

PROJECT MANDATE – Stage 1

Section 1: Please complete all fields

PROJECT REF/NAME	Findrassie Primary School (New Build)		
PROJECT SPONSOR	Denise Whitworth		
COMPLETED BY	Jo Shirriffs	DATE	September 2020

DEPARTMENT	Education Social Care
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SERVICE	Education Resources & Communities (Learning Estate)
FUNCTION	Management oversight of the Moray Learning Estate Strategy

PROJECT CATEGORY	Intermediate
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DMT Approval Date	Note:	DATE	
Problem / Opportunity	<p>Local Development Plan 2020</p> <p>The Moray Local Development Plan 2020 sets out how much and where growth is proposed for land uses including housing. The Growth Strategy for 2020-2030 focusses new development in the primary growth centre of Elgin, with growth to the north through the Findrassie Masterplan, to the south through the Elgin South Masterplan and to the south west through the Bilbohall Masterplan. The Local Plan includes indicative proposals for a new primary school at Findrassie to accommodate the proposed housing growth in that area, and a 2.5ha site has been safeguarded.</p> <p>Findrassie Master Plan</p> <p>Findrassie is a major land release to the north of Elgin comprising 100 hectares of housing land with an indicative capacity of 1500 houses. The Findrassie Masterplan, (approved by the Planning & Regulatory Services Committee on 1 December 2015) includes provision for a centrally located school incorporating provision for community facilities, with opportunities for outdoor learning via allotments and an amphitheatre. The Findrassie Masterplan was subject to public consultation at the key stages of preparation and the finalised masterplan reflects the comments submitted though each consultation process.</p> <p>Learning Estate Strategy</p> <p>The Moray Learning Estate Strategy was recommended to full Council by the Children and Young People Services Committee on 4 March and will come forward for final approval by the end of the year. The strategy proposes a new approach to managing</p>		

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our learning estate that will enable the authority to invest strategically to provide new capacity in growth areas and to bring schools up to a standard of condition and suitability that enhances the learning environment (B for condition and B for suitability across all elements). The strategy recommends an Associated Schools Group (ASG) based approach to engagement and decision making, with high level options developed that take account of population growth, and the condition and suitability of all schools within the ASG, with more detailed options appraisals taking place with input from all stakeholders. The strategy also highlights the need to prioritise particular areas, with Elgin, Buckie and Forres mentioned as areas of focus due to the requirement to develop new capacity over the next 10 years.

An initial officer high level option appraisal exercise for Elgin included a number of different options that will be considered with all stakeholders (Members, School Staff, Partners, Parents, Residents) over the coming weeks. The options developed cover a range of different scenarios for the development, extension, refurbishment and maintenance of primary and secondary schools in Elgin but all include the development of a new Findrassie Primary School as a key element in the development of a strategic approach to managing the learning estate across Elgin.

School Capacity Requirements - Elgin

The school roll forecasts take account of birth rates (actual birth rates for primary 1 estimates for initial 4 years, and then trend data for remaining years), placing request trends, the estimated number of children staying beyond statutory leaving age, migration and anticipated housing development. In Elgin there is an assumed build out rate of 150 houses per annum until 2035 (it is currently assumed that this rate will be maintained despite the Covid interruption), with 0.3 children estimated per household. These assumptions have been applied to the school roll forecasts in the two Elgin ASGs. The actual/presumed impact on primary school rolls in Elgin is as follows:

- a. Bishopmill Primary School – currently at 97% capacity, expected to reach 100% capacity by August 2021.
- b. Seafield Primary School – Expected to reach 100% capacity by August 2025
- c. Greenwards Primary School – currently at 89% capacity, expected to reach 100% capacity by August 2022.

New Primary School capacity in Elgin is therefore urgently required to meet anticipated demand for places. This project mandate addresses school capacity issues to the north of Elgin. A second new primary school is proposed as part of the Elgin South masterplan and will be the subject of a further project mandate.

