



# Mull Campus

## Integrated Impact Assessment Report

On behalf of **Hub North Scotland Ltd**  
**(in partnership with Argyll & Bute Council)**

Project Ref: 332612224 | Rev: FINAL | Date: February 2025

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- Appendix A Glossary
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## Executive Summary

This report entitled 'Mull Campus: Integrated Impact Assessment Report' has been prepared by Stantec UK Ltd to demonstrate how proposals for the proposed Mull Campus Development show due regard to the socio-economic, equalities, child rights and island communities duties under the Equality Act 2010, the Fairer Scotland Duty, the Children and Young People (Scotland) Act 2014, the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (Incorporation) (Scotland) Act 2024, and the Islands (Scotland) Act 2018.

The purpose of this report is to support Hub North Scotland Ltd, in partnership with Argyll & Bute Council in exercising its public functions to check and review that equalities implications have been considered within the proposals, including socio-economic inequalities, impacts on island communities and children's rights and wellbeing. The process has benefitted from consultation to inform the impact assessments with the inclusion of local and contextual knowledge.

As a public authority, Argyll & Bute Council must consider equality issues when making certain types of decisions. In addition to considering the impact the Council's activities might have on people with one or more of the nine protected characteristics as defined under the Equality Act 2010, there is also a requirement for the Council to take into account socio-economic disadvantage, in accordance with the Fairer Scotland Duty, the impact to island communities in accordance with the Islands (Scotland) Act 2018 and the impact to children's rights and wellbeing under the Children and Young People (Scotland) Act 2014.

This report provides an assessment of potential impacts relating to the following domains:

- Economic impacts (including investment stimulus, existing local housing, educational attainment, loss of earnings, school staff costs of commuting, and vehicle carbon costs).
- Island communities (including demographic challenges, economic prosperity, unique transport challenges, infrastructure, natural environment, unique social challenges, unique health challenges and the use of Gaelic).
- Protected characteristics (including age, disability, ethnicity, sex, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, religion or belief, and sexual orientation).
- Children's rights and wellbeing (including Children's Rights and the wellbeing of children and young people).
- Fairer Scotland Duty (including socio-economic disadvantage and inequality of outcome).

# 1 Introduction

## 1.1 Background

- 1.1.1 Stantec UK Ltd has been commissioned by Hub North Scotland Ltd, in partnership with Argyll & Bute Council (the 'Client'), to provide consultancy support in developing a number of impact assessments for a range of potential site options for the proposed Mull Campus Development (the 'Project').
- 1.1.2 Public authorities in Scotland have a statutory duty to consider and address various societal needs and rights when developing proposals, policies and decisions. This is to ensure equity, fairness and the promotion of positive outcomes across diverse groups. The impact assessments include, an Economic Impact Assessment, an Island Communities Impact Assessment (ICIA), an Equality Impact Assessment (EqIA), a Children's Rights and Wellbeing Impact Assessment (CRWIA) in accordance with the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC), and a Fairer Scotland Duty (FSD) assessment.

## 1.2 Report Structure

- 1.2.1 The report is structured as follows:

**Table 1.1: Report Structure**

<b>Section</b>	<b>Description</b>
<b>Section 1</b>	Introduction to the assessment and the Project
<b>Section 2</b>	Description of the Project
<b>Section 3</b>	Overview of consultation and engagement
<b>Section 4</b>	Baseline characteristics relevant to the overarching assessment domains
<b>Section 5</b>	Economic Impact Assessment
<b>Section 6</b>	Island Communities Impact Assessment (ICIA)
<b>Section 7</b>	Children's Rights and Wellbeing Impact Assessment (CRWIA)
<b>Section 8</b>	Equality Impact Assessment (EqIA)
<b>Section 9</b>	Fairer Scotland Duty (FSD) Assessment
<b>Section 10</b>	Summary

## 1.3 Overview of the Assessment Process

- 1.3.1 The objectives of this report are to integrate the consideration of relevant equality issues and associated impacts into the Project to demonstrate compliance with the Public Sector Equality Duty (PSED), the Fairer Scotland Duty (FSD), the Islands (Scotland) Act 2018 and the Children and Young People (Scotland) Act 2014.
- 1.3.2 The purpose of the impact assessments at this stage is to examine the impact of locating the new campus either in Tobermory or more centrally on Mull.



## 1.4 Integrated Impact Assessment Approach

1.4.1 This section provides an overview of the approach for each impact assessment.

### **Economic Impact Assessment**

1.4.2 The economic impact assessment identifies areas of economic benefit where the value is expected to differ depending upon the choice of site location. These include effects on local investment; effects on existing housing stock; impacts on educational attainment; parent/guardian loss of earnings; staff commuting costs and the cost of transport carbon emissions. The assessment was undertaken based on HM Treasury Green Book economic appraisal guidance, using the Isle of Mull economy as an impact geography.

### **Island Communities Impact Assessment**

1.4.3 The Islands (Scotland) Act 2018 provides a legal basis for greater decision making at a local level within Scottish Islands and seeks to increase economic prosperity for island communities.

1.4.4 The guide framing questions are provided in **Section 6.2**.

### **Equality Impact Assessment**

1.4.5 Section 149 of the Equality Act 2010 sets out a Public Sector Equality Duty (PSED). This requires public authorities to have due regard to the need to eliminate discrimination, harassment, victimisation, advance equality of opportunity, and foster good relations between those with a protected characteristic and those without. The duty covers the following protected characteristics: age, disability, gender reassignment, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex and sexual orientation. The public sector equality duty also covers marriage and civil partnerships, with regard to eliminating unlawful discrimination in employment.

1.4.6 The guide framing questions are provided in **Section 7.2**.

### **Children's Rights and Wellbeing Impact Assessment**

1.4.7 The Children and Young People (Scotland) Act 2014 requires public bodies to consider whether existing and emerging legislation, policy and guidance have an impact on children and young people and to assess what further action is required to ensure compliance with the UNCRC. CRWIAs are one of the general measures of implementation under the Convention. It recommends that all levels of government complete a CRWIA as part of their policy development.

1.4.8 The guide framing questions are provided in **Section 8.2**.

### **Fairer Scotland Duty Assessment**

1.4.9 The FSD places a legal responsibility on certain public bodies in Scotland to actively consider how they can reduce inequalities of outcome caused by socio-economic disadvantage when making strategic decisions or developing policy. This differs from the PSED which considers only reducing inequalities of opportunity. The Duty seeks to tackle socio-economic disadvantage and reduce the inequalities associated with being disadvantaged. It is closely related to issues of poverty which may affect outcomes across health, housing, education and training and employment prospects.

1.4.10 The guide framing questions are provided in **Section 9.2**.



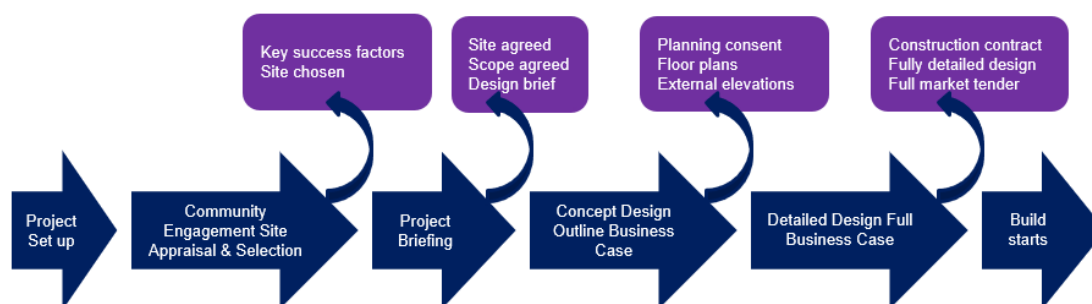
existing pupil capacity numbers and community facilities at the current Tobermory 2-18 School on a like for like basis. Argyll & Bute Council will fund all other costs and will fund the entire construction costs up front.

- 2.2.3 In April 2024, Argyll & Bute Council agreed to progress the business case for the Project and commence community engagement and site selection activities, and in December 2024 Councillors reaffirmed that the Project is to proceed as a single site campus.
- 2.2.4 The projected school roll for the new campus, at the time of submitting the bid for LEIP funding in 2022, was 31 early learning and childcare (ELC), 90 primary and 177 secondary school pupils.
- 2.2.5 This IIA Report has been prepared to inform a site selection exercise for the Mull Campus Project. Following a call for sites in August 2024, four sites were shortlisted for further consideration and assessment by technical experts and the wider Mull Campus Project Team. Due to commercial sensitivities, at the time of writing the IIA, details about the four site locations were not made available to the public.
- 2.2.6 The IIA was commissioned on the basis of providing a high-level assessment of either a Tobermory or central site location. However, in response to some assessment criteria, a more detailed assessment has been provided to consider findings from the Mull Campus Transport Review (Systra, 2025) which assessed the following four specific site options:
  - Site 1 – Tobermory (existing school site);
  - Site 2 – Craignure;
  - Site 3 – Garmony; and
  - Site 4 – Tobermory South.
- 2.2.7 A final decision on the site is due to be made at the next meeting of the Full Council, currently scheduled for the end of February 2025.

## 2.3 Mull Campus Summary Process

- 2.3.1 The Project brief, concept design and outline business case activities will take place during 2025, aiming for Outline Business Case approval by the end of 2025. Argyll & Bute Council will then review the updated case and confirm whether they are content to move to Full Business Case development.
- 2.3.2 The Full Business Case, including more detailed proposals for the campus and costs will be considered again by councillors in late 2026 and approval would allow the campus to move to construction phase. These timescales are estimates and will be reviewed as the Project moves forward, with the community being kept updated of any significant changes.

Figure 2.2: Project Summary



Source: (Argyll & Bute Council, 2025)

## 3 Consultation / Engagement

### 3.1 Introduction

3.1.1 Argyll & Bute Council have an engagement strategy in place for the multiphases of the Project. They have set up a community sounding board and pupil voice group. The Community Sounding Board is formed of community representatives who are impacted by or have an interest in the Project, including groups such as Community Councils, Parent Councils, Community Development Trusts, constituted community groups, education staff, and student voices. The purpose of the group is to advise the Argyll & Bute Council Project Team (the 'Project Team') on how best to engage with the community in relation to the Project, share Project updates and information with the group(s) that they represent and feedback the views of the group on their behalf.

3.1.2 Various phases of consultation and engagement have occurred and are detailed below.

#### **Pre-Engagement**

3.1.3 In 2022, a series of pre-engagement events were held in the local community prior to submitting the bid to the Scottish Government for LEIP funding (Argyll & Bute Council, 2024a). These were held at Tobermory 2-18 School on 11<sup>th</sup> August, and at Bunessan Primary School on 7<sup>th</sup> September. There were also a series of pupil engagements led by members of the central education team in each of the primary schools, Tobermory High School and pupils who travel to Oban High School.

3.1.4 There were over 200 written comments and responses provided through the face to face sessions and the online platforms, with a majority confirming support for the Project.

3.1.5 Comments covered a variety of areas, which are categorised:

- Accessibility (13 comments);
  - Buildings (4 comments);
  - Community (57 comments);
  - Curriculum (45 comments);
  - Hostel (16 comments);
  - Locations (131 comments);
  - Nursery/Pre-5 Unit (1 comment);
  - Outdoor Facilities (35 comments); and
  - Staffing (21 comments).

#### **Community Engagement**

3.1.6 A series of drop in public engagement sessions were held between 17<sup>th</sup>-25<sup>th</sup> September 2024, as part of ongoing engagement with the communities of Mull and Iona. Sessions were held in the following locations: Caignure Hall; Tobermory Scout Hall; Tobermory High School; Salen Church Hall; Salen Primary School; Ulva Primary School; Dervaig Village Hall; Lochdonhead Primary School; Iona Village Hall; and Bunessan Community Hall.

3.1.7 Every session was attended by representatives from the Project Team, as well as an engagement consultant. Attendees were given the opportunity to review information on

boards, talk to the Project Team, and feedback their comments anonymously. Comments could also be returned up until 4<sup>th</sup> October 2024 via email or an online survey.

3.1.8 The purpose of this engagement was to understand what communities and individuals thought were the important factors that should be considered when assessing the potential sites for the campus. Feedback from these sessions was taken into consideration when finalising the site assessment criteria and the relative weightings of each.

3.1.9 A total of 352 respondents contributed comments through various channels: in person (205), online (115), by email (18) and by paper response (14). The majority of respondents were from Tobermory (134), followed by Bunessan and Ross (65) and Craignure (36)<sup>2</sup>. The majority of respondents were aged 36-45 (77).

3.1.10 Key themes and issues that were raised most frequently across the majority of locations included:

- Comments about the **location of the whole campus, primary provision, and / or high school**. Many people felt that primary and / or ELC provision must be kept in Tobermory, meaning that a split site with a more centralised high school was the most commonly requested solution to providing an equitable and accessible campus. Some queried whether a hostel on Mull was a possibility.
- **Concerns about the increase in travel for children** if children are to be transported to a location outside of Tobermory. The key issues raised were:
  - Poor infrastructure such as road conditions, winter weather, lack of buses, access for families without cars;
  - Wellbeing impact on children spending long portions of their day travelling, especially younger children. Emphasis on length of journey, not distance, due to the nature of roads on Mull;
  - Environmental impact of increased travel; and
  - Impact on children who are neurodiverse or have other reasons to avoid long travel such as experiencing travel sickness or bullying.
- **Keeping families together** and avoiding children having to leave home through the week to board. There were additional themes around families having the right to choose whether to board or stay at home, and comments about the rights of children to education and a home life. However, those on Iona strongly requested the right to retain access to funded places at Oban High School, regardless of where the campus is located on Mull.
- The importance of an **equitable solution that provides access for as many children as possible**. These comments tended to be rooted in a desire for fairness and equity and were often combined with comments about keeping families together and creating more social cohesion between the communities in the north and south.
- The campus should be **easily accessible from good transport networks**, with plenty of parking and safe pick up and drop off areas. Active travel is also important to some, with a desire for children to be able to safely walk and cycle to school.
- Access to **good facilities both on campus and close by**. This includes space for sports facilities and other outdoor activities such as learning and socialising, space for community facilities such as a library, shops and other activities somewhere near the

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<sup>2</sup> To note: Location of 'in person' attendees is based on the session they attended rather than a stated home address, therefore numbers are approximate. Otherwise, those filling out the online survey chose the location closest to their home, and those emailing were asked to provide an approximate location. Where necessary, these have been assigned to a closest location from the list below for the purposes of analysis.

school so children can socialise. This includes equitable access to after school clubs whereby children do not have to rush away to catch ferries or travel long bus journeys.

- The campus should be able to provide a **range of subject areas including vocational subjects**, either by space provision and / or by making use of teachers who have easy access from Oban.
- The power of a campus to create **community stability and sustainability**, whether by attracting and retaining people to live and work in a location, or by supporting the shops and cafes nearby. For some, this was about a specific location – for example, supporting the stability of the Ross of Mull or avoiding depopulation of the north. For others, it was about the sustainability of Mull and islands as a whole.

3.1.11 More detail on community engagement undertaken in September 2024 can be found within the Mull Campus Community Engagement Report (Ryder, 2024).

### **School Engagement – Staff and Pupils**

3.1.12 As part of the community engagement, pupils and staff across Mull and Iona were visited by an Argyll & Bute Education Officer between 17<sup>th</sup> and 30<sup>th</sup> September 2024. The schools comprised: Tobermory High School; Tobermory Primary School; Tobermory ELC; Tobermory staff; Salen Primary School; Ulva Primary School; Lochdonhead Primary School; Dervaig Primary School; Bunessan Primary School; Iona Primary School; and Oban High School Hostel.

3.1.13 Sessions took the form of informal workshops, during which attendees were encouraged to talk about what they think is important for a new campus and record their ideas on post it notes.

3.1.14 It should be noted that representatives and community members in Iona requested for the island to be removed from the scope of the Mull Campus Project on the basis that they would like to continue with their existing defined catchment area which includes attendance at Iona Primary School and secondary school attendance and boarding at Oban High School. This decision was agreed unanimously at the Argyll & Bute Council Special Meeting on 20 December 2024.

#### *ELC and Primary Schools*

3.1.15 Children from Tobermory ELC shared their ideas. The most common request for these children was to have an obstacle course and space for a planting box.

3.1.16 The children from the primary schools on Mull were particularly keen on making the most of outside space, with a football pitch being the most mentioned request (20 mentions) and 12 others requesting basketball. A further 18 requested good play space outside. 16 would like access to a swimming pool.

#### *Iona Primary School*

3.1.17 Iona Primary School was reported separately, as the children tended to focus more on the location of the school, and the prospect of going to Oban High School. Reasons for wanting to attend Oban High School generally echoed the views of the adults during the public engagement:

- Independence and learning to cope away from home;
- Avoiding long or disruptive travel every day; and
- Ability to attend after school clubs.

#### *Tobermory High School*

- 3.1.18 Pupils mentioned that they would like to see the following new features within a new campus: a bigger gym hall, provision of social seating, assembly hall, sheltered spaces to eat lunch outside, more or bigger classrooms, music practice rooms and better sports equipment.
- 3.1.19 This group was also asked about their general perceptions or thoughts about location of the campus. Several pupils shared their perceptions of Oban High School, the importance of family life, and a desire to see a central site location. The general consensus of these participants was that they do not think boarding at Oban is a positive experience
- 3.1.20 Three members of staff raised that their main concern regarded the impact of travel, both on the wellbeing of young children and on the roads infrastructure, if the campus was located outside of Tobermory.

#### *Oban High School Hostel*

- 3.1.21 Seventeen pupils who board at Oban High School hostel shared their thoughts on a new campus. Several talked about their own experiences and perceptions of staying at Oban, with mixed opinions on whether the campus could be an alternative option to boarding at Oban.
- Nine commented that there is no point in a central site location for the high school as it will be equally difficult to get to (or would still need a hostel);
  - Six said that they would stay at Oban High School regardless
  - Three said they would consider attending high school on Mull if it was easier to travel to.
  - Others agreed with both points, say that families should have a choice and there should therefore be an option that is fairer for all families.

#### **Bunessan Parent Council Questionnaire**

- 3.1.22 Following the engagement events and information released by the Mull Campus Team at the end of 2024, the Bunessan Parent Council independently decided to reassess the views and opinions of the parents of nursery and primary aged children locally. Bunessan Parent Council gave permission for their findings to be included in the impact assessment process, these are summarised below.
- 3.1.23 In November 2024, the Bunessan Parent Council distributed an up-to-date questionnaire and received 23 individual responses (representing 19 family groups), which suggests that almost every family in the area with children at primary school age or below gave their opinion. Key statistics from the questionnaire include:
- 100% of parents support and realise the importance of a new high school;
  - 95% of parents would send their children to a central school daily;
  - Only 5% of parents would send their children to school in Tobermory daily;
  - 57% of parents expressed that there needs to be funded placement retention for Oban High School, including the hostel; and
  - 50% of parents would seriously consider leaving the Ross of Mull if a central school is not built.
- 3.1.24 Overall, the questionnaire highlighted the importance of a central site location for the participants. The questionnaire noted that the participants felt that a Tobermory location would result in separation between the rest of the island and may contribute to depopulation levels of young people and families.



