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**NORTH AYRSHIRE COUNCIL**Date: 4<sup>th</sup> March 2019**North Ayrshire Council**

Locality	Three Towns
Reference	18/00882/PPM
Application Registered	4th October 2018
Decision Due	4th February 2019
Ward	Saltcoats and Stevenston

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<b>Recommendation</b>	Agree to grant planning permission subject to (1) referral to Scottish Ministers under the Town and Country Planning (Notification of Applications) (Scotland) Direction 2009 as development for which the planning authority is the applicant/developer in circumstances where the proposed development would be significantly contrary to the development plan for the area and (2) the undernoted conditions.
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<b>Location</b>	Auchenharvie Playing Fields, Boglemart Street/ Saltcoats Road, Stevenston
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<b>Applicant</b>	North Ayrshire Council (Education & Youth Employment) Cunninghame House, Irvine
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<b>Proposal</b>	(1) Erection of additional support needs school campus development comprising nursery, primary and secondary departments together with the provision of vehicular and pedestrian access, parking, external play and sports facilities, polytunnel, landscaping and (2) the erection of residential and respite accommodation together with associated access, parking and landscaping
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**1. Introduction**

The above planning application requires to be determined by the full Council in terms of the Town and Country Planning (Notification of Applications) (Scotland) Direction 2009.

A Pre-determination Hearing to enable public objections to be heard and to enable the applicant to make a presentation to Members is to take place in advance of the Determination Meeting.

## **2. Description**

Planning permission is sought to develop a school campus for children with additional support needs (ASN) and a residential/respite care home for young people at the Auchendarvie Playing Fields, Boglemart Street/Saltcoats Road, Stevenston.

The proposal follows consultation undertaken by the applicant with the affected school communities, which concluded that ASN school provision within North Ayrshire should be consolidated onto one site beside an existing secondary school in order to promote better integration and offer shared learning opportunities. Due to its proximity to Auchendarvie Academy, as well as its central location within the catchment area relative to current and estimated future pupil numbers, the application site was chosen from a number of options. A pre-application public event on the Auchendarvie site was then held by the applicant during Spring 2018.

The proposal comprises a number of elements which are described below:

### ***ASN school building***

The proposed campus would replace the four existing ASN schools in mainland North Ayrshire, two of which are in Irvine (Stanecastle School and Haysholm School) with the other two being in the Three Towns (James Macfarlane School in Ardrossan and James Reid School in Saltcoats). The four existing schools each cater for primary and secondary stages of education. The proposed school would also include early years provision. The design capacity of the school is for 200 pupils which would integrate early years, primary and secondary provision within different parts of the one building. The catchment area for the proposed school would encompass all of mainland North Ayrshire. The applicant has advised that it is not envisaged that pupils with ASN who are resident on the islands of Arran or Cumbrae would attend the proposed school, based on current arrangements.

Access to the proposed ASN School would be via a new priority junction to be formed on Boglemart Street. All vehicles would also exit from this junction. Pedestrian access would be provided via footpath links leading from Boglemart Street.

In terms of the floor plan, the building would be split into three distinct elements. Towards the front, and facing onto the car park, it is proposed to provide common facilities serving the school including offices/meeting rooms, staff room, pupil changing facilities, assembly and gym/games hall, a hydrotherapy and learners pool, music and drama rooms, soft-play and various other therapy rooms. A nursery department would be provided at the eastern end. All of the above would be on one level, with no stairs or upper floors envisaged. The main entrance to the school would have a distinctive projecting feature clad in metalwork.

The rear part of the building would be linked to the front section via three corridors. Two of these have been designed to function both for movement purposes as well as providing dining areas and toilet facilities. The third corridor would be for movement only, linking the secondary department to the PE department and staff facilities.

The rear element of the building would provide classroom facilities for the primary and secondary departments of the school. These would be split into compartments of typically four classrooms focussed on a central activity area. Each compartment would be linked together by a corridor. Activity areas would also function as a space for movement between each compartment. As with the front part of the building, the classroom blocks would be on one level, with no staircases or upper floors.

Enclosed between the two main elements of the school building and the corridors would be two large outdoor courtyard areas. There would be a courtyard for primary department children and a separate one for the secondary department children. Doorways would lead from the southeast facing classrooms onto the courtyards, and also from the northwest facing hall and pool areas. The two courtyards would be separate from the main playground. These areas would be landscaped and paved using resin bonded gravel. A multi-use trampoline and sandpit would also be provided.

The school playground areas would be to the rear (northwest) of the building, and the nursery would have a separate playground to the east. The main playground would be imaginatively landscaped with a combination of hard surfacing using resin bonded gravel and soft surfaces such as grass, natural play areas and a variety of other facilities to promote the use of the outdoor spaces, including shelters. The focal point would be an 'amphitheatre' area with wide terraced style seating facing onto a performance space surfaced using resin bonded gravel with coloured graphics. A pathway would run along the perimeter beyond which a 2.4m high close boarded timber fence would be erected along the school boundary. The nursery playground would occupy a smaller area but would also offer a variety of spaces for play experiences suitable for the younger children. The nursery playground would also be enclosed with a hedge and a 2.4m high fence.

### ***Respite and residential accommodation***

Two separate buildings to the east of the ASN School are proposed. The ground level of Boglemart Street rises up towards the east of the site, meaning that the respite and residential buildings would be sited at a lower level than the street. These buildings would therefore be less visible when viewed from the south.

Each building would be single storey and would provide a range of bedrooms, personal care rooms, bathrooms, common room facilities and offices. The buildings, similar in design although slightly different on plan and function, would have a domestic scale with dual pitched, split-gabled roofs each facing onto an enclosed courtyard area. The entry to each would be from a landscaped area. Offices for the health and social care partnership would also be provided within one of the buildings. The perimeter would be landscaped with hedgerows and trees.

In the original submission, vehicular access to this part of the development would have been via Glen Crescent. The applicant's intention was to link the development with the existing residential environment to provide a more domestic setting. However, the use of Glen Crescent for additional vehicular traffic was considered to be inappropriate given the number of staff likely to be involved and the consequent impacts that traffic levels and overspill parking would have on the existing residential area. The proposal has therefore been amended (on 24th January 2019) such that a single track access would be provided (for drop-off and disabled parking purposes only) leading from Boglemart Street. Staff and other visitors would be required to park in the ASN school car park which would be designed to accommodate all vehicles travelling to the campus.

A footpath would also provide a direct pedestrian link from the car parking area at the ASN School to the respite and residential facilities. Separate pathways would provide direct pedestrian links to Boglemart Street. A link between the development and Glen Crescent is no longer proposed. However, the existing pedestrian access to the playing fields from Glen Crescent would be retained and connected to a new length of footpath leading to Auchenharvie Academy, bypassing the respite/residential facilities and ASN school campus.

### ***Energy Centre***

The energy centre would be sited to the southeast of the school, immediately northeast of the car park. It would include the biomass boiler and pellet store; the bin store; a sprinkler tank; a water storage tank; electrical switchgear and an electricity sub-station. Each of these facilities would be grouped close together although there would be four separate elements. The energy centre building would have a flat roof measuring 5m in height from ground level.

### ***Replacement sports pitches and open space***

The proposed all-weather sports pitch with floodlighting, measuring 96.4m in length, would be sited at the southwest of the site near to the existing changing rooms to the southeast of Auchenharvie Academy. The proposed grass pitch with 340m running track would be sited to the west of the ASN School and east of the existing changing rooms. These facilities would be shared with Auchenharvie Academy and would also be available for community use. Both pitches would be visible from Saltcoats Road, to the south. As noted above, a new public footpath would be provided at the edge of the site beside the woodland area which forms the northern boundary. The path would link Glen Crescent to Auchenharvie Academy, and would adjoin a sloping area of ground that would be retained as an area of public open space.

### ***Associated car parking provision, SuDs and drainage infrastructure***

As noted above, access to the ASN School would be via a new access junction with Boglemart Street, and a separate access is proposed for the respite and residential accommodation. Pedestrian footpath connections would also be provided.

The proposed car parks at the site would provide a total of 145 spaces in addition to drop-off and pick-up areas. The main car park would be in front of the school building. This would have 135 spaces, and would include provision for all staff working at the site, including those employed at the respite and residential accommodation. Two of the parking spaces would be equipped with charging points for electric cars. In addition, a small 10 space car park would be provided for visitors and blue badge holders beside the respite and residential accommodation.

