



Cunninghame House,
Irvine.

18 February 2016

North Ayrshire Council (Determination Meeting)

You are requested to attend a Special Meeting of North Ayrshire Council for the purposes of determining planning applications in terms of Section 38A(2) of the Town and Country Planning (Scotland) Act 1997 to be held in the Council Chambers, Cunninghame House, Irvine on **WEDNESDAY 24 FEBRUARY 2016** at **1.30 p.m.** to consider the undernoted business.

Yours faithfully

Elma Murray

Chief Executive

1. Declarations of Interest

Members are requested to give notice of any declarations of interest in respect of items of business on the Agenda.

2. Irvine/Kilwinning

Submit report on the following application:

15/00705/PPPM: Dundonald Links, Ayr Road, Irvine (Page 5)

Planning permission in principle for residential development and visitor accommodation to include associated access, parking, landscaping and ancillary works (copy enclosed).

3. North Coast and Cumbraes

Submit report on the following application:

15/00642/PPM: Site to east of Alexander Avenue, Largs (Page 27)

Erection of educational campus comprising nursery, primary and secondary schools including associated pedestrian and vehicle access points, parking areas, outdoor sports/play areas and landscaping (copy enclosed).

North Ayrshire Council (Determination Meeting)

Sederunt:	Joan Sturgeon Robert Barr John Bell Matthew Brown John Bruce Marie Burns Ian Clarkson Joe Cullinane Anthea Dickson John Easdale John Ferguson Alex Gallagher Willie Gibson Tony Gurney Jean Highgate Alan Hill John Hunter Elizabeth McLardy Grace McLean Catherine McMillan Peter McNamara Ronnie McNicol Ruth Maguire Tom Marshall Jim Montgomerie Alan Munro David O'Neill Irene Oldfather Donald Reid Robert Steel	(Provost) (Depute Provost)	Attending:
			Apologies:
			Meeting Ended:

NORTH AYRSHIRE COUNCIL

Agenda Item 2

North Ayrshire Council (Determination Meeting)

24 February 2016

Planning Area

Irvine/Kilwinning

Reference

15/00705/PPPM

Application

24th November 2015

Registered

Decision Due

24th March 2016

Ward

Irvine West

Recommendation	Grant with conditions as per Appendix 1
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Location	Dundonald Links, Ayr Road, Irvine
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Applicant	Loch Lomond Golf Club Rossdhu House Luss
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Proposal	Planning permission in principle for residential development and visitor accommodation to include associated access, parking, landscaping and ancillary works
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1. Description

Planning permission in principle is sought for a major residential development and visitor accommodation at Dundonald Links Golf Course, Ayr Road, Irvine. The application site, which comprises of approximately 32 hectares, is located approximately 3km south west of Irvine town centre on land to the west of Ayr Road, midway between the Three Stanes roundabout and Meadowhead roundabout. The site is bounded by the Dundonald Links Golf Course to the west and north, Ayr Road (A737) and the Irvine bypass (A78) to the east and agricultural smallholdings to the south (see attached location plan).

The application site is within the boundary of the Dundonald Links Golf Course, which was constructed during the early 2000s. The site is generally level although there are undulations formed by sand dunes and earthworks. Although the site is extensively wooded along its eastern edge adjacent to Ayr Road, the majority of the land has the typical character of a coastal plain heath landscape, historically used for agriculture but disturbed by earthworks during the construction of the golf course. Fragments of the original field boundaries remain visible although most of the site is now colonised by grasses and heathers typical of the coastal plain. With the exception of the existing access road, car park and club house, the site lies outwith the functional parts of the golf course.

Following discussion with officers, an amended indicative layout was submitted in support of the application, which reduced the number of private houses from 65 to 45. The amended proposal envisages 45 private houses for sale and 24 guest/hotel rooms. The applicant has advised that the reasons for the proposed development, are as follows:

- to facilitate the development of previously approved permanent clubhouse accommodation through the provision of enabling development,
- to grow the golf business by increasing the number of members and visitors, through the provision of the clubhouse and visitor accommodation,
- to attract major golfing tournaments and associated events to the course, through the provision of the clubhouse and visitor accommodation .

The applicant considers that the development of the previously consented clubhouse and associated overnight accommodation would require significant funding. The proposed housing development would support the funding package for the proposals indicated above. The applicant also considers that the proposed housing development would result in the following benefits to the local area:

- improved golfing facilities available to visitors,
- increased number of members and day visitors to the course and wider area,
- increased golfing events would generate additional visitor spend in the local economy,
- additional employment opportunities,
- attract more residents to live in the area.

In the adopted Local Development Plan (LDP) the application site lies within an area of protected open space, where Policy ENV 12 (open space) applies. In terms of Policy ENV 12, there is a presumption against the development of protected open space, unless a range of criteria can be satisfied. The following policies are applicable to the consideration of the proposal:

LDP Vision and Spatial Strategy
ENV 12 – Development of Open Space
RES 4 – Affordable Housing
Policy PI 1 - Walking, Cycling and Public Transport
Policy PI 8 - Drainage, SuDs and Flooding
Policy TOU 1 - Tourist Accommodation and Facilities
General Policy.

As the planning application falls into the major developments category, pre-application consultation (PAC) was required, and a notice (ref. 15/15/00477/PREAPM) was submitted on 28th August 2015. The PAC initiated the statutory pre-application procedures. One public event using a 'drop-in' format was held at Dundonald Links Clubhouse on Thursday 15th October 2015 between 4.00pm and 8.00pm. A PAC report has been prepared and submitted with the proposal.

In terms of relevant planning history at the site, there is an extant consent (ref. 06/00113/PP) for the erection of licensed golf clubhouse facilities, 17 no. 2-storey golf units, 40 no. golf lodges, 2 no. security gatehouses, associated roads, car parking and landscaping. Whilst this application was considered by the Planning Committee on 29th May 2006, consent was not issued until 30th May 2013, following the signing of a Section 75 obligation which restricts full time residential occupation of the units and lodges. The basis of the consent was that the lodges and residential units would be sold only to members, corporate members and potential members of Dundonald Links and would include use for corporate entertainment purposes. The lodges and units could be used as accommodation by the owners and/or operators of the golf course, its members, guests and/or other invitees authorised by them as ancillary to the use and enjoyment of the leisure and other facilities provided. The units could not be used as a main residence, nor occupied by any family or individuals for more than four consecutive months in any calendar year.

The 2006 planning application superceded an earlier permission for 30 corporate residential investment units (ref. 01/00145/RMA), which was granted planning permission in May 2001.

More recently, planning permission (ref. 15/00558/PP) was granted for the erection of a clubhouse and an accommodation block for visitors, which followed the approval of an earlier application during 2014 for the erection of a clubhouse (ref. 14/00224/PP). To date, neither consent has been implemented, and a temporary clubhouse has been in operation over a number of years. The consent for the temporary clubhouse has been renewed several times, and the current consent (ref. 14/00460/PP) is due to expire on 29th August 2016.

The proposal falls within the category of "major" development, in terms of the Town and Country Planning (Hierarchy of Developments) (Scotland) Regulations 2009, and the application was accompanied by a Pre-Application Consultation (PAC) report which outlined the steps taken by the applicant to inform the community about the proposed development and offer the opportunity to contribute their views, prior to this application being submitted for determination.

The application is supported by the following documents:

Pre-application consultation report

The PAC report confirms the pre-event publicity measures, which were undertaken and the methods used at the public event to inform those attending. The report states that around 20 people attended the event, all of whom were either members or visitors to the golf club. Notwithstanding the publicity measures, which require a press advertisement, the report notes that no member of the general public attended the event. One written comment was submitted, which supported 'quality' housing development and advocated that some houses should be 'high end.'

Design Statement with concept masterplan

The design statement is non-statutory since this application is for permission in principle. However, the design statement covers site evaluation and analysis. The statement advocates a layout which would work within the existing landscape and ecological framework to create a series of clustered groups of 5 houses. Clusters would be separated by earthworks and dunes, buffered to the east with woodland.

Transport Statement

The transport statement confirms that the site is located within 400m of existing bus stops which are served by frequent services throughout weekdays. There is a footway on Ayr Road which is part of the Core Path Network and provides a direct link to National Cycle Network (NCN) Route 7, which is located approximately 450m north of the site boundary. In addition, the site is well located with respect to both the local and trunk road network. The statement confirms that the development lies outside of the recommended maximum safe walking distances for the schools in the area, and that bus travel would be required for school pupils. The development could be served from the existing golf course access onto Ayr Road.

Supporting Planning Statement

The planning statement acknowledges that new housing would be contrary to the provisions of the Local Development Plan, but highlights that the key outcomes of the proposed development would be an improved clubhouse facility for Dundonald Links; new and high quality housing for North Ayrshire; raise the profile of the club in order to attract national events, which would generate significant economic benefits to the area.

Business Case

The business case highlights the increased land value, which would accrue from a residential planning permission, which would help to underwrite a loan for the construction of the previously consented clubhouse development. Given the low density of the concept masterplan, which aims to provide a housing product not currently oversupplied in the area, there would be higher infrastructure costs. The marketability of the proposed development still needs to be established, although some initial market research has been undertaken. The market research indicates sales values and build rates of recent developments in the local area. The Business Case supports the applicant's assumptions made in terms of the marketability of the site.

Socio-Economic Impact Assessment

The assessment considers a wide range of factors, including the current rate of unemployment in Irvine and North Ayrshire, and presents figures which suggest that the proposed development would create 30 new construction jobs and a net increase of 20 jobs at the local level. It is forecast that the net additional gross value added (GVA) over 15 years would be £9.4m for the local economy.

Extended Phase 1 Habitat Survey

The survey did not find any evidence indicating the presence of protected species during the habitat survey. Further inspection of any trees to be disturbed by the development would be required with respect to the presence of bat roosts. It is also recommended that any future construction works should be undertaken outwith the main bird breeding season.

Geo-environmental Desktop Report

The desktop report drew from a number of previous studies including past site investigation. The report highlighted the potential for on-site sources of contamination from made ground, chiefly in relation to the site of the demolished Meadowhead Cottage. The risk of surface water flooding may present a localised development constraint on low-lying parts of the site. It is recommended that a full ground investigation should be carried out to determine soil properties and whether there is shallow bedrock beneath the site.

Drainage Assessment

The study considers existing drainage connections and highlights that, although foul drainage can drain under gravity to the pumping station within the site, all foul flows would then require to be pumped from the existing pumping station to the existing Scottish Water drainage system on the east side of the A78. Surface water would be drained using soakaways. The assessment also highlights that all drainage would remain private and would be owned and maintained by the site owner/factor.

Finally, the proposed development was subject to negotiation between officers and the applicants, which resulted in a reduction in the indicative number of proposed housing units from 65 to 45. In addition, there is a processing agreement between Planning Services and the applicant, which sets out a timetable for the consultation and decision making process.

2. Consultations and Representations

The application was subject to statutory neighbour notification procedures, which involved the publication of an advertisement in a local newspaper for the purposes of neighbour notification and as development contrary to the development plan on 4th December 2015. No objections or representations were received.

NAC Education & Youth Employment - No objections, and do not consider that the proposed development would result in significant numbers of children. A detailed roll projection has not been possible due to the uncertainty over the timescale for delivery of the proposed development. However, the school that may have a capacity issue is Loudoun-Montgomery PS as the current occupancy is 90%.

Response: Noted. Based on the above response, it is not considered that there would be a significant impact on schools within the catchment area.

NAC Environmental Health - no objections subject to conditions regarding the need for a noise impact assessment in respect of road traffic impacts and nearby commercial and industrial operations. The recommendations contained within the Geo-Environmental Report should be implemented and should any areas of contaminated land be uncovered, a remediation strategy will need to be prepared.

Response: Suitably worded conditions as per the above recommendation could be attached to any grant of planning permission.

NAC Transportation - no objections in principle. Roads Construction Consent would be required for the new length of road. The required visibility splays of 4.5m x 215m can be achieved at the site access.