- 3.1.25 Bunessan Parent Council gave permission for the findings of the survey to inform the ICIA detailed below in **Section 6**.

## 3.2 Impact Assessment Engagement Activities

- 3.2.1 The Mull Campus Team (Argyll & Bute Council) wrote to chairs of community organisations represented on the Community Sounding Board on 20<sup>th</sup> December 2024 to invite representatives from each organisation to co-ordinate a response to the ICIA and CRWIA process.
- 3.2.2 An engagement proforma was developed to collect high-level feedback from representatives in relation to the assessment criteria. The engagement proforma's introduction and information sheets were supplied in English and Scottish Gaelic with the option provided to request the full document in Gaelic, if preferred.
- 3.2.3 The engagement proforma's were issued by the Mull Campus Team on 6<sup>th</sup> January 2025 and a virtual briefing session was held on 9<sup>th</sup> January 2025 via Microsoft Teams. During the briefing sessions community organisations were invited to provide feedback to inform the site selection process for the Project.
- 3.2.4 During the briefing session and following this, community organisations collectively issued a formal response detailing that they would not participate in the impact assessment engagement process at this stage. Concerns were raised around the timing of the impact assessments, the length of the engagement window and the level of detail available of the proposed sites for selection. A joint response was issued by a collective of community organisations stating that they would not participate in the impact assessment process. As a result, only a small number of feedback has been received as part of the impact assessment engagement exercise. The impact assessment is predominantly informed by the engagement sessions held by the Mull Campus Team in September 2024, school engagement sessions and the Pupil Forum Impact Assessment Engagement exercise (summarised below).
- 3.2.5 Responses providing input to the Impact Assessment process were issued by:
- Salen Primary Parent Council;
  - Mull Primary Schools Head Teachers (including Bunessan, Dervaig, Lochdonhead, Salen and Ulva);
  - South West Mull and Iona Development (SWID); and
  - Bunessan Parent Council – Pupil and community testimonies provided in respect of the Mull Campus Project, and findings from a parent council survey (conducted November 2024) discussed above in **paragraphs 3.1.22-24**.

### Pupil Forum Engagement

- 3.2.6 Pupil representatives who are part of the Mull Campus Pupil Working Group were invited to participate in the CRWIA process on 15<sup>th</sup> January 2025. An online session was led by a member of the Mull Campus team with schools including Bunessan Primary School, Lochdonhead Primary School, Ulva Primary School, Tobermory Primary School and Tobermory High School.
- 3.2.7 An engagement proforma was developed for the Pupil Working Group, focussing on three questions to inform the CRWIA. Pupil representatives were asked to provide feedback and gather the views of their peers and classmates. A number of responses were received from pupils in Tobermory Primary School, Tobermory High School, Bunessan Primary School and Ulva Primary School. Anonymised findings have been incorporated into the CRWIA section below.

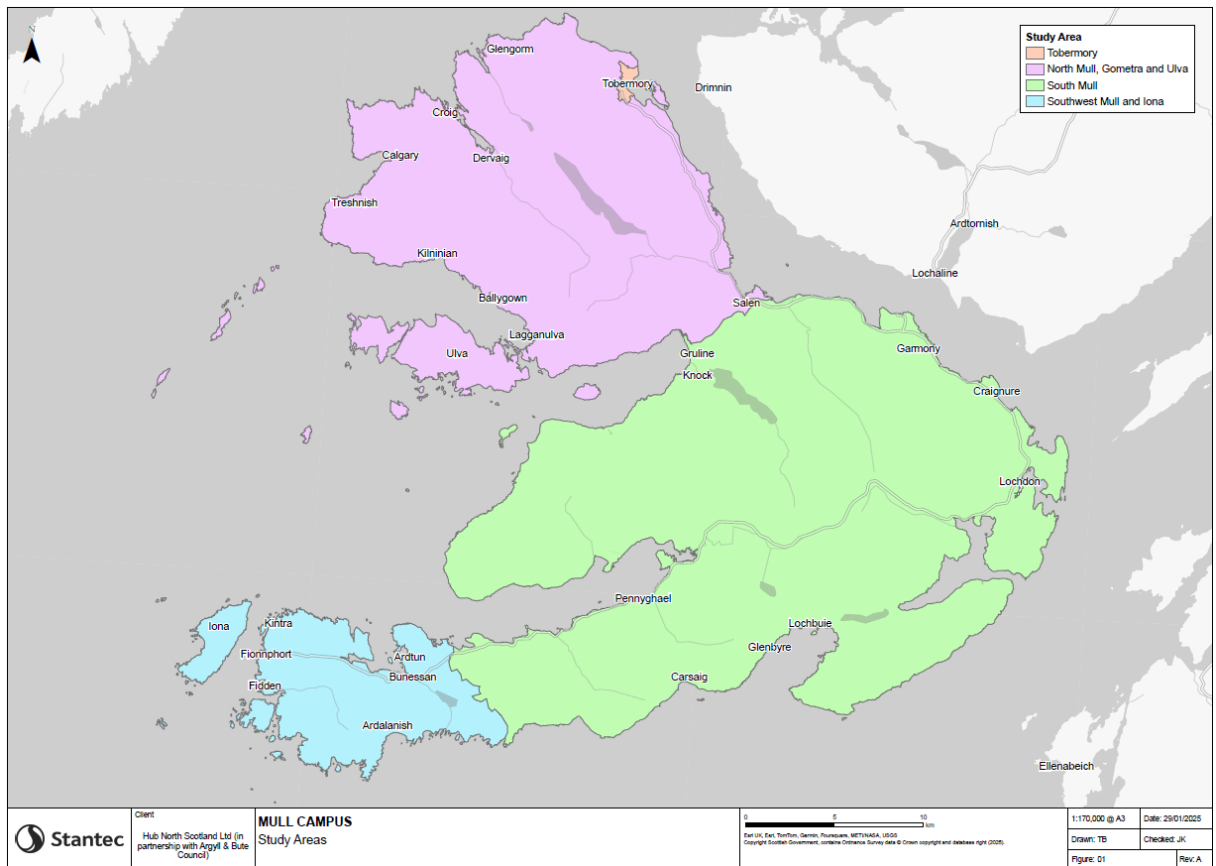


## 4 Baseline Assessment

### 4.1 Introduction

- 4.1.1 This socio-economic baseline provides a comprehensive overview of key demographic, educational, and social trends across the Isle of Mull, Gometra, Ulva and Iona, and comparisons with Argyll & Bute as well as Scotland. By exploring characteristics such as age, disability, and ethnicity, the baseline underscores Mull’s distinctive demographic makeup while providing comparative insights with regional and national averages.
- 4.1.2 Four ‘study areas’ have been adopted within the baseline assessment: Tobermory; North Mull, Gometra and Ulva; South Mull; and Southwest Mull and Iona:
- **Tobermory:** The data zone that Tobermory sits in is ‘S01007286’.
  - **North Mull, Gometra and Ulva:** The data zone ‘S01007285’.
  - **South Mull:** The data zone ‘S01007288’.
  - **Southwest Mull and Iona:** The data zone ‘S01007287’.
- 4.1.3 Mull and the Islands (all data zones listed above), Argyll & Bute (local authority level) and Scotland (national level) have been used for comparison (where available).
- 4.1.4 The four study areas are shown in **Figure 4.1**.

Figure 4.1: Four Study Areas



Source: Stantec

- 4.1.5 Where available, data from the Scottish Census in 2022 has been used. Where data availability is limited due to a delay in the release of data, census data from 2011 has been used.
- 4.1.6 The following data sources have been used to determine baseline information and are fully referenced in **Chapter 10**:
- Scotland's Census;
  - Education Scotland; and
  - Scottish Index of Multiple Deprivation (SIMD); and
  - Scottish Public Health Observatory.

## 4.2 Population Change

- 4.2.1 **Table 4.1** below highlights the changes in the population in the four data zones, Mull and the Islands, Argyll & Bute, and Scotland between 2011 and 2022.
- 4.2.2 The 0-15 year old age group has grown in some of Mull and the Islands data zones, particularly in the South with a significant increase of 36%, and in Tobermory with a 15% rise. In contrast, North Mull, Gometra and Ulva; and Southwest Mull and Iona have seen declines of 3% and 9% respectively. Overall, Mull and the Islands has experienced an 8% increase in this age group, compared to declines in Argyll & Bute (-13%) and Scotland (-3%).
- 4.2.3 The 16-64 year old age group, representing the working-age population, has seen limited growth or decline across Mull and the Islands. The largest increase is in Tobermory with a 4% rise, while the North has also seen an increase at 3%. The South shows no change, and the Southwest has declined by 4%. Mull and the Islands overall has seen a 1% increase, outperforming Argyll & Bute (-8%) and Scotland (-1%).
- 4.2.4 The 65+ year age group has grown substantially across Mull and the Islands, with particularly sharp increases in the South (42%), Southwest (38%), and Tobermory (31%). The North, with a smaller rise of 24%, is higher than Argyll & Bute (21%) and Scotland (22%). Mull and the Islands overall has experienced a 32% increase in this group, reflecting the island's ageing population.

Table 4.1: Population Change, 2011-2022

Study Area	0-15	16-64	65+	All Ages
North Mull, Gometra and Ulva	-3%	3%	24%	8%
Tobermory	15%	4%	31%	10%
Southwest Mull and Iona	-9%	-4%	38%	4%
South Mull	36%	0%	42%	15%
Mull and the Islands	8%	1%	32%	9%
Argyll & Bute	-13%	-8%	21%	-2%
Scotland	-3%	-1%	22%	3%

Source: (Scotland's Census, 2022a).

- 4.2.5 Overall, across the various parts of the island and Mull as a whole population growth has mostly exceeded Argyll & Bute and national averages for most age brackets. Although there may be an issue with an ageing population, growing faster than Argyll & Bute and Scotland, the growth in the younger age brackets is more positive than the national picture. Argyll &

Bute as a whole may have an issue with population decline, however, this has not been observed on the Isle of Mull.

### 4.3 Education and Qualifications

#### Primary and Secondary Attainment

- 4.3.1 **Table 4.2** below shows the level of primary and secondary pupil attainment for the 2023-2024 academic year, where the proportion for Reading, Listening & Talking, Numeracy, and Writing highlights the proportion of all pupils meeting the test score threshold required to be regarded as excellent<sup>3</sup>. The 'Attendance' score shows the average attendance across all school pupils in that geographical area.
- 4.3.2 Attendance in Argyll & Bute is slightly higher than the national average at both primary and secondary, suggesting consistent school engagement. In primary schools, performance is generally on par with the national average, with marginal differences in Reading and Numeracy, though Writing and Listening & Talking lag slightly more than other areas. Secondary school pupils in Argyll & Bute show similar trends, performing slightly below the national average in Reading, Listening & Talking, and Writing. However, a strength emerges in secondary Numeracy, where Argyll & Bute outperforms the national average by 1.8%, indicating strong mathematical attainment.

Table 4.2: School Level Attainment

School Level Attainment	Primary			Secondary		
	Argyll & Bute	Scotland	Difference	Argyll & Bute	Scotland	Difference
Attendance	92.8%	92.2%	0.6%	87.9%	87.7%	0.2%
Reading	80.0%	80.5%	-0.5%	89.2%	90.2%	-1.0%
Listening & Talking	86.0%	87.3%	-1.3%	89.8%	90.8%	-1.0%
Numeracy	80.1%	80.3%	-0.2%	92.1%	90.3%	1.8%
Writing	75.2%	76.2%	-1.0%	87.5%	89.6%	-2.1%

Source: (Education Scotland, 2024).

#### Qualifications

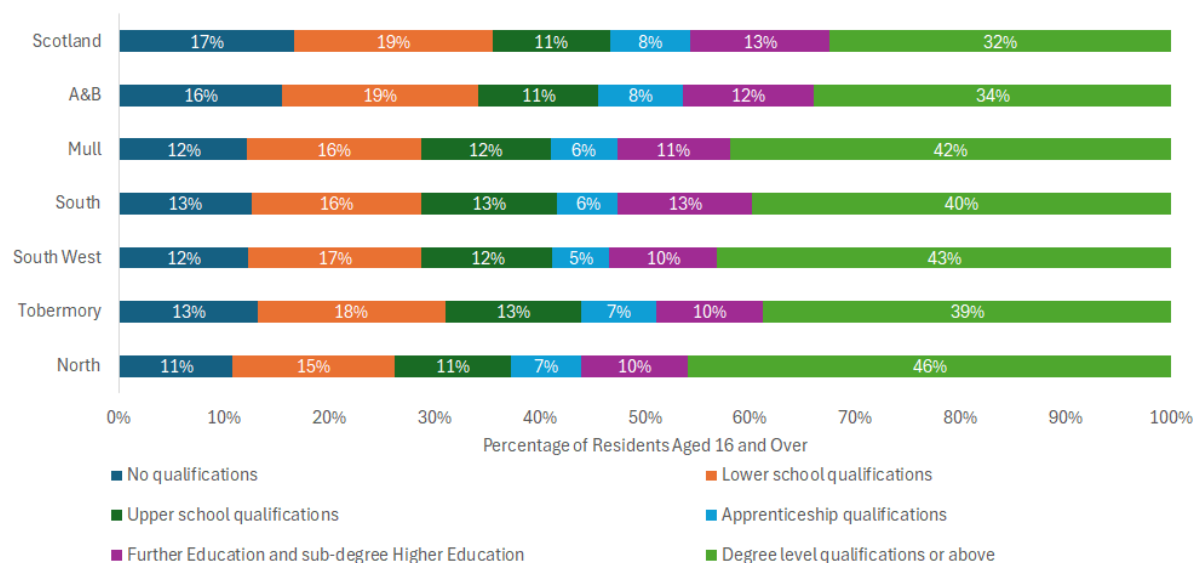
- 4.3.3 **Figure 4.2** below indicates the highest level of qualification of residents across the study areas, Argyll & Bute and Scotland. Overall, Scotland and Argyll & Bute show broadly similar trends, with most residents achieving degree-level qualifications or above, followed by upper school qualifications and further education or sub-degree qualifications.
- 4.3.4 Within the specific study areas, there is noticeable variation. Some areas, such as North Mull, Gometra and Ulva, have a relatively high percentage of residents with degree-level qualifications, while others, such as South Mull, show higher proportions of residents with no qualifications or lower school qualifications, suggesting localised disparities in educational attainment.
- 4.3.5 There is noticeable variation within Mull and the Islands' specific study areas (e.g., North Mull, Gometra and Ulva; South Mull; Southwest Mull and Iona; and Tobermory). Some areas, such as the North Mull, Gometra and Ulva, have a relatively high percentage of residents with degree-level qualifications, while others, such as South Mull, show higher proportions of

<sup>3</sup> This is regarded as students who have exceeded their expected or targeted grade in key assessments.

residents with no qualifications or lower school qualifications, suggesting localised disparities in educational attainment.

- 4.3.6 However, Mull and the Islands overall has a higher proportion of adults aged 16 years and over who have a degree level qualification or above at 42% compared with the Argyll & Bute average of 32% and the Scottish average of 34%. Across Mull and the Islands, 46% of adults aged 16 years and above have a degree level qualification or above compared with 43% in Southwest Mull and Iona, 40% in South Mull and 39% in Tobermory. This suggest that Tobermory could have greater sensitivity in terms of educational attainment compared to other parts of the island.

Figure 4.2: Highest Level of Qualification.



Source: (Scotland's Census, 2022b).

## 4.4 Deprivation

- 4.4.1 North Mull, Gometra and Ulva, Southwest Mull and Iona, South Mull study areas all fall into the least deprived 40% of areas in Scotland, whilst Tobermory performs better, in the bottom 30%. This means that Mull and the Islands is relatively less deprived compared to other areas within Scotland.

- 4.4.2 **Table 4.3** below summarises domains of deprivation for data zones on Mull and the Islands, where lower percentages indicate higher levels of deprivation. The results highlight key challenges across different parts of the island, shaped by its geography, economy, and infrastructure. Figures that are closer to 1% represent higher levels of deprivation, where any area is below the 10% it is in the top 10% most deprived communities in Scotland for that type of deprivation. Similarly, those above the 90<sup>th</sup> percentile fall in the 10% least deprived areas in Scotland.

- 4.4.3 The North of Mull faces severe deprivation in access to services, it is in the 2% most deprived of areas, due to its remote and dispersed population, which makes it difficult to provide regular and convenient access to facilities. Housing deprivation (43%) may reflect limited housing stock, and the high costs associated with building or maintaining homes in remote areas. However, the area's lower crime levels (top 14% least deprived) and moderate education deprivation (23% least deprived) suggest a safe community with reasonably good access to education compared to other parts of the island.

- 4.4.4 Tobermory, the island's largest settlement, experiences challenges in income and employment deprivation. Despite being better connected than other areas, housing

deprivation also remains an issue. The relatively better access to services, top 40% least deprived of areas in Scotland, reflects Tobermory's role as a service hub for the island.

- 4.4.5 The South West area of the island experiences extreme deprivation in access to services, ranked in the lowest percentile, this reflects its isolation and sparse infrastructure. The area is geographically remote, with fewer roads and limited public transport. However, the Southwest performs well in health and crime, for both domains the area ranked in the top 20% least deprived in Scotland. This is likely due to its rural character, low population density, and healthier lifestyle factors often associated with remote living.
- 4.4.6 The South of Mull similarly struggles with access to services ranked in the bottom percentile, reflecting its geographical challenges. However, the South performs relatively well as income, employment, education, crime and health are ranked in the top 30% least deprived.

Table 4.3: Domains of Deprivation

Study Area	Income	Employment	Education	Health	Access	Crime	Housing
North Mull, Gometra and Ulva	65%	75%	77%	67%	2%	86%	43%
Tobermory	58%	63%	72%	59%	60%	54%	54%
Southwest Mull and Iona	67%	68%	58%	83%	1%	88%	19%
South Mull	76%	74%	72%	72%	1%	75%	16%

Source: (SIMD, 2020).

## 4.5 Protected Characteristics

### Age

- 4.5.1 2022 Census data on age was published in May 2024 and provides a summary of age profiles across the four study areas. **Table 4.4** illustrates the age profile of the study areas from the 2022 Census (Scotland's Census, 2022c).

Table 4.4: Age Profiles

Study Area	Ages (%)			
	0-15 Years	16-64 Years	65+ Years	All Ages
Tobermory	18.1%	58.5%	23.8%	100%
North Mull, Gometra and Ulva	15.1%	57.1%	27.5%	100%
South Mull	14.3%	55.3%	30.5%	100%
Southwest Mull and Iona	16.5%	59.4%	27.8%	100%

<b>Mull and the Islands</b>	15.3%	57.6%	27.0%	100%
<b>Argyll &amp; Bute</b>	14.6%	58.2%	27.2%	100%
<b>Scotland</b>	16.4%	63.6%	20.0%	100%

Source: (Scotland's Census 2022c). All figures have been individually rounded and may not sum.

