

To the east is the Forres Enterprise Park and a number of detached residential properties. The site boundary has a mature hedgerow and woodland planting.

To the west of the site is residential estate and Forres Golf Club. Drumduan Road could provide the main vehicular route into the school as it runs along the western boundary of the site.

The site rises up from the A96 and has a gently sloping profile. There several areas of mature planting within the site and views are dominated by a tree lined ridge. Views looking from the ridge to the north are of farmland and the A96 dominates the view.

View looking at the Lochyhill site

# 4.8 Opportunities

### Daylight / Environment

Opportunities to position new building on the site to maximise the amount of sun it will get during the year. Due to the site being clear of existing buildings and trees, the new school can be orientated in optimal position to deliver a sustainable building in terms of energy consumption and environmental conditions

### Public Transport Links

The new building should link with existing public transport infrastructure and minimise pedestrian travel distance, and time, from the existing town to promote active and sustainable travel. The location of this site as well as the close proximity of public transport links means there is opportunity for other services to move there in the future, additionally benefiting from the neighbouring Enterprise Park

### Existing Buildings

As there is no existing school currently on this site, there is no requirement to decant pupils to another location whilst the construction work is ongoing thus meaning their education is not disturbed. Furthermore, as this site is clear and outside of a conservation area, the construction process will be relatively smooth and the contractors compound can placed at the site boundary with minimal impact on existing residential areas.

### Green Space

As there is no existing trees and minimal ecological value, biodiversity enhancements will be easy to achieve. Additionally, there is an opportunity to develop a natural surface water management system using SuDs.

Site Opportunities

# 4.9 Constraints

### Services

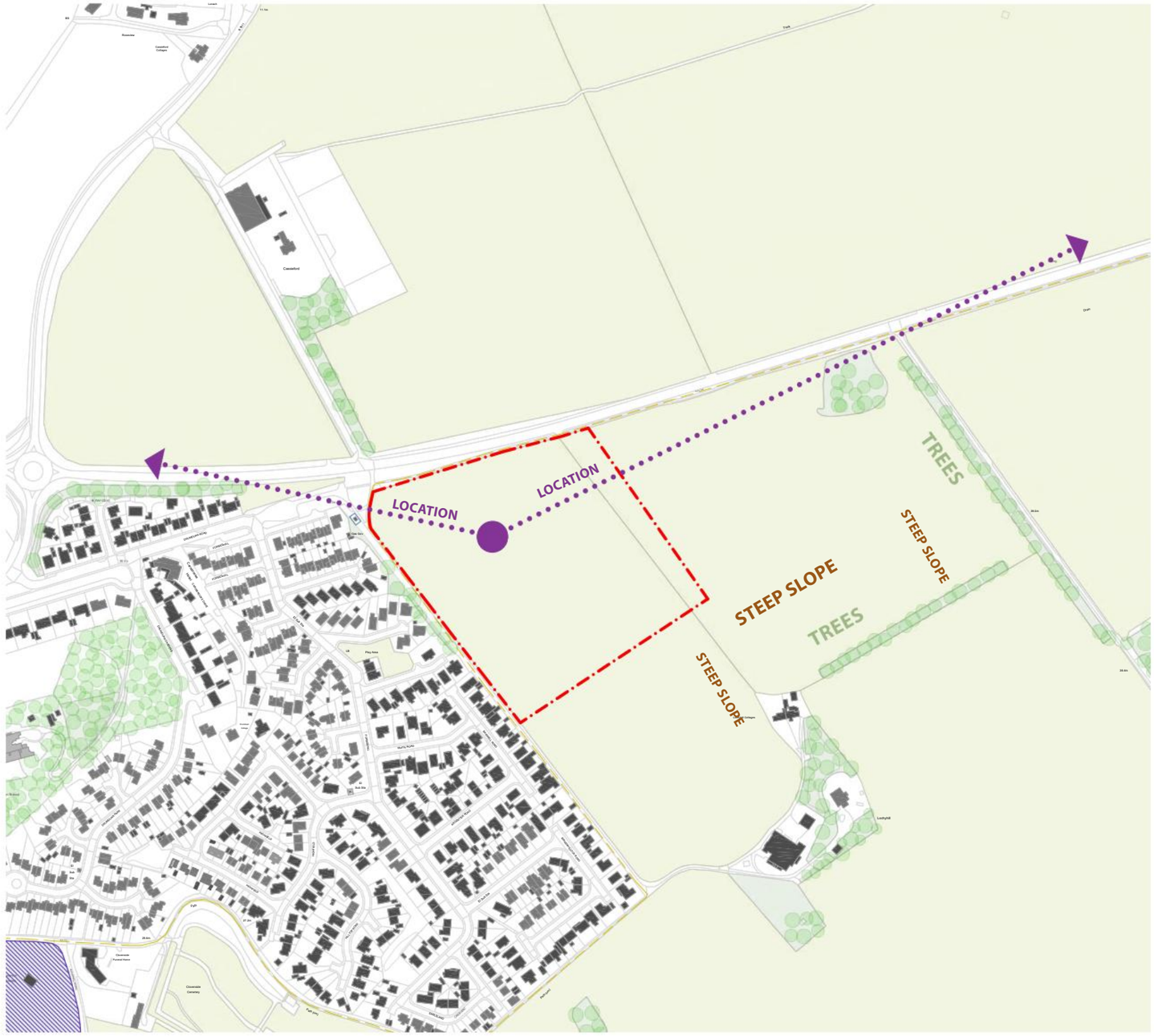
The existing mains water and BT Infrastructure run through the site. The existing water main cannot provide the preferred 125mm connection for the fire main. This means that a cost of provided upgraded infrastructure could be expensive. Furthermore, drainage runs east west through site easements which could impact on building location.

### Location

As this location is on the edges of the town, a proposed school with amenities located a significant distance away poses challenges for accessibility and convenience. This situation can lead to increased transportation costs, longer commute times, and hinder the establishment of a cohesive school-community connection. Additionally, there is no existing primary school which hinders the possibility to develop 5-18 campus

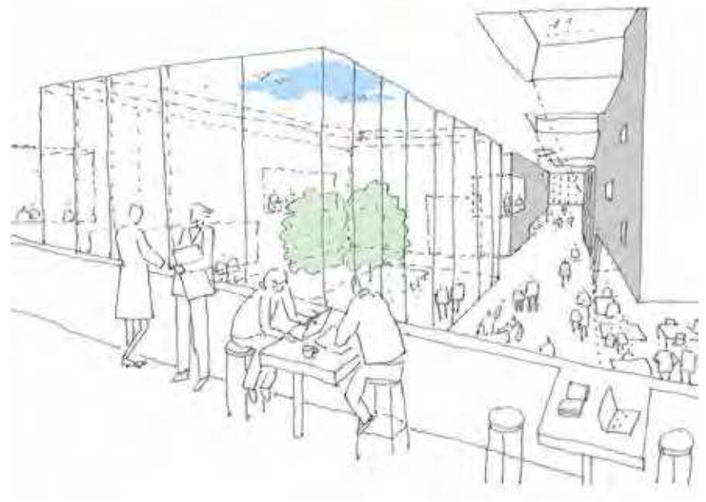
### Archaeological Interest

There is evidence of archaeological interest within the site so further survey work will be required.




Site Constraints

# 5.0 GRANTOWN ROAD



# 5.1 Location Overview

Grantown Road site within the context of Forres

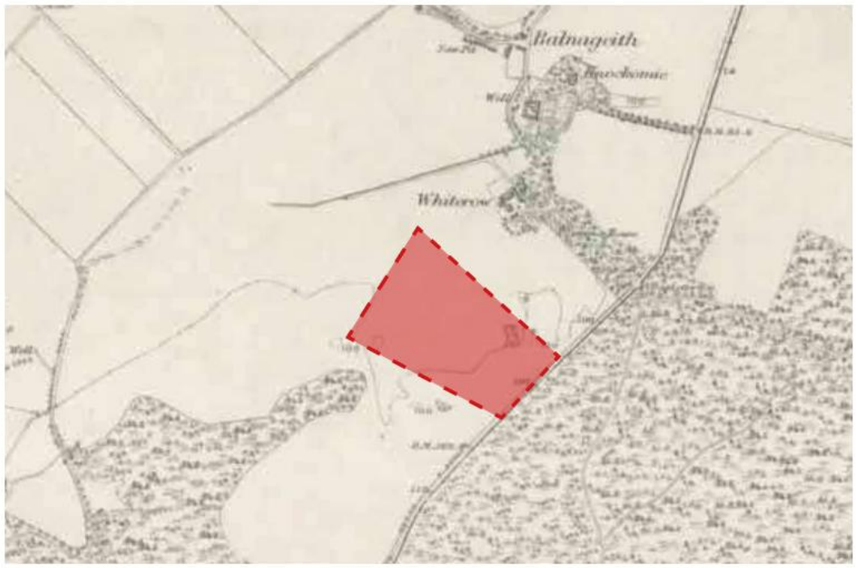
# 5.2 Historical Analysis

Located on the western edge of Forres, the Grantown Road site has long showcased a natural landscape featuring expansive green areas, farmlands with associated structures, and dense woodlands.

While much of the woodlands and green spaces endure, the area to the east of the Grantown Road site has recently undergone substantial residential development. This shift can be attributed, in part, to Forres' expansion and the heightened demand for housing in the 20th and 21st centuries.

Located just northeast of the site boundary, additional residential development is underway within the new Woodroffe Grange development, contributing to the town's evolving urban landscape.

Similar to the Lochyhill site, despite ongoing development surrounding its periphery, the site itself has largely remained untouched for a significant period.

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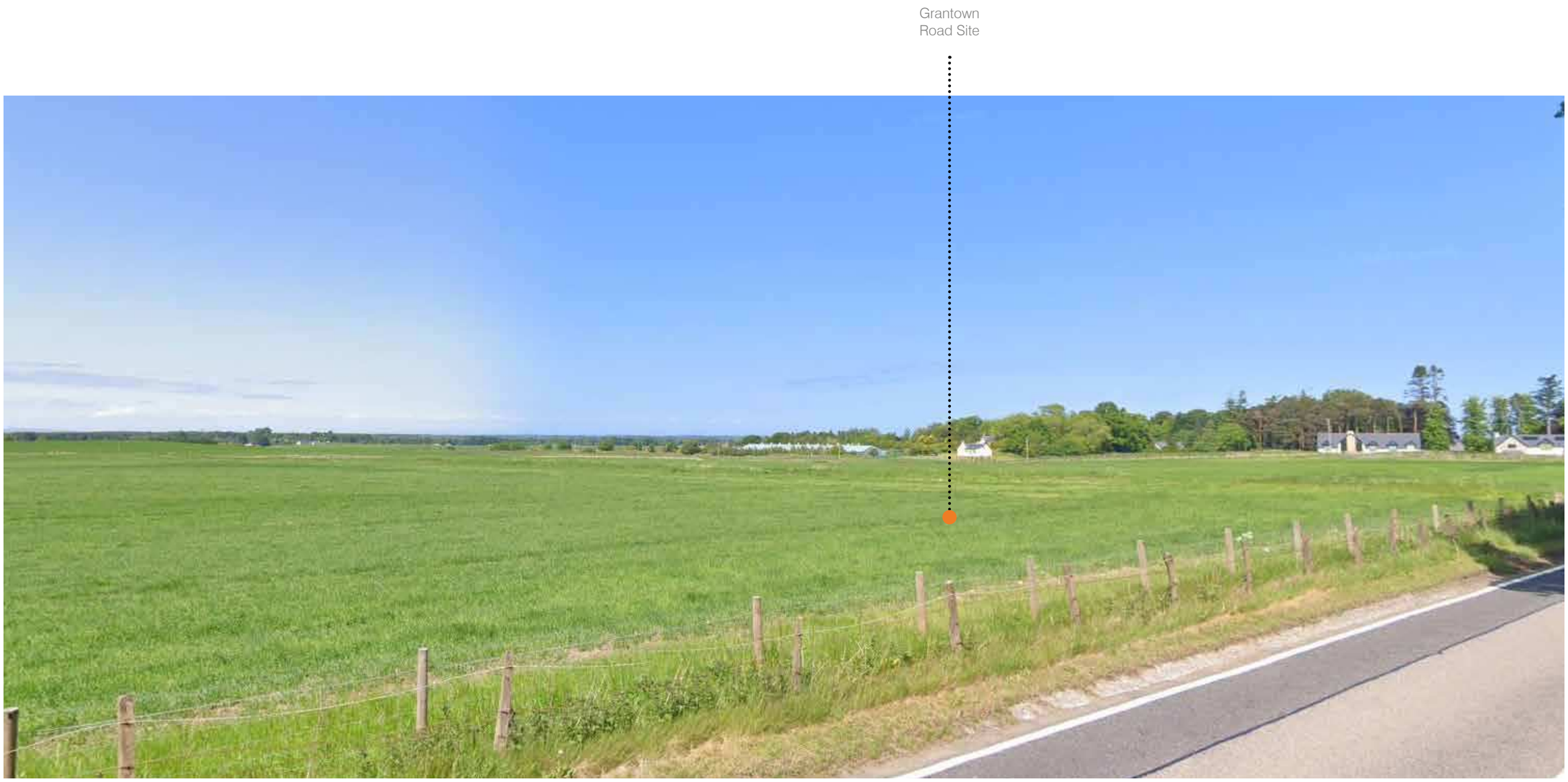
# 5.3 Photographic Survey




View of the Grantown Road site looking north

# 5.3 Photographic Survey


Aerial view of the Grantown Road site

# 5.4 20 Minute Neighbourhood

The Grantown Road site is on the outskirts of the town and is located south-west to the majority of Forres' facilities.