Response: Noted. A suitably worded informative as per the above observations could be attached to any grant of planning permission.

Prestwick Airport - no objection subject to the standard informative regarding the use of cranes.

Response: Noted. A suitably worded informative as per the above observation could be attached to any grant of planning permission.

South Ayrshire Council - no objection. Given the reduction in the number of units from 65 to 45, together with the focus on tourism and the high-end housing market for enabling development of enhanced golfing facilities at Dundonald Links, SAC is now satisfied that this proposal does not raise sufficient strategic concern.

Response: Noted.

Scottish Natural Heritage - no objection. The proposed site is located approximately 500 metres from the boundary of Western Gailes Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI), which is designated for its invertebrate assemblage and sand dune features. Whilst these are natural heritage interests of national importance, SNH consider that they are unlikely to be affected by the proposal. SNH concur with the findings and recommendations of the Extended Phase 1 Habitat Survey. The proposed designed landscape associated with the residential development should be in keeping with the dune features of the surrounding area.

Response: Noted. Suitably worded conditions and informatives as per the above observation could be attached to any grant of planning permission.

Scottish Wildlife Trust - acknowledges the extant planning consent for a similar footprint but is concerned about the residential nature of the development and the fact that sand-based habitat will be lost. The sand-based habitats have been given insufficient consideration. They are of European importance and have been a priority in every Ayrshire Local Biodiversity Action Plan (LBAP) since 2001. The 2007 to 2010 LBAP, which has not been replaced, specifically protects sand dune habitat in the south Irvine area. SWT consider that the "area maintained for Conservation" should be larger, equating to at least the size of the area being fragmented by housing. It should also be protected in such a way that it cannot be lost to future development or re-design of the golf course. The indicative design of the development appears to recognise the landform of its setting. This affords Dundonald Links the opportunity to continue leading the way in the sustainable management of greenspace. As much of the land as possible should be under the control of the green keeping staff, who have the knowledge and machinery to optimise its biodiversity. Residents' garden ground should be designed with sustainable living and wildlife in mind. Breeding bird and vegetation surveys should be undertaken to inform the Biodiversity Management Plan which should cover the whole development site, not just the area set-aside for biodiversity enhancement. It should be prepared in parallel with the detailed developments plans so that each informs the other. The Scottish Wildlife Trust is willing to assist with the Biodiversity Management Plan and shaping the development.

Response: Noted. The application seeks permission in principle, and the submitted layout is therefore indicative only and has no formal status. Since the submission of the application, the indicative area for development has been reduced by the equivalent of 20 housing units, which would enable a greater area of land to be retained for nature conservation purposes. Suitably worded conditions and informatives as per the above observation could be attached to any grant of planning permission.

SEPA - no objections, and would require the drainage to connect to the public sewerage system. The applicant should deal directly with Scottish Water to ensure that the additional flow arising from this development can be accommodated in the sewer network without causing or contributing to the premature operation of consented storm overflows. SEPA also strongly encourages the consideration of connecting the existing golf club, currently served by private drainage arrangements, onto the proposed site drainage and ultimately the public system. This approach would help to protect people and the environment from the impact of waste water. Any proposed discharge of surface water to the water environment must be in accordance with the principles of the SUDS Manual (C753) which was published by CIRIA in November 2015.

The Council may wish to consider if this proposal is compatible with the existing authorised site/processes adjacent to the proposal site; for example the Meadowhead sewerage treatment works, UPM paper mill, Shewalton Moss landfill and Glaxosmithkline. Due to the nature of the adjacent activities, it is possible that there may be a residual odour and/or noise detected outwith the boundary, within the proposal site. Such residual odour and/or noise may not necessarily represent non-compliance with the site licence conditions and the Council may wish to consider if adequate separation distances have been incorporated within the layout of the proposed development.

Response: Suitably worded conditions or informative as per the above comments could be attached to any grant of planning permission. With respect to the industrial and commercial land uses in the vicinity of the site, see Analysis, below.

West of Scotland Archaeology Service - no objections in principle, subject to a condition being imposed. The application site is situated in an area of archaeological potential on the Ayrshire coastal plain. This is illustrated by the many archaeological records in the surrounding landscape which are the result of random reporting of finds and sites made accidentally during ground disturbance associated with agricultural improvements and the former sandpits over the last 150 years or so. The majority of these represent prehistoric activity. Despite disturbance in recent times it is possible that significant archaeological remains may survive within the application boundary and that these may be damaged or destroyed by the ground-breaking elements of the proposals. The West of Scotland Archaeology Service would advise the Council to consider attaching an archaeological condition to any consent they may be minded to grant this application.

Response: A suitably worded condition as per the recommendation of WoSAS could be attached to any grant of planning permission.

Irvine Community Council - no comments.

Scottish Water - no comments.

3. Analysis

Sections 25 and 37(2) of the Town and Country Planning (Scotland) Act 1997 require that decisions by planning authorities shall be taken in accordance with the development plan, unless material considerations indicate otherwise. In this case, the adopted North Ayrshire Local Development Plan (LDP) is the development plan. The plan was adopted in May 2014 and is therefore up to date. The application seeks planning permission in principle for residential development and tourist accommodation on an area of protected open space, the purpose of which is to help fund a capital investment for improving the facilities on offer at the golf course, as outlined above.

Policy STRAT1 of the LDP states that the Council is committed to stimulating population growth within North Ayrshire through the allocation of land and infrastructure to deliver 7,500 new homes, while creating opportunities for new employment, shopping and leisure facilities.

Policy STRAT2 states that the LDP will contribute to the Council's aim of creating new jobs by 2020 by safeguarding key business and industrial sites. The plan also sets out how residential development at specific locations will be used to cross fund new or improved employment space (eg. West Byrehill, North Newmoor).

Policy STRAT3 states that physical, social and economic regeneration, including the need for transformational change in our towns and villages is a key issue for the LDP.

Policy STRAT4 highlights that tourism plays a key role in the North Ayrshire economy, and that there is scope to build on well established golf and marine based assets. The LDP provides opportunities for further development of key tourism projects.

The spatial strategy which underpins the above strategic policies identifies that housing is the most extensive form of new development in North Ayrshire. The LDP requires to allocate sufficient land to meet need and demand for housing over the 10 year period following adoption. The land supply provides a range of sites in a variety of locations to meet the anticipated need and demand. Within the 'Irvine Bay' Sub-Housing Market Area (Irvine, Kilwinning and the Three Towns), the requirement until 2025 is 4,480 units. In order to reach this figure, the LDP allocated 2,600 units in addition to the established land supply. Within the Irvine area, this allocation included new greenfield releases at Perceton and North Gailes.

Through the LDP process, the selection of land for future housing development is carefully considered, taking into account a range of criteria including factors such as sustainability, infrastructure, settlement patterns, transportation, landscape and visual impact. A key issue in North Ayrshire remains the legacy of vacant and derelict land within and on the fringes of settlements, as evidenced in Policy STRAT3 which seeks "transformational" change in North Ayrshire's settlements in order to regenerate communities physically, socially and economically.

Taking the LDP strategy and the associated spatial strategy into account, it is considered that, in terms of housing need and demand, there is no requirement for additional housing land at the present time in terms of the Local Development Plan. The proposal is therefore contrary to the development plan and requires to be assessed in terms of other material considerations. The key issue is whether or not other material considerations would outweigh the provisions of the development plan.

It is recognised that 'windfall' sites can supplement the established housing land supply. The relative remoteness of the site from the main built-up area of Irvine must be considered in terms of its context: there is an existing built-up industrial area to the south of the town on the east side of the A78 and in close proximity to the site. As such, the site is not located in an area of isolated or open countryside. The proposed development would not result in the coalescence of Irvine with the neighbouring town of Troon. In addition, Ayr Road is a bus route and is well served by frequent services to and from the local area.

The applicant contends that, other than the planned investment in the further development and promotion of the golf club, the proposal would assist in the Council's aim of stimulating population growth through the provision of new housing, in terms of STRAT2. It is considered that the proposed housing development at Dundonald Links could contribute positively to this strategic aim, although on a limited scale.

Part of the justification for the proposed development is based on the premise that the proposal could deliver a substantially different product from that currently on offer by typical volume housebuilders in the area, and that such housing could offer more choice to purchasers than is available elsewhere. An indicative 'concept' masterplan and associated sketch drawings illustrate a possible development form based on a series of housing clusters, located within a low density layout, connected to a spine road. The land between the clusters would remain as open space, with views across the landscape achieved as a result of the undeveloped ground. The concept masterplan was submitted, following discussion with Officers, with the aim of offering a housing development, which would be materially different from the other housing developments currently taking place in the area. The applicant considers that the proposed development would be aimed at a different housing market from mainstream developments, with a focus on high quality retirement homes, holiday/second homes and corporate ownership. The intention is to create a housing development that would be compatible and enhance the environment of a modern links golf course.

In summary, it is considered that the proposed development would have positive regeneration and economic benefits that would support the implementation of key Local Development Plan strategies, in respect of population growth and job creation in the tourism sector.

The proposal also requires to be considered in terms of the following LDP policies:

ENV 12 – Development of Open Space
RES 4 – Affordable Housing
Policy PI 1 - Walking, Cycling and Public Transport
Policy PI 8 - Drainage, SuDs and Flooding
Policy TOU 1 - Tourist Accommodation and Facilities
General Policy.

ENV 12 – Development of Open Space

As noted above, the site has the benefit of planning permission for tourism development under previous consents. The principle of development for tourism accommodation purposes is therefore established. However, the proposed development of housing for owner occupation has now to be considered. In terms of Policy ENV 12, there is a presumption against the development of protected open space unless a range of criteria can be satisfied. In particular, criteria 2, 3 and 4 are relevant to the consideration of this application.

Criterion 2 relates to proposals for developments for purposes other than outdoor recreational pursuits, such as housing. It is a requirement that proposals do not act to set undesirable precedents for further incremental loss of open space. In this particular example, whilst this application is in principle, it is envisaged that a substantial area of open space would remain around the clusters of housing. It is noted that the implementation of the extant consent (ref. 06/00113/PP) for the erection of licensed golf clubhouse facilities, 17 no. 2-storey golf units, 40 no. golf lodges, 2 no. security gatehouses, associated roads, car parking and landscaping would have seen the loss of a wider area of open space. A condition could be imposed to require that a detailed masterplan and development brief is prepared to inform the later stages of the planning process. In so doing, incremental loss of the remaining open space could then be minimised.

Criterion 3 states that proposed developments shall not unacceptably impact upon the recreational and/or amenity value of any area of active or passive open space when considered in relation to overall provision in the local area. It is considered that the recreational value of the land is marginal, given the consent for the tourism units and lodges, and when both considered in relation to the overall provision within Irvine, particularly in respect of golfing activities, and in private ownership. The proposal would also offer an opportunity to secure improvements to golf club facilities.

Criterion 4 relates to the effect of the loss of space in terms of the quality, function or playing capacity of a facility. If the effect is material, alternative provision of a similar or improved facility would be required. In this instance, the land is not used for sports or recreation. The area has been reserved for development purposes as part of the original planning permission granted in 2000, and lies outwith the functional area of the golf course.

In summary, the loss of open space for recreation and amenity purposes is not significant given its restricted access to members of the public. The proposal would also offer the opportunity to enhance the amenity and quality of the remaining open space around the proposed housing and visitor accommodation, which may help to secure future golf events for the course. Given the history of consents at the site, the proposal is therefore satisfactory in relation to Policy ENV 12.