- 4.5.2 In terms of the four study areas, Tobermory has the largest proportion of children aged 0-15 (18.1%) and South Mull had the lowest proportion (14.3%). Southwest Mull and Iona had the largest proportion of residents aged 16-64 at 59.4% and South Mull had the lowest at 55.3%. All study areas had a higher proportion of residents aged 65+ when compared to the national average (20.0%). However, South Mull had the highest proportion at 30.5% of residents aged 65+ and Tobermory had the lowest at 23.8%.
- 4.5.3 In terms of comparison with the regional and national averages, Mull and the Islands has a slightly higher proportion of children aged 0-15 (15.3%), compared to Argyll & Bute (14.6%) but had a lower proportion compared to Scotland (16.4%). Mull and the Islands had a lower proportion of working age population aged 16-64 (57.6%), compared to Argyll & Bute (58.2%) and Scotland (63.6%). However, Mull and Argyll & Bute overall had a higher proportion of older people aged 65+ (27.0% and 27.2%, respectively) compared to the national average of 20.0% (Scotland's Census, 2022c).
- 4.5.4 Older people tend to have stronger feelings of belonging with their community. In 2019, almost nine in ten adults (86%) aged 60 and above said they felt a very or fairly strong sense of belonging to their community, compared to seven in ten (70%) of those aged between 16 and 39. However, young people are more likely to attend a cultural event of place than older people (Scottish Government, 2019).

### Disability

- 4.5.5 **Table 4.5** illustrates the disability profiles of the study areas and comparators from the 2022 Census (Scotland's Census, 2022d). The table demonstrates the percentage of residents of all ages who have a long-term health problem or disability.

**Table 4.5: Disability Profiles**

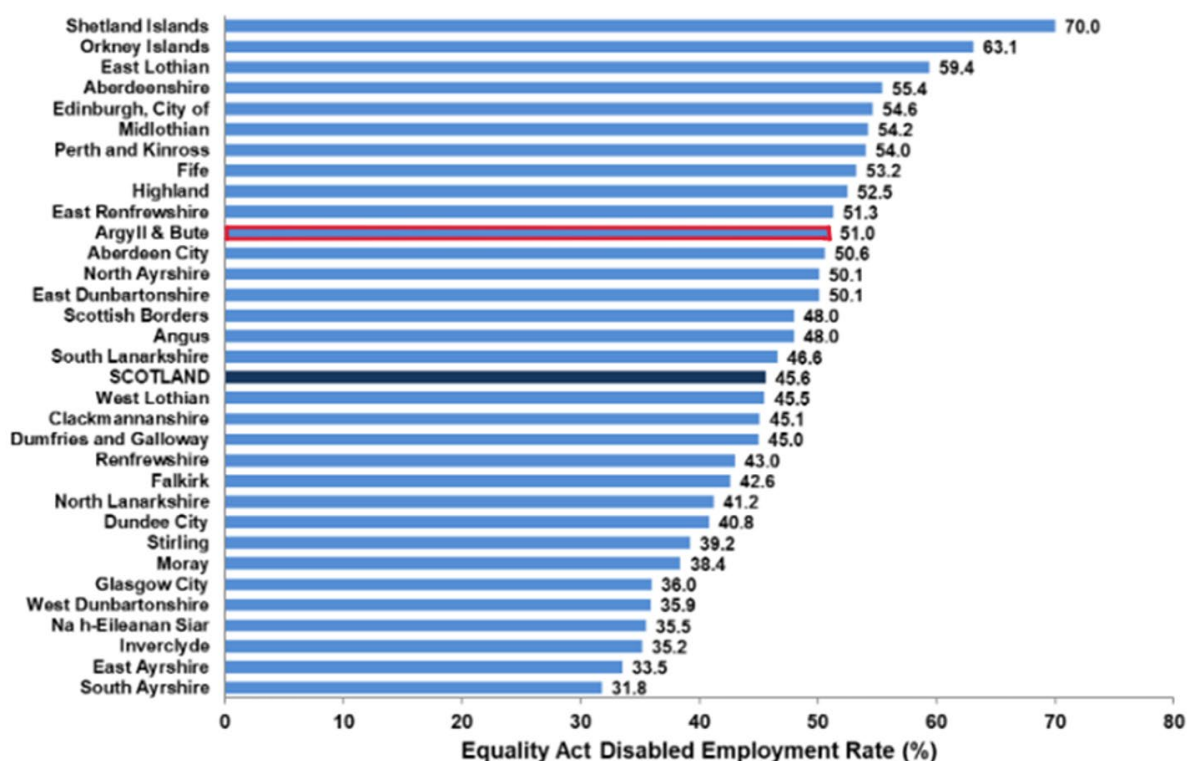
Study Area	Disability (% - total population)		
	Day-to-day activities limited a lot	Day-today activities limited a little	Day-to-day activities not limited
<b>Tobermory</b>	7.7%	12.5%	79.8%
<b>North Mull, Gometra and Ulva</b>	7.5%	14.7%	78.2%
<b>South Mull</b>	9.1%	13.2%	77.5%
<b>Southwest Mull and Iona</b>	6.7%	11.5%	81.7%
<b>Mull and the Islands</b>	7.7%	13.1%	79.3%
<b>Argyll &amp; Bute</b>	10.6%	14.6%	74.7%
<b>Scotland</b>	10.8%	13.3%	75.9%

Source: (Scotland's Census, 2022d).

- 4.5.6 In terms of the four study areas, South Mull has the highest proportion of residents (9.1%) whose day-to-day activities are limited a lot, while Southwest Mull and Iona has the lowest proportion (6.7%). North Mull, Gometra and Ulva has the highest proportion of residents (14.7%) whose day-to-day activities are limited a little and Southwest Mull and Iona has the lowest proportion (11.5%). Overall, Southwest Mull and Iona study area has the population with the lowest percentage of residents who have a long-term health condition or disability.
- 4.5.7 In terms of comparison with the regional and national averages, Mull and the Islands has a significantly lower proportion of its population that have day-to-day activities limited a lot (7.7%), compared to Argyll & Bute (10.6%) and Scotland (10.8%). Despite this, all three areas have similar results in relation to day-to-day activities are limited a little, however Argyll & Bute has a marginally higher percentage: Mull and the Islands (13.1%), Argyll & Bute (14.6%) and Scotland (13.3%). Mull and the Islands has a higher proportion of residents whose day-to-day activities are not limited (79.3%), compared to regional (74.7%) and national (75.9%) averages. Overall, the population of Mull and the Islands has a lower percentage of residents who have a long-term health condition or disability when compared to regional and national averages.
- 4.5.8 In 2019, adults living with a long-term limiting physical or mental health condition were more likely to experience discrimination (12% vs 6%) and harassment (9% vs 5%) in the last 12 months compared to adults without any health condition (Scottish Government, 2023a).
- 4.5.9 According to the Scottish Household Survey, cultural attendance at events or places was lowest among adults with a physical or mental health conditions that caused long-term major reduced daily capacity (Scottish Government, 2018).
- 4.5.10 The gap between employment rates for disabled and non-disabled people across Scotland in 2018 was 35.5 percentage points (46.5% for adults aged 16-64 who were Equality Act disabled vs 81.1% for those who were not Equality Act disabled). However, the gap between employment rates for disabled and non-disabled people was lower for women (31.1 percentage points) than men (40.0 percentage points) (Scottish Government, 2020a).
- 4.5.11 The average rate of employment for people who are classed as disabled under the Equality Act in Argyll & Bute is 51.0% which is higher than the average rate for Scotland at 45.6%, as shown in **Figure 4.3**.



Figure 4.3: Disabled Employment Rates by Local Authority in Scotland



Source: (Scottish Government, 2018).

4.5.12 Across Scotland, 13% of looked after children had a disability which is higher than the overall proportion of children with a disability (approximately 10%) (Scottish Government, 2017).

**Ethnicity**

4.5.13 According to the 2022 Census, the majority of people across Scotland are White; however, across the four study areas within Mull and the Islands, a higher proportion of residents are White, as shown in **Table 4.6** below. The study areas with the highest proportion are North Mull, Gometra and Ulva; and South Mull, both with 98.4%. These percentages are higher than the averages in Argyll & Bute (97.7%) and Scotland (92.9%).

Table 4.6: Ethnicity Profiles

Study Area	Ethnicity (% - total population)				
	'White'	'Mixed or Multiple Ethnic Group'	'Asian, Asian Scottish or Asian British'	African	Caribbean or Black
Tobermory	98.0%	0.7%	0.9%	0.1%	0.0%
North Mull, Gometra and Ulva	98.4%	1.0%	0.5%	0.1%	0.3%
South Mull	98.4%	0.8%	0.5%	0.0%	0.2%
Southwest Mull and Iona	98.3%	0.5%	0.3%	0.0%	0.0%
Mull and the Islands	98.3%	0.7%	0.6%	0.1%	0.1%



<b>Argyll &amp; Bute</b>	97.7%	0.8%	0.9%	0.2%	0.1%
<b>Scotland</b>	92.9%	1.1%	3.9%	0.1%	7.9%

Source: (Scotland's Census 2022e). All figures have been individually rounded and may not sum.

- 4.5.14 The second highest ethnic group in Tobermory is 'Asian, Asian Scottish or Asian British' (0.9%). The second highest ethnic group in the other three study areas is 'Mixed or Multiple Ethnic Group': North Mull, Gometra and Ulva (1.0%), South Mull (0.8%) and Southwest Mull and Iona (0.5%).

### Sex

- 4.5.15 Data on sex from the 2022 Census demonstrates that it is very similar across all four study areas and comparators, as seen in **Table 4.7**. Overall, there are marginally more females than males in Scotland.

**Table 4.7: Sex Profiles**

Study Area	Sex (% - total population)	
	Male	Female
<b>Tobermory</b>	46.8%	53.1%
<b>North Mull, Gometra and Ulva</b>	49.1%	50.9%
<b>South Mull</b>	48.1%	51.7%
<b>Southwest Mull and Iona</b>	46.3%	53.7%
<b>Mull and the Islands</b>	47.6%	52.3%
<b>Argyll &amp; Bute</b>	48.9%	51.1%
<b>Scotland</b>	48.6%	51.4%

Source: (Scotland's Census, 2022f). All figures have been individually rounded and may not sum.

- 4.5.16 In Mull, Iona, Coll & Tiree<sup>4</sup>, life expectancy is higher for females (83.4 years) which is higher than the Scottish average (80.7 years). Life expectancy for males is 78.4 years which is higher than the Scottish average (76.5 years) (Scotland Public Health Observatory, 2024).

### Gender reassignment

- 4.5.17 The 2022 Census found that 19,990 people in Scotland were trans or had trans history. This is 0.44% of people aged 16 and over (Scotland's Census, 2022g). Almost half (46.1%) of trans people were aged 16-24 and around a quarter (26.0%) were aged 25-34. In Argyll & Bute, 0.32% of people were trans, or had trans history, this is lower than the national average.

### Marriage and civil partnership

- 4.5.18 **Table 4.8** shows the marital and civil partnership status profiles of the various study areas (Scotland's Census, 2022h).

**Table 4.8: Marital and Civil Partnership Status Profiles**

Study Area	Marriage and civil partnership (% - population aged 16+)				
	Never married and never registered in a	Married or in a registered	Separated, but still legally	Divorced or civil	Widowed or surviving civil

<sup>4</sup> Data is not available solely for Mull in regards to life expectancy, therefore intermediate zone level data is used which also includes Iona, Coll and Tiree.

	civil partnership	civil partnership	married or still legally in a civil partnership	partnership dissolved	partnership partner
<b>Tobermory</b>	33.0%	49.1%	2.5%	10.1%	5.5%
<b>North Mull, Gometra and Ulva</b>	27.8%	57.1%	1.3%	7.3%	7.1%
<b>South Mull</b>	27.4%	52.0%	2.8%	8.5%	9.2%
<b>Southwest Mull and Iona</b>	30.6%	52.0%	1.8%	8.9%	6.7%
<b>Mull and the Islands</b>	29.9%	52.6%	2.0%	8.7%	7.0%
<b>Argyll &amp; Bute</b>	30.2%	49.1%	2.5%	9.5%	8.7%
<b>Scotland</b>	38.1%	44.0%	2.4%	8.4%	7.0%

Source: (Scotland's Census, 2022h). All figures have been individually rounded and may not sum.

- 4.5.1 In terms of the four study areas, Tobermory has the highest proportion of residents who have never been married or registered in a civil partnership (33.0%) and who are divorced or civil partnership dissolved (10.1%). North Mull, Gometra and Ulva has the highest proportion of residents who are married or in a civil partnership (57.1%). South Mull has the highest proportion of residents who are separated, but still legally married or in a civil partnership (2.8%) and widows or surviving civil partnership partner (9.2%).
- 4.5.2 In terms of comparison with the regional and national averages, Mull and the Islands has a higher proportion of residents who are married or in a registered civil partnership (52.6%), compared to Argyll & Bute (49.1%) and Scotland (44.0%). As a result of this, Mull and the Islands has a lower proportion of residents who have never been married and never registered in a civil partnership (29.9%) compared to Argyll & Bute (30.2%) and Scotland (38.1%). Additionally, a lower proportion of residents are divorced or civil partnership dissolved (8.7%), compared to 9.5% and 8.4%, respectively.

### Pregnancy and maternity

- 4.5.3 In Mull, Iona, Coll & Tiree, 81% of babies are a healthy birth weight which is very similar to the national average of 80.9%. In 2021, the rate of live births in Mull, Iona, Coll & Tiree was 9.5 births per 1,000 population which is higher than the national average at 8.8 births per 1,000 population. The rate of live births in Mull, Iona, Coll & Tiree from 2002-2021 has experienced periods of increase and decrease. The rate of live births did increase from 7.2 per 1,000 population in 2020 to 9.5 per 1,000 population in 2021 (Scottish Public Health Observatory, 2024).

### Religion or belief

- 4.5.1 **Table 4.9** shows the religion and belief profiles of the various study areas (Scotland's Census, 2022i).
- 4.5.2 In terms of the four study areas, the Church of Scotland is the religion or belief which the majority of residents identify with, Southwest Mull and Iona has the highest proportion of residents who identify with it (30.6%). Despite this, the majority of residents across all four study areas identify most with no religion, with North Mull, Gometra and Ulva reporting the highest percentage (56.8%).
- 4.5.3 In terms of comparison with the regional and national averages, Mull and the Islands has a higher percentage of residents who report no religion (53.8%), compared to Argyll & Bute

(48.5%) and Scotland (51.1%). Additionally, Mull and the Islands has a higher proportion of residents who identify with the Pagan religion (0.8%), compared to Argyll & Bute (0.6%) and Scotland (0.4%). Mull and the Islands has a higher percentage of residents who identify as Other Christian (8.7%) compared to Argyll & Bute (6.6%) and Scotland (5.1%). Conversely, Mull and the Islands has a significantly lower proportion of residents who are Roman Catholic (4.0%), compared to Argyll & Bute (9.2%) and Scotland (13.3%). Additionally, Mull and the Islands has a lower percentage of residents who identify as Muslim (0.2%), compared to Argyll & Bute (0.4%) and Scotland (2.2%).

Table 4.9: Percentage Religion or Belief Reported in Scotland's Census 2022

Religion or Belief	Religion or belief (% - total population)						
	Tobermory	North Mull, Gometra and Ulva	South Mull	Southwest Mull and Iona	Mull and the Islands	Argyll & Bute	Scotland
Church of Scotland	24.9%	19.1%	21.5%	30.6%	23.7%	27.0%	20.4%
Roman Catholic	5.4%	3.6%	2.7%	3.9%	4.0%	9.2%	13.3%
Other Christian	7.9%	8.0%	9.7%	10.1%	8.7%	6.6%	5.1%
Buddhist	0.3%	0.1%	0.3%	0.0%	0.2%	0.3%	0.3%
Hindu	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.1%	0.6%
Jewish	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.1%	0.1%
Muslim	0.1%	0.1%	0.0%	0.5%	0.2%	0.4%	2.2%
Sikh	0.1%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.1%	0.2%
Pagan	1.0%	1.0%	0.0%	0.9%	0.8%	0.6%	0.4%
Other religion	0.3%	0.1%	0.0%	0.9%	0.3%	0.2%	0.2%
No religion	54.0%	56.8%	55.2%	47.4%	53.8%	48.5%	51.1%
Religion not stated	6.0%	11.2%	10.2%	5.3%	8.2%	7.0%	6.2%

Source: (Scotland's Census, 2022i).

### Sexual orientation

- 4.5.4 The 2022 Census found that there the majority of people aged 16+ in Argyll & Bute identify as heterosexual/straight (88.0%), which is very similar to the national average (87.8%). As of 2022, there were 1,894 LGB+ people aged 16+ in Argyll & Bute (2.5%), this is a smaller proportion of the population when compared to the rest of Scotland (4.1%). These percentages are demonstrated below in **Table 4.10**.

Table 4.10: Percentage of people who identified as LGB+, 2022

Sexual Orientation	Sexual orientation (% - population aged 16+)	
	Argyll & Bute	Scotland
Heterosexual/Straight	88.0%	87.8%
Gay or Lesbian	1.1%	1.8%
Bisexual	1.1%	1.8%

Other sexual orientation	0.3%	0.5%
Not answered	9.4%	8.2%

Source: (Scotland's Census, 2022j) All figures have been individually rounded and may not sum.

- 4.5.5 Of this 4.1% of people aged 16+ who identify as LGB+, 43.6% identify as 'Gay or Lesbian', 43.6% identified as 'Bisexual' and 12.8% identified as 'Other sexual orientation'. Almost half (46.6%) of bisexual people were aged 16 to 24. Around a third (32.0%) were aged 25 to 34. Around a quarter (23.1%) of gay or lesbian people were aged 16 to 24. A further 28.6% were aged 25 to 34, therefore just under half were aged 35 and older (Scotland's Census, 2022j).

## 5 Economic Impact Assessment

### 5.1 Introduction

- 5.1.1 This economic impact assessment identifies areas of activity where the economic benefits of the proposed campus will differ depending upon whether a site is selected in Tobermory or in a more central island location. These include effects on local investment; effects on existing housing stock; impacts on educational attainment; parent/guardian loss of earnings; staff commuting costs and monetised value of transport carbon emissions. The assessment was undertaken based on HM Treasury (HMT) Green Book economic appraisal guidance (UK Government, 2022), using the Isle of Mull economy as an impact geography.
- 5.1.2 Its purpose is to support the Council in making an evidence-based decision on the most appropriate location for the school, and therefore does not include any consideration of economic benefits that will remain the same irrespective of school location. For example, it does not include an assessment of impacts related to staffing numbers, school expenditure, carbon emissions from construction and operations; or educational impacts related to size of the school's student roll.
- 5.1.3 The assessed impacts provide insights into the effects of the Project on key groups and aspects of the local economy, including:
1. Local Housing
  2. Students
  3. Parents/Guardians
  4. Staff
  5. The Environment

### 5.2 Assessment Approach

- 5.2.1 The assessment has used HMT Green Book (UK Government, 2022) and Transport Scotland's Scottish Transport Appraisal Guidance (STAG) compliant methodologies to quantify the impacts of keeping the school in Tobermory or relocating it to a central Site. Using publicly available data alongside information from the Mull Education Campus Transport Considerations Report (Systra, 2025), reliable data and robust assumptions have been applied to show the changes in economic impacts. The following impacts have been examined:
- **Effects on Local Investments** – The changes to wider Land Value Uplift (LVU) as a result of potential housing developments being closer to or further from a school.
  - **Effect on Existing Housing Stock** – The changes in the house prices of existing residential units.
  - **Impacts on Educational Attainment** – The loss in potential lifetime earnings of students as a result of a decreased likelihood to attend Higher/Further Education due to having to travel further to school.
  - **Parent/Guardian Loss of Earnings** – Estimated earnings lost due to parents travelling further to take children to school.
  - **Cost of Commuting** – Perceived costs to staff commuting to work at the school.
  - **Cost of Transport Carbon Emissions** – Total environmental costs to society as a result of students, parents/guardians and staff travelling to the school.

