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| Case reference | NA-NAY-019 |
| Application details | Erection of an Additional Supports Needs school campus development and erection of residential and respite accommodation campus comprising nursery, primary and secondary departments together with the provision of vehicular and pedestrian access, parking, external play and sports facilities, polytunnel, landscaping and the erection of residential and respite accommodation together with associated access, parking and landscaping. |
| Site address | Auchenharvie Playing fields, Boglemart Street/Saltcoats Road, Stevenston. |
| Applicant Determining Authority Local Authority Area | North Ayrshire Council North Ayrshire Council |
| Reason(s) for notification | Category 1 |
| Representations | Stevenston Community Council plus 9 |
| Date notified to Ministers Date of recommendation | 4 March 2019 but not fully documented until 5 March 2019 20 March 2019 |
| Decision / recommendation | Clear |

Description of Proposal and Site:

- Planning permission is sought to develop a school campus for children with additional support needs (ASN) and a residential/respite care home for young people at the Auchenharvie Playing Fields, Stevenston.
- This would replace four existing additional supports needs schools and would provide provision for the whole of North Ayrshire.
- The application site was chosen from a number of options, following consultation.
- The site is allocated as open space in the North Ayrshire Local Development Plan (LDP), comprising maintained grassland, laid out as football pitches and used for sports during the football season as well as informal recreation purposes.

EIA Development:

- North Ayrshire adopted a screening opinion on 11 Oct 2018 concluding that an Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) was not required.

Consultations and Representations:

- Stevenston Community Council object to the proposed development on the grounds that the proposed development would be sited on an area of protected open space, contrary to the provisions of Policy ENV 12 (Development of Open Space) of the adopted LDP. They consider that the proposed sports pitches would not compensate for the loss of open space. In addition, they consider that the proposal would not accord with Scottish Planning Policy (SPP) in respect of outdoor sports facilities, as there would be a substantial area of public open space lost in Stevenston as a result of the development without the provision of replacement facilities of adequate quality/capacity.
- SportsScotland do not object to the proposed development commenting that synthetic, floodlit pitch surfaces provide more playing capacity than grass surfaces and despite the overall reduction in pitch numbers, playing capacity will generally be maintained at the site.
- Upon notification, the Scottish Government's School Infrastructure Team were consulted and had no comments to make.

Assessment:

1. The application has been notified under Category 1 of the Notification Direction – development in which planning authorities have an interest. North Ayrshire Council Education & Youth Employment is the applicant. Whilst the Council consider there would be a reduction in the gross area of open space, they consider that the proposed development would enhance the quality of the remaining space available for both school and community use whilst also delivering a much needed modern ASN school campus alongside complementary respite/residential facilities at an appropriate location within walking distance of a secondary school and other local facilities. The Council's Committee report concludes that the proposed development would therefore be acceptable in terms of LDP Policy ENV 12.
2. In line with the Notification of Applications Direction 2009, the notification requirement relating to applications where the authority has an interest is limited to those occasions where the development would involve a significant departure from the development plan. Nonetheless, the Council took the view that a decision to grant planning permission for this scale of development on protected public open space should be referred to Scottish Ministers.
3. Whilst noting the objection to the proposal from Stevenston Community Council and others in relation to the loss of protected open space, the Council's Committee Report considers that the proposed development could be supported in terms of the adopted LDP, having regard to other material planning considerations. The loss of open space has been weighed against the potential benefits of the proposed development as well as the proposed compensatory measures that would be provided in relation to public open space and the upgrading of sports pitches. Whilst there would be a reduction in the gross area of open space at Auchendarvie, it would be partially compensated for through the provision of improved outdoor sports facilities and a new footpath for the general public along

the edge of the woodland within a swathe of retained open space. The Council have concluded that both of these elements would provide significantly improved opportunities at Auchendarvie for organised sports as well as catering for informal recreation such as walking and cycling. The council have concluded that the level of public open space provision within Stevenston would be reduced only marginally as a result of the proposed development. And, that overall the proposal is acceptable in terms of the LDP.

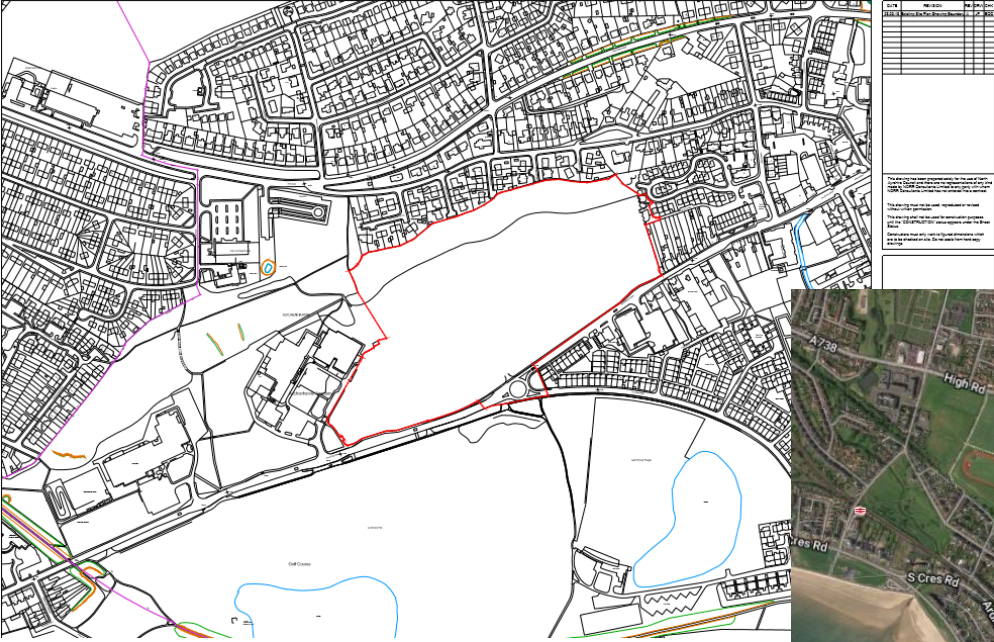
4. Due consideration by the council has also been given to flooding and drainage, traffic and access, ecology, building and landscape design, energy consumption, noise and air quality. The Council's committee report demonstrates a number of potential benefits deriving from the siting of the proposal, its co-location with an established secondary school near a town centre, and enhanced levels of social integration with the wider community.
5. Notably, Sportscotland do not object.
6. The Scottish Government's Schools Infrastructure Team made no comments.
7. The planning application does not raise any issues that would merit intervention at a national level.

Decision/Recommendation:

- Clear.

ANNEX B

Location Plan and Aerial View



3D visualisations

