



Stratherrick & Foyers community trust
Foyers Sports amenity masterplan

DESIGN STATEMENT



COLIN ARMSTRONG
ARCHITECTS

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SUBJECT OF THIS APPLICATION:

INITIAL APPLICATION COMPRISING OF MASTERPLAN LAYOUT, ACCESS ROAD, CAR PARKING AND ASSOCIATED DRAINAGE.

DETAILED CONSENTS FOR REMAINING WORKS WILL BE SOUGHT IN FUTURE APPLICATIONS.

1.00 BACKGROUND INFORMATION

- 1.01 Applicant Details:** Stratherrick & Foyers Community Trust
The Wildside Centre,
Whitebridge,
Inverness IV2 6YP
- 1.02 Agent Details:** Colin Armstrong Architects
Lyle House
Fairways Business Park
INVERNESS IV2 6AA
- 1.03 Consulting Engineers:** RYBKA
10 Ardross St,
Inverness IV3 5NN
- FAIRHURST Engineers
Etive House, Beechwood Business Park, Inverness IV2 3BW
- 1.04 Site Location Plan:** Refer to CAA Drawing

1.05 Description of Development Proposal:

Community masterplan proposal to turn existing non used field on the edge of Foyers to communal sporting hub.

1.06 Development History of the Site

1.06 Purchase and funding

The field was originally offered for sale on the open market by Ashdale Land and Property Limited in 2014. In May 2014 it is understood that members of the public contacted Councillor Margaret Davidson, a Ward Councillor and Leader of the Highland Council, and requested that she call a public meeting to discuss a potential community purchase of the land. It is understood that The Highland Council publicised the public meeting on behalf of Councillor Davidson. As a result of that public meeting, residents signed a petition expressing an interest in the Trust purchasing the field.

As a result of the public meeting and the community interest expressed, the Trust entered into (what became) protracted negotiations with the seller (whose preference was, perhaps unsurprisingly, to dispose to a commercial purchaser for development value rather than a community organisation).

Eventually however, the land was purchased by the Trust from Ashdale Land and Property Limited on 3 March 2016. The purchase was funded by a grant of £28,200 from the Scottish Land Fund and the balance of costs of £4,300 from Stratherrick and Foyers Community Trust's resources. The land purchased excludes a small corner area adjacent to Gray's Park which formed the former restricted agricultural access to the field, which is owned by the Foyers Estate (Messrs. Forbes).

1.07 Stakeholders

Stakeholders were identified as neighbouring residents, Foyers residents, residents of Stratherrick and Foyers of all ages, community organisations and the two primary schools within Stratherrick and Foyers, owners or occupiers of adjacent land and buildings, Stratherrick and Foyers Community Council, Highland Councillors for the Aird and Loch Ness Ward.

1.08 Initial Advertising and Engagement

The Trust designed and erected an 'Acquired by' site notice. This notice includes the Scottish Land Fund logo, the Trust logo and the SSE logo.

On the date of purchase, 3 March 2016, the Trust held a community consultation day to seek views from our community on various matters, including to ascertain the types of activities they would like to see provided on the field. The consultation day was advertised by way of public notice in the Trust's first edition of Stratherrick & Foyers News, by way of Chair's Bulletin to Members of the Trust (on 19 February 2016) and by public notices being placed on community noticeboards.

In Issue 2 of the Stratherrick & Foyers News (June 2016) a further notice was placed offering the field for operation by a local community group. A small group of local gentlemen hoping to form a football club did approach the Trust with an expression of interest and discussions then ensued to advise them on the creation of a constituted group and the operation thereof. Unfortunately, the group were unable to progress.

It was therefore felt that the Trust should instead look to develop the field themselves. A list of recognised stakeholders and representatives of community groups (including Stratherrick & Foyers Community Council) was compiled and these were invited to attend a Stakeholder Meeting at the Craigdarroch Inn, Foyers on 26 October 2016. The Stakeholder meeting was well-attended and the Trust's objects as regards recreation were set out. Representatives were then invited to provide ideas/information about their own individual group's aspirations and needs.