Policy PI 1 - Walking, Cycling and Public Transport

In terms of Policy PI 1, which relates to all development proposals which will result in significant trip generation, applications require to demonstrate that account has been taken of the need of walkers, cyclists and public transport users. A transport statement has been submitted with the application, which considers the various issues and methods to promote active travel and the use of public transport. Whilst the site is well located for pedestrians and cyclists, being connected to an existing footpath on Ayr Road, the main obstacle to the effectiveness of any strategy to promote active travel is the relatively remote location of the site in relation to an existing settlement. However, frequent public transport services are available on Ayr Road. In summary, whilst the location of the site is not fully satisfactory for active travel purposes in terms of Policy PI 1, the provision of multi-user links to Ayr Road could be required as part of a masterplan for the site to support and encourage walking, cycling and public transport use, which could be addressed by condition.

Policy PI 8 - Drainage, SuDS and Flooding

Policy PI 8 is relevant due to the scale of the proposed development. The application has been subject to a drainage assessment, which highlights that all foul drainage would require to be pumped from the existing pumping station in the site to the Scottish Water drainage system on the east side of the A78. Surface water would be drained using soakaways. The assessment also highlights that all drainage would remain private and would be owned and maintained by the site owner/factor.

Policy RES 4 - Affordable Housing

Policy RES 4 requires all proposals for residential development to make a contribution to affordable housing provision. For the Irvine/Kilwinning sub-market housing area, a contribution of 15% is required and should be provided in line with the Council's supplementary guidance. It has not been demonstrated how the affordable housing contribution would be met, although the matter could be addressed by condition at this stage in the planning process.

Policy TOU 1 - Tourist Accommodation and Facilities

Proposals for tourist accommodation within settlements and in the countryside are supported by the LDP. Whilst the proposal is not within an area allocated as countryside, the site is outwith a settlement and has the characteristics of an urban fringe location ie. the land is undeveloped and is protected as an area of open space.

As noted above, the site has the benefit of planning permission for tourism development under previous consents. As such, the visitor accommodation element of the proposal is considered to be acceptable in principle, in terms of Policy TOU 1 in that the proposal can satisfy criteria (b) and (c) of the policy. In terms of criterion (b), there is a site specific locational need for visitor accommodation associated with the golf course to support the development of the club as a tourism/visitor attraction. In terms of criterion (c), the scale and character of the visitor accommodation envisaged in terms of the submitted design statement and concept masterplan would be confined to a relatively small part of the site close to the clubhouse. The proposal is therefore acceptable in terms of Policy TOU 1 insofar as it relates to visitor accommodation. The proposed housing would be justified against Policy TOU 1 as enabling development for tourism development.

General Policy

In relation to the General Policy of the LDP, criterion (a) requires the proposed development to be acceptable in terms of siting, design and external appearance. As per Policy PI 1, criterion (a) also requires the development to incorporate the principles of the Scottish Government's Designing Streets and Designing Places guidance. It is understood that the applicant intends to market the site with the benefit of planning permission in principle. It is considered that the masterplan and development brief for the site would assist in the marketing of the site. The subsequent Matters Specified in Conditions applications (MSC) would then be informed, assessed and determined against the approved masterplan and the associated development brief. This approach would produce more certainty in terms of access, layout, drainage and design concepts for the scheme. The more detailed design issues, such as house types, external finishes, landscape design, would all be addressed within the MSC applications. Although little weight can be attached to siting and design issues at this stage, the proposed 'concept' as envisaged within the indicative layout, is generally satisfactory in this regard, since it would appear to offer a different housing product within a low density development, taking account of the location and landscape setting.

In relation to criterion (b) Amenity, it is considered that the proximity of the site to established industrial and landfill sites to the south of Irvine, as highlighted by SEPA, may have adverse impacts on residential amenity. However, it is not considered that such impacts can be fully assessed at this stage given the lack of detailed information available. In addition, road traffic noise may impact on amenity, given the proximity of the site to the A78 Irvine bypass. Environmental Health recommends the preparation of a noise assessment to meet acceptable residential noise standards, which could be secured by condition.

Criterion (d) relates to access, road layout and parking provision. The Council's Transportation Service has offered no objection to the proposed development. Conditions would be required to ensure that the development is designed in accordance with the principles of the Scottish Government's Designing Streets and Designing Places policy documents.

It is considered that the loss of open space at this location to a residential development would be outweighed by the proposed improvements to the facilities available at the golf course and the wider economic benefits to North Ayrshire over the medium to long term. Whilst it is acknowledged that there is no specific locational or operational requirement for residential development on the site, the submitted socio-economic impact analysis and business case outlines positive benefits in terms of jobs and economic activity. The applicant has also highlighted the following key benefits:

- Loch Lomond Golf Club, owner and applicant for Dundonald Links, is an international golf club with 75% of its membership coming from outwith Scotland. Loch Lomond Golf Club actively promotes Dundonald to its members as a links course and acts as a tour operator for members' visits to Scotland, including staying in Arran. The Club indicate that their members and guests generate significant expenditure on local accommodation, produce and services;
- There is interest in the proposed development by members for investment purposes - the housing would not therefore have the same function or use as mainstream development elsewhere in the area;
- The Club would ensure that the design and delivery of the proposed housing would be unique, bespoke and not of a type currently available in the local area;
- The course has a growing reputation as a golfing destination - several European Tour Qualifying Schools have taken place as well as the Ladies Open in 2015 and various international amateur events;
- The Club is seeking to host the Scottish Open in 2017, and highlights that the 2015 event held at Castle Stuart in Highland was worth £6 million to the local area with 60,000 people attending over 4 days;
- If the Club is successful in attracting the Scottish Open, the rota system would ensure a return every 3 to 4 years;
- Dundonald Links also plans to become an Open qualifier course and would seek to attract other events based on its reputation as a high quality links course of international repute;
- The Ayrshire economy would benefit from the promotion and expenditure gained through hosting such major golfing events.

In summary, the proposed housing would represent a form of enabling development that would help to unlock significant potential economic, social and sporting benefits for North Ayrshire and the wider Ayrshire economy. On the grounds of economic benefit, it is considered that the proposed development would outweigh the provisions of the LDP in terms of the spatial strategy for housing development. As the applicant has advised from the outset, the intention is to create a housing type and layout that would be wholly different to other housebuilder developments in the area and be compatible with the coastal dunes landscape character of the adjacent golf course. Conditions to achieve this outcome could be attached.

Accordingly, it is recommended that the Council is favourably disposed to grant planning permission subject to the conditions set out in Appendix 1.

4. Full Recommendation

See Appendix 1.



KAREN YEOMANS
Executive Director (Economy and Communities)

Cunninghame House, Irvine
19 January 2016

For further information please contact Anthony Hume, Senior Development Management Officer , on 01294 324318

APPENDIX 1

RECOMMENDATION FOR PLANNING APPLICATION REF NO 15/00705/PPPM

Grant subject to the following conditions:-

1. That prior to the submission of the first application for the approval of matters specified in conditions (MSC), a programme of archaeological works in accordance with a written scheme of investigation, the results of which shall inform the layout of the detailed masterplan required by Condition 3, shall be submitted for the approval of North Ayrshire Council as Planning Authority. Thereafter, the developer shall ensure that the approved programme of archaeological works is fully implemented and that all recording and recovery of archaeological resources within the development site is undertaken to the satisfaction of North Ayrshire Council as Planning Authority.

2. That prior to the submission of the first application for the approval of matters specified in conditions (MSC) a scheme to treat the surface water arising from the site in accordance with the principles and practices contained in CIRIA's SuDS Manual (C753) (published 11th November 2015), the results of which shall inform the layout of the detailed masterplan required by Condition 3, shall be submitted for the written approval of North Ayrshire Council as Planning Authority. Thereafter, the scheme as may be approved shall be implemented during the course of development and maintained thereafter to the satisfaction of North Ayrshire Council as Planning Authority.

3. That prior to the submission of the first application for the approval of matters specified in conditions (MSC), a detailed masterplan for the site and a development brief shall be submitted for the approval of North Ayrshire Council as Planning Authority. The detailed masterplan and development brief shall take into account the findings of the archaeological investigations and the detailed SuDS scheme required by conditions 1 and 2 respectively, and shall indicate:

- the means of access to the site, including multi-user link(s) to public transport at Ayr Road;
- the development layout;
- the housing designs for the development;
- structural landscaping including earthworks to mitigate road noise from the A78 and industry;
- areas of open space;
- areas for children's play and
- phasing.

For the avoidance of doubt, the maximum number of housing units within the development hereby approved shall not exceed 45. In addition, the housing development area shall be limited to the land generally to the south of the replacement clubhouse consented under the terms of planning permission ref. 15/00558/PP.

Thereafter, the details contained in the MSC application(s) shall accord with the detailed masterplan and development brief as may be approved, to the satisfaction of North Ayrshire Council as Planning Authority.

4. That the approval of North Ayrshire Council as Planning Authority with regard to the siting, design and external appearance of, landscaping, means of access to the proposed development and affordable housing contribution shall be obtained before the development is commenced.

5. That application(s) for the approval of matters specified in conditions (MSC) shall include details of the noise mitigation measures in accordance with PAN 1/2011 'Planning and Noise' and the associated Technical Advice Note (TAN) - 'Assessment of Noise'. The assessment shall take into account all noise related details contained in the consultation response of Environmental Health dated 9th December 2015. Thereafter, the findings arising from the noise impact assessment as may be approved shall be implemented prior to any of the houses being occupied to the satisfaction of North Ayrshire Council as Planning Authority.

6. That application(s) for the approval of matters specified in conditions (MSC) shall include measures to implement the findings and recommendations of the Extended Phase 1 Habitat Survey prepared by Energised Environments Ltd dated October 2015. Thereafter, the development shall be implemented only in accordance with the measures as may be approved unless North Ayrshire Council as Planning Authority gives written consent to any variation.

7. That application(s) for the approval of matters specified in conditions (MSC) shall include a biodiversity action plan, which shall include details of bat hibernacula, bird boxes, wildflowers and other measures to promote/safeguard biodiversity and nature conservation. Thereafter, the action plan as may be approved shall be implemented prior to the completion or occupation of the development, whichever is the sooner, to the satisfaction of North Ayrshire Council as Planning Authority.

8. That visibility splays of 4.5m x 215m shall be provided and maintained on land within the applicant's control, such that there is no obstruction to visibility above a height of 1.05 metre measured above the adjacent carriageway level to the satisfaction of North Ayrshire Council as Planning Authority.

9. That, prior to the commencement of the development, hereby approved, full details of proposed treeworks and tree protection measures for the development shall be submitted for the written approval of North Ayrshire Council as Planning Authority. The details shall comply with the principles and practices contained in "BS 5837:2012 - Trees in relation to design, demolition and construction - Recommendations." Detailed plans indicating tree protection fencing to be erected, an Arboricultural Impact Assessment and an Arboricultural Method Statement shall be submitted for written approval. For the avoidance of doubt:

- there shall be no treeworks undertaken during the main bird breeding season (March - September);
- all tree protection measures to be erected shall be maintained in a satisfactory condition for the duration of all engineering and construction operations until the completion of the development.

The development shall be implemented only in accordance with such details as may be approved to the satisfaction of North Ayrshire Council as Planning Authority.

10. That, during the implementation of the development hereby approved, all recommendations contained within the report titled "Residential Development - Dundonald Links, Geo-Environmental Desk Study Report" by Fairhurst, Report No. 111895 and dated November 2015 shall be implemented to the satisfaction of North Ayrshire Council as Planning Authority.

11. That the presence of any significant unsuspected contamination that becomes evident during the development of the site shall be brought to the attention of Environmental Health. Thereafter a suitable investigation strategy as agreed with North Ayrshire Council shall be implemented and any necessary remediation works carried out prior to any further

development taking place on the site, all to the satisfaction of North Ayrshire Council as Planning Authority.

