



HIGHLAND COUNCIL

CARE AND LEARNING SERVICE

REVIEW OF PROPOSALS TO IMPROVE THE ACCOMMODATION AT STRONTIAN PRIMARY SCHOOL

This report has been prepared following conclusion of the Statutory Consultation for improving the current accommodation at Strontian Primary School (SPS).

In summary, options explored within the original proposal paper considered by the 21st May 2014 Education, Children and Adult Services (ECAS) Committee were as follows:

- Option 1 - a significant upgrade to the existing SPS building addressing the weaknesses in the existing ancillary accommodation and playground area;
- Option 2 - provide the appropriate Pre-school and Primary-age classroom, ancillary rooms and safe and secure play space adjacent to and within the AHS building;
- Option 3 - purchase land at the front of the Ardnamurchan High School (AHS) and place modular accommodation there, comprising two classrooms, the appropriate office accommodation and the creation of an appropriate and proportionate play area.

The proposal paper commencing the Statutory Consultation process was based upon the following recommendation:

- Place a single classroom modular accommodation with office accommodation adjacent to the existing community/nursery wing of Ardnamurchan High School;
- Convert the existing Pre-school/mother and toddler accommodation within Ardnamurchan High School into a Primary classroom and Pre-school accommodation;
- Create an appropriate safe and secure play area for the Primary-age and Preschool pupils adjacent to this wing.

ECAS Committee in November 2014 received a final proposal report at that time, but deferred consideration of the report based on further local representations made.

This final proposal report is produced, having had regard (in particular) to:

- Relevant written representations received by the Council (from any person) during the consultation period.
- Oral representations made to it (by any persons) at the public meeting held in Strontian Village Hall on 9th June 2014.
- The report from Education Scotland.
- Representations received in November 2014, when it was first proposed to submit a final report to Committee.
- Subsequent discussions with Strontian Community School Building Ltd, a community benefit company society set up to progress the option most favoured by the community.

The recommendation contained within this report is to recommend the re-location of Strontian Primary School, to a new build on land close to Ardnamurchan High School, with that re-location dependent on the community proposal to own, fund and develop the facility as outlined within this report, with that facility then being utilised by the Council for the provision of schooling for the Strontian Primary catchment. The recommendation therefore represents a variation to Option 3 contained within the original Proposal Paper.

This document has been issued by the Highland Council under the requirements of the Schools (Consultation) (Scotland) Act 2010.

CONTENTS

1.0	Background.....	3
2.0	Consultation process.....	3
3.0	Review of proposals following the consultation period.....	4
4.0	Responses received.....	4
5.0	Issues raised during the consultation period	4
6.0	Summary of the issues raised by Education Scotland	7
7.0	Alleged omissions or inaccuracies	8
8.0	Responses to Issues Raised in Section 5, 6 and 7	7
9.0	Further Representations after November 2014	7
10.0	Review.....	8
11.0	Legal issues.....	9

12.0 Conclusion.....	10
13.0 Recommendation.....	12

Appendices:

- Appendix 1 - The proposal document
- Appendix 2 - Minute of public meeting held in Strontian Village Hall on the 9th June 2014.
- Appendix 3 - Minute of the meeting held in Strontian Village Hall on 30th June 2014.
- Appendix 4 - Written Submissions Received
- Appendix 5 - Report from Education Scotland
- Appendix 6 - Further Representations after Nov 2014
- Appendix 7 – Financial Analysis

1.0 Background

- 1.1 The Education, Children and Adult Services Committee (ECAS) at its meeting on 21 May 2014 agreed that a statutory consultation be undertaken on options to improve the current accommodation at Strontian Primary School.
- 1.2 **Appendix 1** is the original proposal document and provides full details of the original proposal, which presented 3 options for consideration.
- 1.3 A Consultation Report was published in October 2014, with a view to approval at the November 2014 ECAS Committee. That Report recommended the Council adopt a variation to the original option 3, which had proposed purchasing land in front of Ardnamurchan High School and place modular accommodation there, comprising two classrooms, the appropriate office accommodation, and the creation of an appropriate and proportionate play area. The variation involved moving the site to the other side of the road from that originally proposed.
- 1.4 Following publication of the Consultation Report, parents and local residents made continuing representations. In the light of these representations the Committee decided, in November 2014, to defer consideration of the Report. Since that date there has been considerable further local consultation with the community with regards to solutions to improve the accommodation for Strontian Primary.
- 1.5 Full details of the process can be found below.

2.0 Consultation process

- 2.1 The formal consultation period ran from Friday 23 May 2014 to Friday 11 July 2014 and written representations on the proposal were sought

from interested parties as defined within the Schools (Consultation) (Scotland) Act 2010.

2.2 In accordance with statutory requirements, the following were consulted:

- (i) Parents of pupils attending Strontian Primary School, including pre-school pupils, and parents of pupils attending Ardnamurchan High School
- (ii) All pupils attending Ardnamurchan High School and all P4-7 pupils attending Strontian Primary School
- (iii) Members of Parliament and Members of Scottish Parliament for the area affected by the proposal
- (iv) The Parent Councils of Ardnamurchan High School and Strontian Primary School
- (v) Staff of Ardnamurchan High School and Strontian Primary School;
- (vi) Trade union representatives
- (vii) The community councils for the areas covered by Strontian Primary School and Ardnamurchan High School
- (viii) Education Scotland
- (ix) Local Youth Forum.

2.3 The proposal document was also advertised in the local press and on the Highland Council website.

2.4 A public meeting was held in Strontian Village Hall on the 9th June 2014. This meeting was advertised in advance in the local press and on the Highland Council website. The Minute of that meeting is appended – **Appendix 2**. A further meeting was subsequently held on 30 June. The minute of that meeting is at **Appendix 3**.

3.0 Review of proposals following the consultation period

3.1 Following receipt of written representations received by Highland Council and consideration of oral representations made at public meetings held during the consultation period, officials reviewed the proposals.

4.0 Responses received

4.1 15 written submissions were received during the consultation period. Details of these submissions are appended – **Appendix 4A – 4P**.

5.0 Issues raised during the consultation period

5.1 The issues identified during the consultation period are summarised below.

- i. The Table of Benefits submitted as part of the original consultation is misleading, and shows alleged benefits for one option that have no basis in evidence.

- ii. There was a lack of transparency about the process at which the options were arrived at.
- iii. The option favoured by Highland Council is not supported by the parent body.
- iv. The area suggested for development as a playground under Option 2 is boggy and shaded by buildings and high ground on 3 sides. It is unsuitable for the suggested purpose.
- v. The community facilities within Àrainn Shuaineirt/The Sunart Centre operate very successfully and should not be put at risk by moving the primary school into the Centre. Local people are particularly respectful of the position of the Mother and Toddler Group.
- vi. Àrainn Shuaineirt/The Sunart Centre has created a unique “Ardnamurchan” identity which must be preserved. The existing facilities within the Centre must be protected.
- vii. Ardnamurchan High School and Àrainn Shuaineirt were built for the wider community of the Peninsula, and this should be taken into account in any proposals to relocate Strontian Primary.
- viii. Option 2 identified job losses for local people and this is a concern for the community.
- ix. Highland Council proposes that Option 3 is located on the same side of the road as the Fire Station, requiring pupils to cross the road to access the facilities that would be shared with the High School. There is development land on the opposite side of the road and there should be an Option to relocate the school there.
- x. The disruption involved with Option1 would have a significant educational impact.
- xi. Children in Strontian have the right to be educated within high quality facilities, similar as exist elsewhere on the Ardnamurchan Peninsula.
- xii. Under Option 1, it may not be necessary to retain the section of road in front of the current school as a 'through' route, as access to Dail Mhor House and the surgery could be gained from either direction. In this way the stretch of road in front of the school could simply be removed completely and become part of the school grounds.

- xiii. Flat roofs are indicated for the extension areas in Option 1. These are aesthetically poor, do not perform well in Highland weather, and miss an opportunity to use the roof space e.g. for additional storage. Pitched roofs should be considered instead.
- xiv. A permanent building would be the best option as it is not more expensive in terms of initial cost, and represents better value long-term as it will not depreciate to same extent as modular units (indeed, property can be expected to appreciate in value rather than depreciate), it would provide greater design flexibility allowing the construction of a form of building which better reflects its surroundings; and a permanent building does not rule out future incorporation into AHS in 2027 (when the current PPP contract ends), if desired. If it is decided to stay as is, no costs are incurred, but on the other hand if it is preferred to move into AHS the investment required for the modifications required will be offset by the existing permanent building being of greater value than modular units, when sold or transferred to another user.
- xv. The inclusion of a new dedicated primary school car park for Option 3 or “Option 4” is an unnecessary expense. If the new school is sited as close to the main AHS building as the PPP 'red line' permits, access should be straightforward via the existing parking arrangements, as also used by the nursery.
- xvi. The current orientation & layout does not maximise natural daylight for the children. Both classrooms should have at least some southerly aspect to them.

5.2 The Highland Council’s responses to the issues raised are as follows:

Issues i-vii - All of the above comments were made in response to the preferred option set out in the original proposal paper, under which one of the classrooms of Strontian Primary School would be located within the current accommodation of Àrainn Shuaineirt/The Sunart Centre. The Council’s response to these matters was detailed within the report published in October 2014. Following further public consultation, Highland Council officials no longer intend to recommend this option to Committee.

Issue viii - The option now being recommended does not involve job losses.

Issue ix – The proposal now being developed by the community, and which the Council is recommending, is based on a revised location, addressing these concerns.

Issue x – Highland Council agrees that there could potentially be disruption associated with construction and improvement works within an operational

school, though the Council has successfully managed such challenges in other school projects.

Issue xi - One of the aims of Highland Council's Sustainable School Estate Review is that pupils should be educated in facilities which are rated at least category B for each of Condition and Suitability. The proposal aims to achieve that outcome.

Issue xii and xiii- Although the stopping up of the section of road in question would be possible, it would need to be subject to a statutory order, which might well attract objections. In addition, it is likely that any such order would result in considerable infrastructure costs, arising particularly from a need to upgrade the route in front of Burnside Cottages and the Telephone Exchange.

The plans for the extension to the existing school were designed to make the extension compatible with the existing design. They involved pitched roofs for the majority of the extension but incorporate flat roofs for the connecting corridors. This is in keeping with the main part of the existing primary school building.

This option is not however being recommended.

Issue xiv – The Option now being recommended would allow for a permanent building, whilst also providing the flexibility for future change.

Issue xv - Agreed, although parking arrangements will be subject to planning permission.

Issue xvi - This would be an issue for the detailed design process.

6.0 Summary of the issues raised by Education Scotland

6.1 In line with legislative requirements, Education Scotland were invited to submit comments on the Council's proposals. A copy of the report from Education Scotland is appended – **Appendix 5**.

6.2 The report from Education Scotland identified further issues for consideration by the Council. These are detailed below:

xvii. Parent Council representatives and staff expressed frustration about the lack of detail available regarding the proposed design layout and timescale for the development. They were not aware of the most up to date proposal. All Parent Council representatives and staff did not favour a modular building, and were more in favour of an eco-friendly, traditional build approach.

xviii. A number of stakeholders including Parent Councils, school staff and members of the Sunart Community Company

raised concerns about future access to a village hall in the event of the school being relocated. The council needs to engage with a range of community partners to manage their concerns, when considering options about the future operation of Strontian Village Hall.

- xix. The Council needs to put in place safe and secure access between the primary school, nursery and high school buildings, including provision for inclement weather.
- xx. In taking forward the proposal, the council needs to engage parents, staff, children, young people and the wider community in discussions about the finalised design and layout of the new school.

6.2 The Highland Council's responses to the issues raised by Education Scotland are as follows:

Issue xvii - Under the option being recommended, community representatives will be the ones leading on design, with appropriate input from the Council.

Issue xviii - Highland Council will work with the local community over any proposals related to the asset, and provide advice and information as appropriate. Were there to be community interest, a business case would require to be drawn up for presentation to the Highland Council's Asset Management Project Board, who consider and make recommendations to Committee on such matters in line with policy.

Issue xix - The Highland Council is sympathetic to the need to provide safe and secure access between the primary and high schools in inclement weather. We are unable to breach the boundary of the PPP site for legal and financial reasons, and any provision for access will be restricted by this factor.

Issue xx – Throughout the consultation process the Council has sought to engage with the community and has gone further than the consultation requirements set down in legislation. In particular, since November 2014 the Council was worked very closely with community representatives, to progress a solution that has the support of the community.

7.0 Alleged omissions or inaccuracies

7.1 A number of alleged omissions and inaccuracies were raised during the consultation period. These are detailed below.

- xxi. Ardnamurchan High School was designed for 250 pupils, not 318.
- xxii. Option 1 as described in the existing paperwork would not extend the playground, despite the assertion made there that

it would. This is a key concern for parents. We recognise new options for this are under consideration, but they are not currently included in this paper.

- xxiii. The financial table attached as Appendix 7 to the original proposals, had mixed up Options 2 and 3.
- xxiv. A major issue with the existing paperwork is the omission of Option 4 (and variants), which is now considered by all to be one of the front-runners.

7.2 Highland Council's response to the alleged inaccuracies and omissions is as follows:

Issue xxi - Highland Council has assessed Ardnamurchan High School as having capacity for 318 pupils and this figure is recorded in returns to the Scottish Government.

Issue xxii - Option 1 is not being recommended.

Issue xxiii - The comment above is correct. A revised financial table is attached at **Appendix 7/7A**.

Issue xxiv – The Option now being recommended is a variant to the Option 3 identified in the Proposal Paper, and has been the subject of extensive discussion between the Council and the local community.

8.0 Response to Issues Raised in Sections 5, 6 and 7

8.1 Following the original consultation exercise, a report was published on 21 October, recommending the adoption of the variation to Option 3. It includes the Council's original responses to the issues raised in consultation.

9.0 Further Representations in November 2014

9.1 Following the publication of the report, an informal meeting was held with parents on 4 November 2014, which led to the submission of a number of further representations, expressing opposition to the Council's recommendation. Copies of these representations are at **Appendix 6**.

9.2 The issues raised in the further representations are summarised below.

- xxv. Parents overwhelmingly reject the proposal advanced by The Highland Council, which would force the school and community into moving into the High School accommodation in 12 years' time, and is thus the least flexible of the options provided.

- xxvi. Strontian Primary will lose its identity if it is forced to move into the High School.
 - xxvii. The proposal reflects a current fashion for 3-18 campuses, which may have changed in 12 years' time. If so, the Council will be back to square one and will be forced to spend another large sum of capital on upgrading the school.
 - xxviii. The proposed design is much too small.
 - xxix. The proposal is based on assumptions about falling school rolls. The Council should instead by looking at ways to support and sustain this rural community.
- 9.4 In light of the representations received, the Education, Children and Adult Services Committee of Highland Council decided to defer a decision.
- 9.5 Following the deferment, and following a number of further local meetings with the community, and further engagement between the community and a housing trust, local community representatives proposed a solution under which they developed and built a new facility, to be leased to the Council for use as a primary school. A community benefit company was formed and has been in discussion with the Council regarding the proposal.

10.0 Review of Options

- 10.1 The statutory consultation exercise revealed general opposition amongst parents to the original options proposed by the Council.
- 10.2 After reviewing the consultation responses, Highland Council does not propose to continue with either Option 1 (refurbishment of Strontian Primary on its current site), or Option 2 (relocating part of the school into Àrainn Shuaineirt/The Sunart Centre) from the original proposal paper.
- 10.3 The proposals outlined by the Council as Option 3 (and its variants), to re-locate the Primary School to a new build on land adjacent to the High School, while receiving some broad support in principle, were not supported specifically through the consultation insofar as the size and design was not deemed to meet community need. The Council has however re-stated in its consultation that the size, design and cost is appropriate to the needs of a school of that size.
- 10.4 As set out above, a variant on Option 3 has emerged through the more recent dialogue with the community through the Statutory Consultation process, for which there is now broad support within the community.

- 10.5 The proposal for a community led project represents an innovative solution, whereby the local community will fund, develop and own a new community facility which will then be leased to the Council, for Strontian Primary School. The basic footprint and structure of the facility is based around that for 3 terraced houses, to provide flexibility in relation to future use, and to deliver an affordable solution.
- 10.6 The proposal offers a facility which will deliver both community and educational benefits. Children attending Strontian Primary will be able to move from the current school building, in which much of the school's ancillary accommodation (office, playground and dining space) is cramped and unsuitable. The community will own an asset which can provide an income stream and long-term benefit to the community. They can have greater scope to influence the scope of the school facility, and its community uses. Medium to long-term, should the Council wish to consider a further re-location of the Primary School, e.g. to within the High School, the community could convert their asset to housing or other community use, maintaining an income stream and community benefit.
- 10.9 The proposal also represents a more affordable and flexible proposition than the Council undertaking to deliver a school of similar size and scope in a traditional capital manner (which would exceed the cost of the Council's option 3 and its variants). The proposal represents a solution for the medium term, giving the potential for the Council to review arrangements at some point in the future with the Primary potentially co-locating within the Ardnamurchan High School campus. Any future re-location would be subject to a new Statutory Consultation, and may be dependent on scope to make change to the High School campus within the confines of the PPP contract, or on the end of that contract in 2027.
- 10.10 The Highland Council's estimate of the capital and revenue costs for the proposal is set out at **Appendix 7 and 7A**. For commercial reasons, land purchase costs have not been shown.
- 10.11 Should the proposal be approved, discussions and negotiations with the community would continue, in order to confirm full project funding is in place, finalise lease terms and sign off on the school brief and design.

11.0 Legal issues

- 11.1 The Council has complied in full with the requirements of the Schools (Consultation) (Scotland) Act 2010.
- 11.2 As provided for in section 1 of the 1980 Act it is the duty of the Council to ensure adequate and efficient provision of school education within Highland, such education to be directed towards the development of

the personality, talents and mental and physical abilities of children or young persons to their fullest potential (Standards in Scotland's Schools Etc. Act 2000). That said, as with all Council duties, the Council has a duty to make arrangements to secure best value and in securing best value the Council is required to maintain an appropriate balance between, inter alia, the quality of its performance of its functions and the cost to the authority of that performance (Local Government in Scotland Act 2002, section 1). In coming to any decision the above factors should be taken into account.

12.0 Conclusion

- 12.1 The consultation process has complied fully with legislative requirements and has provided an opportunity for all parties to identify key issues of concern. These issues have been fully considered and the Council's response detailed above.
- 15.2 Education Scotland staff visited Strontian Primary School to speak to parents, pupils and staff. They also had the opportunity to review in detail the proposal document and all written responses.
- 15.3 The Director of Care and Learning, on reviewing all of the submissions, the note of the meeting, and the Education Scotland report; and having had special regard to alternatives to closure, to the community impact and to the impact of travelling arrangements; concludes that the revised proposal offers the prospect of educational and community benefits and has the support of the local community.

13.0 Recommendation

- 13.1 It is therefore recommended that Strontian Primary School is relocated to a new build on land close to Ardnamurchan High School, with that re-location dependent on the community proposal to own, fund and develop the facility as outlined within this report.

Bill Alexander

Director of Care and Learning

28 July 2016

THE HIGHLAND COUNCIL

EDUCATION, CHILDREN AND ADULT SERVICES COMMITTEE

The views of consultees are sought on a variety of options for improving the accommodation at Strontian Primary School. Options include a major upgrade to the present building, or relocating Strontian Primary School from its present location to Ardnamurchan High School and to retain its separate identity therein. The latter option is the preferred option of the Education, Culture and Sport Service.

EDUCATIONAL BENEFITS STATEMENT

THIS IS A CONSULTATIVE PAPER PREPARED IN TERMS OF THE EDUCATION AUTHORITY'S AGREED PROCEDURE TO MEET THE REQUIREMENTS OF THE SCHOOLS (CONSULTATION) (SCOTLAND) ACT 2010

This paper seeks views on the most effective means of improving the current accommodation at Strontian Primary School (SPS). Options identified include upgrading the present building or relocating SPS from its present location to Ardnamurchan High School (AHS) and to retain its separate identity therein. If agreed, the latter option would be implemented for the start of the school session in August 2015.

1.0 Background

- 1.1 During the course of 2012, The Highland Council proposed to undertake construction works that would improve aspects of the accommodation of SPS. The work was due to start in early 2013 and it was acknowledged that there would have been major disruption to the school during building work.
- 1.2 On being notified of the proposed building work, the SPS Parent Council indicated that they would welcome discussions on the possibility of re-locating to the AHS campus, thereby creating a "3-18 campus." Informal meetings with parents were held on 16 January 2013, 18 March 2014, and 29 April 2014. A meeting was also held on 30 September 2013 with members of the Sunart Centre Management Committee and other community representatives. At these meetings parents indicated that they supported the issue being taken to formal consultation. A brief summary of the issues raised at those meetings are at **Appendices 1(a) to 1 (c)**.
- 1.3 The population living in the AHS catchment area grew by around 120 during the last decade, an increase of 5%, although this was accompanied by an ageing of the population and a fall in the number of women of child-bearing age.
 - 1.3.1 Population projections for the wider Lochaber area show a 4% increase over the next decade and putting this together with the economic position in the AHS area it is likely that future population change will be similar to recent

historic trends, with modest increases accompanied by a general ageing of the profile.

1.3.2 Population change is taken into account in school roll forecasts through new house building. The Council's West Highland and Islands Local Development Plan allocates 15 sites for housing in the AHS catchment area with a capacity of 237 houses. The most significant of these are:

- 2 sites in Strontian with a capacity of 53 houses, but with lapsed planning permission and no activity;
- 3 sites in Lochaline with a capacity of 57 and no activity but recent planning permission for 6 houses on small parts of two sites;
- 1 site with a capacity of 70 houses in Acharacle but no activity and no planning permission.

1.3.3 In view of the minimal progress on large sites, roll forecasts for the area assume that house building will continue to be mainly on small or single plot "windfall" sites distributed fairly evenly across the catchment. The assumption used in the roll forecast for AHS is 14 new houses per year, equal to the historic average from 2000 to date: 4 of these are in the Strontian catchment.

1.3.4 Interim 2014 forecasts are given in the table at paragraphs 2.3 and 3.2 below. They show that the AHS roll is forecast to increase to 141 - as the increase in the birth rate that began in 2006 feeds through the school system – before falling again as the birth rate falls because of the ageing population. The roll in Strontian Primary is forecast to fall steadily and this is due to a low number of births in the area in recent years, which is assumed to continue. This is unusually low and the age profile of Strontian suggests that if the current age profile is maintained we might expect to see a rise in the number of births to 3 to 4 per year giving a school roll in the region of 25, but this will not be achievable if the population continues to "age" as it has in recent years.

2.0 School Details – Strontian Primary

2.1 SPS is a 2-classroom non-denominational school located at the head of Loch Sunart at the junction of the Ardnamurchan and Morvern Peninsulas. The school serves a wide rural area. The present school was built in the mid-1970s. The school is contained within a wider complex which includes a school/community hall, an adult care home (Dalmhor House) and a medical general practice.

2.2 Pre – school provision is located in the nearby AHS and is managed by the Primary School Head Teacher.

2.3 The school has a current roll of 38. The expected roll for August 2014 is 34. Current roll projections for future years are as follows:

2015-16 - 31
2016-17 - 31
2017-18 - 23
2018-19 - 20
2019-20 –17
2020-21 –15

2021-22 - 15
2022-23 - 15
2023-24 - 16
2024-25 - 16
2025-26 - 16
2026-27 - 16
2027-28 - 17

The significant drop in numbers in 2017 reflects a large year group of 10 in the current P4 class, and the projected replacement of that year group by a P1 intake of 2 in 2017-18.

- 2.4 Details of the number of placing requests in and out of SPS have not been provided due to the very low numbers involved and the need to avoid the identification of pupils.
- 2.5 The school has a permanent capacity of 50. The August 2014 roll of 34 pupils therefore represents 68% use of capacity.
- 2.6 On average 17 pupils (44%) of the total school roll take paid school meals. The number entitled to free school meals is not broken down to avoid the identification of pupils.
- 2.7 The most recent HMIE report was published in September 2007. The school was assessed as “Very Good” on 3 aspects, “Good” on 5 aspects, “Adequate” on 5 aspects and “Weak” on 1 aspect.
- 2.8 The anticipated year group numbers for August 2014, based on current enrolments, are as follows:

P1 – 1
P2 – 5
P3 – 5
P4 – 5
P5 – 10
P6 – 2
P7 – 6

Pupils will be organised into two classes, P1 to P4 - 16 and P5 to P7 - 18.