1.09 Professional advisors and land surveys

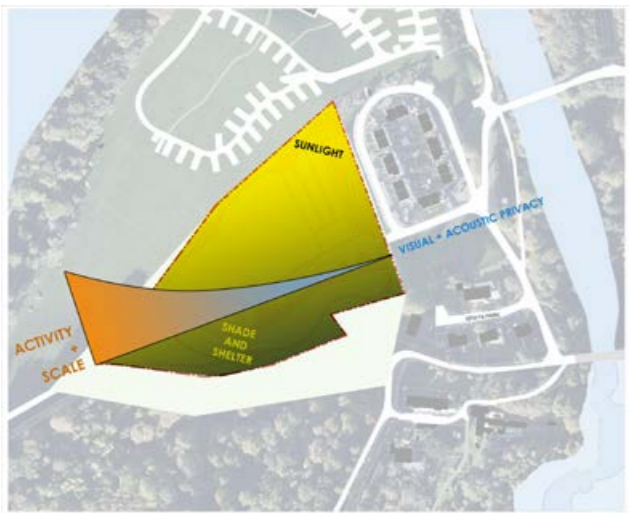
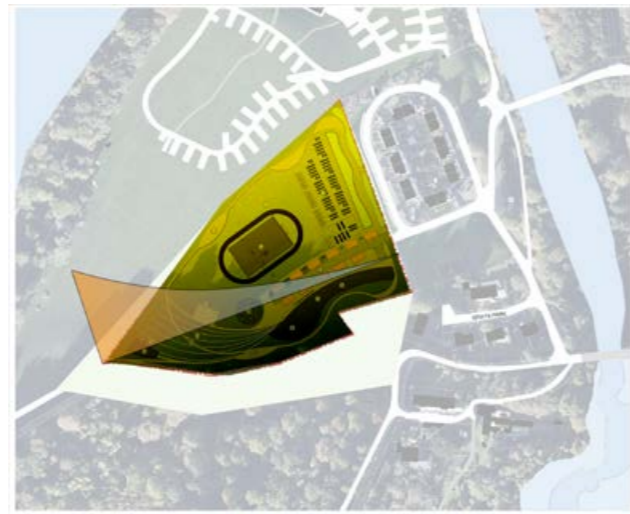
From the results of the community consultations and the ideas received from the community groups' Stakeholder meeting, the Trust prepared a brief and approached a number of architects for quotations to produce visualisations and workable options/draft Masterplan for the field. Three firms were invited to give presentations as to how they would proceed. One invitee declined the offer but two firms of architects attended (in January and February 2017) to make presentations. Unfortunately the original successful tenderer proved unsatisfactory and caused substantial delays and the Trust therefore took the decision to terminate the relationship with that firm and instead, engaged the services of the second presenter, architects Colin Armstrong Associates of Inverness.

Meanwhile a planning application was submitted for the access to the field from the Riverside road. This was successful. Quotations for the works were advertised and [] quotations were received. The access was constructed in 2018/19 and allows people to enter the field from the Riverside road. The works also included the removal of the existing fencing along the eastern boundary and the replacement new wooden fence and gate. Excavated earth from the access road was utilised to form a low bund along the edge of the Trust's land and has been sown with wild flower seed by local children. Some mowing by a farmer was arranged in 2017 and 2018. This has maintained the field as open grassland and discouraged invasive dockens and scrub.

A professional survey of the land was conducted producing a map showing levels. A separate professional survey included a percolation test and some trial digging by an excavator. Both these surveys confirmed the suitability of the land for development. Development of property to the eastern side of Foyers River is constrained by the current access across the temporary Bailey Bridge which was installed in 1985. (The Bailey Bridge was already second-hand when it arrived in Foyers.)

Based on the Trust's brief, Colin Armstrong Associates then developed a first draft masterplan in conjunction with the Trust's elected directors (who are all resident within Stratherrick and Foyers). Drafts of the Masterplan were also broken down into five potential separate phases. These phased plans were progressive. Phase One commenced with a circular boundary path and additional elements were added until Phase 5 when all the possible elements were shown. It was felt that this approach may allow the public to identify the elements they valued and the capacity of the site to accommodate either a basic or complex recreational development. The sheets were produced in A4 format and large A1 format for display purposes. The documents were made available to the public on the Trust website and 'advertised' on the local Stratherrick and Foyers Community Facebook page which has over 800 users. Members of the Trust were also provided with a link to the website.





