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<b>Report To:</b>	<b>Education &amp; Communities Committee</b>	<b>Date:</b>	<b>8 September 2015</b>
<b>Report By:</b>	<b>Head of Education</b>	<b>Report</b>	<b>EDUCOM/69/15/EM</b>
<b>Contact Officer:</b>	<b>Eddie Montgomery</b>	<b>Contact No:</b>	<b>01475 712472</b>
<b>Subject:</b>	<b>Multi-Use Games Area Provision Gourock and Moorfoot Primary Schools</b>		

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## **1.0 PURPOSE**

- 1.1 The purpose of the report is to address the action raised by the March Committee which requested that a report be submitted to the Committee as soon as possible on options for providing MUGA provision for both Gourock and Moorfoot Primary Schools utilising the underspend in the MUGA allocation within the Capital Programme.

## **2.0 SUMMARY**

- 2.1 The existing grass pitches at Gourock and Moorfoot Primary Schools are in reasonable condition but, as in common with other grass surfaces in the area, their availability is limited by weather conditions and there are localised ground condition issues at both sites. A feasibility study has been taken forward to consider the provision of a polymeric multi-use games area at both sites addressing any local issues. The schemes have been scoped with a view to funding the projects from the current projected underspend within the MUGA budget in the Education Capital programme and as such the proposals have been scaled to align with the available funding.

## **3.0 RECOMMENDATIONS**

- 3.1 That the Committee note the report on the possible options for MUGA provision at Gourock and Moorfoot Primary Schools.
- 3.2 That, subject to Committee approval of the proposals, it be agreed to progress the projects utilising the underspend in the MUGA allocation within the Capital Programme.

Ruth Binks  
Head of Education

## 4.0 BACKGROUND

- 4.1 Following representations received from the Gourrock Primary School Parent Council, the Policy and Resources Committee requested a report be submitted to the Education & Communities Committee on the use and condition of the grass pitch used by Gourrock Primary School. A report was submitted to the January 2015 Committee. It was noted within that report that similar representations had been received from the Parent Council of Moorfoot Primary School in respect of upgrading the grass pitch at that facility.
- 4.2 The Education Capital Programme includes an allowance of £1.1M to address provision of small multi-use games areas (MUGAs) within eight Primary Schools to be taken forward during 2014-2016. This funding was made available from reserves following the 2014 budget setting process. Funding in the amount of £830K was also made available from the 2013 budget setting exercise to address the upgrading of three existing blaes pitches within operational Primary Schools. Both of these allocations prioritised schools where there was either no outdoor sports provision or where that provision was/is of a type/condition that requires upgrading. Schools with existing MUGAs or grass pitches were not considered for replacement / upgrading.
- 4.3 To date, two of the blaes pitch replacements have been completed (Whinhill & St Ninian's) with the Kilmacolm blaes pitch replacement to be taken forward with the main refurbishment contract commencing in October this year. The provision of eight small primary school MUGAs has been progressed with seven at an advanced stage or complete (at date of this report) and one (at St John's PS) programmed to complete by the end of September with the main refurbishment project. There is currently a £400K projected underspend on the budget allowance which was verbally reported to the March 2015 Committee and confirmed within the May Committee Capital Programme progress report.

## 5.0 GOUROCK PRIMARY SCHOOL GRASS PITCH

- 5.1 Detailed information on the use and condition of the grass pitch at Gourrock Primary School was provided in the report to the January 2015 Committee. A summary has been provided in the sections below including site specific issues considered as part of the feasibility study.
- 5.2 **Public Use:** The pitch is not locked and is available to the general public. No letting data or recorded use out of hours is available, however from the groups consulted there is general knowledge of the type of community use the pitch receives which includes football training, informal cricket and general play.

**Feasibility Proposals:** The pitch would remain open to the public. The proposed MUGA has a type 4 polymeric surface with overall dimensions of 38 x 32. A section of grass approx. 18m x 45m would remain at the public park end which could be used for the activities noted above such as cricket etc. that would not be able to be played on a polymeric or other all-weather artificial surface.

