

**Inner Moray Firth
Proposed Local Development Plan**



Education Provision in the Inverness-Nairn Corridor

November 2013



An Samhain 2013

Solar Foghlaim ann an Trannsa Inbhir Nis–Inbhir Narann

**Linne Mhoireibh A-staigh
Plana Leasachadh Ionadail air a Mholadh airson**

**DISCUSSION NOTE
INVERNESS CITY AND NAIRN
DEVELOPER CONTRIBUTIONS FOR SECONDARY EDUCATION**

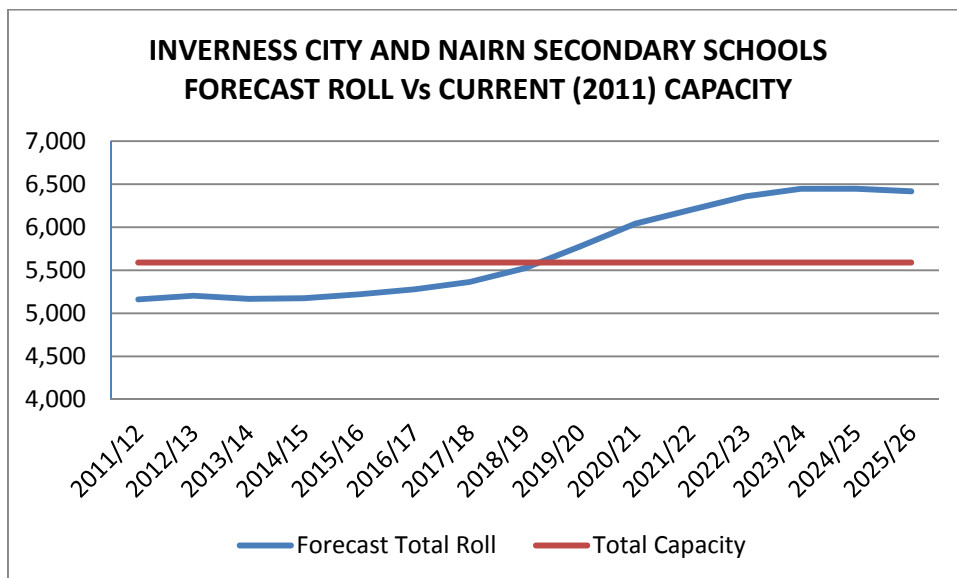
Introduction

Roll Forecasts show that the total roll in Inverness City and Nairn will exceed the available capacity within the next decade (a map at the end of this note shows the locations of the schools involved). The Council is undertaking a review of education provision in the area - part of the pan-Highland Sustainable Schools Estate Review, SSER - which is expected to recommend a wide-ranging package of proposals to improve and expand the school estate. However, the results of the review, and consultation outcome, will not be known in advance of the need to determine major planning applications in Nairn and elsewhere.

This note outlines the case for a blanket policy of developer contributions towards the cost of secondary education in the Inverness City and Nairn areas until the outcome of the SSER and subsequent consultation is known with certainty.