A large number of the food retailers are located along the town's High Street and the closest supermarket, which is the Co-op, is a 15 minute walk, on Grantown Road, to the north east of the site.

There are several public green spaces in the southwest of Forres but these are all located in excess of a 20 minute walk from the site. The Dava Way (a 23 mile trail across the ancient Celtic province of Morayshire) can be linked into via a 25 minute walk from the site.

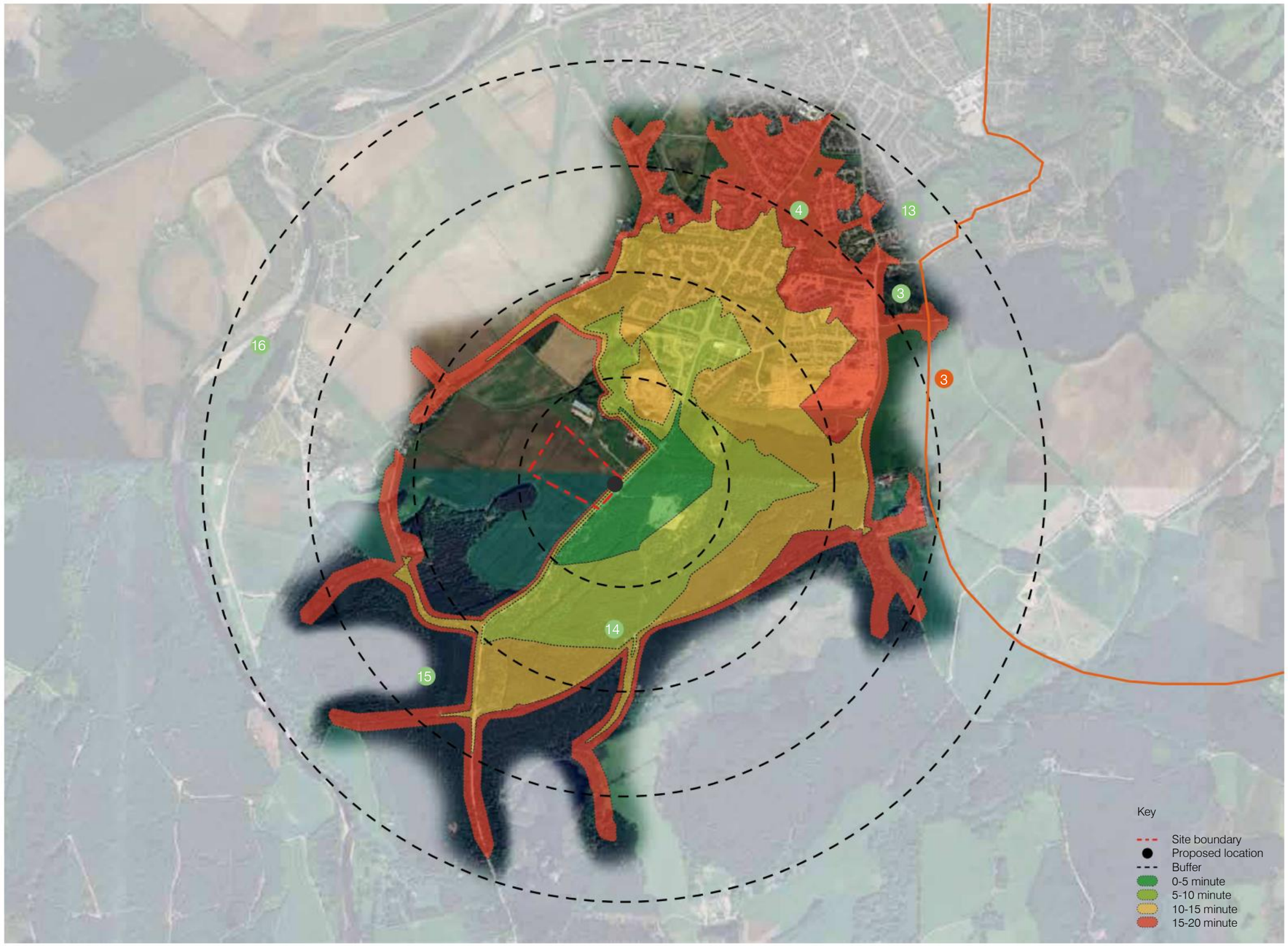
There is a new residential development which is currently under construction - Woodroffe Grange - which is a 5 minute walk from the site.

The train station is to the north east of the site and is approximately 40 minute walk.

KEY

Parks & Green Spaces
- 3 Sanquhar Loch & Woodlands
- 4 Mannachie Park
- 13 Academy Playing Field
- 14 Loch of Blairs & Woodland
- 15 Limekilns Wood
- 16 River Findhorn

Travel Routes
- 3 The Dava Way




Map showing the public amenities in relation to Grantown Road.

# 5.5 Existing Utilities

Record drawings indicate the existence of major Utility Infrastructure in close proximity of the site. There is a high-pressure gas main and overhead 11kV SSE Infrastructure near the eastern boundary.

The high-pressure gas main has been identified as a critical part of the national infrastructure. Diversion or alteration of this pipeline is not recommended and should the site be identified as the preferred option then working within the SGN constraints will be necessary. For this pipeline the construction of any buildings will not be permitted within 32 mtrs, other groundwork's could be undertaken up to 6mtrs either side of the pipeline. Initial indications are that these constraints will not have a significant effect on the proposed school development.

A risk assessment would be conducted against the overhead HV lines that sit on the eastern boundary and would be developed and assessed against the proposed setting-out arrangement within the site. Should an unacceptable risk be identified then an application will be made to re-route the HV Infrastructure underground.

The utilities for the proposed new development would comprise of Electric, Mains Water and Communications Infrastructure. Records show that existing infrastructure for each of these services are located in close proximity to the site.

Utility capacities and the ability for local infrastructure to serve the site without significant network reinforcement will be confirmed as the design develops and applications are made. With the site being located on the southern outskirts of Forres and from information contained within the record drawings there is a higher level of risk that utilities capacities will be available without further reinforcement.

The record drawings received will be verified through a Ground Penetrating Radar Survey (GPRS) during the next stage of the project should the site be selected as the preferred option.

With regard to drainage, there are no existing adopted sewers within the site boundary, and an Pre Development Enquiry will be required to confirm the location and capacity for any connection to the wider Scottish Water network. The closest foul sewer is located within the development north of the site at Woodroffe Grange. To form a foul connection to this network, a new adopted sewer approximately 500m long would be required to be constructed along Grantown Road.

No Surface water sewers are located in the vicinity, therefore it is assumed that any surface water will be discharged to the watercourse to the south of the site at an equivalent greenfield rate and subject to any required SEPA and 3rd party land consents.

For further details and Utility record drawings please refer to Appendix C.

# 5.6 Engineering Review

**Earthworks and Site Levels**

**Existing Site Topography**

No topographical survey has been completed for the site.

The OS maps, seen in Figure 1, shows the south of the site sits at approximately 35mAOD and falls north towards the river Findhorn to approximately 20mAOD.

**Proposed Levels and Cut / Fill Strategy**

As the development area is relatively flat, limited earthworks will be required to form the new access road, parking and rear play areas.

At the appropriate time a high-level cut & fill exercise would be carried out using 3D Civils to minimise off-site disposal.

**Ground Conditions - Previous Land Use**

A review of the 1830-1880 historic map shows that the site was previously used for agricultural purposes. No major structures were recorded within the site boundary prior to the construction of the proposed school. See Figure 2.

The development to the south of the site started construction in 2022, as can be seen in Figure 4.

From previous land use, the assumption is that overall risk of contaminants is low, however, results from the SI report will clarify the presence of contaminants.

**Geology**

There is no nearby borehole information from the British Geological Survey archives, however, the lithological description from the British Geological Survey depicts sandstone bedrock with gravel and sand superficial deposits. Finalised SI information will be required to determine site specific ground conditions.

The Coal Authority GIS database identified that the site is not within an area coal mining reporting or where coal outcrops are present.

The site is within an area of 1% Radon potential. Therefore, the minimum level of Radon Protection is required.

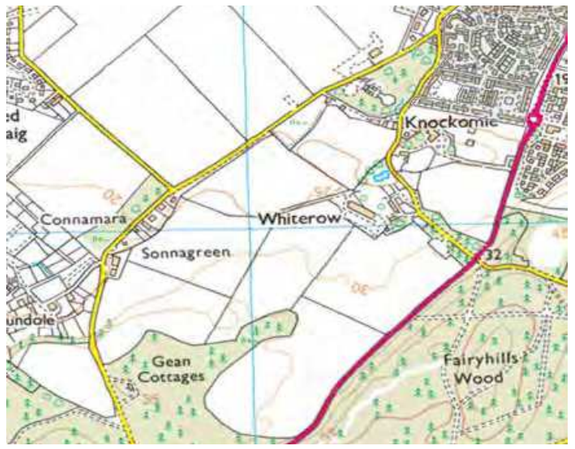


Figure 1. OS - Map Extract


Figure 2. Extract from 1830 - 1880s historical map


Figure 3. Aerial view 2003


Figure 4. Aerial view 2022

# 5.6 Engineering Review

**SUDS Strategy**

**Surface Water Discharge**

The connection for the surface water is yet to be approved by Scottish Water, it is assumed the outfall will be to the watercourse south of the site subjected to 3rd party land consent.

The area of hard standing is yet to be set, therefore, the outfall rate cannot be determined. However, based on the assumption the school will have a similar layout to the proposals at Roysvale Park it is estimated approximately 1400m3 of storage will be required to store the 1:200 year storm with 37% climate change, this is based on greenfield runoff rate being approved by Scottish Water.

The primary method of attenuation will be provided by below ground attenuation tanks as it is anticipated that options such as SUDS basins and ponds will not be viable for this site due to their large land take.

Treatment will be provided by options such as porous paving, filter strips and linear swales which can be accommodated within the landscaping.

**Foul Water**

The capacity of the Scottish Water Network and treatment plant will need to be confirmed by Scottish Water through a Pre-Development Enquiry.

A new development south of the site has the potential to provide a foul water connection, to be approved by Scottish Water. This will require a new adopted sewer to be constructed down Grantown Road, approximately 500m long.

**Flooding**

Pluvial flooding observed on SEPA flood maps, however, this is not of concern as drainage design will take this into consideration.

No flood protection nearby, however, no risk of fluvial flooding from either Burn of Mosset or river Findhorn in accordance with the SEPA flood maps and the Moray Council Flood Risk Assessment.

Full reports can be found in Appendix D.


Figure 4. SEPA flood maps showing pluvial flooding

# 5.7 Existing Land Use

**Existing Site and Land Use**

Greenfield located to the south of Forres town centre. The A940 runs along the south eastern boundary of the site and the site can be accessed from this road. To the east of the site there is a large belt of mature woodland. Housing is located to the north of the site and accessed from Ferry Road. There is also a belt of woodland planting which will provide screening to the properties locating along this side of the site. The site is relatively flat and feels open with long open views to the north west and views of mature woodland to the south.