- 5.2.2 These impacts have been examined to best show the differences between the options. Due to the negligible or no difference in the construction and operations of the school between sites any impacts related to those would be the same.
- 5.2.3 In line with HMT Green Book Guidance all values are presented in Present Value (PV) terms. Using STAG and Green Book principles, values are discounted at 3.5% annually to give the economic impacts in PV terms. The school is scheduled for completion in 2028 and all annual impacts, excluding educational attainment, are appraised over a 10-year period post completion of the school. Educational Attainment is given as the effect on total earnings over a lifetime, still in PV terms. Impacts on housing and land are given in a single year once the school is open and operational.

### **5.3 Economic Impacts**

#### **Investment Stimulus**

- 5.3.1 Schools influence the attractiveness of an area for potential residents and therefore the value of future housing developments. The economic benefits of this are captured through the effect of a school on the LVU of surrounding proposed housing development sites. LVU is the net private benefit resulting from a change in land use to more productive uses. The impact represents the monetised difference between the current land value and future land value resulting from the proposed investment.
- 5.3.2 Research shows that in Scotland, houses within 0.5 miles of a school have a 1.73% higher Gross Development Value (GDV) (market price) than those further away (OnlineMoneyAdviser, 2025). The GDV of future housing developments drives the underlying land value and therefore the LVU of the site. The location of the school on the Isle of Mull will result in a change in the future land values of proposed housing developments nearby, increasing the value of those developments within 0.5 miles of the school's location.
- 5.3.3 The key assumptions used are outlined below.

Table 5.1: Wider LVU Assumptions

Assumption	Value	Source
Current Developments Brought Forward within 0.5 miles of the Tobermory Site (number of units)	144	Calculated using data for Local Development Plan (LDP) and Large & Small Windfall Sites from Mull Education Campus Transport Considerations Report.
Current Developments Brought Forward within 0.5 miles of the Central Site (number of units)	82	Calculated using data for LDP and Large & Small Windfall Sites from Mull Education Campus Transport Considerations Report.
Average House Price in Tobermory	£218,208	Zoopla average house price in Tobermory (Zoopla, December 2024).
Average House Price near the Central Site	£160,000	Zoopla average house price near the Central Site (Zoopla, December 2024).
Change in House Price	1.73%	Where in Britain do homes sell for more money when they are closer to a school? - Value for Scotland of the increase in property prices within 0.5 miles of a school.
Current Land Value Tobermory	£3,360,468	Calculated using data for LDP and Large & Small Windfall Sites from Mull Education Campus Transport Considerations Report and values from Scotland's Land Information Service.
Current Land Value Central Site	£447,302	Calculated using data for LDP and Large & Small Windfall Sites from Mull Education Campus Transport Considerations Report and values from Scotland's Land Information Service.
Land Value as a Proportion of GDV	1/3	Savills – Land buyers rule of thumb, land value is a third of GDV.

Source: Stantec.

5.3.4 The difference in all house prices for the areas near both sites are outlined below.

Table 5.2: Wider LVU Results

	Tobermory Site	Central Island Site	Difference Between Tobermory and Central Island Site
Effect on Local Investments	£152,000	£63,000	£89,000

Source: Stantec.

5.3.5 The greater impact at the Tobermory Site is driven by the substantially greater number of houses in Tobermory than near the central island site. The impact of this will be realised when the school is opened and operational as this is from when prospective buyers will be able to use the school, the benefit occurs once in a single year.

### Existing Local Housing

5.3.6 A similar approach has been used to quantify the effect on existing local housing, showing the effect on house prices due to the choice of location of the school. As there is no change in the

use of land, LVU has not been captured. This effect shows only the change to total housing value in Tobermory and near the central site. The table below shows the assumptions used.

**Table 5.3: Change in Local Housing Value Assumptions**

<b>Assumption</b>	<b>Value</b>	<b>Source</b>
Current Households within 0.5 miles of the Tobermory Site	496	Scottish Census 2022
Current Households within 0.5 miles of the Central Site	40	Scottish Census 2022
Average House Price in Tobermory	£218,208	Zoopla average house price in Tobermory. (December 2024)
Average House Price near the Central Site	£160,000	Zoopla average house price near the Central Site. (December 2024)
Change in House Price	1.73%	Where in Britain do homes sell for more money when they are closer to a school? - Value for Scotland of the increase in property prices within 0.5 miles of a school.

Source: Stantec.

- 5.3.7 The impact on all current house prices is outlined below. The impact of this will be realised when the school is opened and operational as this is from when prospective buyers will be able to use the school, the benefit occurs once in a single year. As there currently is a school in Tobermory the benefit is the value that would be retained if the school does not relocate.

**Table 5.4: House Value Results**

	<b>Tobermory Site</b>	<b>Central Island Site</b>	<b>Difference Between Tobermory and Central Island Site</b>
Effect on Local Investments	£1,567,000	£93,000	£1,474,000

Source: Stantec.

- 5.3.8 The greater impact at the Tobermory Site is driven by the substantially greater number of houses located there and the higher average house price.

### **Educational Attainment**

- 5.3.9 The distance a student must travel to school influences their decision to participate in post-compulsory education, meaning it influences the decision of high school students on whether to continue on to further or higher education. Research shows that in the extreme condition in which a student must travel more than 8km to school they are 27% less likely to attend post-compulsory education than those that live within 2km of their educational institute. The decision of where to locate the high school on Mull will move some students from within 2km to further than 8km away from the school.
- 5.3.10 Those that do not attend university are likely to experience a loss of earnings compared to those that obtain a degree. Therefore, students that must travel further to school are less likely to attend university and may experience a loss of earnings as a result of this. The table below details the assumptions used to calculate the change in lifetime earnings because of the location of the school.



Table 5.5: Educational Attainment Assumptions

Assumption	Value	Source
Total High School Students within 2km of Tobermory Site	80	Mull Education Campus Transport Considerations Report (Systra, 2025).
Total High School Students within 2km of Central Site	3	Mull Education Campus Transport Considerations Report (Systra, 2025).
University Attendance Rate	35.8%	Higher education student numbers. House of Commons Library. 2023 Higher Education Entry Rate.
University Retention Rate	91.5%	Report on Widening Access 2021-22. Scottish Funding Council. University Retention Rate.
Percentage Change in Likelihood to Attend University	27.0%	The Impact of Distance to Nearest Education Institution on the Post-Compulsory Education Participation Decision. Dickerson and McIntosh. Students who live less than 2km from their academic institutes are 27% more likely to attend post-compulsory education than those who live more than 8km away.
Lifetime Difference in Earnings for a Male	£130,000	The impact of undergraduate degrees on lifetime earnings. Britton et al. Over their working lives men who attend university earn £130,000 more than those who do not. Figures are over a lifetime and in PV terms.
Lifetime Difference in Earnings for a Female	£100,000	The impact of undergraduate degrees on lifetime earnings. Britton et al. Over their working lives women who attend university earn £100,000 more than those who do not. Figures are over a lifetime and in PV terms.

Source: Stantec.

- 5.3.11 Using the number of high school students within 2km of each site and calculating a figure for the number of students likely to attend and complete university, which can then be adjusted for the decrease if the school moves 8km away. Applying the loss of earnings values to the number of pupils affected results in the total earnings lost over their entire lifetime. This is then discounted for 7 years, as an average amount of time for high school students to join the labour market. The results of the analysis on total lifetime earnings for all affected students for both sites are outlined below:

Table 5.6: Educational Attainment Results

	Tobermory Site	Central Island Site	Difference Between Tobermory and Central Island Site
Effect on Lifetime Earnings	£652,000	£25,000	£627,000

Source: Stantec.

- 5.3.12 The impact of the Tobermory Site is the earnings that could be lost if the school was moved, the impact of the central site is the earnings gained from the relocation. The greater impact of the Tobermory Site is driven by the high number of students located in the area.

## Loss of Earnings

5.3.13 Parents who drive their children to school are affected by the location of the school. Due to the transport infrastructure limitations a large number of parents must take their children to school, alongside this parents with children in early learning years must take their children to school themselves as transport is not provided. If the school is moved parents may lose the additional travel time in working time. This loss of working time may result in a loss of earnings to parents. Although not quantitatively captured here, there will also be an effect on employer's balance sheets due to the reduced working time of parents. Businesses are likely to suffer some changes to revenue or costs due to the effect on working time. As the effect of this on firms will differ dependant on their business model and approach to the change, this has not been captured here.

5.3.14 The assumptions used are outlined below.

**Table 5.7: Loss of Earnings Assumptions**

Assumption	Value	Source
Daily Travel Time for all Parents - Tobermory Site (aggregate minutes across all staff)	630	Mull Education Campus Transport Considerations Report (Systra, 2025). This is the total travel time in minutes for all parents taking their children to school. This is for the 2 trips per day which are likely to impact employment time.
Daily Travel Time for all Parents - Central Site (aggregate minutes across all staff)	936	Mull Education Campus Transport Considerations Report (Systra, 2025). This is the total travel time in minutes for all parents taking their children to school. This is for the 2 trips per day which are likely to impact employment time.
Employment Rate	67.8%	Argyll & Bute Employment Rate aged 16-64 (December 2024) taken from the Annual Population Survey.
Value of Travel Time for Parents (per hour)	£20.34	Average hourly earnings in Argyll & Bute from ASHE 2024.

Source: Stantec.

5.3.15 The total journey time for 2 daily journeys has been calculated for the entire school year and multiplied by the average earnings in the area. This has then been adjusted to account for the percentage of parents in employment. The difference in journey time for trips in both the morning and afternoon for all employed parents results in the earnings retained or lost set out below:

**Table 5.8: Loss of Earnings Results**

	Tobermory Site	Central Island Site	Difference Between Tobermory and Central Island Site
Effects on Parents Earnings (per year)	£0	-£96,000	£96,000

Source: Stantec.

5.3.16 The value for the central site is the earnings lost due to the relocation of the school, the value for the Tobermory Site is 0 as there will be no earnings lost if the school remains where it currently is.

### School Staff Costs of Community

- 5.3.17 The STAG Guidance applies a value to the individual for commuting to work, this can be applied to the staff travel time for both site options. The STAG Guidance provides a willingness to pay value for the journey time savings for individuals commuting to work. Applying this to the total staff travel time for both sides will show the economic impact to the individuals for commuting to work. The assumptions applied are set out in the following table:

**Table 5.9: School Staff Cost of Commuting Assumptions**

Assumption	Value	Source
Total Daily Staff Travel Time Tobermory Site (aggregate minutes across all staff)	1,390	Mull Education Campus Transport Considerations Report.
Total Daily Staff Travel Time Central Site (aggregate minutes across all staff)	3,932	Mull Education Campus Transport Considerations Report.
Value of Travel Time for Staff (per hour)	£11.10	TAG Databook value of commuting 2024.

Source: Stantec.

- 5.3.18 The results of the analysis for both sites are outlined below:

**Table 5.10: Cost of Commuting Results**

	Tobermory Site	Central Site	Difference Between Tobermory and Central Island Site
Cost of Commuting (per annum)	- £350,000	- £990,000	£640,000

Source: Stantec.

- 5.3.19 Staff commuting time will approximately triple if the school is located at the central site, this is driving the large increase in the total cost to staff. Although staff would be reimbursed for their mileage for the first 4 years of the school relocating, this impact captures the willingness to pay value for the journey time savings which the staff will not receive back and takes a longer-term approach.

### Vehicle Carbon Costs

- 5.3.20 The various methods of transport used by students and staff to travel to school will result in carbon emissions. The Transport Scotland STAG Guidance provides values for monetising vehicle carbon emissions for use in appraisal, these values are estimated by the target-consistent marginal abatement costs consistent with the Government's commitments on carbon emissions. These monetise vehicle emissions to align them with national commitments to carbon reduction. The assumptions used are highlighted below.

Table 5.11: Carbon Costs Assumptions

Assumption	Value	Source
Total Daily Carbon Emissions Tobermory Site (kgCO <sub>2</sub> e)	352	Mull Education Campus Transport Considerations Report.
Total Daily Carbon Emissions Central Site (kgCO <sub>2</sub> e)	1,032	Mull Education Campus Transport Considerations Report.
Carbon Costs (tCO <sub>2</sub> e)	Varies by year	Based on TAG Databook Carbon Values.

Source: Stantec.

5.3.21 The results of the analysis for both sites are outlined below:

Table 5.12: Carbon Costs Results

	Tobermory Site	Central Island Site	Difference Between Tobermory and Central Island Site
Carbon Costs	- £115,000	- £336,000	£221,000

Source: Stantec.

## 5.4 Summary

5.4.1 The differences in economic impact across the two options are summarised below.

Table 5.13: Summary

Summary	Difference Between Tobermory and Central Island Site
Investment Lost/Gained Due to Relocation	£89,000
Existing Property Values	£1,474,000
Students Lifetime Earnings	£627,000
Changes to Parents Current Earnings	£96,000
Cost of Commuting	£640,000
Carbon Cost of Travel	£221,000
<b>Total Benefits</b>	<b>£3,147,000</b>

Source: Stantec.

5.4.2 Overall, the analysis has concluded that the economic impact of the Project will be £3,147,000 higher if the school were built in Tobermory than would be the case if it were built in a central island location.

### Sensitivity Analysis – Change in School Catchment Area

5.4.3 As part of the Transport Considerations Report (Systra, 2025) a change in school catchments has been included to present the scenario in which the secondary school catchments areas are altered. Although this scenario will not directly influence the site scoring and selection

process it has been included as an additional test to consider the sensitivity. The bullets below show the impacts which are affected by the change in catchments:

- **Changes to Parents Current Earnings** – The earnings lost under the central site option, and the differential between the two options would increase by £20,000 to £116,000.
- **Carbon Cost of Travel** – The cost of carbon emissions for the central site option would increase by £24,000 to £360,000; raising the differential between the two options to £250,000.
- **Aggregate Difference in Impact** - These two changes would increase the aggregate difference in impact by £44,000, taking it to £3,191,000.

## 6 Island Communities Impact Assessment

### 6.1 Introduction

- 6.1.1 The Islands (Scotland) Act 2018 provides a legal basis for greater decision making at a local level within Scottish Islands and seeks to increase economic prosperity for island communities.
- 6.1.2 This is to be achieved through 'island proofing' legislation, policy, and strategic decisions by taking account of the special circumstances of island communities and ensuring no disadvantage to people living and working on islands (as defined by Section 1 of the Act).
- 6.1.3 Section 7 of the Act sets out a specific duty for relevant public bodies to "*have regard to island communities*" in carrying out their functions. A related duty in Section 8 of the Act requires relevant public bodies to undertake an island communities impact assessment "*in relation to a policy, strategy, or service which, in the authority's opinion, is likely to have an effect on an island community which is significantly different from its effect on other communities (including other island communities) in the area in which the authority exercises its functions*".

### 6.2 Assessment Approach

- 6.2.1 An ICIA is intended to evaluate the potential effects of a project on island communities, taking account of the unique challenges and opportunities faced by people living on islands, such as geographical isolation, smaller population sizes, limited infrastructure and reliance on specific industries.
- 6.2.2 The assessment following the Scottish Government's guidance and toolkit prepared on ICIAs (Scottish Government, 2020b). This provides a framework to assess the extent to which the proposed Mull Campus has an impact on island communities. The assessment has been informed by engagement activities, as discussed in **Section 3.2**.
- 6.2.3 Consideration has been given to the thematic questions in the ICIA guidance around:
- Demography – including current demographic structure, challenges faced in areas with greater proportion of older people and impacts on these challenges including encouraging young people to leave;
  - Economy – potential for impacts on key industries, on island infrastructure and natural environment, on communications networks, on small businesses and their supply chains and taking account of the costs of travel particularly for people on low incomes; and
  - Social – the often dispersed nature of island deprivation, impacts on the cost of living, changes affecting people in fuel poverty, consideration of part time and self-employed nature of much of the islands' workforce and issues with availability of childcare provision.
- 6.2.4 The following framing questions have been applied to understand the potential impact of the Project based on high level site selection assumptions in accordance with the early phase of the Project.

#### Guide Questions: Island Community Impact Assessment

Q1. Does the proposal take into consideration the current demographic structure of the islands and the challenges faced by populations in these communities?

Q2. Will the proposals have an impact of the economic prosperity of island communities?

Q3. Does the proposal consider the unique transport challenges faced by island communities? Has the cost and time taken in travelling between island communities been taken into consideration – particularly for those on low incomes or reliant on infrequent public transport?

Q4. Will the proposals have an impact on the island's infrastructure or natural environment and biodiversity?

Q5. Effectively address the unique social challenges faced by island communities?

Q6. Effectively address the unique health challenges faced by the islands' communities?

Q7. Does the Project have the potential to impact on the use of Gaelic in the community?

- 6.2.5 The framing questions have also been applied taking account of key aspects in Section 8 of the Act around the potential for differential impacts on the islands' communities and on consideration of the extent to which delivery of the Project might improve or mitigate outcomes.

### 6.3 Island Communities Impact Assessment Findings

#### **Q1. Does the proposal take into consideration the current demographic structure of the islands and the challenges faced by populations in these communities?**

- 6.3.1 At the time of writing, the Project is undergoing a site selection process to determine the most suitable location for a 2-18 education campus on the Isle of Mull. This process has been initiated as a result of LEIP (discussed previously in **Section 2.2.2**) funding which has been awarded to Argyll & Bute Council on the basis of a like-for-like replacement of an existing education campus in Tobermory.
- 6.3.2 The site selection process is considering the suitability of site options within the settlement boundary of Tobermory, including the existing school site, and site options located centrally on Mull in Craignure or Garmony. Due to commercial sensitivities, the exact locations of the site options was not released to the public prior to completion of the impact assessments at this stage. As such, the impact assessment report predominantly considers the high-level implications of a site in either a central (i.e., Craignure or Garmony) or Tobermory (i.e., existing or new site) location.
- 6.3.3 The proposals to consider a Central campus option responds to community views to provide a more equitable high schooling option for all children and young-people living on Mull. At present, children and young people living in the Ross of Mull (South West Mull) have limited access to the high school in Tobermory due to travel times of approximately 1 hour and 30 minutes each way, which precludes this as a viable option for most families. The area is currently within a catchment area for Oban High School where children can board weekly from Monday to Friday and return home to Mull at the weekends.
- 6.3.4 A Tobermory location would likely maintain the current status quo for school provision on the island. This predominantly includes families in Tobermory which is the largest settlement area on the Island and some families located in north, central and some south settlements. By retaining a Tobermory option, concerns about depopulation in the Ross of Mull have been cited during a number of community engagement events and this is reflected in the baseline data which indicates that South West Mull has experienced a depopulation rate of 9% amongst its 0-15 year old age group between 2011 and 2022, while North Mull, Gometra and Ulva has experienced a depopulation rate of 3% in this age group. Comparatively, South of Mull has seen a significant increase in population growth for this age group at 36%, while Tobermory has experienced a 15% increase in this age group.