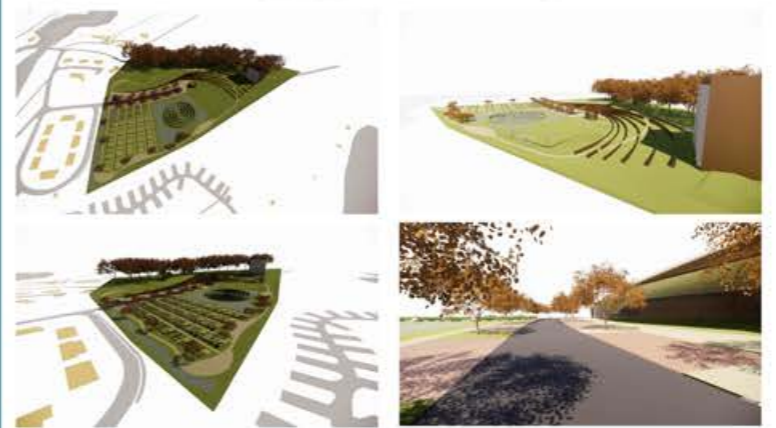
2.00 SITE APPRAISAL

2.01 Site Description, Surrounding Buildings & Landscape

The field is a predominantly flat piece of grassland at Lower Foyers, Inverness-shire. The nearest postcode is IV2 6YH. The land is a single parcel with a ring fence, roughly triangular in shape and rises towards its boundary with the cemetery road to the south. To the north and west the land has a boundary with the Loch Ness Shores Caravan and Camping Park (Messrs. Forbes). The boundary to the east is to verge land and a public road serving the scheme of 16 semi-detached houses comprising Riverside. These houses are all current or former local authority housing stock and many are now in owner-occupation. The eastern boundary of the field is also adjacent to the bungalows of Gray's Park as shown in Appendix 5. In addition the Trust's land marches with Highland Council's basic children's playpark. The Trust has obtained consent and constructed a new gated vehicle and pedestrian access to the field from the Riverside Houses access road as shown in the cover photograph. There is currently no water supply or electricity connection on the site. There are no new planning applications submitted or in preparation.

2.0 SITE APPRAISAL





FOYER COMMUNITY MASTERPLAN

3.0 MASTERPLAN FIRST DRAFT



COLIN ARMSTRONG ARCHITECTS

4.0 FIRST CONSULTATION

4.01 First Draft Masterplan Public Consultation Days

The first draft Masterplan Consultation Day was then held at the Stratherrick Public Hall on Saturday 23 March 2019. The event ran from 10am to 5pm and was organised by the Trust's volunteer directors. The event was advertised in Issue 13 (March 2019) of Stratherrick & Foyers News, with public notices being placed on notice boards throughout the community and by email to Members of the Trust dated 18 March 2019.

A PowerPoint presentation and a talk by the lead architect Michael R. Lawson was provided during the consultation. There was a good attendance with local residents attending. Members of the public were asked to complete either or both of the Consultation Forms. The focus of the day was to establish which of the elements of the Draft Masterplan proposed were most favoured and which were least favoured.

A further consultation day was also held at The Wildside Centre, Whitebridge on 27 April 2019 when the Draft Masterplan was again made available for inspection and Directors were available to discuss the plans with the community. This second consultation was also advertised by way of public notices on notice boards and by email to Members of the Trust of 16 April 2019.

4.02 First Draft Masterplan Consultation Responses and Summaries

There are three different parts to the written responses received.

Firstly, the numerical sheet where respondents could score elements from 9 to 1 or suggest the element should be deleted. Secondly, the numeric sheet had the opportunity for short comments below the table. Thirdly a sheet asking four basic questions was available to record or allow respondents to underline their specific likes, dislikes, concerns or omissions from the draft masterplan. It is evident that some respondents used two or three of the opportunities to state their views.

