



BUSINESS PLAN

Maryburgh Amenities Centre Redevelopment



Scottish Government
March 2016



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1. Executive Summary

INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND

This business plan has been produced to clarify the achievability, and means of delivering, a community proposal to improve the amenities available to people in Maryburgh and neighbouring settlements. It was initially drafted by SKS Scotland on behalf of Maryburgh Amenities Company. This draft has been amended and further developed by Maryburgh Amenities Company to take subsequent developments into account.

Maryburgh Amenities Company Ltd (MAC) is a company limited by guarantee and a registered Scottish Charity (charity no SC009562). It was formed in 2013 to take over the assets and operations of the Maryburgh Amenities Association which raised funding for the Maryburgh Amenities Centre and has operated it successfully for over 30 years. The Community Asset Transfer Business Case prepared by MAC in October 2013 notes that the MAC centre was built to a modular design and, over 30 years old, needs upgrading and remodelling. The upgrading would:

- bring the building to modern standards;
- respond to changing community needs;
- remodel the hall interior;
- improve insulation and heating;
- complement facilities at the new Ben Wyvis Primary School in Conon Bridge.

The renovation/refurbishment of the Amenities Centre will form a core part of the phased redevelopment. The company has been working on proposals to support the transfer of the amenities and former primary school site in Maryburgh from the Highland Council to community ownership.

OPTIONS APPRAISAL

This section presents analysis and conclusions on how the assets may best be used by MAC in furtherance of their constitutional aims. The assets are:

Maryburgh Primary School

Noting that an element of community space could fit well within a mixed use development, the consultants can therefore find no strong business case for the main use of Maryburgh Primary School for anything other than housing development in the longer term. There is an evidenced need for affordable housing in Maryburgh, hence this would provide some community benefit.

There is potential for the school to be used as interim accommodation for community groups during the period that the Amenities Centre is unavailable due to renovation works, depending on the sale schedule and the timing of the renovation project. This would ensure that the present users of the Amenities Centre may be accommodated during the renovation period and reduces the risk of them finding alternative accommodation and failing to return. There is an evidenced need for affordable housing in Maryburgh, hence this would provide some community benefit.

Amenities Centre (including the Football Pitch)

The Amenities Centre is structurally sound, albeit in need of upgrade, renovation and repair. There is demand for space in Maryburgh for community hire and from which services may be provided. The running costs for the Amenities Centre are presently relatively low. There is evidence that some potential hirers of the Amenities Centre have been put off by the quality of the facilities available. Improvements should therefore positively impact on the number of hires, and consequently on the income generated through hire fees. The majority, if not all, of the potential sources of grant funding for this work are likely to demand that the community has ownership of the facility. The provision of an attractive, fit for purpose, Amenities Centre is core to the constitutional objects of MAC. There is therefore a strong case for MAC to seek to attract resources which will allow them to purchase and refurbish the Amenities Centre.

Brownfield Site

Similarly to the school building, the brownfield site adjacent to the school may be of value for housing development. There are few other options for its use that are realistically achievable in the short term, or which are likely to produce significant income as a capital receipt or revenue stream.

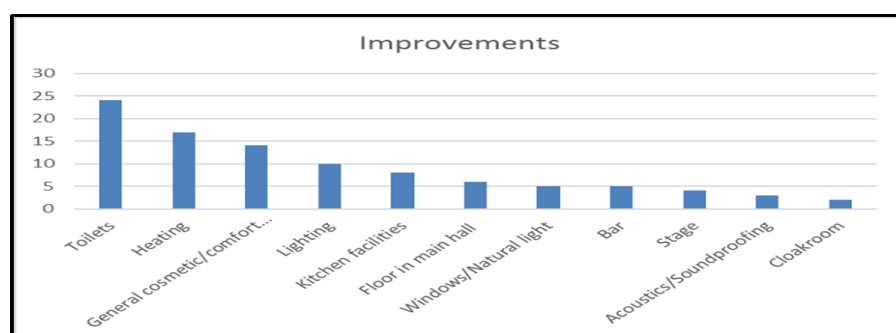
Greenfield site

The greenfield site is highly valued by the local community, occupies a key location in the centre of the village and is the only major green space in the village. There is no case for changing the nature of its use. Enhancing and improving the amenity of the green space would be directly in accord with the constitutional objects of MAC.

DEVELOPING THE AMENITIES CENTRE

The building has had an initial survey carried out by Gunn MacPhee & Associates to confirm its structural integrity, however there is no formal condition report on the Amenities Centre. A site visit by the consultants to the centre showed that the building is poorly insulated and there are gaps between the roof and walls of the building. The inefficiency of the heating system has been confirmed by the audit undertaken by Resource Efficient Scotland.

Respondents to a survey were asked to suggest what, if any improvements they would make to the existing facilities. This question generated 68 separate comments, many of which suggested multiple opportunities for improvement. The graph below shows the results of an analysis of the comments received.





The main things that respondents wanted a community centre for were:

- Parties and social events
- Café/Coffee Shop
- Sports
- Meeting rooms
- Concerts/theatre presentation.
- Site for outreach services
- Changing rooms.
- Space for youth groups.

The present hourly fee for hire of the main hall by private individuals or voluntary organisations for functions, parties etc. is £20 per hour. It may be noted that 25% of respondents to the survey stated that they would only be willing to pay £10 per hour, i.e. less than the current charge, and 65% said they would be willing to pay £20 or more per hour. It may be concluded that the cost of hiring the main hall in the Amenities Centre is presently in line with expectations of two thirds of the respondents.

There are a range of other facilities available for community hire, however these are all either at capacity or perform a function which is different from that envisaged for the renovated/refurbished Amenities Centre. The planned Amenities Centre appears to have a strong niche as a location for parties and other social functions. This does not appear to be covered by any of the other facilities in Maryburgh and Conon Bridge. It is likely therefore that the Amenities Centre will therefore either (a) provide additional local capacity for, or (b) fill a niche that is not at present served.

FOOTBALL PITCH AND GREENSPACE

Proposals for improvements to the football pitch are at present incomplete. It is commonly agreed that improved drainage is a priority, and will allow more frequent play. There are suggestions to move the pitch six metres North, install lighting and set up barriers to prevent vehicle access.

The sources of funds for the improvements to the Football Pitch are likely to be different from the sources of funds for the improvements to the Amenities Centre. The complexities of match-funding aside, it may therefore be possible to view this as a parallel development, and to phase it according to priority and availability of funds. It is also envisaged that development of the football pitch and associated infrastructure would be led by the Maryburgh Football Club.

Community consultation shows that the greenspace is extremely highly valued by the community. The space at present has no design features which encourage the use and enjoyment of the greenspace. There are no natural gathering points or pathways to draw users to particular areas which would facilitate interaction between members of the community. Landscaping, the installation of pathways on the desire lines, and the installation of benches and tables are expected enhance the amenity of the greenspace and increase the level of use and benefit delivered. No costings are presently available for the above work. Although there is a strong business case for investment in improvements in the greenspace, there is little evidence to suggest that there is a need for this development to take place at the same time as the renovation/refurbishment of the Amenities Centre.

LOCAL NEEDS ANALYSIS

Maryburgh is a village in the Highland council area of Scotland, 2 miles (3 km) south of Dingwall. It is situated on the northern bank of the River Conon. Maryburgh and Conon Bridge, although distinct villages, are often treated as a single settlement for administrative purposes. The Highland Council ranks Maryburgh & Conon Bridge as the tenth most populous settlement in the Highland Council area, with a total 3147 people in both villages. Both Maryburgh and Conon Bridge have expanded in recent years because of housing development largely serving commuters who find the locations attractive due to their proximity to the A835 providing road access to employment opportunities in Dingwall and Inverness.

Ben Wyvis Primary School serves both villages. There are 253 primary school pupils enrolled in session 2016/17 with the projected school roll “expected to remain at the upper limit with regard to design limits and teaching entitlement for the next 15 years”. There are currently 70 pre-school children enrolled in the nursery at Ben Wyvis Primary School. There are currently proposals to extend the school with three additional classrooms.

The Scottish Index of Multiple Deprivation (SIMD) identifies small area concentrations of multiple deprivation across all of Scotland in a consistent way. The SIMD ranks small areas, called datazones, from most deprived to least deprived. 1347 people, or 37% of the total population in the Amenities Centre catchment area live in a datazone which is below the median line.

BENEFITS OF DEVELOPMENT

There are several powerful impacts resulting from the facilities and activities that may be provided from the planned improvements to the Amenities Centre, Football Pitch and greenspace, including:

- People of all ages will benefit from increased opportunities to meet with each other in formal and informal social context, thus enhancing intergenerational harmony.
- The Centre can become a hub for outreach services to improve the quality of life and health of the most vulnerable.
- The Centre will provide a modern hub with increased economic activity and opportunity for a wide range of residents.

CONTRIBUTION TO THE HIGHLAND COUNCIL PRIORITIES

The Highland Council approach to contributing to the Scottish Government National outcomes is set out in the Single Outcome Agreement Between the Highland Community Planning Partnership and the Scottish Government 2013/14 – 2018/19¹. The project will help the Highland Council and its partners deliver the Single Outcome Agreement (SOA), in the following areas:

- Employment
- Safer and stronger communities and preventing reoffending
- Health inequalities and physical activity
- Older people
- Environmental outcomes

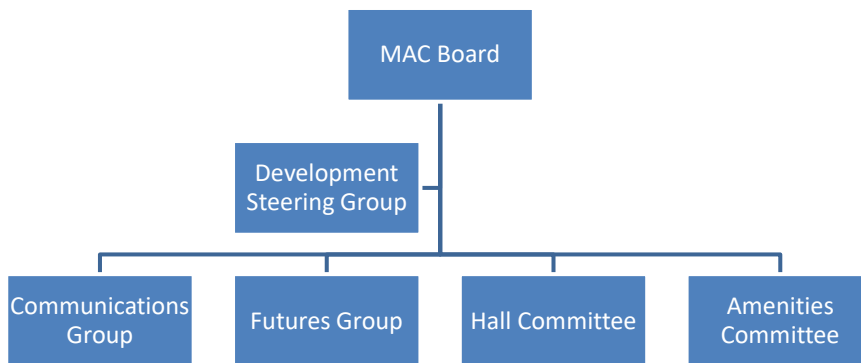
¹ http://www.highland.gov.uk/downloads/file/4613/single_outcome_agreement_3

Transference of the assets into community ownership will also present financial benefits to The Highland Council. There will be a capital receipt resulting from the agreed purchase price for the assets. There will also be a revenue cost saving in perpetuity made in relation to rates and maintenance on the property.

PROJECT MANAGEMENT

Governance of MAC and management of MAC activity is undertaken by the Company Board of Directors and/or subcommittees, working groups, individual volunteers and contractors with delegated authority. The roles within the Board and operating structure are outlined below

MAC Governance Structure



Fundraising and project work is predominantly managed by the MAC Board directly or through a relevant committee. As the project moves from the funding application and Business Planning phase to a detailed design and implementation phase a project Steering Group will be established. The Steering Group will ultimately report to the MAC Board but will have delegated authority to manage and shape the project within a framework approved by the MAC Board at quarterly meetings. The membership of the Steering Group is expected to evolve over time to incorporate key skills related to various stages of the project. The Steering Group will also draw on professional support where required.

There will be a requirement for a detailed project management plan which describes the tasks and dependencies associated with the development. This will require to be articulated with a resource plan which clarifies the sources of funds and the timescales for their receipt and payment to other parties.



During the on-site phase, MAC will be supported by a Clerk of Works who will be recruited/commissioned separately. The Design Team and Clerk of Works will represent the interests of MAC in ensuring that the work is completed satisfactorily by the contractor(s) and within the agreed budget. The project Quantity Surveyor will be responsible for valuing works monthly and issuing interim certificates to accompany contractors' invoices.

MAC plan to access funds from the Scottish Land Fund for the costs associated with a project manager to represent their interests during the development phase. This is at present, envisaged as a 0.5 FTE post for a period of 6 months.

There may be a case for the employment of a business development and marketing officer for a fixed term once the Amenities Centre is re-opened. Their role will include

- (a) assisting in developing effective and efficient operational policies
- (b) marketing the centre, and
- (c) working with the Treasurer and board to maximise income and minimise costs.

This is, at present, envisaged as a 0.5 FTE post for a period of 12 months

PROJECT FINANCE

An independent valuation survey instructed by MAC and undertaken by Shepherd Commercial Chartered Surveyors proposed the following valuations

| Market Valuation | |
|--------------------------|----------|
| Maryburgh Primary School | £95,000 |
| Brownfield site | £100,000 |
| Amenities centre | £75,000 |
| Playing fields | £0 |
| Totals | £270,000 |

Local authorities can dispose of land at less than market value, under the Disposal of Land by Local Authorities (Scotland) Regulations 2010. The regulations require them to consider whether the disposal is likely to promote or improve economic development or regeneration, health, social wellbeing or environmental wellbeing. The proposal is to purchase the assets from Highland Council with the following discounts applied.

| Market Valuation | | % Offer | £ offer | Purpose |
|--------------------------|----------|---------|---------|-----------------------------|
| Maryburgh Primary School | £95,000 | 15% | £14,250 | predominantly community use |
| Brownfield site | £100,000 | 75% | £75,000 | no planning or services |
| Amenities centre | £75,000 | 0% | £0 | Community use |
| Playing fields | £0 | 0% | £0 | Community use |
| Totals | £270,000 | 33% | £89,250 | |



There is considerable support from the MAC Board for the use of the Maryburgh Primary School as interim accommodation while Amenities Centre is under renovation. The school will require some upgrade to bring it to habitable standard. There is conflicting and out of date information on the scale of work and costs required. The consultants would recommend instructing a conditions report on the school

For the purposes of this business plan, we have accepted the costs shown in the December 2011 Highland Council Housing & Property Service Property Inspection & Condition Report on Maryburgh Primary School as the best estimate of costs. Works required immediately and in 2-5 years to ensure condition 'B' status of major elements were estimated at £18,047. To allow some scope for variation, we have applied a 15% increase on the total sum estimated, compounded for each year to 2016. Hence the total budgeted sum is £36,299.

The indicative value of £500K to redevelop the Amenities Centre is considered sufficient to ensure a minimum standard of upgrading to deliver the key improvements highlighted earlier in the Business Plan, and to effect maintenance and upgrading works to the fabric, services, fixtures and fittings to provide a fit for purpose building that can be maintained for the medium to long term without significant additional investment required.

The Scottish Land Fund is expected to provide the resources for the purchase of the assets, and for some other elements of the overall project, specifically relating to project management and sport towards initial operating costs. MAC plan to dispose of the asset brownfield site for market value at a later date. The value of SLF funding application associated with the revenue elements is anticipated to be in the region of £25,000.

Based on the recent valuation, the sale of Maryburgh Primary School and the brownfield site should produce a capital receipt of £17500,000. It is possible that this sum may be greater if the interim renovations that MAC carry out on Maryburgh Primary School increase the value of this property.

This forecast assumes that the MAC Centre would retain its revenue status quo during 2017-2018, until all funding had been received. This forecast assumes that renovation and refurbishment work would be carried out during 2018 - 2019, with the re-opening and potential revenue being starting 2019-2020. Although other possible income streams are examined in the business plan (such as a café) this forecast is based on what is believed to be the most realistic options for MAC at the present time.

| Surplus/Deficit | 2015 - 2016 | 2019 – 2020 | 2020 - 2021 | 2021 - 2022 | 2022 – 2023 |
|-----------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|
| | Year 1 | Year 2 | Year 3 | Year 4 | Year 5 |
| | -£517.81 | £10,289 | £12,779 | £14,803 | £17,101 |

RISK ANALYSIS

Undertaking any project of this scale, complexity and cost involves an element of risk. The risks associated with taking any action, need to be assessed against the risks of inaction. Although there are some risks to MAC associated with taking the project forward, these are manageable and can be mitigated. The risks associated with inaction apply to community of Maryburgh, and not manageable, and methods of mitigation are unclear. It therefore appears, on the balance of risks to be better to take forward the proposal.



2. Background and Project Aims

Introduction

This business plan has been produced to clarify the achievability, and means of delivering, a community proposal to improve the amenities available to people in Maryburgh and neighbouring settlements. It was initially drafted by SKS Scotland on behalf of Maryburgh Amenities Company. This draft has been amended and further developed by Maryburgh Amenities Company to take subsequent developments into account.

About Maryburgh Amenities Company

Maryburgh Amenities Company Ltd (MAC) is a company limited by guarantee and a registered Scottish Charity (charity no SC009562). It was formed in 2013 to take over the assets and operations of the Maryburgh Amenities Association which raised funding for the Maryburgh Amenities Centre and has operated it successfully for over 30 years. The company is managed by a volunteer board of directors and incorporates a number of committees to which day to day aspects of specific functions, including development and management of the hall, are delegated. MAC presently has a membership of 257 individuals, drawn from an adult population of just under 1000.