The 2011/12 Based Roll Forecasts

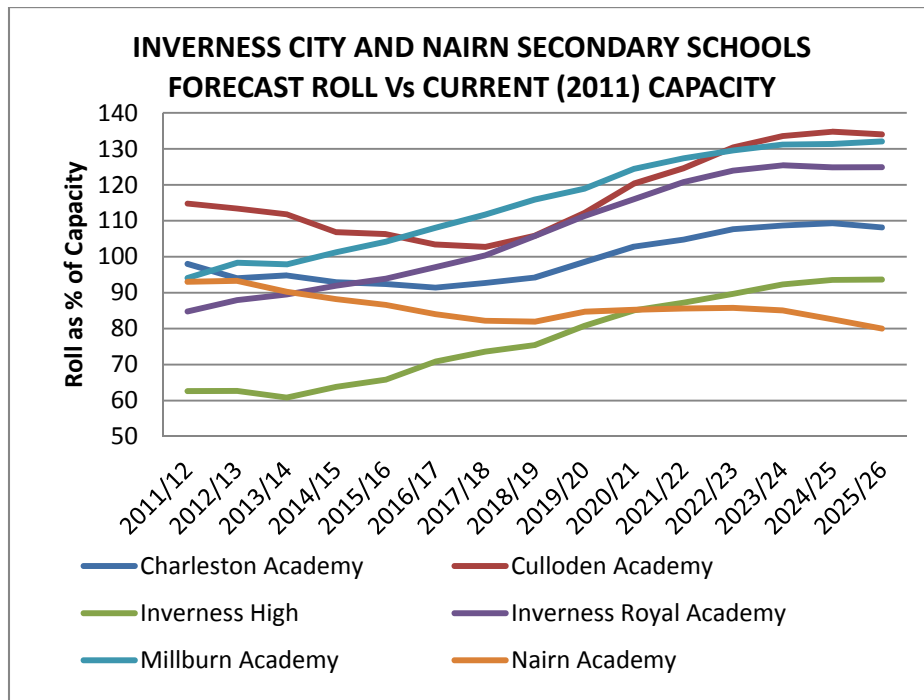
The chart below shows how the total roll is expected to grow over the next 15 years and compares the forecast with the current available total capacity. It shows that the total roll will exceed capacity in 2019/20. This simple aggregate assumes that it will be possible to achieve a perfect match between capacity and pupil location, which is unlikely to be the case.



The next chart shows how the roll is expected to vary in individual schools. Managing roll pressures and balancing spare capacity is part of the remit of the SSER and some of the main issues are:

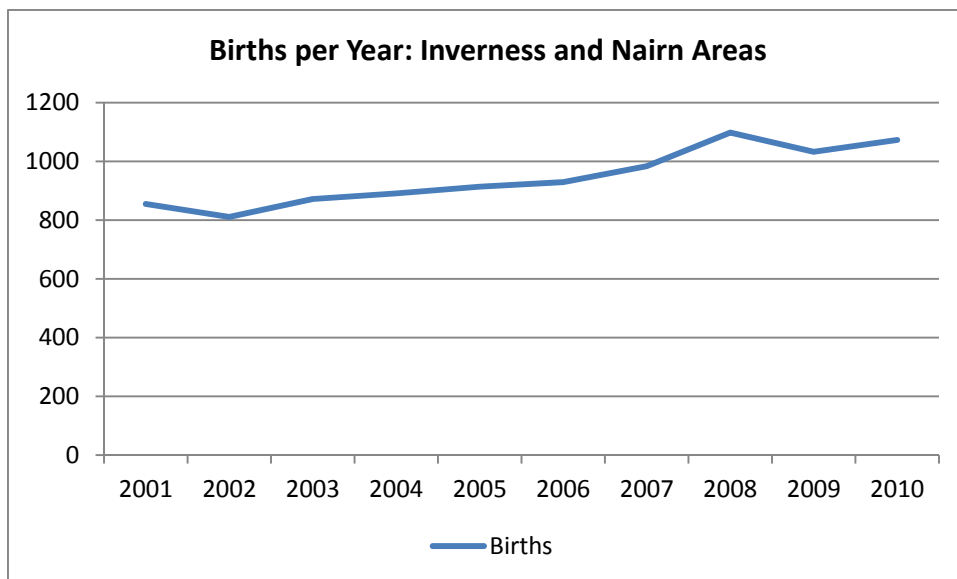
- Culloden currently exceeds capacity and we are looking at ways of enlarging the school, although the site layout and access arrangements are expected to limit the size of any extension that can be built.
- Millburn has (arguably) the most pressing need for expansion which is unlikely to be feasible at the current site. Solutions are therefore limited to management options such as controlling placing requests (mainly from Inverness High) and rezoning of the feeder primaries.
- A stakeholder group has already been established at IRA to look at managing pressure resulting from the increasing roll, the condition and future of the demountable units, and the condition and suitability of the main building. Any significant capital expenditure will be dependent on our capital expenditure programme (and also the availability of revenue).
- The roll at Charleston is dependent on the rate of population growth and house building west of the canal, and is partly dependent on a future river crossing. At the moment we are monitoring the position with a view to the need for action later.
- Inverness High has the only significant spare capacity in the City, due mainly to the number of placing requests to Millburn.
- Nairn has an ageing population and the roll is expected to decline but it could help relieve the pressure on Culloden by taking pupils from (say) Ardersier and Croy. The town also has a number of potential development sites that could lead to a rate of population growth greater than assumed in the current forecasts.

