

THE HIGHLAND COUNCIL
ALNESS ACADEMY REPLACEMENT - STAKEHOLDER GROUP

Minute of Meeting No. 5
Wednesday 1st March 2017, 6.30PM
Alness Academy

Attendees:	<u>Highland Council - Members</u>	
	Maxine Smith	MS
	Mike Finlayson	MF
	<u>Chair:</u> Carolyn Wilson	CW
	<u>Highland Council - Officials</u>	
	Brian Porter, Head of Resources	BP
	Susannah Irvine, Estates Officer	SI
	Gavin Allday, Project Co-ordinator	GA
	Stephanie Wood, Education Quality Improvement Manager	SW
	<u>School Representatives</u>	
	Laura Gordon, Head Teacher Alness Academy	LG
	Kathy Sutherland, Alness Academy Parent Council	KS
	Claire Carr, Alness Academy Parent Council	CC
	Kelly Dallas, Bridgend Parent Council	KD
	Ewan Scott, Bridgend Parent Council	ES
	Rachael Kenny, Bridgend Parent Council	RK
	Pamela Camery, Bridgend Parent Council	PC
	Katie Christie, Bridgend Parent Council	KC
	Mandy Gill, Bridgend Parent Council	MG
	Hazel Mackay, Alness Academy Parent Council	HM
	Fiona Fraser, Kiltarn Parent Council	FF
	Gordon Robertson, Alness Parent Council	GR
	Willma MacPherson, Alness Academy Parent Council	MMacP
	Maryanne Sutherland, Alness Academy Parent Council	MSu
	Kathryn Roberts, Bridgend Parent Council	KB
	Gemma Dunnett, Ardross and Newmore Primary	GD
	Abbey MacLennan, Alness Academy	AMacI
	Holly Ross, Alness Academy	HR
	<u>High Life Highland</u>	
	Fiona Hampton, Head of Business	FH
	<u>HUB North</u>	
	Andrew Low	AL

	<p><u>JM Architects</u> Stewart Davie</p> <p><u>WSPB – Project Management</u> Craig Paton, WSP Group</p> <p><u>Community Representatives</u> Brian Ross, Alness United Tommy Regan, Alness United Mary MacDonald, Alness Community Council</p>	<p>SD</p> <p>CP</p> <p>BR TR MMacD</p>
Apologies:	Robert Campbell Gail Ross Callum MacLennan Mark Lloyd Hazel Mackay Derek Martin Mandy Robertson Martin Rattray	
Minute:	Gavin Allday	
ITEM	DISCUSSION/COMMENT	ACTION
1	APPOINT A CHAIR	
1.1	CW chaired the meeting.	Note
2	INTRODUCTION	
2.1	CW welcomed everyone to the meeting.	Note
2.2	CW recorded a change to the previous minutes. Item 4.9, 'Jacuzzi' should have read 'Steam Room'.	
3	PRESENTATION BY DESIGN TEAM	
3.1	<p>SD from JM Architects gave a presentation on current design ideas based on the strong support for design Option 2 from the previous meeting. Option 2 utilised the South East of Existing School (football Club Pitches):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Advantage of being able to build the new school without closing current school. • New parking area would be on existing school site following demolition • The location of new school has been pushed towards existing school, leaving space in south for expansion or a new primary school in the future. 	Note

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The bus drop-off point will be in a similar location to current. • Design allows for two synthetic pitches and one grass pitch. • Possibility to accommodate 6 lane, 400 metre oval athletics track. 	
3.2	<p><u>Feedback and questions:</u></p> <p>Qu. How far is entrance from car park? Ans. SD confirmed the short distance and used design aerial image to show pertinent points.</p> <p>Qu. Is having two all-weather pitches the favoured plan? Ans. Yes, one to accommodate football club.</p> <p>Qu. Will 400metre track actually fit? Ans. Yes, when overlaid with grass pitch. Actual location on site still being considered and illustrated position indicative only.</p> <p>Qu. Could design include two grass pitches for competitions? Ans. Having three pitches is more than would normally be included for a school of this size. Two synthetic and one grass pitch is considered the best solution to facilitate demand. Grass pitches can only be used for limited periods.</p> <p>Qu. Will there be a pavilion? Ans. The design includes a self-contained changing area at the end of the main building, close to the sports facilities.</p> <p>Qu. How will you manage pitches during transition between schools? Ans. The West synthetic pitch will be built first. There will be no grass pitch available during the build. An additional grass area at the back of the current school could be used, a temporary move to an alternative location for the football club may be a preferred option?</p> <p>Qu. If in the future an additional primary school is constructed to the south of the site, how would it be accessed? Ans. Details are not firm as the design of an additional primary school is not part of the future proofing. However, this is a sizeable site and provision of additional parking and access shouldn't pose a problem. Some facilities could be shared between schools. For example, dining facilities.</p> <p>Qu. Will the spare land to the south be large enough to</p>	<p>Note</p>

