

Ardrossan Campus Proposal: Background Information and FAQs

In November 2018, the Scottish Government announced a programme of further investment in the Scottish schools estate.

It has allocated £1bn to this programme, available from 2020.

What will the Scottish Government fund?

It has been made clear that ambitious and creative thinking is essential in order for local authorities to access the funds.

A like for like build (a replacement Ardrossan Academy) or a campus type facility with only early years, primary school and a secondary school in one building is unlikely to secure funding.

To attract funding, the proposed new facility needs to be more than a school, and even more than more than a campus as described above.

North Ayrshire wants to develop a proposal and business case to secure early access to this Scottish Government funding. From discussions with Scottish Government officials, the following will be important:

- Creative and ambitious thinking about educational space and how it can be used to benefit the whole community.
- Innovative ways of learning and teaching, with partners, leading to further or higher education opportunities or employment for young people.
- Digital learning.
- An opportunity to provide community learning opportunities and leisure services and improve community networking.
- Joined up public services.
- A sustainable financial and business case.

What is North Ayrshire Council's starting point for discussion with the community?

The initial draft proposals include:

- A replacement for the existing Ardrossan Academy.
- A replacement for the existing Winton Primary School and Early Years Class.
- A swimming pool and fitness suite, currently provided at Auchenharvie Leisure Centre in Stevenston.
- Accommodation for the Health and Social Care Partnership.
- A library for use by the public, currently provided at Ardrossan Library.

Why are these ideas included?

Schools

A condition survey of **Ardrossan Academy** was carried out in May 2018 when the condition of the property was recorded as condition "D". (*Economic life expired and/ or risk of failure*).



Winton Primary School and Early Years Class sits within a building which is 119 years old, in which it is challenging to provide appropriate learning and teaching spaces.

The condition of Winton Primary School is rated as a category B (*Performing adequately but showing minor deterioration*).

The new facility of high quality, flexible and modern learning and teaching spaces will incorporate a much needed replacement for Ardrossan Academy, a replacement for Winton Primary and a 30-place early learning and childcare facility able to deliver 1140 hours of early years childcare and learning.

The Council would need to make a contribution to the overall cost of the new facility.

£31.5m has been allocated to replace Ardrossan Academy within North Ayrshire Council's capital programme from 2024.

Auchenharvie Swimming Pool

The condition survey states:

“The swimming pool mechanical and electrical plant and systems at Auchenharvie Leisure Centre are beyond their economic lifespan and are presenting operational issues to the centre operator (KA Leisure).

“In addition, the fabric of the pool and surround also require investment and the layout and finishes of the building are dated.”

The draft proposal would mean that North Ayrshire Council and KA Leisure could continue to retain high quality swimming and leisure provision in the Three Towns.

Why can't the existing swimming pool at Auchenharvie be upgraded?

There is no Scottish Government funding available for standalone leisure centres in the way that there is funding for combined facilities like school and community campuses.

The Council and KA Leisure have no access to funding sources which would allow the leisure centre to be upgraded, with funds like the Big Lottery Community Fund being directed mainly to community rather than Council projects.

Fitness suite

The condition survey states:

“The mechanical and electrical services equipment in the general area (entrance, reception, gym, dance hall etc) is 30 years old and again has generally exceeded its economic life.

“The main air handling plant is in a poor condition and one of the gas fired heating boilers is currently out of commission.

“The main electrical switchboard is located in this area and is showing signs of ageing. A number of areas have been refurbished electrically in the last 10-15 years, but the main distribution network hasn't been upgraded and is still from 1988.”

What about the ice rink at Auchenharvie?

The condition survey shows that the ice hall, which was refurbished and extended in 2011, is in good condition and, with some investment by the Council, can remain at Auchenharvie.



Why include accommodation for the Health and Social Care Partnership?

Joining up services for children and young people has proven successful in other schools, such as Kilwinning.

Professionals have the chance to work together to speed up and improve joint services to children and their families.

What about Ardrossan Library?

The Council is currently engaging with communities about how we provide services like libraries and community centres in the future, with smaller budgets.

One suggestion is that, as has happened successfully in other local authorities, the present Ardrossan Library could be relocated within the new building, allowing public and school access.

Combining the two will provide opportunities to create a better service than may otherwise have been possible.

The daily contact young people will have with those using the library and other social spaces will promote positive relationships and citizenship and there would be further opportunities for intergenerational work.

Where is the proposed location for the project?

It is proposed that the new facility is built on the North Shore, Ardrossan, with the exact location still to be identified.

Why is this the proposed site?

This is because it will benefit from the anticipated developments in the recently announced Ayrshire Growth Deal.

There are already Ayrshire Growth Deal proposals at North Shore which include:

- An expanded marina.
- A marine sciences centre.
- Regeneration of the wider harbour area.
- New ferry terminal.
- Transport hub.
- The creation of sites for private and social housing development.

This proposed location for the campus, linked to wider opportunities for work and education, will deliver better links to further learning, training and employment with partners.

This would include access to marine education and work experience, trades, and training for the retail, leisure and hospitality sectors.

Has all of the above been agreed?

No - these are suggestions to start the debate.

The ingredients proposed above would meet the Scottish Government criteria and would allow us to develop a proposal which they would consider.

However, we recognise that there will be additional and better suggestions which could be added or which could alter this draft proposal.