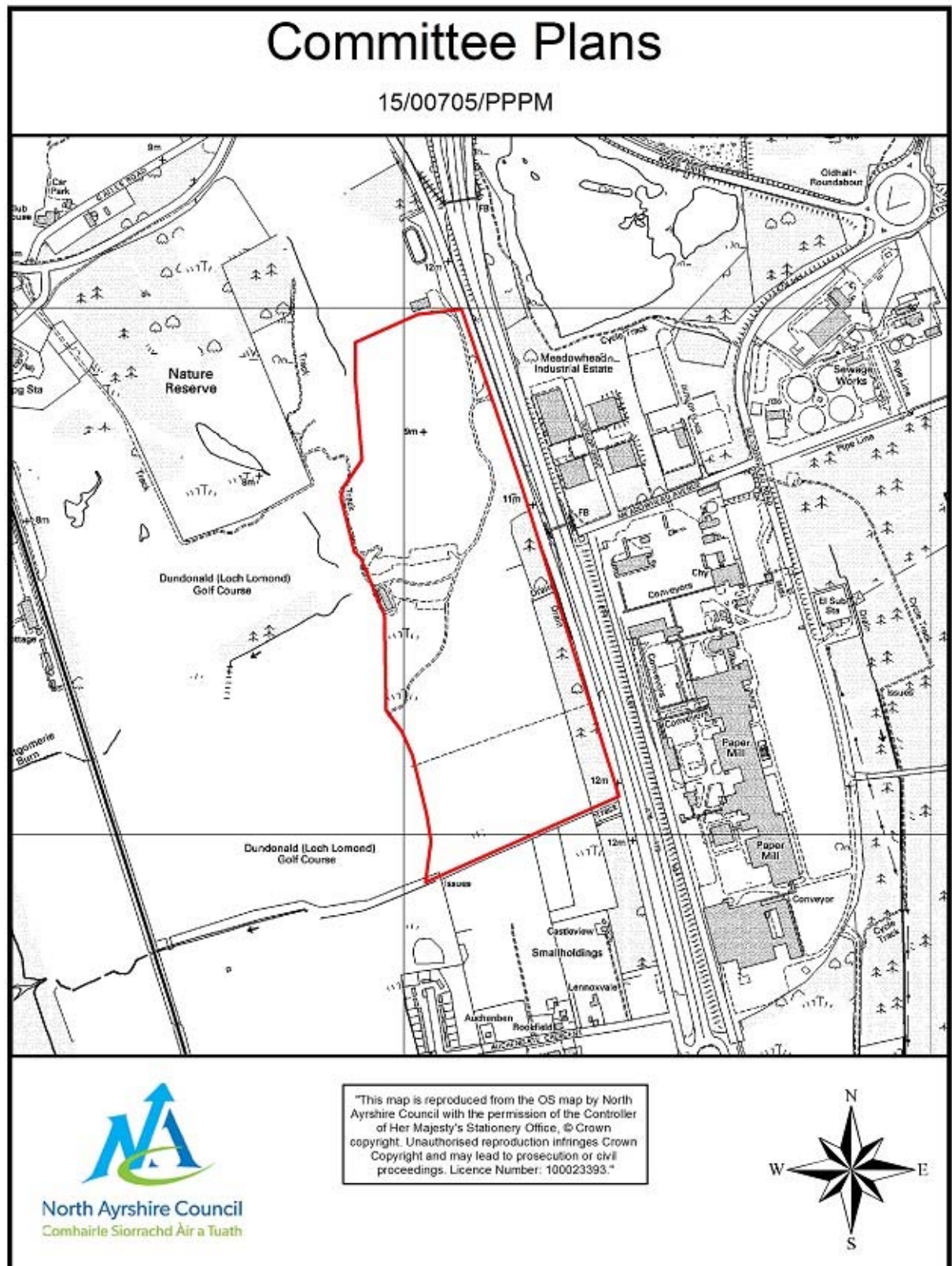
The reason(s) for the above condition(s) are:-

1. To meet the requirements of the West of Scotland Archaeology Service.
2. To ensure that an appropriate SuDS strategy is prepared and implemented.
3. To secure a masterplan for the development in the interests of the proper planning of the area.
4. In order that these matters can be considered in detail.
5. In the interests of amenity of the development.
6. In the interests of nature conservation.
7. In the interests of nature conservation.
8. In the interest of road safety.
9. In the interests of nature conservation and amenity.
10. To meet the requirements of Environmental Health.
11. To meet the requirements of Environmental Health.

Reason(s) for approval:

1. The proposal does not comply with the relevant provisions of the Local Development Plan, however other material considerations indicate otherwise and planning permission should be granted.

Appendix: Location Map



NORTH AYRSHIRE COUNCIL

Agenda Item 3

North Ayrshire Council (Determination Meeting)

24 February 2016

Planning Area

North Coast and Cumbraes

Reference

15/00642/PPM

Application

10th November 2015

Registered

Decision Due

10th March 2015

Ward

North Coast and Cumbraes

Recommendation	Agree, subject to referral to Scottish Ministers in terms of the Town and Country Planning (Notification of Applications) (Scotland) Direction 2009, to grant with conditions as per Appendix 1
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Location	Site to east of Alexander Avenue, Largs
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Applicant	North Ayrshire Council (Education & Skills) Cunninghame House, Irvine
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Proposal	Erection of educational campus comprising nursery, primary and secondary schools including associated pedestrian and vehicle access points, parking areas, outdoor sports/play areas and landscaping
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1. Description

Planning permission is sought for the development of the "Largs Campus" on a greenfield site of approximately 7ha located to the east of Alexander Avenue in Largs. The development would comprise two primary schools, an early years centre, a secondary school and a range of indoor and outdoor leisure facilities for both school and community use. The development would serve as a replacement for Largs Academy and the three primary schools in the town together with their associated nurseries.

The required capacity and proposed facilities for the Campus is as follows:

- 1200 pupil secondary school
- 610 pupil non-denominational primary school
- 210 pupil denominational primary school
- 100 place early years centre
- 1 synthetic 7 a side sports pitch
- 1 multi-use games area
- 219 space car park

The site includes agricultural land and part of the golf training ground operated by sportscotland within the Inverclyde National Centre. The south western part of the site comprises an area of public open space which is bounded by Alexander Avenue to the west and Alexander Walk to the south. There is a minor watercourse, known as the Moor Burn, which crosses the southern part of the site. The land rises generally uphill from west to east and generally uphill from south to north. The difference in ground level across the site, from west to east, is between 5 and 10 metres.

In terms of building form, the proposed campus would comprise a linked group of large cuboid shaped compartments or blocks. The scale of each block has been designed to reflect the different user groups and establishments within the campus. Therefore, the building would be lower on its western side where the primary schools and early years centre would be located with their own separate entrances. In contrast, the eastern side would be up to 4 storeys in height where the secondary school would be located. In effect, the building would 'step' up the contours of the site, with the central part of the building facing south onto an 'entrance plaza' for the secondary school. The building would be clad externally using a limited range of materials, consistent throughout the campus to enable the building to be read as one development. The use of a light coloured brick and large glazed panels of varying sizes would define the main elevations. Parapet walls would give the impression of flat roof. In fact, mono-pitched roofs would be concealed behind the parapets in order to ensure efficient drainage of rainwater.

Car parking for the campus as a whole would be provided to the south of the building, with access taken from Alexander Avenue, where a 20mph speed limit would be introduced over a length of the street. In addition, a "school bus only" access is proposed from an existing cul-de-sac leading off Alexander Avenue. A service vehicle access is proposed from the north, leading from the access road to the Inverclyde National Centre. Two "pedestrian only" access points are proposed at the south end of the campus, leading from Alexander Avenue and Alexander Walk. The proposed pedestrian access from Greeto Falls Avenue has been deleted following consideration of concerns regarding drop-off and pick-up conflicts with residential parking. A signal controlled pedestrian crossing is also proposed near the site access on Alexander Avenue.

The proposed car park would have 219 parking spaces, of which 15 would be wheelchair accessible. Around 136 of the parking spaces would be allocated to staff, with the remainder for general use. Such general use would include afternoon pick-up, which is known to be the peak period of demand. The finishing times for each establishment within the campus would be staggered in order to create turnover of the general parking spaces. Two drop-off areas are also proposed within the car park. As noted above, school buses would access the site from a 'bus only' entrance, and a dedicated drop-off area for buses provided alongside a one way road. Buses would then exit the campus via the same route as general traffic.

Cycle and scooter parking provision for staff and pupils is also proposed at a ratio appropriate to the proposed development, taking into account the school catchment area.

The proposed hours of operation of the campus would be from 8am - 10pm each day, and it is proposed that the public would have access to the sports facilities outwith school hours.

Dense planting is proposed to create a landscaped buffer between the main development area and the rear of Alexander Avenue. Elsewhere, planting would be used for screening and amenity purposes at the southern end of the site. To the north of the campus building, the majority of the land would be retained as open space, partially developed with a synthetic 7-a-side sports pitch but otherwise enhanced as a habitat area. In addition, each school within the campus would have its own self-contained playground. Existing woodland areas at the north end of the site would be retained.

The site is located on the eastern edge of Largs, approximately 1km north east of the town centre and immediately to the east of Alexander Avenue between the existing residential area north of Holehouse Road and to the south of the Inverclyde National Centre. East of the site, the ground rises gradually towards the uplands of Clyde Muirshiel Regional Park.

In terms of the adopted North Ayrshire Local Development Plan, the site encompasses three distinct policy areas. At the southern end of the site, where the access road, footpaths and part of car park would be located, the land is allocated as open space. To the north of this area, the land is allocated for affordable housing development under Policy RES 4 (6). Northwards, the remainder of the site is within an area of protected open space within the Special Landscape Area of Clyde Muirshiel Regional Park. The following policies are applicable to the consideration of the proposal:

LDP Vision and Spatial Strategy
Policy RES 4 – Affordable Housing
Policy ENV 7 – Special Landscape Area
Policy ENV 12 – Development of Open Space
Policy PI 1 - Walking, Cycling and Public Transport
Policy PI 7 - Waste Management
Policy PI 8 - Drainage, SUDs and Flooding

Policy PI 10 - Community Infrastructure
Policy PI 13 - Carbon Emissions and New Buildings
General Policy.

In terms of planning history, there have been no previous planning applications for the site. As the planning application falls into the major developments category, pre-application consultation was required, and a notice (ref. 15/00351/PREAPM) was submitted on 19th June 2015. This initiated the statutory pre-application procedures. Two public events using a 'drop-in' format were held in Largs on 24th August and 26th August 2015. The project team has also held follow-up meetings with local residents to discuss the proposal. A pre-application consultation report has been prepared and submitted with the proposal.

Other documentation submitted in support of the application includes the following, a summary of which is provided for each:

Pre-application Consultation (PAC) Report

The PAC report indicates that the main topics expressed by members of the public related to:

- Impact on surrounding road network
- Car/bus entrance strategy
- Site selection
- Provision of denominational and non-denominational schools
- Vacant school sites
- Communal, open plan toilets
- Safe routes to school for pedestrians and cyclists
- Location of site compound, etc.
- Scale of building
- Proximity of playgrounds to neighbouring residential areas
- Pedestrian/vehicle segregation within car park
- Number of car park and drop-off spaces

The PAC report then considers each of the points raised in the various responses and where possible, amendments were made to accommodate the matters raised at pre-application stage.

Design and Access Statement

The statement considers the location of the site, its topography and context within the area, its physical constraints, the relationship with the landscape and its opportunities. The statement also considers the client brief, the rationale for the proposed siting within the site, the campus design and its architectural character. The access issues raised by the site together with commentary on traffic, public transport, walking and cycling routes in the area are also considered.

Supporting Planning Statement

The statement reviews the various planning policies relevant to the proposal and provides a response against each.

Transport Assessment (TA)

The TA describes the proposal; analyses the predicted travel patterns; describes the pick-up/drop-off arrangements and estimates the likely changes in parking and traffic volumes on the roads surrounding the proposed campus.

Noise Impact Assessment

The assessment considered existing conditions at the site and sets out proposals for sound insulation requirements within the building. The assessment does not consider the impact of external noise from traffic, sports pitches or playgrounds, and additional noise assessment work is therefore required.