- 5.3 **Condition:** The Council's Environmental Services section were consulted in respect of the condition of the pitch and the current maintenance arrangements. The grass pitch is mown on the same frequency as the rest of the park which is routinely once per fortnight but with an extra cut during periods of lush growth in spring or late summer. The pitch is not routinely marked/lined out as a formal pitch. It has been added to the Grounds Maintenance verti-draining programme and received its first maintenance visit in early September 2014 with a further visit in February 2015 (verti-draining visit

frequency = twice per annum).

**Feasibility Proposals:** The upgrading would include improved drainage of the area of the new polymeric MUGA and also improved drainage in the remaining grassed area. The grass could receive the same maintenance as noted above with the all-weather surface only requiring an annual weedkill and power wash. It should be noted that a typical polymeric surface lifecycle profile indicates re-texturing is required after circa 6 years and resurfacing after circa 15 years.

- 5.4 **Availability:** Both the School and the Active Schools Co-ordinator made reference to the limitations of the pitch in respect of weather. This is not uncommon and affects all grass pitches/facilities. Environmental Services confirmed that the availability of other nearby facilities such as those at Battery Park and George Road are also affected due to the adverse weather experienced over recent months and years. The topography of the park contributes to the drainage issues. The pitch has been formed at a lower level to allow access from Davidson Drive, with the parkland along the length sloping up towards Broomberry Drive. Water shedding from the park onto the pitch contributes to the time taken for water to drain through the surface and limits the availability particularly in the winter months.

**Feasibility Proposals:** The proposed polymeric all-weather surface is best suited for general play, football, netball, basketball etc.. It is not suitable for uses such as rugby, golf, cricket and orienteering etc.. The retention of an area of grass, although limited by weather, allows other activities to take place that would not be possible on the artificial surface. The proposals therefore cater for most activities between the two areas with the ability to utilise the surfaces more regularly in most weathers through drainage improvements and provision of all-weather surfacing.

- 5.5 **Legal Position:** The land forming the park and on which the school and pitch have been constructed is under a Feu contract from Major Duncan Darroch recorded 1913. The deed states that the land is a gift in memory of his father to the inhabitants of Gourock to be used as a "Public Park and Pleasure and Recreation Grounds". There are title restrictions stating that it is to be used in all time coming for those purposes. This falls into the category of Common Good and is the reason why the existing pitch is left unlocked and available for general community use. A waiver was obtained circa 1998 to allow construction of the school.

**Feasibility Proposals:** The alterations would be restricted to within the existing fenced boundary to avoid the need for further legal agreements or impact on existing rights of way within the park. Public access would also be maintained i.e. left open for general use. The development of the existing grass pitch to form a Multi-Use Games Area (MUGA) would not conflict in terms of the Common Good title restrictions as the use would still be deemed as park/recreation ground, however as previously noted, the facility would have to be left open to the general public and would not be able to be used to generate income through Inverclyde Leisure in the same way that other school pitches/MUGAs are.

- 5.6 **Future SEMP Project:** The School Estate Management Plan currently includes an allowance for a gym/assembly hall extension to Gourock Primary School with associated changing and toilets. This allocation is currently in future years however any alteration/development has to consider the anticipated future plans for the school.

**Feasibility Proposals:** The pitch is being developed within the fenced boundary of the existing grass pitch and will not impact future plans. An initial feasibility study of the future extension to the school indicates that there is limited scope to extend due to the unique shape of the existing building. It is possible however to extend out from the existing exit to the South West although this will involve diversion of an existing methane gas pipe which runs through the school site from the adjacent quarry. It is not

yet clear as to whether or not a further waiver of the existing title conditions will be required for the hall extension as this will be dependent on the final proposed location and any potential impact on parkland currently out with the fenced school boundary.

