

Sgoil an Iochdair agus a' Choimhearsnachd

Consultant's brief

Title Playing fields development

Objectives To upgrade existing football pitch (app. 1), parking, (app. 2) school playing fields, (app. 3) and develop a cycle route between the sports facilities, (app. 4) allowing for further developments nearby. (app. 5). A map is enclosed.

Background Sgoil an Iochdar agus a' Choimhearsnachd is a community group set up in partnership with several local groups and the school. The aims of the group are to promote development of sports facilities and their use and maintenance in the Iochdar area. The need for facilities was the catalyst for the formation of the group.

Methods The consultant will visit the site initially, liaising with the secretary of the committee for arrangements. The briefs for the football pitch and parking area are fairly inflexible. However, the route of the path can be adjusted, as can the arrangement of the facilities at the school. We would like the study to include 1 year's maintenance for the playing fields, and 5 years maintenance of the cycle path and tree planting.

Liaison/reports Drafts will be discussed on a weekly basis with the secretary and/or chairman either by 'phone/post or by e-mail. A draft will be presented to the committee once the study is almost complete. The committee will display the proposed project in a public area for further local consultation. 6 copies of the final report will be available.

Timescale The draft of the proposals will be presented to the committee 4 weeks after starting. After a short period of local consultation, the consultant will make any further changes, submitting the final report 2 weeks later.

Further information Further information about the brief, and other details of the project can be obtained from the secretary and chairman.

Enclosures: App. 1 Details of football pitch upgrade
App. 2 Details of new parking area
App. 3 Details of new playing fields
App. 4 Details of cycle route
App. 5 Details of other developments to be allowed for.
App. 6 Contact addresses of Chairman and secretary.
App. 7 map of the area.

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APPENDIX 1

The football pitch is full sized, and lies to the north of the hall. The existing pitch has been created from the original peat bog by covering this with a layer of 'Terram' or similar, and shingle, topped with turf. Cars have damaged the pitch over the last few years. In very wet weather, it becomes waterlogged. It is unsheltered, and there are no changing facilities.

The pitch is used regularly during the Uist football season, which begins after Easter and runs throughout the summer. As well as 1 to 2 matches per week, it is used for training by the local team once or twice a week. There is a local ladies team who might also use the facilities. With better facilities, this level of use might increase.

The brief for this area is to create a properly drained level full-sized football pitch with a 15m deep windbreak plantation of sycamores along the west side of the pitch. In addition, we will need to provide a changing area and showers to the rear of the existing hall. (Or convert an area within the hall.) The football pitch needs fencing to protect it from livestock. The changing rooms may be integrated with those required by the local bowling club.

APPENDIX 2

In order to protect the football pitch we will create a new parking area to the south of the hall. This area is currently boggy, with a drain running diagonally across one corner. The hall's septic tank is also in the field. The whole area lies below the level of the existing road.

The field will be used for grazing most of the time, and will be in use for the annual agricultural show, when most of the islands' residents, their relatives and tourists come to view the best local produce. The current pitch has been filled in previous years.

The brief for the parking area is to create a properly drained area suitable for parking for one or two major events in the area each year. This might require re-routing the large ditch. The septic tank for the hall needs to be sunk lower, because of technical problems with the current level of the tank. The surface of the parking area must be suitable for livestock throughout the year. The access to this area will be from the rear of the hall, with egress onto a newly created gate onto the existing main road. This will require the construction of a suitable ramp up to the road.

The car parking area needs to be fenced, to keep in any livestock.

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APPENDIX 3

The playing fields at the school currently consist of an irregular piece of land approximately 100m², sloping down from some almost dry land near the road, to some very boggy patches. There is a shallow drain running across the centre of the area, and several rocky areas near the surface in the centre.

The brief for the area is to create a small multipurpose ball court/pitch and running track by creating drainage and raising the level of the field. Shelter will be created by planting a belt of trees along the west and south sides of the field. The pitch must be suitable for use by children aged 4-12, and for sports such as football, basket-ball and short tennis.

Changing facilities will need to be provided independent from the school, with a separate power and water supply.

The playing field must be fenced against livestock, as at present. The fencing and shelterbelt should allow access through a gate next to the playgroup portakabin.

APPENDIX 4

The path is marked on the map at the end. The route runs from the back of the sheltered housing at Rubha Doigeag, through an existing gateway. The route goes directly from here to the rear of the hall and football pitch, and thence to the shop. This will provide a safe route away from traffic for younger people, and the disabled. The path will be unfenced. The route of the path will require the construction of 2 small bridges. In addition, the route needs 5 stock-proof grids where it crosses from one grazing area to another.

A spur from the main route will run up to the existing play park area. At the end of the spur, as well as at the hall and the school, cycle racks will be included. Bicycles are not allowed into the play park, which already has other access from the council houses. Access from the path will be over a stile. The spur will end by crossing over the main drain via a small bridge, and up a slope onto the road. This will create a new gateway, and must be wide enough and firm enough to take a vehicle.

The path will have signs at its 3 ends, explaining control of dogs, and an explanatory note about the 'special commons', which it crosses. Along the route, at one point, an interpretative area will be created, with a panel describing the wildlife and environmental features at the loch-side. This area will include benches.

At one end, the path crosses a very deep ditch, which may need to be culverted for safety reasons. At the other end, a bridge will cross the stream.

TREE PLANTING

The path passes 2 areas suitable for amenity tree planting. The two areas are highlighted in red on the map. Both areas are wet, and not currently in use. Local children will plant the areas up with a mixture of native species. Explanatory signage will explain the types of trees