The Directors, in addition to their own informed views, have also learned of the degree of support or concern over the development proposals at other meetings, AGMs and social events run by the Trust.

Part 1 - Results of the Numerical Sheet Responses

Methodology - Each response sheet gave respondents the opportunity to score each of the 18 elements a maximum of 9 and a minimum of 1 point. The 'delete' option is the strongest rejection option scoring 0 points. The total points scored for each option is divided by the number of responses indicated by the respondent. Where neither a score nor a delete was indicated, the total points scored figure is divided by the number of active respondents to that element. In interpreting these figures care should be taken when the number of responses to a particular element is lower, however in this survey all respondents indicated a score or delete in almost all of the elements, so the rank has not been unduly influenced by two or three extreme (high or low) scores. This section gives a good insight as results are based on a one person – one sheet response without duplication.

Element	Number of responses	Total points scored	Points divided by responses	Number of 'Deletes'	
1	Trim Trail	12	99	8.25	0
2	Ramped Path	13	103	7.9	1
3	Park land	13	99	7.6	0
4	Multi-use Playing Field	13	99	7.6	0
5	Vehicular Entrance	12	91	7.6	0
6	Cemetery Gated access	11	79	7.2	0
7	Changing Rooms and Toilets	13	85	6.5	2
8	Parking	11	72	6.5	1
9	Wild Flower Bund	11	68	6.2	2
10	Landscaped terraced seating	13	72	5.5	3
11	Rock Climbing Wall	12	66	5.5	2
12	Hedge Maze	10	55	5.5	3
13	Viewing Spot	11	59	5.4	2
14	Gym	12	57	4.8	4
15	Viewing Tower	12	57	4.8	5
16	Village Hall	13	45	3.5	6
17	Bandstand	12	34	2.8	6
18	Allotments	13	28	2.2	8

Comment on Table 1

This table shows the elements fall into three categories. The top six elements score 7.2 or more and are marked green on the table. The middle seven elements all score between 5.0 and 6.5 and are shaded in yellow. All seven options shaded in blue have some delete responses against them. The bottom five elements all score less than 5.0 and have an increasing number of deletes against them. The results suggest a high level of support for the first six elements and high degree of dislike for the bottom five elements.

Part 2 Synthesis of 'Short Comments' - Scoresheet 'Notes and general comments box'
There were handwritten comments on the bottom of the score sheet. The box provided was limited in size and designed to gather specific thoughts after the scoring exercise. Fourteen responses are summarised below.

Concerns

First Aid cover / supervision
Allotments a mess
Climbing wall dangerous
Car parking area should not be too large
No bund, no trees to spoil views from houses

Ideas

Trees and plants native to Scotland, butterfly, park, well designed, natural beauty
MUGA Roof should be retractable
Putting green*
Artificial maze (Milton Keynes example)
Low level trampoline*
Children / toddler and adult play area – fenced off against rabbits, sand pit*
Fruit trees and acers to screen campsite from Riverside houses*
Summer Fayre, Fireworks and Games

Comment on this group of responses

Most responses were positive and thoughtful and reinforced preferences. The new elements / ideas not previously included are marked with an *.

Part 3 Synthesis of the answers given to the four questions on the Public Consultation Form dated 23 March 2019

There were 14 responses to this part of the consultation. A single A4 sheet was offered with four questions in four boxes. All answers were freeform. The four questions asked are as follows.

- What did you like about the draft plan?
- What didn't you like about the draft plan?
- Is there something missing from the draft plan which you would like to see?
- Have you any comments to add about how to make best use of the Riverside Field at Foyers?

Here are summaries of the responses to each question in turn.

What did you like about the draft plan?

Responses strongly supported the MUGA and footpaths. There were positive comments about the trim track and changing room. Positive suggestions such as a 'lights out' time for the MUGA lighting and a code box to control use were also made.

What didn't you like about the draft plan?