Nursery Capacity Requirements - Elgin

Nursery capacity is more difficult to establish and predict as it is dependent both on Care Inspectorate registered capacity within a facility and how each setting utilises their capacity, i.e. the service models they are able to offer to parents over the course of the day, week and year. Moray Council is also dependent on a large number of private and third sector providers of Early Learning & Childcare (ELC) in Elgin, with a significant proportion of funded ELC hours offered through contracted providers. It is understood that there is a need for additional ELC capacity in Elgin, however the anticipated capacity requirement in the Findrassie project will be partly dependent on how partners have adapted their service models over the last 12 months in response to the expansion of ELC. Further analysis of the nursery capacity

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	<p>requirement within this project will be completed in advance of the development of the detailed business case.</p> <p>Two funded providers offering funded ELC capacity within the Elgin Academy ASG are currently operating from Moray Council buildings that do not meet the required condition and suitability standards (VIP operating from Elgin Community Centre, and Torridon Bishopmill Pre School operating from the Annexe building at Bishopmill Primary School). The Findrassie business case will therefore consider options for replacing the capacity offered from one or both of these locations within the Findrassie project.</p> <p>ASN Capacity Requirements - Elgin</p> <p>The number of children with additional support needs is increasing year on year in Moray (38% increase since 2016-17). The ASN service is currently reviewing how support can be provided to children, young people, their families and the early years settings and schools they attend. There will be a need for spaces within Findrassie Primary School to support the growing number of children with additional support needs, but the spaces will need to remain flexible at this stage so that they can be developed in line with the review of ASN. This will not prevent the finalisation of the briefing document for Findrassie Primary, but we should not be assuming at this stage that the ‘ASN space’ will become another Enhanced Provision.</p>
<p>Proposal</p>	<p>The proposal is to move forward with the development of the detailed business case for the development of Findrassie Primary School as part of a developing approach to managing the Moray Learning Estate, and to respond to pressing growth issues.</p> <p>Based on current capacity calculations the proposal is for a 450 capacity Primary School, with a design that will enable extension up to 650 capacity if required. The Early Years and ASN requirements will be further refined and incorporated into the Design Brief.</p> <p>In line with the Vision and Principles set out within Scotland’s Learning Estate Strategy 2019 and the Moray Learning Estate Strategy the detailed options appraisal within the business case will need to take account of the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Proposed design • Options for achieving the required A/A standard for condition and suitability • Options for achieving the required energy efficiency targets • How to achieve the digital enablement target <p>Consideration will also be given to how the school can be used as a community asset and/or service delivery hub, and the preferred procurement approach.</p> <p>Community Engagement on the proposals for Findrassie will take place in advance of the finalisation of the business case and selection of a recommended option.</p>
<p>Strategic Fit</p>	<p>Local Outcome Improvement Plan:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Growing a diverse and sustainable economy (ensuring there is sufficient capacity as our economy grows) • Building a better future for our children and young people in Moray <p>Corporate Plan:</p>

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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provide a sustainable education service aiming for excellence. <p>Scotland’s Learning Estate Strategy 2019</p> <p>Moray Learning Estate Strategy (awaiting final member approval)</p>
Corporate Capacity & Do-ability?	The proposal is to develop the business case for Findrassie by the end of December 2020. This is a challenging timescale but the authority needs to move at pace to respond to the developing capacity issue. The business case will need to be developed in advance of any agreement to resource a Learning Estate Team and will need to be prioritised over other areas of work.
Impact of the Project	<p>The project will ensure we can meet the demand for ELC and school places in the north of Elgin as it grows over the next 5-10 years, and will be an initial step in the development of a strategic approach to the management of the learning estate across the two Elgin ASGs.</p> <p>The project will also inform the development of a ‘design manual’ for new schools and refurbishments, which will ensure a consistent approach to the design of learning spaces across Moray schools.</p>
Funding	<p>The capital plan currently includes provision for £15.5 million of funding for Findrassie Primary School. This figure will be reviewed in line with the most up to date Scottish Futures Trust Cost Metrics in advance of the next Moray Council meeting on 25 November (current build estimate is £17 million)</p> <p>It is proposed that the project is also recommended for the Scottish Government Learning Estate Investment Programme phase 2. The project meets the criteria for the investment programme by responding to demographic changes whilst also being part of a programme to sustain and improve the condition of the wider learning estate. To be eligible for the funding the local authority must commit to delivering a new facility that will achieve and maintain ‘A’ good or ‘B’ satisfactory condition throughout a minimum 25 year period, and the achievement of agreed outcomes in relation to condition, energy efficiency, digital and economic growth. If successful the funding will be on a 50:50 ‘like for like’ basis.</p>
Additional Information	The current estimated programme completion date for Findrassie Primary School is August 2024. In order to alleviate capacity pressures in advance of completion of the project the proposal is to establish the new school in the East End school annex (as per the Linkwood model) from August 2021 onwards (if school roll figures remain in line with predictions).
Section 2: To be completed by Gateway Review Board	

Approval	Please select from list:
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Approved By/Date	Group or Officer Name	Date of meeting/decision
Comments	Any relevant comments from the approving authority should be documented here.	