

Thurso FC – Initial Short Term Upgrades Information and Progress – **21/07/2026**

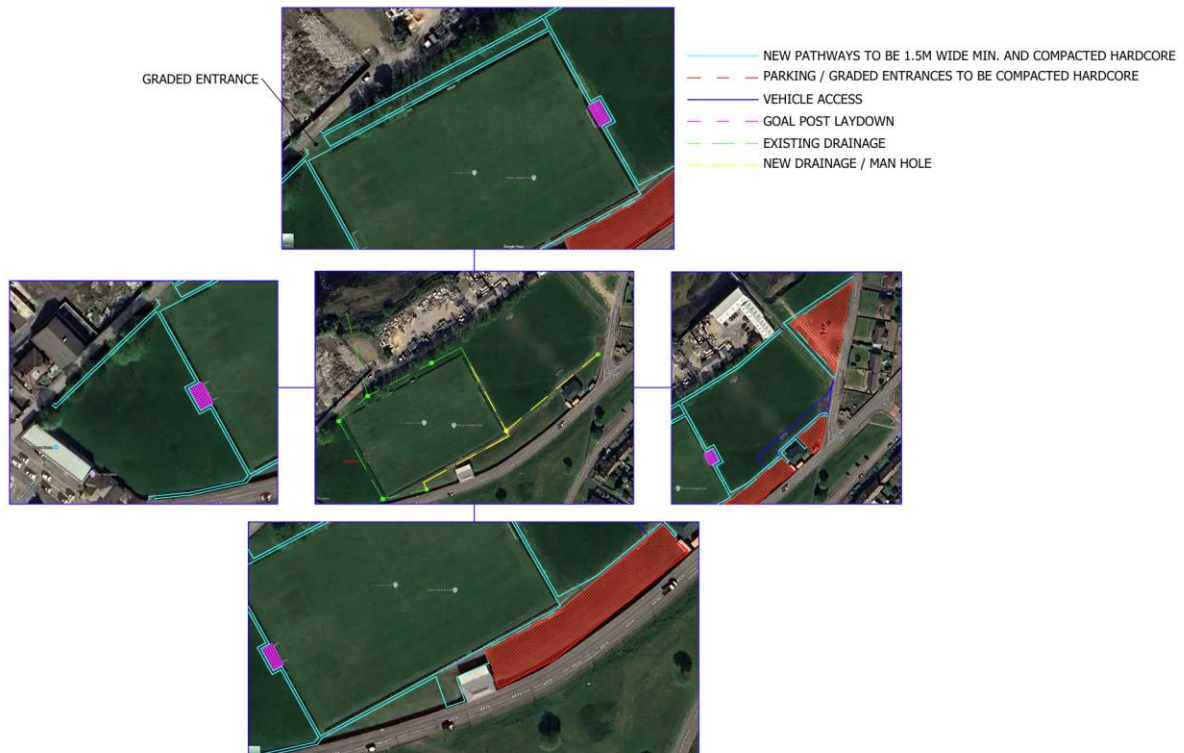
This document provides a summary of the progress we have made in relation to executing our goals of short term upgrades to Sir Georges Park.

Firstly, Mark Crowe, Project Officer has been in touch requesting some confirmation of details. I have uploaded a copy of the Thurso FC Constitution on to the BeConnected Hub proposal. I can also confirm that Thurso FC has a bank account and sets of accounts spanning back years and is also insured accordingly. Details of which can be made available on request.

The short term upgrades proposed are vital to ensure that this recreational surface / area is not lost, if these upgrades do not take place we have been advised that this will no longer be suitable for affiliated sports associations / teams.

Meetings / discussions have been held with several members of the local council, the highland council community development manager for the North and East of highland (Asset manager for Sir Georges Park) and included also some key employee personnel from the Highland Council.

At the meeting the short term and immediate upgrades were presented and discussed with a view to receiving approval to implement the upgrades. The upgrades presented initially are shown below and consist of new compacted hardcore pathways, upgraded compacted hardcore parking and vehicle access (currently thin on hardcore and uneven with potholes), goal post laydown area and additional off field (as in actual football pitch) drainage.



Some concerns were raised around the new pathways and goal post laydown areas specifically to the additional amount of strimming time this would add to the Highland Council employees and also that compacted hardcore so close to the pitch area caused a two fold

risk. Risk that the hardcore could be thrown on the pitch because of the strimming and the risk of stone projectiles to the trimmer operator. So, at this time in order to progress the introduction of new pathways and goal post laydown areas has been postponed to a later date once a proposal can be agreed upon. The answer may be the introduction of kick plates to the boundary railings currently surrounding the perimeter of the pitch. The following was approved:

- The access track to the pavilion
- Parking areas
- Ground surfaces that become muddy in winter.

Below shows an update to the plans for the initial upgrades.



It should be noted that these initial upgrades and being predominately funded at this stage by a construction company donating and volunteering materials, plant and man hours. Thurso FC is also funding some of this, but our funds are very limited due to club running costs which is why it would have been ideal to also get the pathways and goal post laydown areas done as I am unsure we will get a second bit of the cherry with the construction company.