Responses included the position of trees which could screen the campsite if planted alongside that boundary rather than to the Riverside Houses boundary, a fear of over-development and too much parking being provided which would break the peace of the area. Comments reiterated the fear that allotments could quickly become untidy and have a neglected appearance. It was repeatedly suggested deer and rabbits were a major problem and that any planting should take account of this. Concern was expressed over climbing wall safety and the high costs of upkeep of a natural maze. One participant feared a long period of construction would cause extended disruption.

Is there something missing from the draft plan which you would like to see?

It seems important that the path has many uses – a walk, all abilities path, child / pram friendly, measured circular running track with seats or clusters of seats at intervals. As in previous responses, trees along the caravan park boundary to screen the campsite from the Riverside Houses and the field was wanted. Protection for plants against rodents and ruminants, apples and cherry trees and even a sensory garden or trail were suggested. Social seating, facilities for teenagers and skateboarders were also flagged up as omissions. One respondent suggested the current Highland Council playpark could be utilised as a safe egress for vehicles and the facilities relocated to the field. A garage or lock up could be provided for a community minibus. A single response saw 'no common sense' in the draft plan.

Have you any comments to add about how to make best use of the field?

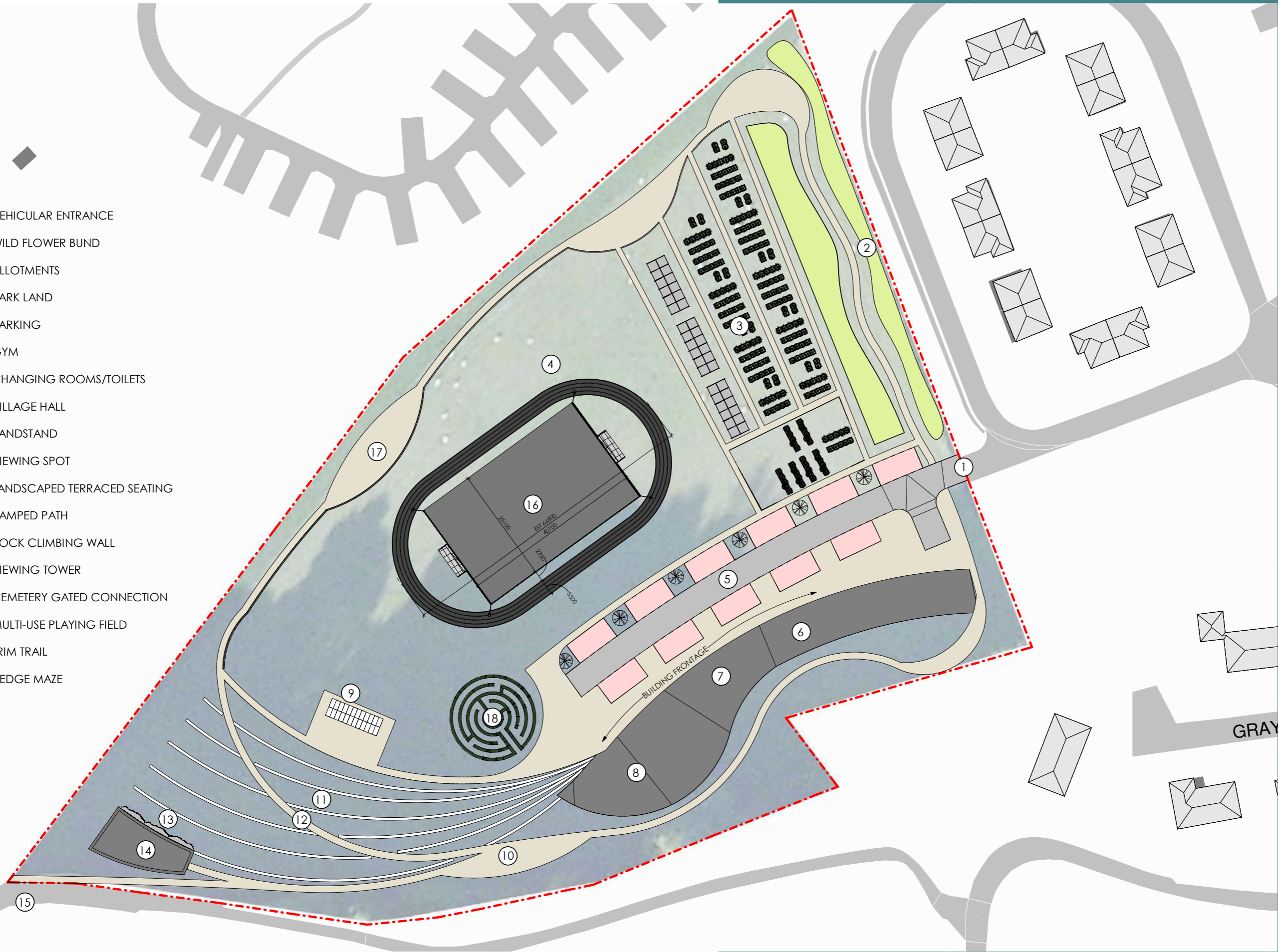
Positive suggestions included the provision of pleasant walks and sporting facilities for young people. A MUGA should not be covered and only a gym, changing room and MUGA had support. Others suggested the gym should be at Whitebridge. Outdoor 'stage' space could be problematic.