A total of 40 cycle parking places are also proposed within 2 secure shelters near to the school building.

The perimeter of the main car park would be landscaped with trees. The SuDS infrastructure would include porous paving, filter trenches, swales, and underground attenuation tanks. Surface water would be filtered through various porous surfaces, collected through a system of pipework, stored below the ground in tanks then discharged at a suitable rate to the surface water sewer on Boglemart Street/Saltcoats Road. An independent check certificate has been included in the documentation for the drainage design.

### ***Site Location***

The site is located at the western end of Stevenston to the north of Boglemart Street/Saltcoats Road (B780). The land slopes steeply to the north of the site. The steep slopes of the hillside are wooded, and beyond is a residential area consisting of private housing. To the east is a residential area which is at the same ground level as the site, beyond which lies Stevenston town centre. To the south is a mix of residential and commercial use, including a Lidl supermarket and a petrol filling station. To the southwest is Auchendarvie Golf Course. To the west is Auchendarvie Academy, beyond which lies Harvies Leisure Centre and a skate park.

### ***Site Characteristics***

The site itself consists of largely level ground, with some areas of gently undulating ground. Most of the site comprises maintained grassland, laid out as football pitches and used for sports during the football season as well as informal recreation purposes (e.g. walking). There is a small woodland area at the southeastern corner of the site near to Boglemart Street. There are no notable topographic features within the playing fields. As noted above, the ground rises steeply to the north of the site boundary where the land is heavily wooded.

### ***Local Development Plan***

In terms of the adopted North Ayrshire Local Development Plan, the land at the site is allocated as open space. The following policies apply to the proposed development:

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

There is no relevant planning history for the site. In support of the application, the following documents have been submitted:

### ***Pre-application Consultation (PAC) Report***

The report summarises the background to the project and pre-application consultation. It highlights that 2 public consultation events were held by the applicant on 2nd and 3rd May 2018. It notes that the first was poorly attended but the second attracted a greater number of people including many neighbouring residents. Representatives of the applicant and design team attended both events to answer questions raised by Members of the public. A range of responses were submitted including siting/design issues, site selection issues, loss of open space, impacts on the adjoining woodland, traffic generation, drainage/flooding, subsidence, trespass, wildlife, etc. The PAC report provides a response to each of the issues raised and has sought to address them where possible.

### ***Design and Access Statement***

The statement outlines the various elements contained in the proposal and explains how the design team sought to address the project. Emphasis has been placed on ensuring that the proposed ASN school development would provide efficient functional organisation, a comfortable environment conducive to learning, low carbon energy solutions, the provision of wider social benefits and, visually, a high quality external environment.

A separate design and access statement has been prepared for the proposed respite and residential accommodation. It highlights that the respite and residential buildings would be small scale care facility centres to accommodate children and young people with additional support needs from the age of 4 to 21 years of age. Each unit would accommodate up to 8 residents and a maximum of 20 staff Members. The residential unit would be for permanent residence care, whilst the respite unit would be for occasional care to offer a respite from home for the individual and their permanent carers. The proposed design is intended offer the residents of the buildings a sense of home. The aesthetics would reflect this in making the buildings of a scale appropriate to a dwelling house, echoing that of the neighbouring houses which surround the site.

A further statement covering landscape design has been submitted. This report describes the landscape design process and analyses the setting of the site, discusses the approach taken in creating a suitable landscape framework, considers the mitigation of visual impacts and describes the design of individual landscape elements proposed for the development.

### ***Transport Assessment***

A firm of transport consultants was commissioned to produce this assessment, which highlights that the site is well located for public transport.

Due to the needs of the children and young people who would attend the ASN School, most pupils would be transported from their homes by taxi or minibus services, as happens presently at the four existing schools. The applicant has indicated that a maximum of 50 vehicles would be used to transport pupils to the ASN School, representing 50 trips during the morning arrival and 50 departing in the afternoon. This is similar to the existing level of provision across all four existing schools. However, the transport arrangements would be subject to review with the aim of reducing vehicle movements to/from the site. Consideration is also being given to staggering the start and finish times in order to reduce concentrated levels of traffic arriving or leaving at the site during short periods. Drop off and pick up facilities would be provided within the site for taxis and minibuses providing school transport.

Staff and visitor trips have also been factored into the transport assessment, taking into account work patterns across the site. Whilst the ASN school would operate only during term times, the nursery could operate for longer periods (e.g. during school holidays). The residential and respite accommodation would be staffed every day throughout the year.

Traffic count data has been collated and it has been concluded by the consultants who produced the assessment that the proposed access junctions with the B780 would be able to operate without the use of signals.

### ***Flood risk assessment and drainage strategy***

A firm of consultants was commissioned to produce this assessment, which describes the existing drainage and flooding conditions on the site. The analysis adopts a risk-based approach which has informed the drainage strategy for the proposal, with the aim of protecting the development against a 1 in 1000 year flood event. Whilst the assessment confirmed that there was little or no risk from most sources of flooding and low risk from infrastructure sources, the risk of groundwater exacerbating flooding from other sources has been found to require further investigation. The various SuDs measures proposed for the development are described above. A cut-off drain would be incorporated into the drainage system to restrict run-off from the steeply sloping woodland area to the north flowing into the site.

The study sets out a strategy for dealing with the drainage arising from the proposed development, noting that all foul flows would be discharged to the existing public sewer and that surface water flows would be connected to an existing surface water sewer following treatment and attenuation via a SuDS system.

The assessment concludes with a number of recommendations, including the need to update the report upon completion of the ongoing groundwater monitoring activities to ensure any remaining risks are appropriately mitigated during the detailed design and construction stages of the development. The assessment also recommends that finished floor levels should be a minimum of 150mm above surrounding ground levels and that all ground slopes generally away from buildings to reduce the risk of water ingress to buildings in the event of flooding. The submitted layout and design takes these recommendations into account.

### ***Air Quality Assessment***

A consultant was commissioned to undertake an Air Quality Assessment. The results indicated that the relevant air quality standards are not predicted to be exceeded at any location within the vicinity of the installation. Impacts were also classified as not significant in accordance with the relevant methodology. Based on the assessment results, air quality issues are not considered a constraint to planning consent for the scheme.

### ***Preliminary Ecological Appraisal***

The reports highlight that surveys of the site were undertaken to determine the presence of any protected species on the site as well as considering the potential ecological impacts of the proposed development. Given that the site consists mostly of amenity grassland, with a small pocket of woodland and some sports facilities, the report concludes that the development would have no significant effects on local ecology and that no protected species or habitats were found during the survey. A separate tree survey has been included with the submitted application. A small number of trees would require to be removed on the line (and adjacent to) the proposed access route serving the respite and residential facilities.

### ***Geo-environmental Report (including Coal Mining Risk Assessment)***

Investigations of the ground conditions at the site were undertaken by a firm of consulting engineers. The study, a combination of desk studies and intrusive investigations, shows that the site has not previously been built upon and is not contaminated, although it is known that coal workings have taken place below the ground in the past. In summary, the site is considered by the consulting engineers to be suitable for the proposed development and subsequent foundation designs for a building warrant would be informed by the geo-technical and coal mining assessment

### ***Construction Methodology***

A document setting out the proposed stages in the construction process has been submitted. This includes details of traffic routes for deliveries of plant and materials, as well as the sequence of construction. In summary, all construction traffic would access and exit the site from Boglemart Street via Stevenston town centre. The project would be developed by firstly fencing off the construction site; stripping off grass and topsoil and any trees to be removed then undertaking all land engineering operations (cut and fill). These works would be followed by the formation of the car parking areas and roadways. The car park would be used for the site compound during construction. The development would then be progressed by forming the sports pitches, drainage, construction of floor slabs for school and respite/residential facility, followed by the erection of building frames, roofs, elevation and internal fit-out. Thereafter, the external hard and soft landscaping works would be undertaken in tandem with the completion of the internal fit-out of all buildings.

### ***Noise Impact Assessment***

A comprehensive noise assessment, providing details of background noise levels and identifying noise-sensitive receptors in the vicinity has been undertaken by a specialist consultant. The assessment goes on to make recommendations in respect of the anticipated noise levels generated by the completed development. The recommendations cover mitigation measures such as attenuators to intake and exhaust terminals; acoustic screens/barriers; acoustic louvres and plant enclosures.

