

Lochcarron Parent Council Meeting
Proposed new MUGA
Wednesday 09 September 2026 4.15pm
Via Microsoft Teams

Attendees:	Robert Campbell, Strategic Lead, Property and Assets, Highland Council Alison MacLennan, Auchtertyre & Lochcarron Cluster Head Teacher Claire MacKenzie, Parent Council Jenny MacRae, Estates Officer, Highland Council Siobhan Murray, Parent Council Robert Wilkinson, Lochcarron and District Community Development Company (LCDC) Fionnuala Stark	
Apologies:	-	

	ACTION
<u>1. Purpose of Meeting</u> To review the outline proposals and preliminary cost estimates received from Sports Labs for a Multi-Use Games Area (MUGA) at Lochcarron Primary School and discuss funding opportunities, governance arrangements and next steps. <u>2. MUGA Design Options</u> Jenny MacRae presented the two design options provided by Sports Labs: Option 1: Larger MUGA • Approximate pitch size of 50m x 25m. • Occupies most of the available school field area. • Would provide greater playing capacity and flexibility. Option 2: Smaller MUGA	

- Approximate pitch size of 30m x 20m.
- Recommended by Sports Labs.
- Leaves an area of grassed field available for other uses.

Discussion

- The surface proposed is a 40mm 3G synthetic pitch with shock pad and associated drainage.
- The facility is intended to support a range of sports including football, shinty, basketball and general physical activity.
- Participants noted that a multi-sport surface would likely be the most appropriate solution for both school and wider community use.
- Further advice can be sought from Sports Labs regarding the most suitable surface specification.

3. Cost Estimates

Smaller MUGA (30m x 20m)

- Estimated cost: **£266,000 including VAT**
- Approximately **£222,000 excluding VAT**

Larger MUGA

- Estimated cost approximately **£286,000 excluding VAT**
- Difference between the two options is less significant than expected due to elements such as planning, consultancy and lighting remaining broadly similar regardless of pitch size.

Included within Costs

- Site preparation works
- Drainage and sub-base
- 3G synthetic sports surface
- Floodlighting
- 3m high fencing system
- Goals and sports equipment
- Reinstatement works
- Consultancy services
- Planning, design and procurement services
- Planning fees
- Initial maintenance allowance

4. Existing Grass Area and Drainage

Discussion took place regarding the impact of selecting the smaller MUGA option and retaining an area of grass.

Key points:

- Existing drainage is present within the field.
- The principal issue appears to be ground compaction rather than drainage failure.
- Retaining grass may require additional investment to improve drainage, soil condition and ongoing maintenance.
- It was agreed that the future use and condition of any retained grass area should be considered as part of the overall project.

5. Funding Opportunities

Current Position

- The Parent Council has secured approximately **£28,000** towards the project.

Funding Sources Discussed

- Community Regeneration Fund (now operating as **Be Connected**)
- Gaelic Capital Funding
- Community benefit funding opportunities
- Sport Scotland funding opportunities
- SSE and other local community funds
- Additional grant opportunities previously circulated by Jenny MacRae

Funding Requirements

- Many funding bodies will require evidence of:
 - Community access
 - Anticipated user numbers
 - Participation by children, adults, girls and women
 - Wider community benefit

6. Community Access and Governance

A significant discussion focused on ensuring the facility is available for community use outside school hours.

Key Points

- Community access will be necessary to maximise funding opportunities.
- A management arrangement will be required.
- A key-holder system or community user group could be established to:
 - Open and close the facility
 - Monitor use
 - Support maintenance and security

Possible representation could come from:

- Parent Council
- Shinty clubs
- Community organisations

- Other regular user groups

It was agreed that responsibility should be shared across a number of individuals to avoid placing excessive demands on any one person.

7. Maintenance

Robert Campbell advised that:

- Highland Council already has servicing arrangements in place for sports facilities.
- The new facility could potentially be added to an existing maintenance contract.
- Consideration will need to be given to long-term replacement costs, particularly if usage levels are high.
- Any future agreement should clarify maintenance responsibilities.

8. School Site Considerations

Security

- Additional fencing may be required to separate school grounds from the community-use area during evenings and weekends.

Play Equipment

- Alison MacLennan advised that the existing timber play equipment has recently been inspected.
- The equipment is over 20 years old and may be approaching the end of its service life.
- Depending on the inspection report, removal of the equipment could create additional space for future development.

Floodlighting

- Potential issues relating to lighting and noise were discussed.
- Members considered these risks to be relatively low due to the site's location and limited neighbouring properties.

9. Next Steps

Parent Council

- Review proposals at the Parent Council AGM.
- Obtain community and parent feedback.
- Decide preferred MUGA option.
- Gather evidence of likely usage, user groups and participation levels.

Highland Council

- Consider governance and partnership arrangements.

- Prepare a draft framework/agreement setting out responsibilities and management arrangements.
- Continue exploring potential funding opportunities and Committee reporting requirements.

Community Partners

- Progress funding discussions.
- Explore opportunities through Community Regeneration/Be Connected funding and other grant programmes.
- Develop proposals for community management and access arrangements.

10. Action Log

Action	Owner
Circulate meeting notes and Sports Labs information	Jenny MacRae
Present proposals to Parent Council AGM and obtain feedback	Claire MacKenzie
Identify preferred MUGA option	Parent Council
Investigate community funding opportunities	Claire MacKenzie / Robert Wilkinson
Draft governance and partnership framework	Robert Campbell
Gather community usage and participation data	Parent Council
Arrange follow-up discussion regarding school site considerations – additional fencing.	Jenny MacRae and Alison MacLennan