Finally, a putting green, voluntary donations from visitors and dog waste bins were suggested.

Following the first consultation Colin Armstrong Architects were asked to propose a masterplan which can be put forward to the community. Below is the subsequent site analysis and masterplan first draft.



1. VEHICULAR ENTRANCE
2. WILD FLOWER BUND
3. ALLOTMENTS
4. PARK LAND
5. PARKING
6. GYM
7. CHANGING ROOMS/TOILETS
8. VILLAGE HALL
9. BANDSTAND
10. VIEWING SPOT
11. LANDSCAPED TERRACED SEATING
12. RAMPED PATH
13. ROCK CLIMBING WALL
14. VIEWING TOWER
15. CEMETERY GATED CONNECTION
16. MULTI-USE PLAYING FIELD
17. TRIM TRAIL
18. HEDGE MAZE



5.0 SECOND DRAFT PROPOSAL



6.01 SECOND DRAFT MASTERPLAN COMMUNITY CONSULTATION DAY

As a result of the comments received from the community, various amendments were discussed and thereafter the Draft Masterplan was revised. All the revisions to Draft Masterplan were agreed by the Trust in December 2019.

The second draft Masterplan Consultation Day was then held at the Stratherrick Public Hall on 22 February 2020. The event ran from 1pm and was organised by the Trust's volunteer directors. The event was advertised by public notices being placed on notice boards throughout the community, by email to Members of the Trust dated 7 February 2020 and by letters of invitation being hand delivered personally by volunteer Trust Directors to every household on Riverside and Gray's Park, Foyers.

A PowerPoint presentation and a talk by the lead architect Michael R. Lawson was again provided during the consultation. Again, there was a good attendance with approximately 35 residents attending. Members of the public were asked to complete a short Consultation Form. The focus of the day was to establish whether the revised Draft Masterplan was agreed by the community and to ensure that they were satisfied that the revised Draft met the needs of the community.

Following this final consultation day, the draft Masterplan and associated documents were placed on the Trust's website together with the consultation questionnaire and members of the public were asked to provide further comments. This opportunity was advertised by way of email to Members.

6.02 Second Draft Masterplan Consultation Responses and Summaries

The second Draft consultation questionnaire took a shorter form and asked 4 simple questions:

1. Are you happy with the Masterplan?
2. Do you agree the design satisfies the wants/needs of our community?
3. Is there anything else/another activity you think should be on the Masterplan?
4. Do you have any other comments?

6.03 Report Summary and Conclusion

In summary, the consultation process has indicated that there is a high degree of public acceptance that some development of the field is both beneficial and possible. Of the elements offered as options there was a clear division between those who wished to see a minimal development and those who were keen that many recreational elements were provided. In addition to what was written by respondents it is important to note that suggestions for the provision of housing, shops, a new school building or swimming pool were all absent from the written comments summarised in this report.