The assessment highlights that a noise propagation model of the proposed school was prepared to assess noise levels on the proposed buildings. The results of the model show that natural ventilation by open windows was suitable for both the school and accommodation buildings.

### ***Supporting Planning Statement***

The statement advises that 18 sites were originally considered then shortlisted to 5 before the Auchenharvie site was selected for the proposed development. The statement examines and reviews the relevant Local Development Plan policies that apply to the site and to the proposed development, and cross-references to the other supporting information discussed above. The statement notes that the existing grass pitches have very poor drainage and can be prone to flooding at times. It contends that the proposal would improve the playing conditions by improving land drainage and introducing all-weather floodlit facilities. It acknowledges that a significant part of the site would be lost as public open space, but concludes that the ASN Campus would accord with the provisions of the LDP.

## **Relevant Development Plan Policies**

### **ENV12 - POLICY ENV 12: DEVELOPMENT OF OPEN SPACE**

Development of land identified on the LDP Maps as protected open space, including school playing fields, and small areas of recreational and amenity open space, not individually identified on the LDP Maps, shall not accord with the LDP unless the following criteria can be satisfied:



1. Where the proposed development is for an outdoor recreation or physical activity use, it will:

- (a) improve the quality and range of outdoor recreation or physical activity facilities within the LDP area; AND
- (b) not lead to an unacceptable net loss of open space (including playing fields); OR

2. Where the proposed development is for a use other than outdoor recreational or physical activity purposes, it will not set an undesirable precedent for further incremental loss of open space.

The following criteria apply to all proposals for development of open space:

3. The proposed development will not unacceptably impact upon the recreational and/or amenity value of any area of active or passive open space when considered in relation to the overall level of provision in the local area; AND

4. Where the loss of open space has a material effect on the quality, function or playing capacity of a facility, alternative provision of similar or improved community benefit and accessibility will be made available in a location which is convenient for its users.

Note: There is a presumption against the extension of private gardens into public open space or the development of communal/backcourt areas for reasons of undesirable precedent setting as well as the potential for creation of irregular boundaries and loss of access and amenity.

## **POLICY PI 1 - WALKING, CYCLING & PUBLIC TRANSPORT**

All development proposals which will result in significant trip generation shall require to demonstrate that account has been taken of the needs of walkers, cyclists and public transport users by demonstrating that:

- (a) the proposals reflect the principles of "Designing Streets" where applicable;
- (b) at an early design stage, consideration has been given to likely desire routes (public transport nodes, schools, town centres etc.) which shall inform the design of the development;
- (c) connectivity is maximised within and to the development site by providing direct routes to wider path networks where possible;
- (d) any paths through the site are clearly signposted, well lit and where possible overlooked;
- (e) secure cycle parking of a proportionate scale, in a visible and accessible location, is provided where the development will be used by a significant volume of visitors (including employees). Changing and shower facilities should also be provided where appropriate;
- (f) discussion with Strathclyde Partnership for Transport (SPT) has been undertaken to consider the provision of new or diverted bus route(s) to serve the development where the proposal is not within 400m of a public transport node. New/diverted routes may require to be subsidised by the developer where such schemes are not commercially viable; and
- (g) proposals for national or major development (as defined by the Planning Etc. (Scotland) Act 2006) which will involve significant trip generation will require the preparation of a Travel Plan for the development.

A Transport Assessment may be required where development will involve significant trip generation.

## **POLICY PI 7 - POLICY PI 7: WASTE MANAGEMENT**

### General

1. Development of waste management installations, including any activity ancillary to any industrial process, shall only accord with the LDP where:

(a) the proposal accords with the principles of the Zero Waste Plan (ZWP) and makes a positive contribution to the provision of a network of waste management installations; AND

(b) the proposal meets an identified need and reflects the proximity principle; AND

(c) the location offers a good standard of accessibility; AND

(d) the proposal provides a sufficient landscape buffer and screening, where appropriate; AND

(e) the proposal is located in close proximity to an existing waste management installation and/or within an industrial allocation unless it can be demonstrated that there is an overriding site specific locational need or benefit to locate elsewhere.

Proposals must also be compatible with surrounding development and the underlying allocation where this is not industrial; AND

(f) the proposal demonstrates satisfactory mitigation measures for any unacceptable impacts arising from the development with respect to air emissions, noise, odour, dust, litter, vermin, insects, birds, visual impact, traffic, natural or built heritage, leachate, operational hours, proximity to water sources or cumulative impacts.

### Waste Processing

2. Development involving the transfer, sorting, handling, processing, recycling or composting of waste shall only accord with the LDP where it accords with the general provisions at 1. (where applicable) and where the proposal seeks to minimise the residual waste material arising from the process.

### Waste Recovery and/or Disposal

3. Development involving the recovery or disposal of waste shall only accord with the LDP where it accords with the general provisions at 1. (where applicable) and:

(a) the proposal will positively contribute to meeting waste management targets set by EU Directives and/or the Scottish Government; AND

(b) the proposal complies with any restrictions on the amount of waste treated by recovery and disposal as may be nationally prescribed; AND

(c) consultation with West of Scotland Archaeology Service has taken place where the proposal involves landfill or landraising; AND

(d) the potential for heat and/or electricity generation has been fully explored and provided where viable (including the potential for local or district heating schemes); AND

AND

(e) the proposal includes, where appropriate, an agreed after care and restoration plan of at least five years duration, with a restoration bond if necessary, to secure beneficial reinstatement.

### Other Development Proposals

4. Applications for other types of development which constitute "national" or "major" development under the terms of the Planning Etc. (Scotland) Act 2006 will require the preparation of a Site Waste Management Plan (SWMP), which will be secured by a condition of the planning consent.

5. All development proposals will require to take satisfactory cognisance of waste collection requirements at the design stage. Such requirements may include waste storage, kerbside collection and small scale recycling facilities.

## **POLICY PI 8 - DRAINAGE, SuDS & FLOODING**

### Water/Waste Water Treatment Infrastructure

1. Proposals for the expansion or development of new facilities for water supply or the treatment of waste water shall accord with the LDP, subject to satisfying the following criteria:

- (a) it can be demonstrated that a range of alternative sites have been examined and that the proposed development offers the solution with least environmental impact whilst at the same time being technically feasible and financially viable;
- (b) the proposal incorporates appropriate landscape buffering, screening and design, particularly in sensitive environments.

#### Drainage

Development shall normally require a comprehensive Drainage Assessment (see Supplementary Guidance: Drainage, SUDS & Flooding) to be submitted to the satisfaction of the Council's Flooding Risk Management section unless it can be otherwise demonstrated that the site can be satisfactorily drained.

2. Proposals where public sewage infrastructure is available should connect to the public network, instead of providing a private drainage solution.

3. Where a private drainage solution is proposed, this will only be acceptable subject to the criteria set out within Supporting Information Paper 9.

4. Any proposals for the culverting of a watercourse will be considered with reference to SEPA's position statement on culverting.

#### SuDS

5. All development, with the exception of single house developments and development discharging surface water run-off to coastal waters, shall require to incorporate SUDS techniques.

#### Flooding

6. Development on areas identified as at or greater than 0.5% risk of flooding annually (0.1% for essential civil infrastructure) on flood risk plans, or on areas of known or suspected incidences of flooding, shall not accord with the LDP, unless the following criteria can be satisfied:

- (a) a Flood Risk Assessment, completed to the satisfaction of the Council's Flood Risk Management Section, has been submitted;
- (b) the ability of any functional floodplain to store and convey water will not be impaired;

(c) the development will not increase the risk of flooding elsewhere or materially increase the number of buildings at risk of being damaged by flooding; AND  
(d) the risk of flooding to the development itself can be mitigated satisfactorily (i.e. through an existing or planned flood protection scheme); OR  
(e) where flood risk cannot be satisfactorily mitigated, the development has an operating requirement that makes the location essential (e.g. for emergency services coverage, agriculture related use, water based activity) and will be capable of remaining operational and accessible during extreme flooding events. The above criteria shall generally not apply to alterations and small scale extensions, provided that such development will not have a significant material effect on the functional floodplain; will not affect local flooding issues; and will not significantly increase the number of people occupying/visiting the area.

7. Development on areas identified as having flood risk of less than 0.5% will normally be acceptable for development in respect of flood risk. A Flood Risk Assessment may be required if the nature of the development or local circumstances indicate heightened risk.