- 6.3.5 A centrally located campus would be sensitive to the demographic challenges faced by families living in the South and South West of Mull and would benefit families with teenage children attending secondary school on the mainland in Oban. A number of local families have expressed that attending boarding school on the mainland has negatively impacted their children and discourages young people from settling back in the local community in adulthood, increasing worries over depopulation. Results from the Buinessan Parent Council Survey (conducted November 2024) show that 50% of parents would “*seriously consider leaving the Ross of Mull if a central school is not built*”.
- 6.3.6 While 95% of those surveyed in the Buinessan Parent Council said they would send their children to a central school daily, 57% of parents said that a funded placement option for Oban High School, including the hostel needs to be retained suggesting a preference to maintain this option. During public engagement sessions in September 2024 a number of parents stated that they would continue to opt for their children to board and attend school in Oban, citing that they felt their children had wider access to more opportunities.
- 6.3.7 A centrally sited option is expected to allow all children on Mull to attend the same high school with reduced travel times for many pupils in the South and South West of Mull areas and allow for greater socialising amongst young people on Mull, this was particularly raised during the engagement with schools. This could have the potential to strengthen community cohesion amongst young people and their families leading to positive social benefits for all island communities. It would also encourage unity between communities in the North and South of Mull.
- 6.3.8 Proposals for a central site option currently involve the transfer of existing early-years and primary school education from Tobermory to the central Campus site due to the like-for-like requirements of the LEIP funding secured by the Council. As such, with a central site option, there is also the potential for negative demographic implications for those living in Tobermory which is Mull’s largest settlement area. Views expressed from community members suggest that families could choose to move away from Tobermory if early years and primary school provision was removed which could result in depopulation if families choose to leave the island.
- 6.3.9 A split-site option which would retain early years and primary school provision in Tobermory with a central high school was explored by the Council, however this option has been deemed unaffordable and thus unviable on the basis that the Council would be required to fund the additional cost requirement for a split-site option in its entirety. A motion was passed unanimously on this matter by Argyll & Bute councillors at a Special Meeting on 20 December 2024 (Argyll & Bute Council, 2024b).

**Q2. Will the proposals have an impact of the economic prosperity of island communities?**

- 6.3.10 The Economic Impact Assessment presented in Chapter 5, outlines that if the campus was located in Tobermory, the economic benefit would be £3,147,000 higher than would be the case if the campus was built in a central island location. This assessment takes into account investment stimulus acknowledging that schools influence the attractiveness of an area for potential residents and therefore the value of future housing developments. The Economic Impact Assessment outlines that houses with 0.5 miles of a school have a 1.73% higher GDV (market price) which drives the underlying land value of the site. The location of the Mull Campus has the potential to increase the value of developments within 0.5 miles of the schools location which would generate positive impacts for both a central and Tobermory site option.
- 6.3.11 Similarly, the Economic Impact Assessment considers economic impacts to existing local housing. A substantially greater impact has been identified for the Tobermory sites options are as result of more houses being located there and higher average house prices.
- 6.3.12 While a Tobermory site location is judged to have a stronger economic impact, some community members feel that a central option could particularly bring positive benefits for the Ross of Mull. This is captured in the following response from members of the community in the



South West of Mull: *“an accessible high school, built in a central location, would make South West Mull a significantly more attractive place for families to move to, assisting in building the economy, stimulating repopulation, and enhancing community resilience. With the increasing ability of remote working, there are exciting opportunities to build up our population through families employed in a combination of remote working and local employment which will make us less dependent on tourism and seasonal work. However, such families are more likely to be attracted to areas with accessible schools”.*

- 6.3.13 Community testimonies provided to inform the ICIA from young people and families who have moved away from the Ross of Mull or from prospective working age families who want to move there but feel unable to do so due to the current secondary school catchment area also support the above comment.

#### *Impact on Local Businesses and Employment*

- 6.3.14 Small businesses could experience changes in revenue or a loss in earning if working patterns were affected by the school site location. A central site option could result in a loss of revenue for Tobermory-based businesses who benefit from local footfall and custom from young people and families attending school in the town if they were instead required to travel daily to a central location. Increased travel times for working parents based in Tobermory and North Mull could also affect earnings if this impacted their available working hours and brings implications for increased travel costs for these families.
- 6.3.15 Bringing the Project forward in a central location could stimulate local business growth to provide services in proximity to the school such as new proposed housing allocations, local shops, amenities and other services. However, due to the early stage of the Project development process any potential impacts attributable to this are regarded as uncertain as they are dependent on a number of factors beyond the scope of this proposal.
- 6.3.16 Across Mull the supply of 0-3 year old childcare is very low compared to demand and provision is largely centred around Tobermory. It is recommended that that new Campus could integrate community spaces and services that meet the needs of the wider community as a whole. This could include more facilities and resources to offer more after school clubs, breakfast clubs and wraparound care that could positively benefits single parents and working parents.

#### *Journey Times and Cost of Travel*

- 6.3.17 In the Mull Education Campus Transport Review (Systra, 2025) attending a central campus option would result in a doubling of travel time for all pupils on average compared to the existing baseline for attendance in Tobermory. This could have a negative impact on parent's and carer's working patterns, particularly those who are self-employed or who work part-time to ensure they can accommodate their children's daily travel to and from school, including attendance at any after school activities locally or elsewhere on the island.
- 6.3.18 While it is assumed that bus services would be provided along major routes, there will still be a need for some families and staff to 'feed in' to bus route intersections where small villages and settlements may not be served. Additionally, the Transport Review (Systra, 2025) forecasts that a number of families are likely to drop-off and collection children by car.
- 6.3.19 Increased journey times and mileage could also have a significant impact on a higher number of families and staff members who will be subject to longer daily journeys to a central campus location. This would incur additional fuel and maintenance costs for private vehicles if travelling by car which could have financial implications, particularly for low-income families and families with limited or no access to a car.

#### *Staff Recruitment and Retention*

- 6.3.20 Education staff have raised concerns about staff recruitment and retention on Mull which is already an issue for a range of positions across the island. A lack of housing options has also

been cited as a factor linked to this. It may be more attractive to recruit and retain teachers in a larger settlement area such as Tobermory but the full impacts of the proposals on staff recruitment and retention is not clearly known at this stage.

- 6.3.21 However, the nearby mainland town of Oban also experiences issues with staff recruitment and retention. Therefore, a location closer to the ferry that allows for staff travel may not alleviate these issues.

**Q3. Does the proposal consider the unique transport challenges faced by island communities? Has the cost and time taken in travelling between island communities been taken into consideration – particularly for those on low incomes or reliant on infrequent public transport?**

- 6.3.22 To inform the site selection decision making process, Argyll & Bute Council commissioned a Mull Education Campus Transport Review (Systra, 2025). The Transport Review takes into account the transport context of Mull and the cost and time required to travel between island communities to four different proposed site options, including Site 1 Tobermory (existing school site), Site 2 – Craignure, Site 3 – Garmony and Site 4 – Tobermory South.

- 6.3.23 A summary of the report findings are presented in **Table 6.1** below:

**Table 6.1: Key Travel Considerations from Systra (2025) Mull Education Campus Transport Review Report**

Site Location	Key Travel Considerations
<b>Site 1 – Tobermory (existing school site)</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Travel characteristics are mostly known as they are likely to align with present conditions;</li> <li>▪ The site is within walking distance of the most existing housing; and</li> <li>▪ The site is constrained making access for large vehicles (e.g. buses and HGVs during construction) difficult.</li> </ul>
<b>Site 2 – Craignure</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Travel times, distances and carbon emissions will increase over the baseline (more so if the catchments are amended to include the Ross of Mull);</li> <li>▪ Average journey times will increase by approximately 20 minutes;</li> <li>▪ Pupils who currently walk will likely have to be taken to the Craignure site by bus requiring approximately 4 additional buses over the baseline;</li> <li>▪ There is an adjacent allocation for c. 80 housing units, enabling trips by active modes; and</li> <li>▪ Footways and crossing opportunities on the adjacent highway network are limited, however, could be improved.</li> </ul>
<b>Site 3 – Garmony</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Travel times, distances and carbon emissions will increase over the baseline (more so if the catchments are amended to include the Ross of Mull);</li> <li>▪ Average journey times will increase by approximately 15 minutes over the baseline;</li> <li>▪ Pupils who currently walk will likely have to be taken to the Garmony site by bus requiring approximately 4 additional buses over the baseline; The site is located adjacent to a limited number of existing housing and no LDP or Large Windfall housing sites identified in the Housing Land Audit; and</li> <li>▪ There are no footways or crossing opportunities on the adjacent highway network – providing them would deliver limited benefit.</li> </ul>

<b>Site 4 – Tobermory South</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ The site is walkable from some existing housing, and it is noted nearby, and adjacent sites are allocated with up to 112 new residential units;</li> <li>▪ There are some existing footways from adjacent residential catchments; and</li> <li>▪ Travel time, distance and associated carbon emissions are likely to remain broadly similar to the baseline.</li> </ul>
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- 6.3.24 Site 1 Tobermory will retain familiar travel patterns as current conditions would largely be unchanged. It is conveniently located within walking distance for most existing housing in Tobermory with 90% of pre-5 and primary school pupils currently living within a 5-minute walking distance (Systra, 2025). Constraints have been noted for the site whereby access for larger vehicles such as HGVs and buses may be challenging.
- 6.3.25 Site 4 Tobermory South is also walkable from local housing and a proposed residential allocation for up to 112 new homes which offers further potential for active travel to and from school. Other impacts are expected to remain consistent with baseline conditions for Site Location 1.
- 6.3.26 Both Site 3 Garmony and Site 2 Craignure would lead to increased travel times, distances and carbon emissions, particularly if the catchments are expanded to include the Ross of Mull. Average journey times would increase by approximately 20 minutes for Craignure and 15 minutes for Garmony, necessitating additional bus services in each case. While Craignure offers some potential for active travel with its proximity to an 80-unit residential housing allocation, it is noted that improvements would need to be made footways and cross infrastructure. Garmony lacks nearby housing and has no planned developments at present. There are also limited benefits from improving footways or crossings on the adjacent highway network at this location. There is also a high potential for increased traffic on the A849 and A848 with more buses and car traffic commuting to a central site for a large proportion of pupils and staff who are based in Tobermory. This could be particularly challenging along sections of the route that involve single track road which will be subject to a high volume of commuters also heading northwards to Tobermory for work at a similar peak time.
- 6.3.27 Island communities are subject to more extreme weather conditions that can more frequently affect travel infrastructure including public transport and ferry travel. For all site locations, it is recommended that the new facilities include digital infrastructure to facilitate and access to online learning for pupils and staff who may not be able to travel to school due to weather-based disruptions.

#### **Q4. Will the proposals have an impact on the island's infrastructure or natural environment and biodiversity?**

- 6.3.28 A central site option would involve increased vehicle trip generation compared with a Tobermory location. The Economic Impact Assessment estimated that vehicle carbon emissions generated from these trips would be 352 kgCO<sub>2e</sub> for a Tobermory Site and 1,032 kgCO<sub>2e</sub> for a central Site.
- 6.3.29 It is acknowledged that the existing road infrastructure on Mull is constrained with large sections of single track road, particularly between Tobermory and central island localities. Increased trip generation on these roads could have adverse effects on local road infrastructure which may require upgrading and could involve increased maintenance costs.
- 6.3.30 A Tobermory site location is not likely to result in substantially higher levels of vehicular traffic compared to the existing baseline scenario.
- 6.3.31 Environmental impacts are likely to arise during construction of either site option. It is considered that these will be robustly assessed during the pre-planning process with appropriate mitigation and monitoring measures proposed to meet local and national planning requirements.

- 6.3.32 It is considered that sustainable design and energy measures will be incorporated into the new Campus, regardless of location, which could have a positive effect in terms of operational emissions and sustainability of the new Mull Campus. Further detail is expected in this regard as the Project develops.

**Q5. Effectively address the unique social challenges faced by island communities?**

- 6.3.33 Mull has an ageing population and while some communities have experienced growth in the population group aged 0-15 years, some communities such as the South West of Mull has experienced depopulation in this age group of 9%.
- 6.3.34 Some community members have attributed this to the lack of a central high schooling option for children living in the Ross of Mull who at present have the option to travel and board weekly at Oban High School. Many believe that this discourages young people from returning to the island in adulthood to live and work.
- 6.3.35 Parents in the South West of Mull have voiced concerns about their children's experiences at Oban High School. Some of these parents had personally experienced weekly boarding at Oban High School and due to their experiences had decided that they did not want that for their children. This was especially apparent as the survey showed that 50% of those surveyed stated that they would consider leaving the Ross of Mull if a school is not built centrally. Additionally, some parents knew of families who would return to Ross of Mull if there was a daily accessible secondary school for their children.
- 6.3.36 Through testimonies provided by Bunessan Parent Council, current and former pupils with experience of boarding at Oban High School detailed the adverse impact that boarding had on them and their mental health, citing particular difficulties with home-sickness and feeling isolated from their families and local community during secondary school.
- 6.3.37 Some community members in the South West of Mull have shared that the impacts of the previous school siting decision in Tobermory has resulted in generational impacts to the communities in this area which has shaped a number of social outcomes for the island as a whole. Community members also feel that if their children and young people are travelling to the mainland for high school education that they are less likely to return to the islands as young adults, bringing concerns around future depopulation. One parent reinforced this point by using an example of their friends who attended Oban High School and "*still don't have a close knit of friends*" as they don't know anyone in the north of the island.
- 6.3.38 Children who have to undertake long journeys to attend school, whether on Mull or in Oban are more likely to experience tiredness as a result. Parents with children who board at Oban High School have shared that their children are often so tired on the weekends that they worry about their ability to partake in local social activities. One parent stated: "*The children come back tired on a Friday and Sundays are ruined because they have to get up so early on Monday. They are 'not here' at the weekends as they are too tired to participate in normal life.*"
- 6.3.39 If a central school location was chosen, this could have the potential to positively impact social outcomes for children and young people currently living in the Ross of Mull, or those currently experiencing long commutes to Tobermory for high school. Many of these pupils, especially those from the Ross of Mull, would still likely experience longer than average travel times by bus each day, however it would provide a feasible option for them to remain on the island, living at home, while attending high school. They would also have the opportunity to socialise with a larger cohort of islanders across Mull who would also be attending the central high school opening up social opportunities such as friendships and participation in island based clubs and activities.
- 6.3.40 A central school location could have negative implications for younger and primary school aged children in Tobermory who would be required undertake daily journeys to a central location to attend early years and primary school education. As a result of this, average journey times for a central school location will increased by approximately 17.5 minutes over

the baseline (SYSTRA, 2025). This could negatively affect families who are less able to travel by car such as families on low income, experiencing unemployment or deprivation.

#### **Q6. Effectively address the unique health challenges faced by the islands' communities?**

- 6.3.41 Island communities face a number of unique health challenges linked which are augmented by limited access to healthcare services as a result of distance and travel from facilities and a lack of specialist care and emergency service provision within island communities.
- 6.3.42 Mental health challenges are prevalent in rural and island contexts, and this is often attributable to geographic isolation which can exacerbate feelings of loneliness. Limited access to mental health services also means island communities may lack the same level of support compared to mainland counterparts. Some island communities also have higher rates of chronic conditions such as hypertension, diabetes, and respiratory diseases due to lifestyle factors and limited preventative care options. Island residents may experience health inequalities compared to mainland populations due to socioeconomic disparities, limited job opportunities, and high costs of living.
- 6.3.43 While there is limited evidence around the impacts of daily travel time on children, some studies suggest that extended daily commutes of 30 minutes to an hour each way for children can have several impacts on the following:
- **Physical health:** longer commutes could result in increased sedentary behaviour due to children spending more time sitting during travel. A reduction in physical activity can contribute to health issues such as obesity and other chronic conditions (Chairassamee et al., 2024).
  - **Sleep and exercise:** children with longer travel times to school may get less sleep and engage in lower levels of physical activity compared to those with shorter commutes which has the potential to affect their overall wellbeing (Chairassamee et al., 2024).
  - **Mental health:** extended period spent commuting can increase stress and negative emotions in children, making it more difficult for them to concentrate during school hours. Linked to the above point, have less time for sleep and exercise could further impact negative health outcomes in children (Voulgaris et al., 2017).
  - **Academic Performance:** there is some evidence to suggest that a negative relationship between longer commuting times and academic performance (Alanzi and Alfraih, 2023).
- 6.3.44 The above factors are relevant to a number of pupils in both site option scenarios who need to contend with longer journey times than other peers across part of Argyll & Bute and Scotland more widely.
- 6.3.45 The Mull Campus proposals have generated a strong community response to an important matter that many care deeply about. A number of concerns have been raised by the community in respect of the proposals and it should be acknowledged that uncertainties around the proposals at present in terms of site location and catchment areas may be causing stress and anxiety to many families in the community. Community members, who have already contributed much to the engagement phases of the Project, have also expressed concerns during the impact assessment process. They have stated that they feel stretched and unable to engage with the process in their capacities as volunteers due to limited timeframes.
- 6.3.46 Some of the sentiments and concerns expressed by the community have indicated a loss of trust in the Project development process and could likely result in a negative impact on mental health for parents and families. It is recommended that Argyll & Bute Council regularly review and monitor their Engagement Strategy and consider measures to rebuild community trust around the Project to promote positive collaboration between the Council and community with

the aim of achieving beneficial outcomes for the Project and Mull's island communities as the Project develops.

**Q7. Does the project have the potential to impact on the use of Gaelic in the community?**

- 6.3.47 Community views suggest that the Project has the potential to increase the use of Gaelic in the community if a Gaelic unit is included as part of secondary education in order to continue the full Gaelic Medium Education (GME) currently available. Community views expressed that this could be further strengthened if a cohort from Bunessan Primary School are able to join to continue their Gaelic education at a central site option alongside GME pupils from Salen Primary School.
- 6.3.48 Delivering GME within the secondary sector of the campus is recognised as being very challenging due to ongoing issues around the recruitment and retention of teachers to Mull and the wider region, including Oban. As such, any GME provision at the Mull Campus cannot be guaranteed regardless of site location.
- 6.3.49 Feedback from Mull Primary Head Teachers also expressed that the new Campus could promote children's bilingual learning and exposure to Gaelic through dual language signage throughout the building and potentially bring together the two Gaelic Medium Units on the island (Salen and Bunessan Primary Schools) to increase the prominence of Gaelic within the island's communities.
- 6.3.50 Overall, it is viewed that the Project could result in minor positive impacts for the use of Gaelic and promotion of Gaelic learning for pupils of all ages and the wider community. The opportunities for this could be enhanced by bringing together two cohorts of Gaelic speaking children from Bunessan and Salen in a central secondary school.