- 5.7 **Neighbours/Consultation:** Initial discussions with the Planning Service indicate that a Planning application would not be required as the value of the works is below the development threshold and there are no floodlights proposed as part of the works. Given the proximity of housing on Davidson Drive floodlighting would likely have been the main area of concern. Discussions are also on-going with Roads Design / Scottish Water with respect to the proposed drainage solution. Initial indications were that there were no culverts in the area necessitating that the drainage will have to be connected to the Scottish Water system and attenuation provided. Further investigation however indicates that there may be a culvert in the vicinity and detailed survey work will be undertaken over the next week or so via the Council's drainage term contractor to establish this. The proposals meantime allow for attenuation although it should be noted that should this be the only option then there remains a risk that additional work may be required pending formal response/approval by Scottish Water.

## 6.0 MOORFOOT PRIMARY SCHOOL GRASS PITCH

- 6.1 The grass pitch at Moorfoot Primary School is predominantly used by the school with no community use noted. The sections below cover site specific issues considered as part of the feasibility study.
- 6.2 **Community Use:** The pitch is within the grounds of Moorfoot Primary School and although is technically available for booking via the Inverclyde Leisure booking facility, is currently not used by the community. This is likely to be attributed to a number of reasons; the condition of the pitch is reasonable but due to its location can become waterlogged with water shedding from the hills behind the school contributing to poor availability. There are also a number of other community and school pitches in the vicinity (George Road (3G & Grass), St Columba's (3G), Battery Park (3G & Grass), and most recently St Ninian's (Polymeric)).

**Feasibility Proposals:** The proposed MUGA has a type 4 polymeric surface with overall dimensions of 45 x 32. Areas of grass would remain at both ends which could be used for other activities that would not be able to be played on a polymeric or other all-weather artificial surface. The new facility could be made available for the community through the Inverclyde Leisure booking facility although use would be limited to summer months as no floodlighting is proposed as part of the works.

- 6.3 **Condition:** The Council's Environmental Services section carry out routine maintenance of the pitch which is mown on the same frequency as the rest of the school grounds. The pitch is not routinely marked/lined out as a formal pitch. It has been added to the Grounds Maintenance verti-draining programme and received its first maintenance visit in early September 2014 with a further visit in February 2015 (verti-draining visit frequency = twice per annum). Drainage improvement works were taken forward in summer 2013 which improved the condition of the pitch however poor ground conditions and the water shedding onto the pitch from the hills behind the school continue to impact overall condition and availability.

**Feasibility Proposals:** The upgrading would include improved drainage of the area of the new polymeric MUGA and also raising of the pitch area to minimise the impact of water from the hill behind. The grass would receive the same maintenance as noted above with the all-weather surface only requiring an annual weedkill and power wash. As outlined in 5.3 above it should be noted that a typical polymeric surface lifecycle profile indicates re-texturing is required after circa 6 years and resurfacing after circa 15 years.

6.4 **Availability:** The pitch has the same limitations in respect of use in inclement weather as outlined in 5.4 above. The topography of the school grounds and the inherently poor ground conditions contribute to the drainage issues as previously noted. Water shedding from the hills onto and through the pitch contributes to the time taken for water to drain through the surface and limits the availability particularly in the winter months.

**Feasibility Proposals:** The proposed polymeric all-weather surface would be constructed by raising the overall levels via stone infill below to assist with the current issues. The proposals therefore would provide a facility which could be utilised more regularly in most weathers through drainage improvements and provision of all-weather surfacing.

6.5 **Future SEMP Project:** The School Estate Management Plan currently includes an allowance for comprehensive refurbishment of Moorfoot Primary School. This allocation is currently in future years however any alteration/development will require to consider the anticipated future plans for the school.

**Feasibility Proposals:** The pitch is being developed within the area of the existing grass pitch which was to be retained and will not impact future plans.

6.6 **Neighbours/Consultation:** Initial discussions with the Planning Service indicate that a Planning application would not be required as the value of the works is below the development threshold and there are no floodlights proposed as part of the works. The site is fairly isolated with neighbouring property along the Northern boundary only. There are long standing issues with drainage in the area which has on occasion impacted some of the neighbouring property. It is likely that the neighbours would welcome any development that would improve the drainage in the area. The Moorfoot site benefits from the ability to take surface water into an adjacent water course and as such no issues in respect of drainage proposal approvals are anticipated.

