

Argyll and Bute Council
Development and Infrastructure Services

Delegated or Committee Planning Application Report and Report of handling as required by Schedule 2 of the Town and Country Planning (Development Management Procedure) (Scotland) Regulations 2008 relative to applications for Planning Permission or Planning Permission in Principle

Reference No: 11/02485/PP

Planning Hierarchy: Local Application

Applicant: Argyll and Bute Council

Proposal: Alterations to annexe building, janitors house, alterations and extension to school to form council office space, a cafe, gallery, community rooms and a marriage/conference suite along with associated car parking and landscaped grounds

Site Address: Community Centre, East Clyde Street, Helensburgh

DECISION ROUTE

(i) Local Government Scotland Act 1973

(A) THE APPLICATION

(i) Development Requiring Express Planning Permission

- Alterations to annexe building, janitors house, alterations and extension to school to form council office space, a cafe, gallery, community rooms and a marriage/conference suite along with associated car parking on site and at Grant Street and landscaped grounds and additional sea defences.

(ii) Other specified operations

- Connection to public water supply;
 - Connection to public sewerage system
-

(B) RECOMMENDATION:

It is recommended that planning permission be approved subject to the conditions listed in the report.

(C) HISTORY:

10/01330/LIB – Rot works and temporary roof covering. Approved 7/10/10.

11/02486/LIB - Alterations to annexe building, janitors house, alterations and extension to school to form council office space, a cafe, gallery, community rooms and a

marriage/conference suite along with internal alterations to all buildings and associated car parking and landscaped grounds. No decision to date.

(D) CONSULTATIONS:

Roads Helensburgh and Lomond (dated 2/2/12): No objections subject to conditions.

Scottish Water (dated 11/1/12): No objections.

Flood Risk Assessor (dated 8/3/12): No objections subject to conditions.

Environmental Health - Helensburgh and Lomond (dated 18/1/12): No objection in principle, however the cafe will require to comply with food hygiene legislation.

West of Scotland Archaeology Service (dated 12/1/12): No substantive archaeological issue raised.

Scottish Environmental Protection Agency (letters dated 3/2/12, 8/3/12) : Object to the application on the grounds of flood risk, however, it is expected that this will be withdrawn following the submission of the additional details requested.

Helensburgh Community Council (dated 6/2/12): HCC objects to the proposed design of the extension to the former school which they consider is a bland design which would not add value to the new civic space or town centre. They also consider that the proposed trees by the water's edge should be removed as they would block the view.

Scottish Rights Of Way and Access Society: No response to date.

Scottish Natural Heritage (dated 31/1/12): No objections subject to conditions. If it can be demonstrated that bats are not currently using the building, then no new EPS licence will be required.

Core Paths (dated 3/2/12 and 7/2/12): No objections. Email of 7/2/12 removes the requirement for a ramp from the site to the beach on the grounds that given the amount of debris on the beach, it is not considered feasible in order to launch small dinghies or canoes. It is also considered that a ramp may create problems of its own as it could become slippery for all users. The applicant will need to consider this position in terms of the Disability Discrimination Act.

(E) PUBLICITY:

ADVERT TYPE: Regulation 20 Advert Local Application
EXPIRY DATE: 03.02.2012

(F) REPRESENTATIONS:

Two letters of support has been received from:

Susan Taylor, 5 Millerslea Gardens, South King Street, Helensburgh (dated 23/1/12)

Berit Vogt, 33 East Argyle Street, Helensburgh G84 7EL (dated 8/2/12)

Four letters of objection have been received from:

Mr Brian McGeachy 73 East Clyde Street Helensburgh (dated 9/1/12)

Mr Simon Fraser SAS Motor Engineers 77 East Clyde Street Helensburgh G84 7PF
(dated 9/1/12)

Margaret Hamill, 58 Maitland Street, Helensburgh (dated 20/1/12)

Richard Trail, 29A Colquhoun Street, Helensburgh (dated 7/2/12)

(i) Summary of issues raised

Object to the cheap way that the roof has been felted.

Comment: The current felt roof is only a temporary cover to keep the building wind and watertight. The current proposal shows that the roof of the historic building will be slated.

The car park on Grant Street will cause further congestion on what is currently a congested cul de sac with a pub.

Comment: The Roads Network Manager is satisfied with the traffic management measures proposed.