What was also agreed at the meeting was some short term upgrades to the recreational surface (football pitch) and they can be seen below:

- Slitting and aeration
- Top dressing with sand/soil mix
- Reducing soil compaction
- Reseeding damaged areas with suitable sports grass seed.

We have received a rough order of magnitude (ROM) costs to get this work carried out via a local landscape specialist. The costs can be seen below, and it is worth noting that at this moment Thurso FC is unable to fund this work fully and is looking for support.

- Sub Soil - £650
- Top Dress Sand and Screened Soil - £5200

- Overseed - £1000
- Fertiliser / Nitrogen - £250
- Winter Feed – £250

Ongoing maintenance throughout the Autumn / Winter and Spring.

- Cut and Collect Grass - £130 / visit
- Rolling - £80 per visit
- Slitting - £250

We have only a short window available to complete this work this year due to multiple club fixture commitments and the seasonal weather window. Some of the local teams and Thurso FC have agreed to play games elsewhere with the agreement from other team / ground owners to allow for a 6-8 week window for this work to take place but we are unable to commit fully at this stage due to some funding shortages.

Going forward and looking to next year ideally there would be an upgrade to the existing perimeter drainage and an introduction of a legitimate sportsturf drainage [Sportsturf Drainage | Sheltons Drainage](#) on the actual pitch. Currently there is no drainage system on the pitch at all so with some consultation and agreed planning with all stakeholders ideally this will be the game changer that the surface truly needs going forward. Opening the door to full use for all on a more consistent basis.

More recently we have also had to engage with a local fabricator to affect a repair on the goal posts and are getting close to no longer being fit for purposes; we are looking at available funding for the goals posts. The Highland Council's stance on this is that the park is designated as a recreational park and not a football park and are not responsible for procuring goals. The current goal posts are a manual handling concern as they need to be lifted fully out of the ground and put to flat or vice versa lifted from fully flat to vertical and positioned in the ground. It has the potential for personal injury from a manual handling perspective compared to modern day goal posts set that are wheeled in and out of position.

At this stage we are grateful to the Council for interaction, advice and cooperation to date. I have included a copy of the minutes from the meeting held with the council for reference.

Sir Georges Park (Dammies)

Date: 15 July 2026

Topic: Pitch and drainage improvements at Sir Georges Park (Dammies)

Who was at the meeting?

Attendee	Organisation / Service
Cai MacIver	The Highland Council, Community Support (North and East)
Jonathan Gunn	The Highland Council, Road Operations (Caithness and Sutherland) , Senior Engineer
Joanne Sutherland	The Highland Council, Road Operations (Caithness and Sutherland) , Operations Manager
John MacKay	The Highland Council, Amenities Services (North)
Ross Sutherland	Representing Thurso FC / local football interests and community sports groups.

What was discussed

1.The football pitch

Ross explained that the pitch is used a lot throughout the year and is struggling to recover between matches. The pitch becomes very wet in winter and has areas of standing water and bare ground.

Agreed

✓ The pitch would benefit from maintenance work such as:

- Slitting and aeration
- Top dressing with sand/soil mix
- Reducing soil compaction
- Reseeding damaged areas with suitable sports grass seed.

2. Drainage problems

The meeting looked at ways to improve drainage around the pitch.

Ross presented information about:

- Existing drains and manholes
- Areas where water collects
- Ideas for new perimeter drainage Jonathan and Joanne advised that more information is needed before any major drainage works begin.

Agreed

- ✓ Existing drains should be checked and cleaned.
- ✓ A drainage camera survey should be carried out.
- ✓ Existing drainage should be retained where possible and not removed unless necessary.

3. Drain Survey

Roads officers recommended:

- Cleaning (jetting) the drains.
- Carrying out a CCTV camera survey.
- Checking for:
 - Blockages
 - Tree roots
 - Collapsed pipes
 - Pipe sizes and condition
 - Connections between drainage systems.

Action

- ➡ Ross to obtain quotations for drain cleaning and camera surveys.

4. Sewage Issue

Ross reported that a manhole has occasionally overflowed during heavy rain.

Joanne advised that this appears to be a Scottish Water issue because it involves sewage rather than road drainage.

Action

- ➡ Any future sewage incidents should be reported to Scottish Water.

5. Access Track and Parking Area

Ross discussed improving:

- The access track to the pavilion
- Parking areas
- Ground surfaces that become muddy in winter.

Agreed

- ✓ These improvements are acceptable in principle, provided:

- Public access is maintained.
- Materials do not affect grass cutting operations.
- The Common Good status of the site is respected

Longer-Term Plans- Thurso POD

Discussion took place about future sports facilities and wider community plans linked to the community consultation process.

No decisions have been made yet.

Further consultation is expected to begin after schools return in August. Community groups, including football clubs, will have opportunities to contribute ideas.

Actions

Obtain quotes for drain jetting and CCTV survey	Ross Sutherland
Investigate existing drainage network	Ross Sutherland
Keep Council officers updated on drainage plans	Ross Sutherland
Share meeting notes and contacts	Cai MacIver
Keep stakeholders informed about future consultations	Cai MacIver

Summary

The group supports improving St George's Park. The priority is understanding the existing drainage system through cleaning and a camera survey. Pitch improvement works can also progress, while longer-term sports facility discussions will continue through community consultation.