### **POLICY PI 10 - POLICY PI 10: COMMUNITY INFRASTRUCTURE**

1. Proposals for the development, replacement or extension of education, health, residential, nursing or other social care facilities or commercial leisure facilities shall accord with the LDP subject to the following criteria:

(a) that the site demonstrates a high level of accessibility, particularly for walking, cycling and public transport; AND

(b) that a range of sites have been examined, including consideration of locating the proposals within an area designated TC1 (Town Centre) or at the edge of a town centre boundary (where a town centre has been designated, and where this would not result in a detrimental impact to the town centre), in the interest of providing a cluster of services, creating vibrancy within centres and creating community hubs, unless it can be demonstrated this is not viable (for reasons of catchment, operating requirements, no suitable site available etc.); AND

(c) that consideration of co-location with other similar or complimentary facilities has been demonstrated, where applicable.

2. In the case of residential, nursing and other social care facilities, proposals should be located within reasonable walking distance of local services (such as a bank or post office) and a public transport node and should also demonstrate a generous level of private garden ground, with interesting aspects.

### **POLICY PI 13 - CARBON EMISSIONS AND NEW BUILDINGS**

All new buildings must reduce their carbon dioxide emissions above or in line with building standards through appropriately designed

On-site low or zero carbon generating technologies (LZCGTs) and/or  
Passive or operational energy efficiency measures

The following are exempt from this policy

- (a) buildings exempted from building regulations
- (b) individual buildings having an area less than 50 square metres
- (c) extensions to buildings, other than extensions to stand-alone buildings having an area less than 50 square metres that would increase the area to 50 square metres or more
- (d) buildings which will not be heated or cooled other than by heating provided solely for the purpose of frost protection
- (e) limited life buildings which have an intended life of less than two years
- (f) CO<sub>2</sub> emissions arising from any apparatus operating within the proposed development which is not related to the heating or cooling of a building.

Applicants are required to demonstrate to the satisfaction of the Council how this requirement will be met. A suspensive condition may be used to allow applicants to submit energy saving or on-site LZCGT schemes at the time of Building Warrant submissions.

On-site LZCGTs not permissible under General Permitted Development rights shall be considered against other relevant LDP policies and guidance.

## **GENERAL POLICY**

### (a) Siting, Design and External Appearance:

- Siting of development should have regard to the relationship of the development to existing buildings and the visual effects of the development on the surrounding area and landscape.
- Design should have regard to existing townscape and consideration should be given to size, scale, form, massing, height, and density.
- External appearance should have regard to the locality in terms of style, fenestration, materials and colours.
- Development will require to incorporate the principles of 'Designing Streets' and 'Designing Places'.
- The particularly unique setting of North Ayrshire's rural, coastal, neighbourhood and town centre areas, and those with similar characteristics, necessitates that all development proposals reflect specific design principles unique to these areas. Coastal, Rural, Neighbourhood and Town Centre Design Guidance (four separate documents) are Supplementary Guidance to the Plan and contain further details.
- Consideration should be given to proper planning of the area and the avoidance of piecemeal and backland development.
- Design should have regard to the need to reduce carbon emissions within new buildings.

### (b) Amenity:

Development should have regard to the character of the area in which it is located.

Regard should be given to the impact on amenity of:

- Lighting;
- Levels and effects of noise and vibration;
- Smell or fumes;
- Levels and effects of emissions including smoke, soot, ash, dust and grit or any other environmental pollution;
- Disturbance by reason of vehicular or pedestrian traffic.

Development should avoid significant adverse impact on biodiversity and upon natural heritage resources, including those outwith designated sites and within the wider countryside. Development proposals should further have regard to the preservation and planting of trees and hedgerows, and should also have regard to their potential to contribute to national and local green network objectives.

In relation to neighbouring properties regard should be taken of privacy, sunlight and daylight.

(c) Landscape Character:

In the case of development on edge of settlement sites, substantial structure planting will generally be required to ensure an appropriate boundary between town and country is provided. Such proposals should include native tree planting, retain natural features where possible and make provision for future maintenance.

Development should seek to protect the landscape character from insensitive development and the Ayrshire Landscape Character Assessment shall be used to assist assessment of significant proposals.

(d) Access, Road Layout, Parking Provision:

Access on foot, by cycle, by public transport and other forms of transport should be an integral part of any significant development proposal. Development should have regard to North Ayrshire Council's Roads Development Guidelines and meet access, internal road layout and parking requirements.

(e) Safeguarding Zones:

Pipelines, airports and certain other sites have designated safeguarding areas associated with them where specific consultation is required in assessing planning applications. The objective is to ensure that no development takes place which is incompatible from a safety viewpoint. The need for consultation within Safeguarding Zones is identified when an application is submitted. Supporting Information Paper No. 7 provides further information on Safeguarding Zones.

(f) The Precautionary Principle

The precautionary principle may be adopted where there are good scientific, engineering, health or other grounds for judging that a development could cause significant irreversible damage to the environment, existing development or any proposed development, including the application itself.

g) Infrastructure and Developer Contributions

For development proposals which create a need for new or improved public services, facilities or infrastructure, and where it is proposed that planning permission be granted, the Council will seek from the developer a fair and reasonable contribution in cash or kind towards these additional costs or requirements. Developer contributions, where required, will be sought through planning conditions or, where this is not feasible, planning or other legal agreements where the tests in Circular 3/2012 are met. Other potential adverse impacts of any development proposal will normally be addressed by planning condition(s) but may also require a contribution secured by agreement.

This will emerge from assessment of the impact of development proposals upon:

- Education;
- Healthcare facilities;
- Transportation and Access;
- Infrastructure;
- Strategic landscaping; and,
- Play facilities.

Further to analysis of infrastructure, indicative requirements for housing land allocations are set out within the Action Programme. Developer contributions will be further established by Supplementary Guidance (timing, costs etc.).

In addition to the above, Mixed Use Employment Areas are identified within the LDP. These sites are allocated for a mix of uses, subject to an element of employment space creation or improvement being provided. This will be informed by a business plan and masterplan. In these specific cases, contributions to the above (and affordable housing requirements as set out in Section 5) will also be required.

#### h) 'Natura 2000' Sites

Any development likely to have an adverse effect on the integrity of a 'Natura 2000' site will only be approved if it can be demonstrated, by means of an 'appropriate assessment', that the integrity of the 'Natura 2000' site will not be significantly adversely affected.

#### i) Waste Management

Applications for development which constitutes "national" or "major" development under the terms of the Planning Etc. (Scotland) Act 2006 will require the preparation of a Site Waste Management Plan (SWMP), which will be secured by a condition of the planning consent.

## 2. Consultations and Representations

The application was subject to statutory neighbour notification procedures, which included an advertisement in a local newspaper on 10<sup>th</sup> October 2018. Neighbour notification was repeated during late January 2019 following receipt of an amendment to the site layout in respect of vehicular access arrangements for the proposed residential and respite facilities.

### **Objections/Representations:**

1. Additional traffic: The development would result in a greatly increased number of vehicles through Glen Crescent and Riggs Cottages, which is a residential area and a cul-de-sac. The proposed use of this residential area to access the development would adversely affect the safety of the street for pedestrians and residents. It would also lead to additional fly-tipping, which is already a problem in the area. All access should be taken from Saltcoats Road.

*Response: As noted above, the original proposal has been amended such that the residential and respite accommodation would not be accessed via Glen Crescent/Riggs Cottages. The existing pedestrian footpath connection would be retained, but would not provide a direct connection to the proposed respite and residential facilities. As a result of the amendment, all vehicular access and egress to/from the development would be via the*

*B780 (Boglemart St/Saltcoats Road). For further commentary on transportation issues, see NAC Active Travel and Transport consultation response, below. Finally, it is not agreed that the proposed development of the site would increase the risk of fly-tipping. The proposed development would not in itself cause or contribute to fly-tipping.*

2. Loss of greenspace: the development of the remaining expanse of open space at Auchendarvie would be a huge loss to the town. The proposed replacement facilities are inadequate to compensate for this loss. There is also a possibility that the football pitches would be too small to meet the standards required by sportscotland and the SFA. In addition, Scottish Planning Policy (SPP) and the Council's LDP advise against development of open space. The proposal is particularly insensitive considering the social deprivation of the area in which the playing fields are located: Auchendarvie is bordered by several data zones in Stevenston and Saltcoats which fall into the 'most deprived' decile in the Scottish Index of Multiple Deprivation (2016). Furthermore, Saltcoats is already particularly poorly served in terms of playing fields. The area is also well used for recreation purposes by ramblers, children, families and dog walkers as well as sports clubs.