Geotechnical and Environmental Assessment

The assessment follows intrusive site investigation of ground conditions and the chemical composition of soil samples from 70 boreholes and trial pits. No abnormal or unexpected ground conditions were encountered. Laboratory testing of the sampled materials taken from the ground concludes that the site is not affected by contaminants of risk to human health.

Drainage Strategy and Flood Risk Assessment

A flood risk assessment document has been produced which considers the impact of the Moor Burn. Initial long-length culvert proposals have been amended in favour of short-length culverts limited to roads and footpath crossings. Drainage design would ensure that rainwater would be managed according to SuDS principles.

Civil and Structural Design Statement

This document outlines several other studies which have been undertaken, such as transport, drainage and geotechnical, in order to provide a summary of the various issues encountered in preparing a comprehensive and workable design for the development.

Bat Survey

A bat survey was undertaken in September 2015, which did not indicate the presence of any bat roosts on the site. Further survey work is recommended prior to any tree felling.

Extended Phase 1 Habitat Survey

The survey area included land beyond the site boundary. Within the wider area, a number of protected species were identified. The survey recommends that any tree felling works avoid the main bird breeding season (March – September), and also that pre-construction surveys for badger and otter should also be carried out within 2 weeks before the commencement of any works.

Finally, the application was subject to a processing agreement between Planning Services and the applicant, which set out the list of documents required, and a timetable for the consultation and decision making process.

2. Consultations and Representations

The application was subject to statutory neighbour notification procedures, and included the publication of an advertisement in a local newspaper for the purposes of neighbour notification and development contrary to the development plan on 18th November 2015. 13 members of the public have submitted objections about the proposal.

Grounds of objection:

1. Loss of open space and inadequate landscaping. NAC has a campaign document entitled 'Fit for the Future' and it is considered that the loss of a well-used area of public open space to accommodate an access road would be inconsistent with its aims. The proposal does not compensate for this loss of open space and the landscaping proposals within the remaining area of open space would not screen the traffic and the campus building. Using greenspace for development without providing new safe green areas for children to play on is not encouraging children to be active.

Response: The most southerly part of the site is identified as an area of open space in the adopted LDP. The land is owned and maintained by the Council. It is proposed to form the main access route into the site across this area, although some undeveloped land would remain to either side of the roads and paths. Landscaping of the remaining land could be provided to create a visual screen that would filter views of the road and campus from the existing housing to the south of this area. The proposal itself would provide new sports facilities for the use of the public. Outwith the site, the area of public open space to the west of Alexander Avenue, which includes a children's play park, would be retained. Pedestrian access to this area would be improved with a new puffin crossing to be provided as part of the development. The central portion of the application site was allocated for housing in terms of the adopted LDP, with up to 80 new houses envisaged for this greenfield site. Taking this into account, the principle of major development on a significant part of the application site has already been established. As such, it is not considered that, although important to the adjacent residents, the relatively small loss of public open space at the southern end of the site is significant, particularly given that the development would enhance the facilities available locally for sports, exercise and physical fitness.

2. Traffic and parking – with all existing schools relocating onto one site, and taking into account the characteristics of the local residential roads, it is considered that the potential for traffic chaos is significant. The volume of traffic generated by the development would lead to congestion in the adjacent streets and have an adverse effect on child safety. Emergency vehicles could be blocked at peak times. The car parking figures are disputed and the surveys which have been undertaken are considered to be inadequate. Overall, the parking and drop-off provision is unlikely to meet actual need/demand. Could the road access be relocated towards the Inverclyde area which already has a road? A one way system through the proposed campus using this road would be preferred, since this would reduce congestion on Alexander Avenue.

Response: The traffic and transport issues associated with the proposed development have been thoroughly assessed by Transportation Officers within the Council who have concluded with a recommendation of no objections, subject to conditions (see consultation response, below). As noted above, the proposed pedestrian access into the site from Greeto Falls Avenue has been deleted in response to concerns expressed by local residents. In addition, in order to meet LDP policy on developments involving significant trip generation, conditions relating to the preparation of a Public Transport Strategy and Travel Plan could also be attached. The purpose of each would be to investigate potential options for enhanced public transport provision to serve the campus, and to prepare a strategy to encourage/support active travel for staff and pupils. In addition, a 20mph zone and signal controlled pedestrian crossing would be provided on Alexander Avenue, with cycle and scooter parking provided for users of the campus. The road access arrangements have been proposed at the optimum location for the site, taking into account the surrounding road network.

It is considered that further work is required to identify and improve the pedestrian routes to the proposed campus. It is evident that, through the relatively low number of school buses serving the site that (a) its location is well positioned to serve the catchment and (b) the main form of travel would be on foot. Conditions could be imposed to meet these requirements.

3. Loss of residential amenity – the development would result in the loss of the semi-rural environment which bounds the edge of the existing housing areas near the site. These areas have enjoyed an attractive environment until now. As well as the loss of open land, the proposed development would create visual intrusion, generate unwanted adverse noise and traffic, create disturbance and light pollution, both during and after construction. The development would also result in a loss of daylight to houses on Alexander Avenue.

Response: The majority of the site has already been allocated for affordable housing development in the adopted LDP; therefore, the principle of major development on much of the site has already been established. The site is the most suitable in the town for the scale of the proposed development, as discussed elsewhere in the report. The proposal incorporates measures to mitigate environmental impacts, including visual, internal noise, transport, ecology, drainage, and conditions could be imposed to address other impacts such as transport and travel, CO2 emissions, lighting design and external noise.

4. Inappropriate building scale and design - the incorporation of all of the education facilities within the town onto one site would be very unsatisfactory, not only because the building would be far too large, but because children would become anonymous and the age range from nursery to secondary is too great - it is considered that this proposal would not be a good environment for learning. Furthermore, communal toilet facilities would be inappropriate. In addition, due to its height and proximity to Alexander Avenue, the building would be imposing, particularly on nearby housing. The use of white brickwork would make the campus 'stick out' rather than harmonise with the neighbouring areas. It is considered that this would be contrary to the General Policy of the adopted LDP.

Response: The Council has followed the statutory consultation processes on the proposed amalgamation of the local schools onto a single site, and this issue does not require consideration as part of the planning application. Internal layout and toilet arrangements are not planning matters. Regarding the physical planning issues raised, proposed design would gradually 'step' up the hillside, with the lowest part being separated from Alexander Avenue by a landscaped buffer strip. A final choice of external materials is still to be made although the intention is to create a light coloured building that would create a landmark and add positively to the skyline. The design concept has been fully documented in the submitted Design and Access Statement, which confirms that the principles of Designing Places have been incorporated into the proposed development. The aim is to create "a simple elegant building with strong sense of character and identity; a robust durable building." Large windows would be incorporated to gain the benefit of the setting. The pattern of fenestration would be more fluid and less regimented in comparison to the existing school buildings in Largs. A condition could be imposed to ensure the external finishing materials are suitable for the development. See also Analysis, below.

5. Soundproofing – Would the Council soundproof and provide dedicated parking spaces for the affected residential properties?

Response: The applicant has advised that the only proposed alterations to the existing road network are in respect of two connections with Alexander Avenue. A noise assessment would be undertaken, although it is considered unlikely that noise limits would be exceeded to an extent that would result in soundproofing of nearby housing. In addition, dedicated parking for affected residential properties does not form part of the planning application and is not proposed.

6. Culverting - the proposed culverting of the Moor Burn would result in the loss of a valuable environmental resource.

Response: The original proposal to culvert a long length of the Moor Burn has since been amended in order to meet the requirements of SEPA.

7. Supporting information contained in application – concerns are expressed that the photomontage of the proposed campus as viewed from the south is not realistic and the greenspaces would not be as large as suggested.

Response: The photomontage is for information purposes only. It is shown to the correct scale but does not illustrate the proposed landscaping, which would enhance the setting of the campus and create buffer strips with the adjacent housing.

Consultations

Access Officer - In line with Policy PI 1 of the adopted LDP, any new paths within the site or linking to the site should be clearly signposted, well lit and overlooked where possible. In terms of cycle parking, provision should be made for at least 10% of the peak staff numbers, 10% of the peak visitor numbers and at least 10% of the pupil numbers within the cycling catchment area for the facility i.e. excluding those pupils transported by bus. Parking provision for scooters should also be provided for 1% of pupil numbers within the cycling catchment area. In line with Policy PI 1 of the adopted Local Development Plan, the cycle and scooter parking should be secure and located in a visible and accessible location. The purpose of this is to meet the objective of the Cycling Action Plan for Scotland (CAPS) that 10% of all journeys will be undertaken by bike by 2020 and in recognition of the fact that cycling is an encouraged method of transport for the development.

In addition, the Council is working with Largs Community Council and Sustrans to secure funding to undertake an Active Travel Study for Largs. This will identify opportunities to improve path networks for walking and cycling for everyday journeys within the town. The need for the study was identified at a recent meeting between representatives from Largs Community Council, Sustrans Scotland and North Ayrshire Council. The development of the Study is dependent on securing funding from Sustrans Community Links Fund and Strathclyde Partnership for Transport's Capital Programme. It is envisaged that further funding applications will be required to implement the study's recommendations in future financial years.

Response: Noted. The proposed development would make provision for active travel, and conditions could be attached to meet the above requirements.

Clyde Muirshiel Regional Park Authority – no objections. CMRP agree with the findings of the ecological report regarding the importance of maintaining the woodland area. There are 3 aspen trees within the site which are not acknowledged in the survey – these trees should be retained as aspen is in decline in Scotland. In addition, it would be of benefit to establish bat hibernacula on the school building, as well as bird boxes which could contribute to the biodiversity of the school grounds.

Response: Noted. Conditions could be imposed to require the retention and protection of the semi-natural broadleaved trees, such as aspen, and the preparation and implementation of a 'biodiversity action plan' for the site.

Environmental Health - no objections subject to conditions regarding (i) the need for additional soil samples and analysis to ensure that a suitable water supply pipe medium is selected according to the prevailing ground conditions, (ii) that any unsuspected contamination is investigated and remediated, (iii) that any increased road traffic shall not have a detrimental effect on air quality such that statutory Air Quality Objectives would be exceeded at any location of relevant public exposure and that (iv) the rated noise level from the operation of any air conditioning units, heating units, refrigeration units or any other plant at the completed development should not exceed the background level by 5dB(A) or more at the curtilage of nearby noise sensitive premises.

Advice is also provided with respect to noise insulation - under the terms of the Noise Insulation (Scotland) Regulations 1975, a Roads Authority must offer grants to domestic premises if after an alteration to a highway the noise levels from road traffic exceeds 68dB(A) L10 (18 hours) and that the new noise levels from road traffic exceed the pre-existing levels by at least 1dB(A). In view of this, it is recommended that a road traffic noise calculation is carried out prior to the commencements of works.

Response: Conditions and informatives to meet the requirements of Environmental Health could be attached to any grant of planning permission. Scottish Water are responsible for approving the water supply pipe. The applicant's agent has advised that further site analysis will be conducted to meet the requirements of Scottish Water. With regard to noise insulation for residential properties, see response to objection comment (5) above.

Flooding Officer - no objection to the proposal on flooding grounds. The Moor Burn is a small watercourse which crosses the development site where the new car park is proposed. The Burn is culverted from Alexander Avenue to its discharge point at the Firth of Clyde. The drainage assessment states that the foul and surface water systems will be separated on site. Surface water will be discharged into the Moor Burn. Flows will be attenuated within the underground drainage system and restricted to a 1 in 30 year storm event. Additional attenuation will be provided to ensure that there is no considerable or unacceptable flooding in the event of a 1 in 200 year storm.

Currently, overland flows follow the gradient of the land and flow towards the Moor Burn. A new boundary bund would protect the Largs Campus site from overland flooding and perimeter filter trenches proposed along the western boundary to ensure runoff is collected and attenuated, thereby protecting neighbouring properties.