There are a significant number of uncertainties surrounding the SSER including the availability of capital and revenue funding; the feasibility of management options; pupil and parent reaction to any proposed management options; the results of formal consultation; and the time needed to implement a solution. This suggests that it will be difficult to optimise the fit between pupil growth and spare capacity, with roll pressures in both individual schools and the aggregate total developing well before the theoretical date of 2019/20 given earlier.



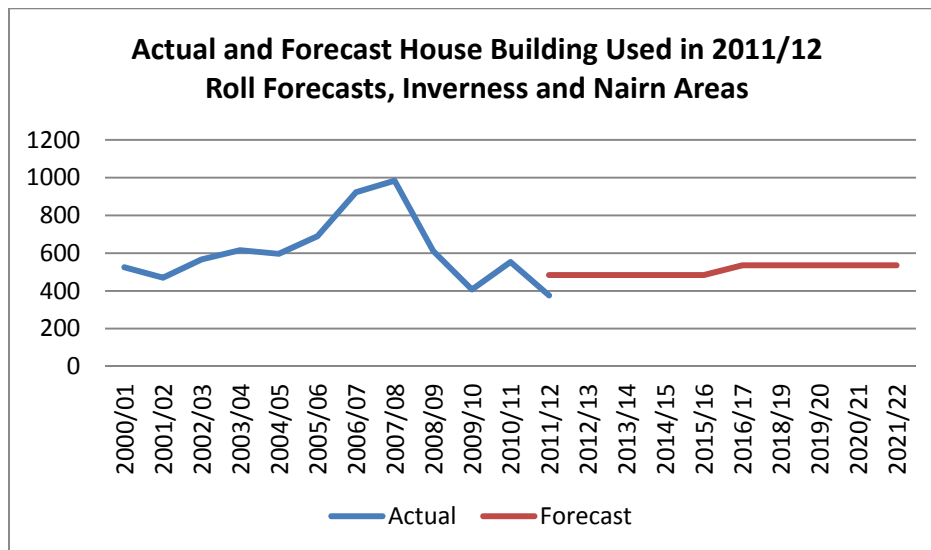
The Impact of Rising Birth Rates on Secondary Rolls

The number of births each year in Highland fell during the last decade of the 20th century, reaching a low point of 1,977 in 2002 before rising to 2,482 in 2008 and 2,467 in 2010. The chart below shows a similar trend in Inverness and Nairn, rising from 811 in 2002 to 1,098 in 2008 and 1,073 in 2010. This increase in beginning to feed into our secondary schools, where we should expect to see a steady increase in rolls for at least the next decade. Note that these extra pupils are already in our primary schools and the increase is independent of future population growth and house building.



The Impact of Future House Building on Secondary Rolls

Population growth in the area has been accompanied by significant new house building, with the number of completions each year doubling during the last decade from 470 in 2001/02 to 984 in 2007/08 before falling at the start of the credit crunch. The chart below shows how the assumptions made in the 2011/12 roll forecasts compare with historical trends, and that conservative figures have been used which reflect the current economic uncertainty. If anything the assumptions are likely to be on the low side (less than the housing requirement in our HNDA) and are therefore robust to challenge when looking at potential developer contributions.