View looking at the Grantown Road site

# 5.8 Opportunities

### Daylight / Environment

Opportunities to position new building on the site to maximise the amount of sun it will get during the year. Due to the site being clear of existing buildings and trees, the new school can be orientated in optimal position to deliver a sustainable building in terms of energy consumption and environmental conditions

### New Neighbourhood

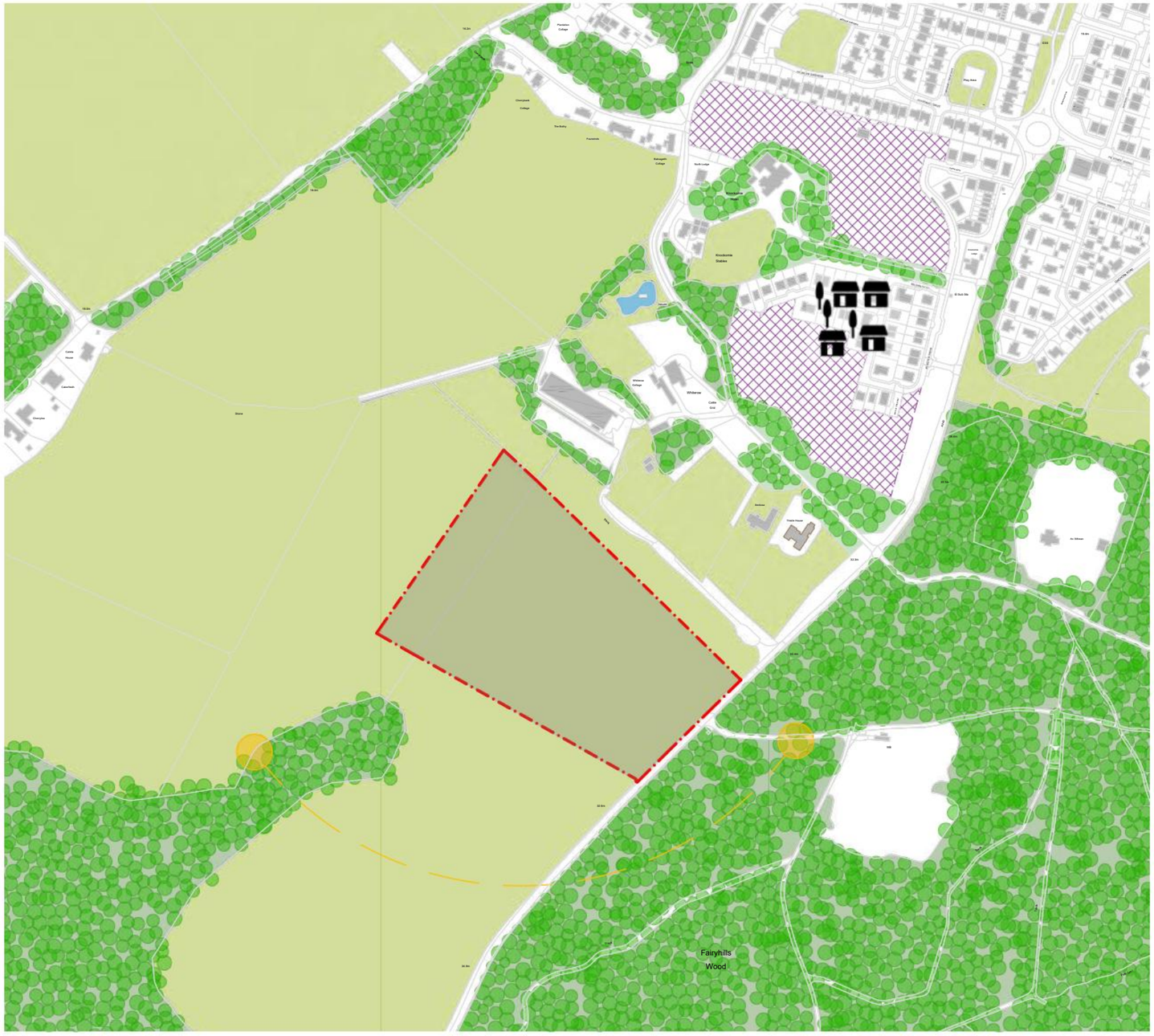
The new housing development in the vicinity is advantageous for the location of a potential new school, as it not only addresses the growing residential needs but also creates a vibrant community hub that promotes accessibility and engagement with educational resources.

### Existing Buildings

As there is no existing school currently on this site, there is no requirement to decant pupils to another location whilst the construction work is ongoing thus meaning their education is not disturbed.
Furthermore, as this site is clear and outside of a conservation area, the construction process will be relatively smooth and the contractors compound can placed at the site boundary with minimal impact on existing residential areas.

### Green Space

As there are no existing trees and minimal ecological value, biodiversity enhancements will be easy to achieve - aiding in creating plenty of outdoor spaces for education promoting a ‘nature based campus’.




Site Opportunities

# 5.9 Constraints

### Public Transport

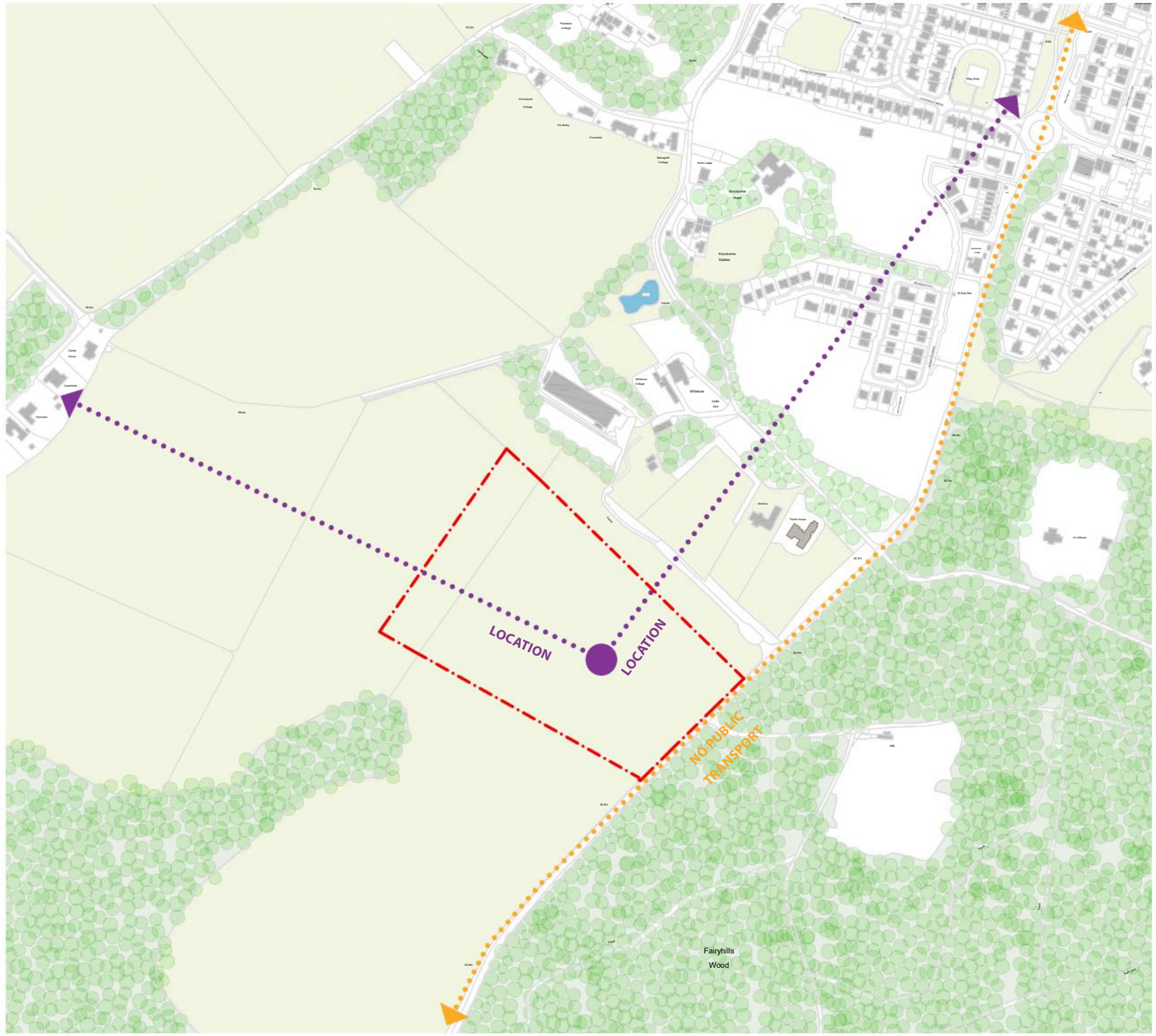
The absence of an existing public network route near this site for a possible school is disadvantageous, potentially hindering accessibility for students and limiting community engagement with the educational institution.

### Unknown Services

There is no foul water connections on or within site boundary. A new offsite connection would be required along the A940 to the existing network on Webster Drive. Additionally, as there is no surface water sewers on site or in vicinity, surface water will need to be taken to ground or to existing drainage channels adjacent to Ferry Road.

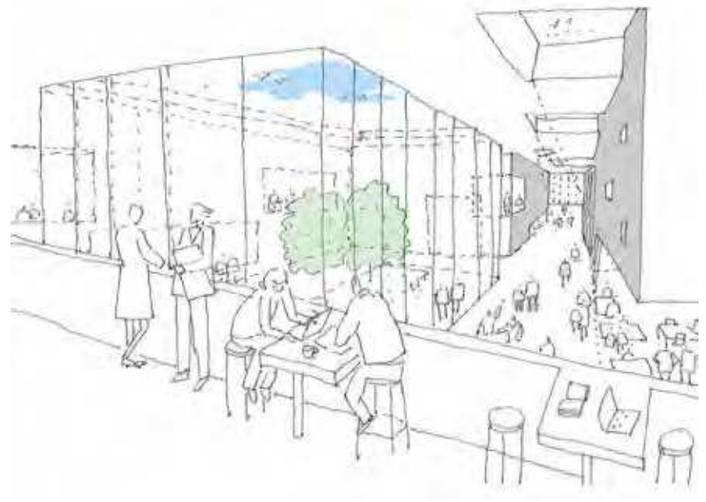
### Location

As this location is on the edges of the town, a proposed school with amenities located a significant distance away poses challenges for accessibility and convenience. This situation can lead to increased transportation costs, longer commute times, and hinder the establishment of a cohesive school-community connection. Additionally, there is no existing primary school which hinders the possibility to develop 5-18 campus.




Site Constraints

# 6.0 Site Location Appraisal



# 6.1 Site Appraisal

At the end of October 2023, Moray Council held an engagement session at Forres Library to present and discuss site selection for a new Forres Academy. The consultation boards were also made available online and remained in the library for public viewing until the end of November, comments were welcomed from the community in person and via email. These boards assessed each site option against the project's Strategic and SMART objectives;  a series of issues, goals and criteria that were developed by Moray Council as part of their strategic planning around future schools in Moray.

In December 2023, the Design Team and Moray Council undertook a wider technical appraisal of the three sites: scoring each of the sites against criteria such as planning considerations, flood risk and existing utilities as well as the previous 'place' based assessment.

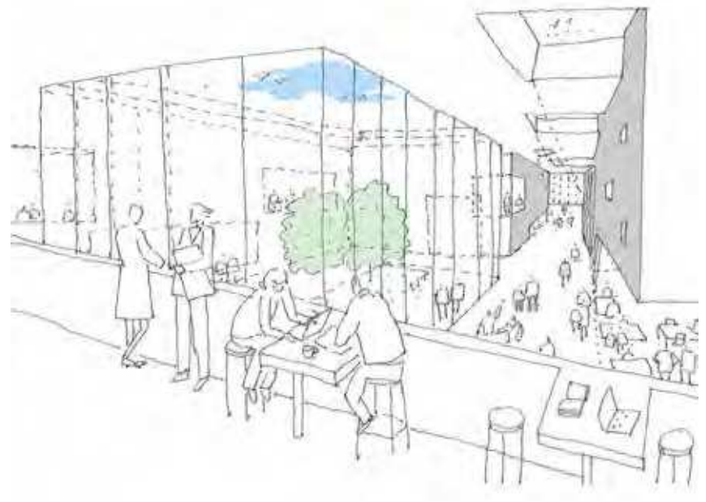
The scoring matrix and outcomes can be found in Appendix F.

Roysvale site

Lochyhill site

Grantown Road site

# 7.0 Forres Academy Current Site



# 7.1 Location Overview

Existing school site within the context of Forres

# 7.2 Historical Analysis

Forres is one of the oldest of Scotland's royal burghs with the charter granted in 1153. In the 12th century, Forres, along with Inverness, Auldearn, Nairn and Elgin formed part of a defensive chain along the south coast of the Moray Firth.

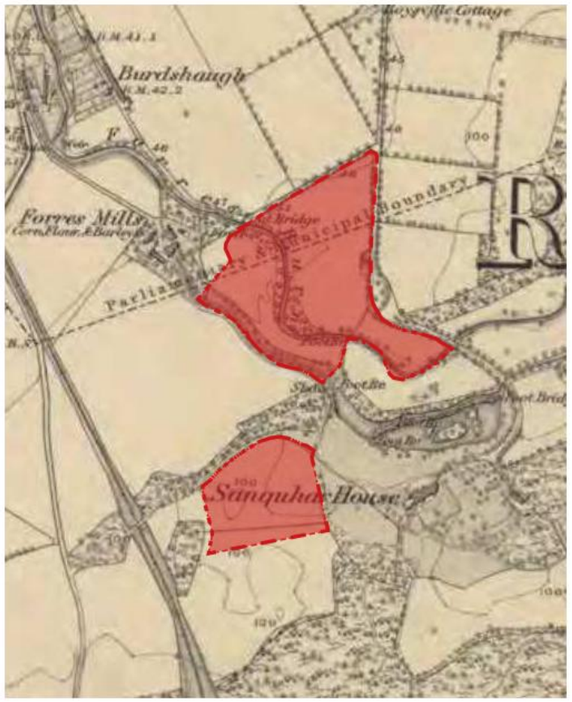
Throughout the 15th and 16th centuries, Forres thrived as a market town, capitalizing on its strategic location and burgeoning trade networks.

By the 18th and 19th century, the site still remained largely untouched. However the main town, particularly along the High Street, began to rapidly develop and became commercially and socially significant for the area.

During the late 19th century and mid-20th century, the towns growth continued, expanding away from the High Street and particularly along Burn of Mosset, with new roads and public footpaths appearing, allowing new housing and amenities to emerge.