Response: Noted. The submitted drainage information and revisions to the proposed culverting are considered to be satisfactory in relation to flood risk and drainage requirements.

Housing Services - No objections. It is noted that the proposed development would result in the loss of a major affordable housing site to the east of Alexander Avenue. The North Coast (incorporating Largs) is identified within the Council's Strategic Housing Investment Plan as the highest priority area within North Ayrshire for affordable housing investment. Land within the area is scarce, with recent developments being progressed on brownfield sites. Housing Services supports the use of the Inverclyde site to enable the Largs Campus to be developed. The development of the campus on the Inverclyde site for education use would release a substantial area of land across the four existing school sites. Should the Campus planning application be approved, the Council would make a comparable level of affordable housing provision within these sites following the completion of the new campus and demolition of the existing school buildings.

Response: Noted.

Largs Community Council – in their response dated 17th February 2016, object to the application as contrary to the Local Development Plan on the following grounds:

(a) ENV 12 (Development of Open Space)

Public open space to the north of Alexander Walk would be developed for the main access road into the site, which would be 3 lanes wide resulting in the open space being bisected. As a consequence, the remainder of the open space would not be available for use by the public since the campus would be used as a community facility outside normal school hours.

Response: Whilst the open space would be bisected by the proposed access road, the proposal would result in significant enhancements to leisure and sports provision within the town. A pedestrian crossing would be provided to provide a safe crossing point to the large area of open space and children's play area to the west of Alexander Avenue. Refer to the Analysis section for further commentary in relation to Policy ENV 12.

(b) PI 1(Walking, Cycling and Public Transport)

The requirement for a new bus stop on Glenacre Drive, as recommended by Strathclyde Partnership for Transport, would cause traffic disruption at peak times when school buses are arriving or leaving the campus.

Response: It is proposed to attach a planning condition which would require the preparation of a travel plan to encourage and support active travel and to require the preparation of a public transport strategy. Refer to the Analysis section for further commentary in relation to Policy PI 1.

(c) RES 4 (Affordable Housing)

A large part of the site has been identified for affordable housing purposes in the Local Development Plan. A proposal for housing on the site was rejected during 2011 on traffic grounds. Despite this, the proposed development would generate significantly more traffic than a housing development of 80 houses, likely to be in excess of 300 vehicle movements per day, in addition to school buses.

Response: The affordable housing allocation in terms of the adopted Local Development Plan was not preceded by a planning application. Refer to both the consultation response above from Housing Services and the Analysis section for further commentary in relation to Policy RES 4.

(d) General Policy (Amenity)

Light pollution from the buildings and the car park would adversely affect the amenity of local residents. The number of pupils in the school would exceed 2,000, which would cause a level of noise and disturbance to local residents. This would be a particular issue for Alexander Avenue residents whose homes back onto the site, especially in the section of the street between the proposed bus entrance and Sinclair Drive, since the primary schools playground would be immediately behind.

Response: It is proposed to attach a planning condition which would require the submission of external lighting details. In addition, a landscaping scheme would act as a buffer between the site and nearby housing, and this matter could be addressed by a planning condition. Refer to the Analysis section for further commentary in relation to the impact of the proposal on amenity.

(e) General Policy (Access, Road Layout, Parking Provision)

Sections of Alexander Avenue are constrained by double parking and measures are taken by drivers to prevent the flow of traffic being impeded (eg. parking on pavements). The use of school buses would exacerbate this problem. In addition, the surrounding roads and junctions will become much busier as a result of increased traffic. There is no proposal to make the Holehouse Road/Alexander Avenue/Eastern Avenue (staggered crossroads) junction any safer. Additional road safety measures also require to be undertaken in the vicinity of the Burnside Road/Alexander Avenue mini-roundabout. There is no proposal for parking restrictions other than along the west side of Alexander Avenue between the NAC Depot and Holehouse Road. There is no proposal to provide any alternative parking for residents in sections of Alexander Avenue is restricted with double yellow lines.

Response: The consultation response from NAC Strategic Planning & Infrastructure (Transportation) offered no objections, subject to conditions. A range of matters have been extensively discussed with the applicant's transport engineering consultant throughout the consultation process, with amendments submitted to address traffic and transportation matters as necessary. A condition relating to the provision of off-site transport infrastructure works, as may be required, and the preparation of a Public Transport Strategy and Travel Plan could also be attached as per the requirements of the LDP for development involving significant trip generation. An informative could be attached regarding further consents for off-site road works in terms of the Roads (Scotland) Act 1984.

SEPA – Initially objected to the proposal, chiefly due to the proposed culverting of the Moor Burn. The proposal has since been amended to remove long lengths of culvert, and SEPA has removed its objection in a revised response dated 21st January 2016. Notwithstanding the removal of the objection, SEPA expects North Ayrshire Council to undertake their responsibilities as the Flood Prevention Authority.

Response: Noted. The NAC Flooding officer has no objections to the proposed development, as noted above.

NAC Strategic Planning & Infrastructure (Transportation) - no objections subject to conditions. A range of matters have been extensively discussed with the applicant's transport engineering consultant throughout the consultation process, with amendments submitted to address traffic and transportation matters as necessary.

Response: Noted. A condition relating to the provision of off-site transport infrastructure works, as may be required, and the preparation of a Public Transport Strategy and Travel Plan could also be attached as per the requirements of the LDP for development involving significant trip generation. An informative could be attached regarding further consents for off-site road works in terms of the Roads (Scotland) Act 1984.

Scottish Wildlife Trust – Advises that the semi natural broadleaved woodland within the north of the site should be retained, and opposes any felling of ancient woodland which is on the Ancient Woodland Inventory. The swamp area and the small watercourse should be retained, if possible, particularly since evidence of its use by otters has been noted. Regarding the proposed landscaping, where planting is to be undertaken, native and berry bearing trees and shrubs should be considered. Perhaps a wildflower meadow could be incorporated into the landscaping and wildlife friendly SuDS ponds. The building itself could be designed to accommodate nest sites/roosts for both birds and bats.

Response: Noted. Conditions could be imposed to require the retention of the semi-natural broadleaved trees and the preparation and implementation of a 'biodiversity action plan' for the site. The Moor Burn culverting proposal has been amended since the application was submitted – the burn would only be culverted at road crossings as advised by SEPA.

sportscotland - no objections. The proposed development would result in a loss of part of the existing golf facility at the site - this is part of a wider golf facility within the National Centre Inverclyde. There is a need to provide replacement provision for the partial loss of the golf facility in the form of new or upgraded provision. In consultation with Scottish Golf, sportscotland advised at pre-application stage that the upgrading of the remaining golf facility adjacent to the planning application site - and within the wider National Centre Inverclyde site - would acceptably compensate for the loss of part of this facility. The Council would be liable for the cost of the replacement facility, which sportscotland would aim to complete by December 2017. Finally, it is noted there is an agreement in place for the secondary school to utilise 2 full-size natural grass pitches and 1 full-size 3G pitch at the adjacent Inverclyde site.

Response: Noted. In order to address the area of ground within the golf facility that would be affected by the proposed campus, planning permission (ref. 15/00744/PP) was granted on 5th February 2016 for the change of use of an agricultural field to form an extension to the existing golf training area on the land to the east of the application site. In terms of synergy, the proposed campus would benefit from its close proximity to the Inverclyde National Centre. See also Analysis, below.

Strathclyde Partnership for Transport – no objections. SPT has recommended conditions in relation to proposed measures to support walking and cycling, travel planning and public transport.

Response: Conditions could be imposed to meet the requirements of SPT in accordance with LDP Policy PI 1. See Analysis, below.

West of Scotland Archaeology Service – no objections. Initial evaluation trenching, commissioned by the applicant, took place on site during August 2015. This identified a number of features on a small knoll at the top of a steep slope in the centre of the development area. These appeared to represent evidence for prehistoric occupation, and as such, a second phase of fieldwork was carried out in October 2015. This involved opening out a larger area of ground around the features, to attempt to ascertain their date and function, and confirmed that they mainly consisted of post holes or small pits positioned along the ridge line, with a few larger pits spread throughout the area. These did not appear to form any coherent structure, though it is thought that the golf school landscaping may have destroyed further features in this area, as the clay subsoil showed evidence of truncation when the golf green was removed. All of the features were 100% excavated, although no artefacts were recovered.

Given the lack of knowledge of any archaeology in this area from historic sources, the lack of artefactual material normally found in abundance within medieval and later sites may suggest that the features found relate to prehistoric activity. Most of the features contained only small flecks of charcoal, but some of the larger pits and clusters of post holes did contain larger amounts of charcoal that could be used for dating purposes. The report on this second phase excavation includes the recommendation that no further archaeological work would be required on the site, and WoSAS would agree with this, at least in terms of onsite work. In order to secure completion of the programme of post-excavation analysis, WoSAS advise that a condition to secure post-site analysis should be attached to a grant of planning permission.

Response: In light of the findings of the two excavations which have been undertaken, it is not considered necessary, nor relevant to planning, to attach a condition relating to further analysis. However, should the applicant wish to carry out further post-excavation analysis, it is open for them to do so.

Scottish Water - no comments. However, the applicant's agent has advised that technical approval from Scottish Water has been obtained.

3. Analysis

Sections 25 and 37(2) of the Town and Country Planning (Scotland) Act 1997 require that decisions by planning authorities shall be taken in accordance with the development plan, unless material considerations indicate otherwise. In this case, the adopted North Ayrshire Local Development Plan is the development plan. The following policies are applicable to the consideration of the proposal:

LDP Vision and Spatial Strategy
RES 4 – Affordable Housing
ENV 7 – Special Landscape Area
ENV 12 – Development of Open Space
Policy PI 1 - Walking, Cycling and Public Transport
Policy PI 7 - Waste Management
Policy PI 8 - Drainage, SUDs and Flooding
Policy PI 10 - Community Infrastructure
Policy PI 13 - Carbon Emissions and New Buildings
General Policy.

It is considered that the main determining issues which consider the principle of the development are the LDP Vision and Spatial Strategy, and Policy PI 10. The remaining policies relate to matters of detail rather than issues of principle.

Firstly, in terms of the LDP Vision & Spatial Strategy, it is considered that the development of an educational campus with community facilities would achieve considerable benefits for Largs and the communities of the North Coast. The benefits of the proposal would sit well with the Vision and Spatial Strategy, particularly STRAT 3: Regeneration, which states that “the LDP will play a role in bringing forward ambitious proposals for new schools, which will bring about a perception change to the local area and provide the best environment to create young people who are confident and aspirational.” The proposed campus development has evolved against this background over several years and it is considered that the proposal would meet the regeneration aspirations of the Council in this regard. It is considered that the proposal, as a concept, accords with the aims and objectives of STRAT 3.

Secondly, in terms of specific policies which relate either to the proposal or to the site, the following requires consideration:

Policy PI 10: Community Infrastructure

PI 10 supports proposals for the development of education and commercial leisure. The sports halls and fitness facilities are considered to be commercial leisure facilities, as members of the public will be charged for their use. To accord with the policy, the following criteria must be satisfied:

- (a) the site has a high level of accessibility, particularly for walking, cycling and public transport;
- (b) a range of alternative sites have been examined;
- (c) co-location with other similar or complimentary facilities has been considered.

With respect to criterion (a), the site at Largs would be well located for the communities to be served. The majority of the North Coast population reside in Largs, which is also the most ‘central place’ for the neighbouring areas of Cumbrae, Fairlie and Skelmorlie. The application site is located within walking distance of various residential areas of Largs via the existing network of streets, and is within walking distance of the town centre and local bus routes. Children travelling from Cumbrae, Fairlie and Skelmorlie would be transported to the Campus by school bus, with dedicated drop-off and pick-up facilities provided within the site. The requirements of criterion (a) have therefore been met.