The company has the following purposes:

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

Background to Project

The company has been working on proposals to support the transfer of the amenities and former primary school site in Maryburgh from the Highland Council to community ownership. A significant Lottery application was submitted during 2015 for major funding to redevelop and extend the Amenities Centre and to improve accessibility and quality of amenity space for the community. The proposals included renovation of the football pitch, a new all-weather sports area and development of the old school building as an area to promote small business and heritage uses. An all ability footpath and arboretum were included to link the area with both sides of the village.

The 2015 Lottery application was unsuccessful, but continuing to work with the Highland Council, the community now seek to purchase the amenities space, old school and associated curtilage, with a view to developing planning permissions for community housing on part of the site, in line with the Local Plan, to raise funds to progress a more modest and possibly phased redevelopment.



Working with the Ward manager and local councillors an agreement was reached to apply to the Scottish Land Fund to acquire funds to purchase the assets at a discounted value.

The Community Asset Transfer Business Case prepared by MAC in October 2013 notes that the MAC centre was built to a modular design and, over 30 years old, needs upgrading and remodelling.

The upgrading would:

- bring the building to modern standards;
- respond to changing community needs;
- remodel the hall interior;
- improve insulation and heating;
- complement facilities at the new Ben Wyvis Primary School in Canon Bridge.

The renovation/refurbishment of the Amenities Centre will form a core part of the phased redevelopment.

Project Description

In July 2016, SKS Scotland² (SKS) was contracted by MAC to undertake the following programme of work:

- identification of options for each area within the site,
- analysis of associated opportunities, benefits, risks and to identify preferred development options with costs and potential sources of funding,
- dialogue and consultation with the community on the proposals
- support to MAC in commissioning a valuation of the land
- preparation of a five-year business plan which incorporates initial revenue costs, capital costs to upgrade the facilities, on-going income & expenditure projections and risk analysis.
- support to MAC in preparing an application to the Scottish Land Fund for acquisition costs and revenue funding for up to 2 years

The table below shows the detail of the planned work programme:

Table 1

| Area of Work | Detail |
|--|--|
| Community Consultation & Social Impact | Co-Design and implementation of community consultation Assessing the community benefit/social impact analysis |
| Feasibility Planning | Assessment of the feasibility of potential businesses Review potential for old school building & present 2 or 3 options (community / business use or sale / partnered for development & income) to MAC for decision on what to take forward in the Business Plan. Identify opportunities, key uses and demand for the Amenity Centre and green space, refer to existing development plans. Business Plan drafting |

² www.sksscotland.co.uk

| | |
|-------------------|---|
| Finance | Purchase & funding options Cost and pricing analysis Funding analysis Revenue analysis |
| Business Planning | Business plan to be developed and informed from above work |

3. Options Appraisal

This section presents our analysis and conclusions on how the assets which form the subject of this review may best be used by MAC in furtherance of their constitutional aims. A more detailed analysis of the options examined for Maryburgh Primary School is presented in Appendix I.

The assets are:

- Maryburgh Primary School
- Amenities Centre (including the Football Pitch)
- Brownfield Site
- Greenfield site

Maryburgh Primary School

There are few identified potential uses for the primary school that are considered viable. Those considered viable are equally well suited to provision from the Amenities Centre. The Amenities Centre, at present, has some available capacity, predominantly through the day, and there are plans in place for the renovation and refurbishment of the building and so the demand for the large sports and social space appears well catered for. Noting that an element of community space could fit well within a mixed use development, the consultants can therefore find no strong business case for the main use of Maryburgh Primary School for anything other than housing development in the longer term. There is an evidenced need for affordable housing in Maryburgh, hence this would provide some community benefit.

There is potential for the school to be used as interim accommodation for community groups during the period that the Amenities Centre is unavailable due to renovation works, depending on the sale schedule and the timing of the renovation project. This would ensure that the present users of the Amenities Centre may be accommodated during the renovation period and reduces the risk of them finding alternative accommodation and failing to return.

Implementation of this option would imply a phased approach to development across the site.

Our detailed options appraisal for Maryburgh Primary School is presented in appendix I.

Brownfield site

Similarly to the school building, the brownfield site adjacent to the school may be of value for housing development. There are few other options for its use that are realistically achievable in the short term, or which are likely to produce significant income as a capital receipt or revenue stream. This option would address an evidenced need for affordable and social housing in Maryburgh.

Greenfield site

The greenfield site is highly valued by the local community, occupies a key location in the centre of the village and is the only major green space in the village. There is no case for changing the nature of its use. There is however a case for investment in enhancing and improving the space to maximise amenity. The football pitch presently has inadequate drainage and is consequently not suitable for use at all times. The present landscape design of the greenspace provides little in the way of focal points for people to meet and spend time in the green space. Enhancing and improving the amenity of the green space would be directly in accord with the constitutional objects of MAC.

Amenities Centre

The Amenities Centre is structurally sound, albeit in need of upgrade, renovation and repair. There is demand for space in Maryburgh for community hire and from which services may be provided. The running costs for the Amenities Centre are presently relatively low, circa £15,000 per annum. This has normally been achieved in recent years through a combination of hire fees and community based fundraising.

A survey undertaken by Resource Efficient Scotland in September 2016 identified a potential reduction of £6,674 in annual electricity costs of £9000. This may be achieved through the implementation of insulation and improvements in the heating and lighting equipment employed.

There is evidence that some potential hirers of the Amenities Centre have been put off by the quality of the facilities available, specifically the heating. Improvements should therefore positively impact on the number of hires, and consequently on the income generated through hire fees.

There is therefore a strong case for investment in renovating and renewing the Amenities Centre.

The majority, if not all, of the potential sources of grant funding for this work are likely to demand that the community has ownership of the facility. The provision of an attractive, fit for purpose, Amenities Centre is core to the constitutional objects of MAC. There is therefore a strong case for MAC to seek to attract resources which will allow them to purchase the Amenities Centre.

Forward strategy

On the basis of the above, the consultants consider the following strategy to present the best possible combination of community benefit and maximisation of resources.

1. Assuming funds can be sourced, purchase all of the land and buildings, including the land that the Amenities Centre is built on.
2. Place the brownfield site on the open market with a view to making a sale for the development of affordable housing.
3. Retain access to Maryburgh Primary School for the period until funds are sourced and renovations/refurbishment to the Amenities Centre are completed.
4. Retain title to the land on which the Amenities Centre is sited, and the Football Pitch, and greenfield site.
5. Obtain funds to renovate/refurbish the Amenities Centre in line with community needs.
6. Identify and establish a suitable partnership model to develop the old school as a mixed use facility including affordable housing units and community space.
7. Working with the Maryburgh Football Club to Obtain funds to improve drainage at Football Pitch.
8. Obtain funds to landscape and improve the amenity of the green space.



Rationale

This strategy is based on the following rationale:

1. At present, only the land for the Amenities Centre and the Football Pitch/green space has any direct applicability to the MAC mission. Subject to planning consent and available funding the old-school building may also become relevant to supporting the MAC mission.
2. If SLF funding is available to enable community purchase of the land and buildings from The Highland Council at a discount on the market value, then the brownfield land can be sold to raise capital for other works of benefit to the community and in line with the constitutional objects of MAC.
3. If the land is sold for affordable housing, or to a housing association for rent, then this will address an evidenced need in the community.
4. There are few viable business options for the school, and the potential revenue income from using the school for any other purpose is relatively small.
5. The MAC hall is in need of renovation/refurbishment, and with appropriate work can fulfil most of the potential purposes suggested for the school.
6. If MAC embark on the redevelopment of the Amenities Centre and greenfield site then there will be a greater need for capital funds than a long-term revenue stream.
7. The green space is highly valued by the community, and is the only major central green space in the village.
8. The range of potential uses for, and benefits of, the green space is relatively high in comparison to the capital investment required to achieve them.

4. Developing the Amenities Centre

Our appraisal of options for the use of the Amenities Centre assumes that its primary use is, and will continue to be, a community facility available for hire to community groups, individual community members and to other organisations for purposes with a community benefit.

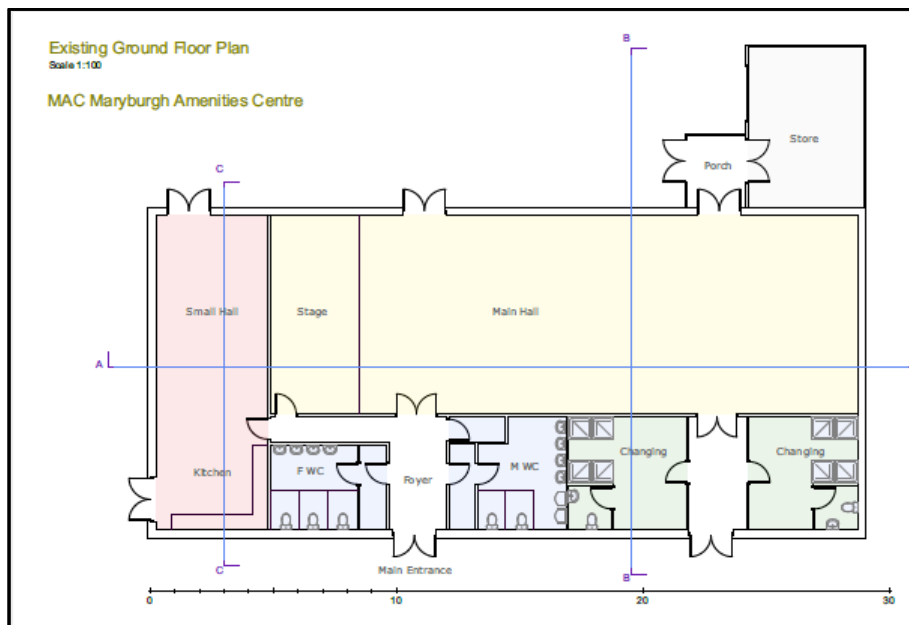
The options appraisal carried out on the Amenities Centre therefore seeks to respond to the following questions:

- What level of demand is there for a renovated/refurbished Amenities Centre?
- What is the nature of the demand for a renovated/refurbished Amenities Centre?
- What kind of facilities would a renovated/refurbished Amenities Centre require to respond to the above?

About the Amenities Centre

The main Amenities Centre building presently has the following configuration of rooms.

- Large hall with stage.
- Kitchen with seating area
- Male and female toilets
- 2 x Changing rooms with showers
- Storage rooms
- A portakabin sited outside provides a meeting space for approximately 10 people.



The building has had an initial survey carried out by Gunn MacPhee & Associates to confirm its structural integrity, however there is no formal condition report on the Amenities Centre. A site visit by the consultants to the centre showed that the building is poorly insulated and there are gaps between the roof and walls of the building. The inefficiency of the heating system has been confirmed by the audit undertaken by Resource Efficient Scotland. The MAC board has noted that the present condition of the centre may be unattractive to potential hirers, and that this may be a factor in the low level of hall hires. On 21st August 2016, volunteers undertook a range of work which has improved the cosmetic presentation of the interior of the Amenities Centre.

Commented [u1]: Online booking is actually more complicated in terms of the facilities management side as the demand for the hall is actually quite high.

Evidence of Demand

Present Demand

As can be seen in the table below, out with evenings and weekends, there are presently relatively few regular Mac Centre users, and significant available capacity for new users.

Table 5 - Amenities Centre users³

| | Morning | Afternoon | Evening |
|--|---------------|-----------|-------------------|
| Monday | | | |
| Tuesday | | | Brownies/Rainbows |
| Wednesday | | | Yoga |
| Thursday | | | Martial Arts Club |
| Friday | | | Soccer Sevens |
| Saturday | Football Club | | |
| Sunday | | | Brownies/Rainbows |
| Monthly/Occasional Users | | | |
| Maryburgh Community Council hire the small hall once a month. The hall is booked for a private or charity function most weekends. Ross & Cromarty Heritage Society use the portakabin and centre for meetings and other work. | | | |
| Previous users | | | |
| Bowling club – reportedly left due to inadequacy of heating. WRI – reportedly left due to inadequacy of heating. Older persons lunch club – moved to the Cottage Bar due to inadequacy of heating. Mothers and toddlers – occasional users if church hall not free. | | | |

³ Based on information from MAC board in May 2017.



Potential Demand

Assessment of demand was informed by data gathered through the following methods of engagement with the community and other stakeholders:

1. A short, face to face questionnaire was carried out with Maryburgh residents (outside the Amenities Centre following the EU Referendum, 23/6/16). Forty-two questionnaires were completed.
2. On Sunday 21st August, Colin Duff of SKS attended the MAC Centre volunteer day, where he held short coffee conversations with 10 local adults and 2 small groups of young people. Topics covered included:
 - If you have used the MAC Centre, what was it for, and how often have you used it?
 - How suitable do you think the centre was for this kind of activity, and what changes could be made to make it more suitable?
 - If the centre is to be remodelled, what sort of rooms and facilities should it have to be most useful to the community?
 - What else, if anything, should happen to make the MAC Centre deliver the most benefit for the community?
3. In July and August 2016, SKS consultants conducted a programme of interviews with community organisations and public and private sector service providers (including current and previous hall users with a view to establishing
 - their perceptions of the Amenities Centre.
 - the potential for them to hire the Amenities Centre
 - the changes to the Amenities Centre facilities and layout that would persuade and/or enable them to hire the Amenities Centre.
 - the price they would be willing to pay for hire of a renovated/refurbished Amenities Centre.
4. In September/October 2016, MAC and SKS promoted an online survey for users and potential users of the Amenities Centre. Hard copies were made available through MAC board members and volunteers. A total of **119⁴** responses were received, of which 75% were from Maryburgh residents and 16% were from residents of Conon Bridge. The balance were from other nearby locations.

A community needs survey undertaken by MAC in 2011 produced some evidence of demand for a range of services. Although this evidence may be useful in the future marketing of the refurbished Amenities Centre to potential hirers, it is of limited use in establishing the level or nature of demand in Maryburgh and Conon Bridge for a refurbished Amenities Centre.

⁴ 92 of which were complete. The remainder had skipped one or more questions.

Perceptions of the Amenities Centre

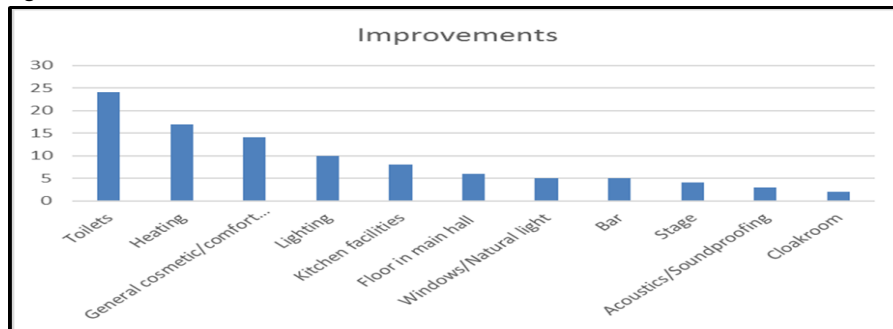
Consultation with current and previous users undertaken by SKS confirmed the perceptions of the MAC board about how the standard of the Amenities Centre impacted on levels of use.

Table 6

| Potential User Group | Comments |
|----------------------------|--|
| Maryburgh Youth Initiative | <p>Considered the Amenities Centre to be in poor condition and the layout to mitigate against good security when working with young people. This had led to some issues in behaviour management in a youth group and the decision to end the group.</p> <p>They would be willing to use the centre again, but not for a traditional youth club, unless security could be improved.</p> <p>They would like to see a better quality hall for sports/games and a space for relaxation/chill-out and informal conversation.</p> <p>They did not give a specific price that they would pay for hire, but referred to the better quality facilities that they were aware of in other locations for similar prices that they had paid for the Amenities Centre. They were happy to pay these prices in the other locations.</p> |
| Highlife Highland | <p>Considered the Amenities Centre to be in poorer condition, but would be interested in delivering Highlife Highland sport/fitness services from the Amenities Centre if it were considerably improved.</p> |
| Older Person's Lunch Club | <p>The club had previously used the Amenities Centre, but re-located to the Cottage Bar in the village when the building was deemed too cold and unpleasant. If the building was refurbished they would be keen to re-start activities on a regular basis.</p> |

Respondents to the survey were asked to suggest what, if any improvements they would make to the existing facilities. This question generated 68 separate comments, many of which suggested multiple opportunities for improvement. Figure 1⁵ below shows the results of an analysis of the comments received.

Figure 1



⁵ Each of the following received a single comment: Location of toilets, Parking, Access paths, Location of changing rooms, remove portacabin, Baby changing facilities.

The condition of the toilets is clearly the issue which concerns the highest number of respondents. The inadequacy of the heating, unsuitability of the lighting, and the generally unattractive presentation of the centre for parties was the next most commonly raised opportunity for improvement. There is support for the installation of a bar facility, an improvement to the kitchen facilities and the ability to serve food directly from the kitchen to the hall. Figure 2 below gives a graphic illustration of the frequency of the factors raised in open responses.

