



CHARTERED ARCHITECT

Design and Access Statement
Wet Weather Facility

Isle of Mull Rugby Club, Garmony, Isle of Mull

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Introduction

The applicant for this project is Mull Community Council in collaboration with the Isle of Mull Rugby Club. The rugby club is vital to the rugby and sporting community right across Mull and has been the main advocate of developing rugby on the island. Since to revamping of their clubhouse in 2011 the sport has flourished which is a testimony to their enthusiasm and love of sport.

The application relates to the erection of a wet weather indoor arena for the Isle of Mull. A facility of this kind does not currently exist on the island and would be open to use for all suitable community activities. Although the focus of the building will be centred around sport, a multi-purpose sports floor will be specified to offer diversity to the functions that can be accommodated, for instance, social gatherings.

The site is located on the Isle of Mull within the grounds of the island's vibrant rugby club at Garmony, just four miles north of Craginure, the main artery to the mainland, Salen is eight miles to the north of the grounds and Tobermory the principal settlement on the island is a just a thirty-minute drive away.

The rugby club comprises of two outdoor full-size rugby pitches, a clubhouse, and an area of vacant land to the north. The vacant land was historically the location of the Craginure Football Pitch. The sports facilities at Garmony are open to use by various sports over and above rugby, including football, shinty, athletics, hockey, and school sports. There is an agreement that the pitch closest to the road has priority for football over rugby. The club house itself is used for club meetings, fun days, corporate meetings, and weddings.

The average monthly rainfall for the Island of Mull is 190mm, and for nine months of the year, the Island can be classed as "mostly wet" with only April, May and June just dipping below this threshold of classification. The facility will offer year around respite from the predominately wet days. There is currently no gymnasium or indoor games area of this size where training and games can be played during the winter months and inclement weather. The gym at Tobermory High School, closest in scale does not accommodate a full size basketball court.



Existing Site

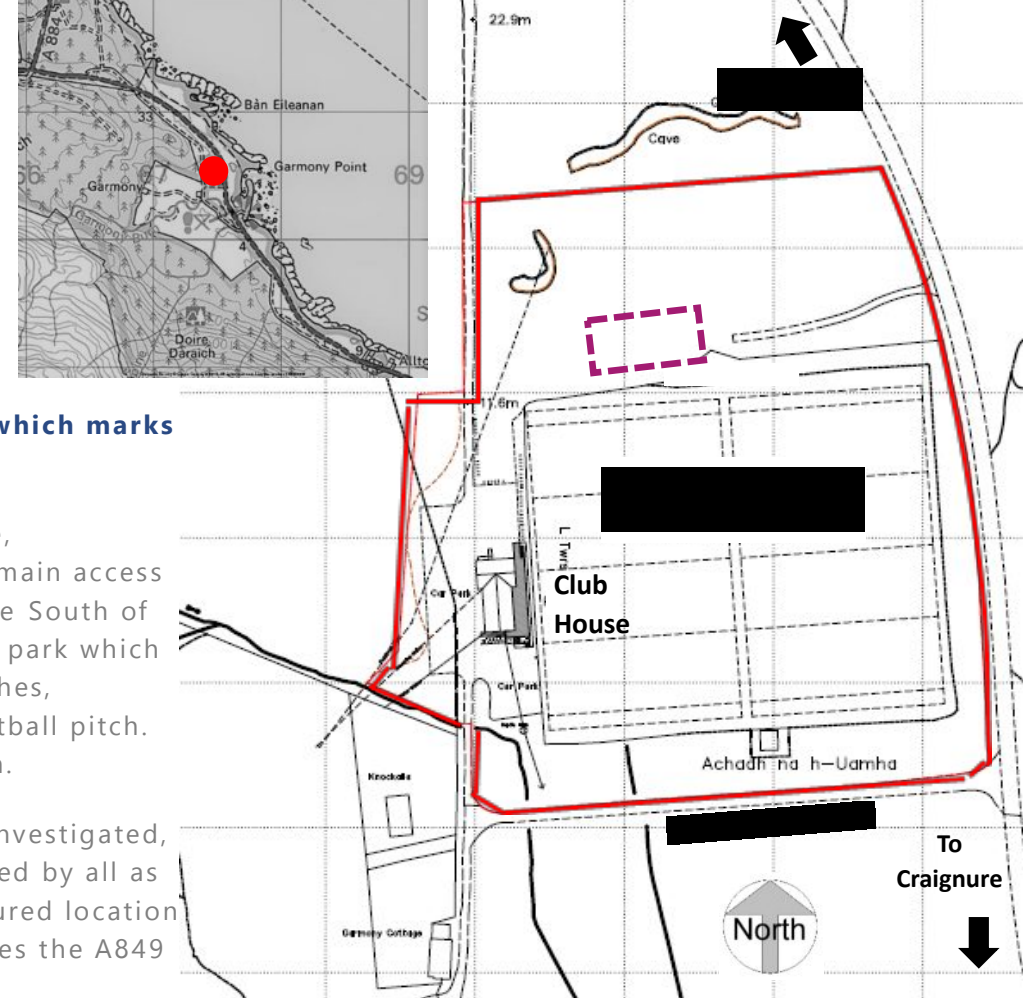
The existing site (bounded in red) accommodates 2 full size rugby pitches, club house, parking and open landscape / hard standing areas. The site area to the north is bounded by a small rock outcrop with caves, which marks the boundary for the deep peat and priority peatland habitat beyond.