With regards to criterion (b), the applicant identified the site following consideration of the environmental and topographic constraints, accessibility and availability within the Largs area. Alternative sites were considered, including the re-use of the existing school sites. The applicant has advised that the proposed site was selected because it is large enough to accommodate the 4 existing schools and an early years establishment at one location. Existing school sites were not considered appropriate due to the lack of decant facilities within the town and the pupil /staff disruption that a phased build would generate. The site also offers a unique opportunity to work in partnership with sportscotland. The requirements of criterion (b) have, therefore, been satisfied.

Regarding criterion (c), the proposal involves co-locating all local schools and a range of other public leisure facilities onto one site, including the proposed upgrading of facilities at the adjacent Inverclyde National Centre.

Scotland's first dedicated all ability-sports facility will be built at the Inverclyde National Centre, the first of its kind anywhere in the UK, and will ensure that athletes of all abilities can train at a fully integrated, multi-sports facility. When upgrading is complete, the National Centre facilities would include an international standard gymnastics training facility, a new indoor 3G pitch, several sports halls, two squash courts, dance studio and fitness suite. Outdoor facilities include four full sized grass football pitches, a synthetic hockey pitch, four synthetic tennis courts, a golf development course and a target range. The upgrading of the National Centre is a legacy project of the Glasgow Commonwealth Games 2014, which featured the highest number of para-sport medal events in the history of the Games.

The applicant has advised that the proposed development of the Largs Campus adjacent to the upgraded National Centre would provide a combined world class campus environment for delivering events across the two sites. The proposed Largs Campus would feature a range of quality accessible indoor facilities, including an eight court sports hall, a number of small sports halls, dance studio and a fitness suite as well as an outdoor 3G 7-a-side synthetic sports pitch and an indoor performance space with seating. The availability of such a facility, combining fully accessible accommodation (60 rooms), a full size games hall suitable for high level events and championship level sports activities, with the complementary sports and conference facilities and the performance space in the proposed Campus would provide an unparalleled opportunity for attracting national and international events and conferences to North Ayrshire.

In summary, it is considered that such siting arrangements would increase the potential for enhanced outcomes at both facilities, as well as reducing the need to travel, which would reduce costs and time. Co-location has therefore been demonstrated, and would increase the potential for linked trips. The requirements of criterion (c) have therefore been met.

Based on the above, the principle of development is in accordance with Policy PI 10.

RES 4 – Affordable Housing

As noted above, a substantial part of the site, currently in agricultural use, has been allocated for affordable housing development through the adopted Local Development Plan. Through this allocation, the principle of a major development on part of the site has been established. Whilst the proposed campus would result in the loss of this allocation, Housing Services has confirmed in the consultation response that the Council would make a comparable level of affordable housing provision within the surplus school sites following the development of the proposed campus and demolition of existing school buildings. To this end, the land required for the delivery of affordable housing in Largs would be safeguarded, subject to regulatory control.

ENV 7 – Special Landscape Area

ENV 12 – Development of Open Space

Both of the above policies can be considered together.

The majority of the site is within the boundary of Clyde Muirshiel Regional Park. The site has an urban fringe character. The ground rises gently eastwards to the foot of the steeper and more rugged slopes which give the town its distinctive backdrop of hillsides.

The site itself does not presently have an agricultural or rural character, since the land has been improved for sports and recreation purposes. The land has the character and appearance of a parkland at the edge of the town – whilst an area of open space, it does not possess the same degree of sensitivity as the remoter, upland areas of the Regional Park which lie inland.

In addition, there are areas of developed land further to the east of the site and on higher ground (eg. the housing estate to the east of Brisbane Primary School). The proposed development would not have the appearance of a major encroachment into the countryside, at this location.

As noted above, the Clyde Muirshiel Regional Park Authority has no objection and sportscotland supports the proposal. Alternative and upgraded golf training provision would be provided on the remaining land to the east, thereby ensuring the retention of a nationally important sports facility at Inverclyde.

Around the building, the campus would be generously landscaped to soften the edge between the urban area and the uplands to the east of the town. In addition to the mature trees to be retained, the proposed landscaping would help to mitigate the mass of the campus building and help to protect the privacy of nearby householders. When viewed from the west, the upland backdrop would act to contain and enclose the development from the hillside beyond the edge of the town.

It is considered that the impact of the proposed development on the special landscape area would be negligible. There would be no impact on the more sensitive upland or moorland landscapes further east, which have a more 'natural' character. As such, the proposal is considered satisfactory in relation to Policy ENV 7.

In terms of the loss of open space, it is noted that a significant area of open space would be provided within the northern part of the site, including a habitat area. The partial loss of public open space at the southern end of the site to facilitate access would, to some extent, be offset by the improved access arrangements, via a signal controlled pedestrian crossing, to the existing park on the west side of Alexander Avenue. The remaining open space would also be partially landscaped in order to soften the visual impact of the proposed road and footpaths. Given the overall objectives of the development, the proposal is considered satisfactory in terms of Policy ENV 12.

Thirdly, turning to other policies which focus on particular topics or issues, PI 1, PI 7, PI 8, PI 13 and the General Policy all require consideration.

Policy PI 1: Walking, Cycling and Public Transport

This policy is specifically relevant to development proposals which will result in significant trip generation, and requires proposals to demonstrate that account has been taken of the needs of walkers, cyclists and public transport users. A range of criteria required to be satisfied, and comments on each are provided below.

Criterion (a) requires proposals to reflect the principles of 'Designing Streets' - however, given the type of development, this is not considered relevant.

Criterion (b) requires that consideration has been given, at an early design stage, to likely desire routes which shall inform the design of the development. Criterion (c) requires that connectivity within and to the development is maximised by providing direct routes to wider path networks wherever possible. The proposed building would be positioned towards the southern end of the site enabling new road and footpath connections to be formed from Alexander Avenue. A total of 219 parking spaces have been proposed, with drop off lay-bys for a further 15 cars within the site. This provision would allow space for staff to park and provide car parking spaces for parents and visitors within the Campus in order to reduce the impact on the neighbouring residents. The applicant undertook surveys of the numbers of staff/visitor cars in each school on 3 separate occasions and at different times of the day. On average, a total of 130 cars were parked in the school car parking areas across all existing establishments. In addition, the janitors of each establishment were asked to record the numbers of cars on a specific date. This provided similar evidence, leading to the conclusion that the proposed car parking provision would be adequate to serve the campus. As noted above, the originally proposed pedestrian access from Greeto Falls Avenue has been deleted in response to concerns raised by the public about potential traffic conflicts with a residents only parking area. However, the key

issue is that the diversion route for pedestrians walking to the campus would not be significant. In summary, it is considered that both criteria have been met.

Criterion (d) requires any paths through the site to be clearly signposted, well lit and, where possible, overlooked. Signposting and lighting can be addressed by a planning condition.

Criterion (e) requires the provision of secure cycle parking. This has been proposed at a ratio of 10% to occupancy. Siting and design details can be the subject of a condition.

Criterion (f) and (g) relates to public transport routes and Travel Plans for major developments. There may be scope for additional bus services to serve the proposed development, and for the schools to adopt active travel policies for staff and pupils. A condition requiring the preparation of Travel Plan for the development can be imposed to meet the requirements of Criterion (g).

The proposed development is in accordance with Policy PI 1, subject to conditions.

Policy PI 7: Waste Management

This policy requires the preparation of a Site Waste Management Plan (SWMP) for major developments. A SWMP could be secured by a planning condition. The proposals must also take cognisance of the Council's waste collection requirements. An informative note can be attached for the applicant to discuss their requirements with Waste Management. The proposed development is in accordance with Policy PI 7, subject to a condition.

Policy PI 8: Drainage, SUDs and Flooding

This policy requires that a comprehensive drainage assessment is submitted in support of development proposals to the satisfaction of the Council's Flooding Risk Management section unless it can be otherwise demonstrated that the site can be satisfactorily drained.

Such an assessment has been provided, and, as noted above, considers the wider impact of the development in terms of hydrological, flooding and drainage interests. SEPA and the Council's Flooding Officer have no objections to the proposal in this regard. The proposed development is in accordance with Policy PI 8, subject to conditions.

Policy PI 13: Carbon Emissions and New Buildings

This policy states that all new buildings must reduce CO2 emissions above or in line with building standards. This requirement could be secured by a condition. The proposed development is in accordance with Policy PI 8, subject to a condition.

General Policy

Finally, the General Policy requires to be considered. This can take place in conjunction with consideration of the supporting documents, such as the Design and Access Statement. The General Policy is split into a number of individual criteria, which are as follows:

- (a) Siting, Design and External Appearance
- (b) Amenity
- (c) Landscape Character
- (d) Access, Road Layout, Parking Provision
- (e) Safeguarding Zones
- (f) The Precautionary Principle
- (g) Infrastructure and Developer Contributions
- (h) 'Natura 2000' sites
- (i) Waste Management

Taking each in turn, the following observations have been made:

(a) The proposed development would contrast significantly in terms of scale and design with the established pattern of development in the surrounding area, which comprises of twentieth century suburban housing in the form of 2 storey terraces, 1.5 storey semi-detached villas and 3 storey flats. Such contrasts in scale and design are considered inevitable given the range of uses the campus would accommodate. The proposal is for a unique building, specifically designed for the site and taking into account its semi-rural setting. It is considered that the proposal would add positively to the design quality of public buildings in North Ayrshire at a suitable location with views over Largs towards the Firth of Clyde, Cumbrae, Arran and Bute.

The submitted Design and Access Statement considers the site and its surroundings, noting its scenic views. The Statement indicates that the site has a steeply sloping topography. A degree of earth moving would be required to form level platforms large enough to accommodate the sports pitch at the north end of the site. To minimise visual impact of the large games and assembly halls, these would be sunk into the hillside in order to retain a flat, central space to the front (south elevation). Since the campus building would be stepped up the hillside, all parts would gain the benefits of the views and natural light.

The principles of Designing Places have been incorporated into the proposed development. The aim of the architect is to create “a simple elegant building with strong sense of character and identity; a robust durable building.” Elevational treatment would be visually coherent, achieved by limiting the range of materials. Other than high level sections of the gym halls, which would be clad using metal panels, a grey/white brick would be used throughout. Due to the elevated position of the site at the eastern edge of the town, the building would be visible from the coast, creating a significant new addition to the skyline of the town. Large windows would be incorporated to gain the benefit of the setting. The pattern of fenestration would be more fluid and less regimented in comparison with the existing school buildings in Largs. A condition could be imposed to ensure the external finishing materials are suitable for the development.

The need to reduce carbon emissions within the project has also been taken into account in terms of, amongst other matters, energy efficient heating systems, use of glazing and other materials and energy efficient lighting design. A condition could be imposed to meet this requirement, as noted above.

(b) Amenity covers environmental issues such as lighting, noise, vibration, smell/fumes, emissions, disturbance from vehicular or pedestrian traffic, sunlight/daylight and privacy. The proposed development would introduce changes to the existing character of the area resulting in a much greater level of activity than at present. The most sensitive nearby land uses are the housing areas at Alexander Avenue, Alexander Walk and Greeto Falls Avenue. In addition, there are residential areas beyond these streets leading down to the Firth of Clyde. Travel routes to the site would be via residential streets. The effects on residential amenity therefore require consideration.

It is also proposed to use a combination of boundary treatments and landscaping to mitigate visual impacts and filter views between the campus and existing housing. Potential noise and air quality impacts on the amenity of the area require to be addressed in more detail, and Environmental Health has recommended conditions/informatives to address these matters. The development would generate additional vehicular traffic on the local road network, particularly during peak arrival and departure times, converging on Alexander Avenue, although separate access routes for service vehicles and school buses would help to remove heavier and larger vehicles from the main entrance. The site is well located for walking and cycling from many parts of Largs, and the proposed Travel Plan would aim to reduce vehicle journeys to the site by encouraging and supporting as many walking and cycling trips as possible. Lighting design could be controlled by condition.