- 2.9 The 2013-14 staffing entitlements, as per the Council’s Devolved School Management policy are as follows;
- Head Teacher – 1.00 FTE
 - Un-promoted Teachers – 1.00 FTE
 - Management Teacher 0.20 FTE
 - Clerical Assistant – 17 hours per week

The school nursery is staffed with a Nursery Assistant at 19.50 hours per week and a Nursery Auxiliary at 15.00 hours per week

In addition, 0.10 FTE Additional Support Needs (ASN) teaching provision and 28.00 hours per week ASN non-teaching provision are currently allocated to the school to meet identified needs.

The Catering and Cleaning Service employs the following staff at the school;

- Cook 1 (Catering Assistant) 8.75 hours per week
- Cleaning Operative – 10.50 hours per week

2.10 There are 2 school transport routes funded by the Council, which on average carry a total of 14 pupils. Therefore, approximately 37% of the total school roll accesses free school transport on a daily basis.

2.11 The Highland Council assesses all of its schools for Suitability and Condition, per the Scottish Government's School Estate management guidelines. Schools are assessed on scales from "A" to "D". Strontian Primary School is currently rated as "C" for both educational suitability and building condition. This indicates an assessment of the accommodation as "Poor", defined as *"showing major problems and/or not operating optimally (the school buildings and grounds impede the delivery of activities that are needed for children and communities in the school)."*

2.12 The scores for each component part of the suitability assessment are as follows:

- Learning and Teaching General B
- Internal Social C
- Internal Facilities C
- External Social C
- External Facilities C

2.13 Particular weaknesses in the school's accommodation were identified as follows:

- There is a small office which is used by the School Clerical Assistant, as a staffroom and office for the Head Teacher. Consequently the Head Teacher does not have appropriate accommodation to deal with private or confidential matters;
- The lack of space in the school means that when individual pupils are receiving instrumental instruction it is disruptive to other pupils;
- Older pupils take their meals at the lower end of the stage, which results in meals being carried down the stage steps.
- The school playground is restricted and does not meet national area guidelines for a school of this size;
- The former storage cupboard at the end of the school hall has been converted into a disabled toilet. The toilet door opens directly into the hall and does not afford appropriate privacy for users. As a consequence there is no dedicated storage for large items of PE. The disabled toilet was put in this location because the hall doubles up as a village hall which is used quite extensively in evenings and weekends;
- The Pre-school's off-site location raises logistical issues, due to the need for the Head Teacher to travel between the two sites. Despite the low pupil

numbers a second member of staff is employed at the nursery because of the offsite location.

3.0 School Details – Ardnamurchan High School

3.1 AHS was constructed in 2002. It is located around a quarter of a mile from the Primary School. Both externally and internally the building is maintained in excellent condition. The school benefits from excellent ventilation and natural lighting. Classrooms are spacious, as is the games hall and the theatre, and there are a good number of smaller tutorial rooms located all around the school. Practical areas are well-appointed and there are practice and recording rooms adjacent to the music classroom. There are also excellent external sports facilities and in essence the school provides the ideal location for good quality learning and teaching. The building is designed to be fully accessible to disabled pupils.

3.2 The school has a current roll of 108. The expected roll for August 2014 is 106. Current roll projections for future years are as follows:

2015-16 - 102
2016-17 - 104
2017-18 - 116
2018-19 - 126
2019-20 –137
2020-21 - 139
2021-22 –141
2022-23 –140
2023-24 –125
2024-25 –114
2025-26 - 106
2026-27 - 102
2027-28 - 98

3.3 Over the last 6 years the school has received 8 placing requests from elsewhere, whilst 11 pupils from the catchment have entered other schools.

3.4 The published capacity of the school is 318, so the expected roll of 106 for August 2014 represents 33% of capacity.

3.5 On average 82 pupils (76%) of the total school roll take paid school meals, of whom 14 (13%) are entitled to free school meals.

3.6 The anticipated year group numbers for August 2014, based on current enrolments, are as follows:

S1 – 18
S2 – 16
S3 – 13
S4 – 20
S5 – 20
S6 – 21

3.7 The 2013-14 staffing entitlements, as per the Council's Devolved School Management policy are as follows;

- Head Teacher – 1.00 FTE
- Depute Head Teacher – 1.00 FTE
- Principal Teachers – 3.00 FTE
- Un-promoted Teachers – 8.81 FTE
- Administrative Assistant – 1.00 FTE
- Clerical Assistant – 0.70 FTE
- Technician – 0.50 FTE

In addition 27.50 hours per week ASN non-teaching staff are allocated to the school.

The Catering and Cleaning Service employs the following staff at the school;

- Cook 3 (Cook-in-Charge with supervisory responsibilities) - 35 hours per week
- Cook 2 (Cook-in-Charge without supervisory responsibilities) - 16 hours per week
- Cook 1 - 25 hours per week

Additional building management staff are employed by the management company for the building

3.8 There are 5 school transport routes funded by the Council, which on average carry a total of 80 pupils. Two of the 5 routes are "feeder" journeys. Therefore, approximately 74% of the total school roll accesses free school transport on a daily basis.

3.9 The school is currently rated as "A" for both educational suitability and building condition. This indicates an assessment of the accommodation as "Good", defined as "*Performing well and operating efficiently (the school buildings and grounds support the delivery of services to children and communities).*"

3.10 Ardnamurchan High School was built as a community school and one entire wing of the building, Àrainn Shuaneirt/The Sunart Centre, is managed by High Life Highland as a community facility. The theatre and sports facilities are used extensively by the community and there is a joint school and community library. A well-attended youth club takes place twice a week during the academic year based around a café close to the main entrance area. There are also two community rooms currently used for a variety of purposes. Most notably the space is used 2/3 times per week for medical purposes. There is also a well-appointed room given over for use by a local Mother and Toddler Group.

4.0 Outline of Options

4.1 Option 1 proposes enhancing current accommodation at the current site to bring the school accommodation up to at least a "B" rating for Suitability and Condition. The proposal would extend the playground, create a new kitchen

and store, and create a new staffroom and disabled toilet. A plan is at **Appendix 2**.

4.2 Option 2 proposes relocating SPS on the following basis:

- Reassign the existing nursery space, within the Sunart Centre, as the SPS infant classroom;
- Reassign the room currently used by the Mother and Toddler Group as the new school nursery;
- Either, reschedule the Mother and Toddler group to the afternoon when they could use the Pre-school classroom (which is not used in the afternoon), or potentially offer them use of space in the existing SPS hall;
- Install a new demountable building to accommodate the upper stages classroom for the Primary School, pupil toilets, and a staffroom;
- Adapt the current office space next to the Pre-school classroom into an office for the Primary School Head Teacher;
- Install secure doors in the corridor leading to the Primary School accommodation, to ensure security, whilst leaving in place the current public access to the community room and public toilets.
- Create a playground space for the Primary School pupils;
- Install a Multi-Use Games Area (MUGA) to further improve the school and community facilities;
- Timetable access to Physical Education inside and outside as necessary;
- Operate staggered break times for Primary and Secondary age pupils, with the Primary pupils having use of the two sports fields during their break times;
- Operate staggered lunch breaks;
- Provide IT infrastructure for the new Primary School accommodation.

4.3 A plan is available at **Appendix 3**.

4.4 Option 3 proposes relocating SPS on the basis of a two classroom demountable unit, on land adjacent to AHS, with toilets, office, staffroom, and playground accommodation being provided. A plan is available at **Appendix 4**.

4.5 As with Option 2, timetabled access to indoor and outdoor PE would be arranged with AHS, and Primary- age pupils would use the dining room within AHS, with the two schools having staggered lunch breaks. Appropriate IT infrastructure would be provided and the Authority would consider installing a MUGA.

4.6 Under Option 3, pupils may need to be supervised whilst moving between SPS and AHS. The extent of supervision might vary according to the precise location of the building.

5.0 Educational Benefits

5.1 Highland Council is of the view that the school environment should be of a quality that sustains and improves education provision, pupil performance and outcomes for the young people of Highland.

5.2 With the above aim in mind, Highland Council has adopted the above indicators in reviewing its' school estate:

- Pupils should be educated in facilities which are rated at least category B for Condition and Suitability;
- Pupils should be members of an age-appropriate peer group;
- Pupils should have the opportunity to engage in the widest possible range of activities beyond the core curriculum, including music, sports, drama and art;
- Pupils with additional needs should be educated in the most appropriate local setting;
- Pupils should not ordinarily be required to travel for longer than 30 minutes from the nearest classified road pick-up point to school (Primary) or 45 minutes from the nearest road pick-up point to school (Secondary), although it is recognised that this may not always be possible in a rural Council area such as Highland;
- School facilities should be of a size appropriate to the delineated area that they serve, paying due regard to demographic trends;
- School delineated areas should reflect geography, travel routes and population distribution;
- Safe school transport should be provided and safe traffic management in and around school sites should be implemented;
- Teachers should be members of a professional learning community comprising at least 3 members located in the same facility;
- The implications of school location to local communities should be considered;
- Schools, wherever possible, should be located where there is a recognised village or other built up community.

5.3 In 2009 the Scottish Government also set out its vision for the future school estate in Scotland, in 'Building Better Schools: Investing in Scotland's Future'. Local Authorities are required to take account of these aspirations in planning changes to their school estate, namely:

- All children and young people will be educated in, and community users will use, schools that are 'fit for purpose' in terms of condition, suitability and sufficiency;
- Schools are well-designed, accessible, inclusive learning environments that inspire and drive new thinking and change and which support the delivery of high quality educational experiences through Curriculum for Excellence;
- Schools are integral parts of the communities they serve, with pupils making use of community facilities and communities accessing school facilities;
- Schools accommodate and provide a range of services, activities and facilities that make a difference to people's health and well-being, to sustaining economic growth and to the strength and vibrancy of communities;
- A sustainable school estate whose design, construction and operation is environmentally and energy efficient; contributes directly to delivering the year-on-year reductions in greenhouse gas emissions introduced by

The Climate Change (Scotland) Act 2009, which is resilient to the impact of climate change and which leads by example in matters of environmental performance;

- A school estate that is efficiently run and that maximises value for money;
- A school estate which is flexible and responsive - both to changes in demand for school places and to learners' and teachers' requirements and wishes, and where the beneficial impact of change is maximised by thorough consultation and engagement with users and stakeholders

5.4 Each of the identified options would provide improved accommodation for SPS. In particular, each option would provide for better office, dining and playground facilities.

5.5 Option 1, if delivered, would meet the majority of the above criteria. One exception would be the aim that teachers should be members of a professional learning community comprising at least 3 members located in the same facility. If the projected fall in the roll is confirmed, the school will fall into the 1.50 FTE teacher staffing band by 2019-20.

5.6 Option 2 would meet all of the criteria in paragraph 3.2 above and most in paragraph 3.3. It would also create an integrated 3-18 campus. The Head Teachers of both schools recognise that in terms of educational benefits there is much to be gained from such an arrangement. The transitions between Pre-school and Primary, and between Primary and Secondary stages, would be virtually seamless. The Primary pupils and staff would have access to facilities which would be a significant improvement on the current provision.

5.7 Option 3 would also meet all of the criteria set out at 3.2, although transition arrangements may be marginally less effective than with Option 2.

5.8 It is difficult to identify any issues in any of the proposals that would cause educational disadvantages, either to pupils in the primary school or the secondary school. During informal consultation, parents have highlighted that Option 2 would result in poorer room accommodation for the nursery. Set against that, Option 2 would allow for co-location of the nursery and the primary school.

5.9 The Table attached at **Appendix 5** outlines the advantages and disadvantages of the 3 options in respect of educational benefits and the criteria set out at 3.2 above.

6.0 Effects on School Transport

6.1 The proposal is not expected to have any significant effects on school transport.

7.0 Effects on Staff and School Management Arrangements

7.1 It is intended that SPS retains its separate identity and that the current management arrangements for the school will remain. The Highland Council would consult with the two Parent Councils regarding any future changes to the future management of the school.

- 7.2 Under Option 1 there would be no changes to school staffing.
- 7.3 Option 2 would result in some limited changes to the current staffing arrangements. The number of Pre-school could be reduced to one as a result of co-locating the facilities. Under Option 2 the number of cleaning hours would be reduced to 5 per week. Under Options 2 and 3 the total catering staff hours between both schools would be more or less the same as those currently being worked, although the provision would be located in the AHS kitchen.

8.0 Effect on the Local Community

- 8.1 As already highlighted, the existing SPS building currently houses a joint school/community hall. If the Primary School was to be re-located, the entire building would be declared surplus for educational purposes. The future uses of the accommodation would be determined in accordance with the Council's current asset management policy. Under this policy, the building would be offered first to other Services within the Council. The Care and Learning Service would be willing to consider bids from the Community to allow the continued operation of the Community Hall, subject to the appropriate business case being made.
- 8.2 Àrainn Shuaneirt/The Sunart Centre currently hosts a Mother and Toddler Group. Option 2 would have an impact on the Group, as set out at 2.2 above. There would no other measurable impact on Àrainn Shuaneirt/The Sunart Centre.
- 8.3 As set out above, the proposals for relocating the Primary School include the creation of a new MUGA. If this came to fruition, it would provide a new community facility for Strontian.

9.0 Financial Consequences

- 9.1 Indicative capital costs for the 3 options can be found at **Appendix 6**.
- 9.2 The table at **Appendix 7** illustrates the effect of the various options on revenue costs.
- 9.3 Only indicative figures can be provided for the potential running costs of the various options.

10. Recommendation

- 10.1 Taking into account the potential educational benefits, Highland Council recommends that Strontian Primary School is relocated from its present location to Ardnamurchan High School and to retain its separate identity therein.
- 10.2 Of the 3 options, The Highland Council is of the view that Option 2 provides the most significant improvements to educational benefit.

10.3 The Council must formally consult on changes to provision, hence the options to be considered in terms of the Council's policy on changes to educational provision. This consultation paper is issued in terms of the authority's agreed procedures to meet the relevant statutory requirements. Following the consultation period, a report and submissions received will be presented to the Education, Children's and Adult Services Committee of the Highland Council.

Note of a Public Meeting held at Strontian Primary School at 7pm on 9th June 2014, to discuss the most effective means of improving the current accommodation at Strontian Primary School.

Chairperson: Alasdair Christie, Chairperson, Education, Children and Adult Services Committee

Officials attending: Norma Young, Area Education Manager (West)
Ian Jackson, Education Officer, Ross, Skye and Lochaber
Brian Porter, Finance Manager (Budget Strategy)
Ron Mackenzie, Head of Support Services

Present:

Cllr. Andrew Baxter
Cllr. Bren Gormley
Cllr. Brian Murphy

Approx. 30 local residents

Cllr. Christie explained that the purpose of the meeting was to consult on the proposals and revised options to provide the most effective means of improving the current accommodation at Strontian Primary School. He introduced the Education Manager and the Education Officer and acknowledged the presence of and named the local members present. Apologies were recorded from Cllr. Thomas MacLennan. Cllr. Christie then indicated that a note would be taken of the proceedings and ascertained that all who required a copy of the consultation paper had one. He advised that the meeting was part of a statutory consultation in line with the relevant legislation – the Schools (Consultation) Scotland Act 2010.

On 21st May 2014 the Education, Culture and Sport Committee had agreed to consult on the proposals and included a fourth option. The relevant consultation paper had been issued to those potentially affected by the proposal and to other nominated parties and made available to the public at large. It was also available on the Council's website. An advertisement had been placed in the Oban Times, and the Lochaber News, to alert people to the proposal, including the time, date and place of tonight's meeting.

Cllr. Christie explained that the consultation period began on 23rd May 2014 and would close on 11th July 2014. All representations and submissions have to be received by the closing date and should be sent to Ian Jackson, Education Officer, Camaghael Hostel, Fort William. All the comments made at tonight's meeting would be written up as a report. It will be made available to all interested parties at least 3 weeks before the Education, Culture and Sport Committee meets on 12th November 2014 when the results of the consultation will be considered.

Cllr. Christie then asked the Education Manager for the West, Mrs Norma Young, to explain the proposal.

Mrs Young introduced the background to the consultation in that the views of consultees are sought on a variety of options for improving the accommodation at Strontian Primary School. Options include a major upgrade to the present building, or relocating Strontian Primary School from its present location to Ardnamurchan High School and to retain its separate identity therein. A fourth option has been added to the consultation to include a proposal that a new primary school should be built adjacent to the nursery building as an additional option to be consulted on during the statutory consultation period.

Mrs Young alerted the room to several points in the Educational Benefits Statement namely section 2 which outlines the details of the current Strontian Primary School and pointed out specifically point 2.3 which is specific to the current school rolls and the roll projections to 2027-28 which shows a significant drop in numbers expected. Mrs Young confirmed there was a weakness in accommodation at Strontian Primary School and discussions have taken place with both Strontian Primary School and Ardnamurchan High School. Mrs Young reiterated point 3.4 in that Ardnamurchan High School is currently operating at 33% of capacity with 106 pupils currently attending. Mrs Young clarified that there were 18 classrooms within Ardnamurchan High School, 7 of which are of a practical nature.

Mrs Young outlined the 4 options:

- Option 1: Refurbishment of Strontian Primary School in its current location (point 4.1 in Educational Benefits Statement).
- Option 2: One Demountable Classroom and one classroom within Ardnamurchan High School (point 4.2 in Educational Benefits Statement).
- Option 3: Two Classroom Demountable next to Fire Station (point 4.4 in Educational Benefits Statement).
- Option 4: Two Classroom Demountable adjacent to Ardnamurchan High School near the nursery.

Mrs Young stated that site plans for option 4 were available to the room and costings should be considered similar to those of option 2. Mrs Young addressed the concern of the effects of school transport and staff and school management arrangements and confirmed that it is intended that Strontian Primary will retain its separate identity in the event of any of the options.

Back to Chair, Cllr. Christie, who invited questions from the floor.

Q1. Mrs Ogilvie, Head Teacher, Strontian Primary School – Could the panel confirm the scale of the map is correct as the size of the module buildings appears very small and doesn't match up?

A1. Ian Jackson stated he would be unable to answer and would have to consult with Property and Architectural Services. Chris Miller Craig (Head Teacher

Ardnamurchan High School) commented that the A1 drawings had been printed to A3 for photocopying and that would have affected the scaling.

Q2. Cllr. Bren Gormley – Commented that the process and legislative restrictions has been daunting for locals and that usually in this process there would be a much longer period of consultation and more debate on concerns which would more likely result in a proposal to suit most. Also stated that clarification over the classroom sizes etc. was vital and that there is a lot more work to be done over the next few weeks.

Q3. Mrs Ogilvie, Head Teacher, Strontian Primary School – Made various points relating to the proposals. At present, the current school has flexible working spaces consisting of 5 classrooms which are used for teaching, music lessons, art, learning support, drama and many more activities. She stated the accommodation was not brilliant but was flexible and with the other options there is very little flexibility especially option 4. Mrs Ogilvie also commented on the necessity to have a designated Head Teacher's office. At present the office is shared by HT and 2 clerical staff and it forces a "hot desk" method of working which puts constraint on both the head-teacher and the clerical assistants. She also commented that whilst option 2 has a large office in the plan, the office has 3 windows. Parents require privacy while meeting with the head-teacher.

Q4. Robert Dunn, Parent – Commented there was much confusion over the plans and asked for some clarification. Also pointed out that Appendix 7 was incorrect.

A4. Ian Jackson outlined the proposals on the whiteboard and explained them clearly. It was confirmed by the panel that indeed Appendix 7 was incorrect however there was very little difference between the figures.

Q5. Helen Tait, Parent – Ms Tait raised several points relating to the current status and the proposals for Strontian Primary School.

- Current building has a serious lack of storage and it would appear all options do not address this.
- Playground – Location in Option 2 is a north facing playground with walls and a hill surrounding and is not bright enough and feels like a prison.
- All options have less toilet facilities; option 2 has one unisex toilet for 23 pupils which is unacceptable.
- Option 3 has no Head Teacher's office and no learning support room. There would be no opportunities for active learning. Could we look at purchasing additional land?

A5. Chris Miller Craig, Head-Teacher at Ardnamurchan High School stated that there were options regarding office space at Ardnamurchan High including the existing nursery and sharing with the secondary clerical staff. He also commented that he and Mrs Ogilvie have had and will continue to have discussions regarding rooms, office space, dining, timetables and many other matters which need to be considered. Cllr. Gormley agreed there was a lot of work to be done in terms of utilising and sharing space.

Q6. Chris Miller Craig, Head Teacher AHS – With separate demountable huts will there be a provision for undercover walkways considering the climate and the age of the children?

A6. Cllr. Christie confirmed there would be discussion round walkways and paths and that CMC has made a very valid point.

Q7. Jamie Tait, Parent – Observed that Option 4 is just a copy of Option 3 moved across the road. Commented that there is a possibility to combine Option 2 and Option 4 and this would have advantages? Also raised the issue of lack of parking and infrastructure costs. The costs shown for Options 3 and 4 were not a true comparison with those for Option 2, because those for Options 3 and 4 included a car park not shown in Option 2. However Options 3 and 4 had no more need for a car park than Option 2.

A7. Cllr. Christie agreed that a combination of Option 2 and Option 4 could be advantageous and stated he would undertake a view of costings etc. This was a very valid point and he would refer to it as Option 5 in the meantime. Option 5 is to move the set of demountable units closer to the school within the grounds and take land ear-marked for car parking to use as a playground.

Q8. Chris Evans, resident – What will be the options on indoor space? Will there be any facilities for children to have an indoor play area?

A8. Norma Young confirmed there is no additional internal space and space inside AHS will be utilised. Mrs Ogilvie confirmed that currently SPS have the option to use the school/community hall for supervised play in bad weather, but this would not be available if the school were re-located.

Q9. Helen Tait, Parent – Commented that the proposal made by the Parent Council in September 2013 looks similar to the new Option 5.

A9. Ian Jackson stated that an extension to the nursery, as per previous plans, was not possible however a demountable unit was an option.

Q10. Jamie MacIntyre, Parent – The paper makes reference to Option 2 providing an extension to the current playground. However the plan shows no such extension. Can the plans for the playground be confirmed?

A10. Ian Jackson commented that the proposal to upgrade Strontian PS to “A” for suitability couldn’t be achieved with the current playground and an extension to the playground would be needed.

Q11. Robert Dunn, Parent – The option for refurbishment of existing school was earlier budgeted at an estimated £200,000 however under the current option the cost is estimated at £920,000. Can more information be provided on costings as it is a substantial difference?

A11. Cllr Christie stated he is also querying the reason for the difference and suspected it would mean the difference between a Category A and a Category B school. Ian Jackson added that the revised option involves a full refurbishment which will include stripping back all walls and rewiring the entire school which would be a substantial cost.

Q12. Cllr. Andrew Baxter – Will there be significant disruption to Ardnamurchan High School during any works and is it possible for any works to be completed in school holidays?

A12. Cllr Christie confirmed there will obviously be decant issues. Ian Jackson also agreed that with Option 1 there will be considerable disruption and it would be highly unlikely that the works could be completed outwith term time. Robert Dunn, Parent, added that he had spoken with Cllr. Foxley who had indicated that it would be an option to relocate pupils for the duration of the works.

Q13. Chris Evans, Resident – Introduced self as a member of the Sunart Community Council. She stated their AGM is on June 23rd and would like clarification on a few points. She attends several groups and Community Council events within Ardnamurchan High School and is concerned there will no longer have the space available should the SPS pupils move in. Would other accommodation for the Community Council be made available?

A13. Cllr Christie commented that the concerns would be noted and feedback would be provided following discussion with everyone involved.

Q14. Neil Roberts – Under Option 1, would it be possible to prioritise the work and do over a number of years to keep disruption to a minimum?

A14. The Panel commented that it would be more disruptive and costly to do the work in stages or over a number of years.

Q15. Jamie MacIntyre, Parent – What is the rationale in financial sustainability with regard to having no permanent structure?

A15. Current roll stands at 38 and is due to fall significantly. A modular structure provides flexibility and gives options for every eventuality.

Q16. Several parents asked where the roll projections had come from.

A16. The Panel confirmed that estimated projections come from various sources including planning applications, number of births locally and projected house building plans. Cllr. Christie confirmed that the estimates are based on the best information available.

Q17. Helen Tait, Parent – Lochaline Primary school has a current roll of Approx. 20 pupils however and they have a brand new school with 2 classrooms. She also commented that the projected figures indicated a cost of £2500 per sqm for a temporary building. However she has made enquiries and has been quoted £1500

per sqm for a temporary domestic building, surely for £2500 per m² we could have a permanent structure?

A17. Ron Mackenzie discussed costs from previous projects in Highland; e.g. the High School in Inverness was of a similar price per m² to that projected for Strontian.