**Forres Academy - Existing School**

The existing school was built in 1969 and has been expanded and updated several times to accommodate the requirements of modern education.

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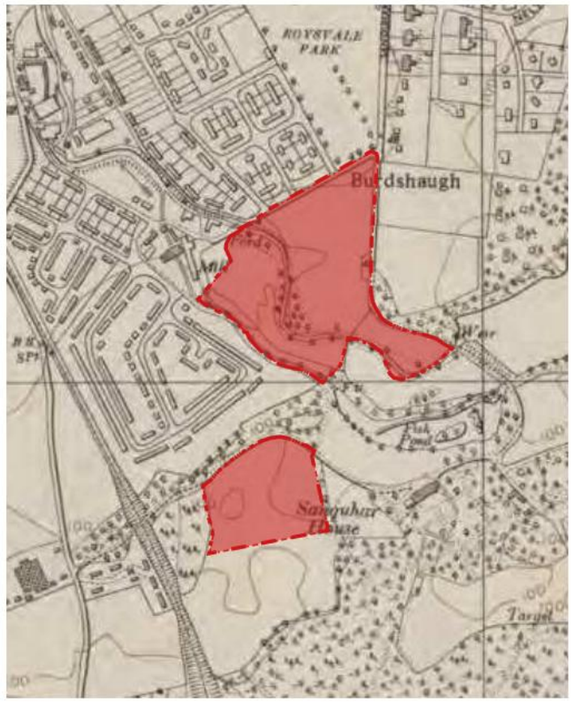


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# 7.3 Site Analysis

### Existing Buildings

Within the site and adjoining the existing school is a community swimming pool building. This will stay open and functioning during the demolition of the existing school. Any future development will have to consider its relationship with the existing swimming pool building.

### Multiple sites

The existing school is spread over 2 sites with 1 of the sites used as a playing field for sports activities. Additionally, the main site, which inhabits the school building, is split in half by the Burn of Mosset. The new school, on any of the potential sites, will be within a single boundary.

### Restricted Development

There is an area within the eastern wing of the site which is out of bounds for future development as it has recently had an outdoor gym installed on it. Any future development will have to consider its relationship with the new gym.

### Flooding

As per SEPA flood information, there are a several areas within the site and existing building which have a flood risk due to the location of the school in relation to the burn. See the Appendix for further detailed information.

### RAAC

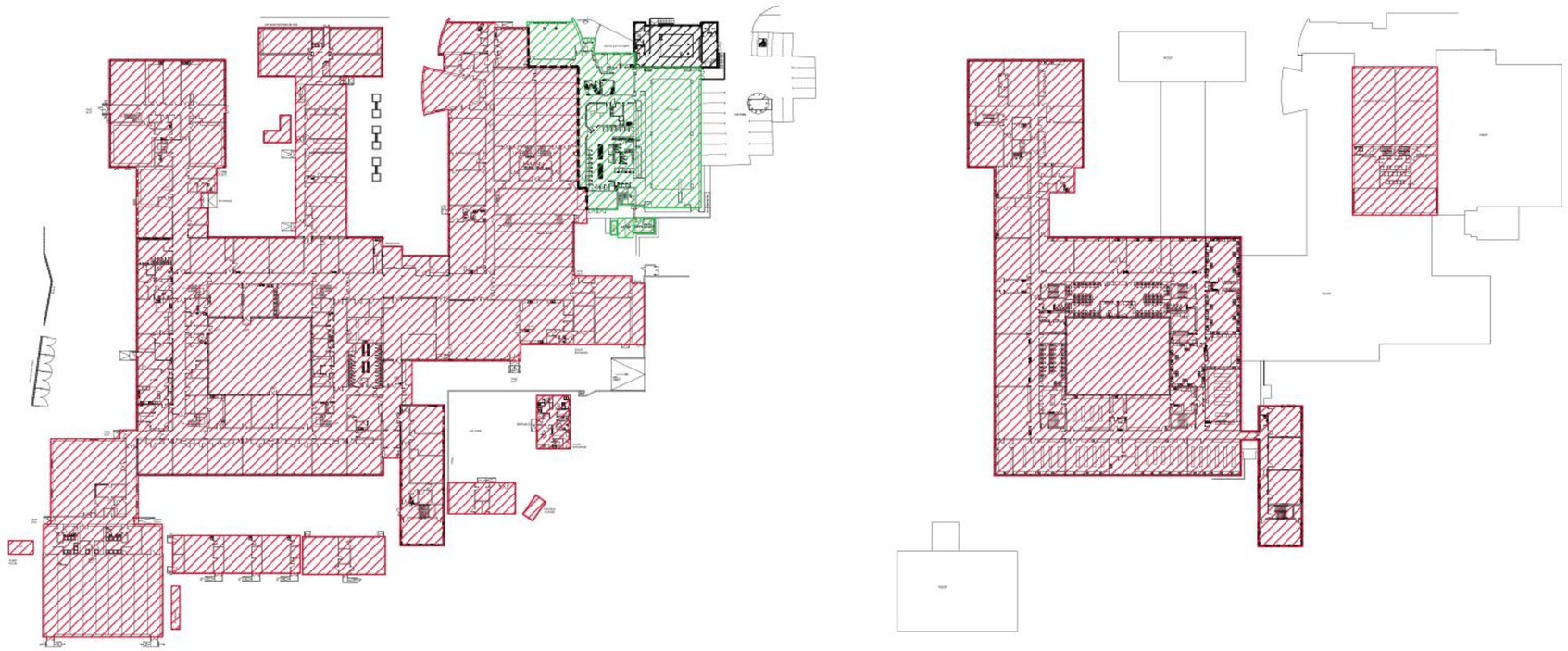
There are several areas within the school which have RAAC present and these areas are not accessible or usable by the staff or pupils. This has caused disruptive learning for the pupils and thus a new school is urgently required.

Existing site analysis

# 7.4 Existing Building

Given the aforementioned challenges with refurbishment and reuse referenced in Section 1.6, the recommendation has been made by Moray Council to demolish the majority of the existing Forres Academy. Demolition will be undertaken following the completion of the new school building to ensure continuity of education for the young learners.

The areas of the building which are an exception to this are the swimming pool, hydrotherapy pool and associated ancillary spaces. Following significant investment and refurbishment, completed in 2016, it is proposed that these buildings are retained and a new external wall constructed along the line of demolition. The swimming pool is currently rated as 'B' for Condition and therefore it is anticipated that there will be minimal refurbishment works required to these spaces.




Demolition plan of existing building

# 7.5 Existing Utilities

Utility Records received identify existing utilities infrastructure serving the school. In general, this information informs the ongoing development of isolations and disconnections during the demolition phase. In addition, it will aid the assessment of the scope of works associated with the option of retaining the swimming pool/ hydrotherapy pool.

**SGN**

Two incoming natural gas supplies have been identified. One to the west of the school that appears to be dedicated to equipment within the teaching block (i.e. science/ home economics/ art). The other supply enters at the east elevation and serves the schools main heating and hot water plant. At the time of the construction of the swimming pool it appears that a branch of this gas supply has been extended to the swimming pool to serve the heating and hot water plant (including pool heating).

**SSE**

Record information show a high voltage ring entering the site from Sanquhar Road to the east and terminating in a SSE substation within the school. Although not identified on the record drawings a further substation exists to the rear of the swimming pool and assumed as installed at the time the swimming pool was constructed.

**BT**

The BT service enters the site off Sanquhar Road to the east. A separate branch connection has been installed directly to the swimming pool building from an external joint box.

**Scottish Water-Mains Water**

It is not entirely clear from record drawings where the mains water supply enters the school. Anticipated as being from the north side of the site but will need tested through future surveys. The mains water supply for the swimming pool extends from the main school connection and appears to be run through the existing school to the Pool block.

**Drainage**

It is assumed that the existing foul and surface water drains from the existing building are assumed to connect directly to the combined sewers on w and Sanquhar Roads, (subject to CCTV survey). It is assumed that any connections for the existing pool building will be retained as part of the development.

# 8.0 New Proposal Site Layout Options

# 8.1 Roysvale Park - Long List Site Organisation Options

## Option 1a

Pros:

New secondary school location offers opportunity to develop 5-18 community campus.

New secondary school building located away from Common Good Land.

Pedestrian priority campus created by minimising vehicles in close proximity to school building

Dedicated bus/ coach drop off location, avoids road congestion

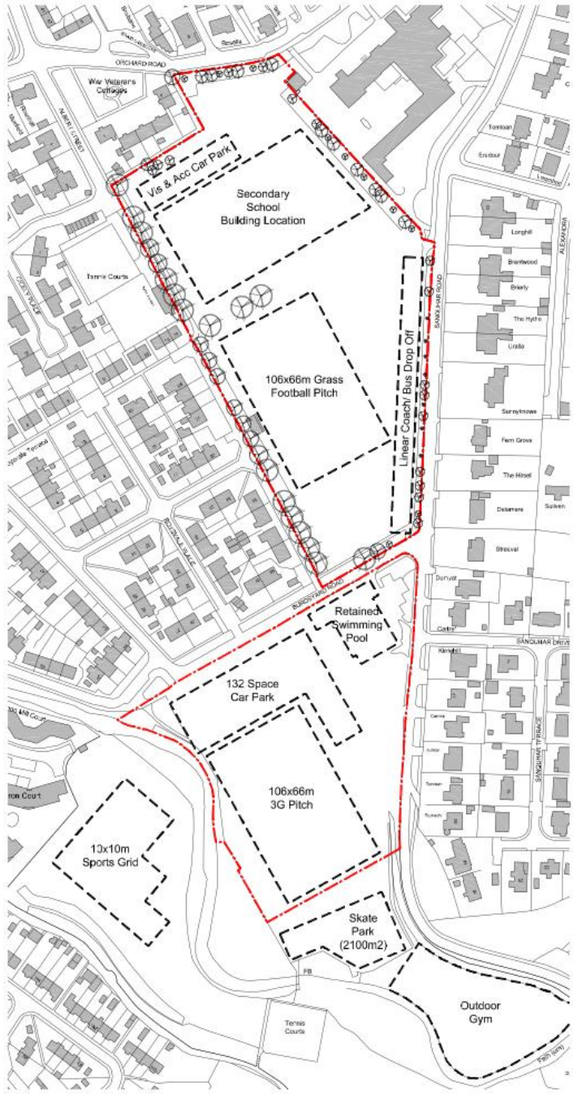
Dual functioning car park - serves both staff at school and swimming pool/ 3G pitch for community events.

Car park utilises existing access route.

Sports pavilion and grass pitch on Roysvale Park retained

Cons:

Car park and 3G pitch located on split site.




**Option 1a**

## Option 1b

Pros:

New secondary school location offers opportunity to develop 5-18 community campus.

New secondary school building located away from Common Good Land.

Pedestrian priority campus created by minimising vehicles in close proximity to school building

Dedicated bus/ coach drop off location, avoids road congestion

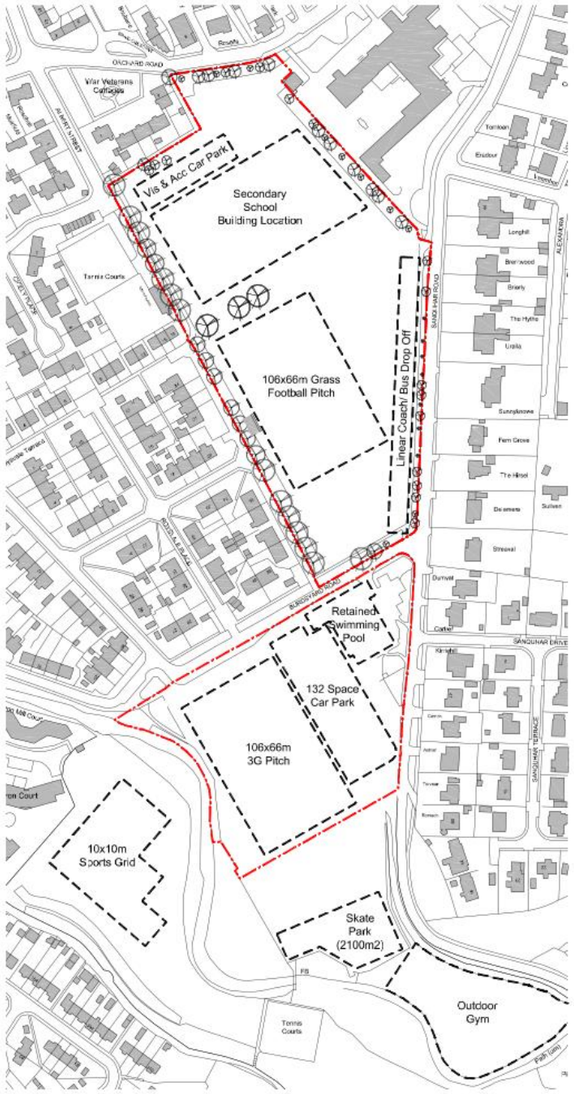
Dual functioning car park - serves both staff at school and swimming pool/ 3G pitch for community events.

Car park utilises existing access route.