## 7.0 IMPLICATIONS

### Finance

7.1 The Education & Communities Capital programme includes an allowance of £1.1M for 8 primary school multi-use games areas and £830K for upgrading of 3 blaes pitches within primary schools. There is no current allowance for works to Gourrock Primary School grass pitch or Moorfoot Primary School grass pitch.

7.2 The May 2015 Capital Programme Progress report confirmed that circa £410K remained unallocated from the original £1.1m budget. The updated projection accounting for latest projections on the committed contracts is £400K.

7.3 The feasibility studies for the MUGA provision at Gourrock and Moorfoot Primary Schools were scaled to suit the available budget. The tables below provides an indication of the capital implications of taking forward projects to upgrade the existing grass pitches at Gourrock and Moorfoot Primary Schools (subject to taking forward a competitive tendering exercise). It should be noted that there will be an impact on the existing SEMP lifecycle budget in future years with the additional of a further two all-weather facilities.

## Estimated Cost of Gourock PS & Moorfoot PS MUGAs

Cost Centre	Budget Heading	Budget Year	Proposed Spend this Report	Virement From	Other Comments
Capital	Non SEMP MUGA	2015/17	£200K	n/a	Estimate
Capital	Non SEMP MUGA	2015/17	£200K	n/a	Estimate
			£400K		

### Legal

7.4 There are no legal issues.

### Human Resources

7.5 There are no human resources issues.

### Equalities

7.6 There are no equalities issues.

### Repopulation

7.7 There are no repopulation issues.

## 8.0 CONSULTATION

8.1 There are no direct staffing implications in respect of the report and as such the Head of Organisational Development, HR and Communications has not been consulted.

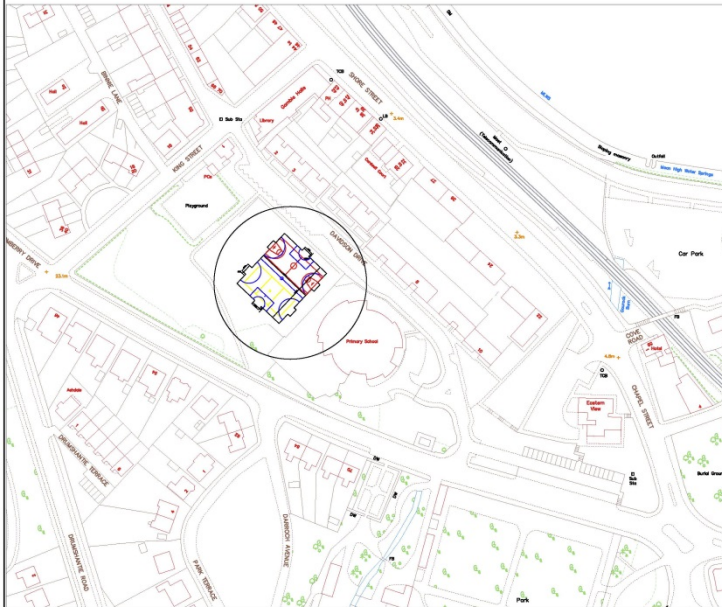
8.2 The Head of Legal and Property Services was consulted in respect of the potential legal issues in connection with any proposed further development of Darroch Park.

