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## NORTH AYRSHIRE COUNCIL

28 September 2021

### Cabinet

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**Title:** Community Asset Transfer

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**Purpose:** To agree the transfer of ownership of Pirnmill Community Centre and land to Pirnmill Village Association; and the transfer of ownership of land at Stevenston Shore Front to Raise Your Voice With Ardeer.

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**Recommendation:** That Cabinet:

- a) Agrees to the asset transfer of Pirnmill Community Centre and its land from North Ayrshire Council to Scottish Incorporated Charitable Organisation (SCIO), "Pirnmill Village Association";
- b) Approves the recommended terms of transfer on this occasion at 10% of the property valuation of £20,000 (totalling £2000);
- c) Agrees the asset transfer of land at Stevenston Shorefront between North Ayrshire Council and the Scottish Incorporated Charitable Organisation (SCIO), "Raise Your Voice With Ardeer";
- d) Approves the recommended terms of transfer on this occasion at 10% of the valuation of £5,500 (totalling £550); and
- e) Authorises officers to conclude the associated legal and community asset transfer processes for Pirnmill Community Centre and its land; and Land at Stevenston Shorefront.

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### 1. Executive Summary

- 1.1 The report proposes the community asset transfer of Pirnmill Community Centre, Pirnmill, Isle of Arran from North Ayrshire Council to the Scottish Incorporated Charitable Organisation (SCIO) "Pirnmill Village Association"; and agrees the community asset transfer of land at Stevenston Shorefront, Stevenston from North Ayrshire Council to the Scottish Incorporated Charitable Organisation (SCIO) "Raise Your Voice With Ardeer".
- 1.2 The transfer of Pirnmill Community Centre will provide a sustainable base for the local community activity. The proposed uses include a range of events and activities which contribute to their key objectives.

- 1.3 This report recommends that Cabinet agrees to the transfer of Pirnmill Community Centre and land with an associated 10% of the valuation costs of £20,000 (£2,000 in total) applied, that reflects the condition of the facility, investment to date and the potential social return on investment and that officers should be authorised to conclude the process under these terms.
- 1.4 The transfer of land at Stevenston Shorefront to Raise Your Voice With Ardeer will allow it to be utilised as a site for the creation of a new facility that will be a valued community asset in this area of the town. The proposed uses include a range of events and activities which contribute to their key objectives.
- 1.5 This report recommends that Cabinet agrees to the transfer of land at Stevenston Shorefront with an associated 10% of the valuation costs of £5,500 (£550 in total), that reflects the potential social return on investment, and that officers should be authorised to conclude the process under these terms.

## **2. Background**

- 2.1 Under the terms of the Community Empowerment (Scotland) Act 2015, community asset transfer provides an opportunity for people to be involved in developing and providing opportunities or services for their local communities. It may also allow groups to develop commercial ventures, which will support community benefit. Asset transfer may also mean that public assets get used more frequently and more effectively. Furthermore, community-led ownership may allow additional opportunities for groups to secure extra funding or resources.

### Pirnmill Community Centre

- 2.2 Pirnmill Village Association has been successfully operating Pirnmill Community Centre for the past 30 years under a lease agreement with North Ayrshire Council. This proposed change in the legal arrangement will allow the Association to continue with their work and any future enhancements on a more secure footing.
- 2.3 The provision of a fit-for-purpose Community Centre within the village will ensure that inclusive, inter-generational activities can be provided for residents and visitors alike, reducing social isolation and improving quality of life and well-being.
- 2.4 Increasing the range of events and activities within an improved Centre will encourage a wider range of people to get involved, giving opportunities for local volunteering and stimulating involvement in shaping and regenerating community life, building self-esteem and confidence.
- 2.5 The proposal to build closer working relationships with island-wide organisations, such as COAST, Eco Savvy, Festival organisers (e.g. Mountain (May), McLellan Arts (Sept)) and charity events such as cycling challenges will raise awareness of the centre and offer them quality facilities on the west coast of the island in order to bring more events and activities into the village.
- 2.6 The centre is currently used by the adjacent Pirnmill Primary School for various activities. The transfer of the asset will not alter this arrangement. The Association proposes to develop a working agreement between the school and the Association to

formalise this arrangement and secure the ongoing use. Having this agreement in place prior to the conclusion of the transfer will be a condition of the offer.

- 2.7 The Association held a community consultation exercise, with a short questionnaire sent to all Pirnmill residents (115 people) regarding the asset transfer and future use of the centre. With a 49% return rate, there was 100% support for the asset transfer, with enthusiasm for local ownership and management, offers of volunteering help and support for extending events and activities within the centre.