The plans show Maitland Court private parking included in the proposal.

Comment: While the parking provision on Grant Street is included within the red line of the site, no change is proposed to these parking spaces and they do not form part of the Council's provision to serve the proposed development.

The renovation of the old building should be made a priority in order to avoid any further deterioration of the building in stormy weather.

Comment: This point is noted.

The original Boys and Girls iron railings should be retained and reused in the open space.

Comment: The applicant has agreed to incorporate these railings into the landscaping and therefore a condition is proposed if the application is approved.

The proposed extension to the school is an undistinguished dreary box extension which does not project a positive vision for the future of Helensburgh.

Comment: See my assessment below.

The design of the new extension has achieved a reasonable compromise between the old and the new. The Clyde Street School does not have an easy facade to grapple with when trying to fit in an extension. The simplicity of the design makes sense both aesthetically and practically. The Community Council's objection is strongly disagreed with.

Comment: This point is noted.

(G) SUPPORTING INFORMATION

Has the application been the subject of:

- (i) **Environmental Statement:** No
- (ii) **An appropriate assessment under the Conservation (Natural Habitats) Regulations 1994:** No

- (iii) **A design or design/access statement:** Yes

This details the approach taken in devising the final design of the building. It is contended that the proposed extension is of a contemporary design which is subordinate and sympathetic to the character of the Listed Building.

- (iv) **A report on the impact of the proposed development eg. Retail impact, transport impact, noise impact, flood risk, drainage impact etc:** Yes

Noise Impact Assessment
Transport Assessment
Planning Support Document
BREEAM Pre-assessment
MEP Sustainability
Ecological Impact Assessment
Coastal Defence Options Review
Flood Risk Assessment
Lighting Statement
Drainage Impact Assessment
Landscape Design Statement
Ground Investigation Report
Animation and Walkthrough DVD

(H) PLANNING OBLIGATIONS

Is a Section 75 agreement required: No

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- (I) **Has a Direction been issued by Scottish Ministers in terms of Regulation 30, 31 or 32:** No
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(J) Section 25 of the Act; Development Plan and any other material considerations over and above those listed above which have been taken into account in the assessment of the application

(i) List of all Development Plan Policy considerations taken into account in assessment of the application.

Argyll and Bute Structure Plan 2002

STRAT DC 1 – Development within the Settlements

STRAT DC 7 – Nature Conservation and Development Control

STRAT DC 9 – Historic Environment and Development Control

STRAT DC 10 – Flooding and Land Erosion

Argyll and Bute Local Plan 2009

LP ENV 1 – Impact on the General Environment

LP ENV 2 – Impact on Biodiversity

LP ENV 6 – Impact on Habitats and Species

LP ENV 13a – Development Impact on Listed Buildings

LP ENV 18 – Protection and Enhancement of Buildings

LP ENV 19 – Development Setting, Layout and Design

LP CST 1 – Coastal Development on the Developed Coast

LP CST 4 – Development Impact on the Natural Foreshore

LP BUS 1 – Business and Industry Proposals in Existing Settlements

LP SERV 2 – Incorporation of Natural Features/Sustainable Drainage Systems

LP SERV 3 – Drainage Impact Assessment (DIA)

LP SERV 5 – Waste Related Development and Waste Management Sites

LP SERV 8 – Flooding and Land Erosion – The Risk Framework for Development

LP TRAN 1 – Public Access and Rights of Way

LP TRAN 2 – Development and Public Transport Accessibility

LP TRAN 3 – Special Needs Access Provision

LP TRAN 4 – New and Existing Public Roads and Private Access Regimes

LP TRAN 6 – Vehicle Parking Provision

LP REC 1 – Sport, Leisure and Recreation

LP REC 2 – Safeguarding of Recreational Land and Important Open Spaces

LP COM 1 – Community Facility Development

Appendix A – Sustainable Siting and Design Principles

Appendix C – Access and Parking Standards

(ii) List of all other material planning considerations taken into account in the assessment of the application, having due regard to Annex A of Circular 4/2009.

Argyll & Bute Sustainable Design Guidance (2006)

Letters of representation.

(K) Is the proposal a Schedule 2 Development not requiring an Environmental Impact Assessment: Yes. The coastal defence element of the proposal falls within Schedule 2 of the EIA Regulations. A screening opinion was issued on 19th January 2012 advising that the proposed development would not require an Environmental Impact Assessment.