## 9.0 LIST OF BACKGROUND PAPERS

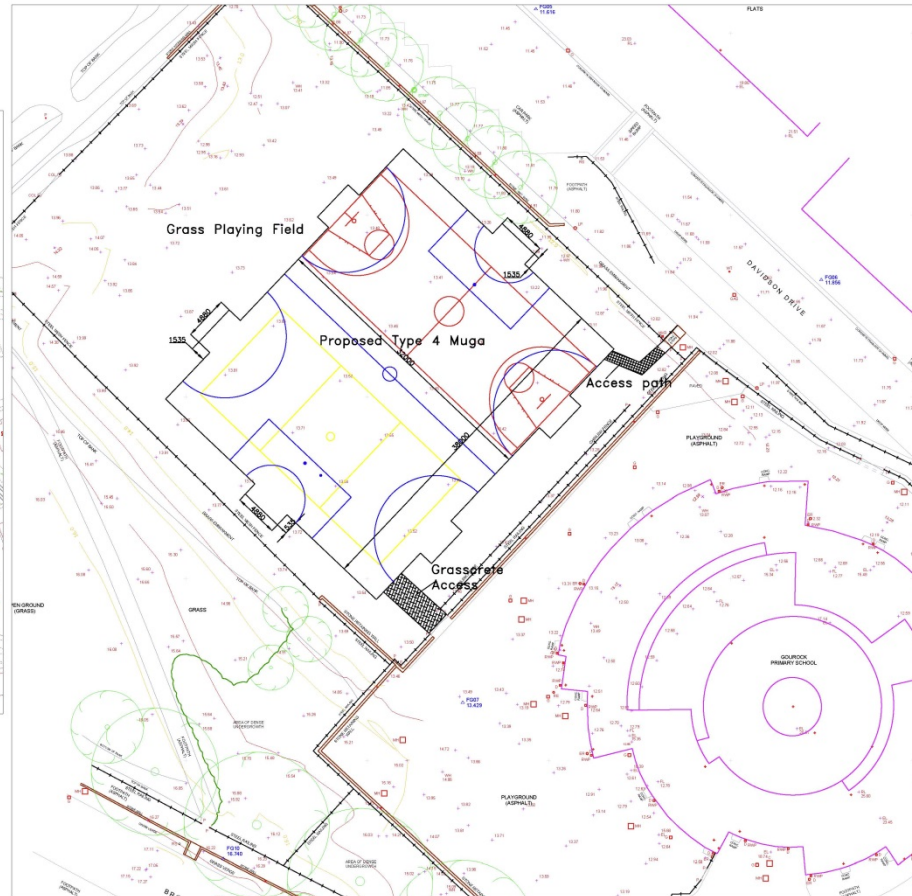
9.1 MUGA feasibility studies and budget cost estimates (Technical Services) – July 2015  
Pitch & MUGA Lifecycle Analysis – July/August 2014



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Multi Use Games  
 Location Plan  
 1:1250



Multi Use Games  
 Layout Plan  
 1:250

**NOTES**

The Multi Use Games Area will be fully fenced and the surface will be a Type 4 MUGA polymeric.

REV	Description	Date

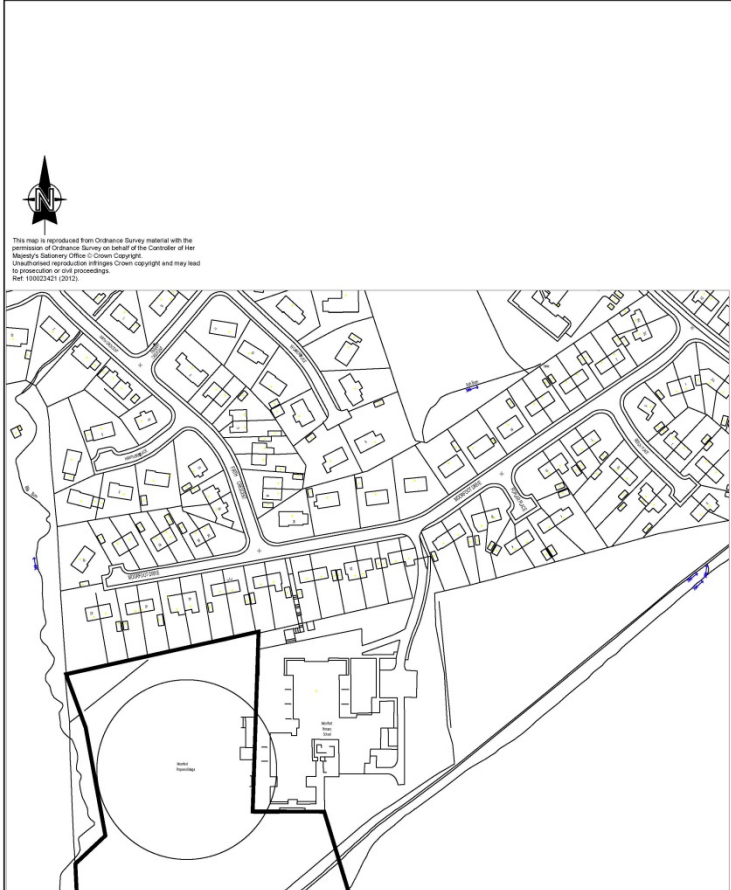
**Inverclyde council**  
 REGENERATION AND ENVIRONMENT  
 Grand Malton  
 Head of Legal & Property Services  
 1 Aberfoyle Road,  
 Gourock,  
 PA11 2EB