Helen Tait suggested that added weight to the argument that a permanent structure could be obtained for the cost HC were suggesting for a temporary one.

Ron Mackenzie again referred to the need for a flexible structure, given projected falling rolls.

A parent from the floor commented that it would be more logical to build a 2 classroom school, nothing fancy, which would have a 30year plus lifespan, as opposed to expensive modular units which will only last approx. 15 years.

Q18. Mrs Taylor, Parent – Both Lochaline and Ardgour, who both have smaller school rolls than SPS, have in recent years had new purpose built schools with 2 classrooms, storage, toilets, nursery, Head Teacher's room and plentiful accommodation.

A18. Neither Lochaline PS nor Ardgour PS have a secondary school nearby which has spare accommodation, bearing in mind that AHS is operating at 30% of capacity.

Q19. Louise Cameron, Chair of AHS Parent Council – Commented on various points raised. She did not accept that AHS could accommodate 300 pupils and keep the high standards of education it currently has, so to say it is operating at 33% capacity is unfair. Across a range of issues the population of Ardnamurchan are being treated as a low priority. Highland Council is full of rural communities who struggle and these communities need support, not negativity. Feels that with restrictions and adversities such as Ferries, Jobs etc. the HC need to offer more support and make the rural communities as attractive as possible so more want to live there.

A19. Ron Mackenzie stated that HC want to upgrade provisions for Strontian PS and want to find the best sustainable option for everyone and want to get the communities what they deserve. Norma Young agreed with RM and explained again that having viable space in the secondary school gives more options. HC are committed to make the best use of all space.

Q20. Robert Dunn, Parent – People who are considering moving to the area will obviously be checking out schools etc. before making a decision and at present other areas of the Peninsula are more attractive due to the schools. Doesn't feel like a demountable unit will be appealing to new families looking to relocate to the area.

A20. Norma Young will arrange for photographs of the demountable units to be distributed and reiterated that they are of a very high standard and are very attractive. Families will see a sustainable school unit. Roy Bridge Primary School has a similar unit which has been very successful.

Q21. Pauline Brady, Parent – It is the belief of many that combining the schools will have a detrimental effect on the primary age pupils due to the differences in behaviours etc.

A21. Norma Young stated that she does not accept there be a detrimental effect and many schools now operate with a 3-18 campus. It has been very successful in Kinlochleven. Different playtimes and lunchtimes will be introduced for the appropriate age groups.

Cllr Andrew Baxter agreed about the success of the 3-18 campus has been in Kinlochleven. The success of the integration there has been phenomenal. The children have benefitted tremendously and he sees no need for concern with AHS and SPS.

Q22. Cllr Bren Gormley - Commented that these are all conversations which should have been had previously. He commented that falling rolls are due to various factors not least the lack of affordable and mid-range accommodation. If these issues are resolved the numbers will rise. Commented on the massive benefits of integration for pupils and teachers alike.

A22. Ron Mackenzie took the opportunity to remind the floor that AHS is a PPP school with an annual charge funded from the Revenue budget rather than Capital expenditure. Revenue funding is the one thing Highland Council does not have much of, and this brings additional restraints to any suggestions that would impact on the AHS building.

Q23. Mrs Ogilvie, Head Teacher, Strontian Primary School – Would like to confer with Bren re working closely with AHS and confirmed that the teaching staff already have good, established connections. Understands that AHS is under capacity however still has to provide all core education. MO queried how much time and space will be made available for SPS pupils as most spaces are always currently in use. Need very significant discussion around timetables etc. to allow SPS pupils to access all facilities.

A23. Chris Miller Craig, Head Teacher, AHS – Confirmed that AHS are totally committed to providing education for their pupils, and that staff also offer many extra-curricular activities. While the school may be running at low numbers, every course is still offered. This means that although class sizes are small there aren't a lot of spare rooms. However he remains committed to making the best of any decision for the benefit of the communities on the Peninsula.

Q24. Cllr Brian Murphy – Commented on Ms Cameron's points earlier and commended her valid points and commitment to the local community. We shouldn't be too hung up on roll projections etc. as they will almost certainly be wrong. We need to support the rural communities and believes SPS deserves a permanent school, not demountables which could prove to be problematic for leaks/draughts etc. Need to look at the future for Strontian and the common belief that a bridge will be over the Corran Narrows in the next 20-30 years which will increase the population dramatically and transform the roll projections. We need to listen to and put trust in the community's views.

A24. Cllr. Christie agreed that a bridge would certainly change dynamics. However it is speculation at this time.

Q25. Mr Thomson, Parent – If AHS had been built as a demountable, it would be nearing the end of its life, surely SPS needs a permanent structure and a permanent identity.

A25. Cllr Christie commented that all options raised issues and a permanent structure would raise its own issues.

Q26. Chris Miller Craig, Head Teacher, AHS – We are almost here discussing an Option 6. Officially AHS has no view and is advising. There is a need to bear in mind there are 4 players involved, AHS, the Sunart Centre Management Committee, SPS and PPP partners. If a new build is to be an option, it needs to be considered in relation to AHS. Is it possible to build a new school and join with AHS eventually when PPP handover is complete in 2027?

No comments from the panel or the floor.

Q27. Robert Dunn, Parent – Is it possible to amend Option 1 with option of building a new SPS in 10/15 years time. Other primary schools took a long time, let's look forward and decide on a long-term solution.

A27. Cllr Christie stated that costings etc. will be looked at and while he can't commit to anything, all opinions will be considered.

Q28. Jamie Tait, Parent – Doing things in a phased way costs more, let's get the right option now and build a new school.

A28. Cllr Christie stated he understands the views expressed. However he did not want to raise expectations. HC has hundreds of buildings in a poor state and the waiting list to build a new school would be significant. It could involve an extremely long wait.

Q29. Jamie MacIntyre, Parent – Disappointed that Options 3 and 4 have electric heating etc. We should be looking at biomass heating for any new development. Mrs Ogilvie, Head Teacher SPS, agreed, commenting that the fuel costs for SPS and Dalmhor house were astronomical. Mrs Ogilvie also took the opportunity to speak to the floor and state that the education of children does not depend on buildings, it's the relationships within the buildings which matter and these will remain.

Q30. Brian Evans, Sunart Community Council – The consultation period is due to end on the 11th July 2014 however there is no Sunart CC meeting before then therefore won't have an opportunity to discuss the options raised tonight.

A30. Ron Mackenzie confirmed that everything discussed will be published as part of a report and will be provided to all concerned parties.

Q31. Helen Tait, Parent – Does the process end now or will there be more consultation with the public?

A31. Cllr Christie confirmed that all new information will be taken away and looked at and worked on. The Report will be published at least 3 weeks before the November Committee date and all views will be encapsulated.

Cllr Bren Gormley commented that tonight has been a wide ranging discussion and there are many steps to come. We all want the right solution and if we are not ready for committee stage we will not proceed.

There being no further questions, Cllr. Christie reminded those present that the final date for the submission of representations was the 11 July 2014 and should be sent to Ian Jackson, Education Officer, Camaghael Hostel, Fort William. He repeated that all the comments made at tonight's meeting would be written up as a report. It will be made available to all interested parties at least 3 weeks before the Education, Culture and Sport Committee meets on 12th November 2014 when the results of the consultation will be considered. He advised that every member of the Education, Culture and Sport Committee would receive a copy of the meeting note and the written representations made.

Cllr. Christie thanked everyone for their attendance.

ENDS

Note of the Main Points Raised at a Meeting held on 30 June 2014 at Strontian Community Hall to discuss the possible relocation of Strontian PS.

In Attendance:

Norma Young, Area Education Manager (West) (NY)

Ian Jackson, Education Officer (West) (IJ)

Iain Robertson, Housing and Property (IR)

Cllr. Thomas MacLennan (TM)

Chris Millar-Craig, Head Teacher, Ardnamurchan High School (CMC)

Mindy Ogilvie, Head Teacher, Strontian Primary School (MO)

Members of the Strontian Primary School Parent Council

NY explained that that, following the meeting held on 9 June, the Council had reviewed the representations made with the caveat that the Authority could not breach the “red line” around the PPP site. She commented that, following the 9 June meeting, there was also a need to clarify the sizes of the demountable buildings being proposed.

NY continued by repeating the options set out in the original paper, and those discussed at the meeting of 9 June, and said that the Council were seeking a view from the parents as to which options they would wish the Council to provide further details.

IR advised that many schools in Highland now incorporated modular buildings, for example Aldourie and Roy Bridge. The modular buildings were built to a very high standard and the gap between such buildings and permanent structures had narrowed considerably in recent years. In response to concerns expressed at the 9 June meeting, he advised that all of the classrooms in the modular buildings would be of an appropriate size – 55m² to 60m², and all necessary ancillary accommodation would be included – e.g. toilet facilities, a Learning Support base.

There was a consensus amongst parents for two options to be considered.

1. Refurbishing the existing school, keeping it in its current location in the centre of the village, and;
2. Building two classrooms with ancillary facilities, as close to the High School as possible, with shared use of the HS sports, music and dining facilities. It was requested that costs were obtained for both modular accommodation and traditional build.

There was no support for the option of utilising the existing nursery space within AHS as a classroom.

IR commented that Option 1 would include an extension to create a dining room.

Discussion took place on the possibility of a walkway from the primary school to the high school as part of Option 2 above. **NY** advised that any walkway could only be constructed up to the “red line.”

Parents suggested it would be important to look ahead to 2027, and suggested that any new build should then be linked with the AHS building. At that stage, (end of PPP contract) the Council would reconsider the accommodation.

It was requested that the Council obtain comparative costs per square metre for modular and traditional builds.

Comments were made that any refurbishment of the current accommodation had to include an extension to the playground. It was acknowledged this may be difficult due to lack of space.

There was discussion about the possibility of using the public play park across the road from the primary school as part of the school playground. It was suggested that the village road be re-routed to accommodate this. If this were done it could open up all sorts of possibilities for extending the school in its current location.

A suggestion was also made about shutting the road for certain periods of the day (e.g. school playtime), rather than re-routing it. **IJ** commented there may be legal difficulties with such a proposal.

NY commented that re-routing the road would almost certainly be expensive.

Some concerns were expressed about the size of the dining room furniture at AHS. **MO** commented that the primary school had used the AHS for lunches during a period when the kitchen at Dalmhor House was out of action. The children had loved going to the AHS and the size of the furniture had not been an issue.

Concerns were expressed about the impact on the community if the primary school were moved. **MO** commented that the education of the primary age children was the most important thing to consider.

CMC commented that if the primary school relocated they might be able to use the facilities at the school, and the school minibus, but that this would require consultation.

It was commented that other communities on the Peninsula were becoming annoyed at perceived educational advantages for Strontian PS pupils that could arise from this proposal.

Some discussion arose about the detailed location of the school, were it to move. **CMC** suggested the school could be located to the side of the AHS building, near the nursery play area. This might preserve the aesthetics of the current build.

Parents suggested that any new build should be designed to complement rather than detract from the existing building.

Cllr. MacLennan agreed that was possible and commented that the modular building at Roy Bridge had a more pronounced pitch roof than normal, in order to fit in with the other buildings on that site.

Parents were concerned that any new refurb/build should incorporate a “green” energy solution such as biomass.

IR confirmed that would definitely be part of Option 1.

Parents suggested that Option2 should also include a biomass boiler that could be plumbed into the AHS building come 2027.

Cllr. MacLennan sounded a warning about the difficulty of obtaining approval for capital funding at Committee. There was a great deal of competition for capital funding.

NY thanked everyone for attending. She had found it very helpful to narrow down the options to those that had support. She was aware parents had changed the end of term concert for the meeting, and was very grateful for that.

Helen Tait, Chairperson of the PC, raised the issue about playground supervision at the school, that had been raised at previous meetings. NY undertook to look into this as part of the annual ASN allocation exercise.

NY undertook to meet again with parents after the start of the new school session in August.

From:
Sent: 18 May 2014 16:07
To:
Cc: Norma Young; Ron MacKenzie; Bren Gormley - Member; Brian Murphy - Member; Thomas MacLennan - Member
Subject: Fwd: Weblink: Education, Children and Adult Services Committee - 21 May 2014
Attachments: image001.gif

- as a key stakeholder, it is disappointing that as Chair of the ASMC I only receive this via the NHS.
Can you please circulate this to the ASMC members. We will need to meet to provide a comprehensive response.
Ron and Norma:
In the background information, there are a number of serious factual errors:
AHS was designed for 250 and the venue for 220, not over 318.
Strontian was the favoured site by the campaign group, the Council consulted on 7- Salen did not have a viable site.
Thanks.
PS Ron, could you please phone me, when convenient, about Portree HS and WHC. Thanks.

Sent from my iPad

Begin forwarded message:

From:
Date: 16 May 2014 12:09:01 BST
To: Board Member

Subject: FW: Weblink: Education, Children and Adult Services Committee - 21 May 2014

Board Members – for information.

E-mail:



Please consider the environment before printing this e-mail.

From:
Sent: 16 May 2014 11:56
Subject: Weblink: Education, Children and Adult Services Committee - 21 May 2014

Good morning

For information, the agenda and reports in respect of the **Education, Children and Adult Services Committee on Wednesday 21 May 2014** are now available on the Council's website and can be accessed by using the following hyperlink:-

<http://www.highland.gov.uk/yourcouncil/committees/strategiccommittees/acs-comm/2014-05-21-eca-ag.htm>

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Thank you for your co-operation.

NHSmial is the secure email and directory service available for all NHS staff in England and Scotland
NHSmial is approved for exchanging patient data and other sensitive

information with NHSmail and GSi recipients
NHSmail provides an email address for your career in the NHS and can be
accessed anywhere

From: Ian Jackson
Sent: 21 May 2014 07:40
To:
Subject: Fw: Fwd: Statutory Consultation on the future education provision to serve the Strontian Primary School Catchment area

Please save email as a response to the consultation.

From: Norma Young
Sent: Wednesday, May 21, 2014 06:44 AM
To: Ian Jackson
Subject: Fw: Fwd: Statutory Consultation on the future education provision to serve the Strontian Primary School Catchment area

See below

From:
Sent: Wednesday, May 21, 2014 06:30 AM
To: Norma Young
Subject: Fwd: Statutory Consultation on the future education provision to serve the Strontian Primary School Catchment area

----- Original Message -----

Subject: Statutory Consultation on the future education provision to serve the Strontian Primary School Catchment area

Date: Tue, 20 May 2014 18:35:42 +0100

From: ≥

To: norma.young@highland.co.uk

CC: bren.gormley.cllr@highland.gov.uk,
eoghan.carmichael@highlifehighland.com,
ron.mackenzie@highland.gov.uk

Dear Mrs Young,

RE: Document entitled 'Statutory Consultation on the future education provision to serve the Strontian Primary School Catchment area'

Having read and had time to reflect on the above document being taken to the Education, Adult and Childrens Services Committee tomorrow (21/5/14) I wish to make the following comments. (I must clarify that I make these comments as an individual parent not as part of the parent council or any community committee.)

1. **The document is misleading.** It shows in appendix 5 - the table of benefits - that there are significant differences between the options of a school build partially integrated into the Arainn Shuainert/AHS building (option 2) over a separate building (option3) that are **not true**. The 'significant benefits' stated are

'transitions' and 'staff professional community'. Transitions across the peninsular are excellent. Moving a matter of metres closer to the AHS school building will not significantly change them for either option. To show this as a significant benefit (to HC's preferred option 2) in your report is misleading to the members. Staff Professional Community again would not be significantly different between the options - **neither option 1,2 or 3 is located in Ardnamurchan High School** - a clear mistake on the chart. It is located on the end of the community part of the building and would have a separate secure entrance. With either option 1, 2 or 3 staff only have to cross the AHS threshold to access other staff and resources. Therefore the benefit status should be the same for each option. **Again, your chart is misleading to members and would clearly lead them to the conclusion that HC's preferred option provides significant benefit when this is not the case.**

2. My second comment surrounds the **lack of transparency** that has appeared via this document. Appendix 2 shows a new reconfiguration of the existing primary school that **has not been seen** by parent body, school or community before. You have had discussions based on a very different plan of upgrade to the primary school. Appendix 4 details a building or prefab buildings at a location **never before discussed** with parents or community. At meetings we discussed an option of a site adjacent to the nursery doors not next to the fire station. (This again skews the information on appendix 5 - which shows a greater benefit to option 2 for safe transport - if located where discussed this would not be an issue, nor would we need a carpark. **Misleading.**) The document itself has not been circulated to key stakeholders, hence my untimely response, again a lack of transparency in proceedings. This lack of transparency is unacceptable, and does not bode well for further consultation and discussion.

The observations I have made have left me with feelings of mistrust about the whole process to come.

We need to consider this situation carefully, with full, and transparent information, in order to make positive, fair, sustainable changes for both the school and wider community.

I hope at your meeting tomorrow the above issues will be discussed so that consultation can go ahead with a true representation of the options available.

Yours sincerely,

Statement from Strontian Primary Parent Council regarding the statutory consultation of future education provision for Strontian.

The Strontian Primary School parents are pleased that the statutory consultation is moving forward as this process has been going on since 2012, and the existing primary school facilities have been labelled as poor and not fit for purpose for many years.

However the parents have major concerns that that Highland Council (HC) are basing their consultation on an option that is **not supported by the majority of the parent body**, and that the whole consultation document is tremendously biased towards an option which is not in the best interests of this school, its partner schools or the community as a whole.

The message given to the Primary School parents at the meeting of the 29th April, was that this would be a statutory consultation about **all the options** available, not just the Highland Councils' preferred one, especially when the parent's preferred option at the meeting was option 3. (No drawings or details were available at the meeting, and HC were unable to back up any figures quoted). The parents are concerned that the summary does not even acknowledge that other options are available.

Specific Concerns

- The document states that at the initial meeting parents supported a move to AHS, but this support was for a temporary measure not a permanent move. This isn't clear from the presentation or the appendices.
- Item 3.0 – The options considered. The options highlighted in 3.2 are not the same as those detailed in the proposal Appendix 1 of the report. This calls into question the accuracy of comparisons made between the options - exactly which option are they comparing with which?
- Appendix 1 - Notes from 16 January meeting, A2 "There is also a grassed quadrangle outside at the rear of AHS, that could be developed as a playground for the primary age pupils" This is an area of boggy ground shaded by high buildings and a hill on three sides, and therefore completely unsuitable as a play area for primary school children and is therefore NOT an option. The parents have raised the unsuitability of this area as a playground a number of times at meetings with HC.
- Appendix 2 – The plans for option 1 have been radically changed, and have been unseen until this document was published.
- Appendix 3, - The drawing for option 2 shows, given the two lengths of access ramp shown to get up the building that not much excavation is expected, so this building is likely to sit up much higher than the level of the nursery. Is this split level what is wanted for the next 25 years of Strontian Primary School?
- Appendix 4 – Why has the Highland Council located option 3 out near the fire station, on the opposite side of the road when there is development land adjacent to the existing Strontian Nursery, about 5 metres away from the Option 2 proposal? To the best of our knowledge HC have not discussed this with landowners (the Housing Trust themselves are only meeting landowners this week) so to choose the 'wrong' side of the road when either side is presumably potentially available skews the comparison. HC have also added a separate car park which would be unnecessary if Option 3 was sited in the correct field and accessed in the same way as the nursery. This goes some way to explain the HC's **inflated costs for this option**.
- The building shown for option 3 (appendix 4) would easily fit on the land opposite the existing childcare centre entrance. We'd have the best of both and none of the disadvantages - ie requirement for supervised access for catering and other AHS facilities, disruption to existing nursery and playgroup facilities.

- Appendix 5 - Options 2 & 3 are practically very similar yet the comparison table suggests that for some aspects one option provides no significant benefit and yet the HC preferred option provides significant benefit (ie opposite extremes). They would **clearly** have very similar benefit status. Teachers and pupils only have to enter the AHS building to access other staff and future fellow pupils, and we should remember that the part of the building HC are proposing to doctor is NOT part of AHS either. It makes it look though option 2 is very much better, when the actual difference between the options is negligible or in fact nil.
- Plans for both Option 2 & 3 would appear to have been drawn by someone who has not visited the site and has thus made completely impractical choices.
- There is general agreement amongst the Parent Body, that the facilities shown for option 2 (appendix 3) would be inferior to option 1. It would still present operational difficulties and appear to be a temporary measure. The village would find itself going through this again in 10 to 15 years time.
- Any job losses for local people are also a concern with a move to AHS.

The parents have been assured in meetings with the Highland Council that the consultation will be fair and that Education Scotland will form a view on the educational merits of the proposals. We trust that these concerns are listened to, and that any suggested community solutions are considered as part of the consultation. The parents expect that the Highland Council will be prepared to make alterations to the current options should cost effective solutions materialise as part of this process.

The parents feel that an Option 4, in the correct field, would be the most cost effective, and educationally beneficial solution for the next 25 years of Strontian Primary School. In addition, this option is the one that we have been discussing with Norma Young and Ron MacKenzie. The option 3 you see on the table is again unseen by the parent body/community and has not been discussed.

Chair, Strontian Primary Parent Council

20th May 2014.

Attachments

1. Appendix 5 Revised showing benefits of 'Option 4' DWG/App5/Rev1
2. Local Development plan 'DWG/HT/building locations', showing HC location for 'Option 3', and the parents preferred location for 'Option 4'

APPENDIX 5 REVISED SHOWING BENEFITS OF OPTION 4

Options	Enhanced Facilities		Age Appropriate Peer Group		Wider Activities		Travel Times		Safe Transport and Traffic Management		Key - Professional Community		Key - Transition Arrangements		Summary	
	No Significant Improvement	Some Improvement	No Significant Benefit	Some Benefit	No Significant Benefit	Some Benefit	No Significant Benefit	Some Benefit	No Significant Benefit	Some Benefit	No Significant Benefit	Some Benefit	No Significant Benefit	Some Benefit		
Option 1 - Improve Existing Primary School	No Significant Improvement	Some Improvement	No Significant Benefit	Some Benefit	No Significant Benefit	Some Benefit	No Significant Benefit	Some Benefit	No Significant Benefit	Some Benefit	No Significant Benefit	Some Benefit	No Significant Benefit	Some Benefit	Would the Option Allow for improved Transition between nursery, primary and secondary?	No Significant Benefit
Option 2 - Relocate in AHS with additional classrooms	Moderate Improvement	Significant Improvement	Moderate Benefit	Significant Benefit	Moderate Benefit	Significant Benefit	Moderate Benefit	Significant Benefit	Moderate Benefit	Significant Benefit	Moderate Benefit	Significant Benefit	Moderate Benefit	Significant Benefit	Would the option allow staff to become members of a professional community comprising at least 3 persons located within the same facility?	Significant Benefit
Option 3 - New School in Park Avenue	Some Improvement	Moderate Improvement	No Significant Benefit	Moderate Benefit	No Significant Benefit	Moderate Benefit	No Significant Benefit	Moderate Benefit	No Significant Benefit	Some Benefit	No Significant Benefit	Moderate Benefit	No Significant Benefit	Significant Benefit	Would the Option Create Safe Transport and Traffic Arrangements?	No Significant Benefit
Option 4 - New School on east side of road, next to Nursery (preferred option by VAST majority of parents)	Moderate Improvement	Significant Improvement	No Significant Benefit	Significant Benefit	Moderate Benefit	Significant Benefit	No Significant Benefit	Moderate Benefit	No Significant Benefit	Moderate Benefit	Significant Benefit	No Significant Benefit	Significant Benefit	Significant Benefit	Would an Option Improve Access to Music, Sports, Drama, and Art?	Significant Benefit

Would generate improved arrangements in terms of transition & prog. learning comm. Classes located together. No issues crossing to AHS building.