(L) Has the application been the subject of statutory pre-application consultation (PAC): No

(M) Has a sustainability check list been submitted: Yes

A sustainability statement has been submitted in support of this application. The heating demand will be met by using air source heat pumps, which are considered to be an affordable renewable technology. The south facing new build provides an opportunity to harness the openness to utilise a natural ventilation strategy. Having natural ventilation design provides the following advantages:

- Lower running costs and lower energy consumption;
- Decreased capital costs;
- Decreased maintenance costs;
- Reduced transport energy associated with fans;
- Fewer possible problems with plant noise.

A Building Management System will provide suitable control of the plant in the building and lighting will be intelligently controlled to respond to demand.

(N) Does the Council have an interest in the site: Yes

(O) Requirement for a hearing (PAN41 or other): Not required

(P) Assessment and summary of determining issues and material considerations

Planning permission is sought for the renovation of and the extension to the listed former Clyde Street School to provide offices for the Council. The proposal would also incorporate both indoor and outdoor space for community purposes and a cafe is also proposed within the central area of the original building. Parking would be provided on site with additional spaces located remotely at Grant Street. In order to protect the development from coastal flooding, enhanced sea defences are also proposed. An area of publicly accessible open space will be formed on the Firth side of the development.

The proposed extension to the former school building would be attached to the original building by means of a glazed link with the main body of the building being oak clad on the street and side elevation and glazed onto the open space and Clyde beyond. It is considered that this contemporary extension would be subordinate and sympathetic to the listed building. This would accord with design policies and guidance and those related to listed buildings as contained within the development plan. The site would also provide a valuable area of open space consistent with the requirements of Policy LP REC 2.

A full analysis of all policies relating to this development is contained within Appendix A of this report. It is concluded that the proposal would comply fully with the development plan and that there are no adverse material considerations which would indicate

otherwise. Taking account of the above, it is recommended that planning permission be approved.

(Q) Is the proposal consistent with the Development Plan: Yes

(R) Reasons why planning permission or a Planning Permission in Principle should be granted

The proposal would represent a sympathetic and complementary design to the existing Listed Building which is currently on the Listed Building at risk register. An area of open space commensurate to the size of the former playing field would be retained and a high quality landscaped area would be created affording public access to both this area and the shore below. All elements of this proposal would accord with the development plan and there are no adverse material considerations. Therefore in accordance with section 25 of the Town and Country Planning Act planning permission should be granted.

(S) Reasoned justification for a departure to the provisions of the Development Plan

Not applicable

(T) Need for notification to Scottish Ministers or Historic Scotland: No required

Author of Report: Sandra Davies

Date: 02/03/12

Reviewing Officer: Richard Kerr

Date: 02/03/12

Angus Gilmour
Head of Planning and Regulatory Services

CONDITIONS AND REASONS RELATIVE TO APPLICATION REF. NO.11/02485/PP

1. The development shall be implemented in accordance with the details specified on the application form dated 9/12/11 and the approved drawing reference numbers P0-AL(0-)001A, P1-AL(0-)001, P1-AL(0-)002, P1-AL(0-) 003, P3-AL(0-)001, P4-AL(0-)001, P0-AL(--)001A, P0-AL(--)002B, P0-AL(--) 003, P0-AL (--)004, P0-AE(--) 001A, P2-AS(--) 001, P2-AS(--)002, P1-AS(--)001, P0-AS(--)001, P3-AL(--)001, P4-AL(--)001, L001D, L002A, P1-AD(--)001, P1-S(--)001, P3/4-S(--)001 unless the prior written approval of the planning authority is obtained for other materials/finishes/for an amendment to the approved details under Section 64 of the Town and Country Planning (Scotland) Act 1997.

Reason: For the purpose of clarity, to ensure that the development is implemented in accordance with the approved details.

2. No works shall commence on site until the detailed design of the vehicular access and improvements on Grant Street including the street lighting are submitted to and approved in writing by the Planning Authority in consultation with the Roads Network Manager. The development shall be implemented in accordance with the duly approved details unless any variation thereof is agree in advance in writing.

Reason: In the interests of road safety.

3. The car parking and signalised junction as detailed on the approved plans shall be fully operational prior to the development hereby approved being brought into use.