Figure 2



These findings suggest that if all of the above improvements were incorporated into the redevelopment of the Amenities Centre, this would have a substantial impact on the perceptions of the centre and the number of hires it attracts.

Nature of demand

Figure 3 below gives a graphic illustration of the frequency of the potential uses for a community facility raised in open responses to the survey.

Figure 3

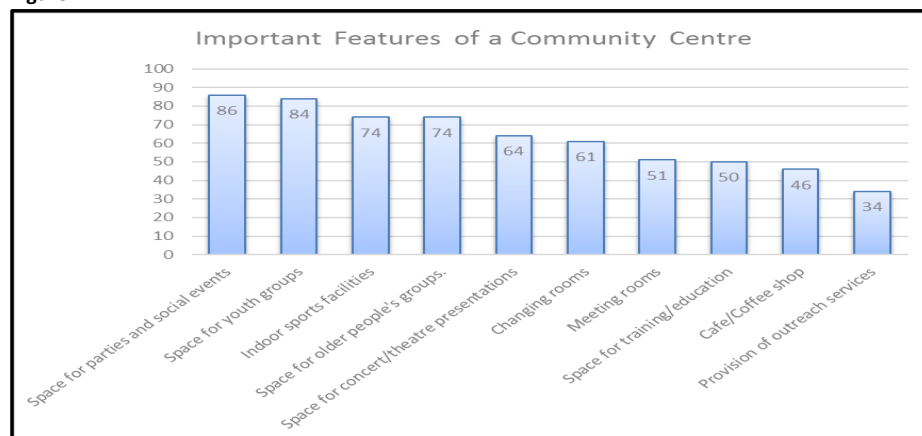


The main things that respondents wanted a community centre for were:

- Parties and social events
- Café/Coffee Shop
- Sports
- Meeting rooms
- Concerts/theatre presentation.
- Site for outreach services
- Changing rooms.
- Space for youth groups.

Responses to the survey identified a similar set of features regarded as important in a community centre, albeit that the frequency with which the individual features were raised differs. It is notable that both interviews and the survey identified space for parties and social events as the top priority. The idea of a café/coffee shop was less popular with survey respondents than it was with individuals interviewed at the MAC volunteer day. Space for older people's groups and youth groups were both popular.

Figure 4



Features required of a renovated/refurbished community centre

An analysis of feedback drawn from the whole range of sources available to the consultants suggests that there is demand for the following features in a renovated/refurbished centre:

Large hall

Large hall suitable for parties and for indoor sports and fitness activity. Parties were the most popular activity that people wanted a community facility for. There was extensive commentary to suggest that the present hall is not suitable for that purpose. A new floor, which was more suited to dancing, and not easily damaged by spilled drinks/wet shoes was required. Lighting which is more low-level and appropriate for social gatherings, improved seating and a bar are required.



There were mixed views on the requirement for a bar, some people felt that most parties would be 'bring your own bottle', others felt that a bar would substantially enhance the suitability of the hall for parties. A temporary/removable bar may allow all demands to be addressed. There were mixed views on the requirement for staging. Removable staging should allow all demands to be addressed. There was some support for the installation of audio/audio-visual equipment suitable for concerts/music presentation.

If the Amenities Centre is to attract core business from Highlife Highland or other provider of fitness activities, then a good quality hall for sports/fitness activities is essential. Given that sporting/fitness activity is largely likely to take place during the day, and parties are largely likely to take place in the evening, it may make economic sense for a single large hall to provide facilities for both parties and sporting/fitness activities. This may involve some design compromises from both sides.

One comment suggested that a mirrored wall would make the hall attractive for yoga, dance classes and other similar activities and would provide the hall with a unique selling point, a feature that was not available in any other local hall. This may be a valuable insight in terms of the marketing and income generation potential of the hall, and should be pursued, assuming that the design would not unnecessarily compromise the potential for other uses of the hall.

The potential for a mezzanine floor to be added to the main hall was raised by a small number of people. While there may be some case for this in relation to making best use of the available space, the installation of a mezzanine may negatively affect the suitability of the large hall for some types of sporting activity.

Small hall.

A small room suitable for meetings and smaller gatherings of 5-20 people depending on the arrangement of furniture.

Chill-out space

A comfortable 'chill-out' space suitable for use as a café, youth drop-in and other informal gatherings was supported by a broad cross-section of the community. The main benefit that people wished to achieve through this space was the opportunity for people to meet informally, and in an unplanned manner. This was expected to contribute to community cohesion and sustainability. A space suitable for use by groups would allow a café to operate at set times, and for the space to be available for hire at other times.

Improved kitchen facilities.

The existing kitchen facilities were largely considered out of date, excessively large and incorrectly sited. There was support for a more compact, efficiently designed and fitted kitchen space. This should ideally be located to allow serving to take place to the chill-out area and to the large hall.

Improved toilet facilities.

The toilets were regarded as the worst feature of the Amenities Centre and required substantial upgrading. Their present location at the front of the building was regarded as presenting the wrong immediate impression, and producing a bottleneck effect of people entering the building and using the toilets during parties. It may be possible to design the toilet facilities in such a way as to allow direct access from outside for groups using the football pitch and greenspace. This could be achieved through card/code access, assuming that any security issues can be addressed.

Improved foyer/reception area.

The foyer was regarded as unwelcoming in design and décor. It should be replaced with a design that featured two sets of doors to limit heat loss during the colder months. The toilets should not be in the foyer area.

Storage facilities.

The amenities centre presently has storage facilities under the stage, and at the rear of the building. Some storage space will be required for core centre equipment, i.e. chairs, tables, removable bar and staging. Core user groups may also require some storage space.

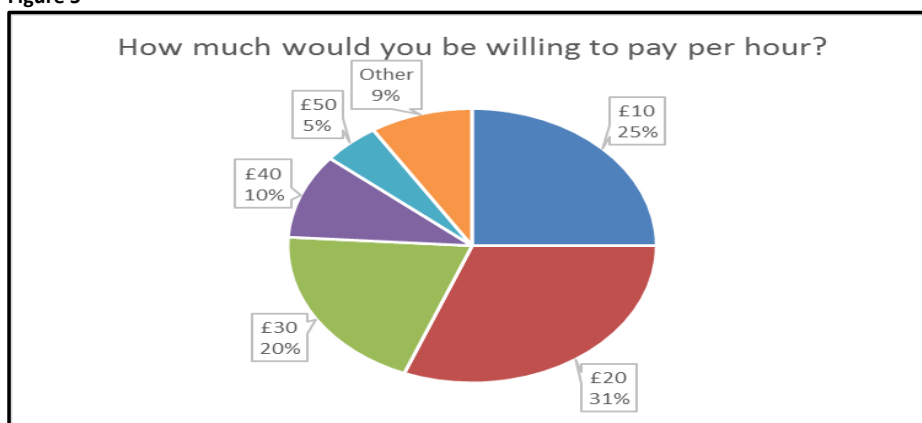
Changing/Shower rooms.

There were mixed views on the need for changing/shower rooms. Some people felt that they were wholly unnecessary, others felt that they were essential. At present, the only users of the changing/shower rooms are the football club. It is likely that NHS Highland and Highlife Highland may require access to some form of shower facility and changing rooms if they are to be attracted to use the Amenities Centre. It may be possible to design the changing rooms/shower facilities in such a way as to allow direct access from outside for groups using the football pitch and greenspace. This could be achieved through card/code access, assuming that any security issues can be addressed.

Pricing

Figure 5 show the range of prices that individuals responding to the survey stated that they would be willing to pay for the hire of the main hall in the Amenities Centre, if it were refurbished to a standard they regarded as fit for purpose.

Figure 5





The present hourly fee for hire of the main hall by private individuals or voluntary organisations for functions, parties etc. is £20 per hour. It may be noted that 25% of respondents to this survey stated that they would only be willing to pay £10 per hour, i.e. less than the current charge, and 31% said they would be willing to pay £20 per hour, equal to that presently charged; suggesting there is no potential for an increased charge. Three of those who responded 'Other' suggested a charge of £15 per hour.

If the above data is accepted as factual and representative of the wider community, it may be concluded that the cost of hiring the main hall in the Amenities Centre is presently in line with expectations of more than 60% of the respondents. While there may be some savings to be made on the running costs of a renovated/refurbished centre, it is likely that the existing hire fees will remain at their present level, and may in fact increase as a result of the improvement in the quality of the offer. Therefore, the market for the main hall is anticipated to be around 60% of the population.

Thirty-five per cent of respondents to the survey stated that they would be willing to pay £30-£50 per hour for an adequately refurbished, fit for purpose, facility. Of those who selected 'other', three of these suggested rates of £20-£30, and one noted that their experience of comparable hire fees elsewhere was in the region of £60-£80.

If this is accepted as factual and representative of the wider community, then there is some scope for an increase in the hire fees achievable by an adequately refurbished, fit for purpose, facility. For the purposes of this business plan we have calculated the hire fees as an average of £20 per hour. This takes into account the fact that the present hire fee structure allows for lower fees for certain groups and for other spaces within the present layout. This also provides comparable use patterns for the on demand hall hires based on use over the past twelve months.

Competitor Analysis

This section presents a description of comparable facilities available in Maryburgh and Conon Bridge, and an analysis of the potential competition they present to the planned Maryburgh Amenities Centre.

Ben Wyvis Primary School

Ben Wyvis Primary School (in Conon Bridge) offers facilities available for community hire, through the Leanaig Centre at Ben Wyvis Primary School. The Leanaig Centre comprises a two-court games hall, a dance studio, 1 community room with a kitchen and an all-weather games pitch. Highlife Highland⁶ offers a range of activities from the Leanaig Centre including Children's term time and holiday activities, Group Fitness classes, and Community activities, such as Highland Dancing and Taekwondo.

The availability of facilities at the Leanaig centre for community hire are limited by the Highlife Highland block bookings and the priority placed on school use. Hires after 10pm are more difficult to obtain, and there are barriers to the consumption of alcohol on the premises, hence the Leanaig centre is largely unsuitable for parties and social events. The Amenities Centre is more suitable for this purpose, and attracts some business for this.

⁶ <https://www.highlifehighland.com/the-leanaig-centre/>

The consultants understand that the Leanaig Centre is at, or near, capacity. The consultants have requested information from Highlife Highland on evidence of unmet demand, i.e. demands for provision which the Leanaig Centre has been unable to meet. We have not yet received a response to our requests. We have no formal evidence of demand for the Leanaig centre exceeding supply. If the Leanaig Centre is at capacity, then a renovated/refurbished Amenities Centre is likely to be in a strong position to meet demands which the Leanaig Centre cannot presently accommodate.

Maryburgh Free Church Hall

A small hall is available at Maryburgh Free Church. Church activities are given priority, but occasional use by community organisations is possible. A parent and toddlers group presently uses the hall. They may relocate to the Amenities Centre after renovation/refurbishment.

Ferintosh (Conon Bridge) Church of Scotland Hall

A Sunday Club and Youth Fellowship presently meet in the Ferintosh Church Hall. Ferintosh Parish Church Hall is mainly used for Church related activities and events. There is Sunday morning crèche; a Sunday Club during school term; an Xtra Time youth group for P6/7 pupils on Friday evenings; Church Guild; River Café which meets on the second Wednesday of the month in school term; Youth Fellowship for S1/4 young people; Prayer Group and Bible Study. There is little or no apparent overlap between the users of Ferintosh Church Hall and the planned Amenities Centre.

Conon Bridge and Maryburgh Bowling Club

Clubhouse provides accommodation for occasional coffee mornings. Unclear if the clubhouse is licensed. The clubhouse is not normally available for external bookings. It has a kitchen and is used for the catering round league matches and tournaments.

Cottage Bar

The Cottage Bar offers comfortable public space which is not available for hire, but which is presently used by the older persons lunch club. It is possible that the Cottage bar could provide some competition for more informal groups and meetings, and for the proposed café in the Amenities Centre.

Conclusions on demand

At present, demand for the Maryburgh Amenities Centre is largely from two customer types; community groups seeking regular hires and individuals seeking occasional hires. Responses to the community engagement activity undertaken universally support confidence that a renovated/refurbished centre would attract a greater number of regular and occasional hirers. It is not possible to quantify the level of demand with any certainty.

The refurbished/renovated centre will offer new resources which will present opportunities to attract new users. For example, if a café/coffee shop space is incorporated, it may be possible to allow this to be hired and run by community organisations. This would have multiple benefits; enabling local groups to generate income, creating employment and volunteering opportunities, and delivering a service to the community, whilst reducing the potential expectation for MAC to be the sole operator of the café.

If the centre were to be refurbished to a higher standard and incorporate appropriate features, there is the potential to add a third customer type; public sector service providers.

- The consultants spoke with the NHS Highland District Manager for the Easter Ross area. They advised that 'community hubs' where users share buildings are proving to be increasingly popular in the Easter Ross area, and that NHS Highland would be willing to engage with the Maryburgh community to consider providing services from a building in the village. He commented; *"evidence shows that such services would be almost certainly be full. Demand in the area for services for older people is extremely high."*
- The consultants also spoke with the Facilities Manager for Highlife Highland, responsible for the Leanaig Centre and several other facilities in Ross-shire. He notes that there is potential unmet demand for Highlife Highland services, similar to those offered at the Leanaig Centre. He suggested that a renovated Amenities Centre may be suitable for the delivery of these services and that Highlife Highland would be interested in negotiating an arrangement to pay MAC for the hire of the facilities.

Maryburgh has a strong community that has a history of running clubs and activities for the local population. There is already some demand for space for community hire in Maryburgh, and few facilities suitable to meet this demand. The Amenities Centre is not, at present, considered fit for purpose by a number of potential hirers. This is largely due to the quality of the facilities on offer and the internal layout. These issues may be addressed by the planned renovation/refurbishment.

The Community Facilities Needs Analysis and Outline Development Plan, prepared in January 2011, forecast an increase in households and population in the immediate future, with 75 to 100 additional houses in Maryburgh and a further 260 homes in Conon Bridge by 2017 anticipated in the local plan.⁷ The planned community purchase of the old Maryburgh Primary School and adjacent brownfield site, and subsequent resale for housing development may accelerate this increase in households. The increase in households and population is likely to bring an increase in demand for space for hire, and for the services provided from that space.

The good transport infrastructure that has been a factor in the anticipated increase in houses may also increase the market for the space available for hire and the services provided from that space.

There are a range of other facilities available for community hire, however these are all either at capacity or perform a function which is different from that envisaged for the renovated/refurbished Amenities Centre. The planned Amenities Centre appears to have a strong niche as a location for parties and other social functions. This does not appear to be covered by any of the other facilities in Maryburgh and Conon Bridge. It is likely therefore that the Amenities Centre will therefore either (a) provide additional local capacity for, or (b) fill a niche that is not at present served.

If one or both of the potential public sector hirers were to take a longer term let of renovated/refurbished Amenities Centre, additional regular income will follow and the sustainability of the centre will be positively impacted. The Maryburgh community will also benefit from the availability of high quality locally available services. There is the potential for some synergy between the provision of these services and the passing trade available to a café/coffee shop.

⁷ Community Facilities Needs Analysis and Outline Development Plan, January 2011, item 2.4.



In order to deliver increased use of the amenities centre, the consultants would support the notion of Maryburgh Amenities Company seeking to attract grant support for a post dedicated to business development, including marketing the facilities and ensuring that the needs of new, and existing, users are met.

The consultants' conclusion is that there is a good business case for investment in a renovated/refurbished community building.

5. Football Pitch and Greenspace

Football Pitch

Proposals for improvements to the football pitch are at present incomplete. It is commonly agreed that improved drainage is a priority, and will allow more frequent play. There are suggestions to move the pitch six metres North, install lighting and set up barriers to prevent vehicle access.

We have limited information on the costs associated with the above. Our experience of drafting business plans for similar work suggests that the £50,000 allocated towards Football Pitch improvements in the business case document may be on the low side.

The sources of funds for the improvements to the Football Pitch are likely to be different from the sources of funds for the improvements to the Amenities Centre. The complexities of match-funding aside, it may therefore be possible to view this as a parallel development, and to phase it according to priority and availability of funds. It is also envisaged that development of the football pitch and associated infrastructure would be led by the Maryburgh Football Club.

This would place the improvements to the football pitch outside the scope of this business plan. There is however some case for its retention in this business plan if it can be shown that improved drainage to the football pitch can be achieved more cost-efficiently is undertaken as part of the renovation of the Amenities Centre.

Our conclusion is that there is not a strong business case for seeking to redevelop the football pitch at the same time as taking on the renovation/refurbishment of the Amenities Centre.

Greenspace

Community consultation shows that the greenspace is extremely highly valued by the community. The consultants have therefore not considered any options which would produce any decrease in the level or quality of amenity of this greenspace.

Improvement plans for the Greenspace include:

- Landscaping to improve the amenity of the space for community gatherings.
- Provision of paved pathways.
- Installation of street furniture.
- Installation of improved play equipment.