Sports pavilion and grass pitch on Roysvale Park retained

Cons:

Car park and 3G pitch located on split site.




**Option 1b**

# 8.1 Roysvale Park - Long List Site Organisation Options

## Option 1c

Pros:

New secondary school location offers opportunity to develop 5-18 community campus.

New secondary school building located away from Common Good Land.

Pedestrian priority campus created by minimising vehicles in close proximity to school building

Dedicated bus/ coach drop off location, avoids road congestion

Dual functioning car park - serves both staff at school and swimming pool/ 3G pitch for community events.

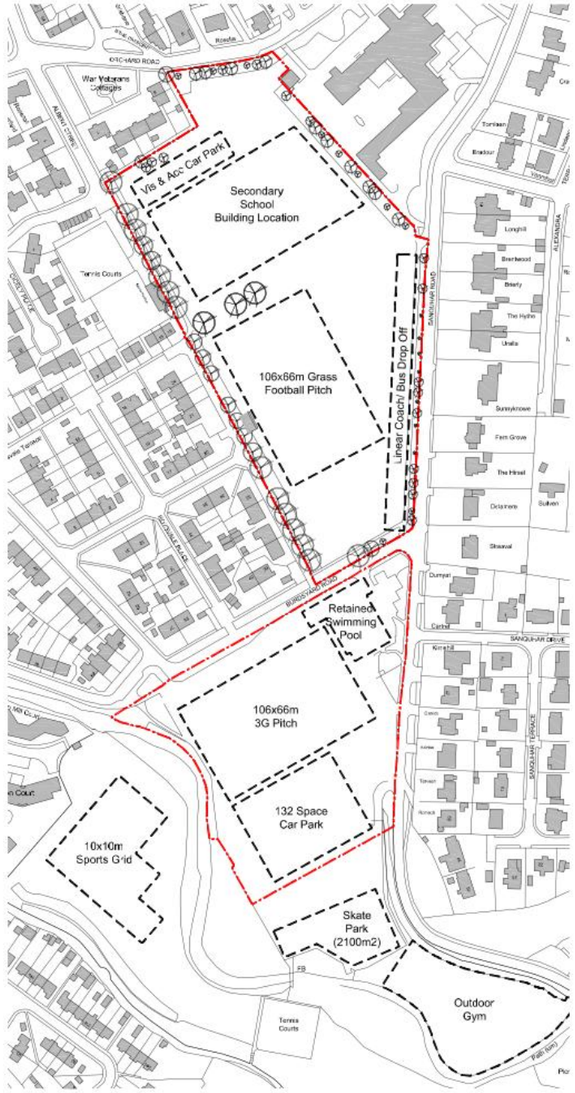
Car park utilises existing access route.

Sports pavilion and grass pitch on Roysvale Park retained

Cons:

Car park and 3G pitch located on split site.

3G pitch isolates car park from wider campus.




Option 1c

## Option 2

Pros:

New secondary school location offers opportunity to develop 5-18 community campus.

New secondary school building located away from Common Good Land.

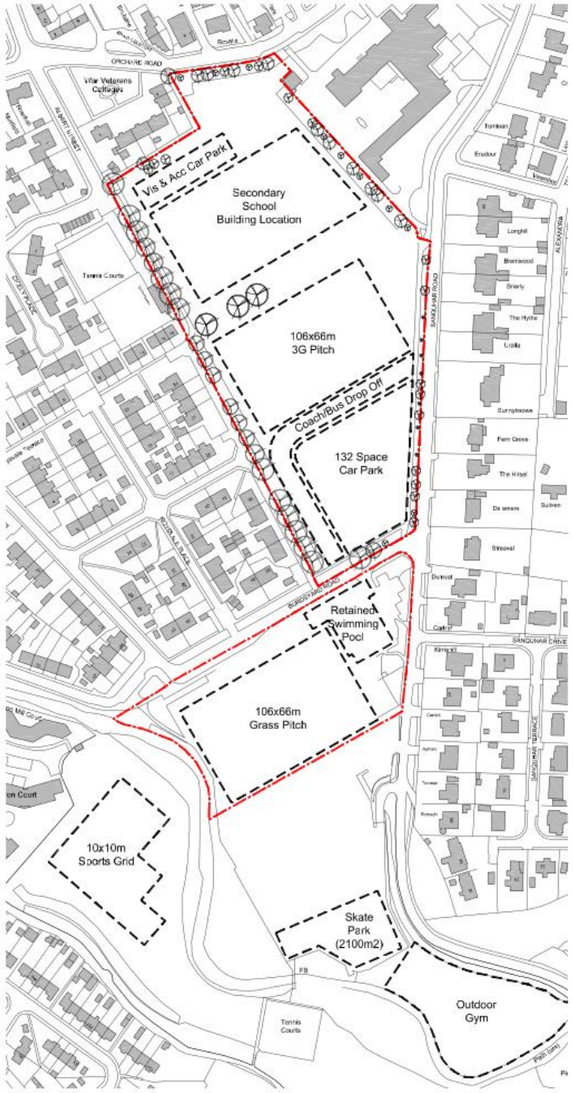
Dedicated bus/ coach drop off location, avoids road congestion

Car park in close proximity to school building.

Cons:

Car park and 3G pitch located on Common Good Land.

Loss of existing sports pavilion on Roysvale Park.




Option 2

# 8.1 Roysvale Park - Long List Site Organisation Options

## Option 3

Pros:

New secondary school location (core teaching) offers opportunity to develop 5-18 community campus.

Co-location of sports facilities for education and community use.

Removing ‘larger volume spaces’ from core teaching allow the mass of the building to be reduced.

New secondary school building located away from Common Good Land.

Dedicated bus/ coach drop off location, avoids road congestion

Sports pavilion and grass pitch on Roysvale Park retained

Pedestrian priority campus created by minimising vehicles in close proximity to school building

Dual functioning car park - serves both staff at school and swimming pool/ 3G pitch for community events.

Car park utilises existing access route.

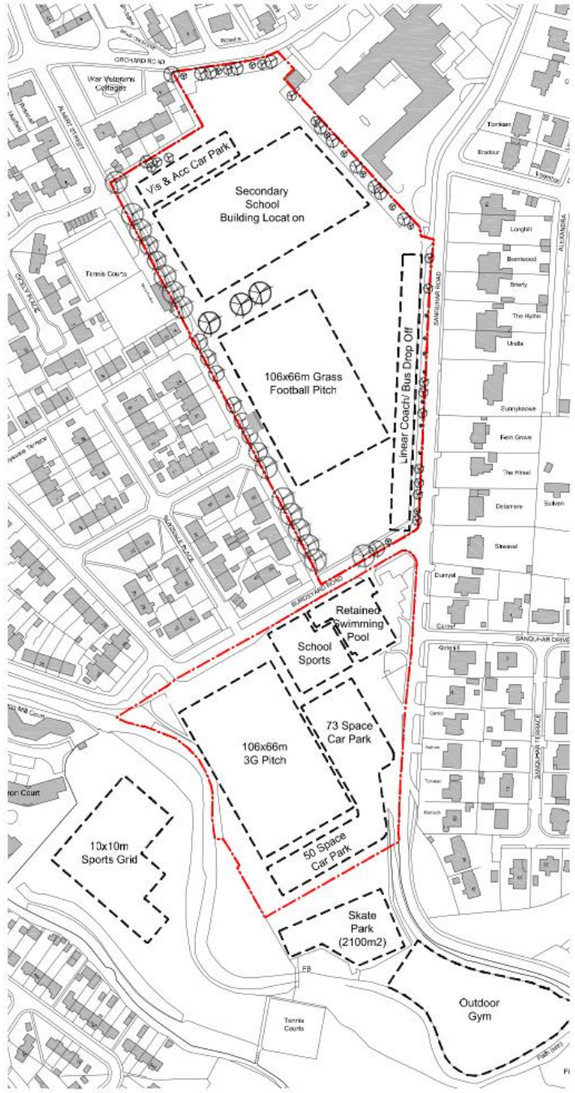
Cons:

Car park, 3G pitch and school indoor sports located on split site.

PE staff may feel isolated from wider school community.

Pupils required to walk to access to sports facilities, potentially impacting on amount of teaching time due to distance from main school building.

3G pitch and building isolates car park from wider campus.




Option 3

## Option 4

Pros:

Proposed building location delivers good adjacencies to existing swimming pool and primary school.

Minimal disruption to Applegrove Primary School.

Dedicated bus/ coach drop off location, avoids road congestion

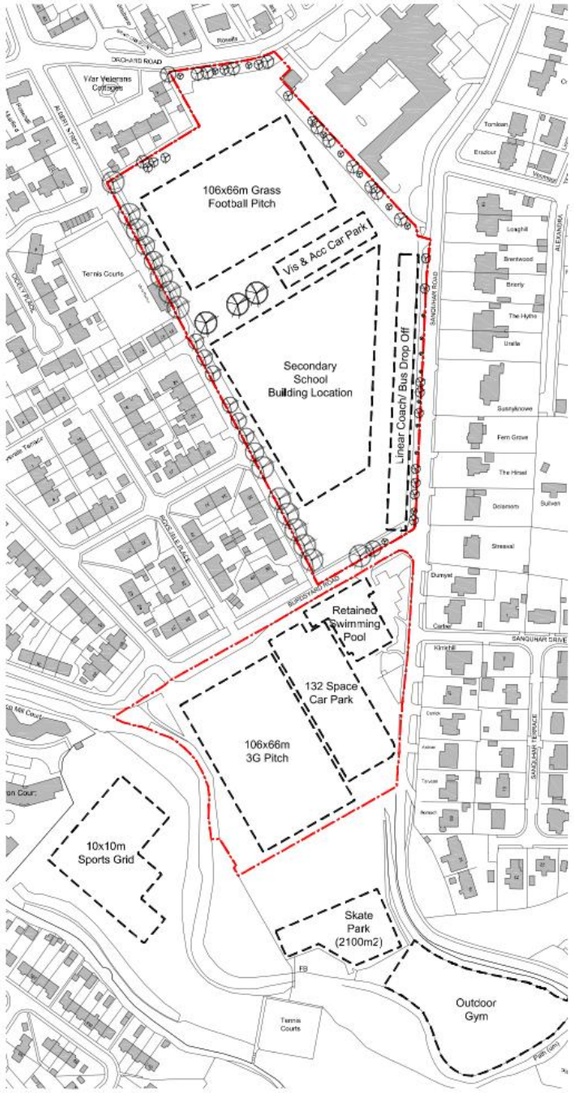
Car park in close proximity to school building.

Cons:

New secondary school located on Common Good Land.

Proposed building will be located further within the flood plain which may represent a challenge with respect to obtaining planning approval.

Loss of existing sports pavilion and grass pitch on Roysvale Park.




Option 4

# 8.2 Roysvale Park - Developed Site Organisation Option 1a

Development location for new secondary building (core teaching and sport facilities) with civic frontage onto Orchard Road.

Opportunity for 5-18 community and education campus to be developed with Applegrove Primary School.

Existing swimming pool, hydrotherapy pool and ancillary spaces (changing etc) retained.

Existing sports pavilion on Roysvale Park retained.

Proposed visitors and accessible car parking accessed from Orchard Road.

Proposed linear bus/ coach drop off layby running parallel to Sanquhar Road (access from Burdsyard Road, egress onto Sanquhar Rad).

Proposed school car park access and egress from existing opening on Sanquhar Road.

Existing grass football pitch and running track retained on Roysvale Park.

Proposed 3G 106x66m pitch located with close proximity to Forres Swimming Pool and proposed school car park.


# 8.3 Roysvale Park - Developed Site Organisation Option 1b

Development location for new secondary building (core teaching and sport facilities) with civic frontage onto Orchard Road.

Opportunity for 5-18 community and education campus to be developed with Applegrove Primary School.

Existing swimming pool, hydrotherapy pool and ancillary spaces (changing etc) retained.

Existing sports pavilion on Roysvale Park retained.

Proposed visitors and accessible car parking accessed from Orchard Road.

Proposed linear bus/ coach drop off layby running parallel to Sanquhar Road (access from Burdsyard Road, egress onto Sanquhar Rad).

Proposed school car park access and egress from existing opening on Sanquhar Road.

Existing grass football pitch and running track retained on Roysvale Park.

Proposed 3G 106x66m pitch located with close proximity to Forres Swimming Pool and proposed school car park.


# 8.4 Roysvale Park - Developed Site Organisation Option 3

Development location for new secondary building (core teaching) with civic frontage onto Orchard Road.

Opportunity for 5-18 community and education campus to be developed with Applegrove Primary School.

Existing swimming pool, hydrotherapy pool and ancillary spaces (changing etc) retained and enhanced with new indoor school sports accommodation construction on the existing school site, creating a education and community sports hub.

Existing sports pavilion on Roysvale Park retained.

Proposed visitors and accessible car parking accessed from Orchard Road.

Proposed linear bus/ coach drop off layby running parallel to Sanquhar Road (access from Burdsyard Road, egress onto Sanquhar Rad).

Proposed school car park access and egress from existing opening on Sanquhar Road.

Existing grass football pitch and running track retained on Roysvale Park.