With respect to the effects of the proposed development on sunlight and daylight, the proposed campus would be situated at a sufficient distance from the nearest housing to avoid any adverse effects. As noted above, boundary treatments and landscaping is proposed on the edges of the site which would reduce and mitigate impacts on the privacy of rear garden areas at Alexander Avenue, as well as enhancing the setting of the development. Both matters could be addressed by planning conditions. It is considered that the impacts on residential amenity arising from the proposal would be acceptable, subject to the above noted mitigation measures.

(c) The general requirement is for edge of settlement sites to be bounded by substantial structure planting to ensure an appropriate boundary between town and country. Existing woodland to the north of the site would be retained, and additional planting to help define pathways and site boundaries has been proposed, as noted above. A landscaping condition could be imposed to address these matters.

(d) Access routes to the site for walking, cycling and vehicles have been proposed and assessed by NAC Roads and Transportation, as discussed above. The access component of the Design and Access Statement addresses the specific issue of disabled access to the development and how this will be maintained. It is considered that the proposed network of paths into the site would be appropriately graded and designed to enable access for people with disabilities without the need for stairs or steps. Ramps would be provided where necessary. This approach is continued into the building itself and on the surrounding grounds. In summary, it is considered that access arrangements would be adequate for people with mobility impairments.

(e) There are no safeguarding zones to consider.

(f) The proposed development would not cause significant, irreversible damage to the environment, existing development or any proposed development. Existing woodland areas would be retained as far as possible. A condition requiring details of tree protection measures to be erected could be imposed.

(g) As noted above, there are off-site proposals for a pedestrian crossing at Alexander Avenue. Other minor works outwith the site may also be required. A condition could be imposed to ensure that the necessary infrastructure upgrading is completed before the development becomes operational.

(h) The proposed development does not affect any 'Natura 2000' sites. There are no other nature conservation designations affecting the site. The applicant has submitted a bat survey, Phase 1 habitat and protected species survey, which demonstrates that there are no endangered or protected species at risk. An updated bat survey could be undertaken to ensure that the information regarding bat roosts is fully up to date before any works commence on site. This could be addressed by condition. The provision of bat hibernacula and bird boxes could also be addressed as part of 'biodiversity action plan' condition.

(i) As the proposal is for a major development, the preparation of a Site Waste Management Plan will be required. As noted above, this could be addressed by condition.

There are no other material considerations. In summary, whilst the proposed development does not accord with the Local Development Plan in terms of the loss of an affordable housing site, areas of protected open space and special landscape character, it is considered that the Largs Campus would deliver significant educational and community benefits, with particular relevance to STRAT3 (Regeneration) and Policy PI 10 (Community Infrastructure).

Accordingly, it is recommended that the Council is favourably disposed to grant planning permission subject to the conditions set out in Appendix 1. There is a requirement to refer the matter to Scottish Ministers in terms of Town and Country Planning (Notification of Applications) (Scotland) Direction 2009 on the grounds that the proposal is significantly contrary to the development plan.

4. Full Recommendation

See Appendix 1.



KAREN YEOMANS
Executive Director (Economy and Communities)

Cunninghame House, Irvine
18 January 2016

For further information please contact Mr Anthony Hume, Senior Development Management Officer, on 01294 324318

APPENDIX 1

RECOMMENDATION FOR PLANNING APPLICATION REF NO 15/00642/PPM

Agree, subject to referral to Scottish Ministers in terms of the Town and Country Planning (Notification of Applications) (Scotland) Direction 2009, to grant with the undernoted conditions:

1. That, prior to the commencement of the development, hereby approved, full details of proposed treeworks and tree protection measures for the development shall be submitted for the written approval of North Ayrshire Council as Planning Authority. The details shall comply with the principles and practices contained in "BS 5837:2012 - Trees in relation to design, demolition and construction - Recommendations." Detailed plans indicating tree protection fencing to be erected, an Arboricultural Impact Assessment and an Arboricultural Method Statement shall be submitted for written approval. For the avoidance of doubt:

- there shall be no treeworks undertaken during the main bird breeding season (March - September);
- all tree protection measures to be erected shall be maintained in a satisfactory condition for the duration of all engineering and construction operations until the completion of the development.

The development shall be implemented only in accordance with such details as may be approved to the satisfaction of North Ayrshire Council as Planning Authority.

2. That, prior to the commencement of the development, hereby approved, the following surveys for nature conservation purposes shall be undertaken:

- an updated bat survey shall be undertaken following an inspection of the site for the presence of bat roosts.
- pre-construction surveys for the presence of badgers and otters shall be undertaken during the 2 week period before the commencement of works.

In the event of any bat roosts, badgers or otters being found within the site, survey reports shall include a mitigation plan to conserve or replace bat roosting sites, badger setts or otter holts, the details of which shall be submitted for the written approval of North Ayrshire Council as Planning Authority prior to the commencement of the development. Any mitigation plan which may be approved shall be brought into operation prior to the commencement of site operations to the satisfaction of North Ayrshire Council as Planning Authority.

3. That the presence of any significant unsuspected contamination that becomes evident during the development of the site shall be brought to the attention of Environmental Health. Thereafter, a suitable investigation strategy as agreed with North Ayrshire Council shall be implemented and any necessary remediation works carried out prior to any further development taking place on the site, all to the satisfaction of North Ayrshire Council as Planning Authority.

4. That, within 12 months of the date of approval, the applicant shall submit for the written approval of North Ayrshire Council as Planning Authority full details of all off-site path and lighting improvement works as may be deemed necessary by North Ayrshire Council as Roads Authority. Thereafter, the off-site path and lighting improvements and all other works as may be approved shall be fully implemented prior to the campus becoming operational to the satisfaction of North Ayrshire Council as Planning Authority.
5. That, within 12 months of the date of approval, the applicant shall submit for the written approval of North Ayrshire Council as Planning Authority a detailed schedule of the proposed external finishes to be used on the campus building and an annotated plan indicating the surface treatments for open spaces, footpaths, play areas, roads and car parks. Thereafter, the development shall be implemented only in accordance with such details as may be approved, unless otherwise agreed in writing with North Ayrshire Council as Planning Authority.
6. That, within 12 months of the date of approval, the applicant shall submit for the written approval of North Ayrshire Council as Planning Authority a detailed plan and schedule of the proposed boundary treatments to be formed as part of the development. Thereafter, the boundary treatments as may be approved shall be implemented prior to the campus becoming operational to the satisfaction of North Ayrshire Council as Planning Authority.
7. That, within 12 months of the date of approval, the applicant shall submit for the written approval of North Ayrshire Council as Planning Authority a scheme of landscaping, which shall include details of species, planting densities, soil treatment and aftercare. Thereafter, the landscaping scheme as may be approved shall be implemented prior to the campus becoming operational to the satisfaction of North Ayrshire Council as Planning Authority.
8. That, within 12 months of the date of approval, the applicant shall submit for the written approval of North Ayrshire Council as Planning Authority a biodiversity action plan, which shall include details of bat hibernacula, bird boxes, wildflowers and other measures to promote/safeguard biodiversity and nature conservation. Thereafter, the action plan as may be approved shall be implemented prior to the campus becoming operational to the satisfaction of North Ayrshire Council as Planning Authority.
9. That, within 12 months of the date of approval, the applicant shall submit for the written approval of North Ayrshire Council as Planning Authority a noise impact assessment in accordance with PAN 1/2011 'Planning and Noise' and the associated Technical Advice Note (TAN) - 'Assessment of Noise'. The assessment shall take into account all noise related details contained in the consultation response of Environmental Health dated 27th November 2015. Thereafter, the findings arising from the noise impact assessment as may be approved shall be implemented prior to the campus becoming operational to the satisfaction of North Ayrshire Council as Planning Authority.
10. That, within 12 months of the date of approval, the applicant shall submit for the written approval of North Ayrshire Council as Planning Authority the specification

of the boiler plant to be installed at the campus. The specification shall take into account all of the air quality related details contained in the consultation response of Environmental Health dated 27th November 2015. Thereafter, the building operations shall be implemented only in accordance with such details as may be approved to the satisfaction of North Ayrshire Council as Planning Authority.

11. That, within 12 months of the date of approval, the applicant shall submit for the written approval of North Ayrshire Council as Planning Authority details of measures to be taken to reduce carbon dioxide emissions arising from the campus building. Thereafter, the building operations shall be implemented only in accordance with such details as may be approved to the satisfaction of North Ayrshire Council as Planning Authority.

12. That, within 12 months of the date of approval, the applicant shall submit for the written approval of North Ayrshire Council as Planning Authority details of all external lighting and signposting within the site. Thereafter, the external lighting and signposting scheme as may be approved shall be implemented prior to the campus becoming operational to the satisfaction of North Ayrshire Council as Planning Authority.

13. That, within 12 months of the date of approval, the applicant shall submit for the written approval of North Ayrshire Council as Planning Authority details of secure cycle parking within the site, which shall be provided at a rate of 10% for the peak level of staff/visitors and 10% of pupils within a defined cycling catchment area. The cycling catchment area shall be defined by the applicant for the written agreement of North Ayrshire Council as Planning Authority prior to the calculation of the 10% figure. In addition, details of secure scooter parking at a rate of 1% of pupil numbers within the defined cycling catchment area shall be submitted for the written approval of North Ayrshire Council as Planning Authority. Thereafter, all details as may be approved shall be implemented prior to the campus becoming operational to the satisfaction of North Ayrshire Council as Planning Authority.

14. That prior to the campus becoming operational, the applicant shall submit for the written approval of North Ayrshire Council as Planning Authority details of a Travel Plan for the campus. Such a Travel Plan shall include details of active travel proposals for all users of the site and an indication of the measures which shall be undertaken to reduce car journeys. Thereafter, the Travel Plan as may be approved shall be implemented upon the campus becoming operational to the satisfaction of North Ayrshire Council as Planning Authority and reviewed at 2 yearly intervals thereafter, unless otherwise agreed in writing with North Ayrshire Council as Planning Authority.

15. That, within 12 months of the date of approval, the applicant shall submit for the written approval of North Ayrshire Council as Planning Authority a Public Transport Strategy for the campus. This shall provide details of public transport infrastructure to be provided (bus stops and shelters) and travel information to be provided to ensure users are aware of pedestrian, cycle and public transport provision. The strategy may also include measures for the provision of real time public transport information and details of the frequency, routing of and funding mechanisms for any new or amended bus services to serve the development.

Thereafter, the development shall be implemented in accordance with such details as may be approved, unless otherwise agreed in writing with North Ayrshire Council as Planning Authority.

16. That prior to the campus becoming operational, the applicant shall submit for the written approval of North Ayrshire Council as Planning Authority details of a Site Waste Management Plan (SWMP). Thereafter, the SWMP as may be approved shall be implemented upon the campus becoming operational to the satisfaction of North Ayrshire Council as Planning Authority and reviewed at 5 yearly intervals thereafter, unless otherwise agreed in writing with North Ayrshire Council as Planning Authority.

The reason(s) for the above condition(s) are:-

1. In the interests of nature conservation and amenity.
2. In the interests of nature conservation.
3. To meet the requirements of Environmental Health.
4. To meet the requirements of the North Ayrshire Council as Roads Authority.
5. In the interest of the amenity of the area.
6. In the interest of the amenity of the area.
7. In the interest of the amenity of the area.
8. In the interests of nature conservation and amenity.
9. To meet the requirements of Environmental Health.
10. To meet the requirements of Environmental Health.
11. To meet the requirements of the adopted North Ayrshire Local Development Plan.
12. In the interests of visual amenity.
13. To meet the requirements of the North Ayrshire Council as Planning Authority.
14. To meet the requirements of the North Ayrshire Council as Roads Authority.
15. To ensure that proper consideration is given to public transport prior to the campus becoming operational.
16. To meet the requirements of the adopted North Ayrshire Local Development Plan.

Reason(s) for approval:

1. The proposal does not comply with the relevant provisions of the Local Development Plan, however other material considerations indicate otherwise and planning permission should be granted.

Appendix: Location Map