The space at present has no design features which encourage the use and enjoyment of the greenspace. There are no natural gathering points or pathways to draw users to particular areas which would facilitate interaction between members of the community. Landscaping, the installation of pathways on the desire lines, and the installation of benches and tables are expected enhance the amenity of the greenspace and increase the level of use and benefit delivered.

No costings are presently available for the above work. The installation of pathways and benches/tables will be relatively low cost. It is not possible to estimate the cost of landscaping works at this stage.



There has been some discussion of the installation of a Multi Use Gaming Area to the Greenspace. The only voices which the consultants encountered in support of this were from members of the MAC board. In other discussions it was either not raised at all, or the level of demand for a MUGA – bearing in mind that there was one in Canon Bridge - was questioned. The costs of installation of such facilities can be high, and the range of options for their development are vast.

Our conclusion is that there is a strong business case for investment in improvements in the greenspace. There is little evidence to suggest that there is a need for this development to take place at the same time as the renovation/refurbishment of the Amenities Centre. We would suggest that the MAC board give some consideration to the potential workload associated with a twin-track development when deciding about the timing of improvements to the greenspace.

We do not believe that we have seen sufficient evidence of overall demand for, or clarity on the features of, a MUGA to support the inclusion of such a development in this business plan.

6. Local Needs Analysis

Population demographics

Maryburgh is a village in the Highland council area of Scotland, 2 miles (3 km) south of Dingwall. It is situated on the northern bank of the River Conon. Maryburgh and Conon Bridge, although distinct villages, are often treated as a single settlement for administrative purposes.

The Highland Council ranks Maryburgh & Conon Bridge as the tenth most populous settlement in the Highland Council area⁸, with a total 3147 people in both villages. The table⁹ below shows the population of Maryburgh and Conon Bridge by age range and compares this with nearby Dingwall and Scotland.

Table 2 - Population by age band

| Locality | All ages | Under 16 | | 16-64 | | 65+ | |
|--------------|-----------|----------|-----|-----------|-----|---------|-----|
| Maryburgh | 1,180 | 214 | 18% | 763 | 65% | 203 | 17% |
| Conon Bridge | 1,710 | 349 | 20% | 1,048 | 61% | 313 | 18% |
| Dingwall | 5,520 | 1,016 | 18% | 3,473 | 63% | 1,031 | 19% |
| Scotland | 5,313,600 | 914,626 | 17% | 3,345,400 | 63% | 925,741 | 17% |

For the purposes of this business plan, we have regarded Maryburgh and Conon Bridge as the primary market for services provided from the Amenities Centre. The participation of individuals from other nearby settlements is possible, but we have chosen to exclude this possibility as peripheral to the main market, challenging to enumerate and likely to distort the assessment of demand.

Communications

The travelling time/distance from Maryburgh to other settlements as calculated by Google Maps, is as follows:

- Conon Bridge – 0.8 Miles – 4 minutes
- Dingwall - 1.9 miles – 6 minutes
- Muir of Ord – 4.3 Miles – 10 minutes
- Strathpeffer – 7.6 miles - 13 minutes
- Alness – 11.9 miles – 22 minutes
- Fortrose 14.2 miles – 23 minutes
- Invergordon – 15 miles – 24 minutes
- Inverness – 13.2 miles – 24 minutes
- Ardross – 15.4 miles – 26 minutes
- Tain – 25.4 miles – 37 minutes
- Ullapool – 44 miles – 56 minutes

⁸ http://www.highland.gov.uk/info/695/council_information_performance_and_statistics/165/highland_profile_-_key_facts_and_figures/2

⁹ <http://www.nrscotland.gov.uk/files/statistics/population-estimates/special-area/mid-2012-settlements/2012-pop-est-sett-local-main-tab3a.pdf>



Three bus routes, run by Stagecoach, pass through the village. The nearest passenger rail link is the recently re-opened Conon Bridge Rail Station, around 1 mile South. Compared with the Highland average, Maryburgh has a higher level of ownership of 2 or more vehicles. Conon Bridge, Dingwall, Muir of Ord and Strathpeffer all have at least one community facility comparable to Maryburgh Amenities Centre.

Education

Ben Wyvis Primary School serves both villages. There are 253¹⁰ primary school pupils enrolled in session 2016/17 with the projected school roll *“expected to remain at the upper limit with regard to design limits and teaching entitlement for the next 15 years”*¹¹. There are currently 70 pre-school children enrolled in the nursery at Ben Wyvis Primary School. There are currently proposals to extend the school with three additional classrooms.

Secondary school age pupils attend Dingwall Academy, the largest secondary school in the Highland Council area, with an enrolment of 1,103 pupils as of August 2016. Pupils from Conon Bridge, Maryburgh, Muir of Ord, Strathpeffer, Evanton and the surrounding area attend Dingwall Academy.

Housing

Both Maryburgh and Conon Bridge have expanded in recent years because of housing development largely serving commuters who find the locations attractive due to their proximity to the A835 providing road access to employment opportunities in Dingwall and Inverness.

Expansion in recent years is reflected in the Local Plan, which anticipated a need for 75 to 100 additional houses in Maryburgh and a further 260 homes in Conon Bridge by 2017. From 2001 to (October) 2008 there were already 121 new housing completions – 88 in Conon Bridge and 33 in Maryburgh. The Housing Land Audit carried out by Highland Council in 2007 saw a further 96 houses in Conon Bridge and 25 in Maryburgh between 2010 and 2012 and identified sites for a further 335 in Conon Bridge and 95 in Maryburgh for development in 2013 and beyond.

There is also the potential of further development on sites not identified in the local plan and, additionally, in the surrounding area as the planning guidelines for development of houses in the hinterland become more flexible. Housing development has slowed down following the 2008 recession. Nevertheless, it is likely that both Maryburgh and Conon Bridge will expand over the next 10 years.

The Community Asset Transfer Business Case notes; *“Demand for affordable housing in Maryburgh is strong. There are 28 households on the housing register for a property in Maryburgh, and another 11 tenants who want a transfer, giving Maryburgh as their first choice location for housing. 19 of the 39 are looking for a 1 bedroom property and 10 for a 2 bedroom.”*

Amenities

In addition to the Amenities Centre, Maryburgh has a small shop with a post office, The Cottage Bar restaurant, and a horse-riding school.

¹⁰ https://www.highland.gov.uk/directory_record/521579/ben_wyvis_primary

¹¹ http://s3.spanglefish.com/s/31188/documents/conon-craic-online/craic-april-2016_web.pdf



Conon Bridge has a primary school, railway station with frequent service to Inverness, church, Post Office, hotel, SPAR shop, fish and chip shop, pharmacy, motor vehicle dealer and various bed and breakfasts.

Ben Wyvis Primary School (in Conon Bridge) offers facilities available for community hire, through the Leanaig Centre at Ben Wyvis Primary School. The Leanaig Centre is one of the newest community facilities in the Ross-shire area. The Leanaig Centre comprises a two court games hall, a dance studio, one community room with a kitchen and an all-weather games pitch.

Highlife Highland¹² offers a range of activities from the Leanaig Centre including Children's term time and holiday activities, Group Fitness classes. Community based organisations offer activities such as Highland Dancing and Taekwondo from the Leanaig Centre.

Community Infrastructure

Maryburgh and Conon Bridge support a number of community organisations and resources:

- Both villages have their own Community Council. The Maryburgh Community Council shares a number of members with the MAC board. Conon Bridge Community Council has recently reformed in March 2016.
- A Gala Committee organises an annual gala day event, which raises funds for the Amenities Centre.
- The Maryburgh Futures Group brings together representatives of a number of community organisations to consider options and plan for the development of facilities and amenities within the village.
- The Maryburgh Youth Initiative recently began work with local young people in response to an identified need for more project based activity with young people.
- Rainbows and Brownie groups operate from the Amenities Centre.
- An older person's lunch club takes place at the Cottage Bar on a monthly basis.
- A local newspaper, the Maryburgh Roundabout, is produced and distributed by volunteers.
- A website, the Maryburgh Hub¹³, is maintained by volunteers.

Deprivation

The Scottish Index of Multiple Deprivation (SIMD) identifies small area concentrations of multiple deprivation across all of Scotland in a consistent way. It allows effective targeting of policies and funding where the aim is to wholly or partly tackle or take account of area concentrations of multiple deprivation.

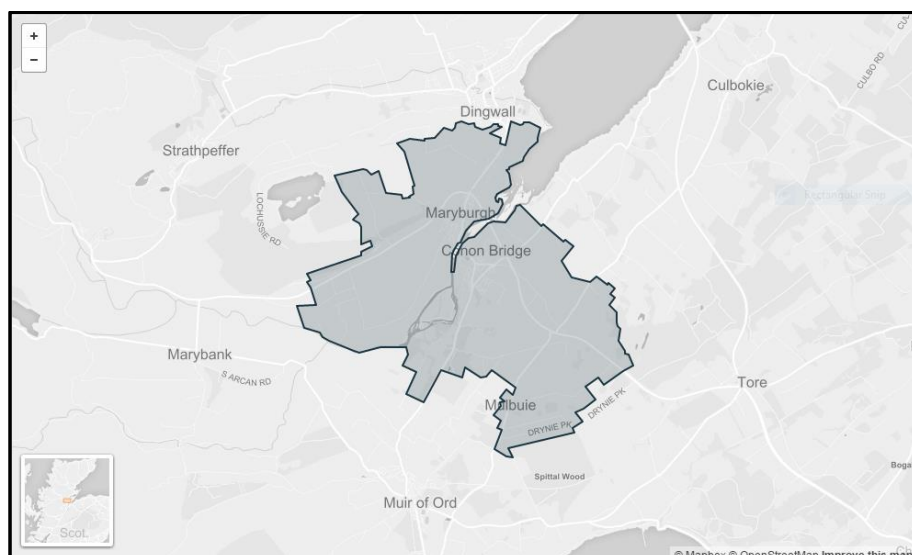
The SIMD ranks small areas, called datazones, from most deprived to least deprived. Agencies using the SIMD to target resources will often focus on the datazones below a certain rank, for example, the 5%, 10%, 15% or 20% most deprived datazones in Scotland.

An update to the SIMD was published on 31 August 2016. Data from this update has been used in the following analysis of deprivation affecting the catchment area for the Amenities Centre.

There are 5 datazones within the Amenities Centre catchment area. The geographic locations covered by these 5 datazones is presented in the map below

¹² <https://www.highlifehighland.com/the-leanaig-centre/>

¹³ <http://maryburghhub.info/>



The summary data for these 5 zones is presented in the table below.

Table 3 - Amenities Centre catchment area - SIMD 2016 Summary

| Data Zone | Name | Total population | Working age population | Overall SIMD16 rank | Above/Below median ¹⁴ | 6 fold Urban/Rural Classification |
|-----------|---------|------------------|------------------------|---------------------|----------------------------------|-----------------------------------|
| S01010707 | Conon 1 | 759 | 445 | 4,727 | Above | 5 |
| S01010708 | Conon 2 | 522 | 324 | 3,390 | Below | 6 |
| S01010709 | Conon 3 | 741 | 475 | 4,994 | Above | 6 |
| S01010710 | Conon 4 | 825 | 481 | 1,552 | Below | 6 |
| S01010711 | Conon 5 | 804 | 488 | 5,680 | Above | 6 |
| Subtotals | | 3651 | 2213 | | | |

1347 people, or 37% of the total population in the Amenities Centre catchment area live in a datazone which is below the median line. The Weir Trust will fund work in rural areas which fall into the 50% most deprived. The Amenities Centre is located within datazone S01010709, which is not below the median line.

¹⁴ There are 6976 data zones in Scotland, therefore the median line is at 3488.

Rurality

The Scottish Government Urban Rural Classification provides a standard definition of rural areas in Scotland. All of the Amenities Centre catchment area is classified as either 5 - Accessible Rural - or 6 Remote Rural.

Table 4 - Amenities Centre catchment area SIMD 2016 Detail

| Data Zone | Income domain 2016 rank | Employment domain 2016 rank | Health domain 2016 rank | Education domain 2016 rank | Housing domain 2016 rank | Access domain 2016 rank | Crime domain 2016 rank |
|-----------|----------------------------------|--------------------------------------|----------------------------|-------------------------------------|--------------------------------|----------------------------|---------------------------|
| S01010707 | 4,934 | 5,628 | 5,675 | 5,604 | 5,159 | 305 | 5,414 |
| S01010708 | 4,112 | 3,351 | 3,671 | 3,397 | 3,805 | 1,142 | 2,925 |
| S01010709 | 5,273 | 4,965 | 5,651 | 5,187 | 5,355 | 795 | 5,921 |
| S01010710 | 1,689 | 2,051 | 2,749 | 866 | 1,794 | 881 | 2,258 |
| S01010711 | 6,040 | 5,528 | 5,722 | 6,224 | 6,211 | 1,065 | 5,276 |

The tables above show that, for the majority of deprivation domains, the Conon 1-5 datazones, and with some exceptions above the median line. The domain in which all 5 datazones are consistently below the median line is Access, indicating that the main deprivation factor is rurality/access to services. This corresponds with the data in the 6 fold urban/rural classification.

7. Benefits of Development

Community Benefit

Earlier work undertaken on behalf of MAC identified the top six top priorities for improvements to local communities. These priorities, and how the proposed developments would deliver on these priorities are described in the table below.

Table 6

| Priority | Impact |
|---|---|
| Access to safe routes of travel within and between communities (high) | Improvements to the greenspace such as paths and lighting will impact positively on this. |
| Opportunities for business & employment (medium) | <p>The refurbished/renovated centre will attract an increased level of use, and consequently create an increased requirement for cleaning and maintenance – opportunities that are likely to be suitable for local people and businesses.</p> <p>The development phase will involve a substantial amount of work, some of which may be suitable for local business. MAC already have good contacts and experience of hiring local tradesmen for maintenance work.</p> |
| Information about the local environment & natural assets (medium) | The siting of notice boards, and the increased footfall achieved through the improvements to the Amenities Centre and the greenspace has the potential to improve the dissemination of information about the local environment & natural assets. |
| Information about & access to leisure & recreational opportunities (medium) | The improvements to the Amenities Centre, Football Pitch and greenspace will enable more groups to book space for more leisure and recreational opportunities. It will also allow agencies like Highlife Highland to increase their offer in Maryburgh, this increasing access to leisure and recreational opportunities. |
| Opportunities for outdoor sports & pursuits (medium) | The improvements to the Football Pitch and greenspace will enable more groups to book space for more leisure and recreational opportunities, and extend the lifetime of the pitch substantially. |
| Access to facilities and activities for children (medium) | The improved facilities will be a resource which will enable a greater number of agencies and community organisations to provide facilities and activities for children. |



There are several powerful impacts resulting from the facilities and activities that may be provided from the planned improvements to the Amenities Centre, Football Pitch and greenspace, including:

- People of all ages will benefit from having a drop-in gathering place and events space.
- People of all ages will benefit from increased opportunities to meet with each other in formal and informal social context, thus enhancing intergenerational harmony.
- Children and young people will be able to access the Centre for organised activities.
- Older people will enjoy many more opportunities for social interaction and educational opportunities that will overcome the isolation currently adversely affecting many of them.
- Younger and older people will have increased and improved opportunities to positively interact, thus producing improved intergenerational harmony and community cohesion.
- The Centre can become a hub for outreach services to improve the quality of life and health of the most vulnerable.
- The Centre will provide a modern hub with increased economic activity and opportunity for a wide range of residents.
- Increased opportunities for social interaction will improve the social cohesion of the community. It will enhance engagement between different sectors of the community, and with surrounding villages.
- The opportunity to highlight the cultural and environmental heritage of the community will enhance the pride the community is and its history. This will help to generate a vibrant community with a sustainable future.
- The increased informal social interaction, education and training provision within the community will enhance health and well-being. Classes in, for example, healthy cooking and eating, oral history, or a lunch club would have a direct impact on the health of older residents.

Contribution to The Highland Council priorities

The circumstances in which a local authority may dispose of land for a consideration less than the best that can reasonably be obtained are that the local authority is satisfied that the disposal for that consideration is reasonable, and the disposal is likely to contribute to any of the purposes set out below, in respect of the whole or any part of the area of the local authority or any persons resident or present in its area. Those purposes are the promotion or improvement of

- economic development or regeneration;
- health;
- social well-being; or
- environmental well-being.

The MAC purchase of the assets will make a considerable contribution to the following Scottish Government national outcomes.

- National Outcome 10 – We live in well designed sustainable places where we are able to access the amenities and services we need.
- National Outcome 11 – We have strong resilient and supportive communities where people take responsibility for their own actions and how they affect others.



The Highland Council approach to contributing to the Scottish Government National outcomes is set out in the Single Outcome Agreement Between the Highland Community Planning Partnership and the Scottish Government 2013/14 – 2018/19¹⁵. The project will help the Highland Council and its partners deliver the Single Outcome Agreement (SOA), in the following areas:

Employment

There will be direct employment through managing the Amenities Centre and, potentially, a development officer. Creation of the Enterprise Centre at the former school building will support the establishment of new small business and social enterprise.