The argument that although the quantity of playing fields will decrease drastically whilst the quality of the remaining playing fields will improve - because of improvements in drainage, other surface properties, lighting, etc. - fails to recognise that a core component of 'quality' in the context of this planning policy is quantity (ie. the amount of open space). If the quantity of provision decreases to the extent that 4 or 5 grass pitches are lost and only one is left, then the quality of provision has clearly decreased markedly to the extent that any physical improvements to the quality of the remaining area would not off-set the net reduction in the available open space for public use. This factor is compounded by a significant cumulative loss of green space at Auchendarvie in recent years (eg. resource centre, children's home and cemetery on High Road as well as the skate park development west of the Harvie's leisure centre).

Stevenston's large undeveloped green spaces are one of its most important social and economic assets and should therefore be protected against inappropriate development. The development would negatively impact on quality of life, health and, indirectly, the economy. There is plenty of brownfield land across North Ayrshire which the proposed school should be built on. The development should go elsewhere.

*Response: The above points are noted. The status of SPP is non-statutory, and clearly highlights that the 1997 Planning Act requires planning applications to be determined in accordance with the development plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise. The adopted Local Development Plan (LDP) provides the basis for decision making, and enables an assessment to be undertaken for community infrastructure developments (such as schools) and for developments on public open space (as would be the case in this instance). The policies of the LDP require to be considered alongside other material planning considerations to enable a balance to be struck. For further commentary on the loss of open space, see sportscotland consultation response and Analysis, below.*

3. The proposed development land is too close to residential areas, and would result in various negative impacts on existing housing. Construction activity and the associated noise and pollution would have an adverse impact on local residents and wildlife. Once complete, there would be ongoing noise from the children attending the school, deliveries, traffic and mechanical plant. An increased level of anti-social behaviour, including trespassing, is also likely to occur.



*Response: As noted above, the proposed development is supported by a range of studies and documents which describe in detail the design and mitigation measures that would be incorporated into the development, both during the construction phase and once the facilities become operational. In addition to a construction method statement, various recommendations are included within each report. The implementation of the recommendations could be the subject of planning conditions, as necessary. Finally, it is not agreed that the development would lead to an increased level of anti-social behaviour in the surrounding area.*

4. The development would result in an increased risk of subsidence, increased risk of flooding, cause damage to existing natural habitats and cause damage to existing property.

*Response: As noted above, a detailed ground investigation has been undertaken by a firm of civil and structural engineers. Their report was subject to consultation with the Coal Authority who has no objection to the proposal, subject to a condition.*

5. Whilst screening of the development would take a generation to be effective, additional planting should take place to cover existing gaps in woodland.

*Response: It is not proposed to disturb the ground within the woodland area to the north of the site during the development. Extensive planting within the site has been proposed to enhance the landscape setting for the development. It is considered that such planting would also benefit the visual amenity of the surrounding area.*

6. The proposal would result in additional traffic using Boglemart Street. Additional traffic would cause congestion and further adverse effects on residential amenity within Boglemart Street. The road surface of Boglemart Street is constantly being damaged from the already high volume of traffic. There is also concern that the bus stops near the Lidl supermarket could be relocated as a consequence of the proposal.

*Response: The additional traffic generated by the proposed development would be appropriately directed onto the B780 given that this is one of the main local distributor roads in the area. Road defects can be reported directly to the Council for repair, although no specific defects have been highlighted in the submitted correspondence. The volume of additional traffic is considered to be acceptable given the status of this route. The site is also accessible by other modes of transportation and the development would include cycle parking provision for staff and visitors to use. Finally, there are no plans to relocate the bus stops serving the Lidl supermarket.*

7. The development would lead to environmental problems such as littering and would add to an existing problem of blocked drains which can cause unpleasant odours.

*Response: The issue of litter is not a material planning consideration. The development would have a new drainage system which would separate surface water drainage from foul water flows. Surface water run-off from the development site would not enter the foul sewer.*

8. Comments made during the pre-application phase have not been taken into account.

*Response: The PAC report provides many examples of where additional information has been provided by the applicant in response to concerns raised. The planning application provides the opportunity for public comment for consideration by the planning authority. Comments made by the public during the processing of the application have also been taken into account and addressed by the applicant.*

9. There has been very little communication with the local residents who would be most affected by the proposed development.

*Response: All statutory publicity procedures have been correctly followed. All neighbours were re-notified by letter on 24<sup>th</sup> January 2019 following receipt of an amended plan from the applicant. The amendment proposes no vehicular access between the site and Glen Crescent/Riggs Cottages following consideration of residents' concerns.*

### **Consultations:**

**NAC Access Officer** - no objections. The recommended level of cycle parking (10% of peak capacity for visitors and staff) is not considered necessary for the proposal given the wide catchment area. The proposed level of 20 cycle parking spaces is considered to be suitable. Various other comments have been made in relation to the DDA compliant internal path network and potential impacts of 'overspill' parking on the surrounding residential areas. To avoid the potential for overspill parking, which could adversely affect safe pedestrian movements in and out of the site, adequate parking provision within the development should be provided. The location for the cycle parking should be clarified.

*Response: Notwithstanding the above response, the recommended 10% level is considered necessary in view of the staff and visitor numbers at the proposed development. As such, an amended plan indicating this level of provision on the site has been submitted.*

**NAC Active Travel and Transportation** – no objection subject to conditions. The proposals should not have a significant impact on the adjacent road network provided that a right turn ghost island junction is created for the main entrance. Whilst it is desirable to fully connect developments to the wider road/footway network, careful consideration should be given to the possibility of impacting on the adjacent road network. In order to reduce the possibility of staff using Glen Crescent as a parking area instead of the allocated parking area, no direct pedestrian access to Glen Crescent should be provided. To ensure a one way operation of the residential and respite accommodation access appropriate signing to be used and agreed with the Active Travel and Transport team prior to works commencing. The proposed parking has been assessed and agreed that the parking will be shared between the two parts of the development. This will allow shift change to use spare capacity for the school and vice versa. Parking should be monitored on Boglemart Street once the development has opened. If after a period of three months continuous parking by staff on Boglemart Street occurs then the applicant will be required to arrange for the introduction of waiting restrictions at their expense.

*Response: Noted. The above matters can be addressed by attaching suitably worded conditions to any grant of planning permission. The link footpath has now been deleted from the proposed site layout drawing in order to deter staff and visitor parking in Glen Crescent. A condition requiring a travel plan, in accordance with established practice for major education developments, could also be attached. This would require review at two yearly intervals to ensure that any impacts on the surrounding area (eg. staff parking) could be identified and addressed.*

**NAC Environmental Health** - no objections subject to recommendations regarding noise levels and the hours of operation for construction activities.

*Response: The implementation of the recommendations in the submitted Noise Survey, Air Quality Survey and Construction Methodology would be secured by condition.*

**NAC Flooding Officer** - no objections subject to various conditions relating to surface water drainage design in order to minimise the risk of flooding.

*Response: The implementation of the recommendations in the submitted Flood Risk Assessment and Drainage Strategy would be secured by condition.*

**Scottish Water (SW)** - no objections subject to obtaining separate approval from SW with regard to connections into the public sewer and water networks. There is capacity within the water supply and waste water treatment works which serve Stevenston to serve the proposed development although SW are unable to reserve such capacity. The development should use SuDS to reduce the flow of surface water into the combined sewer system. The development proposals may impact on existing SW assets just outwith the site and recommend that contact is made with their Asset Impact Team.

*Response: Noted. The applicant will require to apply to SW for technical approval and to address outstanding issues relating to the proposed SuDS design and management as well as any potential impacts on SW assets. An informative note could be attached to any grant of planning permission.*

**Stevenston Community Council – (1)** Object to the proposed development on the grounds that the ASN school campus and residential/respite care facilities would be sited on an area of protected open space. As such, the proposal would be contrary to the provisions of Policy ENV 12 of the adopted LDP. The proposed sports pitches would not compensate for the loss of open space - i.e. five or more football pitches would be replaced by two. In addition, the proposal would not accord with Scottish Planning Policy (SPP) in respect of outdoor sports facilities, which provides detailed policy guidance on such matters. It is considered the proposal conflicts with SPP as there would be a substantial area of public open space lost in Stevenston as a result of the development without the provision of replacement facilities of adequate quality/capacity.