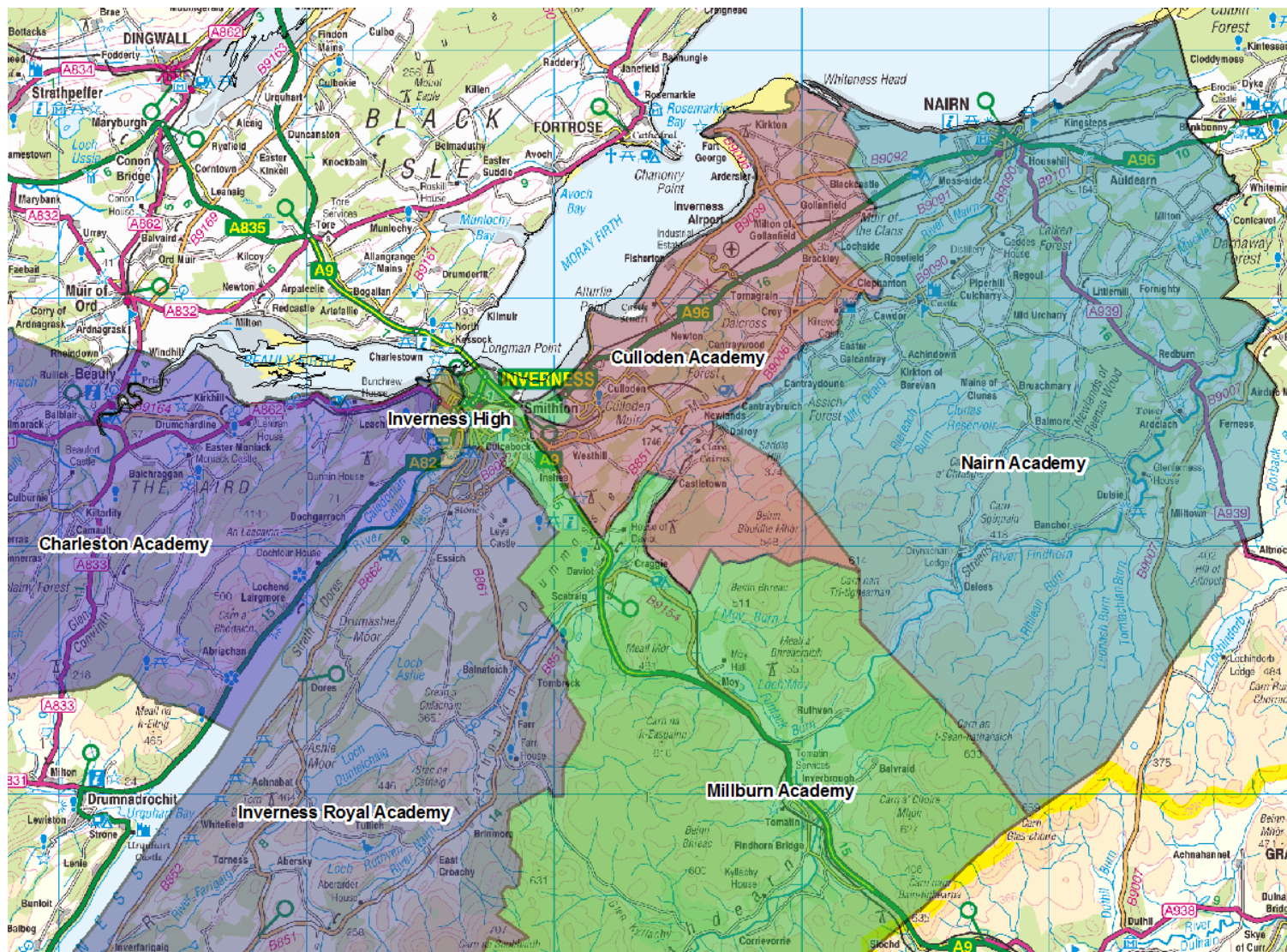
Conclusion

Secondary school rolls in Inverness City and Nairn will grow significantly over the next decade. The main reason is the rising primary school roll which is working through the system, with the modest rate of house building assumed in the current forecasts a secondary factor. Our schools do not have the aggregate capacity to cope with the increase in pupils and we cannot guarantee that the SSER will deliver a good match between pupils and capacity, or the timescales for action.

Recommendation

We should consider developer contributions for secondary education for all new permissions granted in the catchments of the six schools shown on the attached map, in accordance with our supplementary guidance. This policy should be reviewed when the Inverness SSER is concluded (including consultation) and capital and revenue funding firmly committed. For projects with a long timescale, a continuation of the pause and review approach is appropriate.

Cameron Thomas
Research Officer
Planning & Development Services
14/05/12



Charleston Academy

Inverness High

Culloden Academy

Nairn Academy

Millburn Academy

Inverness Royal Academy