

ABERDEEN CITY COUNCIL

COMMITTEE	Education, Culture and Sport
DATE	15 September 2011
DIRECTOR	Annette Bruton
TITLE OF REPORT:	Newhills Primary School – Land Transfer
REPORT NUMBER:	ECS/11/037

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

This Report provides the background in relation to the requirement to build a new school on the Newhills School site to accommodate an amalgamation of Newhills and Bucksburn Schools. In order to facilitate this additional land is required. A site has been identified for this, which is owned by the Council, but held on the Housing Revenue Account. This Report seeks the appropriate approvals to transfer the land to the General Service Account to allow redevelopment to commence, without delay when all other issues have been resolved.

2. RECOMMENDATIONS

That the committee:

- a) notes the decision of the Housing and Environment Committee to declare the land surplus to their requirements and to apply to the Scottish Government for approval to transfer the site to the General Services Account, subject to the approval of the Finance and Resources Committee on 29 September 2011.
- b) request the Finance and Resources Committee on 29 September 2011 to agree to earmark the land within the General Services Account for potential future educational use, subject to the agreement of the Scottish Government.
- c) receive a further report on the long-term use, date of transfer and transfer value of the site once a business case and funding is approved for a new school at Newhills.

3. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

There are at this time no significant revenue implications with regard to the transfer. The only ongoing costs relate to grass cutting etc. which will continue to be met by the Housing Revenue Account until such time as the site is transferred.

An independent Valuation of the site was reported by Ryden LLP on 14 December 2010 at £350,000. A revised valuation has not been instructed at this time. It is probable that a revised valuation will be required prior to the actual transfer and as such it is not cost effective to instruct a valuation for this report. The land value will require to be met from the overall project cost.

There are no state aid implications for the site.

4. OTHER IMPLICATIONS

There are no other significant implications in relation to this Report, other than Council officer's time.

5. BACKGROUND/ MAIN ISSUES

On 16 September 2010 a Report entitled 'Replacement School for Bucksburn and Newhills Schools– Stakeholder Engagement' (ECS/10/074). The Report recommended that the preferred site for the new school is the current Newhills School Campus and instructed officers to make all necessary arrangements to facilitate the establishment of the new school.

The project does not currently sit within the Council's Capital Plan for 2011/12 or 2012/13 although it is a priority project for the Service.

The proposed plans for the school show that an additional area of land is required. This area is roughly triangular in nature and extends to approximately 1.48 acres (0.59 Ha). A plan is attached. With the exception of some goal posts and play equipment, the site is completely undeveloped and is generally level in nature. Housing and Environment have no intention in taking forward any development on the site.

In order to facilitate the future development when funding becomes available, it is anticipated that the necessary approvals should be put in place at this stage. Significant delays can be experienced in gaining consent from the Scottish Government to sell sites held on the Housing Revenue Account, hence the reason Officers are proposing that permission is sought for the transfer of the land in advance of the full funding being in place.

At their meeting on 25 August 2011, the Housing and Environment Committee agreed to declare the land surplus to their requirements and to authorise the Head of Finance to apply to the Scottish Government for approval to transfer the site to the General Services Account.

6. IMPACT

Corporate – The provision of ‘fit for purpose’ primary schools is a key priority for the Council.

Public – Any project involving significant changes to schools will be of interest to the public, as will any loss of what may be deemed public open space. Equality and Human Rights Impact Assessment will be undertaken as part of the formal process for the development.

7. BACKGROUND PAPERS

Report and minute of Education, Culture and Sport Committee on 16 September 2010, entitled ‘Replacement School for Bucksburn and Newhills Schools – Stakeholder Engagement’ (ECS/10/074).

Report and decision sheet from Housing and Environment Committee on 25 August 2011, entitled ‘Newhills Primary School – Land Requirement’ (EPI/11/186).