Proposed 3G 106x66m pitch located with close proximity to Forres Swimming Pool, indoor sports facilities and proposed school car park.


# 8.5 Lochyhill / Enterprise Park - Developed Site Organisation Option

Development location for new secondary building (core teaching and sports facilities) with civic presence onto A96.

Existing swimming pool, hydrotherapy pool and ancillary spaces (changing etc) retained on Burdsyard Road.

Proposed vehicular access from Drumduan Road, including staff, visitor and accessible parking, bus/ coach drop off and service access.

New grass football pitch and running track and 3G pitch.

# 8.6 Grantown Road - Developed Site Organisation Option

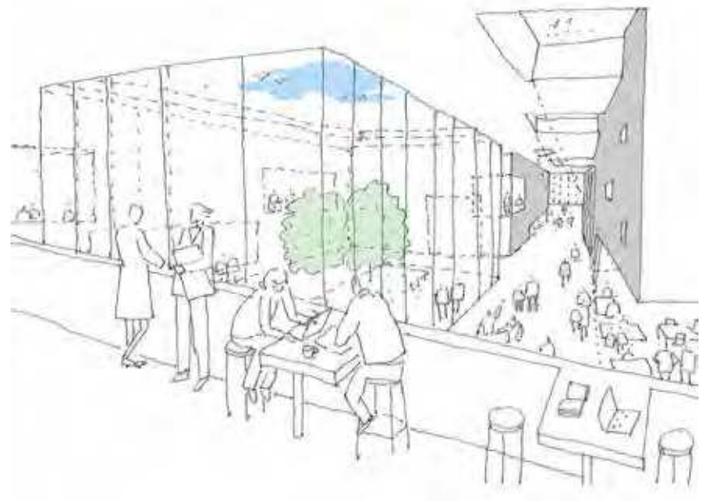
Development location for new secondary building (core teaching and sports facilities) with civic presence onto Grantown Road (A940).

Existing swimming pool, hydrotherapy pool and ancillary spaces (changing etc) retained on Burdsyard Road.

Proposed vehicular access from Grantown Road, including staff, visitor and accessible parking, bus/ coach drop off and service access.

New grass football pitch and running track and 3G pitch.

# 9.0 Mechanical and Electrical



# 9.1 Energy and Carbon Strategy

The LEIP programme performance energy and carbon criteria, we believe sets the benchmark for all new schools irrespective of whether they are funded through the LEIP programme or through other funding routes.

The energy consumption target for Forres Academy is recommended to meet the LEIP Band A consumption target of 67 to 83 kWh/sqm/p.a when assessed under the LEIP calculation methodology. It should be noted that the LEIP energy consumption targets will not correlate directly with the total in-use energy consumption. We would propose a supplementary target of no more than 100 kWh /sqm/p.a "at the meter" making a reasonable allowance for community use of the facility.

Arguably the most significant energy consumption reductions can be realised by reducing heating demand. Passive design solutions that involve careful consideration of orientation, massing, thermal bridging, air infiltration rates and building envelope thermal performance will play a major role in the ability to meet energy performance targets and will form the initial focus in developing design proposals to deliver against the energy targets.

A recent addition in the LEIP Phase 3 metric is the introduction of embodied carbon targets that did not exist in the prior two phases.

The targets promote a collaborative approach by Designers and Contractors to address key topics such as:

- Local Sourcing
- Minimising Waste
- Efficient fabrication
- Use of Recycled material
- Material Selection
- Design and construction for future ease of dismantling and disposal/ re-use.

For further details in the approach to energy and carbon reduction please refer to Appendix G.

# 9.2 Mechanical and Electrical Design Strategy

The design of MEP systems will focus on efficiency, maintainability and simplicity of user controls.

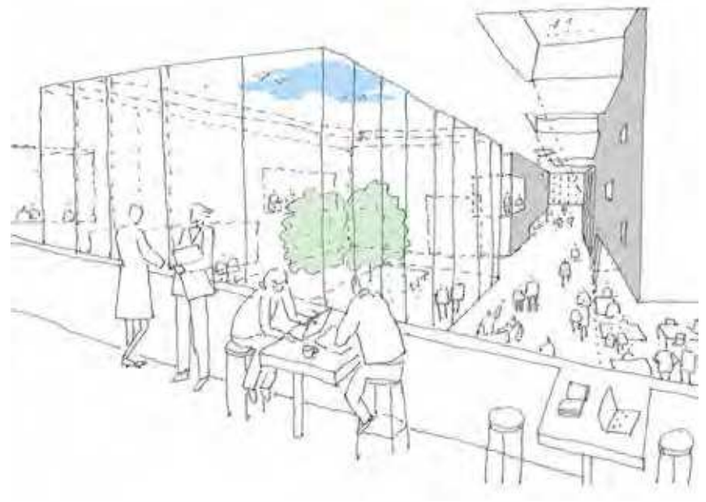
The MEP services design will, at every stage, focus on minimising system losses through efficient placement of plant and equipment and understanding the opportunities to limit energy consumption and carbon emissions for example, minimising hot water storage and ductwork/ pipework/ cable lengths to minimise system energy losses.

The strategic approach to the engineering services for the new facility shall be founded on the following principals:

- Carbon efficient primary energy sources and desire to reduce/ remove reliance on fossil fuels.
- Recognise potential users of the facility (Education & Community Use) and the inter-relationship, operability & systems efficiency for varying operational and occupancy profiles.
- Provide an internal environment which is comfortable, safe, healthy and compatible with the operations associated with the facility.
- Develop solutions that are compatible with the Clients Brief for the project, taking cognisance of any budgetary constraints.
- Develop engineering services solutions that are simple in concept and in-use, reliable and robust in operation.
- Design engineering services plant, plant rooms and distribution systems with a focus on system efficiencies and minimising distribution losses.
- Develop environmental control strategy for summer and winter with the aim of simplistic implementation and low reliance on technology.
- Design engineering services plant, plant rooms and distribution systems taking account of the requirement to provide safe access/provision for maintenance, repair and replacement.
- Develop energy consumption monitoring strategy for each of the uses and major loads associated with the facility.

Please refer to Appendix G for further detail and initial outline elemental specification of MEP Systems in response to the strategic approach outlined above.

# 10.0 Structural And Civil



# 10.1 Structural Strategy

### Structural Loading

Vertical loads on structures are dictated by the relevant design codes and standards in accordance with building use and occupancy classes. Environmental loads acting on the structures, both vertically and laterally will be assessed using a site-specific methodology. Typical imposed load values are shown in Table 1.

| | UDL (kN/m²) | Point Load (kN) |
|---|---|---|
| Roof (Maintenance access only/Snow) | 0.6 | 0.6 |
| Classrooms | 3.0 | 3.0 |
| Typical Floor | 2.0 | 3.0 |
| Corridor/ Stairs | 3.0 | 4.5 |
| Plant Rooms | 7.5 | 4.5 |

Table 1

### Material selection

Due to the varying types and sizes of structures, a suitability exercise should be carried out at an appropriate time to determine the best option for the development.

The below matrix gives a traffic light indication of the benefits of the main forms of construction to a project.

| | Flexibility in Design | Future Flexibility | Services Optimisation | Cost | MAE Fit | Construction Programme |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Steel Frame | ● | ● | ● | ● | ● | ● |
| In-Situ Concrete | ● | ● | ● | ● | ● | ● |
| PT Concrete | ● | ● | ● | ● | ● | ● |
| Tradional Masonry | ● | ● | ● | ● | ● | ● |
| CLT/Timber | ● | ● | ● | ● | ● | ● |

Table 2

Of course, individual building layout plays a huge factor in this exercise as certain typical structural elements lend themselves well to specific situations, e.g. steel is well suited for large span openings typically found in education projects such as games halls and central atrium's.

Architectural features will also play a role in the material selection so early engagement between design team members is beneficial for agreeing the aspirations for the project.

### Foundation Design

Through Site Investigation works geotechnical ground conditions will be established to allow a suitable foundation type to be determined – see the below matrix indicating the suitability for foundations when proposed with respective superstructure materials

Geo-environmental testing is carried out as part of the on-site suite of ground investigations and will inform the design relating to gas membranes, water supply pipe specification and determination of and contamination sources within the ground.

| | Piled | Shallow (Pad/Strip) | Raft |
|---|---|---|---|
| Steel Frame | ● | ● | ● |
| Concrete Frame | ● | ● | ● |
| Masonry | ● | ● | ● |
| CLT/Timber | ● | ● | ● |

Table 3

### MMC (Modern methods of construction)

While off-site manufacturing (OSM) of structural elements has been a part of modern construction for a long time, there are now opportunities to expand on these elements for the benefit of the entirety of the project.

Typical OSM elements include pre-cast concrete or roof trusses which historically provide a higher quality product, constructed to tighter tolerances than on-site manufacturing.

With appropriate lead-times accounted for in the programme, delivery of fully or partially erected structural elements can also present an on-site time saving.

### Sustainability

Modern construction methods must also consider the environment, via both carbon offsetting and carbon footprint reduction. Reductions in footprint are the preferred method of minimising emissions and are achieved through consideration in terms of both embodied carbon as a result of manufacturing and also as a result of transport to site. Carbon offsetting is seen as the less preferred option and only used once all other practical measures are taken. The aspirational hierarchy for net zero structural design is shown in Figure 1.

### Stability

Whether utilising a framed or a shear wall structural solution, a regular and vertically repetitive layout with allows for an efficient design of stability members.

Where stability members can positively transfer the horizontal loads from the floor and roof diaphragms into the foundations in a single vertical line, the need for transfer members can be avoided.

Repetitive structure also encourages development of details which can be specified across multiple areas, simplifying manufacturing/ construction and building confidence through usage.

Further site investigation information can be found under Appendix E.

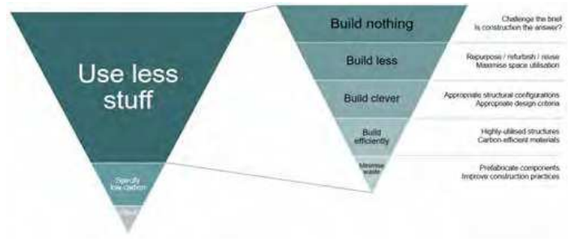



Figure 1. Aspirational hierarchy for net zero structural design

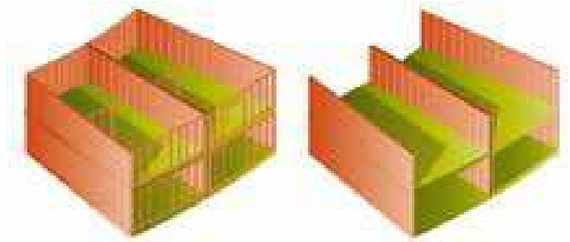


Figure 2. Shear wall structural solution

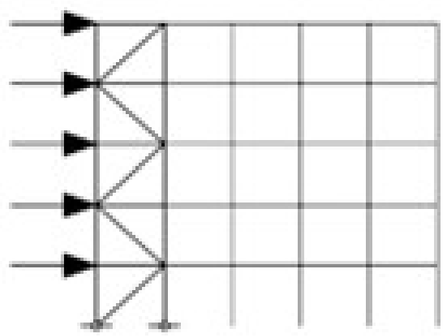


Figure 3. Shear wall structural solution

# 10.2 Civil Strategy

**SUDS**

The main impact of a development is increasing the proportion of impermeable surfaces (e.g., roofs and paved areas) within the site, without careful planning this can increase peak rate runoff. Sustainable Drainage Systems (SUDS) aim to mitigate this effect by emulating natural drainage systems and the provision of storage.

The greenfield runoff rate for Roysvale Park has been used to estimate the attenuation volume required for all three sites. Based on this greenfield run off rate, it is estimated approximately 1250m3 of storage will be required to store the 1:200 year storm with 37% climate change. However, this volume is correlated to total area of proposed hard standing, therefore, it is subject to change based on the architects layout. Furthermore, depending on the layout, there is a possibility of capturing the 1:200 year +37% C/C rainfall event on site which would reduce the total attenuation volume.

The primary method of attenuation will be provided by below ground attenuation tanks as it is anticipated that options such as SUDS basins and ponds will not be viable for this site due to their large land take.

**Treatment**

Treatment must be provided in accordance with the recommendations of The SUDS Manual (CIRIA Document C753), SEPA and other relevant guidance. To determine surface water treatment requirements, The SUDS Manual (CIRIA Document C753) initially requires identification of the various land use classifications involved in the development. Using Table 4.3 (Page 63), the following classifications are considered relevant for all three sites:

- Non-residential parking with infrequent change (e.g. schools, offices, < 300 traffic movements a day)
- Commercial/Industrial roofing: Inert materials

The guidance confirms that the various land use classifications identified require use of the Simple Index Approach. This involves a comparison between indices of likely pollution levels against SUDS performance capacities. To deliver adequate treatment, the selected SUDS components should have a total pollution mitigation that equals or exceeds the pollution hazard index. There are several options for treatment, however, the best choice will need to consider the site constraints and space available. For this reason, it is anticipated that options such as SUDS basins and ponds will not be viable for this site due to their large land take.