*Response: It is noted that the proposed development would result in a substantial development taking place on a large area of public open space. This must be weighed against the potential benefits of the proposed development as well as the proposed compensatory measures that would be provided in relation to public open space and the upgrading of sports pitches. See Analysis.*

**(2)** - In addition to the above, the community council considers that there is a lack of supportive infrastructure in the surrounding area. It is not considered that the road system is adequate to handle the increased level of traffic generated by the new school and there are no feeder primary schools nearby. Stevenston town centre is poorly suited for less-able individuals. Poor parking provision and very narrow pavements in particular make the town centre an inconvenient and sometimes dangerous place. The amenities of the town centre are located a considerable distance from the proposed school.

*Response: As noted elsewhere in this report, most pupils who would attend the proposed school would not be transported individually by parents/guardians or travel to the school by themselves. In accordance with the Council's established practice for the existing ASN schools in North Ayrshire, pupils would be driven from their homes to school using taxis or minibus, typically in small groups of 3 or more wherever possible. The Council's Transport Hub coordinate these services to ensure that the most efficient use of resources is made in order to reduce traffic generation in the surrounding road network. The school would include a primary department as per the existing ASN schools: it would not be 'linked' with any other primary school in the mainstream sector, and would replace all existing ASN schools in North Ayrshire. Pupils at the primary stages of the school would progress onto the secondary stage once they reach the appropriate age. As such, the proximity of the proposed ASN School to existing primary schools in the area is not relevant.*

*In addition, all vehicular access to the proposed development would be taken from the B780 - a main local distributor route in the Three Towns area that also serves as a main bus route serving the entire catchment area for the school. The site is relatively close to two railway stations. The availability of public transport would be of potential benefit to staff and visitors, rather than the pupils or residents. For staff or visitors travelling by car, the proposed access arrangements would avoid the need to drive through or park within the neighbouring residential streets at Glen Crescent/Riggs Cottages. All parking for staff and visitors would be provided within the site itself, where adequate capacity for cars and bicycles has been proposed. Finally, the site was selected because of its proximity to an existing secondary school, leisure facilities and the nearby Stevenston town centre, all of which are within walking distance. A new footpath link to the north of the site would enable Members of the wider community to reach either Auchendarvie Academy or Stevenston town centre without having to walk alongside the B780. For these reasons, the applicants consider that siting the development at the Auchendarvie playing fields would provide many new opportunities and benefits for young people with ASN. It is not agreed that the local road network would be adversely affected by the scale of the proposed development, nor is there convincing evidence to suggest that it would result in adverse impacts on the infrastructure of the nearby town centre. A travel plan for the development, requiring reviews at 2 yearly intervals, could be a condition of any grant of planning permission.*

**(3)** - Concerns have been expressed about air quality in the vicinity of the site. It is considered that the traffic levels on the adjacent B780 road would contribute to adverse health for the pupils attending the school.

*Response: As noted elsewhere in this report, an Air Quality Assessment has been undertaken, which concludes that the proposed development would have no adverse outcomes in this regard.*

**(4)** - Advise that their meetings held to discuss the project together with an online survey did not indicate any support for the proposed developments on the Auchendarvie playing fields site. Their conclusion is that the general feeling in the Stevenston community is that the proposal is "grossly inappropriate" for the Auchendarvie site for the various reasons given above.

*Response: Whilst this position is noted, it is not agreed that the proposal would be "grossly inappropriate". See Analysis.*

**SEPA** - no objection on flood risk grounds. SEPA has also provided comments, guidance and recommendations on air quality, construction site licensing, surface water drainage, foul drainage, construction and pollution prevention, district heating (including low or zero carbon heat networks) and regulatory advice.

*Response: SEPA has written directly to the applicant's agent setting out various regulatory matters which may require to be addressed. The main heating system for the campus would be a biomass boiler (with gas boiler back-ups).*

**sportscotland** - no objection. The proposed pitches meet the minimum size although a larger size of 100m x 60m with 3m run-off is recommended. A condition relating to the construction of the facility by a specialist contractor is also recommended.

*Response: The minimum requirements of sportscotland for the proposed pitches have been met. The applicant's agent advises that the requirements for larger pitches would be difficult to achieve this due to space restrictions and the significant additional cost. As the minimum standards have been met, the proposal does not require to be amended in this respect. In addition, the sports facilities would be constructed by an appropriately qualified contractor which would be secured through the procurement process. A planning condition in this respect would therefore be inappropriate.*

**The Coal Authority** - initially objected on the basis of insufficient information in relation to ground conditions. A request for further site investigation was made, which was duly submitted by the applicant's agent in December 2018. On the basis of the additional information received, The Coal Authority has removed its objection subject to a condition requiring further site investigations in advance of any development taking place. The further site investigations should be followed up with a report detailing the findings, and provide details of the extent and nature of any remedial works as may be necessary (for ground stability purposes). The report should then be submitted for the approval of the Planning Authority and the development only undertaken following the completion of any remedial works.

*Response: A condition could be attached to any grant of planning permission to ensure that the above requirements are met.*

**West of Scotland Archaeology Service** - No objection, and recommend that prior evaluation is undertaken before the development commences.

*Response: Prior evaluation of the site was undertaken during December 2018. A watching brief condition could be attached to ensure that the northeast part of the site, which is the only area of potential archaeological interest, is monitored by an archaeologist during the initial phase of land engineering and groundworks, thus enabling any archaeological remains to be recorded.*

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

Firstly, in terms of the LDP Vision & Spatial Strategy, it is considered that the development of an ASN educational campus with residential and respite care facilities would achieve considerable benefits for the communities of North Ayrshire at an accessible location for the majority of young people who will attend the proposed facilities. 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 ASN campus development has evolved against this background over several years and it is considered that the submitted 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. As well as providing education benefits, the proposed sports pitches 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 Auchendarvie would be well located for the communities to be served. In line with current arrangements, children travelling to the ASN Campus would generally be transported either by taxi or school bus, with dedicated drop-off and pick-up facilities provided within the site. Other users of the site, whether staff or Members of the public, could travel to the facilities on foot or bicycle from the surrounding residential areas, by public transport (bus or train) as well as by car. All vehicular traffic accessing the site would require to use the main B780 road which links Stevenston town centre with Saltcoats. The adjacent residential areas, such as Glen Crescent, would have no vehicular connection with the site, although the existing pedestrian footpath link into the playing fields from Glen Crescent would be retained and enhanced with a new path leading directly to Auchendarvie Academy. No direct path link into the campus site would be formed from Glen Crescent in order to deter staff from parking within the residential area. 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 Three Towns, Irvine and Kilwinning areas. Alternative sites were considered but none had the benefits of Auchendarvie in respect of co-location with an existing secondary school and proximity to a town centre. The requirements of criterion (b) have, therefore, been satisfied.

Regarding criterion (c), the proposal involves co-locating all of North Ayrshire's ASN schools and a range of other facilities onto one site beside an existing secondary school, including the provision of enhanced outdoor leisure facilities.

In summary, it is considered that the proposed siting arrangements would increase the potential for enhanced outcomes for pupils and young people attending the school or the residential/respite facilities. Co-location has therefore been demonstrated. The requirements of criterion (c) have therefore been met. Based on the above, the principle of development is in accordance with Policy PI 10.

### **Policy ENV 12 – Development of Open Space**

In terms of Policy ENV 12, development of land identified as protected leisure and open space shall not accord with the LDP unless a range of criteria can be satisfied. These are set out below.

Firstly, where the proposed development is for an outdoor recreation or physical activity use, criterion (a) requires that it will improve the quality and range of outdoor recreation or physical activity facilities within the LDP area and criterion (b) requires that it will not lead to an unacceptable net loss of open space (including playing fields).

Secondly, where the proposed development is for a use other than outdoor recreational or physical activity purposes, it will not set an undesirable precedent for further incremental loss of open space.

Thirdly, the policy requires that proposed development will not unacceptably impact upon the recreational and/or amenity value of any area of active or passive open space when considered in relation to the overall level of provision in the local area;

Fourthly, where the loss of open space has a material effect on the quality, function or playing capacity of a facility, alternative provision of similar or improved community benefit and accessibility will be made available in a location which is convenient for its users.