Reason: In the interests of road safety.

4. Prior to the commencement of development, full details of the proposed sea defences shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the planning authority. Thereafter these sea defences shall be constructed in accordance with these details unless otherwise agreed in writing with the planning authority and these shall be fully completed prior to the development hereby approved being brought into use.

Reason: In order to ensure that the site is adequately protected against coastal flooding.

5. A repeat bat survey shall be undertaken prior to the commencement of development. If bats are found prior to commencement or during the course of works, all works must stop and Scottish Natural Heritage should be contacted for advice on how to proceed, prior to any further work taking place.

Reason: In the interests of protecting this European Protected Species

6. That a minimum of 20 bat slates and access points must be incorporated into the roof space of the property and made available to roosting bats no later than 1 December 2013. The completed provision of these features must be signed-off, in writing, by a licensed bat worker.

Reason: To compensate for the loss of any roosts when carrying out the roof repair works under EPS license (Ref: DEROG 063/2011)

7. Development shall not begin until samples of materials to be used (on external surfaces of the buildings) and/or in construction of hard standings/walls/fences) have been submitted to and approved in writing by the Planning Authority. Development shall thereafter be carried out using the approved materials or such alternatives as may be agreed in writing, with the Planning Authority.

Reason: In order to integrate the development into its surroundings.

8. All landscaping shall be in accordance with drawing nos. L001D and L002A. The landscaping scheme shall be completed during the first planting season following the first occupation of the development. Any trees or shrubs which fail to become established, which die, are removed or become seriously diseased within 10 years of the implementation of the scheme shall be replaced in the following planting season by equivalent size and species of trees or shrubs as those originally required to be planted.

Reason: In the interests of visual amenity and to ensure that adequate measures are put in place to protect the landscaping and planting in the long term.

9. That the existing “boys” and “girls” railings shall be retained and reused within the proposed open space. Full details including the proposed removal, storage, treatment and final location of these railings shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Planning Authority prior to the commencement of development.

Reason: In the interests of retaining a portion of the railings which is of historic interest and will function as a reminder of the past use of the building whilst also providing and attractive feature in the open space.

10. That prior to the commencement of development a full drainage assessment shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the planning authority. This should identify:

- Overland flow paths on site due to culvert blockages or extreme event runoff;
- Design calculations for the surface water drainage proposals. The level of flood management required is for the 1 in 200 year event with an allowance for climate change. If this level is not contained on site, a flow path diagram should be provided showing overland routes;
- Details and proposals for any existing drainage infrastructure on the site;
- A method statement for surface water containment during construction;
- Design / calculations for SUDS covering levels and attenuation;
- The proposed maintenance regime for any SUDS;
- Details / calculations of the permeability of the bound gravel area including details of how quickly this will drain after the 1 in 200 overtopping inundation.

Thereafter the proposal will be implemented in accordance with these details unless otherwise agreed in writing with the Planning Authority.

Reason: In order to ensure that there is an effective drainage system in place for the site.

11. At least two months prior to the commencement of development, a site specific environmental management plan (EMP) shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Planning Authority in consultation with SEPA (and other agencies such as SNH as appropriate). Thereafter, all work shall be carried out in accordance with the approved plan unless otherwise agreed with the Planning Authority in consultation with SEPA.

Reason: In order to control the pollution of air, land and water.

12. Prior to the commencement of any works, a site waste management plan shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Planning Authority in consultation with SEPA. Thereafter, all work shall be carried out in accordance with the approved plan unless otherwise agreed with the Planning Authority in consultation with SEPA.

Reason: To ensure that waste on the site is managed in a sustainable manner.

NOTES TO APPLICANT

1. **The length of this planning permission:** This planning permission will last only for three years from the date of this decision notice, unless the development has been started within that period. [See section 58(1) of the Town and Country Planning (Scotland) Act 1997 (as amended).]
2. In order to comply with Section 27A(1) of the Town and Country Planning (Scotland) Act 1997, prior to works commencing on site it is the responsibility of the developer to complete and submit the attached 'Notice of Initiation of Development' to the Planning Authority specifying the date on which the development will start.
3. In order to comply with Section 27B(1) of the Town and Country Planning (Scotland) Act 1997 it is the responsibility of the developer to submit the attached 'Notice of Completion' to the Planning Authority specifying the date upon which the development was completed.
3. The proposal hereby approved also requires Listed Building Consent and no works should commence until written confirmation has been received confirming that Listed Building Consent has been granted.
4. A Road Construction Consent will be required for the works located within the existing road boundary.