As such, options such as porous paving, filter strips and linear swales which can be accommodated within the landscaping will be preferred.

**Connections**

All surface water and foul connections require approval by Scottish water.
Scottish Water's preference for surface Water are as follows:

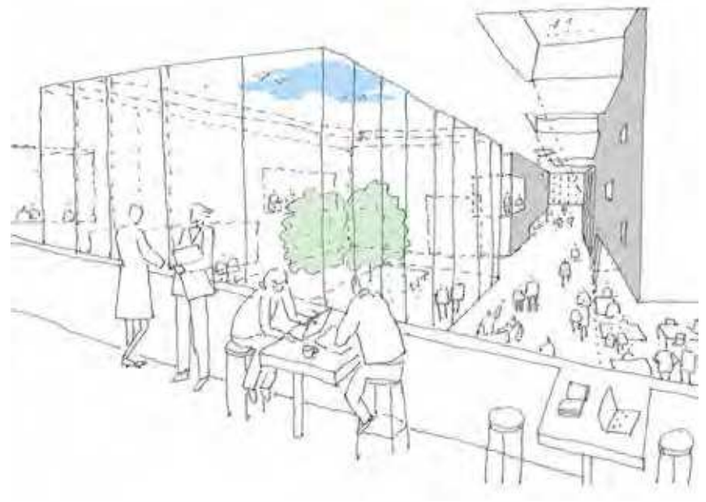
1. Re-use
2. Soak-away
3. Watercourse
4. Surface water sewer
5. Combined sewer

The sites in question for Forres use a variance of these options; Roysvale – Combined sewer, Lochyhill/ Enterprise – Surface water sewer and Grantown – watercourse. These connection methods may vary depending on Scottish Water approval.

Foul connections for all sites will be to either nearby combined sewers or foul water sewers. Scottish Water approval required prior to connection.

Further site investigation information can be found under Appendix E.

# 11.0 Programme



# 11.1 Programme Commentary

The programmes contained within Appendix H and the commentary below reflect the timescales required based on the Hub procurement model. Should an alternative procurement route to Hub be adopted it should be noted that this will result in a minimum 6 months extension required to procure and engage a new Design Team as well as potential financial impacts.

Should the decision be made to proceed with a Hub procurement model the new school at Forres is to be delivered as part of the LEIP 3 Northern Schools Programme managed by hub North Scotland Limited. This programme looks to provide a collaborative and aligned approach delivering:

- shared knowledge and resources,
- establishing replicable designs with associated cost savings,
- accelerating the understanding and application of the funding conditions,
- maximising economic and social benefits,
- monitoring and implementing lessons learned,
- alignment with the10 guiding principles of the National Learning Strategy, and
- supporting wider collaboration with other services and public partners.

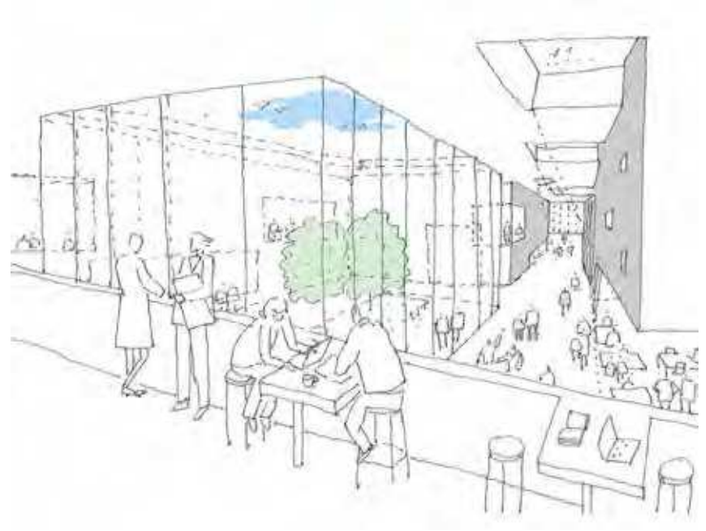
The programme aims to deliver:

- Capital cost benefits, by ensuring a steady and predictable work-stream for the local market, promoting supply chain development and enhance buying gains, delivering projects faster
- Operational cost benefits, by creating opportunities for co-location of facilities, reducing build and running costs leading to lower carbon emissions providing better places for businesses and communities to work and meet.
- Socio-economic benefits, by evidencing a steady pipeline of work in the region which would allow new employment opportunities to be created locally within the supply chain. With more confidence in workload, the supply chain could widen their apprenticeships to the local communities. Sustained employment in the region would result in growth to the local economy. In addition, the sharing and pooling of resources will also cause a ripple effect, allowing different ways of collaborative working to be embraced and benefits to be gained, such as knowledge sharing and upskilling
- Non-financial benefits, by reducing development time across projects with a consistent approach. Suites of standard firm of building contracts, specifications and technical documentation can be developed, reducing the production time-scales for creating bespoke information. The time savings will result in projects being delivered earlier compared to being developed in isolation. The time saving is in addition to the cost saving that would also be realised.

The LEIP 3 North Schools Programme Partners include:

- Aberdeen City Council
- Argyll and Bute Council
- Moray Council
- Orkney Islands Council
- Shetland Islands Council, along with
- Northern Alliance
- Scottish Futures Trust and
- Hub North Scotland Limited

# 12.0 Cost Appraisal



# 12.1 Cost Commentary

Currie and Brown have prepared high level Cost Models for the developed site options for Forres Academy. The costs for these options are as per Table 1.

The main differences between the various cost options are as follows, utilising Roysvale Park (Option 1a) as the base line for comparison purposes only:

- Roysvale Park (Option 1b) – smaller development site and reduced extent of access roads
- Roysvale Park (Option 3) – separate sports block from main school building constructed on footprint of existing school and associated extended programme.
- Lochyhill – roundabout on A96, increased allowance for safer routes to schools and land purchase
- Granton Road – trenchfill to foundations, off-site junction works at new school entrance, increased allowance for safer routes to schools and land purchase.

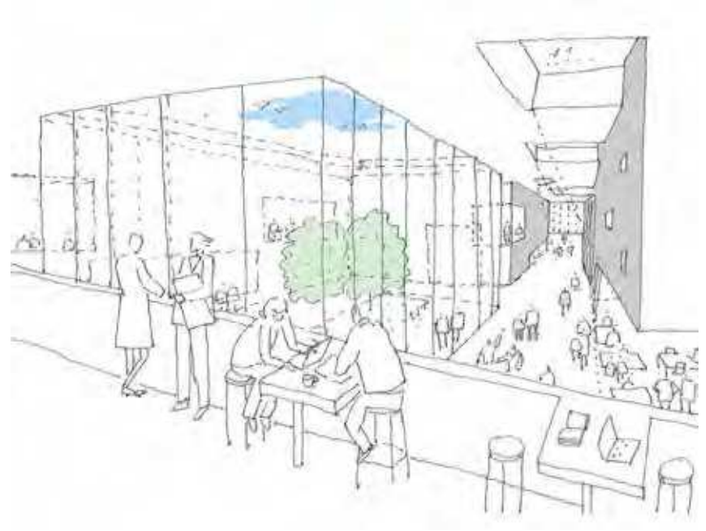
We would also highlight the following which forms the basis of the Cost Models:

- Building costs based on Currie & Brown benchmarking.
- Allowances included for refurbishment works at junction to retained swimming pool following demolition of existing school.
- External works surfacing etc based on approximate quantities based on Architects Landscape Layouts
- Allowances included for ground works ie cut and fill, trenchfill etc with requirement /extent to be confirmed once further Site Investigation undertaken.
- Allowance included for fencing, site furniture, external service connections including electrical sub-stations.
- Preliminaries based on amended hNSL pro-forma percentages to reflect extended programme and current market conditions.
- Contractor's margin, Design Team fees based on hNSL pro-forma percentages.
- Design development risk based on percentages reflective of current Scottish market.
- LEIP 2 and LEIP 3 targets based on SFT percentage uplifts.
- Inflation included to mid-construction based on BCIS indices and Currie & Brown's Construction Activity & Market Outlook. Due to the BCIS's heavy reliance on cost data for the other regions of the UK and also due to the delay / lag in BCIS receiving cost information, in our opinion Currie and Brown's inflation outlook is more reflective of the current Scottish Market.
- Construction duration / programme assumes 183 weeks (209 weeks for Roysvale – Option 3)
- Allowances included for Authority costs ie internal costs, legal costs / fees, IT active equipment, interactive boards / screens etc.
- Authority cost for optimism bias / Client contingency based on percentage.
- Authority costs include high level cost allowances for off-site works ie safer routes to schools, roundabouts, land purchase etc where applicable to each option.

[redacted]

Table 1 - Cost Models

# 13.0 Recommendations and Next Steps



# 13.1 Recommendations

To assist Moray Council in determining the most appropriate site for building the new school, the Design Team members including hub North Scotland Ltd, and a representative from Moray Council all participated in an “options appraisal” exercise looking at varied criteria pertaining to the three sites (Roysvale Park, Lochyhill and Grantown Road), all of which were scored jointly and collectively by the Design Team members; the outcome of the options appraisal was that Roysvale Park received the highest score.

Whilst there are risks associated with developing any of the three sites, it was noted however that only one of the sites (Roysvale Park) is under ownership of Moray Council, whereas both Lochyhill and Grantown Road would require the Council to formally acquire the land in question. The major risk with developing the Roysvale site, however, lies with the fact that a major part of the developable site is classed as “Common Good” and hence Moray Council would need to be confident that they, and their legal advisers, are able to remove said restrictions in a timeous manner during the design development phase of the project in time to allow the main Contractor to commence works on site in accordance with the project programme.

If Moray Council is confident that the Common Good constraint can be removed prior to commencement of construction on site (July 2025), then the recommendation would be that Roysvale Park would offer the best site solution for Moray Council to deliver the new school.

Aerial view of Roysvale Park

# 13.2 Next Steps

**The following 'Next Steps' are based on the assumption that approval to proceed with Roysvale Park as the preferred site, under a Hub procurement route, is received.**

Following the submission of this SSPS Report and approval to proceed, the development programme included in Appendix H proposes commencement of Hub Stage 1 (RIBA Stage 2) at the end of March 2024. This stage runs for a seven month period, concluding at the end of October. Hub Stage 2 will follow on sequentially, concluding at the end of July 2025.

**Northern Schools Programme Approach**

Forres Academy is to be delivered as part of the LEIP 3 Northern Schools Programme managed by hub North Scotland Limited. This programme looks to provide a collaborative and aligned approach and will follow the steps below:

1. Initial Goal Teams to be established with initial workshops to be set up w/c 8th Jan 2024
    1. Place
    2. Net Zero
    3. Inclusive Social Outcomes
    4. Technical Collaboration
    5. Procurement
2. Programme Wide Strategies. Supply Chain Members to confirm contributors
3. Phase 1 strategies and mini-programmes to be established

**Common Good Land Review**

It has been identified that part of the overall site at Roysvale Park has been designated as Common Good and as such presents additional risk to the project. The proposed location for the new secondary school building is on land to the north of the footpath that dissects the site, and is therefore not directly located on Common Good Land. However it is currently proposed to use the Common Good Land temporarily during construction as site setup and the contractor's compound and permanently as a drop off layby for buses and a grass sports pitch. The land designation may need to be reviewed as part of the project development.

**Additional Surveys Required**

To help support the Design Team's work and statutory approvals during Hub Stages 1 and 2, the following surveys may be required:

- Ground Penetrating Radar Survey
- CCTV Drainage Survey
- Parking Survey
- Transport Statement
- Tree Survey and Reports
- Ecology and Habitat
- Archaeological Desk Based Assessment
- Flood Risk Assessment
- Asbestos Survey (if not available, for current building)
- Intrusive Testing Tracing Surveys (existing building, by MEP subcontractor)

**Stakeholder Engagement**

The initial stakeholder engagement which has been undertaken during SSPS Phases A and B will be built upon and developed throughout Hub Stages 1 and 2.

**Statutory (and other) Consultations**

The Design Team have already engaged in some light touch discussions with the Planning and Roads and Transport departments and would look to further these discussions during Hub Stage 1.

As the Forres Academy project will be classed as a Major Development under The Town and Country Planning (Hierarchy of Developments) (Scotland) Regulations 2009, the formal Planning Application will be subject to a 12 week pre-application process.

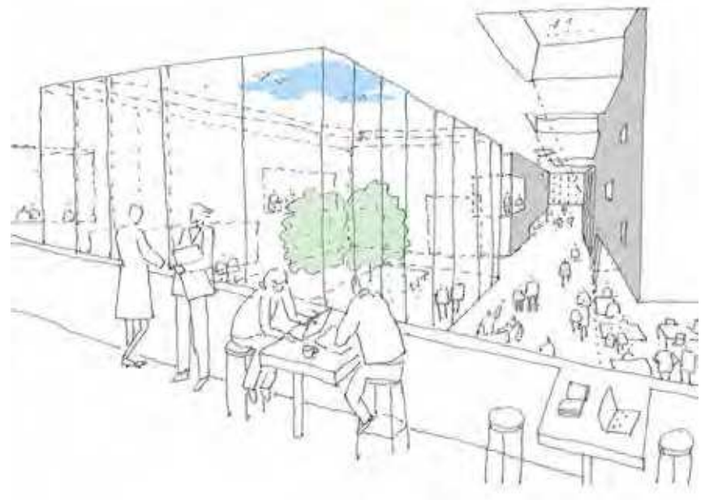
Following the submission of the Planning Application information will be prepared to enable an application for Building Warrant however, engagement with the Building Control Team will occur prior to this to introduce the project, team and agree the proposed Building Warrant stages.