	<p>accommodate an additional primary school?</p> <p>Ans. Yes, the site is deceptively large, although it could also be used to provide an extension to the High School. Future use will be flexible to meet needs. Any future development of the land would require additional funding, so it would be some time before any additional development could be explored.</p>	
3.3	<p>SD gave a brief overview of the main blocks and possible classroom locations in the design, but stated that these are for discussion and finalisation :</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Main entrance is within knuckle point with direct walk from car park. • Front swimming pool elevation could be significantly glazed. The opposite elevation forming the sports halls would be more 'box' like. Dining spaces would feature fully glazed walls and be double height. • CDT classroom would have access to outside area • Student Support would be located near front entrance • Maths and Science areas would be bright, with central break-out areas. Science classrooms would also have access to terrace area. • Art would be the only class occupying second floor area 	Note
3.4	<p><u>Further feedback and questions:</u></p> <p>Qu. Would reduction in height from previous plan reduce capacity?</p> <p>Ans. No. Capacity remained 600 pupils based on projected school rolls, with room for further expansion if needed.</p> <p>Qu. Can we manage 'greenhouse' effect with such large glazed areas?</p> <p>Ans. Yes. Advanced modelling helps us achieve required min/max temperatures for each area. Although most classes are North facing, solar controlled glass can be used on South elevations like the dining area.</p> <p>Qu. Is there a staff room?</p> <p>Ans. Yes.</p> <p>Qu. Do pupils have designated rooms, for example, 6th year common room?</p> <p>Ans. No. Modern schools tend to fully utilise all spaces, all of the time. Some rooms are used flexibly and a shared area may usable as a common room when required.</p> <p>Qu. Is it possible to see internal renders?</p> <p>Ans. Not yet as we are still finalising internal layouts, but early external renders were shown.</p>	Note

	<p>Qu. The initial impression on entering a building is critical and some schools feel restrictive. Will this design give an impression of space?</p> <p>Ans. Yes. The hall and dining areas will feel 'connected' to the classes and breakout spaces. Two storeys make it easier to connect spaces vertically.</p> <p>Qu. What type of roof will be used?</p> <p>Ans. It is a pitched roof of five degrees, although it looks flat due to parapet edging.</p> <p>Qu. What are the next steps?</p> <p>Ans. Stakeholder engagement to help finalise the positions of the various blocks, then the detail can be worked up.</p> <p>Qu. Is there space for the youth work team?</p> <p>Ans. Yes.</p>	
4	PROJECT OVERVIEW	
4.1	<p>BP gave a brief overview :</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • March 2020 for school opening is a condition of funding • It is difficult to project an overall cost figure during engagement phase. However, it is hoped that financial picture will be clearer in a week or so. • There may still be a need to revise thinking to meet budgetary requirements. • Other teams will now be brought into the project to flesh out finer details. 	Note
5	COMMUNICATION AND ENGAGEMENT	
5.1	BP invited discussion on engagement to date and ideas for improving future communication.	Note
5.2	<p>BP encouraged stakeholders to visit one of the other new school sites, with the recently completed Wick campus being a suitable comparable site.</p> <p>The new Inverness Royal Academy site was discussed as a closer alternative in terms of distance, but deemed to have significant differences to the proposed Alness development.</p> <p>It may be possible for visitors to the Wick site to video and share the experience.</p>	Note
5.3	Following questions from the room, there was a brief discussion on availability of visualisation tools. It was noted that contractors are sometimes asked to provide a mock-up of a typical classroom as part of their proposal. Some contractors are now utilising Virtual Reality technology to demonstrate	Note

	designs and gather feedback.	
6	AOB	
6.1	<p>There was a discussion on how to involve future pupils in the project. Once the initial design details have been finalised, school based workshops could be used to explain the design process and other project steps to the pupils.</p> <p>Focus groups could also be used to inform a wider audience.</p>	Note
6.2	<p>Opinions varied whilst discussing the inclusion of locker space in general areas:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • They are not included in the current design as they were not deemed to be a priority. The design team work to tight metrics which define the space allowance per pupil and the inclusion of lockers would leave less space for other uses. • Concern was raised about a lack of storage for valuables and the number of bags that would be left in classrooms, especially with the distribution of Chromebooks to pupils in the near future. • It was confirmed that the swimming pool and P.E areas would have lockers. • Current practice is to exclude provision for cloakrooms in designs for any new secondary schools. <p>Further discussion will be required before a final decision can be reached. Interested parties were encouraged to feedback comments. SI confirmed locker provision would be reviewed with the school.</p>	SI
6.3	BP closed by explaining the metrics and criteria that have to be considered to meet the funding requirements set by the Scottish Government. Every m2 has to be justified and we will be challenged on any perceived 'over-provision'. Although the current design will seem spacious at first, the metrics used are based on the expected future increase in school roll.	
7	DATE OF THE NEXT MEETING	
7.1	The next meeting will be held at 6.30PM on Wednesday 17 th May.	Note