APPENDIX A – RELATIVE TO APPLICATION NUMBER: 11/02485/PP

PLANNING LAND USE AND POLICY ASSESSMENT

A. Settlement Strategy

The application site is located within the settlement boundary of Helensburgh within an edge of town centre location as defined by the adopted Local Plan. Part of the western portion of the site is covered by an Open Space Protection Area (OSPA). Policy STRAT DC1 of the Argyll and Bute Structure Plan gives support for large scale development within the main towns. Policy LP BUS 1 - Business and Industry Proposals in the Existing Settlements notes that the generally preferred areas for such uses would be business and industry allocation and exiting uses. Where a Class 4 use is concerned there is no requirement for a sequential test to be carried out and the reuse of Brownfield land is supported by Structure Plan Policy STRAT S1. Furthermore, this site was considered during the Public Local Inquiry into the current adopted Local Plan. Here it was accepted that there are functions of the Council which require a town centre site and it was recommended that the listed building on the application site be used for such a purpose.

As a significant part of the development would also operate as a community facility Policy LP COM 1 also requires consideration. The proposal would accord fully with this policy being located within a main settlement in a location which is easily accessible close to Helensburgh Town Centre.

The site also lies within a wider area covered by Area for Action (AFA) 3/1 – Helensburgh Waterfront. This has the strategic aims of regeneration and enhancement. The proposal would satisfy both of these aims in terms of both the regeneration of a Listed Building at risk and the wider regeneration of a vacant including the creation of a high quality open space.

B. Location, Nature and Design of Proposed Development

The proposal is located on the south side of East Clyde Street in an edge of town centre location. The site is bounded to the south by the Firth of Clyde and to the east and west by residential development. The proposal also includes an area across the road off Grant Street which would provide additional parking. The main focus of the site is the category B listed building which was formerly known as Clyde Street School and designed by A. N. Paterson. It is currently in a very poor condition, although temporary works have been undertaken to make the buildings wind and watertight. It is also included within the Listed Buildings at Risk register.

The proposal also involves the demolition of two buildings, namely, the former scout hall and Seabank Cottage. Both of these buildings are in the adjacent site to the west of the school site and not within the curtilage of listed building and are therefore not listed themselves. The scout building is a modern structure with little architectural merit while Seabank Cottage is a more traditional building with stone walls and a slate roof. Both are, however, in an extremely dilapidated condition. Planning permission is not required for their removal and where the proposed demolition forms part of a wider redevelopment, an application for Prior Notification for demolition is not required.

The school building, annexe building and former janitor's house would all be renovated and a large contemporary extension would be added to the school building. The main function of the site would be as Class 4 offices to accommodate 139 staff, however, there would also be a significant community use, including a cafe and community room

in the central hall, marriage suite, gallery space and the conversion of the annexe into two community rooms.

The design statement notes that the general approach had been to design the extension to be subordinate to the main listed building, rather than being a pastiche addition, to compliment the structure and appearance of the building. The building would be attached by a lower height glazed link which would also provide the main access point to the building. The main portion of the extension would have a zinc monopitch roof and would be clad on the streetscape elevation in sustainable oak timber. On the south elevation the extension would be glazed and would have views out to the landscaped area and Firth of Clyde beyond.

It is considered that although this is a large extension of a contemporary design, it balances well with the existing sandstone listed building and the proposed palette of materials complements the sandstone of the former school. The landscaping will also contribute to the setting of the building. A new publicly accessible landscaped open space is proposed along the southern aspect between the shore and the building. This will consist of a series of grass berms interspersed with gravel paving with approximately 20 trees planted across the site. These trees will be a mix of *acer*, *sorbus*, ornamental pear and hawthorn. A number of wall seats will also be incorporated across this area. Further shrub planting is proposed on the eastern side of the building around a community garden / external marriage space and also at the front of the old school building. The car parking area to the front and side of the new extension will be landscaped by means of further specimen tree planting and shrub planting. Helensburgh Community Council have suggested that a number of the trees should be removed from the landscaping plan in order to maintain the view of the Clyde, however, it is considered that these trees will add visual interest to the open space, and they are not proposed in sufficient numbers to significantly block the view.