#### Stevenston Shorefront

- 2.8 The land requested at Stevenston Shorefront by “Raise Your Voice With Ardeer” (RYVA) is ideally situated to construct a community owned building. The land and the building will be a location for activities that will provide a focus for the local community as well as and visitors to the locality.
- 2.9 Following the community asset transfer of the land, RYVA will be able to commence building the new facility. The key purposes for the new facility are to:
- Create a community hub
  - Create storage for litter picking materials;
  - Create a community garden;
  - Create an asset that will provide a focus for outdoor activities encourage people to use the area as well as engage in more outdoor activity and benefit from Green Health activities;
  - Provide a space to meet and hold events and activities;
  - Open a café which will become a destination for people in the locality especially and those travelling from out-with; and
  - Provide an opportunity to promote the rich history of Stevenston, Burns, Alfred Noble and more. It will be a central hub from which people will be able to explore the rich historical aspects of the local area.
- 2.10 The community of Stevenston and the Three Towns will benefit from the new facilities and it is hoped that people travelling through the Three Towns will stay longer and visit other places in Stevenston and the Three Towns.
- 2.11 The area immediately surrounding the asset includes playparks, a football field, excellent car parking, direct access to Stevenston Beach and one of the finest nature reserves on the West Coast of Scotland. It is close to the national cycle network. The local community use this area for outdoor leisure, dog walking, exercise and activities for children and young people. The new resource will enable activities to take place in fit-for-purpose surroundings and encourage more locals to spend time outdoors and engage with the natural environment.
- 2.12 As a volunteer-led project there will opportunities for people to get involved in the work, operation and delivery of activities. People will be able to get closer to the natural environment, increase understanding of the importance of the nature reserve and benefit from improved physical, mental health and wellness. Volunteering with the project will give people self-confidence, build self-esteem and a place in their community, support routes into employment and help reduce isolation.

- 2.13 It is anticipated that the new facility will increase tourism and spending with local businesses. The inclusion of a space to sell locally made crafts will further support this and aligns to the principles of community wealth building.
- 2.14 RYVA has good relationships with North Ayrshire Countryside Rangers and the local schools. The facility will allow for greater scope for learning opportunities to be delivered to all ages of the community.
- 2.15 A survey was completed, attracting 600 responses. These included consultations at the location and through social media. Presentations have been made to the Three Towns Locality Partnership, The Three Towns Chit Chat, Stevenston North and South Community Associations and Stevenston Community Council. From these extensive engagements, a high level of positive feedback was received.
- 2.16 RYVA has been highly successful in raising funding for the creation of the hub, pending the completion of the asset transfer process. The hub can be created quickly bringing early benefits to the community from the transfer.

### **3. Proposals**

#### **3.1 That Cabinet:**

- a) Agrees to the asset transfer of Pirnmill Community Centre and its land from North Ayrshire Council to Scottish Incorporated Charitable Organisation (SCIO), "Pirnmill Village Association";
- b) Approves the recommended terms of transfer on this occasion at 10% of the property valuation of £20,000 (totalling £2000);
- c) Agrees the asset transfer of land at Stevenston Shorefront between North Ayrshire Council and the Scottish Incorporated Charitable Organisation (SCIO), "Raise Your Voice With Ardeer";
- d) Approves the recommended terms of transfer on this occasion at 10% of the valuation of £5,500 (totalling £550); and
- e) Authorises officers to conclude the associated legal and community asset transfer processes for Pirnmill Community Centre and its land; and Land at Stevenston Shorefront.

### **4. Implications/Socio-economic Duty**

#### **Financial**

- 4.1 Through the transfer of the two assets, the Council will achieve an overall capital receipt of £2,550. The current rental income from the lease of Pirnmill Community Centre is £50 per annum. Although this is a small loss of income, in the longer term, there will cost avoidance in the capital budget due to the need for future investment in upkeep of the premises on Arran. In addition, the projects will attract funding from external sources, with Stevenston Shorefront having secured £100,000 of Scottish Government's Regeneration Capital Grants Fund earlier this year. The sums proposed reflects the significant community benefits.

## **Human Resources**

4.2 None.

## **Legal**

4.3 The Local Government (Scotland) Act 1973 places a statutory obligation on the Council to obtain the best price or the best rent when it disposes of any asset by sale or lease. These regulations permit a disposal at less than the best price achievable where either (a) the property is valued at less than £10,000, or (b) the Council has compared the financial cost of transfer against the community benefits and determined that the transfer is reasonable and promotes either economic development or regeneration, health, social well-being or environmental well-being.