**6.4 Summary**

- 6.4.1 Conclusions for the above assessment are provided below in accordance with high level assumptions for either a Central Site Location or a Tobermory Site Location.

**Conclusion Q1 – Island Demography and Population Challenges**

*Central Site Location*

- 6.4.2 It is considered that a central site location would positively impact children, young people and their families living in the South and South West of Mull and possibly bring unity to the North and South communities of the island. Community members feel strongly that a central high school option is crucial to reversing current trends of depopulation in the island's South West community.
- 6.4.3 Children, young people and their families would be affected in Tobermory and the North of Mull with increased travel times to school and importantly the removal of early years and primary school education in Tobermory which currently serves a combined total of 95 children, requiring them to travel daily to a central location. The implications of this could negatively impact the demographic structure of Tobermory and North Mull if families decided to move elsewhere with a risk of depopulation if they chose to leave the island.

*Tobermory Site Location*

- 6.4.4 Retaining education provision in Tobermory would positively impact pupils, families and community members currently utilising the existing Site through the re-provision of enhanced and contemporary facilities. This could also encourage population retention and growth in the area.
- 6.4.5 However, there would be no additional benefit to families living in the South West of Mull who would likely continue with status quo education arrangements for local primary schooling and



off-island secondary-school attendance. This option poses the continued risk of depopulation with the South West of Mull, where some families may make decisions to relocate on the basis of their child's education and to avoid the possibility weekly boarding on the mainland.

### **Conclusion Q2 – Economic Prosperity**

#### *Central Site Location*

- 6.4.6 The location of the Mull Campus has the potential to increase the value of developments within 0.5 miles of the school location, which would generate positive impacts. However, a central site could stimulate local business growth in this area, for example, a greater number of local businesses surrounding the school. Conversely, a central site option may result in a loss of revenue for Tobermory-based businesses and negatively impact working parents based in Tobermory and North Mull due to increased travel costs.
- 6.4.7 An increase in travel time for those living in Tobermory and North Mull may have a negative impact on parent's and carer's working patterns whilst also incurring additional fuel and maintenance costs for private vehicles, which may be unaffordable for some.

#### *Tobermory Site Location*

- 6.4.8 The Economic Impact Assessment estimated that there would be a higher economic benefit (£3,147,000) associated with a Tobermory location than a central site location. The location of the Mull Campus has the potential to increase the value of developments within 0.5 miles of the school location, which would generate positive impacts. As a larger settlement, the Tobermory site option may be more attractive to recruit and retain teachers, which is currently an issue on Mull.

### **Conclusion Q3 – Transport Challenges**

#### *Central Site Location*

- 6.4.9 Based on the travel considerations outlined, both Site 2 – Craignure and Site 3 – Garmony would result in increased travel times (approximately 20 minutes for Craignure and 15 minutes for Garmony), distances and carbon emissions. Both sites would require additional bus services. While Craignure offers some potential for active travel, improvements would still be required. Despite this, it was deemed of little benefit to provide additional footways or crossing opportunities on the adjacent highway network.

#### *Tobermory Site Location*

- 6.4.10 Based on the travel considerations outlined, Site 4 – Tobermory South emerges as the most favourable option. It maintains proximity to some existing housing and is adjacent to planned developments for up to 112 new residential units, which could support future active travel. The presence of existing footways and travel times, distances, and carbon emissions are expected to remain consistent with the baseline make it a practical choice.
- 6.4.11 While Site 1 – Tobermory (existing site) also offers proximity to housing and unchanged travel conditions, its constraints for large vehicle access during construction could pose logistical challenges. Sites 2 – Craignure and 3 – Garmony, by contrast, would significantly increase travel times, carbon emissions, and the need for additional buses, making them less efficient and less environmentally sustainable. Overall, South Tobermory balances accessibility, sustainability, and future growth potential, making it the best performing option.

### **Conclusion Q4 – Island's Infrastructure**

#### *Central Site Location*

- 6.4.12 A central site option would involve increased vehicle trip generation compared to a Tobermory location. It was estimated that vehicle carbon emissions generated from these trips would be

1,032 kgCO<sub>2</sub>e. As existing roads from Tobermory to central island locations are mainly single track, increased trip generation could have adverse effects on local road infrastructure which may require upgrading.

- 6.4.13 Environmental impacts are likely to arise at both locations during construction but will be appropriately mitigated against. The new Campus, regardless of location, is likely to have a positive effect in terms of operational emissions and sustainability due to appropriate design and energy measures.

*Tobermory Site Location*

- 6.4.14 A Tobermory Site location would result in lower vehicle trip generation compared to a central site location. It was estimated that vehicle carbon emissions generated from these trips would be 352 kgCO<sub>2</sub>e.

**Conclusion Q5 – Unique Social Challenges of Island Communities**

*Central Site Location*

- 6.4.15 Parents in the South West of Mull have voiced concerns if the school is not built centrally, as 50% of those surveys stated that they would consider leaving the area.
- 6.4.16 A central site option could have the potential to positively impact social outcomes for children and young people who have to undertake long journeys to attend school. Additionally, they have a greater opportunity to interact with a larger cohort children and young people on the island. However, for children and young people in Tobermory, average journey times for a central school location will increase by approximately 17.5 minutes over the baseline.
- 6.4.17 Additionally, a central site option could have negative implications for younger and primary school aged children in Tobermory who would be required to undertake daily journeys to a central location to attend early years and primary school education.

*Tobermory Site Location*

- 6.4.18 Some community members in the South West of Mull have shared that the impacts of previous school siting decision in Tobermory has resulted in generational impacts and has shaped a number of social outcomes. Parents in South West Mull also raised that the issue of depopulation will continue in their area if the school was located in Tobermory. Children, especially in South West of Mull, who have to travel long journeys shared how tired they feel from their journeys, and this would continue with a Tobermory site location.

**Conclusion Q6 – Unique Health Challenges in Island Communities**

*All Site Locations*

- 6.4.19 Island communities face a number of unique health challenges. Some studies suggest that extended daily commutes of 30 minute to an hour each way for children can have several impacts on physical health, sleep and exercise, mental health and academic performance. These factors are relevant to a number of pupils in both Site option scenarios who need to contend with longer journey times than other peers across part of Argyll & Bute and Scotland more widely.

**Conclusion Q7 – Gaelic in the Community**

*All Site Locations*

- 6.4.20 Overall, it is viewed that the Project could result in minor positive impacts for the use of Gaelic and promotion of Gaelic learning for pupils of all ages and the wider community. Members of the community and school representatives have suggested the inclusion of Gaelic signage in the design of the new Campus building. While some members of the community are



advocating for further opportunities for Gaelic provision in the secondary sector of the Campus it is recognised that the delivery of this would be challenging due to recruitment constraints. It is recommended that opportunities to incorporate Gaelic in the new Campus are explored where possible during further development of the Project.

## 7 Children's Rights and Wellbeing Impact Assessment

### 7.1 Introduction

7.1.1 The Children and Young People (Scotland) Act 2014 requires public bodies to consider whether existing and emerging legislation, policy and guidance have an impact on children and young people and to assess what further action is required to ensure compliance with the UNCRC. CRWIAs are one of the general measures of implementation under the Convention. It recommends that all levels of government complete a CRWIA as part of their policy development.

7.1.2 There are four general principles of the UNCRC which must always be considered in policy appraisal:

- **Article 2:** apply rights without discrimination;
- **Article 3:** best interests of the child to be a principal consideration;
- **Article 6:** right to life, survival and development; and
- **Article 12:** right to express a view and have that view taken into account.

7.1.3 These articles underpin all other rights in the Convention and have formed the basis for consideration within this assessment. Additional articles considered relevant to this appraisal include, further detail is provided in **Appendix B: Summary of the UNCRC** (UNICEF UK, 2019):

- **Article 15:** freedom of association;
- **Article 23:** rights of the disabled children;
- **Article 24:** right to best possible health;
- **Article 29:** goals of education;
- **Article 30:** rights of children from minority or indigenous groups; and
- **Article 31:** right to leisure, play and participation in cultural and artistic activities.

### 7.2 Assessment Approach

7.2.1 The following guide framing questions have been applied to testing the performance of the proposed Mull Campus Development in relation to implementing the CRW Duties. This provides a transparent framework to assess the extent to which emerging components of the development have an impact on children and young people and assess what further action is required to ensure compliance with the UNCRC.

7.2.2 The framing questions, as set out below, have been applied to test and confirm the implementation of relevant Scottish Ministers' duties under the Children and Young People (Scotland) Act 2014 and the UNCRC in relation to the proposed Mull Campus. They have been formulated with reference to the approach recommended within the Scottish Government's Child Rights and Wellbeing (CRW) Impact Assessment Guidance (Scottish Government, 2021a).

7.2.3 The objective is to help progress the realisation of children's rights, and safeguard support and promote the wellbeing of children and young people.

- 7.2.4 The assessment has been informed through engagement activities with relevant groups of interest and impact (as discussed in **Section 3.2**).
- 7.2.5 The framing questions have been applied in relation to the UNCRC articles and taking account of the Scottish Government's SHANARRI<sup>5</sup> wellbeing indicators developed for the Getting it Right for Every Child (GIRFEC) approach (Scottish Government, 2023b) to children's services provision in Scotland. These indicators were developed from the UNCRC and are incorporated in the Children and Young People (Scotland) Act 2014. They are safe, healthy, achieving, nurtured, active, respected, responsible and included.

#### **Guide Questions: Children's Rights and Wellbeing impact Assessment**

- Q1. What likely impact will the Mull Campus Proposals have on Children's Rights?
- Q2. How will the Mull Campus proposals affect the wellbeing of children and young people?
- Q3. Are some children and young people more likely to be affected by the proposals than others?

### **7.3 Pupil Forum Engagement**

- 7.3.1 To inform the CRWIA, representatives from the Mull Campus Pupil Working Group were invited to provide feedback during an online video call and afterwards by completing feedback forms centred around the three assessment questions highlighted below in **Section 7.4**. Pupil representatives from Lochdonhead Primary School, Bunessan Primary School, Ulva Primary School, Tobermory Primary School and Tobermory High School joined the call on 15 January 2025. The call was led by an Education Officer from Argyll & Bute Council with a consultant from Stantec present.
- 7.3.2 Written feedback was received digitally from pupils attending Ulva Primary School, Tobermory Primary School, Bunessan Primary School and Tobermory High School. No written responses were received from Lochdonhead Primary School, however verbal feedback captured during the online session has been taken into account. All responses gathered are presented anonymously to protect confidentiality.

### **7.4 Children's Rights and Wellbeing Impact Assessment Findings**

#### **Q1. What likely impact will the Mull Campus Proposals have on Children's Rights?**

- 7.4.1 The Project adheres to the four underpinning Rights of the UNCRC, including:
- **Article 2 (non-discrimination):** The Project proposals considered the needs of all children and young people on Mull without discrimination. For example, this includes consideration of children and young people with protected characteristics, their socio-demographic status and other status factors such as language, ability, or geographic location. This is evidenced in this IIA Report.
  - **Article 3 (best interests of the child):** The Project proposals consider the best interests of children in the decision making process. This IIA report indicates that there is not one single solution that equally meets the needs of all children and young people living on Mull due to the challenges of its island context and geography. While the Education Authority has a duty to educate pupils in accordance with the wishes of their parents, there is a requirement for this to be compatible with the provision of suitable instruction and training

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<sup>5</sup> Eight wellbeing indicators: Safe, Healthy, Achieving, Nurtured, Active, Respected, Responsible, and Included.

and the avoidance of unreasonable public expenditure (Section 28, *Education (Scotland) Act 1980*).

- **Article 6 (life, survival and development):** The Project proposals support the delivery of a contemporary and accessible education campus facilities, designed to meet the needs of children, young people and their local communities on the Isle of Mull. In doing so, the proposals intend to support children to survive and develop to their full potential.
- **Article 12 (respect for the views of the child):** Every child has the right to express their views, feelings and wishes in all matters affecting them, and to have their views considered and taken seriously. The Mull Campus Team have engagement with all schools on Mull and Iona, as well as pupils from these areas attending Oban High School, during school engagement sessions in September 2024 to gather views on the Project to inform the site selection process. A pupil forum has also been established by the Mull Campus Team which invites pupil representative from all affected schools to meet regularly to discuss the Project and to be informed of the process and development of proposals. Argyll & Bute Council have also published an Engagement Strategy which details plans for key engagement activities, including those with children and young people as the Project develops. To inform the CRWIA, the Pupil Forum were invited to provide feedback for the assessment as detailed in **Section 7.3**.

7.4.2 The following articles have also been identified as relevant to the Project and are considered below in relation to different site options:

- **Article 15 (freedom of association):** Every child has the right to meet with other children and join groups and organisations, as long as this does not stop other people from enjoying their rights. A key driver of a central campus option is to provide children and young people across Mull with equal opportunities as part of the secondary school experience. This could include attendance and participation in school sports, clubs and music lessons available to all children on Mull. However, some community feedback has raised concerns that increased or long travel times for a large proportion of children travelling from Tobermory or the Ross of Mull to a central site location could affect their ability to participate fully in group and organisations due to timings, travel arrangements and the potential implications of a longer school day on children's wellbeing.
- **Article 23 (children with a disability):** Children with a disability have the right to live a full and decent life with dignity and as far as possible, independence and to play an active part in the community. Regardless of the site option, the Mull Campus has the potential to deliver benefits for children with disabilities living on Mull. At present, there are concerns around inadequate accessibility at the existing Tobermory 2-18 School site which does not include suitable level access provision and is constrained by narrow corridors and split-level site design. The new Mull Campus will be designed to include modern accessibility standards and intends to provide a range of learning environments to support children with physical and mental disabilities or additional support requirement. The Council currently make provision for the transport needs of disabled pupils (i.e., by taxi or specialist bus) and future provisions will likely continue to be made available to meet the needs of pupils regardless of site option or where they reside on the island.
- **Article 24 (right to best possible health):** Every child has the right to the best possible health. All site locations have the potential to positive impact the health of all children through the provision of well-designed high-quality learning environments and sports facilities. In terms of active travel, a Tobermory location would facilities walking or cycling to school for a large proportion of Tobermory Primary and High School pupils. Currently 90% of primary pupils live within a five minute walk of the existing school site and 50% of Tobermory High School pupils live in Tobermory. It is likely that good levels of active travel to school will be maintained in either the existing or South Tobermory site option which is linked to a range of health benefits for children and young people. Active travel to school would be highly unlikely for the majority of pupils attending either central locations at Garmony or Craignure (Systra, 2025) and all pupils would likely be travelling via bus or car

to school. Increased sedentary time for a large proportion of pupils could have a negative impact on their health, particularly for those with longer commuting times.

- **Article 29 (goals of education):** Education must develop every child's personality, talents and abilities to the full. It must encourage the child's respect for human rights, as well as respect for their parents, their own and other cultures, and the environment. The Project has the potential to contribute positively to this right by designing a contemporary education facility that can deliver educational and social benefits to a range of children and young people living on Mull.
- **Article 30 (rights of children from minority or indigenous groups):** Every child has the right to learn and use the language, customs and religion of their family, whether or not these are shared by the majority of people where they live. In the context of Mull, like many other Scottish islands, there is a larger proportion of Scottish Gaelic speakers and relevant to the scope of this Project, provision is currently made for Gaelic Medium Education at Buessan Primary, Salen Primary, Tobermory High School and Oban High School. The National Islands Plan Survey (2022) suggests that 13% of people in the Argyll Islands speak Gaelic. Regardless of site location, the Mull Campus has the potential to deliver Gaelic education for secondary pupils which promotes and protects the heritage and culture of the island for future generations. If this was delivered in a central location, then there would be a greater potential of bringing Gaelic speaking children from the South and North of the island together at secondary school.
- **Article 31 (right to leisure, play and participation in cultural and artistic activities):** Every child has the right to relax, play and take part in a wide range of cultural and artistic activities. Some children and parents living in the Ross of Mull and attending boarding school in Oban have cited concerns about their ability to participate in local activities as they can only return home for a short period at the weekends and often feel tired from travelling when they return. A central site option could enable the majority of children on Mull to participate in local sporting, cultural or other leisure activities locally with their island peers. However, at present many activities for children and young people are currently organised in and around Tobermory. There is also a concern that if the school site was relocated this would affect the provision of local activities in Tobermory or that children would be less able to attend due to increased travel time, increased travel costs and the need for additional travel arrangements which could be challenging for some families.

7.4.3 Some members of the community have referenced UNCRC Article 9 stating that children should not be separated from their parents in relation to the current scenario where children from the Ross of Mull leave their family homes weekly to board on the mainland in order to attend Oban High School, as per their defined catchment area. Many argue that secondary-school aged children are entitled to remain with their families during the week and the current catchment provision does not allow for this. A central site option could allow greater choice for pupils and families living in the Ross of Mull to attend secondary school on the island which would allow children to more fully enjoy all aspects of family life during their time at secondary school.

7.4.4 While the premise of citing Article 9 is important, the Article covers instances where there is enforced separation by the State of a child and parent. Examples of that being where a child is removed from the parent(s) by virtue of procedures under social work legislation, where a parent is detained or imprisoned or where a court makes an order restricting contact between a child and parent. As such, Article 9 would not apply to the current scenario as parents have a legal right to make a placing request for their child to attend a school that is not in their catchment area, as such Education Authorities cannot legally force children to only attend their catchment school.

7.4.5 Similarly, many parents and children have identified Article 8 of the European Convention on Human Rights in respect of children's rights to a private and family life as being a relevant consideration in the Project. Article 8 is a qualified right and under the current proposals it is unlikely to be engaged on the basis that while the Education Authority is required to make

arrangements to set its catchment areas, it does not require the children attending with those areas to attend the catchment schools.

- 7.4.6 Taking the above into account, however, should not invalidate the concerns of children, young people and their families who wish to avoid boarding on the mainland as part of the decision-making process.