Significant benefit (next to nursery, same as Option 2)

Significant benefit (next to nursery same as Option 2)

Moderate Benefit (no road to cross)

No Significant Benefit

Moderate Benefit

Moderate benefit

No Significant Benefit

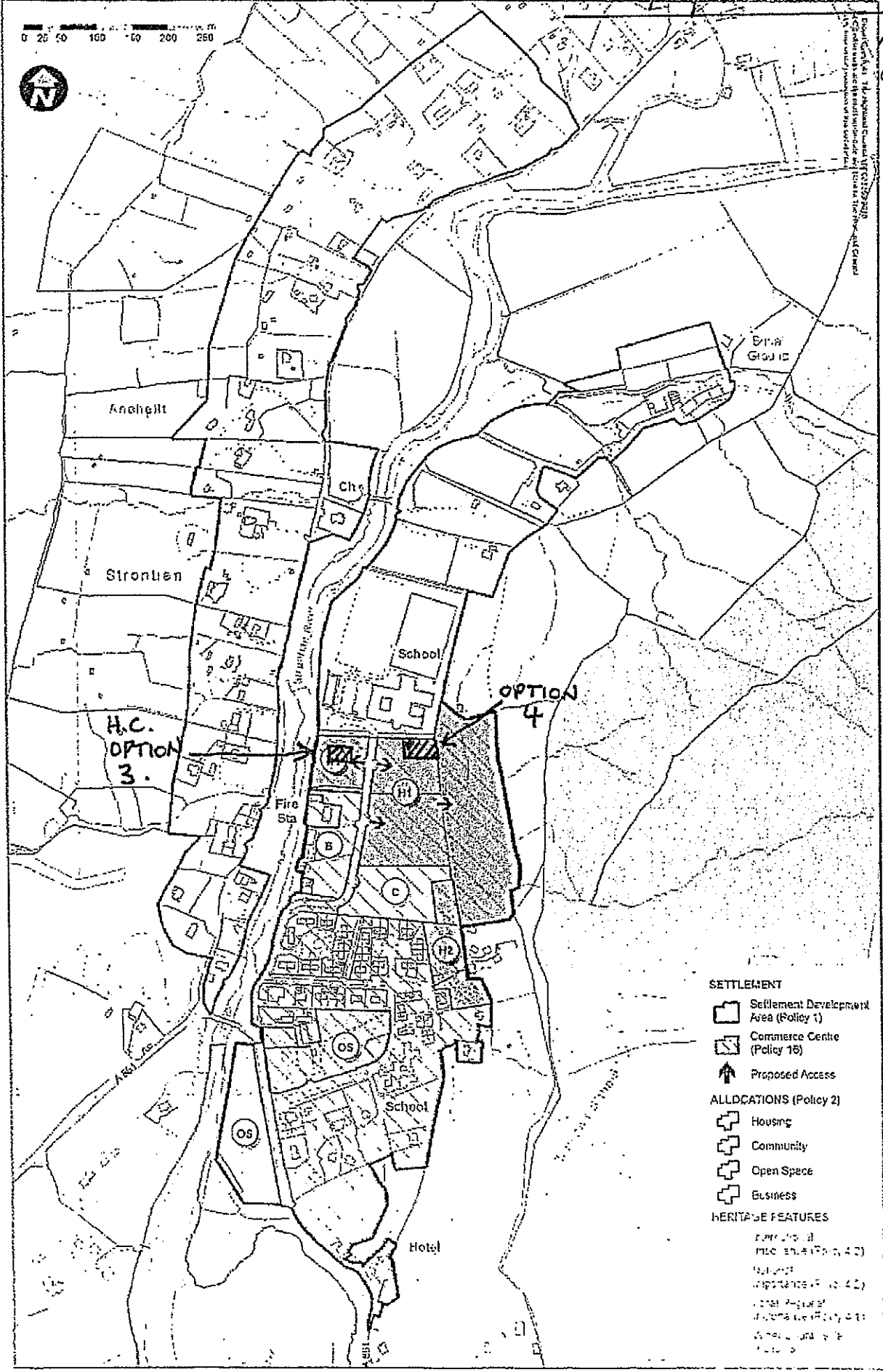
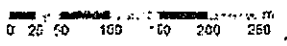
No Significant Benefit

Would generate improved arrangements in terms of transition & prog. learning comm. Classes located together. No issues crossing to AHS building.

* Same modular class rooms as Option 2 so should be the same.

LOCAL DEVELOPMENT PLAN DWG HT/BUILDING LOCATIONS

MAY 2014



- SETTLEMENT**
- Settlement Development Area (Policy 1)
 - Commerence Centre (Policy 1B)
 - Proposed Access
- ALLDCATIONS (Policy 2)**
- Housing
 - Community
 - Open Space
 - Business
- HERITABLE FEATURES**
- Heritable Feature (No. 42)
 - Heritable Feature (No. 42)
 - Heritable Feature (No. 42)
 - Heritable Feature (No. 42)
 - Heritable Feature (No. 42)

(As Continued in Force) (April 2012)

INSET 13: Stronlian
Inset 13: Stronlian an t-Sithein

From:
Sent: 26 May 2014 12:47
To: Norma Young
Cc: Ron MacKenzie; Janice MacKinnon - Strontian Primary; Mindy Ogilvie; Andrew Baxter - Member; Thomas MacLennan - Member; Bren Gormley - Member; Ian Jackson
Subject: Strontian Primary School consultation

Norma

Letter and full package received both as chair and as a parent, thank you. I also recieved in the library today a copy of the letter to go with the documents, again many thanks.

Whilst the letter does have a couple of sentences in it referring to option 4, I am concerned that without option 4 being marked on a drawing, or mentioned anywhere in the main text of the document, this may be confusing to those without intimate knowledge of the sites in question. I am also concerned that 'the educational benefits and financial implications of option 4 will be presented in **November** to the Education Committee'. Again I worry that the lack of inclusion of this information during the consultation period, will lead to unbalanced discussions, and could make the whole consultation process irrelevant.

Whilst I understand your need to get documents out so as not to miss the 30 school day window.... I request that the full cost details, and educational benefits for Option 4 are brought to the public meetings so that they can form part of the discussions.

Please consider the above a personal opinion, as the Parent Council hasn't met in full yet this week.

Regards

On 23 May 2014, at 13:12, Ian Jackson <ian.jackson@highland.gov.uk> wrote:

Hi

The documents sent to the library are really just spares in case anyone requires further copies. As a parent, you will be receiving a full set of papers with a covering letter that explains how the consultation now includes Option 4 and how the detailed information on that option is to be developed.

The letters to parents were posted first class yesterday so should arrive today.

From:
Sent: Friday, May 23, 2014 12:26 PM
To: Norma Young; Ron MacKenzie; Ian Jackson; Janice MacKinnon - Strontian Primary; Mindy Ogilvie
Cc: Andrew Baxter - Member; Thomas MacLennan - Member; Bren Gormley - Member

Subject: Strontian Primary School consultation

Following the outcome of the meeting on Wednesday, please can you explain why Option 4 is not mentioned in any way in the public consultation document received in the library this morning.

Many thanks

Chair - Strontian Primary Parent Council

Unless related to the business of The Highland Council, the views or opinions expressed within this e-mail are those of the sender and do not necessarily reflect those of The Highland Council, or associated bodies, nor does this e-mail form part of any contract unless so stated.

Mura h-eil na beachdan a tha air an cur an cèill sa phost-d seo a' buntainn ri gnothachas Chomhairle na Gàidhealtachd, 's ann leis an neach fhèin a chuir air falbh e a tha iad, is chan eil iad an-còmhnaidh a' riochdachadh beachdan na Comhairle, no buidhnean buntainneach, agus chan eil am post-d seo na phàirt de chunradh sam bith mura h-eil sin air innse.

Listening * Open * Valuing * Improving * Supporting * Partnering * Delivering
Èisteachd * Fosgailte * Luach * Leasachadh * Taic * Com-pàirteachas * Libhrigeadh

From:
Sent: 25 June 2014 15:50
To: Ian Jackson
Cc: Mindy Ogilvie; Janice MacKinnon - Strontian Primary; Norma Young; Ron MacKenzie
Subject: Strontian Primary School Relocation
Attachments: Strontian primary parent proposal for new build adjacent to AHS , June 2014.pdf; ATT00001.txt

Dear Ian

Since the public meeting on the 9th June, I have drawn plans up for discussion of what I think we as parents would like to see as an option for Strontian Primary School. I was going to send through as part of the consultation process in a more complete form, however since we are now meeting this Monday, I thought it was important you knew how we were thinking, and hopefully we are close to how you are thinking as well?
By sending through now, hopefully your team will have a chance to look at them in more detail, before we meet.

These plans have the backing of the parents, but haven't gone out to the wider community yet. We think they provide both a 15 and 25 year solution, and reduce your land purchase needs.
The one thing I forgot to mention on the drawing is the possibility of biomass heating, which was discussed on the 9th June.

Please do not hesitate to contact me before the meeting if needed.

Kind Regards

Strontian Primary Parent Council Chair.

From:
Sent: 25 June 2014 12:47
To: Ian Jackson
Cc: Christopher Millar-Craig; Norma Young; , Patricia Kennedy; Eoghan Carmichael
Subject: Strontian Primary school relocation to AHS proposal 2014

Dear Iain Jackson,

At our meeting of AHS parent council on Monday 16 June we discussed the proposal to relocate Strontian Primary School into the AHS building. We note that the Options have increased from 4 to 6? since the initial consultation papers were issued and that it is quite possible the new Option 6 may be most suitable for our PPP building.

Ardnamurchan High School Parent Council are supportive of other local school Parent Councils generally and partnership working in principle. In particular we would like to, and have already offered support to Strontian Primary Parent Council as they work towards a viable solution with the Highland Council. We are respectful of both the Community Wing use as a community resource for the wider peninsula and the Nursery and Toddler group's current successful use of their space.

Yours sincerely

AHS parent council

Mr Ian Jackson
Area Education Officer, West Ross, Skye & Lochaber
Highland Council – Education, Culture and Sport
Camaghael Hostel
Fort William
PH33 7BR.

9th June 2014

Dear Ian

Parents Meeting with Highland Council Tuesday 29th April 2014. Request for amendment to meeting minutes (Appendix 1 (c) in Statutory Consultation document).

Following a review of the Highland Council minutes, received as part of the consultation document, the parents think there may be an error in part of the minutes taken.

The queries relate to the questions and answers to items 17 and 18.

On question 17, we believe no one felt able to answer Mrs Young's question about a choice between option 1 and option 2, because the hall was in agreement that the finances for option 1 were not realistic, and there was therefore no choice available (rather than most choosing option 2 which is implied in the minutes).

On question 18, my question requested an additional member of staff to join the lunchtime team on health and safety grounds on a temporary basis until the school is modified or relocated. As you are aware, lunch is currently undertaken in cramped conditions on an elevated stage, and the primary school teachers do not currently get a lunch break because they have to act as waitresses. The floor recalls Mrs Young saying yes to this.

Please can you amend the minutes.

Yours sincerely

Chair- Strontian Primary

cc. Mrs Mindy Ogilvie. Strontian Primary Head Teacher

Strontian Parent Council Discussion Folders
prepared for the Primary School Consultation –
June 2014.

Contents

1. Letter to Ian Jackson dated 26th September 2013 detailing concerns and proposing solutions for Strontian Primary accommodation, prior to Highland Council meeting with the Àrainn Shuaineirt Management Committee.
2. Letter of support from Sunart Community Council, October 2013.
3. CADISPA report extract detailing community feeling about the primary school – April 2014
4. Statement from Parent Council to the Education Committee regarding the statutory consultation of future education provision for Strontian. 20th May 2014.
5. Letter from Mindy Ogilvie to all parents 8th June 2014.
6. Photographs of the existing playground provision at Strontian Primary.
7. Aerial photograph of Ardnamurchan High School
8. Option 2 location photographs.

Chair, Strontian Parent Council 9th June 2014.

Mr Ian Jackson
Area Education Officer, West Ross, Skye & Lochaber
Highland Council – Education, Culture and Sport
Camaghael Hostel
Fort William
PH33 7BR.

26th September 2013

Dear Mr Jackson

Ref het/pc/004. Strontian Primary School Accommodation Review.

We understand that the Highland Council is currently preparing a report to put towards Council concerning the proposed relocation of Strontian Primary School to Ardnamurchan High School / The Sunart Centre (AHS/SC).

The Parent Council and Head Teacher have engaged in extensive discussions about the idea. The current Primary School premises are not fit for purpose in a modern age of education, even though Strontian Primary School has a supportive parent body and dedicated school staff. We have drawn up and attach a list of problems for your consideration, along with our preferred solutions (Table 1: Parental concerns about existing facilities at Strontian Primary School).

At the present primary school, the Council has plans to build two extensions to the existing premises: a Head Teachers office, and a kitchen to address some of these problems. These plans will reduce a small playground space further, which is a major parental concern. We believe that these two extensions would not address many of the long-term issues with the present school building and the Council would be wasting a substantial sum of money. This proposal has been rejected by parents as a workable long term solution. The Parent Council have agreed that the best solution for Strontian Primary would be a new school building.

The proposal to transfer Strontian Primary to AHS/SC is considered to be the next best solution, provided the arrangements address all the problems outlined in our attachments (Table 1, and Table 2: Core requirements and concerns raised at Parent Council Meeting 26th August 2013). The Parent Council feel strongly that any relocation should have minimal impact on the existing community facilities at the Sunart Centre.

On Saturday 21st September, Strontian Primary parents had a tour of the Childcare Wing and the Community Rooms at the Sunart Centre. From this, we feel that the best and most cost effective solution to house the Primary School would be the construction of a single storey extension on the end of the Child Care Centre to provide two new classrooms. We attach an annotated ground floor plan (DWG/HET/9/13/001) showing how we think that this could work. We feel this is achievable for around £180,000. This calculation is based on a rate of £1500 per m² for a high specification finish. Was provision made in the original building plans for a future extension in this area?

The present Primary School playground does not meet statutory requirements, and was the reason parents first became concerned about the plan for extensions to the existing building. Purchase of land adjacent to AHS for school and community use is essential to address this requirement, and is shown on the annotated Strontian development plan DWG/HET/9/13/002 attached.

A move for Strontian Primary School to AHS/SC is possible but it does need to provide the best facilities for all concerned.

We hope the attached documents are useful.

Yours sincerely

Chair, Strontian Primary School Parent Council.

c.c. Mindy Ogilvie, Strontian Primary School

- Enc. Table 1. Parent Council concerns about the existing facilities at Strontian Primary School.
Table 2. Core requirements and concerns raised at Parent Council Meeting 26th August 2013.
DWG/HET/9/13/001: Possible location for a Strontian Primary School extension.
DWG/HET/9/13/002: Possible land purchase area for Strontian Primary School playground.

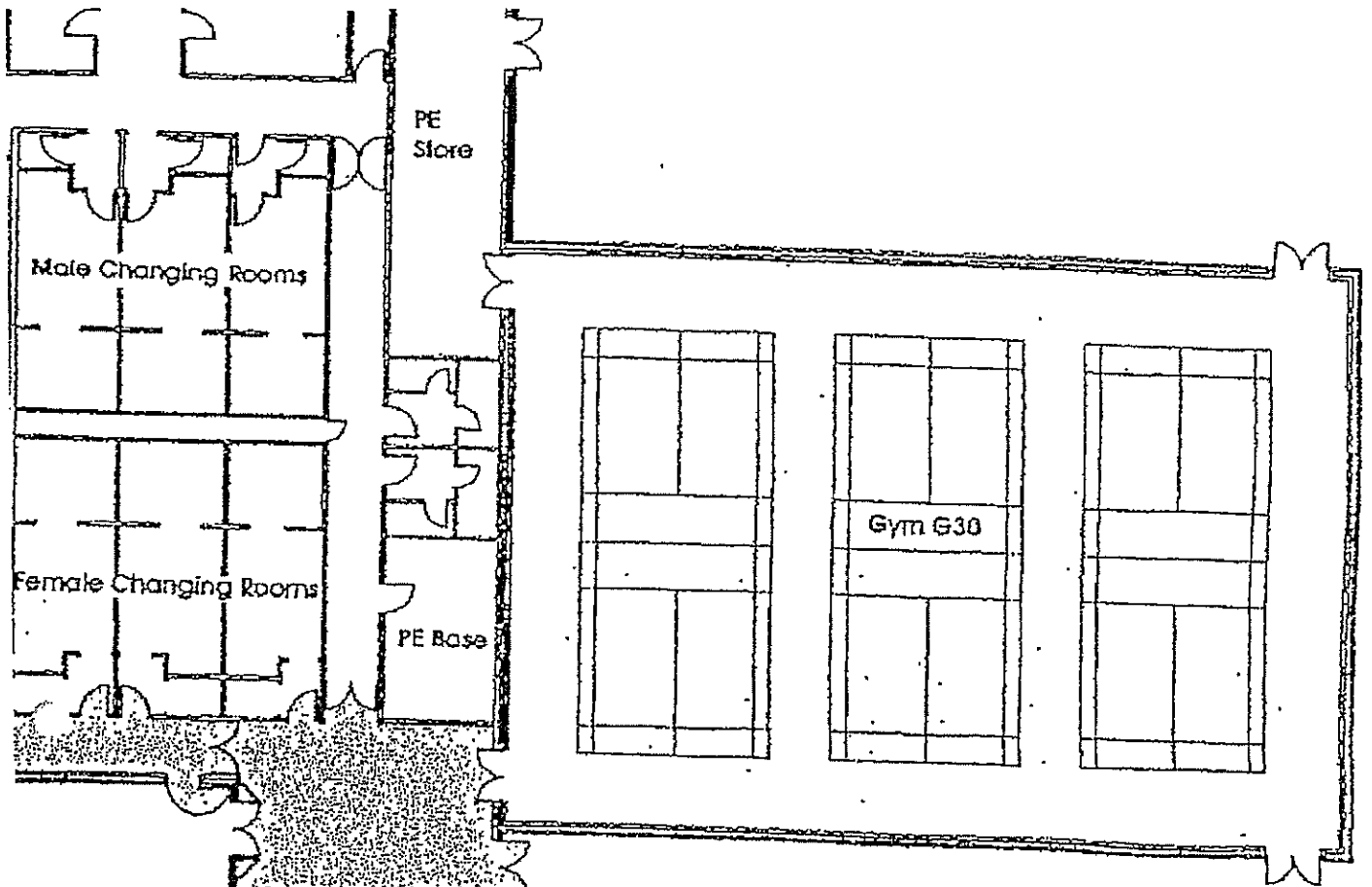
Table 1. Parent Council concerns about the existing facilities at Strontian Primary School

Building issue, or Highland Council policy issue?	Problem at Existing Strontian Primary School	Proposed Solution
Building	The outside playgrounds are small and oddly shaped. The P1-3 playground has a small paved area (about 9mx9m) which the children are restricted to for much of the year, as the rest of the playground is sloping grass, which can be dangerous when wet. Both areas are way below recommended playground sizes, and there are no team playing fields nearby.	There must be a dedicated outside play space adjacent to the primary school, with easy access to and from the primary school building. By purchasing land to the east of AHS/SC, a play area of adequate size can be realised. (DWG HET/9/13/002) The use of the existing AHS play area is not a solution, as it is too far from primary school toilets, and would be shared with much older children.
Building	Because of the failings in the existing playground, the Primary School has created and made full use of a wood school and school garden, within the Community woodland. The area allows the school to take active learning and learning for sustainability outdoors. This fulfils CfE outcomes and experiences and Education Scotland and Highland Council guidelines.	Purchase of land adjacent to AHS/SC for school and community use is essential to address this requirement. (DWG HET/9/13/002)
HC Policy	There is no provision for playground supervision in the school staffing complement.	Provide playground supervision
Building	No staff room facilities means that teachers have nowhere to even sit down when not teaching, and class management time must take place in the cloakroom in the centre of the school (next to the toilets and the photocopier).	Allow for a staff room area within the new building.
Building	No Head Teacher's office means that any private /sensitive calls need to be made from the staff toilet.	Allow for a private Head Teacher's office within the new building.
Building	Only having one office (shared between head teacher and clerical), means that the school is only allowed one computer for administrative purposes, which must be shared.	Allow for a private office and staff area within the new building.
Building	There is no room available for additional pupil support, so any one-to-one or group support with pupils has to be conducted in	Additional pupil support could be given in the existing nursery, quiet room, or playgroup room, when not in

	the cloakroom in the centre of the school.	use by others.
Building	There is little storage, and the construction of a disabled toilet (for school use) in the village hall has meant the loss of the PE cupboard.	A new build extension would allow adequate storage areas to be easily incorporated into the design. Squeezing the school into existing community rooms within the Sunart Centre would not address this issue.
Building	There are no facilities for the Cook 1 to change prior to serving lunches (or even wash hands).	Existing catering facilities could be shared/timetabled with AHS
Building	Pupils eat lunches on the stage in the Village Hall. The area is so cramped that children are unable to get up to clear their own plates. Currently school staff have to act as waiters, which doesn't encourage responsibility, co-operation and independence in pupils.	Existing dining facilities could be shared /timetabled with AHS.
Building	Music lessons are popular with a number of children, and have to take place in the village hall, which makes it out of bounds for other activities for large portions of the week. The village hall is used for classroom projects needing a large area, concert and pantomime rehearsal (including for the Gaelic mod), and for PE lessons.	Existing music facilities could be shared /timetabled with AHS. Existing venue and sports hall space could be shared/timetabled with AHS. The nursery and playgroup rooms could be used for large scale classroom projects and rehearsal space when not in use by others.
HC Policy	Strontian Primary does not currently qualify for an on site janitor. This means that immediate janitorial concerns have to be undertaken by either the Head Teacher, or the cleaner, whose time and dedication could be better spent. These can include clearing of the flat roof and gutters following snow melt to avoid flooding, changing of light bulbs, and unblocking toilets.	By being part of the AHS/SC complex, the schools janitorial needs could be met.
Building	The building, although not doing so at the moment, has a tendency to leak. The heating system is temperamental. There are plans to undertake further repairs on the heating, but this will not address the long-term issues. Class time was lost last year due to failings in the heating system.	School relocation would resolve this issue.

Table 2. Core requirements and concerns raised at Parent Council Meeting 26th August 2013

Parent Council core requirement, or core concern	Requirement/Concern
Requirement	There must be dedicated outside play space, adjacent to the school, with easy access to and from the school building. The dark and soggy area next to the transformer to the back of the high school, is not fit for purpose.
Requirement	The school must be provided with a single campus space (i.e. not split between different buildings or in different parts of a building).
Requirement	There must be a staff room and adequate office space for staff.
Requirement	There must be dedicated toilets – to be used only by Nursery/Primary School pupils.
Requirement	There must be provision of a better lunch area.
Requirement	The Head Teacher requires a separate office.
Requirement	There must be adequate storage within the campus.
Requirement	There must be adequate capacity for possible future increase in school rolls.
Requirement	The name 'Strontian Primary School' must be retained along with the school's identity (e.g. retaining the current school uniform, etc.).
Requirement	There must be a dedicated teacher for each class – i.e. P1-3 and P4-7.
Requirement	There must be a dedicated Primary School Head Teacher, or Depute Head Teacher within AHS with dedicated <i>timetabled</i> primary school responsibility.
Requirement	There must be timetabled access to the AHS gym hall, venue, home economics room, computer suite etc.
Requirement	There must be adequate computer facilities within the classrooms.
Requirement	There must be a spare room to be used for music tuition/ additional support needs, etc.
	The Parents do not want any changes to result in reduced access to facilities to the community. The key concerns about a primary school move to within AHS/ the Sunart Centre are noted below.
Concern	The impact on community use of the Sunart Centre/AHS.
Concern	The impact on the income/revenue for the Sunart Centre.
Concern	Any impact on the current playgroup/mother-and-toddlers.
Concern	The Sunart Centre Management Committee must be kept fully informed throughout the process of consultation/decision-making.
Concern	All other Parent Councils in the area must be kept fully informed of the process.
Concern	That Strontian Primary School does not become 'Junior AHS', but retains its current identity.
Concern	That the Village Hall continues to be a village resource – used in the same way that it is at present (a consultation with user groups and the Hall Committee should take place).