## **Equality/Socio-economic**

4.4 There will be considerable socio-economic benefits from the transfers and the sum proposed reflects the community benefits. These include a variety of positive impacts, for the communities of Pirnmill and Stevenston as described in the report.

## **Environmental and Sustainability**

4.5 The transfer seeks to provide sustainable community facilities. This proposal will provide a base for the volunteer group who regularly clean Stevenston Beach and raise biodiversity and local environmental awareness through outdoor learning.

## **Key Priorities**

4.6 The proposals contained within the report support the following North Ayrshire Council Plan priorities:

- Active and strong communities
- Inclusive, growing and enterprising local economy
- People enjoy good life-long health and wellbeing.

## **Community Wealth Building**

4.7 This proposal supports the following pillars of community wealth building:

- Advancing community enterprises;
- Advancing local ownership of underused land and buildings; and
- Supporting local business activities and increasing the variety of ownership models.

## **5. Consultation**

5.1 The consultation required in terms of the Community Empowerment (Scotland) Act 2015 for a community asset transfer application has now concluded with no objections received for the groups. These are outlined in sections 2.7 and 2.16.

5.2 Consultation has taken place with Economic Development, Streetscene, Finance, Estates, Property Maintenance and Investment, and Legal Services. All parties are happy in principle with the proposals for the listed assets.

Caroline Amos  
**Interim Executive Director (Communities and Education)**

For further information please contact **Rhona Arthur, Head of Connected Communities**, on **(01294) 324415**.