**Q2. How will the Mull Campus proposals affect the wellbeing of children and young people?**

- 7.4.7 During the Pupil Working Group engagement, some young people expressed that the proposals involving increased travel time would have a negative impact on their mental health and physical wellbeing. For children and young people in the Ross of Mull this was a concern linked with weekly boarding at Oban High School. For children and young people in Tobermory concerns were raised around no longer being able to walk to school and spending more time travel to and from school which could also limit participation in sports clubs or other after-school activities.
- 7.4.8 Testimonies provided by Bunessan Parent Council from current and former pupils with experience of boarding at Oban High School highlight some of the difficulties experienced by pupils who board, including adverse impacts on their mental health often linked with homesickness and feeling isolated from their families. Some former pupils said that these challenges affected their mental health in adulthood after finishing secondary school. If a Tobermory site is selected then, there would continue to be a proportion of pupils from the Ross of Mull who are likely to experience a range of difficulties boarding weekly in Oban for the duration of their secondary school education.
- 7.4.9 If the existing Tobermory site is selected for the Campus, additional consideration should be given to the disruption this could cause for pupils during the proposed two year construction period. This includes any decanting requirements while the site is prepared for construction and any amenity impacts (e.g., noise pollution, air pollution and dust) that could be experienced by children during school hours in addition to the safety of children in respect of increased construction and HGV traffic accessing the site.
- 7.4.10 Representatives from a Parent Council have requested that information is provided about the impacts of any potential building works on Tobermory High School pupils with assurance provided that their education will not be disrupted. It was expressed that a group of children have already been impacted by renovation works at Salen Primary School, involving a decant, in addition to disruptions caused by COVID-19. Efforts to minimise further disruption to their learning should be prioritised.
- 7.4.11 The Project responds directly to the need for improvements at the current Tobermory High School site which has a number of accessibility issues. The development of a new education Campus aims to provide a contemporary, pleasant and accessible learning environment for all children and young people, including those with additional needs. Regardless of site location, this is considered to have a significant positive impact on the wellbeing of pupils attending the Campus.
- 7.4.12 During consultation, concerns were raised about the potential increase in travel if younger children (e.g., early years and primary school aged children) were to be transported to a location outside of Tobermory. Key issues raised related to the wellbeing of children, especially, spending longer portions of their day travelling by bus or car. Additionally, concerns were raised around the impact on children who are neurodiverse or have other reasons to avoid long travel times such as experiencing travel sickness or bullying.
- 7.4.13 The safety of children was also raised during consultation as parents raised the importance of safe pick-up and drop-off areas at the new Campus. Active travel was also an important factor for many parents and children and young people, with a desire for pupils to be able to safely walk and cycle to school. Currently, 90% of children attending Tobermory Primary School and pupils live within a five minute walk of the school. Of the 157 pupils at Tobermory High School, 50% live within Tobermory. The Transport Review conducted by Systra (2025), suggests that



there would be very limited potential for active travel in either of the proposed central site locations due to their geographic locations and limited connectivity to residential settlements and co-located services.

### **Q3. Are some children and young people more likely to be affected by the proposals than others?**

- 7.4.14 It is clear from the ICIA that there is no clear definitive site option that would meet the needs of Mull communities in its entirety under the current proposals. With both site options there are groups of children and young people who will benefit and others who are more likely to be disproportionately affected by the proposals. For a Tobermory Site location, secondary school aged pupils living in the Ross of Mull would continue to be disadvantaged in terms of high school access and would face the choice of continuing to board off-island and attend Oban High School.
- 7.4.15 For a central site location, there would be more equity in terms of secondary school provision that is more suited to serving a wider proportion of the island's population. However, this option would bring disadvantages for pre-school and primary school aged children living in Tobermory who would be required to undertake longer journeys by bus each day to access education.
- 7.4.16 Generally, many parents felt that longer travel times from Tobermory to a central location for high school aged pupils would have less of an adverse impact as they were more likely to adapt and cope with an increase in travel time similar to that undertaken by many of their peers currently to attend Tobermory High School.
- 7.4.17 As the Project develops, community members have requested that they are kept informed about any implications that could have a knock-on effect on other schools on Mull. For example, if pre-school and primary school provision was to be relocated from Tobermory as part of a central campus option, implications would need to be considered for nearby schools such as Salen Primary School and its ability to accommodate any additional primary intake that may arise.

## **7.5 Summary**

- 7.5.1 In general, the Project aligns with the general principles underpinning the UNCRC. The development of Project proposals through engagement have aims to take the diverse needs of all children, including those with protected characteristics or specific geographic challenges into account. While no site solution fully meets the needs of all children due to Mull's geography and the financial constraints of the Project, decisions have aimed to balance educational needs, parental wishes, and reasonable public expenditure. Findings in relation to other relevant UNCRC articles are summarised below:
- The provision of modern, accessible campus facilities aim to support children's growth and development;
  - Engagement with children and young people via the Pupil Working Group and school sessions has sought to ensure that children's voices and views are considered. The Mull Campus Engagement strategy also outlines how this will be managed in the future.
  - Overall, the Project aims to deliver increased accessibility and contemporary learning environments for all pupils, including those with a disability or additional support needs.
  - The Project has the potential to promote island and Gaelic heritage and provide cultural opportunities.
  - Some concerns are noted in regard to children's ability to participate in extracurricular activities and travel to school via walking or cycling if they would be required to undertake significant different travel routines with increased journey times.

7.5.2 The following impacts on children's wellbeing have been considered:

- The new campus has the potential to address long-standing accessibility challenges currently identified at the existing Tobermory 2-18 High School site and provide improved learning environments benefitting all pupils including those with additional needs and enhancing overall pupil wellbeing.
- Increased travel times for children from Tobermory to a central site location could negatively affect children's wellbeing and their ability to participate in extracurricular activities.
- Safety, travel arrangements, and minimising disruptions during construction are key priorities raised by parents and pupils.
- It is also acknowledged that some community members have expressed concern around the impact of boarding weekly on secondary aged pupils on their health and wellbeing from the Ross of Mull. In particular, there are concerns around the implications of this on their children's mental health and physical wellbeing, including their ability to participate fully in island life.

7.5.3 The following differential impacts were identified for different groups of children and young people:

- A Tobermory site option maintains proximity for local children but continues challenges for children from the Ross of Mull, who may need to board off-island for secondary school.
- A central site option provides more equitable secondary school access across Mull but disadvantages Tobermory's younger children, who would face longer daily commutes to early years and primary school attendance.
- Parents generally believe that that older children can better adapt to longer travel times compared with younger children.
- Community members emphasise the need to manage any knock-on effect on nearby primary schools if Tobermory provision is relocated.

7.5.4 In conclusion, while the Mull Campus Proposals have the potential to significantly enhance education and children's rights on Mull, they also present challenges around travel, wellbeing, and equitable access, particularly for specific groups of children. Ongoing consultation and mitigation strategies will be critical.



## 8 Equality Impact Assessment

### 8.1 Introduction

- 8.1.1 Section 149 of the Equality Act 2010 sets out a 'Public Sector Equality Duty' (PSED). This requires public authorities to have due regard to the need to eliminate discrimination, harassment, victimisation, advance equality of opportunity, and foster good relations between those with a protected characteristic and those without.<sup>6</sup>
- 8.1.2 The Duty covers the following protected characteristics: age, disability, gender reassignment, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex and sexual orientation. The public sector equality duty also covers marriage and civil partnerships, with regard to eliminating unlawful discrimination in employment.
- 8.1.3 The Equality Act 2010 (Specific Duties) (Scotland) Regulations 2012 require listed authorities to undertake an impact assessment in relation to the needs outlined in section 149(1) of the Act and take account of the results of the assessment in development of the policy. The approach to the assessment has been informed by reference to the Scottish Government's general guidance on the PSED (Scottish Government, 2016) and relevant guidance on application of the duty in Scotland (Equality and Human Rights Commission, 2016).

### 8.2 Assessment Approach

- 8.2.1 The assessment has been framed using the key aims of the PSED have been applied to test the performance of the proposed Project in relation to this duty and to assess the extent to which it promotes equality of opportunity.
- 8.2.2 The assessment takes the following three key aims of the Duty into account:
- Eliminating discrimination, harassment and victimisation;
  - Advancing equality of opportunity; and
  - Fostering good relations.
- 8.2.3 The second of these aims involves:
- Removing or minimising disadvantages affecting people due to their protected characteristics;
  - Taking steps to meet the needs of people with certain protected characteristics where these are different from the needs of other people; and
  - Encouraging people with certain protected characteristics to participate in public life or in other activities where their participation is disproportionately low.

#### **Assessment Scope**

- 8.2.4 Age and disability have been scoped in as the proposals have the potential to disproportionately or differentially affect school children or staff with these protected characteristics.
- 8.2.5 However, the proposals are unlikely to disproportionately or differentially affect school children or staff with the following protected characteristics: ethnicity; sex; gender reassignment;

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<sup>6</sup> The protected characteristics referenced within this duty are specified within Section 4 of the Act, namely: age; disability; gender reassignment; marriage and civil partnership; pregnancy and maternity; race; religion or belief; sex; and sexual orientation.

marriage and civil partnership; pregnancy and maternity; religion or belief; and sexual orientation. Therefore, these protected characteristics have been scoped out of the assessment.

### 8.3 Equality Impact Assessment Findings

#### Age

- 8.3.1 This section discusses the potential impacts of both campus locations on different age groups: young children (early years and primary school aged children) and older children (high school age).
- 8.3.2 For children in Tobermory, travelling to a central site would result in much longer journey times which could have a negative impact, especially for the younger children. Longer travel times for a greater number of children may also result in an adverse effect on educational attainment, thereby reducing equality of opportunity for all children. As shown in **Table 4.2**, performance relating to reading; listening and talking; numeracy; and writing within Argyll & Bute are all currently below the national averages. If a larger number of children are required to travel greater distances for school as would be the case with a central site option, there is concern that this could affect wellbeing, energy levels and ability to concentrate during school hours which may take away from their learning. This was echoed by feedback received from the Pupil Forum where children were concerned about the impacts of undertaking long daily commutes by bus and losing the ability to walk to school.
- 8.3.3 Conversely, a central site would benefit children living in the south and southwest of the island and would enable all children on the island to stay on the island by reducing the need for children to board at Oban High School throughout the week. However, through the consultation process it was highlighted by some parents that it is important that this commute remains an option regardless of what site option is taken forward. A benefit of the central site option would mean that there would be no discrimination for children depending on what part of the island they are from, thereby advancing equality of opportunity for children in the south and southwest of the island. Additionally, children from other parts of the island would spend less time travelling with a central site and may have more energy during school which may positively impact education attainment averages. A central site option would enable greater socialising amongst young people on the island and may lead to a greater level of unity across Mull.
- 8.3.4 A centrally located campus may negatively impact children and young people in relation to being able to attend after school clubs, particularly those living in Tobermory who already have access to such clubs. This was highlighted by school children attending both Tobermory Primary School and High School during the Pupil Forum engagement and concern was specifically raised regarding a lack of transport home. Additionally, the Transport Review Report (Systra, 2025), found that 50% of Tobermory High School students lived within Tobermory and many felt that because the majority of children attending the school lives within the surrounding area, the school would benefit from a Tobermory location.
- 8.3.5 Independence of both younger and older children are at risk through a central site as far fewer children would be able to exercise the freedoms that they are able to currently. An example of this was raised through the older children during consultation with Tobermory High School. They stated that a central location has the potential to negatively impact their mental health due to a likely remote location which would not allow them to have as much freedom as they do now, for example, at the moment they are able to go into town to the shops at lunch time. In addition to this, younger children raised how a central location would negatively impact their mental and physical health as they would no longer be able to walk to and from school. As stated in the Transport Report (Systra, 2025), 90% of the 81 pupils in Tobermory Primary School live within a 5 minute walk from the school. A central location would mean that children must travel to and from the school, reducing their level of physical activity throughout the day.

## **Disability**

- 8.3.6 Improved campus facilities as a result of the proposed development will positively impact disabled children and staff compared to existing provision. This is likely to include enhanced accessibility measures and design features that could benefit pupils and staff with a disability. Further detail on these design measure will come forward as the project develops.
- 8.3.7 An increase in travel times, for example for children and staff living in Tobermory travelling to a central location, will have a negative impact on disabled children and staff. Conversely, a decrease in travel times, for example for children and staff living in Lochdon travelling to a central location, will have a positive impact on disabled children and staff.
- 8.3.8 Poverty rates remain higher for households in which somebody is disabled compared to those where no-one is disabled (Scottish Government, 2023c). Additionally, people who have a long-term illness or disability that limits their daily activities are more likely to live in households that do not have access to a private car. This may adversely impact disabled children who require transportation to school and may not be able to use a public bus. There is potential for additional adverse impacts if a parent is disabled and or does not have use of a private car. This would be particularly evident if the school was centrally located. This is a particular concern as the highest proportion of residents whose day-to-day activities are limited a lot is the South.

## **8.4 Summary**

- 8.4.1 It is considered that a central Site option would positively impact children and young people and their families living in the South and South West of Mull and bring unity to the North and South communities of the island. During consultation, children and young people from these areas raised that a central Site option would be fairer for them as they would not have to travel as far every day and could potentially participate in after school clubs.
- 8.4.2 However, children and young people from Tobermory and the North of Mull presented concern with a central Site option as it would significantly increase their journey time to and from school, reduce their current freedoms and potentially remove their ability to attend after school clubs. They showed preference towards a Tobermory site option as they could continue to walk to and from school and because the majority of students currently live in and around Tobermory.
- 8.4.3 It is considered that all site options would positively impact disabled children as the school would have improved campus facilities, such as enhanced accessibility measures. However, there are potential negative impacts as a result of a central site as some disabled children may not be able to travel by public transport and this would put pressure on family members or caregivers who may not have access to a private car.

## 9 Fairer Scotland Duty Assessment

### 9.1 Introduction

- 9.1.1 The FSD places a legal responsibility on certain public bodies in Scotland to actively consider how they can reduce inequalities of outcome caused by socio-economic disadvantage when making strategic decisions or developing policy. This differs from the PSED which considers only reducing inequalities of opportunity. The Duty seeks to tackle socio-economic disadvantage and reduce the inequalities associated with being disadvantaged. It is closely related to issues of poverty which may affect outcomes across health, housing, education and training and employment prospects.
- 9.1.2 The FSD identifies a need to consider both 'communities of place' and 'communities of interest' in terms of people who share an experience and are particularly impacted by socio-economic disadvantage (Scottish Government, 2021b). Demographic groups who share one or more of the protected characteristics listed in Section 4 of the Equality Act 2010 can be considered 'communities of interest', meaning there is a direct link between the FSD and the PSED.

### 9.2 Assessment Approach

- 9.2.1 The FSD assessment considers impacts of the Project on two key parts of the Duty, with relevant criteria identified from the statutory guidance. This includes consideration of the following:

- **Socio-economic disadvantage**, which is influenced by low income, low/no wealth, material and area deprivation and socio-economic background; and
- **Inequality of outcome**, including education, skills, employment, crime, health and wellbeing, life expectancy, living standards, poverty and connectivity.

- 9.2.2 The assessment has been informed through engagement activities with relevant groups of interest and impact (as discussed in **Section 3**).

#### **Socio-Economic Disadvantage**

- 9.2.3 Socio-economic disadvantage considers living on a low income compared to others in Scotland, with little or no accumulated wealth, leading to greater material deprivation, restricting the ability to access basic goods and services. As well as considering areas of deprivation, the guidance also identified communities of place and communities of interest (Scottish Government, 2019).
- 9.2.4 Communities of place describe people who are bound together because of where they live or work. Communities of interest refers to groups who share an experience such as homelessness, or those who share one or more protected characteristics as listed in the Equality Act 2010.
- #### **Inequality of Outcome**
- 9.2.5 The Fairer Scotland Duty is intended to reduce inequalities of outcome cause by socio-economic disadvantage. Inequality of outcome refers to the measurable difference between those who have experienced socio-economic disadvantage and the rest of the population, for example this could be in relation to health and life expectancy or educational attainment. Socio-economically disadvantaged households have a higher risk of experiencing negative outcomes (Scottish Government, 2019).
- 9.2.6 Background to topic and provide response based on education outcomes, and other relevant topics from above bullet point.

## 9.3 Fairer Scotland Duty Findings

### Socio-Economic Disadvantage

An assessment has been provided below for the main consideration that would affect socio-economic disadvantage in respect of the Project. This includes Area Deprivation whereby living in a deprived area can exacerbate negative outcomes for individuals and households already affected by issues of low-income. Socio-economic background is considered which take account of structural disadvantage that can arise from parents' education, employment and income. Communities of interest and communities of place have also been identified.

#### *Area Deprivation*

- 9.3.1 The North, South West and South of Mull all fall into the least deprived 40% of areas in Scotland, whilst Tobermory performs even better in the bottom 30%. This means that the Isle of Mull is relatively better off in terms of deprivation compared to other areas within Scotland. While this provides some measure of deprivation, it should be noted that island contexts are known to have higher a cost of living and rates of fuel poverty compared to mainland counterparts which could affect adversely affect income deprivation.
- 9.3.2 The baseline evidence presented in **Section 4.4** highlights key challenges across different parts of the island, shaped by its geography, economy and infrastructure in terms of deprivation.
- 9.3.3 The North of Mull faces severe deprivation in access to services, it is in the 2% most deprived of geographic areas, due to its remote and dispersed population, which makes it difficult to provide regular and convenient access to facilities. Housing deprivation (43%) may reflect limited housing stock, and the high costs associated with building or maintaining homes in remote areas. However, the area's lower crime levels (top 14% least deprived) and moderate education deprivation (23% least deprived) suggest a safe community with reasonably good access to education compared to other parts of the island.
- 9.3.4 Tobermory, the island's largest settlement, experiences challenges in income and employment deprivation. Despite being better connected than other areas, housing deprivation also remains an issue. The relatively better access to services, top 40% least deprived of areas in Scotland, reflects Tobermory's role as a service hub for the island.
- 9.3.5 The South West area of the island experiences extreme deprivation in access to services, ranked in the lowest percentile, this reflects its isolation and sparse infrastructure. The area is geographically remote, with fewer roads and limited public transport. However, the South West performs well in health and crime, for both domains the area ranked in the top 20% least deprived in Scotland. This is likely due to its rural character, low population density, and healthier lifestyle factors often associated with remote living.
- 9.3.6 The South of Mull similarly struggles with access to services ranked in the bottom percentile, reflecting its geographical challenges. However, the South performs relatively well in crime and health ranked in the top 30% least deprived.
- 9.3.7 While overall levels of multiple deprivation across Mull perform better compared to other areas of Scotland, it is clear that the island's geographies are impacted by more unique factors of deprivation typical for island and rural communities in terms of access to services and housing deprivation.
- 9.3.8 In terms of overall impact depending on the Campus site selection, it is not clear how area deprivation could be affected by either site option. It is likely that a central Site option could result in reduced access to services in Tobermory if the 2-18 Campus was to relocate, resulting in an adverse impact for the locality. However, a central option would enhance access to services for a central site options, particularly if this could be co-located with other services and infrastructure such as the Community Hospital and ferry terminal in Craignure.