Safer and stronger communities and preventing reoffending

Community ownership, taking the different elements of this project forward and managing it through our community company will all help to bring the community together and to make it stronger and more confident. As pointed out in the SOA: Our creation of a strong sense of place also extends to utilising physical activity opportunities to build social and community capacity; and also enhance our sense of safe and strong communities. Local opportunities in volunteering, grassroots clubs and local groups that join together for enjoyment and/or common purpose are the backbone of community relations. Community participation and diversionary activities reduce crime, and fear of crime; and also provide positive role models for children and young people.

Health inequalities and physical activity

The project creates opportunity for physical activity for all age groups - indoor and outdoor, formal and informal. The SOA highlights a need for an increase in outdoor play opportunities for children, for the support of local clubs and volunteers, for improved facilities and for community development and voluntary sector activities. It points out the need for access to be maximised and for a sense of ownership and the benefits of safe space for recreational physical activity.

Older people

In Maryburgh there is a need for readily accessible green space where older people can take exercise, with seating for them to take a rest and socialise and activity going on to talk about. Without the area this project seeks to take into community ownership this would not be available. The remodelled centre will also provide a location for older people to take part in the social and recreational groups which combat isolation and promote continuing mental and physical health.

Environmental outcomes

The project will take the main green space in the centre of Maryburgh and improve and develop it for the benefit of the whole community. This will be a major environmental improvement in a village where the main street is a narrow section of a main A road and where there is no other easily accessible open space.

¹⁵ http://www.highland.gov.uk/downloads/file/4613/single_outcome_agreement_3

The Highland Council approach to the implementation of the commitments in the Single Outcome agreement is described in 'Highland First'¹⁶ the council programme for 2015 to 2017. This was agreed by the council on 13 August 2015 and is a statement of what The Highland Council wish to achieve and outlines their political commitments and priorities. The MAC purchase of assets will support The Highland Council to deliver on the following Highland First Commitments.

Table 7

| | |
|-----------|---|
| 2 | Empowering Communities Along with our Community Planning Partners, we will bring forward ways to implement the commitments contained within the Community Empowerment Act to ensure that where they wish to, communities are able to fully participate in the development of services and taking over the running of facilities and land. This will include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Development of an asset transfer policy, ensuring we have a transparent and simplified process for communities. • Reviewing ways of supporting communities to lead on the delivery of services locally. |
| 7 | Helping Communities Reduce their Energy Use and Costs The Council, with partners, will support communities to reduce their energy use and associated carbon emissions and costs. |
| 14 | Public Access Wi-Fi The Council will work with the Scottish and UK Governments to improve Public Access Wi-Fi across Highland communities. |
| 23 | Community Works We will explore how community works, including drainage, verges, grass cutting and road improvements could be delivered in the context of local decision making and local priorities. |
| 30 | Strengthening our Partnership with NHS Highland <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Council and NHS Highland will review the current partnership agreement with a greater emphasis on stronger financial scrutiny and governance. • We will work with NHS Highland to accelerate efforts to shift the balance of care and provide more services within our communities. |
| 49 | Housing We will promote and support more community led housing initiatives in rural areas to deliver housing to meet local need. |
| 52 | Affordable Housing The Council will work with the Scottish Government, Housing Associations, and the private sector to help to deliver 5000 new homes between 2012 and 2017. This will include at least the completion of, or starting on site of 1700 new affordable homes including Council and housing association houses, low cost home ownership and mid-market rent homes. |

¹⁶ http://www.highland.gov.uk/downloads/file/4611/programme_of_the_highland_council



Transference of the assets into community ownership will also present financial benefits to The Highland Council. There will be a capital receipt resulting from the agreed purchase price for the assets. There will also be a revenue cost saving in perpetuity made in relation to rates and maintenance on the property.

The rateable value of Maryburgh Primary School is £6000. At a poundage rate of 48.4% this equates to an annual cost of £2,904. If the poundage rate remains similar for the next 5 years, this would be an overall cost of around £15,000 to The Highland Council

There will be some cost to the council associated with the maintenance and upkeep of the greenspace. The sum involved is not known.

8. Project Management

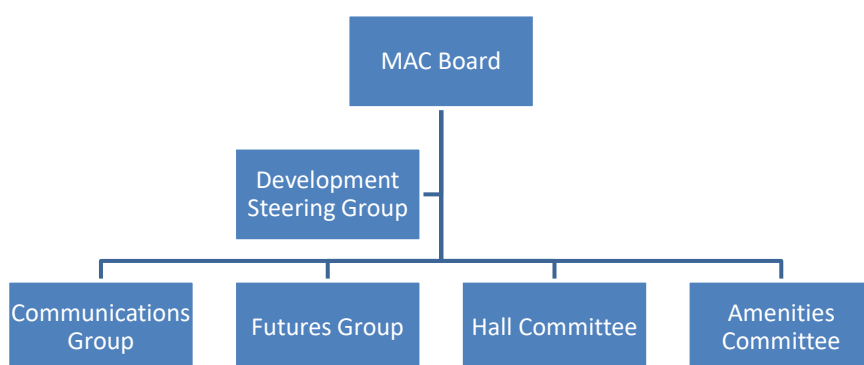
Capacity of Maryburgh Amenities Council

Governance of MAC and management of MAC activity is undertaken by the Company Board of Directors and/or subcommittees, working groups, individual volunteers and contractors with delegated authority.

The board meets approximately quarterly; several committees report to the Board with responsibility for management and oversight of specific aspects of the company's activity. The Company's primary focus is in managing and developing the Maryburgh Amenities Centre and improving provision and capacity of community facilities and quality greenspace available in the village.

The roles within the Board and operating structure are outlined below. Whilst most committees are chaired or led by MAC Board members, this is not a specific requirement and where appropriate leads for specific committees will report to the Board at quarterly meetings. Generally, a member of the MAC Board will be involved in all committees.

Figure 6 – MAC Governance Structure



| MAC Board and Sub-Group Roles | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| <p style="text-align: center;">MAC Board</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Governance - Official correspondence - Liaise with Company Secretary - Annual Accounts & Returns - Companies House requirements - Coordinate board meetings & papers <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Finance & Cash flow - Insurance | | | |
| <p>MAC Communications Group</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - E-bulletin - Manage website Content - Social media - General communications with membership | <p>MAC Hall Committee</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Oversee running of Amenities Centre - Update on hall bookings & rates - Coordinate hall upkeep & maintenance | <p>MAC Futures Group</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Strategic development - Major grants | <p>MAC Amenities Committee</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Gala (organising and coordinating) - General community events or fundraising |

Fundraising and project work is predominantly managed by the MAC Board directly or through a relevant committee (Amenities Committee for Gala and small scale community events, Futures Group for larger and more strategic projects). Recent work around development of plans for the Amenities Centre and greenspace has been through the Maryburgh Futures Group, a committee chaired by a MAC Board member. As the project moves from the funding application and Business Planning phase to a detailed design and implementation phase a project Steering Group will be established.

The Steering Group will ultimately report to the MAC Board but will have delegated authority to manage and shape the project within a framework approved by the MAC Board at quarterly meetings. At least one member of the MAC Board will be on the Steering Group at all times. The project Steering Group will provide an update and forward plan covering the timeline and key stages for the full project and a detailed work plan covering the next six months. This will be presented for review and approval at each board meeting.

The membership of the Steering Group is expected to evolve over time to incorporate key skills related to various stages of the project. The Steering Group will also draw on professional support where required to ensure that the capacity required to support and deliver the project is available.

In the event of the renovation/refurbishment project going forward, a terms of reference Development Steering Group will be produced and approved by the MAC Board.

Project Management during the development and on-site phase

There will be a requirement for a detailed project management plan which describes the tasks and dependencies associated with the development. This will require to be articulated with a resource



plan which clarifies the sources of funds and the timescales for their receipt and payment to other parties.

The purchase, development of detailed plans and resale of the brownfield site will require some support from property consultants and legal professionals. Surplus generated by the sale of the assets may be available to cover the costs of these services.

There will be a requirement to commission a design team. MAC may require some support from HIE or THC in producing commissioning briefs for a design team and conducting competitive tendering processes for these.

During the on-site phase, MAC will be supported by a Clerk of Works who will be recruited/commissioned separately. The Design Team and Clerk of Works will represent the interests of MAC in ensuring that the work is completed satisfactorily by the contractor(s) and within the agreed budget. Regular site meetings will take place attended by the MAC representatives, including board members and commissioned professionals.

The project Quantity Surveyor will be responsible for valuing works monthly and issuing interim certificates to accompany contractors' invoices.

Considering the volume and complexity of the work involved in a development project of this nature, and the capacity of the MAC board, there is a case for MAC seeking to appoint staff to (a) assist them to deal with some of the stakeholder engagement and administration of the process from here, (b) act as their representative during the development and on-site phase, (c) build the capacity of and support the board to take a full role in these processes.

MAC plan to access funds from the Scottish Land Fund for the costs associated with a project manager to represent their interests during the development phase. The project manager will work with the MAC Treasurer to ensure the timely drawdown of grant funding from all sources. This is at present, envisaged as a 0.5 FTE post for a period of 6 months. It may be possible to commission this service rather than seeking to employ an individual in a new post.

Project Management post on-site phase

There may be a case for the employment of a business development and marketing officer for a fixed term once the Amenities Centre is re-opened. Their role will include

- (d) assisting in developing effective and efficient operational policies
- (e) marketing the centre, and
- (f) working with the Treasurer and board to maximise income and minimise costs.

This is, at present, envisaged as a 0.5 FTE post for a period of 12 months.

9. Project Finance

Capital Costs and Funding

Capital costs for purchase of land and old school building

An independent valuation survey instructed by MAC and undertaken by Shepherd Commercial Chartered Surveyors proposed the following valuations

Table 8

| Market Valuation | |
|--------------------------|----------|
| Maryburgh Primary School | £95,000 |
| Brownfield site | £100,000 |
| Amenities centre | £75,000 |
| Playing fields | £0 |
| Totals | £270,000 |

The valuation for Maryburgh Primary School is made on the basis that no planning permission for residential development is available. If such permissions were available, the value would be revised upwards to £100,000. Consequently, the total value of the all the above assets would be £275,000. For the purposes of this business plan we have calculated the value of the assets without residential planning permission.

Local authorities are given power under section 74 of the Local Government (Scotland) Act 1973 (the 1973 Act) to dispose of land in any manner they wish, subject to Part II of the Town and Country Planning (Scotland) Act 1959 and to the “best consideration” rules.

Section 11 of the Local Government in Scotland Act 2003 amends section 74 of the 1973 Act and sets out that the Scottish Ministers may, by regulations, provide the circumstances in which local authorities may dispose of land for a consideration less than the best consideration that can reasonably be obtained.

The Disposal of Land By Local Authorities (Scotland) Regulations 2010 - Additional Non-Statutory Guidance aims to assist local authorities in applying the regulations. Communities may make a request for an asset transfer to a relevant authority under the terms of the Community Empowerment (Scotland) Act 2015.

Local authorities can dispose of land at less than market value, under the Disposal of Land by Local Authorities (Scotland) Regulations 2010. The regulations require them to consider whether the disposal is likely to promote or improve economic development or regeneration, health, social wellbeing or environmental wellbeing. These matters are also to be considered in deciding whether to agree to or refuse an asset transfer request.

Working with the Ward manager and local councillors, MAC have reached an agreement to apply to the Scottish Land Fund to acquire funds to purchase the assets at a discounted value.

The Community Empowerment Act does not say anything about how much a community body would be expected to pay for transfer of an asset. It only says the community transfer body must state in the asset transfer request the price it is prepared to pay. The relevant authority must agree to the request unless there are reasonable grounds for refusal, taking into consideration (amongst other things) the benefits that may arise from the community body's proposal and comparing that to the benefits of any other proposal.¹⁷

In this case, MAC is the community body and The Highland Council is the relevant authority.

Table 9 below demonstrates the impact of several scenarios on the total purchase price.

Table 9 – Discounts on market valuation

| Market Valuation | | Percentage Discount | | | | |
|--------------------------|----------|---------------------|----------|----------|---------|---------|
| | | 5% | 25% | 50% | 75% | 90% |
| Maryburgh Primary School | £95,000 | £90,250 | £71,250 | £47,500 | £23,750 | £9,500 |
| Brownfield site | £100,000 | £95,000 | £75,000 | £50,000 | £25,000 | £10,000 |
| Amenities centre | £75,000 | £71,250 | £56,250 | £37,500 | £18,750 | £7,500 |
| Playing fields | £0 | £0 | £0 | £0 | £0 | £0 |
| Totals | £270,000 | £256,500 | £202,500 | £135,000 | £67,500 | £27,000 |

The Scottish Land Fund can fund up to 95% of eligible project costs. In addition to the purchase price of the asset, eligible project costs include:

- Project Manager Salary
- Professional fees associated with asset transfer process
- Renovation and refurbishment of assets.
- Business Development and Marketing Officer salary.

¹⁷ <http://www.gov.scot/Topics/People/engage/CommunityEmpowermentBillFAQs>

Because the overall project has greater resource implications than simply the purchase of the assets, it is in MAC's interests to seek to obtain the maximum possible discount on the purchase price. A greater level of discount will release headroom in the Scottish Land Fund bid to support the costs of other elements of the overall project. Headroom in the SLF application is created by the value of the agreed discount. The greater the agreed discount, the greater the headroom available for other elements of the eligible project costs.

The minimum discount which MAC could possibly accept to make an eligible application to the Scottish Land Fund would be 5%. This, however would release little or no headroom in the Scottish Land Fund bid for resources for other activities. Consequently, MAC would require to generate income through other means to fully implement the project. For this reason, a 5% discount is not regarded as acceptable.

The consultants are advised that The Highland Council has previously discussed the possibility of releasing the assets to community for a nil or token sum. We have therefore assumed that a significant discount may be available on the purchase price of the assets.

Capital costs for interim work at old school

There is considerable support from the MAC Board for the use of the Maryburgh Primary School as interim accommodation while Amenities Centre is under renovation.

The school will require some upgrade to bring it to habitable standard. There is conflicting and out of date information on the scale of work and costs required. The consultants would recommend instructing a conditions report on the school. This would allow an up to date and professional opinion of the costs of bringing the school up to a standard suitable for short-term public use.

For the purposes of this business plan, we have accepted the costs shown in the December 2011 Highland Council Housing & Property Service Property Inspection & Condition Report on Maryburgh Primary School as the best estimate of costs. These were estimated, in 2011, as described in the table below.

Table 10

| Schedule | Costs |
|--|------------|
| OUTLINE SCHEDULE 1: Work currently required to ensure condition 'B' status of major elements. | £14,244.75 |
| OUTLINE SCHEDULE 2: Work required in years 2-5 to ensure condition 'B' status of major elements. | £3,802.50 |
| Total | £18,047.25 |

The scope of these works is described in Appendix III.

Considering the time elapsed since the 2011 conditions survey, the potential for further deterioration of the fabric of the building and for increases in the price of labour and materials, the consultants recommend that the above total costs is viewed as being underestimated.

To allow some scope for variation, we have applied a 15% increase on the total sum estimated in 2011. We have compounded this increase for each year to 2016. Hence the total budgeted sum for interim renovation of Maryburgh Primary School is £36,299.

Capital costs for Amenities Centre renovation/refurbishment.

Two sets of costings for redevelopment were available from previous work undertaken by MAC. These are regarded as out of date, and to refer to designs that have now have been superseded. These are presented for reference in Appendix IV

The consultants were not commissioned to provide RIBA staged work and/or quantity surveyed costs. A clarification document issued by MAC prior to commissioning consultants stated

"If we are successful in securing the SLF funding, the final design and specification work will be carried out separately – if we are unsuccessful there will still be work carried out on the building but at a reduced scale, so where possible we are keen to avoid costs associated with detailed design and costing work at this stage that will need to be revisited."

The sums presented in this section should therefore be regarded as high level, and subject to change. It may be noted that the above statement shows that MAC are prepared to amend the scope of the refurbishment/renovation work dependent on the resources available.

The most up to date available costs for proposed improvements to the Amenities Centre are included in a report from Resource Efficient Scotland produced in September 2016. This stated that resource use and subsequent costs could be reduced by undertaking the following interventions:

- Installing roof and wall insulation
- Replacing hall lighting with LED
- Changing the space heating over to radiant heaters
- Installing demand water heaters beside the sinks to provide hot water
- Installing thermal destratification fans in the main hall to help distribution of the warm air.

The total cost estimated by Resource Efficient Scotland for the above works is £5,794. This cost has been produced based on being implemented as a single set of improvements; not as part of a larger renovation/refurbishment project. There may therefore be some variance from this in the final budget.