Taking account of the above, it is considered that the proposal would accord with policy LP ENV 19 and Appendix A of the adopted Local Plan and the Council's Sustainable Design Guide.

C. Natural Environment

An Ecological Impact Assessment has been submitted in support of this application. This has concluded that none of the habitats within the application site have intrinsic ecological value or are rare, vulnerable or priority habitats listed in the UK or Argyll and Bute Local Biodiversity Action Plan (LBAP). As such the loss of these habitats is not considered to be significant.

With regard to European Protected Species no suitable resting sites or habitat for otters have been found on the site and the River Clyde has no foraging areas for water vole.

With regard to bats, the report considers that there is suitable habitat for roosting, foraging and commuting bats within the application site, although no confirmed roosts were located during the surveys. However, during the proposed refurbishment of the main school building access will be made available for bats to use the building. The new roof will include raised slates to compensate for the loss of potential roost sites situated under loose slates. A minimum of 20 such tiles will be installed. The new roof will include the provision of access points within the sarking to provide bats with access to the loft space within.

The proposal would therefore accord with Structure Plan policy STRAT DC 7 and Policies LP ENV2 and LP ENV 6 of the adopted Local Plan.

D. Built Environment

Structure Plan policy STRAT DC 9 – Historic Environment and Development Control requires the promotion of protection, conservation, enhancement and positive management of the historic environment. In a similar vein Local Plan Policy LP ENV 13 (a) requires that any development affecting a listed building or its setting preserves the building or its setting and any features of architectural or historic interest that it possesses. It is considered that this does provide a sympathetic solution for this building and that the proposed addition would not detract from the building's external character. An application for Listed Building consent has also been submitted in tandem with this application. As the Council has an interest in the proposal, legislation requires that this be determined by Historic Scotland. The application for Listed Building consent will also assess the acceptability of the internal alterations to the Listed Building.

Policy LP ENV 18 would also apply to this development. This policy is supportive of the enhancement and re-use of existing buildings subject to safeguarding residential amenity, the provision of adequate access and parking and alterations and extensions respecting the appearance, scale and character of the original building

It is therefore considered that the proposal complies with policies STRAT DC 9 and LP ENV 13(a) and LP ENV 18.

E. Coastal Protection and Flooding

The proposal also includes further coastal protection measures along the southern edge of the site. A Coastal Defence Options report has been submitted and this identifies the preferred option as being for the construction of a reinforced concrete wall and a rock armour revetment. The wall height would be 5.1 metres with a 4 metre rock armour crest width. Policy LP CST 1 relates to coastal development on the developed coast. It is considered that the enhanced sea wall would accord with this policy in that such a development is coastal specific and the appearance would be in keeping with other coastal protection measure in the urban area. Policy LP CST 4 is concerned with development impact on the natural foreshore. The development would accord with this policy in that the enhance sea defences are required for a specific operational purpose and there is no effective alternative location. Access from the site to the foreshore would be maintained and the appearance of the sea wall would be in keeping with its urban location and other sea walls in the area.

The Flood Risk Assessment submitted in support of the application states that *"A raised sea wall with a crest at 5.1 AOD would have a 1.1 metre freeboard under present day conditions and 0.5 metres under full future climate change conditions. Therefore, the only form of further risk allowance required would be a freeboard of floor levels above the surrounding ground of some 0.3 metres or so to cater for any overtopping or locally trapped surface water."*

The SEPA indicative flood map indicates that the site lies within the 1:200 year flood envelope. Policy LP SERV 8 is only supportive of commercial development in such areas where flood prevention measures to the appropriate standard already exist or are under construction. In this case the existing sea wall can be altered in order to provide adequate protection, in which case policy LP SERV 8 can be fully satisfied. In addition, Structure Plan policy STRAT DC10 allows development on land which would have a significant risk of flooding subject to suitable mitigation. Again, subject to the flood mitigation measures identified, this policy would be satisfied.