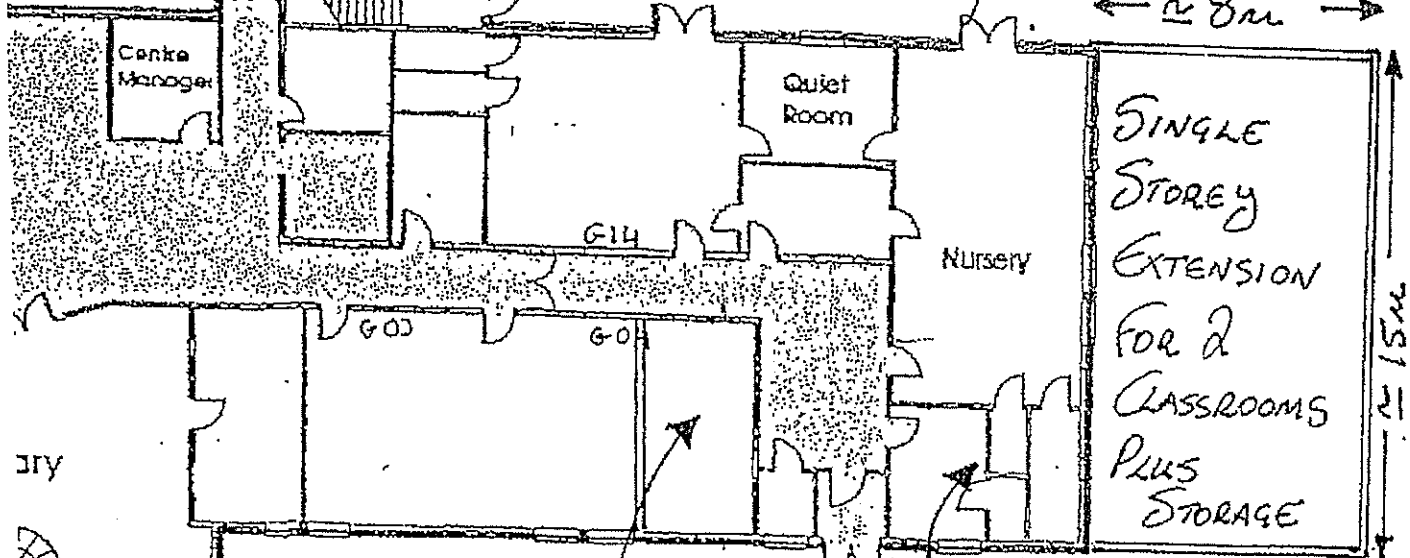
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Dwg/HET/9/13/001

POSSIBLE LOCATION FOR A
STRONTIAN PRIMARY SCHOOL
EXTENSION

(NOT TO SCALE)

← 8m →



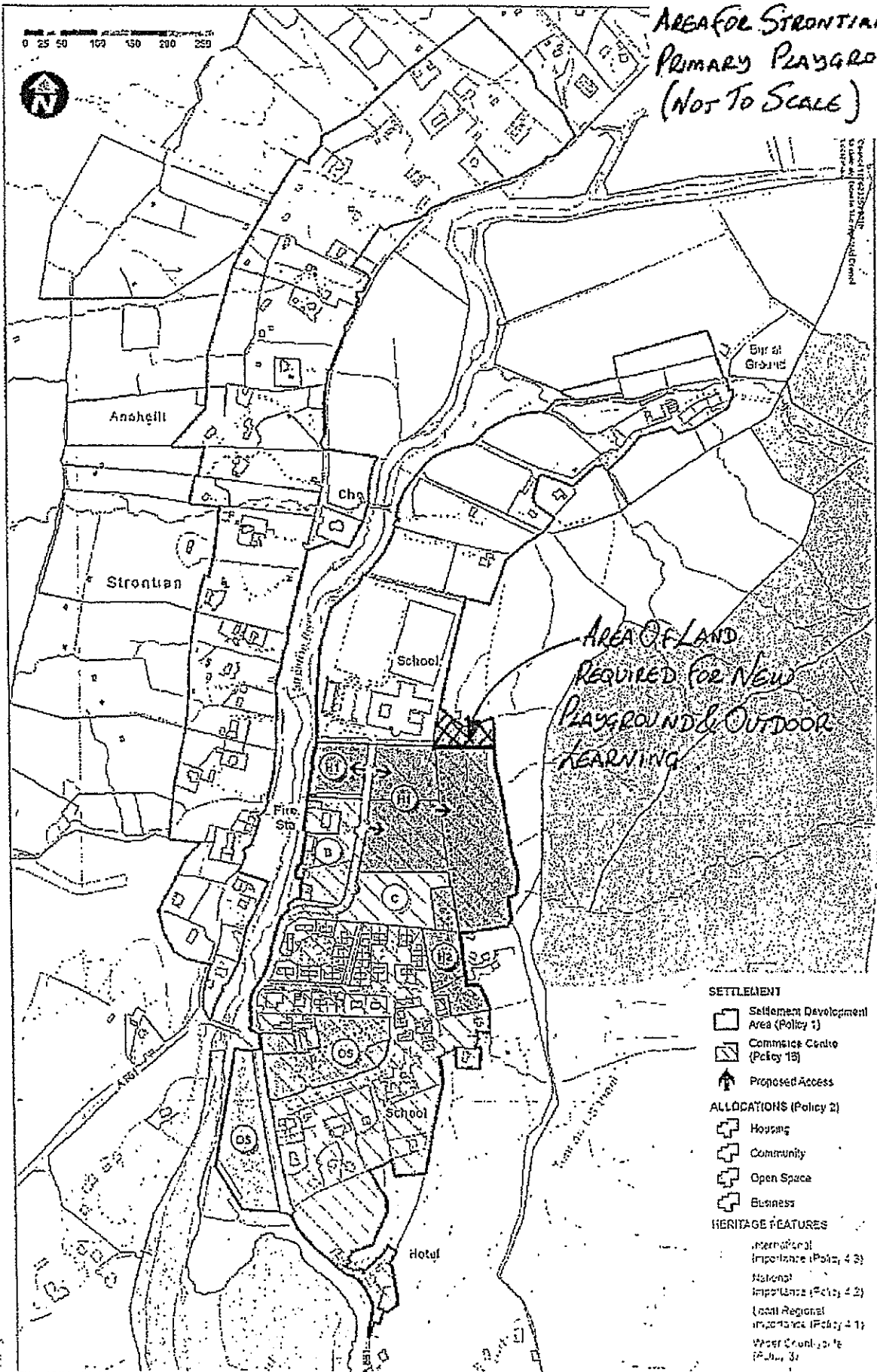
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STAFF ROOMS ?
OR TOILET BLOCK :

Nursery
Entrance

PRIMARY TOILET BLOCK OR
STAFF ROOMS ?

DWG/NET/9/13/002
POSSIBLE LAND PURCHASE
AREA FOR STRONTIAN
PRIMARY PLAYGROUND
(NOT TO SCALE)



AREA OF LAND
 REQUIRED FOR NEW
 PLAYGROUND & OUTDOOR
 LEARNING

- SETTLEMENT**
- Settlement Development Area (Policy 1)
 - Commercial Centre (Policy 13)
 - Proposed Access
- ALLOCATIONS (Policy 2)**
- Housing
 - Community
 - Open Space
 - Business
- HERITAGE FEATURES**
- International Importance (Policy 4.3)
 - National Importance (Policy 4.2)
 - Local/Regional Importance (Policy 4.1)
 - Water Course (Policy 3)

(As Continued in Force) (April 2012)

INSET 13: STRONTIAN
 Inset 13: Stron an t-Sithein

INSET 13: SYRONIAN

Inset 13 : Srón an t-Sithein

Position in Settlement Hierarchy	Area centre
2007 Estimated Population	246
Housing Completions 2000-2005	17
Primary School Capacity (nonphysical capacity)	57%
Water Capacity (allocations versus capacity)	spare capacity
Sewerage Capacity (allocations versus capacity)	limited spare capacity

Objectives

- To consolidate the core of the village by reaffirming the long term commitment to development at Drimnatorran.
- To acknowledge possible opportunities in future for improved community facilities notably primary school, health centre/surgery, business accommodation.
- To secure land for a swimming pool and additional cemetery provision.
- To promote redevelopment of "brownfield" sites notably the former hotel and encourage its redevelopment for business.
- To maintain the grain of the community, its overriding linear form and shape and the balance of development and in-bye croft land through Anabheill.
- To protect and enhance the character and architectural merit of the 1970's planned village, its layout and open spaces.
- To safeguard the village setting including rising land, the open and wooded seaboard, river margins and community woodland.
- To protect the Tree Preservation Order within the settlement.
- To ensure drainage to land.
- Access improvements will be necessary to allow limited development north of Ardnamurchan High School.

Site Allocations

Site Ref.	Site Area	Location	Indicative Capacity	Developer Requirements
H1	4.9 ha	Drimnatorran	40 units	Accommodation suitable for the elderly. Protect existing trees. High quality designs in keeping with the important woodland setting/built environment. Retain & integrate watercourses as natural features within the development. Home zone or equivalent. Any development on the site should include a connection to the public sewer where it is technically and economically feasible to make a connection.
H2	0.8 ha	Former caravan site	12 units	Accommodation suitable for the elderly. Protect existing trees. High quality designs in keeping with the important woodland setting/built environment. Retain & integrate watercourses as natural features within the development. Any development on the site should include a connection to the public sewer where it is technically and economically feasible to make a connection.
C	0.9 ha	Drimnatorran (south-east)	-	Any development on the site should include a connection to the public sewer where it is technically and economically feasible to make a connection.
B	0.8 ha	Drimnatorran (west)	-	Observe statutory distance for overhead lines. Any development on the site should include a connection to the public sewer where it is technically and economically feasible to make a connection.

Dear Mr. Jackson,

Members of Sunart Community Council attended an "informal" meeting in the Sunart Centre on 30th September 2013, at which the possible move of Strontian Primary School to the High School building was discussed.

As is quite clear to everyone the current Primary School building is not fit for purpose, the reasons for which are very clearly laid out in the letter which you received from the chair of the Parent Council. Council members were horrified to learn that confidential phone conversations have to take place in the toilets due to lack of office space, a computer is shared between the HT and clerical staff, one to one teacher/ pupil time takes place in the cloakroom---the list is endless.

SCC understands and accepts the financial constraints under which Highland Council is operating, but feels that a solution is urgently needed. Without flourishing primary schools there will be a reduction in numbers at the High School which must ultimately impact on its viability.

We acknowledge that the community rooms are important, but surely in a school which was built to accommodate 240 pupils and has fewer than half that number, there must be room for manoeuvre.

As was pointed out at the meeting the building is Ardnamurchan High School and the Sunart Centre, it just happens to be in Strontian. Fair enough, but Strontian children are being seriously disadvantaged by being overcrowded in a building which is not fit for purpose, and playing in an area which does not meet statutory requirements. SCC offers its support to the parents, pupils and staff of Strontian Primary School and hopes that with goodwill and compromise on all sides a satisfactory solution to this problem can be found in the very near future.

Yours sincerely,

Sec Sunart Community Council.

CADISPA REPORT

As part of a Community wide Development plan, in 2013 the Sunart Community Company engaged an organisation called CADISPA to carry out a community consultation. The executive summary was launched on the 26th April, and the full report will be ready imminently. A copy of the executive summary was presented to Norma Young at the meeting with parents on the 29th April 2014.

Over 49% of the population responded to a very lengthy survey which is a huge number, as typically a return of 20% is considered good. The key issues generated from the report were – transport – education – housing- jobs- health

Overwhelmingly 79% of all respondents identified an upgraded school building as the main source of improvement needed for the primary school.

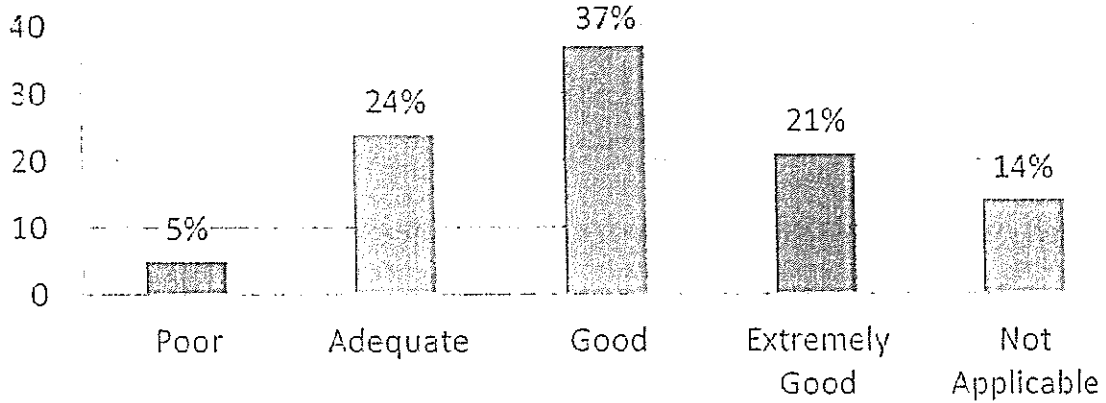
This is not just a primary school parents issue, but a whole community issue. When people move to an area they look at educational provision. We need to ensure that the solution for Strontian Primary school is one which is attractive and long term.

Attached is part of the report regarding our schools, which will become part of the main report, to be published in due course.

9th June 2014

School Education

f. What is your opinion about the provision of school education in Sunart?



The overall results from this question indicate that the vast majority of respondents feel positive about the provision of local school level education that is available in Sunart with only 5% highlighting classifying it as 'poor'. The highest proportion of people (37%) responded that school education locally was 'good' with a further 21% classifying it as 'very good'. Comments have been made, however, both throughout this questionnaire and within group discussions that wished to examine the local Nursery, Primary School and High School individually and the issues concerned with these separate educational entities have been examined in more detail in the following sections.

c. Education for children and young adults could be improved by:

When examining potential improvements Ardnamurchan High School, Strontian Primary School and the local Nursery (situated within the same building as the High School) respondents were asked to examine these facilities separately.

- **High School:** 58% of respondents felt that the main concern for the local high school lay in their lack of ability to attract and keep teachers for the longer term. A further 37% felt that the limited course choice available for pupils at Ardnamurchan High School was something that could be improved upon, a number of individuals recognised the difficulty associated with this (especially when linked to the previous issue of teacher retention) and suggested the possibility of further links with other local schools, colleges or even online courses to overcome some of these issues. 12% of respondents specifically mentioned the possibility of incentive schemes to attract local teachers to live and work in the area with the lack of affordable housing options identified as one of the main barriers facing the High School.
- **Primary School:** The teaching at the Primary School was largely praised as excellent with the majority of the suggested improvements revving around the school building itself. Overwhelmingly, 79% identified an upgraded school building as the

20.	Move into High School
21.	Better facilities for the children. Play area.
22.	A new building. The one they have is very old, falling apart and with new 'baby boom' younger pupils, not really fit for purpose any more.
23.	new premises
24.	New Premises
25.	New primary school
26.	Provision of an adequate school building. School building which reflects the local, highland setting of the school. More gaelic. Links with community 'elders'.
27.	A bigger school with a proper playground
28.	Improved/new school premises, additional staff.
29.	I feel there is no improvement needed regarding education. Fantastic school and nursery.
30.	Very good

Statement from Strontian Primary Parent Council regarding the statutory consultation of future education provision for Strontian.

The Strontian Primary School parents are pleased that the statutory consultation is moving forward as this process has been going on since 2012, and the existing primary school facilities have been labelled as poor and not fit for purpose for many years.

However the parents have major concerns that that Highland Council (HC) are basing their consultation on an option that is **not supported by the majority of the parent body**, and that the whole consultation document is tremendously biased towards an option which is not in the best interests of this school, its partner schools or the community as a whole.

The message given to the Primary School parents at the meeting of the 29th April, was that this would be a statutory consultation about **all the options** available, not just the Highland Councils' preferred one, especially when the parent's preferred option at the meeting was option 3. (No drawings or details were available at the meeting, and HC were unable to back up any figures quoted). The parents are concerned that the summary does not even acknowledge that other options are available.

Specific Concerns

- The document states that at the initial meeting parents supported a move to AHS, but this support was for a temporary measure not a permanent move. This isn't clear from the presentation or the appendices.
- Item 3.0 – The options considered. The options highlighted in 3.2 are not the same as those detailed in the proposal Appendix 1 of the report. This calls into question the accuracy of comparisons made between the options - exactly which option are they comparing with which?
- Appendix 1 - Notes from 16 January meeting, A2 "There is also a grassed quadrangle outside at the rear of AHS, that could be developed as a playground for the primary age pupils" This is an area of boggy ground shaded by high buildings and a hill on three sides, and therefore completely unsuitable as a play area for primary school children and is therefore NOT an option. The parents have raised the unsuitability of this area as a playground a number of times at meetings with HC.
- Appendix 2 – The plans for option 1 have been radically changed, and have been unseen until this document was published.
- Appendix 3, - The drawing for option 2 shows, given the two lengths of access ramp shown to get up the building that not much excavation is expected, so this building is likely to sit up much higher than the level of the nursery. Is this split level what is wanted for the next 25 years of Strontian Primary School?
- Appendix 4 – Why has the Highland Council located option 3 out near the fire station, on the opposite side of the road when there is development land adjacent to the existing Strontian Nursery, about 5 metres away from the Option 2 proposal? To the best of our knowledge HC have not discussed this with landowners (the Housing Trust themselves are only meeting landowners this week) so to choose the 'wrong' side of the road when either side is presumably potentially available skews the comparison. HC have also added a separate car park which would be unnecessary if Option 3 was sited in the correct field and accessed in the same way as the nursery. This goes some way to explain the HC's inflated costs for this option.
- The building shown for option 3 (appendix 4) would easily fit on the land opposite the existing childcare centre entrance. We'd have the best of both and none of the disadvantages - ie requirement for supervised access for catering and other AHS facilities, disruption to existing nursery and playgroup facilities.

- Appendix 5 - Options 2 & 3 are practically very similar yet the comparison table suggests that for some aspects one option provides no significant benefit and yet the HC preferred option provides significant benefit (ie opposite extremes). They would clearly have very similar benefit status. Teachers and pupils only have to enter the AHS building to access other staff and future fellow pupils, and we should remember that the part of the building HC are proposing to doctor is NOT part of AHS either. It makes it look though option 2 is very much better, when the actual difference between the options is negligible or in fact nil.
- Plans for both Option 2 & 3 would appear to have been drawn by someone who has not visited the site and has thus made completely impractical choices.
- There is general agreement amongst the Parent Body, that the facilities shown for option 2 (appendix 3) would be inferior to option 1. It would still present operational difficulties and appear to be a temporary measure. The village would find itself going through this again in 10 to 15 years time.
- Any job losses for local people are also a concern with a move to AHS.

The parents have been assured in meetings with the Highland Council that the consultation will be fair and that Education Scotland will form a view on the educational merits of the proposals. We trust that these concerns are listened to, and that any suggested community solutions are considered as part of the consultation. The parents expect that the Highland Council will be prepared to make alterations to the current options should cost effective solutions materialise as part of this process.

The parents feel that an Option 4, in the correct field, would be the most cost effective, and educationally beneficial solution for the next 25 years of Strontian Primary School. In addition, this option is the one that we have been discussing with Norma Young and Ron MacKenzie. The option 3 you see on the table is again unseen by the parent body/community and has not been discussed.

Chair, Strontian Primary Parent Council
20th May 2014.

Attachments

1. Appendix 5 Revised showing benefits of 'Option 4' DWG/App5/Rev1
2. Local Development plan 'DWG/HT/building locations', showing HC location for 'Option 3', and the parents preferred location for 'Option 4'

APPENDIX D REVIDED SHOWING BENEFITS OF OPTION 4

Options	Safe Transport and Traffic Management					Safe Transition		Summary
	Pro Appropriate Peer Group	Wider Activities	Travel Time	Safe Transport and Traffic Management	Safe Professional Community	No Significant Benefit	Some Benefit	
Option 1 - New School on east side of road, next to Nursery (preferred option by VAST majority of parents)	Would the option enhance the prospect of pupils being in an appropriate peer group?	Would this option improve access to Music, Sports, Drama, and Art?	Would an option reduce travel time?	Would an option create safe transport and traffic arrangements?	Would this option allow staff to become members of a professional community comprising at least 3 persons located within the same facility?	No Significant Benefit	Some Benefit	Would generate a better learning environment in terms of accessibility and professional working conditions. Pupils would be able to interact with staff in classrooms.
Option 2 - New School on east side of road, next to Nursery	No Significant Benefit	Moderate Benefit	No Significant Benefit	No Significant Benefit	No Significant Benefit	No Significant Benefit	Some Benefit	Would generate a better learning environment in terms of accessibility and professional working conditions. Pupils would be able to interact with staff in classrooms.
Option 3 - New School on east side of road, next to Nursery	No Significant Benefit	Moderate Benefit	No Significant Benefit	No Significant Benefit	No Significant Benefit	No Significant Benefit	Some Benefit	Would generate a better learning environment in terms of accessibility and professional working conditions. Pupils would be able to interact with staff in classrooms.
Option 4 - New School on east side of road, next to Nursery	No Significant Benefit	Moderate Benefit	No Significant Benefit	No Significant Benefit	No Significant Benefit	No Significant Benefit	Some Benefit	Would generate a better learning environment in terms of accessibility and professional working conditions. Pupils would be able to interact with staff in classrooms.

Would generate improved arrangements in terms of transition & prof. learning course. Classes located together. No issues crossing to AHS building.

Significant benefit (next to nursery, same as Option 2)

Moderate Benefit (no road to cross)

No Significant benefit

Moderate benefit

No Significant benefit

No Significant benefit

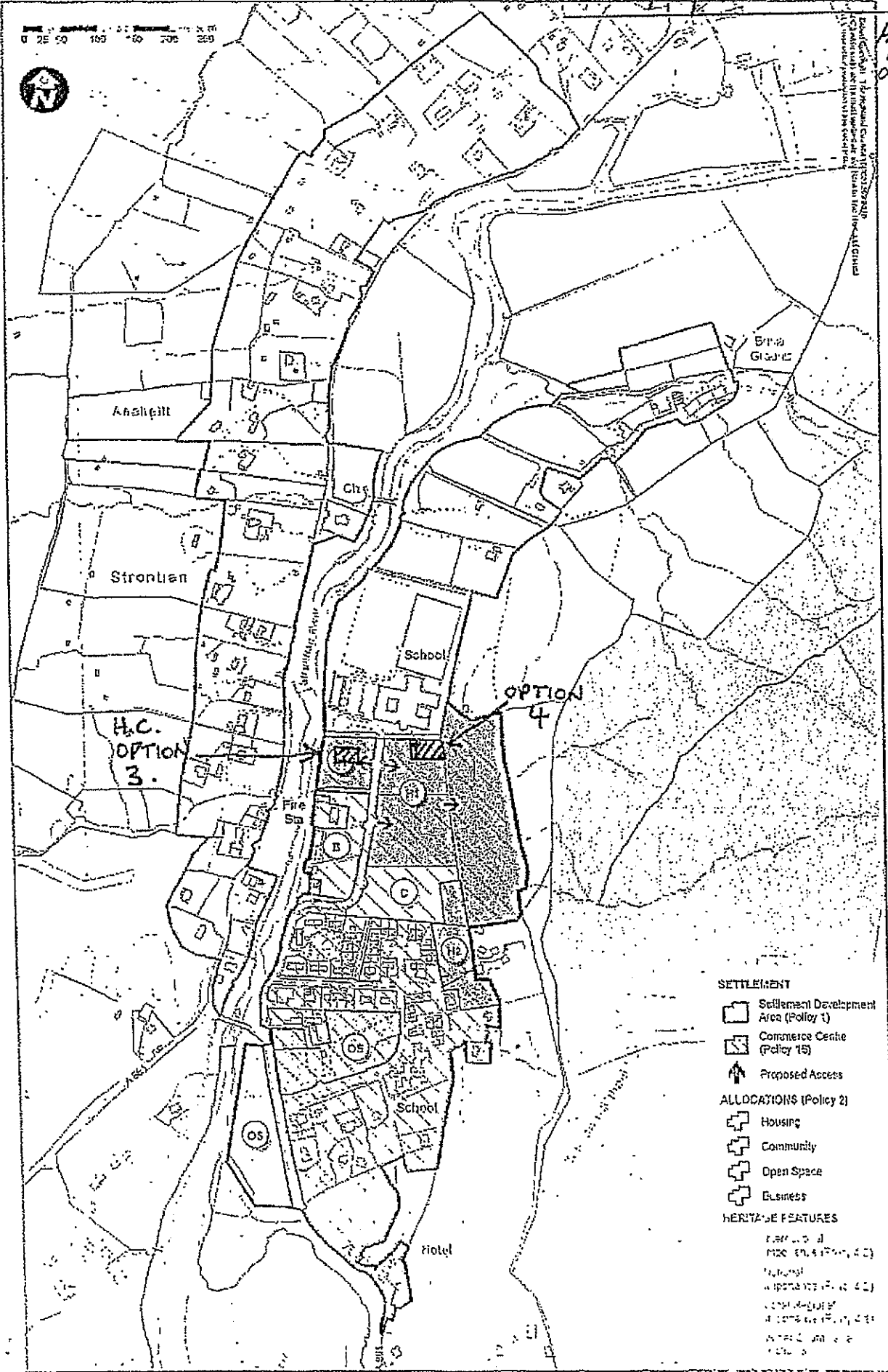
Moderate Improvement

Option 4 - New School on east side of road, next to Nursery (preferred option by VAST majority of parents) or same modular classrooms as Option 2 so should be the same.