The Community Asset Transfer Business case prepared in 2013 reported

“Highland Architecture has also worked with the community to look at potential designs for an appropriate upgrading, allowing an assessment of costs to be made and an illustrative drawing is shown in an appendix. These are estimated at around £500,000. The upgrading would:

- *bring the building to modern standards;*
- *respond to changing community needs;*
- *remodel the hall interior;*
- *improve insulation and heating;*
- *complement facilities which have been developed as part of the new Ben Wyvis Primary School in Conon Bridge.”*

The nature of the upgrading supported by the community engagement work which has informed this business plan does not differ in character from the above, only in the level of detail on the nature of the improvements required for the Amenities Centre.

The consultants are therefore of the view that the sum of £500,000 may be regarded, at this time, as a reasonable high level figure for the proposed development.

Table 11

| Item | Cost | Notes |
|--|-----------------|---|
| Purchase of assets | £202,500 | Based on 25% discount on market value. |
| 0.2 FTE Project Manager (6 months) | £19,500 | Based 65 days at £300 per day |
| Interim Renovation of Maryburgh Primary School | £36,299 | Based on 15% compound increase on 2011 conditions report. |
| Redevelopment of Amenities Centre | £500,000 | Based on 2013 Business Case |
| Business Development and Marketing Officer | £15,789 | Based on 0.5 FTE SNC Scales Spinal Column Point 55 |
| Total | £762,388 | |

The total project cost is therefore £762,388, reducing to £694,888 if a 50% discount on market value is applied, and £586,888 if a 90% discount is applied.

The indicative value of £500K to redevelop the Amenities Centre is considered sufficient to ensure a minimum standard of upgrading to deliver the key improvements highlighted earlier in the Business Plan, and to effect maintenance and upgrading works to the fabric, services, fixtures and fittings to provide a fit for purpose building that can be maintained for the medium to long term without significant additional investment required. In its current condition, the Amenities Centre will need significant investment even to maintain the current basic facilities at a usable standard; which is not fit for purpose for the range of uses identified by the community.

9.2 Income for Development Project

The Scottish Land Fund is expected to provide the resources for the purchase of the assets, and for some other elements of the overall project, specifically relating to project management and support towards initial operating costs. MAC plan to dispose of the brownfield site for market value at a later



date. The value of SLF funding application associated with the revenue elements is anticipated to be in the region of £25,000.

Based on the recent valuation, the sale of the brownfield site should produce a capital receipt of £100,000. It is possible that this sum may vary depending on the specific development model adopted.

The Highland Council has committed £47,000 for the renovation/refurbishment of the Amenities Centre. This is at present held by The Highland Council and an application has been submitted by MAC to formally allocate the funding, subject to a fully funded project being in place.

This produces an initial financing package of £172,000. It is anticipated that the balance of funding will be from a number of sources, predominately as grants but with the potential for limited debit finance. Recognising the findings around the potential value of lets from the redeveloped centre, MAC must ensure that any loans are linked to additional revenue generating activity and will not create additional risk in terms of the Company's finances. Assuming a 25% discount on the transfer of the assets from The Highland Council to MAC this leaves a balance of £502,269 in total project costs. This balance reduces to £438,144 with a 50% discount and £335,544 if a 90% discount is applied.

The Scottish Government has committed £10 million to the Scottish Land Fund for 2016-17. The average grant size in the last Scottish Land Fund was under £190,000; the smallest grant awarded was £14,000 and the largest was £750,000.



Revenue Budget

Income/Expenditure Forecast

This forecast assumes that the MAC Centre would retain its revenue status quo during 2017-2018, until all funding had been received. This forecast assumes that renovation and refurbishment work would be carried out during 2018 - 2019, with the re-opening and potential revenue being starting 2019-2020.

Although other possible income streams are examined in the business plan (such as a café) this forecast is based on what is believed to be the most realistic options for MAC at the present time. This may change in the future.

Table 12

| Expenses | 2018 – 2019 | 2019 – 2020 | 2020 - 2021 | 2021 - 2022 | 2022 - 2023 | Notes |
|------------------------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|------------------------------------|
| | Year 1 | Year 2 | Year 3 | Year 4 | Year 5 | |
| Bank service charges | £15.00 | £0.00 | £0.00 | £0.00 | £0.00 | |
| Cleaning | £1,926.10 | £2,210.00 | £2,320.00 | £2,442.00 | £2,571.00 | Allowed a 5% increase per year |
| Gala day (catering and misc) | £650.00 | £684.00 | £720.00 | £758.00 | £798.00 | Allowed a 5% increase per year |
| Insurance | £0.00 | £800.00 | £800.00 | £800.00 | £800.00 | through THC Halls Insurance scheme |
| Licences | £0.00 | £20.00 | £20.00 | £20.00 | £20.00 | |
| Misc | £21.90 | £30.00 | £40.00 | £50.00 | £60.00 | Allowed a small increase per year |
| Office misc | £0.00 | £50.00 | £100.00 | £120.00 | £130.00 | Allowed a small increase per year |
| Postage | £7.00 | £30.00 | £50.00 | £60.00 | £70.00 | Allowed a small increase per year |
| Marketing / print* | £0.00 | £500.00 | £555.00 | £617.00 | £686.00 | Allowed a 10% increase per year |



| | | | | | | |
|-------------------------|------------------|-------------------|-------------------|-------------------|-------------------|---|
| Professional fees | £0.00 | £1,450.00 | £750.00 | £789.00 | £831.00 | It is hoped that new accountant will be employed in year 3, who will be less expensive. A 5% increase per year has been allowed thereafter. |
| Repairs and maintenance | £0.00 | £500.00 | £526.00 | £554.00 | £583.00 | Allowed a 5% increase per year from year 2 onwards |
| Senior citizens xmas | £0.00 | £500.00 | £526.00 | £554.00 | £583.00 | Allowed a 5% increase per year from year 2 onwards |
| Telephone | £70.28 | £420.00 | £442.00 | £465.00 | £490.00 | Allowed a 5% increase per year from year 2 onwards. This is £420 with Phone & BB split three ways - MAC / MCC / RCHS - an additional element for contribution to energy use is included in the payment but not here. See below**. |
| Electricity | £4,896.01 | £6,500.00 | £6,842.00 | £7,202.00 | £7,581.00 | Allowed a 5% increase per year from year 2 onwards |
| TOTAL | £6,936.37 | £13,694.00 | £13,691.00 | £14,431.00 | £15,203.00 | |

| Income | 2018 – 2019 | 2019 – 2020 | 2020 - 2021 | 2021 - 2022 | 2022 - 2023 | Notes |
|------------------------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|---|
| | Year 1 | Year 2 | Year 3 | Year 4 | Year 5 | |
| Roundabout advertising | £1,200.00 | £0.00 | £0.00 | £0.00 | £0.00 | MCC is now co-ordinating this. |
| Misc | £8.46 | £10.00 | £10.00 | £10.00 | £10.00 | |
| Gala | £915.00 | £5,000.00 | £5,555.00 | £6,172.00 | £6,858.00 | Allowed a 10% increase per year from year 3 onwards, assuming increase in awareness and popularity. |
| Hall lets | £4,295.00 | £17,153.00 | £19,058.00 | £21,176.00 | £23,529.00 | Allowed a 10% increase per year from year 3 onwards, assuming increase in awareness and popularity. |
| Specific Grants | £0.00 | £1,300.00 | £1,300.00 | £1,300.00 | £1,300.00 | £1000 halls grant / £300 senior citizens grant - others available but will vary |
| Phone/BB/Energy contribution | £0.00 | £520.00 | £547.00 | £576.00 | £607.00 | Allowed a 5% increase per year from year 2 onwards |



| Income | 2018 – 2019 | 2019 – 2020 | 2020 - 2021 | 2021 - 2022 | 2022 - 2023 | Notes |
|--------|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------|
| Total | £6,418.56 | £23,983.00 | £26,470.00 | £29,234.00 | £32,304.00 | |

| Surplus/Deficit | 2015 - 2016 | 2019 – 2020 | 2020 - 2021 | 2021 - 2022 | 2022 – 2023 |
|-----------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|
| | Year 1 | Year 2 | Year 3 | Year 4 | Year 5 |
| | -£517.81 | £10,289 | £12,779 | £14,803 | £17,101 |

10. Risk Analysis

Risks of taking project forward.

Undertaking any project of this scale, complexity and cost involves an element of risk. The risks associated with taking any action, need to be assessed against the risks of inaction. The risks of inaction are discussed below.

The risks associated with taking the course of action described in this business plan have been identified using the following framework.

- Human – Illness, death, injury, or other loss of a key individual.
- Operational – Disruption to supplies and operations, loss of access to essential assets, or failures in distribution.
- Reputational – Loss of customer or employee confidence, or damage to market reputation.
- Procedural – Failures of accountability, internal systems, or controls, or from fraud.
- Project – Going over budget, taking too long on key tasks, or experiencing issues with product or service quality.
- Financial – Business failure, stock market fluctuations, interest rate changes, or non-availability of funding.
- Technical – Advances in technology, or from technical failure.
- Natural – Weather, natural disasters, or disease.
- Political – Changes in tax, public opinion, government policy, or foreign influence.
- Structural – Dangerous chemicals, poor lighting, falling boxes, or any situation where staff, products, or technology can be harmed.

For each of the above we have asked ‘what could go wrong specific to this project, how likely is it to happen and what would be the impact of it happening?’

| Risks Identified | Controls in place |
|--|--|
| Key individuals from the MAC board become unavailable. Likelihood – Low Impact – Medium | Responsibility for implementing this plan is shared across a number of MAC board members. No one member has individual responsibility for the project. All records relating to the project are kept in a central location and accessible to other members of the MAC board, not held in the home or head of any one individual. |
| That current hall users fail to return to the hall after it is refurbished. Likelihood – Low Impact - Medium | School available for use during period when hall is not available. Commitment sought from users to return to hall. Marketing plan for community hub in place. Potential to increase letting fees in line with the market. |
| Development phase goes over timescale. Likelihood – Medium Impact - Low | Project management plans in place. Dedicated project manager allocated to project. |

| | |
|---|---|
| Building costs increase during development phase Likelihood – Medium Impact - High | Upper ceiling for costs to be specified in contracts. Contingency element built in to budget. Potential to phase work and/or to reduce the scope of specific elements to ensure overall project remains within available global budget. |
| Unable to secure funding as identified in the funding plan. Likelihood – Medium Impact - High | Funding has been conservatively estimated. The project will not commence until core funding is in place. Potential for other sources of funding to balance any unsuccessful funding bids. |
| New building fails to generate sufficient income to cover costs. Likelihood – Low Impact – High | Levels of occupancy, and consequently income from letting have been conservatively estimated. Marketing plan to be developed to maximise new business. Grants to be sought to support elements of new building operational costs. |
| Change in level or nature of partner support. Likelihood – Medium Impact – Dependent on nature of change. | Partners have been fully involved in the business planning process and will be fully informed and involved as appropriate. |

Risks of not taking project forward

There are some risks and potential negative consequences associated with not taking forward some of the planned improvements

- If there is no investment in improvements to the facilities and quality of accommodation in the Amenities Centre, there is a risk that levels of use by the community will further decline. This will produce a negative spiral of reduced income, reduced available capital to invest in maintenance, and further deterioration of the facilities. Given the current condition of the buildings and key issues & priorities identified through the community engagement work, in the short to medium term this could result in the closure of the centre and a valuable resource will be lost to the community and surrounding area.
- Opportunities for people within the community to meet with each other, and to meet with other sections of the community, e.g. other generations, will decrease. This will have a negative impact on quality of life, community capacity and, in the longer term, the sustainability of the community.

There will be fewer or no hires of the centre from agencies, and the number and range of services available to the community will reduce. This will negatively impact on quality of life, educational opportunities and health and well-being.¹¹ Conclusions Undertaking any project of this scale, complexity and cost involves an element of risk. The risks associated with taking any action, need to be assessed against the risks of inaction. Although there are some risks to MAC associated with taking the project forward, these are manageable and can be mitigated. The risks associated with inaction apply to community of Maryburgh, and not manageable, and methods of mitigation are unclear. It therefore appears, on the balance of risks to be better to take forward the proposal.

Appendix I –Options Appraisal - Maryburgh Primary School

Introduction

Maryburgh Primary school building presently has the following configuration of rooms.

- Three classrooms
- Boys and Girls toilets (presently designed for infants)
- Office
- Boiler Room

Assessment of its present condition is based on *“an initial survey carried out by Gunn MacPhee & Associates to confirm its structural integrity”*¹⁸ and conditions report completed by Highland Council Housing & Property Service in December 2011. This conditions report was supplied to the consultants with the caution that it was no longer considered to have any force as a result of the time elapsed since its completion.

The Community Facilities Needs Analysis, completed in January 2011, states *“In 2003 the Highland Council estimated that the main school building required over £500,000 of maintenance works, little of which has been carried out subsequently.”*¹⁹ The original source of these figures is unavailable to the consultants.

This sum provided in the needs analysis differs from the sum in the conditions report. The conditions report provides detailed cost estimates for series of timeframes. These are reproduced in the table below.

| Ref ²⁰ | Schedule | Cost (£) |
|-------------------|---|-------------|
| Appendix A | OUTLINE SCHEDULE 1: Work currently required to ensure condition 'B' status of major elements. | £14,244.75 |
| Appendix B | OUTLINE SCHEDULE 2: Work required in years 2-5 to ensure condition 'B' status of major elements. | £3,802.50 |
| Appendix C | OUTLINE SCHEDULE 3: Work to be considered in future years to ensure condition 'B' status of major elements. | £163,449.00 |

The total sum in the condition report is only £181,495, and the sum required in the next 5 years is only £18,046. This differs drastically from the £500,000 sum given in the needs analysis. We have been unable to ascertain the reason for this discrepancy. Part of it may be a result of costs associated with the outbuildings that were sited on the school grounds at the time of the needs analysis, but we do not believe that these could account for such a significant discrepancy. As a result, the consultants do not have confidence in any of these figures.

¹⁸ Business Case, item 3.12

¹⁹ Item 4.25

²⁰ Conditions report, item 6.2.3

Maryburgh Primary School Option 1 – Enterprise Centre

The HRI Architects proposal for redevelopment as an Enterprise Centre presents the following floor plan.

- Meeting Room
- Common Resource Area
- Boiler Room
- Male and Female toilets
- 6 x studio spaces

The conversion costs for the above are estimated at £250,000²¹. It should be noted that the Business Case states *“This estimate is illustrative but it has been arrived at with the help of our professional advisors.”*²² There is therefore the potential for the true costs to vary significantly from this.

The Project Development Plan and Costings completed by HRI Architects in August 2014 stated²³

“The former primary school and adjoining site were identified in option 5 for possible conversion as a business unit. Such facilities, offering low rent small scale accommodation for business ventures, are not unusual; usually provided through local enterprise agencies, they are essentially subsidised in terms of overall revenue and maintenance costs. We do not consider that such usage in this case will meet the objectives of MAC inasmuch as such conversion would become a net revenue drain on the organisation rather than a revenue generator. Additionally, its location relative to established centres in Dingwall and Inverness, mean that commercial take-up may well be limited.”

The consultants undertook a search on a number of online locations²⁴ to establish the availability of similar facilities, levels of demand and pricing. We identified nothing that was directly comparable to the size and scale of the proposed units. This may mean that there is little or no competition for this sort of offer.

The consultants interviewed Kenny McKenzie, Property manager for Graham & Sibbald. Graham & Sibbald deal with property management for Highlands & Islands Enterprise and were therefore considered to be in a good position to offer professional insight to the Highland commercial property market.

Kenny’s professional opinion was that there may be some market for this, but it was by no means clear that, if there was a market for this, that Maryburgh was the ideal location. As a comparator Kenny offered that, In Dingwall, G&S have a shed at 5000 sq ft. The building is not in good condition, and is offered at £2.50 - £3.00 per sq ft. There has been very little interest. This may be because of the large size of the unit. Smaller units may be more attractive. The owner is considering demolishing it to save on the rates payments.

²¹ It may be noted that these conversion costs are half of the estimated costs of maintenance provided in the needs analysis.

²² Item 7.2

²³ Item 2.1

²⁴ Gumtree, S1Property, Shepherd Commercial Property



Kenny also noted that there are small startup units in Inverness. These are larger and more industrial in design than the units proposed for Maryburgh Old School, and have roller shutter type doors. Demand is high for these and closing dates are set when they are offered to market. Kenny felt that there may be potential for something similar in Maryburgh, but noted that his assessment was entirely subjective and made without real evidence.

The consultants have undertaken a brief audit of small businesses in operation in Maryburgh and surrounding areas. Yell.com²⁵ identified 111 small businesses within 2 miles of Maryburgh, 11 of which were in Maryburgh itself. A small number of other local businesses have been identified through adverts in the Maryburgh Roundabout.

The Community Survey²⁶ undertaken for the Needs Analysis generated 12 ticks to the option of business start up units, the second least popular of the 16 options offered.

Conclusion

There is little evidence that there is the level of existing business activity or latent entrepreneurship in Maryburgh to produce a high demand for these.

There may be demand from other areas, but this brings into question whether Maryburgh is therefore the most appropriate location. It also raises the question of the constitutional competence of MAC providing facilities that benefit individuals from other areas.

