

Elgin High School replacement project update: – November 2013

You may recall that our last bulletin explained that the presence of peat on the site has caused some problems which resulted in significant potential extra costs if we go ahead with the development as it is currently proposed.

Since our last update, The Project Team (The Moray Council, hubCo and Scottish Futures Trust) has been working hard to find the best position for the school on the existing site. We need to try to minimise the amount of site works required to bring the costs within budget. We also want to avoid positioning the school on the peat for several reasons:

- 1) Disturbing peat is not good for the environment as it releases Carbon Dioxide into the atmosphere.
- 2) It is expensive to remediate because it involves filling in, securing supporting structures and moving around a large amount of material to accommodate the school building block.
- 3) There are some further options we wish to explore to bring down the overall costs of the construction.

We are now more optimistic that an affordable option is near – but we need some time to explore all the options fully. Although this sounds like bad news, we don't necessarily see it that way. We want to reassure you that in doing this work we will be getting the best school we can, rather than using up a large proportion of the funding just to remediate the site.

Going further into the design stage now is useful as it means we are also saving some time by doing work that would normally be done at the next stage. As you are probably aware, there are only a few key dates in the academic year when an old school can be vacated and a new school handed over – this avoids disturbance of pupils during critical exam periods, for example. Therefore, a key factor which dictates the project timetable is the handover date.

The Scottish Futures Trust is being very supportive and has been involved in the lengthy design meetings recently. We have been assured that the funding is secure. The overall delay to the new build will be minimised and as soon as we have a revised schedule we will let you know.

In other news...we have applied for some additional funding for the 3G sports pitch from sportscotland – if we are successful in our bid, it will help to provide enhanced sports provision for the whole of Elgin.

<http://www.scotland.gov.uk/News/Releases/2011/03/16134101>
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We hope to have some good news for you next month!

If you have any queries please direct them to ehsproject@moray.gov.uk or telephone 01343 563011

Regards,

The EHS project Team.