The Design Team will also make contact with the Scottish Fire and Rescue Service to discuss the project with their Fire Safety Enforcement Officer and engage in details discussions which will assist with the Building Warrant process.

Should it be deemed a requirement by Moray Council, the Design Team can also meet with the Architectural Liaison Officer from Police Scotland to discuss Secured by Design.

As all of the proposed options for Roysvale Park in this report would be deemed a 'relevant proposal' (a proposal to relocate a school or part of a school) under the terms of the Schools (Consultation) (Scotland) Act 2010, Moray Council will commence engagement, during the next stage, with His Majesty's Inspectors of Education (HMIE) and prepare an Educational Benefits Statement to support the chosen proposal in line with the requirements set out in the Act.

# 14.0 Appendices



# Appendix A - Consultation Summary

# Appendix B - The Education Brief, Adjacencies & Schedule of Accommodation

# Appendix C - Existing Utilities Report

# Appendix D - High Level Site Constraints Report

# Appendix E - Site Investigations Report

# Appendix F - Site Appraisals Assessment

# Appendix G - Energy and Carbon Strategy

# Appendix H - Programme

# Appendix J - Cost Appraisal

jmarchitects

www.jmarchitects.net
info@jmarchitects.net

64 Queen Street
Edinburgh, EH2 4NA
edinburgh@jmarchitects.net
t 0131 464 6100

12 Great Portland Street
London, W1W 8QN
london@jmarchitects.net
t 0207 580 5330

54 Princess Street
Manchester, M1 6HS
manchester@jmarchitects.net
t 0161 200 6300

50 Bell Street
Glasgow, G1 1LQ
glasgow@jmarchitects.net
t 0141 333 3920

## Forres Academy Location Survey (Paper Copy)

### Background

Further to the Education, Children's and Leisure Service committee held on 27 March, it was agreed that the next step for the Forres Academy project is to engage with the community regarding the site selection for the new build. There are two site options remaining following the committee meeting: Lochyhills and Applegrove/ Roysvale.

Whilst there are risks associated with developing either of these sites, it was noted that only Applegrove/Roysvale Park is under ownership of the Council, whilst Lochyhill would require the Council to formally acquire the land in question. The main risk with developing the Applegrove/Roysvale site lies with the fact that a major part of the developable site is classed as 'Common Good', although the main school building is not planned on this site but rather the Council-owned land adjacent to Applegrove Primary School and currently used as grass playing fields by them. The cost for developing the Lochyhill site is up to £4m more than the Applegrove/ Roysvale site. More detailed information about the new school build can be found by scanning the QR code below.

This short survey seeks your views on these two sites for the location of the Forres Academy new build. The survey should take no long than 5 minutes to complete. **This survey will close on 25 April 2024.**

**This paper copy should be returned to either Forres Post Office or Forres Library no later than the closing date.**

QR Code

## Forres Academy Location Survey (Paper Copy)
Questions

The map shows the locations of the two sites:


* 1. Which site location would you prefer?

- ◯ Lochyhill
- ◯ Applegrove / Roysvale

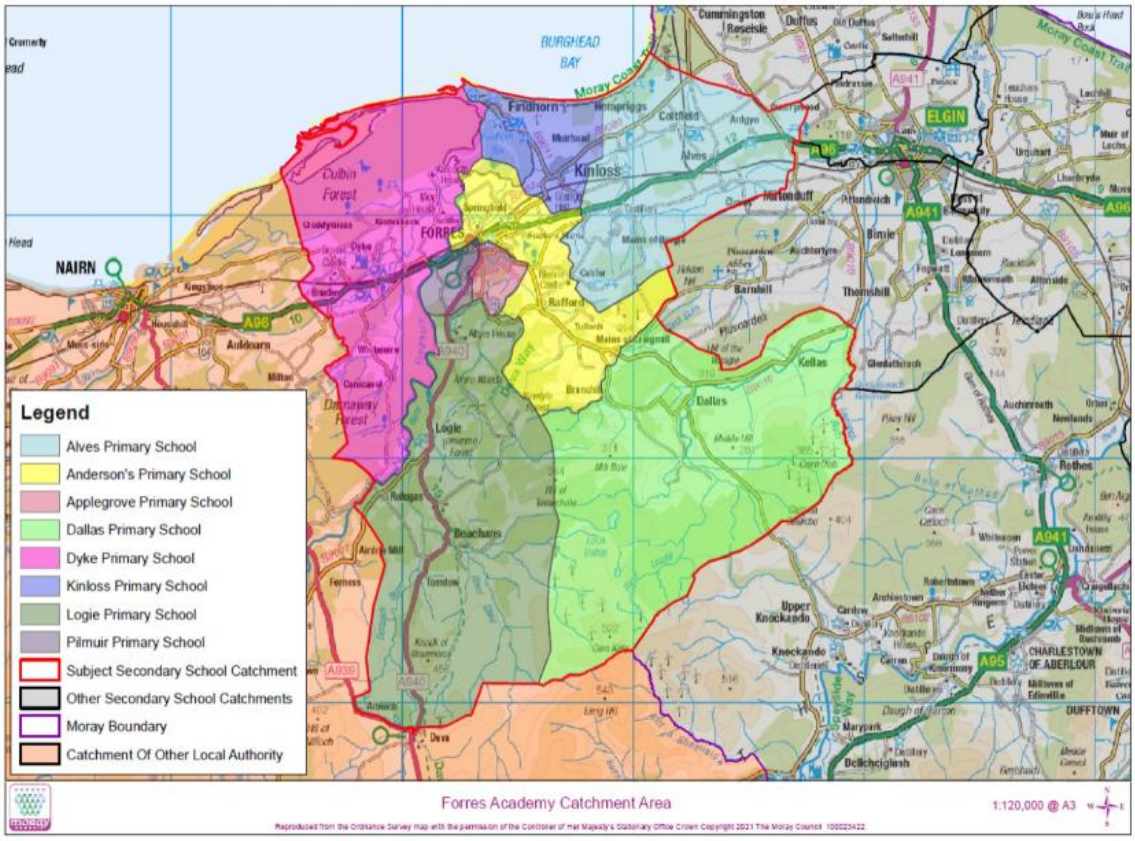
* 2. Please provide your reasons for choosing this location

* 3. Please confirm whether you are....(Select all that apply)

- [ ] Parent/Carer of a child attending school
- [ ] Local resident living within Associated School Group (ASG) area.
- [ ] Primary school pupil
- [ ] Secondary school pupil
- [ ] Primary school staff member
- [ ] Secondary school staff member

Other (please specify)

Forres Associated School Group (ASG) Primary School catchment areas



* 4. In which school catchment area do you live?

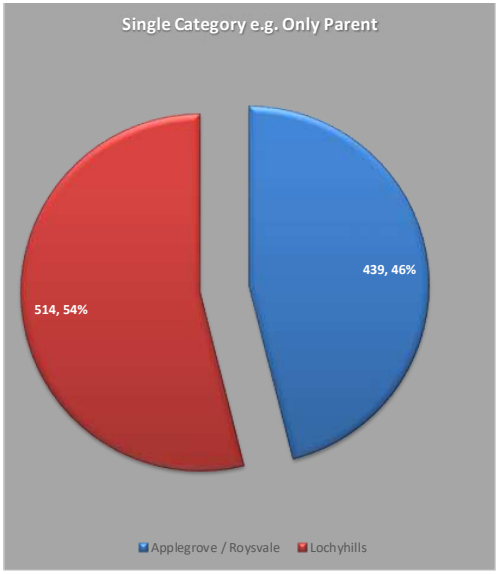
- ◯ Alves Primary School
- ◯ Anderson's Primary School
- ◯ Applegrove Primary School
- ◯ Dallas Primary School
- ◯ Dyke Primary School
- ◯ Kinloss Primary School
- ◯ Logie Primary School
- ◯ Pilmuir Primary School
- ◯ I live out with ASG area

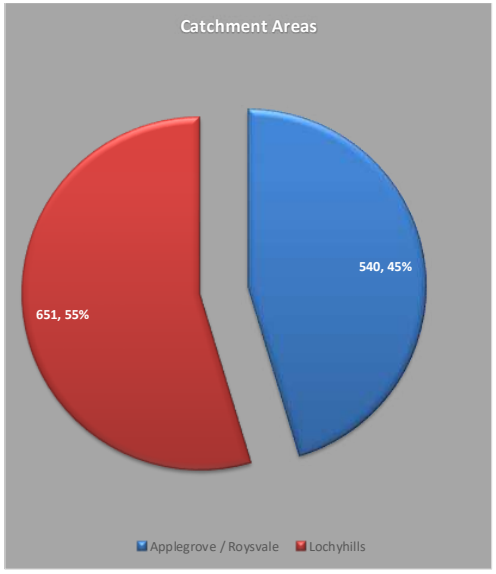
Thank you for taking part in this survey. Your views are important to us and will help to inform the planned development.

## Appendix 3 – Forres Academy Site Selection

## Public Engagement - Online Survey Analysis

| | | Numbers | | % | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | Applegrove / Roysvale | Lochyhills | Applegrove / Roysvale | Lochyhills |
| Single Category e.g. Only Parent | Parent/Carer of a child attending school | 172 | 158 | 52.1% | 47.9% |
| | Local resident living within Associated School Group (ASG) a | 140 | 227 | 38.1% | 61.9% |
| | Primary school pupil | 23 | 16 | 59.0% | 41.0% |
| | Secondary school pupil | 22 | 29 | 43.1% | 56.9% |
| | Primary school staff member | 4 | 8 | 33.3% | 66.7% |
| | Secondary school staff member | 11 | 18 | 37.9% | 62.1% |
| | Other | 67 | 58 | 53.6% | 46.4% |
| | **TOTAL** | **439** | **514** | **46.1%** | **53.9%** |
| | Alves Primary School | 7 | 17 | 29.2% | 70.8% |
| | Anderson's Primary School | 119 | 94 | 55.9% | 44.1% |
| | Applegrove Primary School | 197 | 321 | 38.0% | 62.0% |
| | Dallas Primary School | 9 | 4 | 69.2% | 30.8% |
| | Dyke Primary School | 18 | 21 | 46.2% | 53.8% |
| | Kinloss Primary School | 26 | 53 | 32.9% | 67.1% |
| | Logie Primary School | 11 | 12 | 47.8% | 52.2% |
| | Pilmuir Primary School | 122 | 98 | 55.5% | 44.5% |
| | I live out with ASG area | 31 | 31 | 50.0% | 50.0% |
| | **TOTAL** | **540** | **651** | **45.3%** | **54.7%** |
| | | | | | |
| | Living in Applegrove Catchment + Resident | 76 | 195 | 28.0% | 72.0% |
| | Living in Applegrove Catchment + Parent | 107 | 133 | 44.6% | 55.4% |



## Appendix 4 – Forres Academy Site Selection

## Public Engagement - Paper Survey Analysis

| | | Numbers | | % | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | Applegrove / Roysvale | Lochyhill | Applegrove / Roysvale | Lochyhills |
| Single Category e.g. Only Parent | Parent/Carer of a child attending school | 3 | 20 | 13.0% | 87.0% |
| | Local resident living within Associated School Group (ASG) a | 4 | 33 | 10.8% | 89.2% |
| | Primary school pupil | 0 | 1 | 0.0% | 100.0% |
| | Secondary school pupil | 0 | 0 | 0.0% | 0.0% |
| | Primary school staff member | 1 | 0 | 100.0% | 0.0% |
| | Secondary school staff member | 0 | 0 | 0.0% | 0.0% |
| | Other | 0 | 0 | 0.0% | 0.0% |
| | **TOTAL** | **8** | **54** | **12.9%** | **87.1%** |
| | Alves Primary School | 0 | 1 | 0.0% | 100.0% |
| | Anderson's Primary School | 4 | 19 | 17.4% | 82.6% |
| | Applegrove Primary School | 3 | 32 | 8.6% | 91.4% |
| | Dallas Primary School | 0 | 1 | 0.0% | 100.0% |
| | Dyke Primary School | 1 | 2 | 33.3% | 66.7% |
| | Kinloss Primary School | 2 | 4 | 33.3% | 66.7% |
| | Logie Primary School | 0 | 1 | 0.0% | 100.0% |
| | Pilmuir Primary School | 2 | 15 | 11.8% | 88.2% |
| | I live out with ASG area | 1 | 1 | 50.0% | 50.0% |
| | **TOTAL** | **13** | **76** | **14.6%** | **85.4%** |
| | Living in Applegrove Catchment + Resident | 2 | 30 | 6.3% | 93.8% |
| | Living in Applegrove Catchment + Parent | 1 | 3 | 25.0% | 75.0% |