JOB  
**Gourock PS  
 Davidson Drive  
 Gourock**

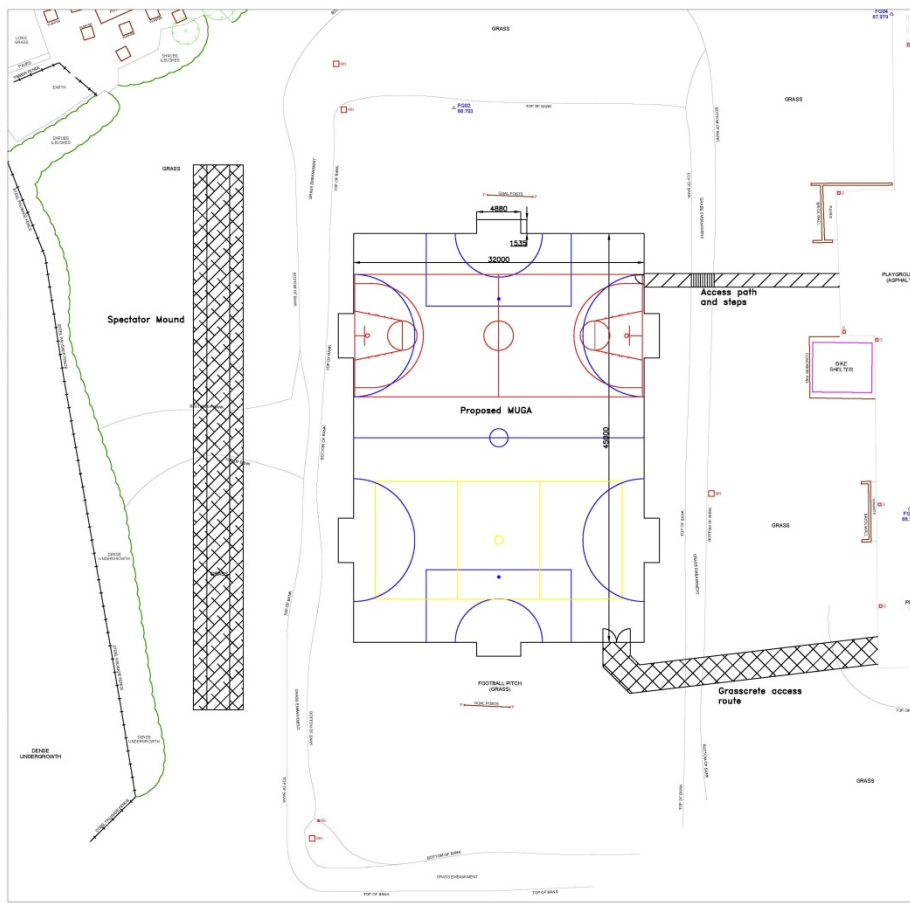
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DWG. TITLE  
**MUGA Location  
 /Layout**

Drawn TJ	Scale As Shown
Checked	
Date 25/06/15	



Multi Use Games  
Location Plan  
1:1250



Multi Use Games  
Layout Plan  
1:250

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**Inverclyde council**  
REGENERATION AND ENVIRONMENT  
Gerald Malone  
Head of Legal & Property Services

1 Aberclyde Road,  
Greenside,  
PA15 3QB

JOB  
**Moorfoot PS  
Moorfoot Drive  
Gourock**

DWG. No.	REV.
15 030 700	

DWG. TITLE  
**MUGA Location  
/Layout**

Drawn TJ	Scale As Shown
Checked	
Date 05/06/15	