The proposal would result in a net loss of public open space, and result in a reduction in the number of football pitches at Auchendarvie. However, the policy requires that consideration must also be given to the overall level of provision in the local area; that no undesirable precedent would be set as a result of the development and that alternative provision of similar or improved community benefit is provided to compensate for what is lost.

Taken as a whole, it is considered that there would be adequate green space remaining at a variety of locations in and around Stevenston to provide continued opportunities for a wide variety of outdoor sports and recreation purposes for the local and wider Three Towns community. At the site itself, the proposed development would provide new opportunities for outdoor sports through the provision of greatly enhanced, all-weather facilities. Whilst it is undoubtedly the case that there would be a net reduction in the *total area* available for sports and informal outdoor recreation at Auchendarvie, it is considered that the *qualitative improvements* which have been proposed at the site would outweigh this loss. It is not considered that the proposed development would lead to an incremental loss of further open space at Auchendarvie: the development is a unique 'one-off'. The proposed pitches would be available for use by pupils at the proposed ASN School, Auchendarvie Academy and also for community use. Both pitches (one artificial and floodlit, the other grass) would help to diversify and enhance the range of facilities on offer at Stevenston. The applicant is confident that the development would encourage additional sports use at Auchendarvie, and advises that its usage by football clubs over recent years has declined, possibly in light of improved facilities elsewhere. Within this context, it is not considered necessary for additional provision to be provided elsewhere to compensate for the grass pitches lost by the development. Notably, sportscotland does not require any such provision, and has not objected to the proposal.

For informal recreation purposes, there would also be a large uninterrupted swathe of public open space retained along the northern edge of the site. This area of grassland, approximately 350m in length, would vary in width from 15m to 45m between the north of the proposed development and the foot of the wooded slope. Within this area, it is proposed to provide a surfaced footpath along the southern edge of the woodland to provide a dedicated path link from the Glen Crescent area to Auchendarvie. The proposed footpath would provide a dedicated route for the public to walk (or cycle) through the Auchendarvie area: currently there is no formal pathway over the playing fields. The new path would adjoin an area of sloping ground that would lead down towards the northern boundary of the ASN school and residential/respite accommodation.

The development would also introduce additional tree and shrub planting that would enhance the landscape character of the area, which is currently dominated by short mown grassland. The small group of trees which would be removed to facilitate the construction of the access road serving the respite and residential facility would therefore be replaced by new planting elsewhere on the site.

In summary, it is considered that whilst there would be a reduction in the gross area of open space at Auchendarvie, the proposed development would enhance the quality of the remaining space available for both school and community use whilst also delivering a much needed modern ASN school campus alongside complementary respite/residential facilities at an appropriate location within walking distance of a secondary school and other local facilities. The proposed development would therefore be acceptable in terms of Policy ENV



12. Nonetheless, in these circumstances, it is considered necessary that a decision to grant planning permission for this scale of development on protected public open space should be referred to Scottish Ministers in line with the Notification of Applications Direction 2009.

### **Policy PI 1: Walking, cycling and public transport**

This policy aims to ensure that all proposals which will result in significant trip generation demonstrates that account has been taken of the needs of walkers, cyclists and public transport users. The proposal is supported by a transport assessment which considers these issues in detail. The planning application includes adequate provision for staff parking. Most school pupils would be transported from their homes by taxi or minibus. Services are coordinated to ensure the minimum number of vehicles are used, with pupils typically travelling together in groups of at least 3 whenever possible. A total of 40 cycle parking places are proposed within 2 secure shelters. Public transport is available on the B780 Boglemart St/Saltcoats Road, which is well served throughout the day by a range of bus services, including Stagecoach 11 which links the Three Towns to Kilwinning, Irvine and Kilmarnock. The site is also within 15 minutes walking distance of two railway stations (Stevenston and Saltcoats) where there are regular train services throughout the day. As noted above, the requirement to produce (and regularly update) a travel plan could be a condition of any planning permission. Further conditions could be attached to address other outstanding transportation issues, as recommended by NAC Active Travel & Transportation. Overall, the application has addressed the relevant transport issues and is considered to be acceptable in terms of Policy PI 1.

### **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. NAC Flooding and SEPA have no objection to the proposed development on flood risk grounds. The development would result in improved management of surface water run-off through the use of Sustainable Drainage Systems (SuDS) and the implementation of the measures identified in the submitted flood risk assessment, drainage strategy and landscaping plan. Various measures would be adopted within the development to manage the eventual discharge of surface water run-off. The application has addressed the relevant flooding and drainage issues and meets the terms of Policy PI 8.

### **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. The proposal includes a biomass boiler, which is a renewable heat source of a type now used widely in North Ayrshire schools and new council housing. There would also be a gas fuelled back-up boiler system, which would only be used in the event of the biomass boiler temporarily breaking down. The application provides further commentary on energy efficiency measures that will be embodied within the development. The proposal is therefore satisfactory in this regard and accords with Policy PI 13.

In terms of the General Policy, the relevant criteria are (a) Siting, Design and External Appearance, (b) Amenity, (c) Landscape Character, (d) Access, road layout, parking provision and (e) Water and Sewerage.

(a) Siting, design and external appearance would be acceptable, with the ASN School resulting in a new and distinctive contemporary architectural form for Auchendarvie. The school building would be visible primarily from Boglemart Street and Saltcoats Road, and also from the surrounding residential areas. The design of the building is considered to be of high quality, and would relate well to the landscape setting of the site, with the wooded backdrop being fully retained. The respite and residential buildings would be smaller and more domestic in scale. These buildings would be less visible within the wider townscape, although still visible from the Boglemart Street and Glen Crescent areas. All parts of the site would be visible from the residential areas to the north, although the difference in ground level is such that these houses would essentially 'overlook' the development from a high vantage point and at some distance away. The sports facilities would be located at a greater distance from the nearest housing on Boglemart Street, much closer to Auchendarvie Academy and opposite the golf course. A condition could be attached with regard to the submission of a final schedule of external finishes to be used on the buildings within the development. A further condition requiring the submission of external lighting and signposting within the development could also be attached.

(b) In terms of the impact on amenity, the development of the playing fields would be mitigated through the use of extensive landscaping including new tree and shrub planting. Once mature, such landscaping works would soften the visual impacts of the buildings and filter views.

There would be no loss of daylight or sunlight to neighbouring residential areas arising from the proposed development. Noise impacts would be attenuated by the distance of the main facilities from the nearest housing, whilst noting that the site is already a long established site for outdoor sports.

The proposed floodlighting would extend the hours of operation for the use of the sports pitch facilities in comparison with the existing situation. However, as noted above, the location of the floodlit pitch in relation to the nearest residential areas would be in excess of 100m, thereby providing noise attenuation through the separation distance. In addition, the submitted lighting design would involve the use of LED lamps directed onto the playing surfaces only. LED lighting would also be used throughout the development itself. As noted above, a condition could be attached in respect of the external lighting systems.

Overall, whilst there would be a loss of openness within the site arising from the new buildings, enclosed playgrounds, gardens, parking areas and roadways, as well as the potential for more activity during hours of darkness, the impact on local amenity would be acceptable given the separation distances from the nearest housing and the overall improvement in the facilities available for public and educational use. As noted above, a substantial swathe of public open space, including a new footpath, would remain along the northern edge of the site at the edge of the woodland area.

(c) The landscape character of Stevenston would not be affected as the site is wholly within the Three Towns urban area. It is however acknowledged that there would be a loss of openness as a result of the development. New landscaping works would enhance the setting of the buildings and car parking areas. A requirement for the applicant to submit the final details of the landscaping together with a requirement to implement the scheme could be the subject of a condition. A further condition in respect of promoting biodiversity through an action plan is also recommended. The implementation of such a measure would enable the continued use of the site by wildlife once the development is complete e.g. provision of bird boxes, the planting of pollen producing wildflowers.

(d) NAC Transportation offered no objection to the proposal on the grounds of the provision of a right turn lane at the site access, car and cycle parking provision, pedestrian routes and links to public transport. The implementation of these matters would be the subject of conditions, where necessary.

(e) Waste water from the buildings would be discharged to the public sewer. Surface water drainage details would be attenuated through a SuDS scheme and discharged to the public sewer. The recommendations contained in the flooding and drainage strategy would be implemented through a planning condition.

In summary, the proposal is considered acceptable in terms of the General Policy.