F. Impact on Open Space Protection Area

Part of the site is covered by an Open Space Protection Area. This area was designated following the Public Local Inquiry on the current adopted Local Plan. The Reporter considered that there was merit in protecting the existing disused playing field on the site and allowing views of the seashore across the site. In response to this, the Council designated an OSPA not to protect the former playing field for sport/recreation but for the incorporation of an area of open space similar to the size of the playing field as an amenity open space. The key objectives of the Reporters' recommendations were not to retain a playing pitch but to safeguard an area of open space of sufficient scale to afford enjoyment of the area, to provide public access, in particular to the seashore area, to permit sea views and to assist with regeneration and enhancement opportunities as set out in the Structure Plan.

Policy LP REC 2 seeks to safeguard OSPAs and notes that these areas shall not be built on except where the retention or enhancement of the facilities can best be achieved by the redevelopment of part of the site which will not compromise its sporting potential and its amenity value, and there would be no loss of amenity and alternative provision of equal community benefit. An area of open space commensurate to the size of the former playing field would be retained, and a high quality landscaped area would be created affording public access to both this area and the shore below. It is therefore considered that Policy LP REC 2 has been satisfied.

The site currently provides pedestrian access to the foreshore and this access would be maintained by means of two stepped accesses at either end of the sea wall which would accord with policy LP TRAN 1.

Policy LP REC 1 gives support to new or improved recreation facilities provided that they are easily accessible and located close to where people live. The proposed open space associated with this development would accord with this policy.

G. Road Network, Parking and Associated Transport Matters.

Policy LP TRAN 2 requires development of this scale to take account of public transport accessibility as well as providing suitable routes for pedestrians and cyclists. The supporting Transport Assessment has undertaken a measurement of accessibility to and from the proposed site. It is noted that the site is located within 5 minutes of Helensburgh Town Centre and high quality walking links are available to the site. In addition, a recent survey of staff has indicated that approximately 12% will travel on foot. With regard to cycling, there are no formal cycling facilities available with cyclists generally using the road network, however the topography of the town is generally flat with many low trafficked residential roads. The majority of houses in Helensburgh are located within a 10 minute cycle of the site. Being close to the town centre the site is also convenient for the railway station and bus link. A Green Transport Plan has also been presented in support of this application and this details a series of initiatives proposed to encourage more sustainable transport. The proposal would therefore accord with the provisions of policy LP TRAN 2.

In terms of special need access provision, the proposal would comply fully with Policy LP TRAN 3 by providing safe pedestrian, disabled and vehicular access as well as suitable cycle parking and turning for service vehicles.

The proposed development would also be in accordance with Policy LP TRAN 4 as it would be served by a public road. In addition the footway width would be increased in part along the frontage of the development in order to facilitate pedestrian access.

The introduction of a new access from the proposed development site onto the A 814 East Clyde Street along with the increased traffic generated by the ancillary car park located within Grant Street will generate additional vehicle and pedestrian numbers. In the interest of road safety, the proposal to introduce a signalised controlled junction is a reasonable solution and should be in place prior to building being brought into use.

With regard to parking provision 108 car parking spaces are proposed which includes 5 disabled car parking spaces. Sixty (60) spaces are to be provided within the site to the west of the main building and 48 of these spaces would be formed in an ancillary car park located on Grant Street which is within an acceptable walking distance from the main buildings. The combined car parking spaces would accord with the provisions of Policy LP TRAN 6. The proposal would also accord with Appendix C of the Local Plan (Access and Parking Standards).

H. Infrastructure

A Drainage Statement has been submitted in support of the application. This confirms that the surface water drainage system will be designed in accordance with best practice guidelines. The statement also confirms that a Sustainable Urban Drainage System will be incorporated into the scheme. Whilst SEPA have noted that there is adequate room within the site for a SUDS scheme, it has been requested that a condition be placed on planning permission requiring further details of the SUDS scheme be submitted prior to the commencement of development. The proposal would therefore accord with Local Plan policy LP SERV 2 which encourages the incorporation of SUDS into development and policy LP SERV 3 which requires Drainage Impact Assessments to be submitted in support of planning applications above a certain threshold.

Policy LP SERV 5 – Waste Related Development and Waste Management in Developments would also apply to this proposal. This requires that developments make effective provision for managing waste within the development. An area for refuse storage and collection has been identified on the north western corner of the site adjacent to the proposed generator. I am of the view that this satisfies policy LP SERV 5, however, SEPA has requested an additional condition requiring the submission of a site waste management plan prior to the commencement of works.