The consultation was open for a long period of time. Local knowledge of the consultation was high and immediate neighbours were stimulated to respond. Directors' volunteer resource, staff time and the use of different media all contributed to this. The consultation days at the Stratherrick Hall and The Wildside Centre and presentations by the architect marked the culmination of the consultation process.

The object of the consultation was to inform the directors of Stratherrick and Foyers Community Trust of which elements mentioned by stakeholders in preliminary discussions and forums had popular appeal and which did not. The survey has shown that the following elements are widely acceptable. The top six elements shown on the ranked list in section 7 of this report enjoy wide support. These elements are Trim Trail, Ramped Path, Park land, Multi-use Playing Field, Vehicular Entrance and Cemetery Gated Connection. Conversely, there is a very negative collective view of elements such as Allotments, a Bandstand or a Village Hall.

The freeform responses underscore the numeric responses and add considerably to the sample. Facilities for young people including toddlers are mentioned, whilst the desire for a MUGA and quality path with screening along the caravan site boundary receive more support. Omissions from the options highlight the desire for dog waste bins, a putting green and a toddler and parent facility. The circular path needs to be of a high quality to allow it to be used for different purposes and diverse user groups.

This report concludes that based on the responses made, the development of the Riverside field in a qualitative, naturalistic fashion with limited quality recreational facilities is preferred. A path, track, MUGA and link through to the cemetery road seem to sit well together and to have the maximum level of support.



7.0 FINAL CONSULTATION

Following development of the masterplan design in conjunction with the local Community Trust a Proposal of Application Notice was submitted to The Highland Council on 28 October 2020. Following this a further Community Consultation event was arranged and undertaken on 7th November 2020. The event was publicised in the local paper and via Community Trust electronic means of website and emails.

The consultation was undertaken online via the Zoom platform and attended by twelve community residents and Trust Directors. The masterplan was presented by Colin Armstrong Architects, covering the varying stages of the development of the masterplan and the final arrangement presented was endorsed by all.

The outcome of from the consultation was that the design should proceed with preparation of the required engineering supporting statements and then lodge a planning application for the masterplan, car park and associated drainage. It was agreed that individual components of the masterplan would comprise subsequent Matter Specified in Condition Applications following achievement of a successful planning consent for the masterplan.

7.0 FINAL CONSULTATION





8.0 DESIGN PRINCIPLES

8.01 The proposed development looks to include the following design principles:

- Quality Development
- Naturalistic fashion
- Recreational facilities including:
 - Path/trim trail
 - MUGA
 - Link through to cemetery
 - Accessible
 - Parking provision
 - Sustainable drainage solutions
 - Local Materials
 - Sustainable energy solutions
- Community integration

8.0 DESIGN PRINCIPLES





9.00 DESIGN CONCEPT

9.01 Site Access

The design utilises existing access from the adjacent housing estate giving access directly onto the proposed communal carparking

9.02 Site Arrangement

The site arrangement has been informed by the topography, surroundings and access. The location of each of the facilities has been carefully positioned to utilise the site's benefits, maximise the land use and avoid unnecessary disturbance to neighbouring properties.

9.03 Sustainable drainage solutions

The proposed design makes use of a SUDS basin to limit the effect of the development on the local area.

9.04 Materials

Materials have been chosen from the surrounding properties to help the design settle into local vernacular.

9.0 DESIGN CONCEPT



1. COMMUNITY HALL WITH GYM AND CHANGING FACILITIES
2. PARKING
3. PUTTING GREEN
4. SECURED CLIMBING WALL
5. TRIM TRAIL
6. OUTDOOR TABLE TENNIS
7. LANDSCAPED BLEACHER SEATING
8. MEGA
9. IN GROUND TRAMPOLINE
10. SENSORY GARDEN
11. GATED ACCESS TO CEMETERY
12. BALL WALL
13. LANDSCAPED TERRACE SEATING
14. RETANQUE COURTS



10 DESIGN SOLUTION



10 DESIGN SOLUTION



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PROJECT
Community Land Foyers

APPLICANT
Stratherrick & Foyers Community Trus

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