Taking all of the above into account, and whilst noting the objection to the proposal from Stevenston Community Council and others in relation to the loss of protected open space at Auchenharvie, it is considered that the proposed development could be supported in terms of the adopted LDP, having regard to other material planning considerations, for the following reasons:

1. The loss of open space would be partially compensated for through the provision of improved outdoor sports facilities and a new footpath for the general public along the edge of the woodland within a swathe of retained open space. Both of these elements would provide significantly improved opportunities at Auchenharvie for organised sports as well as catering for informal recreation such as walking and cycling. The overall level of public open space provision within Stevenston would be reduced only marginally as a result of the proposed development.

2. Due consideration has been given to a variety of factors such as ground conditions, flooding and drainage, traffic and access, ecology, building and landscape design, energy consumption, noise and air quality. The proposal has addressed all of these issues satisfactorily through a range of supporting documents. Planning conditions could be attached to address any outstanding issues, where necessary.

3. The siting of the proposal at a prominent and accessible location within Stevenston would represent a landmark development for Additional Support Needs education and accommodation in North Ayrshire. As well as being a well-designed, high quality educational and social facility in its own right, there would be a number of potential benefits derived from its co-location with an established secondary school near a town centre. Together with the respite and residential accommodation, these factors would combine to provide a strong basis for greater educational attainment, improved health and social care facilities as well as enhanced levels of social integration with the wider community.

In summary, the integration of education facilities, health and social care onto one campus would offer significant benefits to the children and young people in North Ayrshire with Additional Support Needs.

It is therefore recommended that planning permission is granted, subject to the undernoted conditions.

#### **4. Full Recommendation**

See Appendix 1.

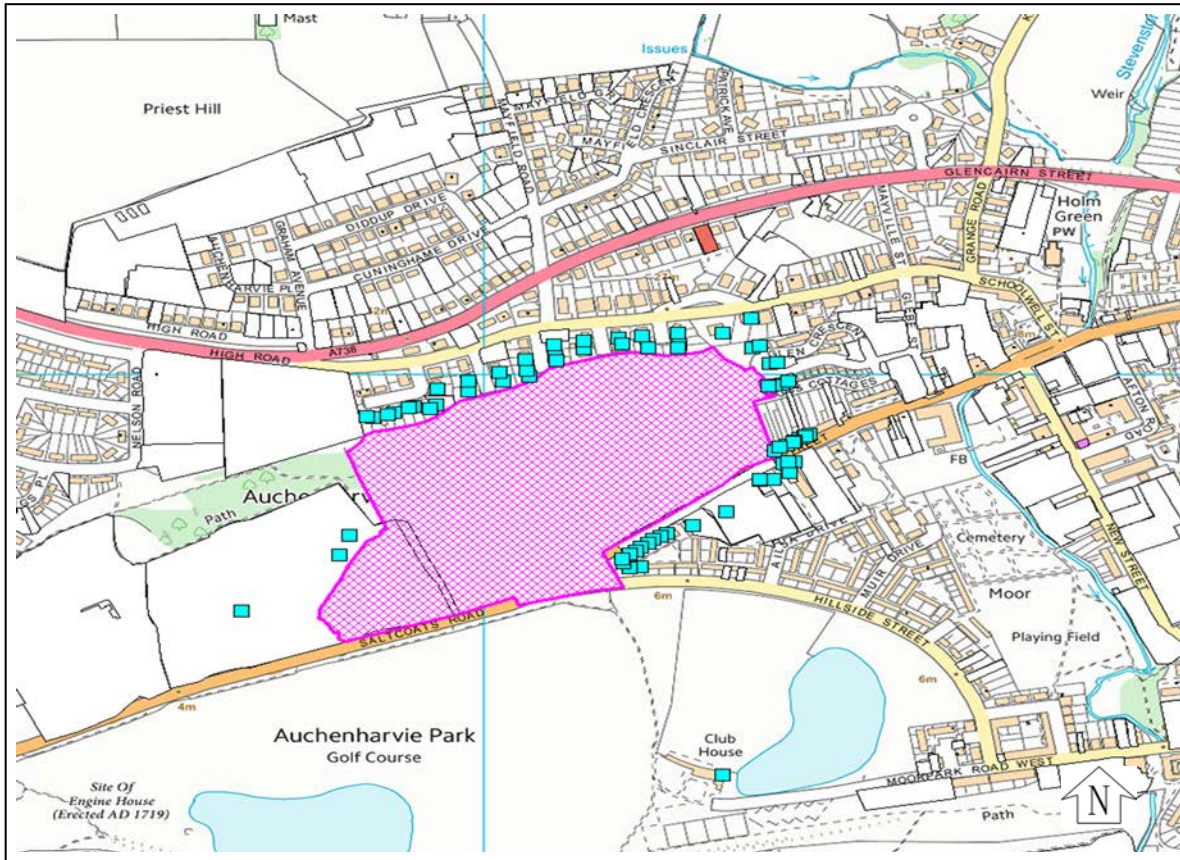
A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "Cara Lerman". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Executive Director, Economy & Communities

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

# Location Plan

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## **APPENDIX 1**

### **RECOMMENDATION FOR PLANNING APPLICATION REF NO 18/00882/PPM**

Grant subject to the following conditions:-

1. That, prior to the commencement of the development hereby approved, a scheme of further intrusive site investigations shall be undertaken, the scope of which shall be adequate to fully assess the ground conditions and inform any required remedial works. Once complete, a report detailing the findings arising from the further intrusive site investigations, including details of the extent and nature of any remedial works, shall be submitted to and approved in writing by North Ayrshire Council as Planning Authority. Thereafter, any remedial works that are required for ground stability purposes shall be implemented only in accordance with such details as may be approved prior to the commencement of the development.
2. That the development hereby approved shall be implemented in accordance with the recommendations contained in the supporting documentation submitted with the planning application unless otherwise indicated below, all to the satisfaction of North Ayrshire Council as Planning Authority.
3. That the developer shall secure the implementation of an archaeological watching brief for the northeast part of the site, to be carried out by an archaeological organisation acceptable to North Ayrshire Council as Planning Authority during the phase of land engineering and site preparation works. The retained archaeological organisation shall be afforded access at all reasonable times and allowed to record and recover items of interest and finds. Terms of Reference for the watching brief shall be supplied by West of Scotland Archaeology Service. The name of the archaeological organisation retained by the developer shall be given to North Ayrshire Council as Planning Authority in writing not less than 14 days before the development commences.
4. 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.
5. That, prior to the commencement of any building operations, 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 buildings in the development. 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 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 development 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 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.

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 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.

9. That prior to the development 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.

10. That prior to the development becoming operational, the applicant shall submit for the written approval of North Ayrshire Council as Planning Authority details of a Travel Plan for the development. 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 development 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.

11. That, prior to the development becoming operational, a right turn lane shall be formed to serve the ASN school access on Boglemart Street, the design of which shall be confirmed with North Ayrshire Council as Planning Authority beforehand.

12. That visibility splays of 2.5 metres by 70 metres, in both directions, shall be provided and maintained at the junction of the ASN school access with the public road. No item with a height greater than 1.05 metre above adjacent carriageway level shall be located within these sightline triangles.

13. That, within 12 months of the date of approval, details of a replacement bus shelter and associated hardstanding for the existing eastbound bus stop on Boglemart Street to the south of the application site shall be submitted for the written approval of North Ayrshire Council as Planning Authority. The hardstanding shall be located to the rear (north) of the existing footway and the shelter type shall be a DDA compliant enclosed 3 bay model (as a minimum) that meets the standards of Strathclyde Partnership for Transport (SPT). Thereafter, the works shall be implemented in accordance with such details as may be approved prior to the development becoming operational and permanently retained thereafter.

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

1. To meet the requirements of the Coal Authority in respect of historic coal workings below the site.

2. In the interest of the proper planning of the area.
3. To meet the requirements of the West of Scotland Archaeology Service.
4. To meet the requirements of Environmental Health.
5. In the interest of the amenity of the area.
6. In the interest of the amenity of the area.
7. In the interests of nature conservation and amenity.
8. In the interests of visual amenity.
9. To meet the requirements of the adopted North Ayrshire Local Development Plan.
10. To ensure that the methods of transportation for all users of the development are reviewed at regular intervals.
11. In the interest of road safety.
12. In the interest of road safety.
13. To support and encourage the use of public transport to/from the development.