Thurs/Agos for

LOCAL DEVELOPMENT PLAN DWG 1/MT/BUILDING LOCATIONS

MAY 2014



As continued in Force (April 2012)

As Continued in Force (April 2012)

Inset 13 : Stron an t-Silbheinn

Strontian Primary School - Letter to all Parents

Dear Parents,

Options for Improved Facilities for Strontian Primary School

I am sorry I was unable to attend the Parent Council Meeting on 2nd June. Please find enclosed the comments I was going to share with you at that meeting, about Highland Council's proposals to upgrade the accommodation of our school. Now that detailed drawings have been issued, you have no doubt been considering the various options. This is a summary of how the existing building is used and I hope it will help you critically assess all the alternatives put before you by Highland Council.

Facility	How it is used at present	Advantages / disadvantages
P4 – P7 Classroom	Lessons for 23 pupils; all resources for core curriculum stored in room, plus large library of fiction and non-fiction books that children use constantly. 4 laptop computers, projector.	Advantages: All core curriculum resources in class; light and airy. Disadvantages: Lack of separate storage (e.g. stock cupboard). Quite a cramped space for 23 pupils and all resources. Heating can be erratic – hot in summer, sometimes cold in winter. Need to draw curtains when sun is too strong. Display boards awkward to reach.
P1 – P3 Classroom	Lessons for 14 pupils; most resources for core curriculum stored in room, plus small library of fiction and non-fiction books; role play area, reading tent, sand tray, art area, carpet area. Interactive whiteboard and one computer. School bags kept in classroom.	Advantages: Nearly all core curriculum resources in class. Large classroom with plenty of space for various activities. Direct access to playground for outdoor learning. Disadvantages: Nursery is in separate location. Transition to P1 difficult. Split does not fit Cf E Early/ 1 st levels.
Corridor & Toilets	All children's coats, shoes, PE kits and P4 - & school bags stored here. Photocopier, broadband pathfinder cabinet, cupboard for jotters etc; table and 4 chairs – used by clericals when HT is in office or by HT when clericals are in office, teachers do planning and preparation there during their CCR time, also used as learning support area where children / groups work with Mrs Lawson or Carol, sometimes used as overflow for P4 – P7 class. Toilets: Girls have 3 cubicles + 3 hand wash basins; Boys have 2 cubicles, 2 urinals and three hand wash basins; Staff toilet is one cubicle with hand wash basin.	This is a small area used for many different purposes! What we need: a separate office for the Head teacher, a separate staffroom for the teachers, a separate area adjacent to the classrooms that can be used for learning support and a separate cloakroom. Adequate toilet facilities for up to 50 pupils – at least equal to what we have now.
Hall & Stage Serving hatch. Disabled toilet. Chair Store. Cupboards.	The hall is used up to 21 hours a week during the school day: PE lessons, assemblies, class music lessons, Fets tutor music lessons, Kodaly singing lessons, chanter, piano and violin. In addition we use the hall for active learning e.g. maths, science, drama. The stage is used as an extra teaching area for groups and for learning support. We put on end of term concerts and Christmas Shows here and use the hall for regular rehearsals for these and for the Mod and Music festival. It's a large hall, with a sprung wooden floor and excellent acoustics and grand piano. Topic resources, musical instruments, science and technology resources, art resources are all stored here. The cubby hole next to the stairs to the stage contains PE equipment, large items are kept in the hall. The stage doubles as our dining room. The hall is also used extensively by the Community.	If these facilities do not appear in the plans, what does Highland Council propose for the future of our present office staff, the management of the school and the provision of learning support? Advantages: We can choose how and when to use the hall, working round the timetabled music sessions (Monday am, Wednesday pm, Thursday all day). This flexibility allows us to provide many varied experiences for the pupils across the curriculum, including working with the whole school and activities provided by other organisations (Blas Festival workshops; Caledonian Thistle Youth Team; Youth Leader training etc.) Access is restricted when the hall / stage is being used for music lessons. However, pupils can come and go to these lessons quickly and independently. The hall is close to the classrooms and part of the school, so children can use the facility with some independence when it is appropriate. Disadvantages: The stage is a cramped and not a suitable dining area. The serving hatch is too small and a difficult space to serve meals from. The hall is shared with the community and hired out for ceilidhs.

<p>dances. Before these events staff at school (and their husbands/relatives!) have to move large equipment into the school on a Friday night and then put it back on Sunday. They do this in their own time. Carol has to clear out her cleaning cupboard in the hall for those running the bar.</p> <p>The heating system is expensive and inefficient – it's either too hot or too cold. The extractor fans in the hall sound like jet aeroplanes, so are permanently switched off. The hot water pipes run under the stage and hall floor to the cleaner's cupboard and are part of the same system as Dailmhor. The hot water is constantly circulated, so residual heat from the pipes make the stage and hall very warm in summer.</p> <p>The disabled toilet is very well equipped and has been essential. However, it opens directly into the hall and is quite a distance from the classrooms.</p> <p>What we need: access to a large hall for all the purposes listed above; a separate dining area and better kitchen / serving facilities; a room for music instructors that pupils can go to easily and independently; a separate area for learning support; storage for PE equipment (large and small); two separate cupboards, one for the cleaner and one for the community; a janitor who is paid to move furniture and set up venues; more sustainable and eco-friendly heating systems.</p>		<p>Disadvantages: There is no separate staffroom. Staff take their breaks and eat lunch etc in the classrooms. Head teacher or clericals are 'hot desking' in office, and someone often has to go into corridor or work in the corner of a classroom. Office is small and cramped. <u>What we need:</u> Office accommodation for both clerical and head teacher within the school. Clerical is first point of contact for the school. Staffroom for teachers and support staff, if these are not provided in the plans, what are Highland Council's intentions for the future management and clerical provision at Strontian Primary School?</p> <p>Advantages: Playgrounds are adjacent to the school. Opportunities for outdoor learning at Community Garden, Wood School and woodland are close by.</p> <p>Disadvantages: Playgrounds are too small. The P1 – P3 playground is mostly grass and not suitable during wet weather. There are no outdoor, all weather PE facilities. Dog dirt is a hazard on the green.</p>
<p>School Office</p>	<p>Small office shared by two clericals and Head teacher. One office computer and Head teacher now has a separate laptop, (that isn't set up for emails yet!)</p>	<p>Playgrounds are used for playtimes and sometimes for lessons. We go to the Community Garden regularly; last year we used the Wood School every week through the Summer; we go to the play park or use the green for outdoor activities and PE.</p>
<p>Playgrounds and out door areas e.g. Community garden. Wood School / Community Woodland. Play park / green</p>		<p>Playgrounds are used for playtimes and sometimes for lessons. We go to the Community Garden regularly; last year we used the Wood School every week through the Summer; we go to the play park or use the green for outdoor activities and PE.</p>

If you have any questions you would like to ask me before the Public Meeting on Monday 9th June, I will be available after school at 4pm on Monday.

Kind regards,
M. Ogilvie
Head teacher

Strontian Primary School – Existing Playground Provision, June 2014

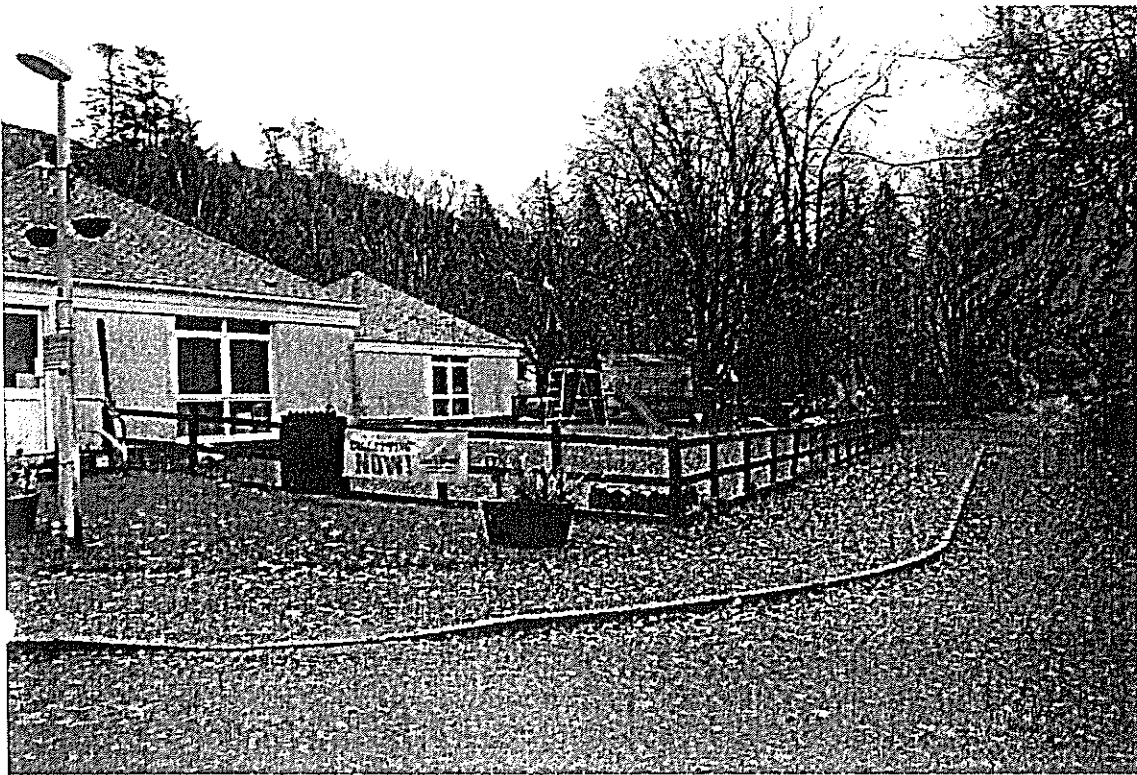


Photo 1. P1 to P3 playground viewed from the main road



Photo 2. P1 to P3 playground hard paved area.

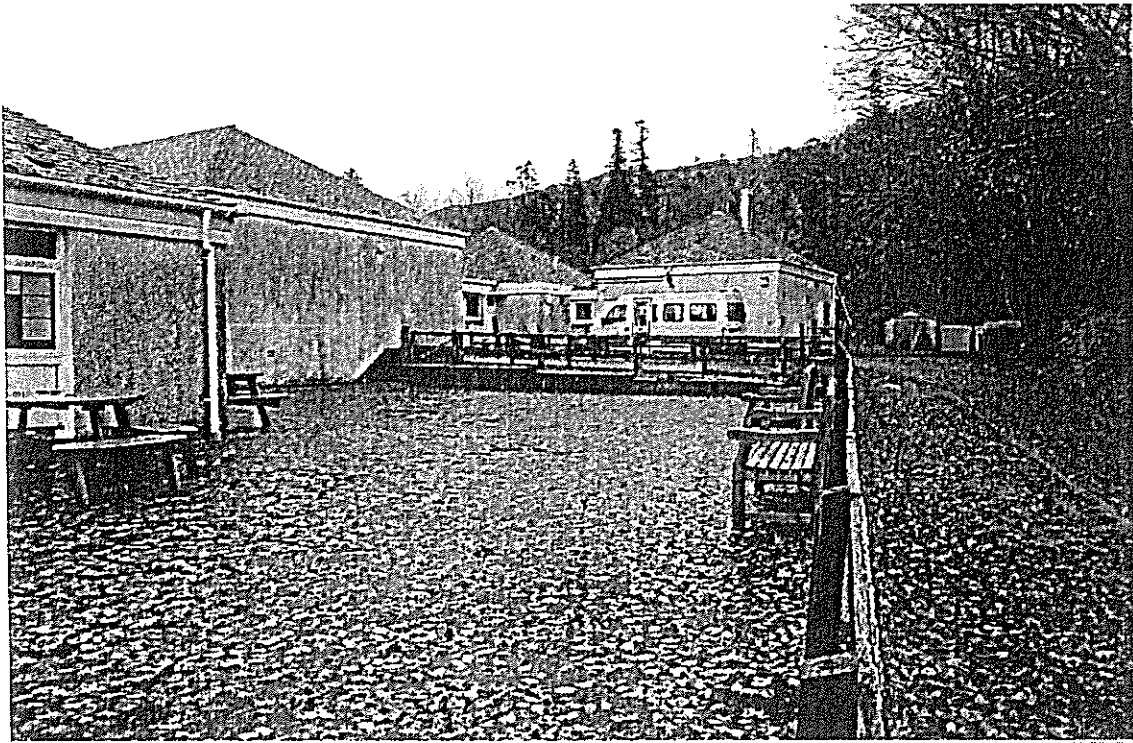


Photo 3. P4 to P4 playground from lower end. The retaining wall and fence which cuts the playground in half is visible. The access road to Dail Mhor house is also shown.

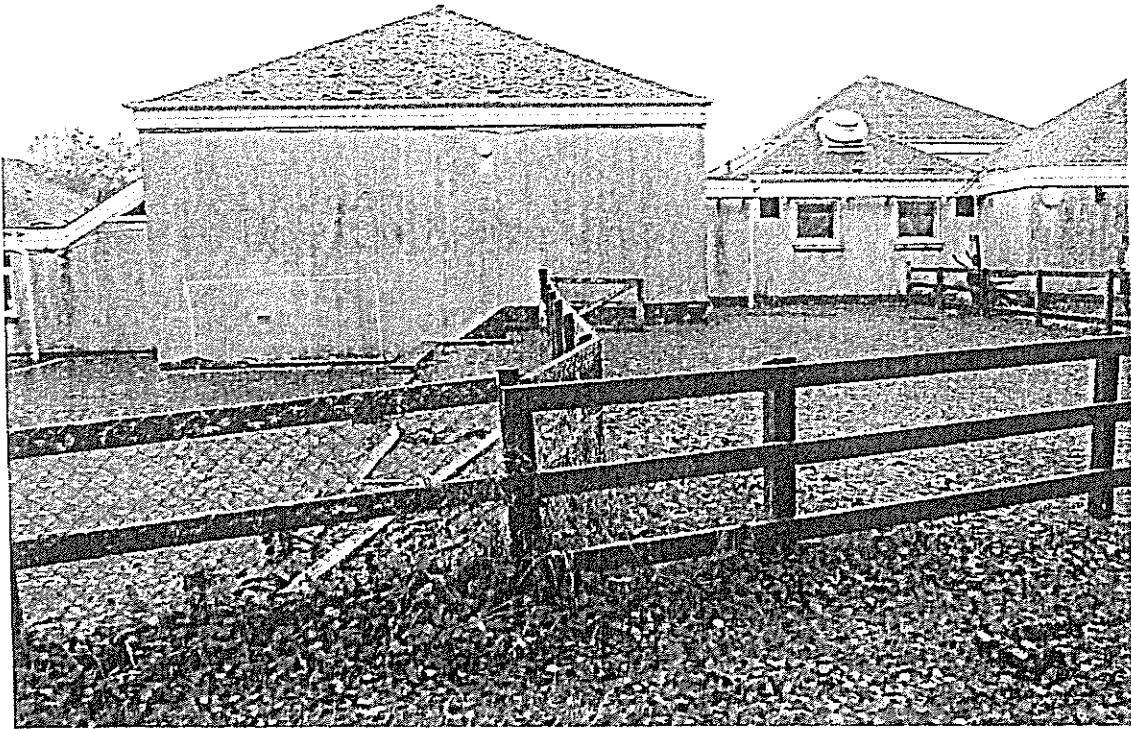
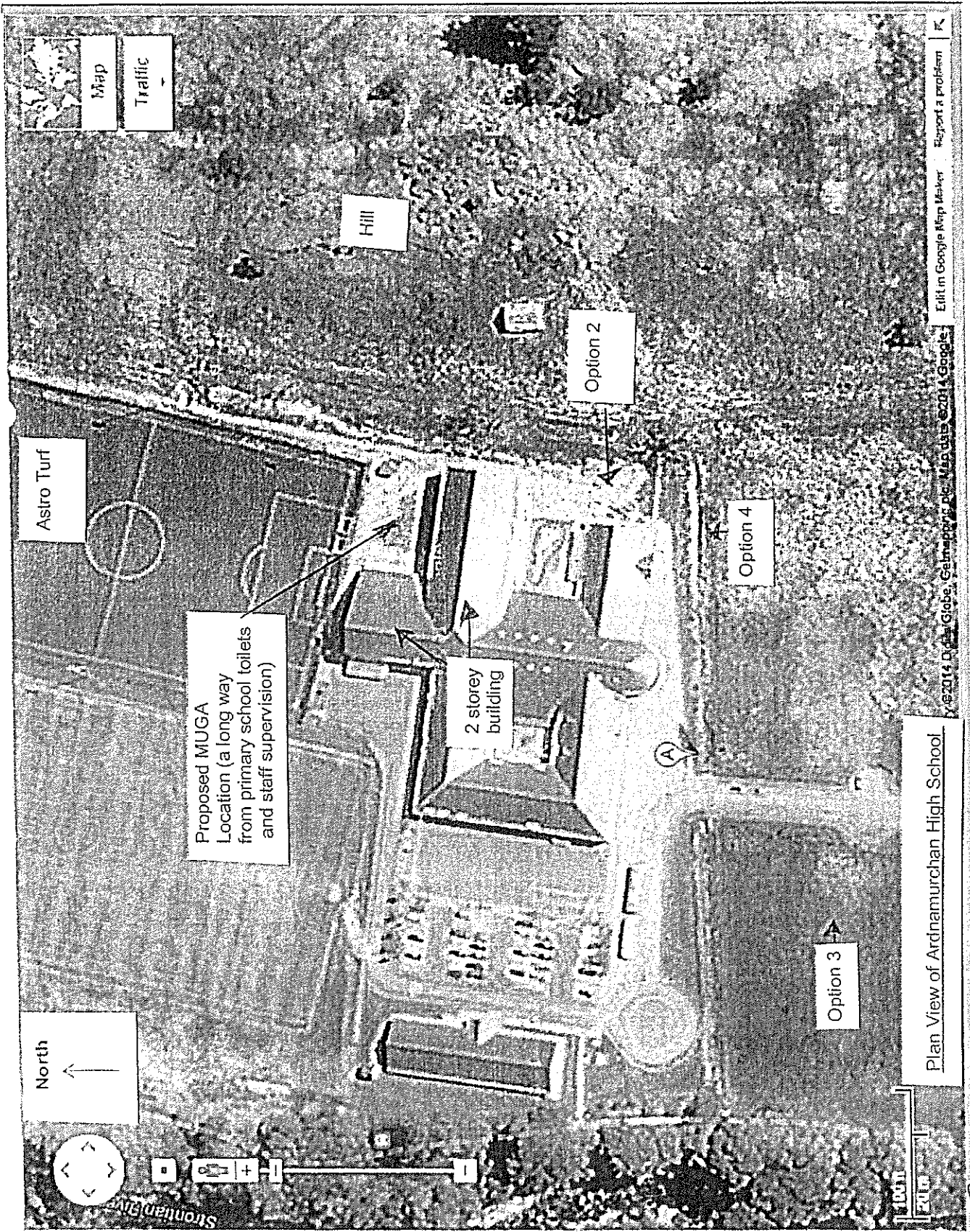


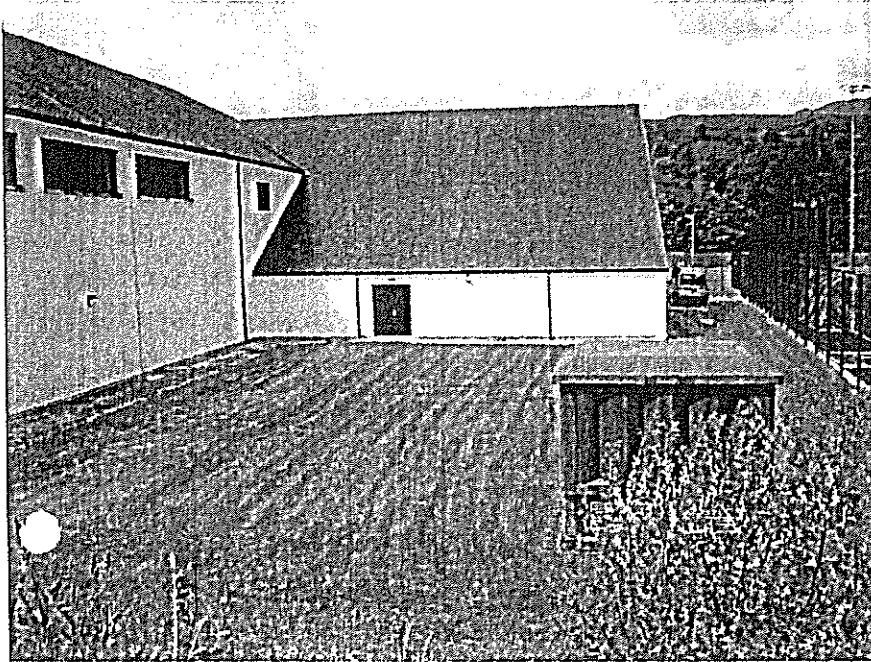
Photo 4. P4 to P7 playground. Photo shows the 'dead area' between the upper and lower areas of the playground, plus the upper area. The upper playground is slippery and not often used.



Plan View of Ardnamurchan High School

Robert 9/6/14

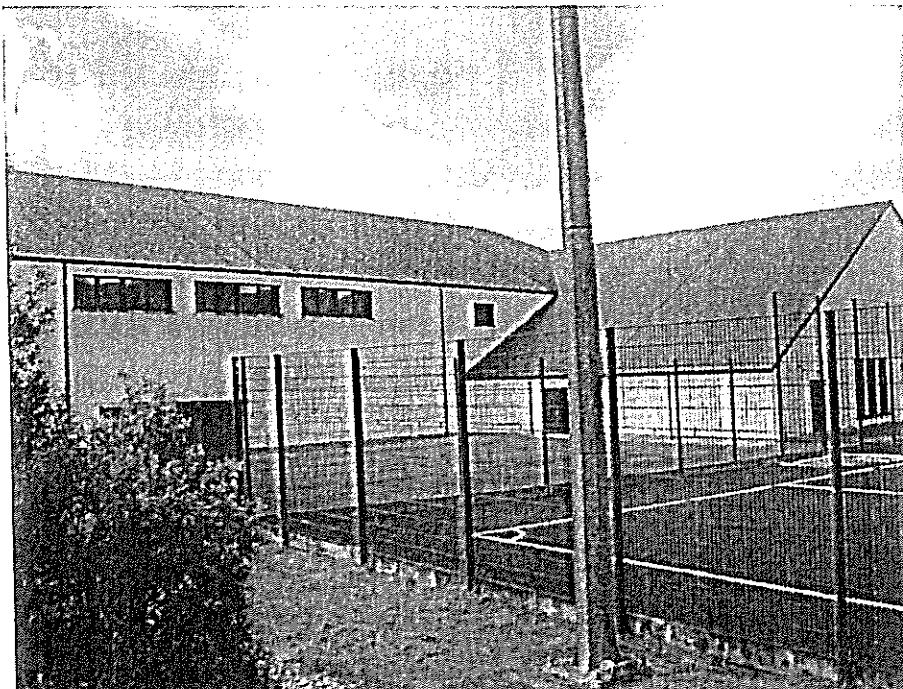
Option 2 Location Photographs—June 2014



Proposed location for Primary School 'MUGA'

This location is surrounded by 2 storey buildings on its south and west side, a hill on its east side, and astro turf fencing at the north.

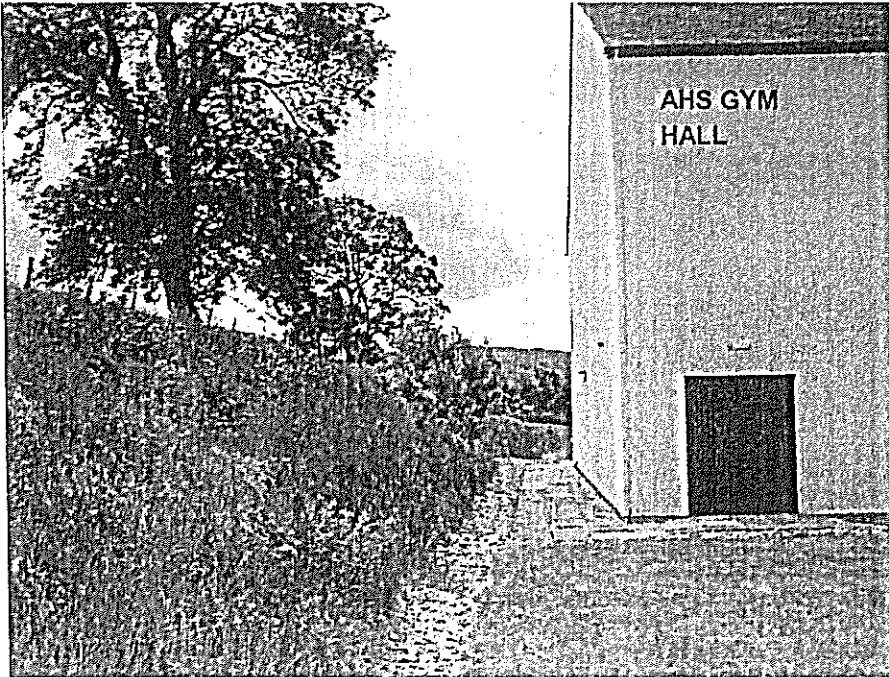
This photograph was taken at midday on the 9th June—and still part of the area is in shadow.