### *Socio-Economic Background*

- 9.3.9 Socio-economic background is a structural disadvantage that can arise as a result of parents' education, employment and income. These factors in the Mull context are discussed below.
- 9.3.10 Educational attainment is closely linked to socio-economic background. Baseline evidence suggests that there is noticeable variation within Mull's specific study areas (e.g., North, South, South West and Tobermory). Some areas, such as the North, have a relatively high percentage of residents with degree-level qualifications, while others, such as the South, show higher proportions of residents with no qualifications or lower school qualifications, suggesting localised disparities in educational attainment.
- 9.3.11 However, Mull overall has a higher proportion of adults aged 16 years and over who have a degree level qualification or above at 42% compared with the Argyll & Bute average of 32% and the Scottish average of 34%. Across the island 46% of adults aged 16 years and above have a degree level qualification or above compared with 43% in the South West, 40% in the South and 39% in Tobermory. This suggest that Tobermory could have greater sensitivity in terms of educational attainment compared to other parts of the island.
- 9.3.12 Approximately 63.0% of people aged 16+ in Mull are economically active, which is lower than both the Argyll & Bute and Scotland averages (75.0% and 77.1%, respectively). Average gross weekly pay for full-time workers in Mull is not available, therefore, the Argyll & Bute average has been used instead which is £653. This compares to a Scottish average of £702 and a British average of £682. In 2024 48% of employee jobs in Argyll & Bute are 'Managers, Professional and Associated Professional Occupations'. This compares to 50% for Scotland and 52% for Great Britain (Argyll & Bute Council, 2024c).
- 9.3.13 The above data suggests that people living on the Isle of Mull are likely to be earning less compared to the Scottish average. While lower levels of economic activity may be reflective of an ageing population in Mull, there are likely disparities on the island in terms of socio-economic background compared to other parts of Scotland. The Economic Impact Assessment has quantified the potential impact of the Mull Campus proposals on future earning and loss of earnings depending on the site location (see **Sections 5.3.9 – 5.3.16**). There is a greater loss to earning and future earning for a central site location compared to Tobermory, which considers the larger population in the Tobermory settlement. This impact could be augmented by increased sensitivity among the population in terms of average full-time weekly earnings being lower and lower levels of economic activity on the island.

### *Communities of Interest and Communities of Place*

- 9.3.14 A community of interest refers to groups of people who share an experience. In this context, that is also closely aligned with communities of place so both factors are considered together. A notable community of interest in the context of the Mull Campus proposal is secondary school aged children from the Ross of Mull and other localities who access secondary education by boarding on the mainland to attend Oban High School. Community feedback has expressed concern around the impact of children attending six years of their schooling off-island, with limiting their opportunities to participate fully in family life and community life on the island.
- 9.3.15 The site selection proposals have the potential to significantly affect this community of interest with the potential to bring positive impacts and equity to this group through the delivery of a central site option.
- 9.3.16 Another community of place that could emerge as a result of the proposals is group of children from Tobermory attending pre-5 and primary school who might be required to undertake longer journeys on a daily basis to access education at a central or other location. Due to the age of children, it is judged that impact would be felt more significantly in this age group compared with secondary school aged children. There is also a precedent for extended travel times on Mull for secondary school children accessing Tobermory High School from other localities on the island.



## Inequality of Outcome

Equality of outcome is influenced by socio-economic disadvantage. To assess this in relation to the Mull Campus proposal, factors relating to education, health and income have been selected as most relevant.

### *Education*

- 9.3.17 Island communities often face challenges in providing consistent, high quality education due to their geographic context and smaller population sizes. Specific considerations include smaller school roll sizes which may mean schools have fewer resources, limited subject offerings and the ability to recruit fewer specialist teachers. Teacher recruitment and retention is often challenging and has been cited as a key concern from many community members and organisations during public engagement sessions. Attracting and retaining qualified staff can be challenging due to rural isolation, cost of living, and limited professional development opportunities. Digital connectivity and facilities can also have an impact on the access to online learning tools which could widen educational disparities.
- 9.3.18 In the National Islands Plan Survey 2020 (Scottish Government, 2021), 57% of Argyll Islands<sup>7</sup> respondents agreed that children living on the islands can access secondary school education that offers a range of subjects (online or in person). While this response rate is similar to response rates in Uist and Barra (57%), and Bute and the Cumbraes (59%) is lower than the average response for all island groups (approx. 75% agreement).
- 9.3.19 Regardless of site location, the Project presents a positive opportunity to address challenges in the quality and provision of education on the island through the provision of contemporary and sustainably designed educational facilities that would benefit pupils aged 2-18 in addition to the wider community.
- 9.3.20 The extent of this benefit is varied depending on whether this is delivered in a central or Tobermory Site location. The reality of the proposals means that there is the potential to affect different groups of children and young people and their communities by virtue of where they live on the island. Existing baseline data should that educational attainment and qualification levels across Mull are relatively consistent across the Isle of Mull and with Scottish averages (please refer to **Section 4.3**). However, findings from the Economic Impact Assessment indicate that there could be negative impact on potential future earnings for children required to undertake longer daily journeys to school. The assessment is based on evidence that pupils who must travel further to school are less likely to attend university and may experience a loss of earnings as a result.

### *Health and Wellbeing*

- 9.3.21 In the National Islands Plan Survey 2020 (Scottish Government, 2021) it was reported that Argyll Islanders report notably lower satisfaction with local sports facilities than other island groups. Only 60% of Argyll Islands respondents agree that there were places they could go to take part in sports and physical exercise, compared with 86% of respondents who agreed across all island groups. Only 36% of Argyll Islands responses agreed that local sports facilities were good quality and maintained, compared with 73% across all island groups.
- 9.3.22 There could be higher sensitivity in local communities living near site options in Tobermory and a central site in relation to the provision of or re-provision of sports facilities that might be associated with the Mull Campus proposals. Early engagement and planning should ensure that new facilities are able to meet community needs to minimise the population loss or disruption of existing facilities during construction periods, which would be a key consideration if the Mull Campus is located on the existing school site in Tobermory.

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<sup>7</sup> Argyll Islands – National Islands Plan group that includes Coll, Colonsay, Easdale, Gometra, Iona, Isle of Gigha, Isle of Mull, Jura, Kerrera, Lismore, Luìng, Oransay, Seil, Tiree and Ulva.

### *Income*

- 9.3.23 The Project has the potential to affect income both in terms of future earnings for pupils and the earning of parents and carers. This is discussed above in **Sections 4.3 – 4.4** of the Economic Impact Assessment and as part of the FSD assessment in **Section 9.3.12 – 9.3.13**.

## **9.4 Summary**

### **Socio-Economic Disadvantage**

- The North, South West and South of Mull all fall into the least deprived 40% of areas in Scotland, whilst Tobermory performs even better in the bottom 30%. In terms of overall impact depending on the Campus site selection, it is not clear how area deprivation could be affected by either site option.
- There is a greater loss to earning and future earning for a central site location compared to Tobermory, which considers the larger population in the Tobermory settlement.
- Community feedback has expressed concern around the impact of children attending six years of their schooling off-island, with limiting their opportunities to participate fully in family life and community life on the island.
- There is a precedent for extended travel times on Mull for secondary school children accessing Tobermory High School from other localities on the island.

### **Inequality of Outcome**

- Regardless of site location, the Project presents a positive opportunity to address challenges in the quality and provision of education on the island through the provision of contemporary and sustainably designed educational facilities that would benefit pupils aged 2-18 in addition to the wider community.
- The extent of this benefit is varied depending on whether this is delivered in a central or Tobermory Site location. The reality of the proposals means that there is the potential to affect different groups of children and young people and their communities by virtue of where they live on the island.
- There could be negative impact on potential future earnings for children required to undertake longer daily journeys to school. Pupils who must travel further to school are less likely to attend university and may experience a loss of earnings as a result.
- There could be higher sensitivity in local communities living near site options in Tobermory and a central site in relation to the provision of or re-provision of sports facilities that might be associated with the Mull Campus proposals.
- The Project has the potential to affect income both in terms of future earnings for pupils and the earning of parents and carers.



## 10 Conclusion and Recommendations

### 10.1 IIA Summary

- 10.1.1 This report provides a high-level IIA of the Project proposals to inform the site selection process.
- 10.1.2 Findings from this impact assessment have been taken into consideration by Argyll & Bute Council as part of a technical scoring exercise to evaluate the performance of four separate sites on the Isle of Mull for delivery of the proposed Mull Campus.
- 10.1.3 Due to commercial sensitivities, members of the public were not made aware of the four individual sites for selection. As such, this assessment largely reflects public understanding to consider the implications of the Project broadly in either a central or Tobermory site location.
- 10.1.4 There is currently a strong need to upgrade the current Tobermory 2-18 School which is in need of upgrading and has been reported to have inadequate accessibility features for children and staff with disabilities or additional support needs. Many community members across the island feel strongly that a central high school is required to unite young people from the north and south of Mull and to provide an on-island secondary education option for children from the Ross of Mull. However, there is also a strong feeling across the island's communities that early years and primary school education should not be relocated from Tobermory for the families residing there. As such, conclusions of the IIA show that there are benefits and disbenefits associated with all site options. However, due to LEIP funding restrictions and other cost factors, it is unlikely that either of the Campus locations would be able to provide a fully equal solution for all children and young people living on Mull and the islands.
- 10.1.5 Regardless of site location, the campus has the potential to deliver a range of benefits to the island through the provision of contemporary and high-quality learning, sport and community facilities. It is recommended that the pupils and members of the community are closely involved in shaping the design of the new Campus so that it can best meet the needs of people living on Mull and the islands.

### 10.2 Recommendations

- 10.2.1 The following recommendations are provided as part of this assessment:
- 10.2.2 This IIA has been conducted at an early phase of the Project and it is recommended that the assessments are taken forward and updated iteratively with community involvement as the Project progresses.
- It is recommended that the Mull Campus proposals consider the integration of community spaces and services that would meet the needs of the wider community as whole, this could include additional extracurricular activities, breakfast clubs and wraparound care to support working families and single parents.
  - It is recommended that Argyll and Bute Council regularly review and monitor their engagement strategy for the Project to promote positive engagement and collaboration with the local community.
  - It is recommended that, wherever possible, the Mull Campus Project should utilise local contractors and supply chains in the development and fit-out of the school.
  - The Mull Campus has the opportunity to showcase and promote the island's unique geography, culture and heritage. It is recommended that a strategy is developed between pupils, the community and the Project Team to promote these elements in the projects design and delivery.

- It is recommended that the Project delivers digital infrastructure to enhance access to online learning which can be used to support pupils with additional support needs or pupils and staff affected by weather based disruptions.

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## Appendix A Glossary

Abbreviation	Meaning
CRW	Child Rights and Wellbeing
CRWIA	Children's Rights and Wellbeing Impact Assessment
ELC	Early learning and childcare
EqIA	Equality Impact Assessment
FSD	Fairer Scotland Duty
GDV	Gross Development Value
GIRFEC	Getting it Right for Every Child
GME	Gaelic Medium Education
HMT	HM Treasury
ICIA	Island Communities Impact Assessment
IIA	Integrated Impact Assessment
LDP	Local Development Plan
LEIP	Learning Estate Investment Programme
LGB+	Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, and other
LVU	Land Value Uplift
PSED	Public Sector Equality Duty
PV	Present Value
SIMD	Scottish Index of Multiple Deprivation
STAG	Scottish Transport Appraisal Guidance
UNCRC	United Nations Convention of the Rights of the Child
UK	United Kingdom

# Appendix B Summary of the UNCRC Articles



# A SUMMARY OF THE UN CONVENTION ON THE RIGHTS OF THE CHILD



UNITED KINGDOM

## ARTICLE 1 (definition of the child)

Everyone under the age of 18 has all the rights in the Convention.

## ARTICLE 2 (non-discrimination)

The Convention applies to every child without discrimination, whatever their ethnicity, sex, religion, language, abilities or any other status, whatever they think or say, whatever their family background.

## ARTICLE 3 (best interests of the child)

The best interests of the child must be a top priority in all decisions and actions that affect children.

## ARTICLE 4 (implementation of the Convention)

Governments must do all they can to make sure every child can enjoy their rights by creating systems and passing laws that promote and protect children's rights.

## ARTICLE 5 (parental guidance and a child's evolving capacities)

Governments must respect the rights and responsibilities of parents and carers to provide guidance and direction to their child as they grow up, so that they fully enjoy their rights. This must be done in a way that recognises the child's increasing capacity to make their own choices.

## ARTICLE 6 (life, survival and development)

Every child has the right to life. Governments must do all they can to ensure that children survive and develop to their full potential.

## ARTICLE 7 (birth registration, name, nationality, care)

Every child has the right to be registered at birth, to have a name and nationality, and, as far as possible, to know and be cared for by their parents.

## ARTICLE 8 (protection and preservation of identity)

Every child has the right to an identity. Governments must respect and protect that right, and prevent the child's name, nationality or family relationships from being changed unlawfully.

## ARTICLE 9 (separation from parents)

Children must not be separated from their parents against their will unless it is in their best interests (for example, if a parent is hurting or neglecting a child). Children whose parents have separated have the right to stay in contact with both parents, unless this could cause them harm.

## ARTICLE 10 (family reunification)

Governments must respond quickly and sympathetically if a child or their parents apply to live together in the same country. If a child's parents live apart in different countries, the child has the right to visit and keep in contact with both of them.

## ARTICLE 11 (abduction and non-return of children)

Governments must do everything they can to stop children being taken out of their own country illegally by their parents or other relatives, or being prevented from returning home.

## ARTICLE 12 (respect for the views of the child)

Every child has the right to express their views, feelings and wishes in all matters affecting them, and to have their views considered and taken seriously. This right applies at all times, for example during immigration proceedings, housing decisions or the child's day-to-day home life.

## ARTICLE 13 (freedom of expression)

Every child must be free to express their thoughts and opinions and to access all kinds of information, as long as it is within the law.

## ARTICLE 14 (freedom of thought, belief and religion)

Every child has the right to think and believe what they choose and also to practise their religion, as long as they are not stopping other people from enjoying their rights. Governments must respect the rights and responsibilities of parents to guide their child as they grow up.

## ARTICLE 15 (freedom of association)

Every child has the right to meet with other children and to join groups and organisations, as long as this does not stop other people from enjoying their rights.

## ARTICLE 16 (right to privacy)

Every child has the right to privacy. The law should protect the child's private, family and home life, including protecting children from unlawful attacks that harm their reputation.

## ARTICLE 17 (access to information from the media)

Every child has the right to reliable information from a variety of sources, and governments should encourage the media to provide information that children can understand. Governments must help protect children from materials that could harm them.

## ARTICLE 18 (parental responsibilities and state assistance)

Both parents share responsibility for bringing up their child and should always consider what is best for the child. Governments must support parents by creating support services for children and giving parents the help they need to raise their children.

## ARTICLE 19 (protection from violence, abuse and neglect)

Governments must do all they can to ensure that children are protected from all forms of violence, abuse, neglect and bad treatment by their parents or anyone else who looks after them.

## ARTICLE 20 (children unable to live with their family)

If a child cannot be looked after by their immediate family, the government must give them special protection and assistance. This includes making sure the child is provided with alternative care that is continuous and respects the child's culture, language and religion.

## ARTICLE 21 (adoption)

Governments must oversee the process of adoption to make sure it is safe, lawful and that it prioritises children's best interests. Children should only be adopted outside of their country if they cannot be placed with a family in their own country.

## ARTICLE 22 (refugee children)

If a child is seeking refuge or has refugee status, governments must provide them with appropriate protection and assistance to help them enjoy all the rights in the Convention. Governments must help refugee children who are separated from their parents to be reunited with them.

## ARTICLE 23 (children with a disability)

A child with a disability has the right to live a full and decent life with dignity and, as far as possible, independence and to play an active part in the community. Governments must do all they can to support disabled children and their families.

## ARTICLE 24 (health and health services)

Every child has the right to the best possible health. Governments must provide good quality health care, clean water, nutritious food, and a clean environment and education on health and well-being so that children can stay healthy. Richer countries must help poorer countries achieve this.

## ARTICLE 25 (review of treatment in care)

If a child has been placed away from home for the purpose of care or protection (for example, with a foster family or in hospital), they have the right to a regular review of their treatment, the way they are cared for and their wider circumstances.

## ARTICLE 26 (social security)

Every child has the right to benefit from social security. Governments must provide social security, including financial support and other benefits, to families in need of assistance.

## ARTICLE 27 (adequate standard of living)

Every child has the right to a standard of living that is good enough to meet their physical and social needs and support their development. Governments must help families who cannot afford to provide this.

## ARTICLE 28 (right to education)

Every child has the right to an education. Primary education must be free and different forms of secondary education must be available to every child. Discipline in schools must respect children's dignity and their rights. Richer countries must help poorer countries achieve this.

## ARTICLE 29 (goals of education)

Education must develop every child's personality, talents and abilities to the full. It must encourage the child's respect for human rights, as well as respect for their parents, their own and other cultures, and the environment.

## ARTICLE 30 (children from minority or indigenous groups)

Every child has the right to learn and use the language, customs and religion of their family, whether or not these are shared by the majority of the people in the country where they live.

## ARTICLE 31 (leisure, play and culture)

Every child has the right to relax, play and take part in a wide range of cultural and artistic activities.

## ARTICLE 32 (child labour)

Governments must protect children from economic exploitation and work that is dangerous or might harm their health, development or education. Governments must set a minimum age for children to work and ensure that work conditions are safe and appropriate.

## ARTICLE 33 (drug abuse)

Governments must protect children from the illegal use of drugs and from being involved in the production or distribution of drugs.

## ARTICLE 34 (sexual exploitation)

Governments must protect children from all forms of sexual abuse and exploitation.

## ARTICLE 35 (abduction, sale and trafficking)

Governments must protect children from being abducted, sold or moved illegally to a different place in or outside their country for the purpose of exploitation.

## ARTICLE 36 (other forms of exploitation)

Governments must protect children from all other forms of exploitation, for example the exploitation of children for political activities, by the media or for medical research.

## ARTICLE 37 (inhumane treatment and detention)

Children must not be tortured, sentenced to the death penalty or suffer other cruel or degrading treatment or punishment. Children should be arrested, detained or imprisoned only as a last resort and for the shortest time possible. They must be treated with respect and care, and be able to keep in contact with their family. Children must not be put in prison with adults.

## ARTICLE 38 (war and armed conflicts)

Governments must not allow children under the age of 15 to take part in war or join the armed forces. Governments must do everything they can to protect and care for children affected by war and armed conflicts.

## ARTICLE 39 (recovery from trauma and reintegration)

Children who have experienced neglect, abuse, exploitation, torture or who are victims of war must receive special support to help them recover their health, dignity, self-respect and social life.

## ARTICLE 40 (juvenile justice)

A child accused or guilty of breaking the law must be treated with dignity and respect. They have the right to legal assistance and a fair trial that takes account of their age. Governments must set a minimum age for children to be tried in a criminal court and manage a justice system that enables children who have been in conflict with the law to reintegrate into society.

## ARTICLE 41 (respect for higher national standards)

If a country has laws and standards that go further than the present Convention, then the country must keep these laws.

## ARTICLE 42 (knowledge of rights)

Governments must actively work to make sure children and adults know about the Convention.

The Convention has 54 articles in total. Articles 43–54 are about how adults and governments must work together to make sure all children can enjoy all their rights, including:

## ARTICLE 45

Unicef can provide expert advice and assistance on children's rights.

### OPTIONAL PROTOCOLS

There are three agreements, called Optional Protocols, that strengthen the Convention and add further unique rights for children. They are optional because governments that ratify the Convention can decide whether or not to sign up to these Optional Protocols. They are: the Optional Protocol on the sale of children, child prostitution and child pornography, the Optional Protocol on the involvement of children in armed conflict and the Optional Protocol on a complaints mechanism for children (called Communications Procedure).

For more information go to [unicef.org/uk/crc/op](https://www.unicef.org/uk/crc/op)