The income that this sort of provision is likely to produce is likely to be relatively low, and place some management burden on MAC.

The above analysis is likely to hold true, to a greater or lesser degree, for other similar options, e.g. artist studios.

²⁵ Yell.com does not allow a location search for all businesses. This search was therefore carried out using 30 set terms, some of which were selected by the consultants, others of which were suggested by the Yell.com suggestions feature.

²⁶ Appendix B. Only Bunk Houses achieved a lower score.



Maryburgh Primary School Option 2 – Well-being Centre for older people

During community consultation, it became apparent that there was little provision for older people in the local area, apart from the Maryburgh lunch club (Forever Young Club) that meets in the Cottage Bar and is strongly supported. It is very active, meeting once a month in the bar for lunch but also organising day trips to garden centres etc. Previously they used the Community Centre for activities, but it proved too cold for them. Primary research with the local organiser of this club indicates that there would be strong demand for a well-being centre for older people. They would prefer to use the Community Centre than the Primary School building, as the larger spaces are more suitable for some of their activities such as boccia, indoor bowls etc.

Additional research by the consultants looked at well-being centre models. The Bradbury Centre in Bonar Bridge is extremely successful, with all of their 26 spaces per week-day being taken. They have an NHS support worker two days a week (which is increasing to three days a week to meet demand) who meets any personal care needs such as assisted washing. They have a wet room facility, dining area, lounge area and a multi function room with access to computers and hairdressing facilities (2 basins and 1 hairdryer).

They receive regularly enquiries from the Maryburgh area, which they cannot fulfil due to lack of space. It is supported and part-funded by Highland Council for these services. (nb. The Bradbury Centre is a different model from the potential facility in Maryburgh, in that it is a purpose built building that is used almost exclusively as a well-being centre. They do, however, rent rooms when they are not in use).

The consultants contacted Mr Christopher Arnold, the NHS Highland District Manager who covers the Easter Ross area. He advised that 'community hubs' where users share buildings are proving to be increasingly popular in the Easter Ross area, and that NHS Highland would be willing to engage with the Maryburgh community to consider providing services from a building in the village. He commented; "evidence shows that such services would be almost certainly be full. Demand in the area for services for older people is extremely high."

Maryburgh School Option 3 - Alternative/Additional Community Facility

The community survey undertaken as part of the community facility needs analysis identified strong support for services that would require good quality community facilities. There is insufficient evidence to quantify the level of demand in terms of space. Consequently, the business case for developing the school as a community facility, at the same time as renovating the MAC hall is incomplete.

The consultants note that the community survey design suggests that the options were presented to the community as items that they would be interested in *if another party were to provide them as a service*. It is not clear what agency, except for Highlife Highland, may be in a position to offer any of these services. Thus, the results of the community survey may not represent the actual potential for the use of community facility space, if available. Letting of community space requires an organisation to undertake the let. The existence of demand for an activity is not evidence of demand for community space from which to provide an activity.

We have commented elsewhere in this report above on the range of possible costs associated with bringing the school into habitable condition. These may be quite low or very high depending on the figure accepted. If they are at the low end, there is the potential for the school to be brought to habitable standard relatively quickly. This means that the school could offer alternative accommodation to existing Amenities Centre user groups while the Amenities Centre undergoes renovation.

This would be an attractive option as it would prevent existing users from finding alternative accommodation in this period and eliminate the risk of them failing to return to the Amenities Centre after completion of the renovations.

The Amenities Centre is used by a small number of groups at present, most if not all, of which could be easily relocated to the school.

Conclusion

If the Amenities Centre is to be renovated, there is little reason to invest heavily in bringing the school up to a condition where it may be operated as a long-term provision. To do so may result in an over provision of community facilities in Maryburgh with the result that neither of the two buildings achieve a high level of occupancy. The balance of letting income to operation costs for each building would then be a higher risk. We cannot think of any strong case for MAC taking on this level of risk.



Maryburgh Primary School Option 4 – Site for Services

Maryburgh has few public, voluntary or private sector services available at present. This appears to be because Dingwall (less than 2 miles from Maryburgh) provides excellent services, with several also available in Conon Bridge (less than 1 mile from Maryburgh).

The question of whether a community facility sited at the school could provide otherwise unavailable services, which would benefit the community and reduce the costs for providers should, however, be examined. Possible services include:

- Childcare provision
- Public/voluntary sector services, e.g. Police, Citizens Advice, Energy efficiency, healthcare.
- Provision of private sector services: post office, hairdressers, childcare, music lessons, elderly care.
- Pick up and drop-off for services like dry-cleaning, shoe repair, etc.

Primary and secondary research²⁷ has been carried out to evaluate the level of interest in delivering services of this nature in Maryburgh.

Conclusion

There is a good mix of services available very close by in Dingwall, with a regular bus service between the two localities. There appears to be little need / demand in supplying most these services in Maryburgh, with only one service looking weak within the Maryburgh area: day care for the elderly. There is, however, no reason that this could not be provided in the Amenities Centre, thus reducing the high level of management input and costs that running two community halls / centres would need.

²⁷ See appendix 4



Maryburgh School - Option 5 – Heritage Centre

There is an active community based heritage organisation, the Ross & Cromarty Heritage Society²⁸ with members and activity in Maryburgh. They presently meet in the portakabin at the Amenities Centre.

Email communication with the chair of the Ross and Cromarty Heritage Society confirmed that the society would be interested only in using an office within the old school building. The chair pointed out that, as presently constituted and structured, the Society has only a single objective – to develop their Web Site. He noted some personal interest in establishing a History / Heritage / Genealogy Centre for Easter Ross.

There are some other examples of similar uses of community buildings in Scotland. For example, Dower House in Corstorphine is managed by the Corstorphine Trust²⁹ as a local heritage centre. They hold local archives and historical objects. The house is open to the public on Wednesday and Saturday mornings, at which time a volunteer run coffee and cake service is provided. The house also provides a venue for talks, concerts and other occasional activities.

Dower House is entirely run by volunteers and has been since 1991 when the Corstorphine Trust took it over as a derelict building. Funds from Historic Scotland, The Lottery Fund and bequests were used to restore it.

If the school were to be developed as a heritage centre, it is likely that this development would require its own feasibility study, options appraisal, business planning and funding. All of this would take some time, and may result in the return of conclusions that Maryburgh school is not the most advantageous site for a heritage centre.

Conclusion

Ross & Cromarty Heritage Society have no plans for the creation of a heritage centre, and at present could not deliver such a plan without an amendment to their constitution. It is therefore highly unlikely that such a development could take place in any timescale which would correspond with the timescale MAC would have for disposal of the building.

²⁸ www.rossandcromartyheritage.org/

²⁹ <http://www.corstorphinetrust.co.uk/article.php?xArt=11>

Maryburgh School Option 6 – Café

Note that existing architect's drawings/costings do not include café or kitchen space. The HRI architects costings include a sum for a 40 cover café offering light snacks and limited hot food within MAC.

There are approximately 3400 people in Maryburgh and Conon Bridge. Except for the very young and/or people who are unable to leave their home, all of these are potentially café customers.

Feedback from community consultation exercises identified a high degree of support for a community café, including one detailed comment on how the space could be used. This does not necessarily mean that people would use a café if it existed. There is a gap between what people say they want, and what people actually use.

The location of the present hall is not ideal to attract passing trade. It would be possible to place signage on the main road (the A862) alerting passing travelers to the presence of the café.

Data ³⁰ shows that passing traffic is not insignificant, with average daily vehicles on the main road being 3,220. This figures do, however show a slow decrease in passing traffic, falling 3% since the year 2000 (see appendix 4).

Figures for commuters to Maryburgh have not been possible to locate, but general data for the Highlands has been obtained ³¹ (see appendix 4). This shows a general trend for individuals to commute from home in the Highland region to workplaces out with the Highlands, i.e. a net commute of -2,124.

There are clearly many tourists that visit the Highlands, with 2.1 million visitors to the region in 2010 spending £536 million ³². However, this is extremely seasonal and not area specific for Maryburgh.

It may be possible to generate café use through organized group activity, e.g. lunch clubs. These do presently exist in Maryburgh/Conon Bridge.

If the Amenities Centre is to be renovated as a modern community hub, there may be a greater case for siting any café in the Amenities Centre where it would benefit from greater passing trade, i.e. from other hall users.

There are three options for arranging the provision of a café

- a) Provision of café/coffee shop space as a hireable resource.

Although there is some evidence of demand for a café in Maryburgh, it is not clear that there is sufficient market to support 9 to 5 style opening hours, or the generation of a significant profit from such an enterprise.

³⁰ <http://www.uktrafficdata.info/cp/highland-a862-dingwall-and-seaforth-20950>

³¹ <http://www.neighbourhood.statistics.gov.uk/HTMLDocs/dvc193/#>

³² [http://www.visitscotland.org/pdf/Visitor%20Survey%20-%20Regional%20Factsheet%20-%20Highlands%20FV4pptx%20\[Read-Only\].pdf](http://www.visitscotland.org/pdf/Visitor%20Survey%20-%20Regional%20Factsheet%20-%20Highlands%20FV4pptx%20[Read-Only].pdf)



It may be possible for MAC to simply make café space available for hire in a renovated/refurbished centre. This could then be hired by local groups who could then staff it with their own volunteers or paid employees, promote it to their own members/users and make it available to the public. This would have all the advantages of option (b), but would also potentially enable local groups to generate income, create employment and volunteering opportunities, and deliver a service to the community, whilst reducing the potential expectation for MAC to be the sole operator of the café.

b) Social Enterprise Community café

A community café could be designed as a social enterprise and therefore could obtain grant and other support. It could also reduce costs by deploying volunteers. All the running of the café, including licensing, health and safety, etc would be the legal responsibility of the MAC board. If run by community will mean that they will become employers. That will mean employers liability insurance, payroll, pensions (possibly, etc). Requirement for REHIS training for staff. It may be possible to deliver this service on some limited opening hours, i.e. to only open for example on a Wednesday and Saturday morning. This would have the advantage of motivating people to use the café at the times it was open, thus concentrating the number of users at any given time, and hence increasing the income/expenditure balance and increasing the levels of social interaction offered by the café. There are models like this elsewhere, e.g. Dower House in Corstorphine.

c) Franchise to local business.

Franchise to local business would produce a franchise/rental income from franchisee. Would require a contractual relationship with franchisee. This would have to include community access to the kitchen at times when not in use by the café. This caveat may make the franchise offer less attractive to potential franchisees.

Conclusion

There is no strong business case for siting a café at the school, particularly when it could be sited in the Amenities Centre.

Maryburgh School Option 7 – Serviced/Managed Office Units

On 29th July, a search for “office space” in Highland on the Gumtree website identified a total of 21 adverts placed in the last 376 days and still online (i.e. not deleted by the advertisers). Six of these adverts had been placed in the previous 7 days. Four of the six were for office space in Inverness, one in Dingwall and one in Thurso.

It was notable that 14 of the 23 visible adverts had a single contact number based in London. Price for single office/desk space was around £250 pcm with services. It should be noted that this price is for office space which includes heating and lighting, internet and some other services, e.g. meeting rooms, reception, that couldn’t realistically be provided at Maryburgh Primary School. Pricing would therefore have to take that into account.

Comment from local residents suggests that anyone requiring a single desk space in Maryburgh would, except in unusual circumstances, be able to do so from home. Anyone requiring a greater number of desk spaces may be recruiting from outside Maryburgh, and therefore may wish to locate outside Maryburgh. It is difficult therefore to find a niche market for serviced office space in Maryburgh.

The consultants interviewed Kenny McKenzie, Property manager for Graham & Sibbald. Graham & Sibbald deal with property management for Highlands & Islands Enterprise and were therefore considered to be in a good position to offer professional insight to the Highland commercial property market.

G&S have office property available at Dingwall Business Park³³. There is low demand for office accommodation in Dingwall. That may be because the office accommodation offered is big - 1000s of sq ft. There are few large organisations which require that kind of accommodation who wish to locate in Dingwall. It may be more successful if offered as smaller units.

The price that property in Dingwall Business Park is expected to achieve is £9-10 per sq ft. This is for high quality, modern, purpose built office accommodation. For comparison, the G&S offices in Inverness are in a converted Townhouse and cost £7-9 per sq ft.

In Kenny’s opinion, office accommodation in Maryburgh would have to offer a high specification, e.g. raised floors and suspended ceilings to compete with the offer at Dingwall, and even then would not be expected to achieve more than the lower end of £7-9 per sq ft due to the relatively remote location and the fact that the specification will likely be compromised by being a result of a conversion.

He felt that demand may be for small spaces, where people can plug in for a month or two months. He felt that it was unlikely, although not impossible, that there would be a demand for long term rentals.

Conclusion

There is insufficient evidence of demand for serviced office space in Maryburgh to support the investment required to convert the school to a suitable specification.

³³ <http://www.completelyoffice.co.uk/offices/scheme/Dingwall-Business-Park-Inverness.html>

Maryburgh Primary School Option 8 – Housing Development

NB: This section discusses the old school building and brownfield/hard standing land adjacent.

The Stage C Project Development work undertaken by HRI Architects concluded that there was little demand for any other use for the school and hard standing land around it than housing. We have no evidence to challenge this conclusion.

The hard standing may be useful for periodic events, e.g. craft fair, farmers market, car boot sale. We have no evidence at present of the nature of the income that these could produce for MAC, but it is unlikely to be significant. These events may, in better weather, also possibly take place on the greenfield site.

Following discussions with Highland Small Communities Housing Trust, it has been confirmed that there are a number of models that would support a partnership approach to enable incorporation of housing into development of the old school building. This assumes a compatible community use could be co-located, most likely providing small meeting and drop in space, as identified in options noted above, and providing complimentary facilities to those available at the hall and providing additional flexibility over busy periods. Discussions also noted that the building would likely be better suited to a development incorporating housing and other community uses as the scale of the existing property would be less suited to being exclusively developed as small housing units.

It was also confirmed that partnership models available, and already established in other communities within the Highlands, would also ensure a degree of control over targeting and ensuring affordable rents; linked to community priorities associated with provision of affordable housing, particularly for local young people.

If the brownfield land is to be sold for housing development, the Scottish Land Fund will only support this if the housing is affordable. The requirement that housing is affordable will affect the potential sale price of housing, and hence the value of the land itself. If this is sold to a housing association or other social landlord MAC would have no control over the allocation of housing on the site once developed.

HRI architects estimated that sale of the land for high density housing at commercial rates could generate £100-£150K. Lower density housing would generate a lower sale price. Thus lower density housing + affordable housing would generate a still lower sale price.

The business case notes *“Demand for affordable housing in Maryburgh is strong. There are 28 households on the housing register for a property in Maryburgh, and another 11 tenants who want a transfer, giving Maryburgh as their first choice location for housing. 19 of the 39 are looking for a 1 bedroom property and 10 for a 2 bedroom.”*³⁴

The Project Development Plans produced by HRI architects note that the school building *“Could possibly provide up to three 2-bedroom apartments or a single house.”*³⁵

The Community Facilities Needs Analysis notes *“The Housing Land Audit carried out by Highland Council in 2007 saw a further 96 houses in Conon Bridge and 25 in Maryburgh between 2010 and*

³⁴ Item 3.18

³⁵ Item 2.10.3



2012 and identified sites for a further 335 in Conon Bridge and 95 in Maryburgh for development in 2013 and beyond.”³⁶

Planned housing developments appear to have stalled, most likely in response to the global economic recession. This may affect the value of the land for housing development. A further valuation³⁷ will be required to establish this.

The business case suggests a partnership arrangement for MAC and housing developer would be suited to both the brownfield site and old school building. There are a number of options which may be possible for such a partnership:

- a) Purchase property and place on the open market, thereby producing a capital receipt within the short-term.
- b) Purchase property then work in partnership with a housing association to build low cost housing. MAC retain the land and apply a ground rent payable by the housing association, thereby producing a small recurring and sustainable annual income.
- c) Purchase property & develop homes for rent. This would require a long term loan, a full business plan, and substantial capacity to manage the building project and take on the role of landlord. This would produce a larger recurring and sustainable annual income.
- d) Purchase property and develop homes for rent/sale through shared equity. This offsets some capital costs whilst giving people on low income people a step into home ownership. Possible role of community shares approach. This would require a long term loan, a full business plan, and substantial capacity to manage the building project and take on the role of landlord.

Conclusion

Sale of the brownfield site for housing development and a partnership approach to a mixed use (housing & community) development at the old school will address an evidenced community need. This option increases the population of Maryburgh, and helps to enable local residents in housing need to remain located in the village, thereby enhancing the sustainability of the community and increasing the market for other services delivered from the Amenities Centre.

It will also produce a capital receipt that may be applied to the costs of the renovation of the Amenities Centre. At the present time, it likely that a single capital receipt would be more useful to MAC than a longer term income stream. Therefore, of the above options for housing development, only option (a) is considered suitable.

³⁶ Item 2.4

³⁷ Also required for the SLF application.