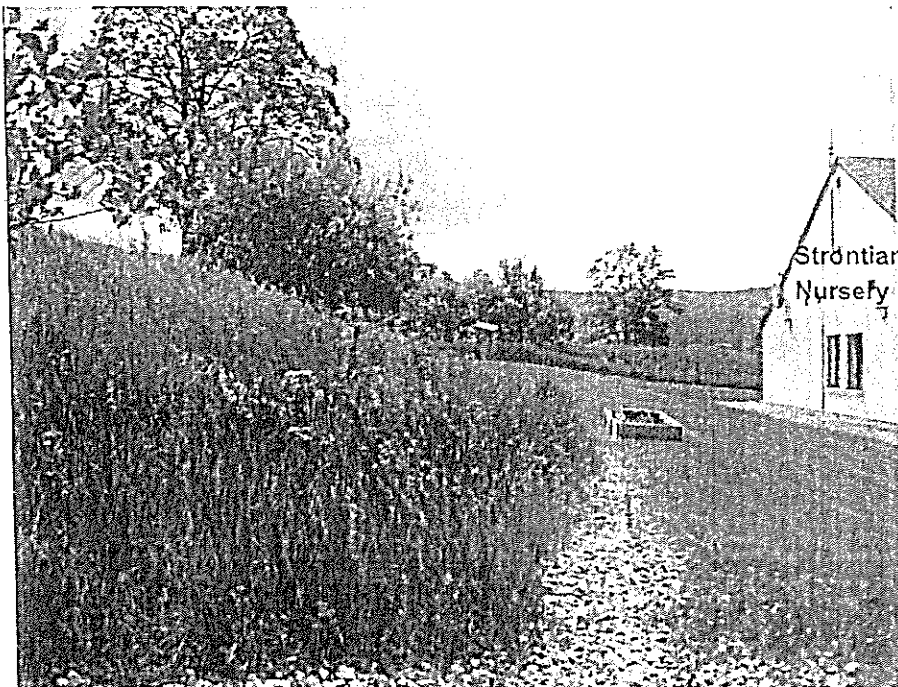
Proposed location for Primary School MUGA, as viewed from the North East.

Astro turf fencing adds further shading from the north.

Option 2 Location Photographs—June 2014,
continued.



Photograph from the proposed option 2 MUGA site looking south, - showing area of playground identified as a primary school playground (to the east of the existing AHS gym hall.



Photograph looking south towards the existing Strontian Nursery, showing the proposed location for the Option 2 demountable. The site gradient begins to flatten out here.

From: Ron MacKenzie
Sent: 13 June 2014 07:17
To: Ian Jackson
Subject: FW: Strontian PS - Option ... X??

Good morning Ian

Could Bren's email please be included in the formal responses received re the Strontian PS statutory consultation

Thanks

From: Bren Gormley - Member
Sent: 11 June 2014 13:08
To: Ron MacKenzie
Subject: RE: Strontian PS - Option ... X??

Ron

Thanks for response

Happy for email to be included in responses – may add further thoughts later

Bren

Councillor Bren Gormley - SNP
Fort William & Ardnamurchan

From: Ron MacKenzie
Sent: 10 June 2014 19:54
To: Bren Gormley - Member
Subject: RE: Strontian PS - Option ... X??

Thanks Bren

I was impressed by the quality of the debate last night and the conduct of the audience. They were both challenging and respectful in equal measures.

I too am attracted to an idea that creates an integrated 3 to 18 campus as it satisfies the main objective of improving outcomes for our young people

I will explore options of how this could be achieved on an incremental basis

Re demographic trends, it is this uncertainty which is my biggest concern when determining appropriate proportionate provision on a sustainable basis. This therefore reinforces the attraction of the incremental approach referred to above.

Are you wanting the email below to be included within the formal consultation responses?

Regards

Ron

From: Bren Gormley - Member
Sent: 10 June 2014 15:27
To: Ron MacKenzie
Subject: Strontian PS - Option ... X??

Ron

Thanks for your positive contributions to last night's gathering in Strontian, overall the session went much better than we might have feared giving some optimism for a good outcome

We still face a considerable challenge to find the "right" outcome in all senses within the timeframes to which we are tied

I was particularly taken by the idea from Chris Millar-Craig which picked up on the future status of the High School building

The 12 years since the opening of AHS have gone in the blink of an eye, as did the decade or two of its' gestation – the next decade and a bit to its' "de-ppp-ing" should disappear equally so

The idea of a longer term concept, visualising a 3-18 Community Campus achieved in discrete stages, based on short, medium and long terms visions, is greatly attractive

It may be that in the immediate phase costs may present a challenge, but I truly believe that in the longer term this is where the smart money lies

Will you be able to get some initial thoughts from Property Services on this – rapidly if it can be best considered

Regarding the questions that arose concerning future pupil numbers – discussions within the community over recent years have noted strongly the destabilising nature of the current housing market on the community. House prices, particularly around the central part of the peninsular, being unduly influenced by the retirement and holiday homes market making life well nigh impossible for the young families on which the future cohesion of the community is dependant

Work towards various initiatives is underway, focussed on both affordable and mid-market developments, which in time will impact on future school rolls. I would hope that by the time of the de-ppp – ing of AHS this trend may be making itself evident

Again many thanks – I am of course happy to meet whenever it is of assistance

Bren

Councillor Bren Gormley - SNP
Fort William & Ardnamurchan

From:
Sent: 25 June 2014 13:45
To: Ian Jackson
Cc: Christopher Millar-Craig; Eoghan Carmichael;
Subject: Strontian Primary School - relocation -ASMC response

Ian- the ASMC response to the HC consultation.

Eoghan- can you please circulate to the ASMC. Thanks.

Dear Sir,

Proposed relocation of Strontian Primary School

The development of AHS and the Sunart Centre have helped create a unique "Ardnamurchan" identity throughout the scattered communities that gives our young people a real sense of pride and belonging which is unusual in such a remote and sparsely populated area.

The Aim of the ASMC is to help continue that development of identity, and, maximise the use of the facility for all, here in Strontian. Clearly, all communities on the peninsula have ownership of this unique development and the ASG primaries are all key players.

To this end, the ASMC, as inheritors of the old Action Group remit, would resist any proposed threat to the community resources within the AHS/AS building, for which the Action Group had fought and raised additional funding.

However, that said, the ASMC is fully supportive of the aspirations of the Strontian Primary community for improved facilities for their children and would support sensitive and well-designed development of the campus for a sustainable future for all. (Should this be the preferred option resulting from consultation)

Clearly, the SMC would also be supportive of accommodating a temporary relocation, should primary parents opt for upgrading the existing primary facilities on the existing site.

This is an extract from the approved Àrainn Shuaineirt (Sunart Centre) Management Committee (ASMC) minute of 20 January 2014

8. Strontian Primary School – relocation

- a) CMC has no further direct information, but thought it unlikely that full financial impact reports would have been completed or reports submitted to the Council Committee. Given, the remaining timescales, it therefore seems unlikely that Strontian Primary would be relocated in AHS/AS building this year (August 2014). However, any definitive answer on this matter would need to come from the Area Manager, or Ron Mackenzie.
- b) **CMC felt that since the initial proposal was made there may be a better understanding within the Council of the issues surrounding community spaces in the building.**
- c) **MF reported on a conversation he had recently with Norma Young (Area Education Manager), in which he had emphasised the fact that the local community had raised an extra £1.5 million for additional community facilities within AHS, having battled with both HIE and European Funders to ensure AHS became more than just a school but a true and effective community resource. He had also stated the view that AHS was always to be**

seen as a flagship enterprise to which others should aspire, and that any additional resources here should not be taken away to reduce what we have to the lowest common denominator.

- d) General discussion at the meeting came to the following conclusions:
- i. AHS and the Sunart Centre have created a unique “Ardnamurchan” identity throughout the scattered communities that gives our young people a sense of pride and belonging that is unusual in such a remote and sparsely populated area.
 - ii. The ASMC as inheritors of the old Action Group remit would resist any proposed threat to the community resources within the AHS/AS building, for which the Action Group had fought and raised additional funding.
 - iii. The ASMC must be consulted over any proposed changes within the AHS building that may impact on community access to and benefit from the facilities currently available. MF and RMI are to be the first points of contact.

At our ASMC meeting on the 23rd June 2014, we again discussed the issue and agreed the following:

1. The community rooms and learning centre must be retained for community use.
2. The wider communities of Ardgour, Morvern, Acharacle and West Ardnamurchan must be consulted and involved, as well as Strontian, if there is to be any impact on the ethos of the community school.
3. If the Council decides to carry out a major refurbishment of the existing primary school we are happy to manage a temporary decant of the pupils into the community rooms and space whilst this work is carried out. This would require a full discussion with the ASMC.
4. If the Council decides on a new build adjacent to AHS and to utilise the child care areas permanently it is vital that we have continuing access to the mother and toddler room, kitchen and nursery out with primary school hours. These areas were included and funded within the design to allow child care facilities to be available during social and community events.

Thanks

Yours sincerely,

Chair, Àrainn Shuaineirt Management Committee

Governing the Sunart Centre for the communities of Sunart, Ardgour, Morvern, Moidart and Ardnamurchan

Box Office: 01397 709228 Web: www.sunartcentre.org

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From:
Sent: 03 July 2014 14:09
To: ECS Lochaber Admin
Cc: Norma Young; Mindy Ogilvie; Ian Jackson; Iain Robertson - Housing & Property
Subject: Strontian Primary School

Some observations regarding Strontian Primary School proposals

That the current premises are not suitable for the current pupil roll is without question.

I understand that the following options are currently being costed:

1. Refurbish the current premises to triple A standard and acquire land to extend the play area. A servery and store would be in the hall/gymnasium and a new staff office and disabled toilet will be added to the front of the school.
2. Acquire land adjacent to the Ardnamurchan High School/Sunart Centre and use modular construction to build a suitable school and share some facilities with AHS avoiding the complications of the PPP conditions. The building would last until 2027 when the AHS will belong to Highland Council.
3. Acquire land adjacent to the Ardnamurchan High School/Sunart Centre and use traditional construction to build a suitable school and share some facilities with AHS avoiding the complications of the PPP conditions. The building would last indefinitely and this is considered to be a permanent solution.

All three options would provide a suitable venue to provide the quality education we desire. With the current Head Teacher and staff, I think that the highest educational standards would be achieved but some cover for staff lunch breaks etc would be desirable. I am aware of the pupil roll - staff ratio problem with this.

Option 1 would need negotiations with the Sunart Centre for temporary accommodation during construction. I believe that the disruption caused by the move could be a significant factor educationally.

I have to declare an interest in this option because my wife and I own adjacent land which could be used to extend the existing play area. To avoid uncertainty we would sell the land at valuation should this option be chosen.

Options 2 and 3 would provide purpose built facilities. The costings for option 2 should include an allowance for the post 2027 situation when it will be possible to join AHS/SC. The modular constructed building would be nearing the end of its life by that time.

A “new build” would allow for bio-mass electricity generation. I understand that the current premises are very expensive to heat.

Between now and completion the current inadequate premises would have to be used unless similar negotiations to those of option 1 with the Sunart Centre take place. The building time for option 2 would be less than for option 3.

Prior to 2027 there can be no construction within the “red line” but if the building is sited such that the distance between entrances is as short as possible then this should not be a major problem.

If there is no significant difference in costing between the options 2 and 3 then I think that the preferred option should be either option 1 or option 3.

Whether a new build and sharing facilities at the High School is preferable educationally to independence at the current location is outside my competence.

Chair Sunart Community Council

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From:
Sent: 03 July 2014 13:40
To: Ian Jackson
Subject: Proposal to Relocate Strontian Primary School

Dear Mr Jackson,

With regards the proposal consultation to relocate Strontian Primary School, I wish to comment that I believe the children of Strontian and the surrounding catchment area have the right to a new, modern facility. I believe that updating the existing facility (Option 1) would be costly, but would not give the same benefits/opportunities that Options 2 or 3 would give. I base my opinion on my experience of being a parent of two children, one of whom attended the old Acharacle Primary School from nursery until P6 (presently going in to S4) and the other who attended from nursery to P2 (presently going in to P7). After this time they both have had the opportunity to enjoy the fantastic environment and facilities that the new school provides.

Yours sincerely,

From:
Sent: 11 July 2014 11:29
To: Ian Jackson
Subject: Proposal to relocate Strontian Primary School into the Ardnamurchan High School Building

Dear Mr Jackson

We write in respect of the above consultation and welcome the opportunity to comment on the proposals.

At the meeting of 30 June it was decided to focus in on a more limited range of preferred options and we confine our main comments below to these. However we begin by making some general comments about the documentation circulated for the consultation, and in particular the Educational Benefits Statement which we assume will be presented to Committee for consideration, but which if taken at face value could be misleading to them (there are also some inaccuracies, since cleared up verbally at meetings, but it is important that these are carried through to material presented to Committee).

1. Option 1 as described in the existing paperwork would not extend the playground, despite the assertion made there that it would. This is a key concern for parents. We recognise new options for this are under consideration, but they are not currently included in this paper.
2. A major issue with the existing paperwork is the omission of Option 4 (and variants), which is now considered by all to be one of the front-runners.
3. Option 3 does not commit to a MUGA for children, merely proposes to consider it. Will Option 4 include a commitment to a MUGA, or simply consideration of one?
4. At various points in the paperwork (notes from meetings, indicated on plans etc) there is the suggestion that the 'back quad' at AHS be used as a play area for the primary children. This is totally unsuitable for this purpose, being north facing, shaded by high walls and including an electricity substation. A proper playground solution needs to be found.

More generally, we note that none of the options presented initially in this consultation are entirely fit for purpose at present. It is important that once an Option is approved in principle, there should be further fine-tuning in response to feedback from parents and school staff.

We now make more specific comments about about the two preferred options, Option 1 and Option 4 (+ variants):

Option 1

- As noted above, the playground is a particular concern. A suggestion was made at the 30 June meeting of re-routing the public road to incorporate some of the 'green' and playpark into the school grounds. We suspect that re-routing the public road may be prohibitively expensive. However it may not be necessary to retain this section of road as a 'through' route as access to Dail Mhor and the surgery could be gained from either direction. In this way the stretch of road in front of the school could simply be removed completely and become part of the school grounds.
- Flat roofs are indicated for the extension areas. We feel these are aesthetically poor, do not perform in Highland weather, and miss an opportunity to use the roof space eg for additional storage. We suggest that pitched roofs be considered instead.

Options 4

- As proposed in the plan presented on 30 June, the inclusion of a new dedicated primary school car park is an unnecessary expense. If the new school is sited as close to the main AHS building as the PPP 'red line' permits, access should be straightforward via the existing parking arrangements, as also used by the nursery.
- The current layout proposed does not provide the required accommodation highlighted by parents and school staff
- The current orientation & layout does not maximise natural daylight for the children. We would prefer both classrooms to have at least some southerly aspect to them

- The main issue overall however is whether to use modular units rather than a permanent structure. We strongly favour a permanent building for the following reasons:
 - it is not more expensive in terms of initial cost, and represents better value long-term as it will not depreciate to same extent as modular units (indeed, property can be expected to appreciate in value rather than depreciate);
 - it provides greater design flexibility allowing a form of building to be built which better reflects its surroundings. Modular units by their nature are limited in this respect;
 - a permanent building does not rule out future incorporation into AHS in 2027, if desired. If it is decided to stay as is, no costs are incurred, but on the other hand if it is preferred to move into AHS the investment required for the modifications required will be offset by the existing permanent building being of greater value than modular units, when sold or transferred to another user

Overall on balance we prefer Option 4 (permanent building) as our preferred option, representing best value for money, delivering the best physical result, and most importantly providing the educational and social benefits of being more closely associated with the High School.

Yours sincerely

From:
Sent: 08 July 2014 17:39
To: Ian Jackson
Subject: Proposal to relocate Strontian Primary School

Dear Mr Jackson

I am emailing comments on this proposal on behalf of West Ardnamuchan Community Council. Overall we feel that this decision should be influenced primarily by the views of the parents and other residents in Strontian, however, I have been asked to raise some concern from us regarding any potential impact from the move on pupils at the High School and on community use of the building. Ideally we would like the decision to minimise any such impact, given that the school and Sunart Centre were built for the benefit of the wider community.

Regards

Secretary
West Ardnamurchan Community Council

Sunart Community Appraisal – Prioritising Result

Results (in order of priority)	No.
That the Primary School be substantially upgraded or rebuilt	481
Stabilise / upgrade the present GP arrangements by working with Health Board / Mallaig GP Management to better coordinate access to a team of regularly attending GPs and for their times to be available.	398
That a community social hub feasibility study be completed.	252
That a Heritage Centre feasibility study is conducted.	246
That workshops and small industrial or storage units are made available.	212
That a proportion of local housing be 'tied' to allow key workers to be immediately housed without the fear of losing housing stock to speculation and forced sale.	203
Further negotiations take place between Highland Council and the Ardnamurchan communities to stabilise prices and extend the ferry time-tabled service.	191
That the mine site and access be protected for community use by being brought into community ownership.	168
That the community considers supplementing normal transport arrangements with a Community Bus and a car-sharing club.	163
That Sheltered Housing be built and that these units become reserved housing stock held for those in need of sheltered accommodation.	161
That a more effective link is established to Higher Education and Further Education to increase options.	156
That the position of the NHS Dail Mhor Residential Home for the Elderly be clarified.	152
That the elderly, in being encouraged to stay in their own home under 'Care in the Community' are more adequately and transparently supported.	152
That every opportunity is identified for 'apprenticeships'.	149
That the impact on students of staff turnover is minimised and investigations made as to why the turnover rate of the staff appears so high.	141
That wood fuel is encouraged through a community-owned woodland.	141
That greater use is made of the loch as a potential contributor to the local economy.	140
Upgrade the surgery	132
That upgrades to the walking and cycling routes are carried out.	133
That a swimming pool feasibility study is carried out.	130
That steps are taken to address rural isolation, particularly for the elderly, and that they are fully included in the day-to-day life of the community.	126
That a short-term working group looks into the development of a 'Men's Shed' and other community workshop concepts in Sunart.	120
Local skills training is available	103

TOP 23 of 67 issues identified by
 CRG/ISPH. (date not known)

Report by Education Scotland addressing educational aspects of the proposal by The Highland Council to improve the accommodation at Strontian Primary School. Options include a major upgrade to the present building or relocating Strontian Primary School from its present location to a new build school next to the nursery at Ardnamurchan High School and to retain its separate identity therein.

1. Introduction

1.1 This report from Education Scotland has been prepared by HM Inspectors in accordance with the terms of the *Schools (Consultation) (Scotland) Act 2010*. The purpose of the report is to provide an independent and impartial consideration of The Highland Council's proposal to improve the accommodation at Strontian Primary School. Section 2 of the report sets out brief details of the consultation process. Section 3 of the report sets out HM Inspectors' consideration of the educational aspects of the proposal, including significant views expressed by consultees. Section 4 summarises HM Inspectors' overall view of the proposal. Upon receipt of this report, the Act requires the council to consider it and then prepare its final consultation report. The council's final consultation report should include a copy of this report and must contain an explanation of how, in finalising the proposal, it has reviewed the initial proposal, including a summary of points raised during the consultation process and the council's response to them. The council has to publish its final consultation report three weeks before it takes its final decision. Where a council is proposing to close a school, it needs to follow all legislative obligations set out in the 2010 Act, including notifying Ministers within six working days of making its final decision and explaining to consultees the opportunity they have to make representations to Ministers.

1.2 HM Inspectors considered:

- the likely effects of the proposal for children and young people of Strontian Primary School; any other users; children likely to become pupils within two years of the date of publication of the proposal paper; and other children and young people in the council area;
- any other likely effects of the proposal;
- how the council intends to minimise or avoid any adverse effects that may arise from the proposal; and
- benefits which the council believes will result from implementation of the proposal, and the council's reasons for coming to these beliefs.

1.3 In preparing this report, HM Inspectors undertook the following activities:

- consideration of all relevant documentation provided by the council in relation to the proposal, specifically the educational benefits statement and related consultation documents, written and oral submissions from parents and others; and

- visits to the site of Strontian Primary School, Ardnamurchan High School and the Sunnart Centre, including discussion with relevant consultees.

2. Consultation process

The Highland Council undertook the consultation on its proposals with reference to the *Schools (Consultation) (Scotland) Act 2010*. During 2012 The Highland Council proposed to undertake work to improve the accommodation at Strontian Primary School. On being notified of the proposed building work Strontian Primary School Parent Council indicated they would welcome discussions on the possibility of relocating to the Ardnamurchan High School campus thus creating a '3-18' campus. These discussions form the basis of the formal consultation exercise. As part of the consultation process a public meeting was held on 9 June 2014. The Highland Council received 15 responses to the consultation. All of these support the proposal to improve the accommodation at Strontian Primary School through relocating Strontian Primary School from its present location to a new build school next to the nursery at Ardnamurchan High School. There were no objections to the proposal. During the course of the consultation, the proposed options for improving the accommodation were amended to take into account the views expressed by stakeholders.

3. Educational aspects of the proposal

3.1. The proposal by The Highland Council to relocate Strontian Primary School from its present location to a new build school next to the nursery at Ardnamurchan High School and to retain its separate identity therein offers significant educational benefits for children. There are a number of significant weaknesses in the building currently used by Strontian Primary School. Within the proposals being considered the option to upgrade the existing school building is not supported by key stakeholders and does not address the significant shortcomings identified. The council's Schools Estate Management Plan rates the existing building as C (poor) for both educational suitability and condition. Current playgrounds are small and do not offer a safe or stimulating area for play. Access for those with restricted mobility within the current Strontian Primary is limited. There is no staff room or space for teachers to prepare lessons. There is a lack of flexible space which could be used for a range of purposes and meet the demands for delivering a 21st century curriculum.

3.2. The proposed new build would be more environmentally friendly and has the potential to provide a high-quality learning environment. It would also provide a range of other improvements, including access to enhanced information and communications technology (ICT). Access to the school building would comply with all relevant legislative requirements. The co-location of the primary school alongside both nursery and secondary provision within a single 3-18 campus has the potential to improve transitions for children moving from nursery to primary and from primary to secondary. Children would benefit from access to a wide range of facilities within Ardnamurchan High School and Sunnart Centre. There is current capacity to accommodate this demand. Playground and outdoor learning opportunities will potentially be improved. Management of the nursery by the headteacher would potentially be improved by having her located on a single rather than split site basis as currently operates. Having access to an increased staff team with a broader

range of skills, offers the potential to provide increased opportunities for children to take part in a wider range of out-of-class activities. The proposal offers staff the opportunity to be part of a local professional learning community.

3.3. Parent Council representatives, staff, children and young people at both Strontian Primary School and Ardnamurchan High School expressed a strong preference for the proposal to relocate the primary school to a new build, stand-alone school at Ardnamurchan High School. Parent Councils and staff felt there was capacity to accommodate such a move. They felt that children and young people would benefit from being co-located on a 3-18 campus in a modern building. They were strongly of the view that the existing Strontian Primary School was not fit for purpose. They felt that co-location with the nursery and high school would offer improved access to a wide range of resources such as the library, ICT, home economics and physical education. The proposed multi-use games area was warmly welcomed by parents as were increased opportunities for children to access improved playground and outdoor learning experiences. Access to improved dining facilities and a much improved dining experience for the children was seen as a major benefit over existing arrangements. Parents who have children attending both nursery and primary school were positive about the prospect of not having to travel between two sites to drop off and collect children should the option to locate the establishments on one campus go ahead. Young people from Ardnamurchan High School thought that the new build, co-location option beside the nursery at Ardnamurchan High School would improve transitions between nursery, primary and secondary.