8. REPORT AUTHOR DETAILS

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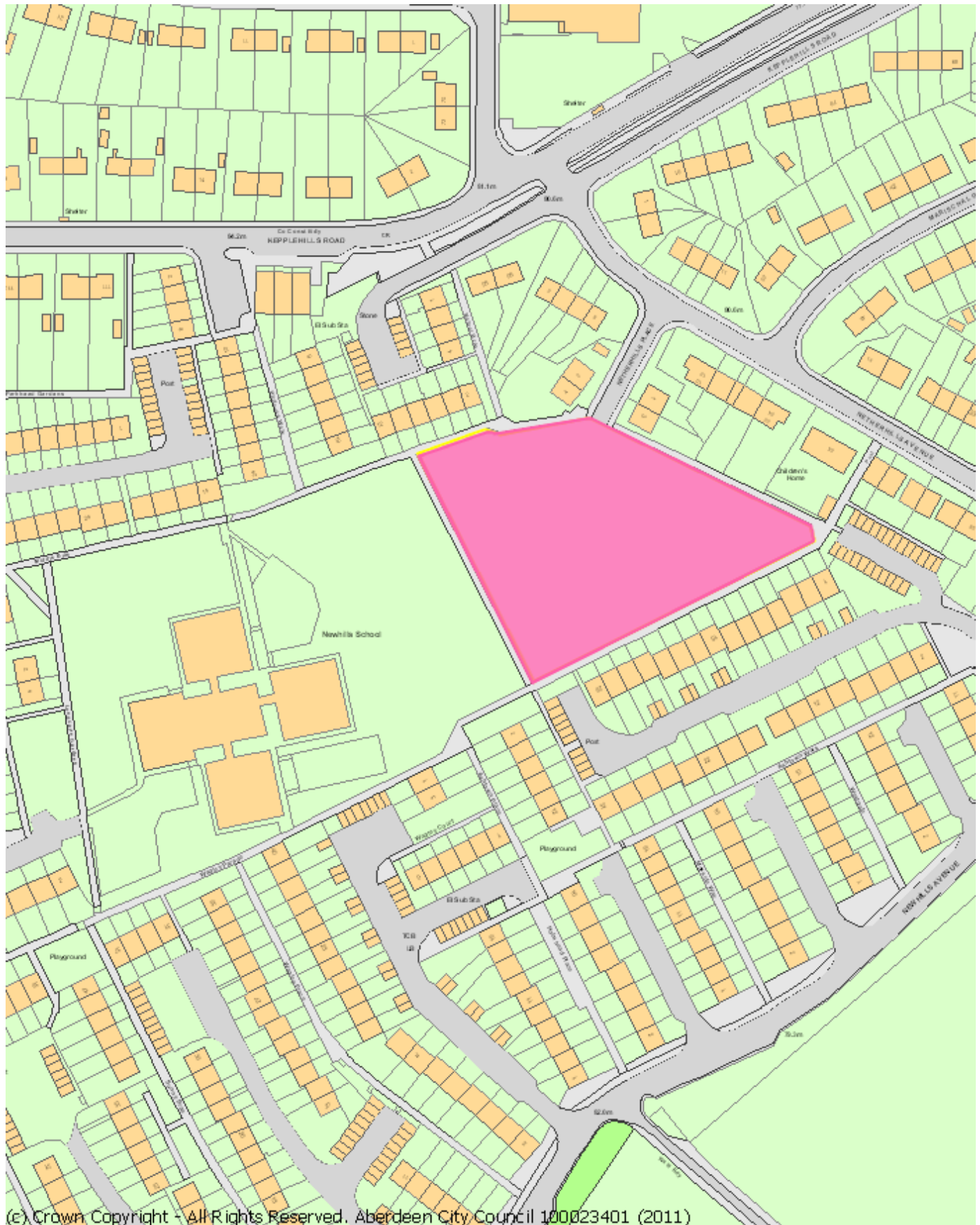
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Newhills Primary School - Land Requirement



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