Maryburgh School Option 9 – Computer Learning / IT Centre

Fibre broadband is available for homes within a 5-mile radius of Maryburgh³⁸, the fastest speed being 76 Mbps (excellent). This suggests that small, 'kitchen table' businesses could be run from home more efficiently.

Conclusion

It would be possible for computer learning / IT centre to be provided from the old school building, but would only merit one room within it. It would equally be possible to site this in the Amenities Centre, where other groups (eg elderly, youth groups) would be able to use the facility too.

Overall Conclusion on Options for Maryburgh Primary School

Few, if any, of the identified potential uses for the primary school that are considered viable in terms of local demand are not equally well suited to provision from the Amenities Centre. Bearing in mind the fact that the Amenities Centre, at present, has substantial available capacity and that there are plans in place for the renovation and refurbishment of the Amenities Centre, we can find no strong business case for the use of Maryburgh Primary School for anything other than housing development.

There is potential for the school to be used as interim accommodation for community groups during the period that the Amenities Centre is unavailable due to ongoing works.

³⁸ <http://www.broadbandexposed.co.uk/broadband/in/maryburgh/>

Appendix II - Potential Sources of Funds

Sport Lottery Facilities Fund

£10000-£>£100000

http://www.sportscotland.org.uk/facilities/funding/sport_facilities_fund/

This programme covers the provision or upgrading of all facilities for the general community. In the main, proposals will be led by local authorities, clubs, trusts etc.

Split into greater than and less than £100K processes.

Requires bids to be connected to the activity of local authorities and/or the national governing body for the relevant sport.

SKS Comment: May be some potential in this for elements of the MAC Centre refurbishment that incorporates sport, and/or development of the greenspace.

Sport Scotland Awards for All

£500-£10000.

<http://www.sportscotland.org.uk/funding/awards-for-all/>

The programme is administered by the Big Lottery Fund and is run in partnership with sportscotland

The programme is focused on funding organisations that have not received funding from the programme in the last three years.

Awards For All gives groups a chance to apply for a grant between £500 and £10,000 for projects that aim to help improve local communities and the lives of people most in need.

You can apply to Awards For All if you are a not for profit /voluntary or community group, social enterprise, community council, school or statutory body.

We will fund a range of projects which involve bringing local people together, helping people learn, improving local spaces and getting people more active.

SKS Comment: This fund is for resources to help improve local communities and the lives of people most in need.

Scottish Land Fund

Funds up to 95% of capital costs. Can fund up to £100K of revenue costs associated with development.

SKS Comment: Already identified as main source of land/asset purchase costs. May be able to get some kind of member of staff and/or costs of further consultancy support to MAC from the revenue element.

Comic Relief Local Communities Programme (Scotland)

£1000-£10000

<https://www.foundationscotland.org.uk/programmes/comic-relief.aspx>

Not for profit organisations such as community groups, resident associations, community centres, social enterprises, CIC's and credit unions can apply for funding of between £1,000 and £10,000 from the Comic Relief Local Communities Programme. The programme aims to empower local people enabling them to create lasting change in their communities.

The Foundation Scotland is one of the delivery partners and will be delivering the programme across Scotland. The priorities of the programme are to improve people's life skills, education, employability and enterprise; maximise people's ability to strengthen community cohesion and build social capacity; provide people with opportunities to access local services, achieve greater social justice and to reduce inequality, exclusion and disadvantage; and advance people's physical and Projects should be run by people directly affected by the issues they are dealing with and priority will be given to small, locally based groups or organisations in areas of disadvantage that have a clear understanding of the needs of their community. To be eligible organisations need to have an annual income of less than £250,000 pa. PTAs/Parent Councils can apply if appropriately constituted but must evidence the project has genuine wider community benefit. A

Local Communities grant must be at least 30% of the total cost of the project.

Deadline: 31st October 2016

SKS Comment: Requirement for grant to be at least 30% of the total cost of the project may limit the phase this could relate to.

Postcode Local Trust Round 2

£500-£20000

<http://www.postcodelocaltrust.org.uk/applying-for-a-grant>

Funding is available for good causes which benefit wildlife, enhance biodiversity, or renovate/create new green habitats. Consideration will also be given to sustainable energy projects benefitting local areas. Funding will be available for activities, such as:

- Creation of community gardens which benefit local areas.
- Habitat restoration projects which benefit biodiversity and which provide lasting benefits to a community such as on-going recreation activities, flood prevention schemes, natural hedgerow boundaries.
- Tree planting or creation of community orchard projects.
- Wildflower meadow creation.
- Projects which create bird, bug and beastie homes.
- Outdoor education projects delivered with local communities by environmental charities.
- Green-energy projects which create more sustainable solutions to lowering, e.g., energy costs for a community.
- Micro-hydro schemes benefiting a local community.

Grassroots organisations, local charities and non-profit community businesses that are seeking to effect positive change within their local area in England, Scotland and Wales can apply. Grants range from £500 to £20,000 for those in Scotland and England and up to £10,000 for those in Wales. The amount of funding depends on the type of organisation that is applying.

Deadline: 30th September 2016

SKS Comment: Could be useful for green space redevelopment and/or green energy sources for the MAC Centre.

Safer Routes To School

Potentially some funds available which may be used for paths, lighting or other features which may encourage children and parents to travel to school through the green space rather than using the main roads.

Trusthouse Charitable Foundation

<£6000-£45000

<http://trusthousecharitablefoundation.org.uk/grants/>

Funding is available to support the work of local and national charities or not-for-profit organisations that address rural and urban deprivation within the UK. Within these two main headings, the Trust are interested in helping established projects which work in the fields of: Community Support; Arts, Education & Heritage; Disability & Health Care. There are three grants schemes. These are the Large

Grant Scheme, with grants of between £10,000 and £45,000 to cover capital costs; the Standard Grant Scheme, grants of between £6,001 - £12,000 for revenue or one-off capital costs; the Small Grant Scheme, grants of below £6,000 to cover capital and revenue costs. In addition, the Foundation also has funding available to support capital projects at hospices throughout the UK; and for Village Halls and Community Centres. The Grants Committee meets quarterly to consider applications at the beginning of February, May, September and November. The deadlines for submitting applications are generally 2 months before the date of a meeting.

Applications to the small grants programme can be made at any time

Weir Charitable Trust Open to Applications

<£25000

<http://weircharitabletrust.com/how-apply>

The aim of the Weir Charitable Trust is to support individuals, groups and charities, new or established, which are based in Scotland and provide services in Scotland. The Trust anticipates supporting groups and individuals who find difficulty in sourcing funds from traditional or mainstream funders.

Proposals should fall within the following five main areas:

- Health
- Sport
- Culture
- Recreational Facilities
- Animal Welfare

Applications are invited for projects and activities that improve the quality of life for people wherever they are in Scotland.

Deadline: 28th February 2017

SKS Comment: May be useful to fund elements of renovation related to the first four of their five main areas.

Sportscotland Facilities Fund

£10000->£100000

http://www.sportscotland.org.uk/funding/sport_facilities_fund/

The Sports Facilities Fund provides funding for the provision or upgrading of all sports facilities for the general community. Proposals must be led by local authorities, clubs and trusts. Applicants need to demonstrate that the proposed development is for the public good and will provide equitable opportunities for increased sports participation by the community at local level. They will also need to demonstrate what links they have established/will establish with the sports programmes and/or initiatives operated by the local authority, national governing body for sport and their associates/partners.

Small Project Application - All applicants with a total project value between £10,000 and £100,000 (Inc. VAT) are eligible to apply for up to a maximum of 50% funding. In exceptional circumstances club led projects with a total project value of between £10,000 and £50,000 (Inc. VAT) are eligible to apply for up to a maximum of 100% funding.

Large Project Application – (Over £100,000) all applicants are eligible to apply for up to a maximum of 50% funding from Sportscotland, up to the maximum award levels.

- Voluntary sports clubs (including Community Sports Hubs)
- Public bodies such as local authorities.
- Social enterprises such as leisure trusts.
- Area sports associations
- Recognised Scottish governing bodies of sport
- Charitable trusts, playing field associations, youth and uniformed organisations
- Educational establishments such as universities, colleges and schools
- Companies limited by guarantee
-

Applications may be submitted at any time

Heritage Lottery Fund – Resilient Heritage

£3000-£250000

<https://www.hlf.org.uk/looking-funding/our-grant-programmes/resilient-heritage>

Resilient Heritage grants of £3,000-£250,000 can help you to strengthen your organisation, and build the capacity of your staff and volunteers to better manage heritage in the long term.

SKS Comment: Not suitable for MAC, but could be suitable for Ross & Cromarty Heritage Society.

Appendix III – Schedule of Proposed Works At Maryburgh Primary School

Taken from

SCHEDULE 1:

December 2011

Work currently required to ensure condition 'B' status of major elements.

UPRN: HC 00148B
 Building Name: Maryburgh Primary School – Original Building
 Building Address: Hood Street, Maryburgh, DINGWALL IV7

| Item | Description of Works | Budget Allowance |
|------------|---|------------------|
| 1.1 | <u>External Areas</u> | |
| 1.1.1 | Allow for the annual inspection and clearing of the surface water drainage system. | £250.00 |
| 1.2 | <u>Roofs & Rainwater Goods</u> | |
| 1.2.1 | Carry out minor repairs to rainwater goods joints and fixings. | £150.00 |
| 1.2.2 | Carry out isolated repairs to slate roof. | £1000.00 |
| 1.2.3 | Carry out minor repairs to felt roof areas, and flashings. | £500.00 |
| 1.2.4 | Allow for annual inspection and clearing of roof, channels and rainwater goods. | £500.00 |
| 1.3 | <u>External Walls, Windows and Doors</u> | |
| 1.3.1 | Minor / Isolated pointing and render repairs to sandstone walls. | £200.00 |
| 1.3.2 | External decoration and pre-decoration repairs of windows, timber external doors, and rainwater goods. | £4200.00 |
| 1.4 | <u>Hot Water Installations</u> | |
| 1.4.1 | Repair DHW system to provide hot water to WHB's in toilet areas. | £200.00 |
| 1.5 | <u>Fire Safety / Security</u> | |
| 1.5.1 | Upgrade the fire alarm system to include automatic detection (heat and smoke detection in the boiler room and smoke detection in the corridor outside the boiler room). | £3500.00 |
| 1.5.2 | Upgrade boiler room door to 60 minute (medium duration) fire resistance and fitted with both smoke and intumescent seals. | £675.00 |
| 1.5.3 | Remove stored materials from established means of escape routes and boiler room. | £0.00 |

Housing & Property Service

APPENDIX A: Page 1 of 2

SCHEDULE 1:**December 2011****Work currently required to ensure condition 'B' status of major elements.**

UPRN: HC 00149B
Building Name: Maryburgh Primary School – Original Building
Building Address: Hood Street, Maryburgh, DINGWALL IV7

| Item | Description of Works | Budget Allowance |
|---|--|------------------|
| 1.6 | <u>Deleterious Material</u> | |
| 1.6.1 | Provisional sum for conducting a refurbishment asbestos survey prior to the commencement of any of the works detailed in the previous works items. | £1000.00 |
| | Total Excluding VAT: | £12,175.00 |
| | Professional Fees: | £2,069.75 |
| | Total: | £14,244.75 |
| Note* A detailed specification has not been prepared for this work. Costs should be used for guidance only pending a fully detailed appraisal. All costs are based on values taken from the BMI Building Maintenance Price Book 2009 Edition. No allowance has been made for any mark-ups, or contingency sums. | | |

SCHEDULE 2:**December 2011****Work required in years 2-5 to ensure condition 'B' status of major elements.**

UPRN: HC 00149B
Building Name: Maryburgh Primary School – Original Building
Building Address: Hood Street, Maryburgh, DINGWALL IV7

| Item | Description of Works | Budget Allowance |
|---|---|------------------|
| 2.1 | <u>External Areas</u> | |
| 2.1.1 | Allow for the annual inspection and clearing of the surface water drainage system. | £750.00 |
| 2.2 | <u>Roofs & Rainwater Goods</u> | |
| 2.2.1 | Allow for annual inspection and clearing of roof, channels and rainwater goods and slate repairs / re-fixing. | £2500.00 |
| | Total Excluding VAT: | £3,250.00 |
| | Professional Fees: | £ 552.50 |
| | Total: | £3,802.50 |
| Note* A detailed specification has not been prepared for this work. Costs should be used for guidance only pending a fully detailed appraisal. All costs are based on values taken from the BMI Building Maintenance Price Book 2009 Edition. No allowance has been made for any mark-ups, or contingency sums. | | |

Appendix IV – Capital Costs from Previous MAC Documents

Capital Costs Information 1

Broad Order Of Cost Prepared In Conjunction With HRI Architects³⁹

| Item | Sum |
|---------------------------------------|----------------------|
| Works at former school | £0.00 |
| Community area - low area | £5,000.00 |
| Memorium area c/w trees | £5,000.00 |
| Amendments to football pitch | £15,000.00 |
| Site works and hub building | £115,000.00 |
| Hanging rooms etc | £165,000.00 |
| Community cafe/coffee shop etc | £85,000.00 |
| Pergola | £25,000.00 |
| Extg bldg upgrade | £75,000.00 |
| Internal upgrading | £325,000.00 |
| M&E services etc as HRI itemised list | £195,000.00 |
| Finishings & fixtures etc | £35,000.00 |
| Subtotal | £1,045,000.00 |
| Add preliminaries 10% | £1,045,000.00 |
| Subtotal | £1,149,500.00 |
| Add contingencies 7.5% | £86,212.50 |
| Sub til ex vat & prof fees | £1,235,712.50 |

The above is based on a specification that may not be taken forward. Comments from MAC Board members suggest that this sum may be reduced considerably if the specification and plans are amended.

Capital Costs Information 2

Costs Prepared with the help of MAC professional advisers

| Item | Sum |
|------------------------|----------|
| Amenities Centre | £500,000 |
| Pitch improvements | £ 50,000 |
| Play area improvements | £ 50,000 |
| Landscaping | £100,000 |
| Multi sport court | £ 50,000 |
| Total | £750,000 |

The business case notes that this “estimate is illustrative but it has been arrived at with the help of our professional advisors. The largest elements relate to the two building which will be remodelled and for these Highland Architecture has carried out initial design work (shown in the appendices) and illustrative cost estimates.”⁴⁰

³⁹ From Project Development Plans and Costings, Appendix E

⁴⁰ From items 7.1 and 7.2 in the Business Case document.

Competitor's Resources & Pricing

| <u>Community Centre</u> | <u>Facilities</u> | | | | | | | | | | | | |
|--|-------------------|------|-----------|-----------------------|---------|-------------------------------|-------------------------------|-------------------------------|-------------------------------|-------------------------------|-------------------------------|----------------|---------|
| | Various clubs* | Café | Soft Play | IT Suite | Kitchen | Rooms to hire | Fitness Suite | Games Hall | Gym | Football pitch | Outdoor multi-use games area | Public Library | Theatre |
| Cameron Youth Centre, Plane Rd, Inverness (01463 234785) | yes | No | no | 7 laptops, broad band | no | yes | no | No | no | no | no | no | no |
| Charleston Academy Community Campus, Inverness | no | No | no | no | no | yes (during non-school times) | yes (during non-school times) | yes (during non-school times) | yes (during non-school times) | yes (during non-school times) | yes (during non-school times) | no | no |
| Craigmonie Centre (integrated with Glen Urquhart High School, Drumnadrochit) | yes | No | no | yes | no | yes | | Yes | no | yes | yes | yes | yes |
| Hilton Community Centre, Inverness | yes | yes | yes | no | no | yes | no | Yes | no | indoor | no | no | no |
| James Cameron Community Centre, Inverness | yes | No | no | yes | yes | yes | no | No | no | no | no | book exchange | no |
| Leanaig Centre at Ben Wyvis Primary School, Conon Bridge (01349 860950) | yes | No | no | no | yes | yes | yes | Yes | no | no | yes | no | no |

| | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
|---|-----|-----|----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|--------------|-----|
| Merkinch Community Centre, Inverness | yes | no | no | no | no | yes | yes | No | yes | no | no | no | yes |
| Raigmore Community Centre, Inverness | yes | no | no | no | no | yes | yes | Yes | no | no | no | no | no |
| Spectrum Centre, Inverness | yes | yes | no | no | no | yes | no | Yes | no | no | no | no | yes |
| The Leven Centre, Kinlochleven | yes | no | no | yes | no | yes | yes | Yes | no | no | yes | yes | yes |
| The Macphail Centre (arts, learning and community Centre), Ullapool | yes | no | no | yes | no | yes | no | No | no | no | yes | yes | yes |
| The Sunart Centre, Ardnamurchan High School | yes | no | no | yes | no | yes | yes | Yes | yes | yes | yes | no | yes |
| The Seaboard Centre, Balintore | yes | yes | no | yes | | yes | no | Yes | d/k | no | d/k | yes (mobile) | no |
| Dingwall Community Centre | yes | no | no | no | yes | yes | no | yes | no | no | no | no | no |