3.4. While stakeholders support the proposal to improve the accommodation at Strontian Primary School through relocating Strontian Primary School from its present location to a new build school next to the nursery at Ardnamurchan High School, Parent Council representatives and staff expressed frustration about the lack of detail available regarding the proposed design layout and timescale for the development. They were not aware of the most up to date proposal. All Parent Council representatives and staff did not favour a modular building, and were more in favour of an eco-friendly, traditional build approach. They felt this would demonstrate a longer term commitment by the council to primary education in the area. Secure and safe access for children between any proposed new build school and the existing nursery / high school is an area of concern for parents, staff and children. Of particular concern was how children would move between buildings during inclement weather. In finalising its plans the council needs to take on-board the views and suggestions of parents.

3.5. The community benefits from strong, confident and effective community organisations that are active in delivering local services. As part of a recent community appraisal members of the local community identified the need for Strontian Primary School to be upgraded or rebuilt as a key priority. However, Strontian Village Hall is located within the existing primary school and is a popular and well used local facility. It provides a social hub locally. A number of stakeholders including Parent Councils, school staff and members of the Sunnart Community Company raised concerns about future access to a village hall in the event of the school being relocated. The council needs to engage with a range of

community partners to manage their concerns, when considering options about the future operation of Strontian Village Hall.

4. Summary

The council's proposal to relocate Strontian Primary School from its present location to a new build school next to the nursery at Ardnamurchan High School offers significant educational benefits for children through the provision of purpose-built and fit for purpose accommodation. The current accommodation at Strontian Primary School has a number of significant weaknesses. The fabric of the building is deteriorating and access for those with restricted mobility is limited. The council has consulted with a range of stakeholders and is keen to continue to do so. In taking forward the proposal, the council needs to engage parents, staff, children, young people and the wider community in discussions about the finalised design and layout of the new school. The council needs to put in place safe and secure access between the primary school, nursery and high school buildings, including provision for inclement weather. In taking forward the proposal, it also needs to engage with a range of community partners to manage their concerns about the future operation of Strontian Village Hall.

**HM Inspectors
Education Scotland
September 2014**

From: [redacted]
Sent: 13 November 2014 08:20
To: Ian Jackson
Subject: Fwd: Future of Strontian Primary School

Ian

The email below was sent to our local councillors in advance of Tuesday's meeting. I understand that a decision has been referred, and that you are collating representations to form part of the ongoing consultation. I would be grateful if you could include this email.

From
Board of Directors
Sunart Community Company

To
Councillor Andrew Baxter
Councillor Bren Gormley
Councillor Thomas MacLennan
Councillor Brian Murphy

Cc:
Helen Tait, Chair, Strontian Primary School Parent Council

Sirs

Future of Strontian Primary School

As the Board of Directors of Sunart Community Company, we represent our members in the following areas:

- To manage community land and associated assets for the benefit of the Community and the public in general.

- To provide, or assist in providing, recreational facilities, and/or organising recreational activities, which will be available to members of the Community and public at large with the object of improving the conditions of life of the Community.
- To advance community development, including urban or rural regeneration within the Community.
- To advance the education of the Community about its environment, culture, heritage and/or history.
- To advance environmental protection or improvement including preservation, sustainable development and conservation of the natural environment, the maintenance, improvement or provision of environmental amenities for the Community and/or the preservation of buildings or sites of architectural, historic or other importance to the Community.

As you may be aware, the community of Sunart has been actively discussing and planning its own future, in the form of a series of community consultations and the creation of a Community Development Plan. It is quite clear that there is significant strength of feeling around the provision of quality accommodation for the Primary School; indeed it counted as the third most important on a long list of issues and challenges we all face.

We have been following the discussions about the future of the Primary School with interest, and more recently with increasing concern. It has been widely reported that council officers are recommending that you approve the move of Strontian Primary School activities to demountable units adjacent to Ardnamurchan High School. We would like to draw your attention to three specific areas:

1. In spite of this being the least popular option among parents, officers appear to be claiming that this recommendation is based on consultation. We urge you as our representatives to ensure that the voices of the local community, in particular parents of children at both Primary and High Schools, are given prominence in the decision-making process. As indicated, this issue has a high profile across the community;
2. The 'solution' being offered leaves no legacy for the public authorities, and appears to be based on a short-term view of the needs of the community, or perhaps more accurately the desires of the council above that of the community. Any option must be considered in light of the fact that premises, of whatever nature, could be reused, and future flexibility must be designed in from the outset. Careful thought must be given to how any decision affects (and indeed actively promotes) community regeneration and development, increasing the long-term value of Highland Council's investment. Possibilities that ought to be explored include partnership with WestHighlandCollege, later conversion into housing units, or sale to a community body. The recommendation that you will be considering states "*9.12 Although a permanent structure built at this stage could be designed in anticipation of its future incorporation into the High School building, the creation of a permanent structure now would inevitably mean some reduction in the number of options available to Highland Council in 2027*". It is obvious to us that this is contrary to the facts: joined-up thinking at this stage will actually increase the number of options available to HC in 13 years' time.
3. The approach supporting the recommendation appears to be based upon demographic assumptions relating to aging and falling rural populations. Our approach is more holistic, focussing on maintaining and sustaining our rural community, with affordable housing, improved transport and improved economic opportunities. We would urge you when considering the officers' recommendations to adopt a similarly broad-spectrum and positive approach.

We appreciate that we live in straitened times, but urge you to take a long-term view of what is best for our community.

Subject: Highland Council meeting with Strontian Primary Parents, Thursday 4th December

Hi Ian

Please can you pass on my apologies to the meeting on Thursday night, I am unable to attend, as I am away.

Please can my personal view below be considered as part of the meeting.

My view is that if HC want the primary school to move up to AHS then what is being offered needs to be an improvement on what is currently available at our current site, and the current plans mainly in terms of size do not do this.

As discussed in our meeting on the 4th November and previous meetings, the lack of a physical connection to AHS to use the dining facilities, community and music rooms is a major issue for your proposed new SPS. In its current location, SPS uses the village hall all the time, and because the school and village hall is self contained the children can take themselves through and back on their own. Without the same physical link in the new location children will constantly need escorting to and fro, and I can't imagine that SPS or AHS will have the staffing to do this. Weather is also an issue, as it takes quite a while to get small children in and out of waterproof clothing.

To compensate for this, SPS is going to need more flexible space in the new location, an issue raised again at our previous meetings. For me it would be ideal if there was a large '3rd classroom' where the children could eat their lunches, have active learning sessions, and music lessons, and learning support time - and area where the door could be shut, i.e. not just a central space in the middle of the building where any noise would disturb everyone. Currently SPS use the village hall to run around in during wet playtimes. Again for me, to compensate for a loss of this, a covered play space outside, around the new building?, is essential.

The current HC plan for a new SPS is for 242m². I agree with whoever said it at the last meeting that an additional 100m² is needed in the plans to make SPS in the new location adjacent to AHS more viable.

If we are unable to achieve these extras in the new location, then my preference would be for option 1 from the consultation.

I stress that this is my personal view, but it may echo the views of other parents.

I hope that you have a productive meeting.
Kind Regards

Cc: Ian Jackson
Subject: Response to consultation re: upgrading / relocation of Strontian Primary School.

Dear Sirs,

Response to consultation re: upgrading / relocation of Strontian Primary School.

Having, between us, attended all meetings in the last three years regarding this process we would like to convey our dismay at the report being presented to the Highland Council by the Education Department.

There have been on-going negotiations regarding the possible solutions to the problem of the current poor standard of the Strontian Primary School buildings and the three final, costed plans were only presented to the parents and community barely three weeks ago.

Five issues strike us from the report, written by the Education Department, that accompanied these options:

1. It is implied that the parents do not want Option 1 (upgrade existing school) based on this comment:

“After reviewing the consultation responses, Highland Council does not propose to continue with either Option 1 (refurbishment of Strontian Primary on its current site),”

However, although there are around 50 pages of communication there is no evidence to support this and a recent ballot makes it clear that this is the parents' preferred option.

2. For the vast majority of the consultation, Option 1 has been a very minor upgrade of the Primary school with no improvement in playground space, among other things.
3. The most recent comment listed in the 'received communication' in the report is 8th July, which is long before the final options were presented to the parents to make a decision.
4. The investment for demountable units now will necessitate considerable additional expenditure in twelve years time if the proposed move into the AHS takes place.
5. It appears that, in order to help make the case for the Education Department's preferred option, the cost of land purchase has been excluded from the costings. This 'oversight' has

meant that the true cost of the two options next to the High School is not known. We think it reasonable to assume that taking up around 4 building plots next to AHS would result in an extra cost of around £200,000. This difference would make the cost of the new build options very similar to the upgrade option.

It is clear that the Education Department's long-term goal is to force the Primary School into AHS, whether the Strontian community want this or not (or the wider community within the AHS catchment area who also appear to be against this).

The report agrees (Section 9.11 and 10.1) that a key to recommending the demountable option is to maximise flexibility. However, we believe that this is the least flexible option as it virtually guarantees that, by having a school with a limited lifespan, the Primary School will be forced to move into AHS regardless of the wishes of the parents or community in 12 years time. A permanent build would provide considerably more flexibility when the possibility of moving into AHS is possible but it doesn't make it inevitable. Perhaps the 'upgrade' option and the 'permanent build' option have been overlooked as this is precisely what the Education Department would prefer.

You will have seen the result of the recent secret ballot organised by the Primary School Parent Council. This has been the first time there has been a vote in three years – since the decision to **explore** the possibility of moving into the High School – and the result speaks for itself. The desire of a significant majority of parents is for the existing school to be upgraded and there is a complete rejection of the demountable option with not a single parent voting for it as their preference.

In a consultation meeting with Cllr. S. Barron, two weeks ago, when this issue was raised by a number of concerned parents, he assured us that it was they – the elected councillors – who took the decisions, not the civil servants, and that our concerns / preferences would be taken into account. We hope this declaration will stand the test of time when it comes to making this important decision and that the wishes of the parents and community will not be overlooked.

Yours faithfully,

:

From:

Sent:

To:

Cc:

Subject: Strontian Primary School - refurbishment

Dear all,

Just a quick message to inform you all that [redacted] and I are among those parents (the vast majority, according to the local poll) who are keen on refurbishment of the existing primary school accommodation and will strongly oppose any moves to shoehorn Strontian pupils into a demountable unit at Ardnamurchan High School.

We are both shocked and dismayed by the shortcomings of the so-called "consultation process" carried out by Highland Council and, more pertinently, the recommendation made to councillors following this process, which has taken absolutely no account of the wishes of parents.

We would prefer it if a decision on this matter was not made this week, unless we can be assured that one of the two preferred options - refurbishment/upgrade of existing facilities or a new-build at AHS - will be provided.

Thank you all for any support you can give us regarding this issue.

[redacted]

From:
Sent:
To:

Cc:
Subject:

Dear Ian,

Please can my following representation be added to the report for consideration by the Education Committee on the 12th November with respect to Strontian Primary School Consultation Report 2014.

1. I believe the Education Departments preferred option (4B) as currently presented in the report, will have serious operational failings that will only increase the stress and pressure on the primary school staff.

These are:

a. With the building being outside of the current AHS PPP redline boundary and no provision made for a direct link to AHS, then every child leaving the proposed building to attend AHS facilities (as is proposed) will have to be escorted across public rights of way. This will be very disruptive to staff teaching time, when say for example individual pupils are coming and going to music lessons at half hour intervals.

b. The current proposal at 243sqm is very small and makes no allowance for handling wet pupils and their clothing.

c. With the small size there is no space to exercise/entertain pupils at wet break times. Will the AHS gym hall be made available for this and supervisors employed, so the primary staff can have their legally entitled breaks?

2. The reports preferred option 4B is a temporary building that I fear will have 2 consequences for primary education in Strontian in the future:

a. The primary school maybe absorbed into AHS completely and lose its identity in 2027 when the AHS PPP agreement ends. It currently has a very good record and is an asset to our community for helping to encourage young families here. 3 to 18 facilities may be the current vogue but we are all aware about how teaching policy and practice seems to be constantly on the shift - which leads me to my second point.

b. If in 2027 when the AHS PPP ends and the then Education Department is no longer in favour of 3 to 18 facilities, Strontian Primary School would be left in a temporary building halfway through its lifespan. This would mean in 20- 25 years from now we could be looking at a school housed in failing buildings, having to go through this process again and looking at having to spent another £1 to 2m of our money to put right. Please see sense and put and an end to short term decisions making. Invest for all our children's future.

In conclusion - Currently of the 3 proposals on the table in this report, option 1 (to refurbish the existing school) is the only option that improves on things beyond where they are at present. If you can't see you way to vote for option 1 then please can you propose to delay the process until a fully satisfactory solution is found.

From:

Sent:

To:

Cc:

Subject:

Dear Mr. Jackson,

I write to express my belief that your consultation process regarding this matter has not been satisfactory, and that a decision should therefore be delayed so that a more comprehensive consultation can take place.

The principal matter under discussion is how to provide adequate accommodation for Strontian Primary school, and as such all relevant parties in Strontian have been consulted. However, it is clear from the Consultation Report and comments made by Norma Young and others at recent meetings, that it is intended that the Primary School will ultimately be housed within the AHS/Sunart Centre building, and that the recommended course of action is specifically intended as a first step along that route. Accordingly this decision has significant implications for the future of High School education in the wider area and the consultation should therefore involve all communities in the AHS catchment area, including Kilchoan, Lochaline, Acharacle and Ardgour.

Point 2.2 of "Strontian Primary School - Proposals to Improve Accommodation, Report by Director of Care and Learning", lists the groups and individuals consulted with in this matter. Whilst this list might meet "statutory requirements" in the limited sense of those affected by Strontian Primary school, it does not acknowledge the implications for AHS and High School education in the area, and has not undertaken adequate (or any) consultation with that wider community.

Norma Young further indicated recently (meeting held at Strontian Village Hall on Tuesday 4th November 2014) that the absorption of Strontian Primary into the AHS/Sunart Centre building in approximately 12 years' time would be part of a wider plan to create "age 3 to 18 campuses" for future education of children in rural locations. This further highlights the significant impact upon future education of all ages in this area, that this initial, seemingly small and localised decision will have.

Furthermore, this recommendation is being put forward in spite of unanimous objection from current Strontian Primary parents.

Neither of the options preferred by current parents, namely upgrading the existing school, or creating a new build school adjacent to AHS, would have the same implications for locking the community into a future course of action – this recommendation, in spite of assertions to the contrary, is therefore the LEAST flexible option for the community. Either of these options would address both the current (urgent) need for improved accommodation for Strontian Primary School, and enable wider consultation and consideration of the medium to long-term proposals being raised.

Thank you for your consideration of these points.

Yours sincerely,

.. it

From:
Sent:
To:

Cc:
Subject:
Attachments:

Hi all

Thank you for last night's meeting. Please find attached a summary of the key issues identified at the meeting. I have passed to parents, and have asked them how they wish to proceed. I am hoping that with the drawings we will have a better idea which way things will go (Many thanks Ian, received this afternoon).

The parents have said no to the use of a modular building. I think that the way forward for the parents is a vote between option 1, and a permanent option 4 with additions (size being the chief factor) if I have read the situation correctly?

Any advice or comments on those 2 options would be helpful, and I will pass through.

Kind Regards

!

Summary of public meeting with Highland Council regarding Strontian Primary School refurbishment proposals.

Held in Strontian Village Hall on Tuesday 4th November at 6.30pm

Attendees: Cllr Thomas MacLennan, Cllr Brian Murphy, Norma Young, Ian Jackson, plus members of the public, including Mindy Ogilvie and Chris Millar Craig.

Apologies: Bren Gormley and Andrew Baxter

- Additional meeting requested to discuss the Education Department recommendation that the installation of a 2-classroom demountable unit, with additional accommodation is adopted to improve the current accommodation for Strontian Primary School

The main points to come out of the discussions were:

- All are after a solution which improves the accommodation for Strontian Primary School. The accommodation needs to be attractive to a new head teacher following Mindy Ogilvie's retirement in Oct 2015.
- The opinion from the floor was that with the options currently on the table, only Option 1 is offering an improvement to facilities for the children and staff of Strontian Primary school. The flexibility of having the hall, which is also used as a general learning space, adjacent to the classrooms seems to be a major deciding factor. At present the children can get to a dry play area, music lessons, drama workshop and active learning sessions in small groups without being escorted.
- There is strong opposition to the use of temporary modular units, particularly as their cost will involve additional spend in 2027 which we cannot be sure Highland Council will have the budget for.
- Future ideas on what a 3-18 community campus would look like vary. There was opposition from the floor to the idea, in 2027, to install the primary school within the walls of the existing AHS. It was felt that this would be detrimental to both the primary school and the high school. If this is the Education Departments intention, then this was considered an ASG wide decision, not just for Strontian Primary School. An additional permanent building adjacent to AHS and then connected in some way in 2027 was considered a better option.
- Problems with the option 1 proposal include initial building cost, and relocation of pupils during the construction phase. Positives for this proposal include cheaper land purchase costs (?), keeping the school in the centre of the village, no negative impact on AHS, retaining Strontian Primary schools identity and keeping the village hall for the community.
- Problems with the option 4s on the table include initial land purchase cost (higher than option 1?), additional spend required in 2027(with modular units), no covered walkway link into the main school for the next 11 years, concerns about timetabling shared facilities, insufficient building size and flexibility. Positives for this proposal

include new purpose built building (for traditional build solution only), timetabled access to AHS facilities and an area to develop as a new playground/ outside space.

- Debate was opened up to a 'do we stay/ do we go scenario'. Floor was unable to make a decisive decision either way – citing lack of information / drawings. All said current plans for option 4 inadequate, particularly in terms of size, (at least an additional 100m² required?). This doesn't help our Councillors, who can argue on our behalf, if they know what we want.

Way Forward...

- Drawings requested, and Ian Jackson will get copies to the Primary School and the Library for viewing. **(DELIVERED TO PRIMARY SCHOOL ON 5TH NOVEMBER)**
- We could ask for a delay in putting the documents to Committee. The next Committee meeting would be January. This could delay the start of the project works by more than 3 months. Cllr MacLennan to investigate whether a delay is possible and sensible.
- Representation is needed to be made to Committee before 11th November, and written representations encouraged as soon as possible. Contact Ian Jackson on ian.jackson@highland.gov.uk
- Strontian Parents need to decide on a particular option together, or to decide to delay and need to inform Councillors asap.

, 5th November 2014

From:
Sent:
To:
Cc:

Subject:
Attachments:

Dear Ian

Please can the attached correspondance be included as part of the consultation for Wednesdays meeting.
Sent on behalf of the Strontian Primary and Nursery Parent Council.

Many thanks

Strontian Primary School Relocation Proposals

Results of Parental ballot held on Friday 7th and Saturday 8th November.

Following a public meeting on Tuesday 7th November, and the subsequent release of drawings by the Education Department, Strontian primary and nursery parents undertook a ballot to establish feeling on the current proposals from Highland Council relating to the future of Strontian Primary school.

BALLOT PAPER

This is a secret ballot undertaken to establish the current views of the parents regarding the Strontian Primary School relocation proposals. Each family has two ballot papers (i.e. 2 votes) to vote with.

You should prioritise the options listed below with a 1, 2 and 3. Please use '1' as your preferred option and '3' as your least favoured option.

The three options are as described in the '*Strontian Primary School Consultation Report 2014, prepared for the Education, Children's and Adults Services Committee meeting on 12th November, along with preliminary drawings ECSB0365/A/00/104/A, ECSB0365/A/00/101/A*'.

Option 1: Upgrade existing Primary School. Floor area 270 m² (460m² including hall / stage)

Option 4a: Demountable modular units close to AHS. Floor area 243m²

Option 4b: Permanent building close to AHS. Floor area: 243m²

Thank you.
Helen Tait.
Chair, Strontian Primary School Parent Council

2 votes were offered per family. Those with a single parent in the household all chose to put one vote into the ballot.

40 voting slips went out, and 40 were returned, a 100% turn out.

- On a points system, where we allocated 2 points to a 1st choice on the ballot, and 1 point to the 2nd choice, the results were
 - Option 1, 60 points
 - Option 4a, 4 points
 - Option 4b, 47 points.
- On a first past the post system, the results were
 - Option 1, 25 votes
 - Option 4a, no votes
 - Option 4b, 15 votes

Conclusion. Overwhelming rejection of Highland Councils preferred option 4a, installation of temporary accommodation adjacent to Ardnamurchan High School.

....., 0th November 2014.

Mr Ian Jackson
Area Education Officer, West Ross, Skye &
Lochaber
Highland Council – Education, Culture and
Sport
Camaghael Hostel
Fort William
PH33 7BR.

10th November 2014

Dear Mr Jackson

Results of Parental Ballot November 2014

Following our public meeting on the 7th November, and the subsequent issue of drawings, the parents agreed to hold a ballot to establish a snapshot of opinion on the current proposals. Many parents expressed disappointment and anger that after 3 years of discussion they were being asked to identify a preferred option when none has a satisfactory level of detail. A full breakdown of the process and results is attached.

A 100% return expressed an overwhelming rejection of your current proposed option to install demountable units adjacent to the high school, with the intention of additional spend in 12 years time. The preferred option as currently presented is Option 1, remodelling and extension to the existing Primary School (62.5%).

The parents feel that there has been a complete lack of clarity over the last 3 years and that information has only been forthcoming if we have had a councillor present at our meetings. Drawings of the current proposals were only made generally available after intervention by Councillors last week, and the options currently available bear little resemblance to the options discussed 3 years ago.

The one area of unanimity amongst parents is the rejection of demountable buildings which has been very consistently opposed from the start. Many feel this predetermines the future of a separate Primary School, as by definition a temporary building is not permanent. Education Scotland noted these concerns in its report and asked Highland Council to reflect them. Instead of this HC has chosen demountable buildings as its preferred option.

The wish of the parents is a long term solution which improves the facilities in which our children are educated, in a way that benefits both staff and pupils.

Yours sincerely

Financial Template - Stontian Primary School Options

Appendix 7

Additional revenue costs associated with options 1 to 3				
Strontian Primary School	Option 1- Existing Strontian PS	Option 2 - integrated with AHS plus adjacent modular building	Option 3- standalone modular building	Option 3 Variation- Standalone Community Build with Lease Back
<i>Employee costs- teaching staff</i>	0	0	0	0
<i>Employee costs- support staff</i>	0	-10,367	-267	-267
<i>Building costs</i>	0	5,750	15,000	15,000
<i>School operational costs</i>	0	0	0	0
revenue costs arising from capital	0	0	0	55,000
TOTAL ADDITIONAL COSTS	0	-4,617	14,733	69,733

Option 2 saving arises from reduced catering and nursery staff. Additional costs of small modular unit
 Option 3 has limited staffing savings (0.5 hours cleaner) and a larger modular unit.

Option 2 modular unit is 69 sq m as opposed to 180 in option 3. Running costs pro-rated accordingly

All figures quoted at 2014 prices

STRONTIAN PRIMARY SCHOOL - CAPITAL COSTS	Existing Building Partial	Existing Building Full	Modular Building 243m ²	Community Build Option
Construction Works				
Extension to Existing Primary	£149,894	£149,894		
Minor Refurb of Existing Primary	£29,918			
Full Refurb of Existing Primary		£638,960		
Extension of Rear Access Road		£44,092		
Extension of Playground		£19,058		
MUGA		£55,230		
Modular Building 243m ²			£563,450	
Permanent Building				
Drainage, Service and Site Works			£104,264	
SUB TOTAL	£179,812	£907,234	£667,714	
Prelimnaries (15% allowance)	£26,972	£136,085	£100,157	
SUB TOTAL	£206,784	£1,043,319	£767,871	
Contingencies (10% Col B 7.5% Cols C-E)	£20,678	£78,248.93	£57,590.3	
SUB TOTAL	£227,462	£1,121,568	£825,461	
Time Inflation Adjustment (Forecast 10.57%)	£24,042.75	£118,549.74	£87,251.27	
Less Grants				
CONSTRUCTION COSTS	£251,504.93	£1,240,117.77	£912,712.71	£0.00
Other Costs				
HC D & I Fees	£42,756	£210,826	£167,994	
IT installation, Furniture and Fittings	£5,000	£5,000	£0	£190,000
Planning and Building Warrant Fees	£2,482	£6,182	£6,234	
Fees Combined	£0	£0	£0	
Development Financing				
Total Fees, Finance and Fitting	£50,238	£222,008	£174,228	£190,000
TOTAL COST	£301,742.93	£1,462,125.77	£1,086,940.71	£190,000.00 See footnote

Footnote - community Build Option - The community would have responsibility for the core construction costs. The Council would meet capital fit out costs as shown, above. It is assumed the Council would lease the building from the community at an estimated £55k p.a. This cost is included within the revenue implications annex appended to this report.