**Background Papers**

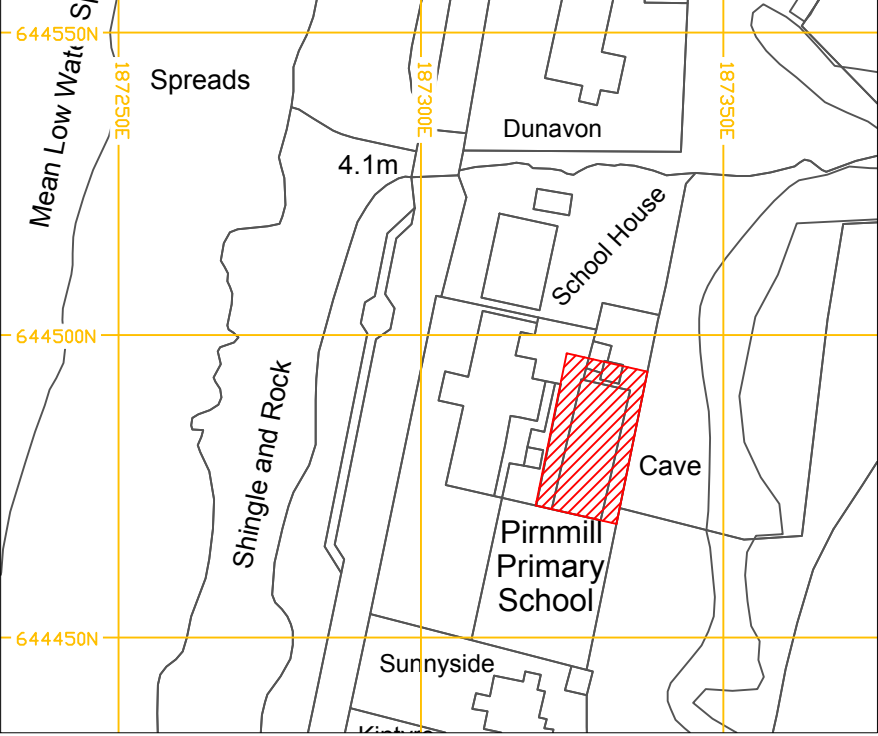
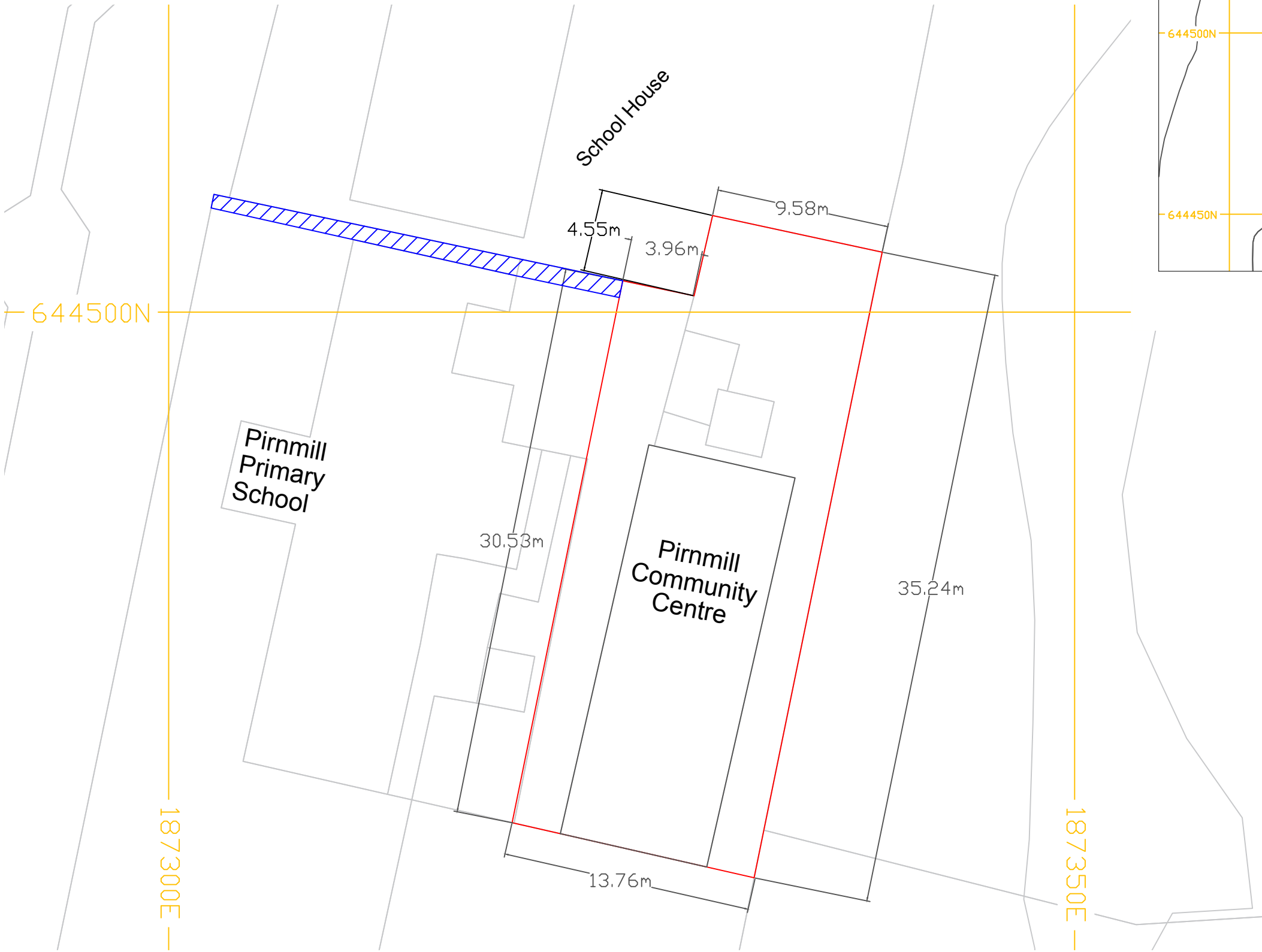
Appendix 1 - Pirnmill Community Centre, Pirnmill

Appendix 2 - Stevenston Shorefront

THIS IS THE PLAN REFERRED TO IN THE FOREGOING LEASE BY THE NORTH AYRSHIRE COUNCIL IN FAVOUR OF PIRNMILL VILLAGE ASSOCIATION OF:

Pirnmill Community Centre, Pirnmill

Area within red boundary = 463.13m<sup>2</sup> or thereby      Area hatched blue = Right of Access



1:1250

Rev	Description	Drawn	Chkd.	Date

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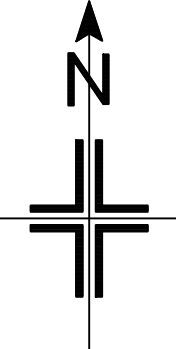
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Pirnmill Community Centre  
Pirnmill, Arran  
KA27 8HP

Project: Lease to Pirnmill Village Association

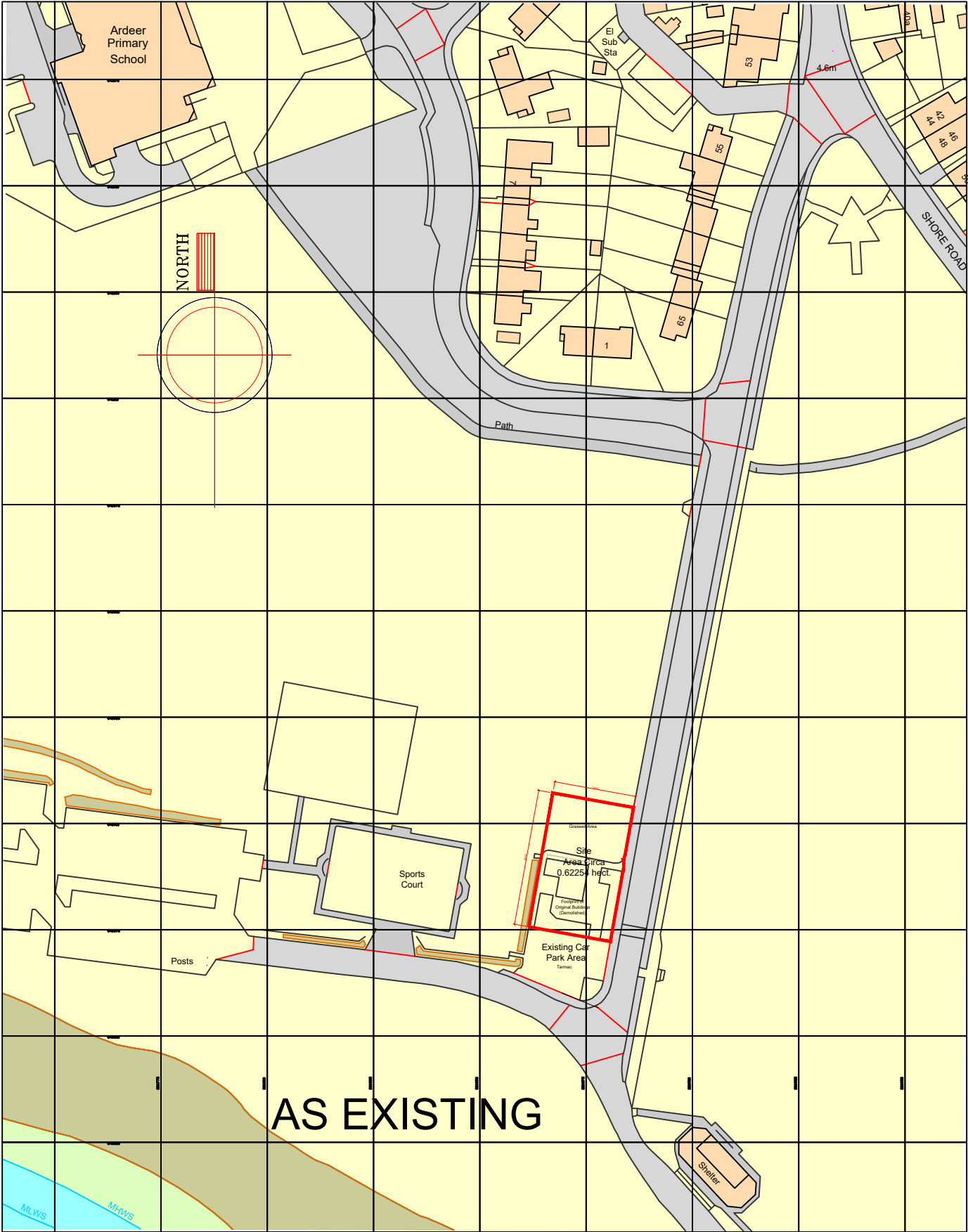
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Drawn: AC	Date: 24/09/2020
Checked:	OS Grid Reference: NR873444
Drawing No: 2020-09-24 - Pirnmill CC.dwg	Rev. Sheet Size A3



1:250







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Location Plan :: 1:1250



View To Site Looking From North East



View To Site Looking From South



Aerial View :: NTS

:: PLANNING PERMISSION ::

NOTES		
Internal dimensions are finished sizes unless otherwise stated.		
REVISION SCHEDULE		
Rev	Description	Date
DO NOT SCALE FROM DRAWING :: SITE CHECK DIMENSIONS		
All dimensions to be site checked by the Contractor and all discrepancies to be advised to the Architect prior to the work being commenced. Use stated dimensions only.		
This Drawing Is Copyright.		
This is the drawing referred to in my application		
Dated :: 1st September 2020		
Signed :: E. Mcmillan		
CLIENT ::		
Raise Your Voice Ardeer		
PROJECT ::		
Proposed New Build Community Building		
Shore Road, Stevenston		
DRAWING ::		
OS Plan ::		
Existing & Alternative Proposed		
Scale	Date	Drawn by
1:1250	17.01.20	emcm
Job No.	Drawing No.	Revision No.
19013	PP 001	.

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