The proposed hall (bounded in purple) is to be located to the North of the site, overlooking the pitches and out beyond to the Sound of Mull to the East. The main access into the complex is off the A849 Craignure to Salen road which is located to the South of the pitches. Immediately behind the clubhouse, to the West, is the existing car park which is bounded by a rock outcrop running South to North. To the North of the pitches, adjacent to the proposed hall there is open ground, once the location of a football pitch. This area has been identified as a potential site for a third junior training pitch.

During the feasibility study, locating the hall adjacent to the club house, was investigated, including a neighbour consultation meeting. The original proposal was discarded by all as the hall dwarfed the pavilion and was very prominent from the A849. The favoured location was to locate the hall to the north in the hollow, where only the gable addresses the A849 and the impact of the development was reduced.

Site Context: The context of the site is explored by the utilising Site Analysis. This enables the understanding of the various elements within and beyond the site boundary and is carried out by a physical appraisal of the site. The following site appraisals have been carried out:

- Site Analysis: Analysis of the development site on an immediate level which includes exploration of Microclimate, Focal Points, Views to and from the site and the topography of the site.
- Building Appraisal: Analysis of hierarchy of spaces within the proposed building.
- Public Utilities: A new mains water is imminently being applied for, to serve the clubhouse and will be sized to accommodate this development. A new water treatment plant will be required for the hall with soakaway and discharge to be agreed. A new electrical supply will be required, in all probability taken of the existing underground cable that runs along the north end of the pitches.



Existing Site Photographs

In the highlighted area, half the site has been cleared in the recent past. This was originally the site of the Craignure football pitch, which was replaced with the rugby pitches approximately 30 years ago. Technically the pitch adjacent to the road is designated for football, but the all pitches are maintained from Rugby Club funds.

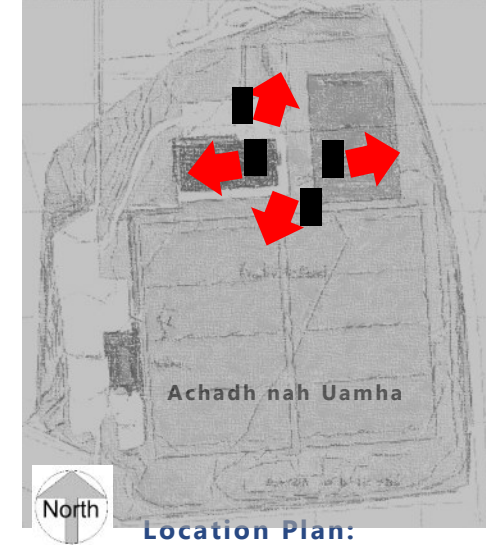
It is worth noting that the old B-Class Road ran parallel to the West of the Clubhouse. This area in the proposal has been allocated the new junior training pitch.

The other half of the site, designated for the building and car park is largely undeveloped. The Soil Survey of Scotland 1972, map indicates this area as Calcareous and brown forest soils associated with Gruline, consisting of raised beach and outwash gravels and classed as a non-indurated soil.

The NatureScot, Carbon and Peat Map 2016, classes the area as Class 4, predominately mineral soil with some peat. The area in question is unlikely therefore to be peat or at the most, shallow peat of less than one foot deep on top of rock. The area north of the caves however, out with the site area is designated as deep peat and priority peatland habitat. The caves can be seen in View 4 below.



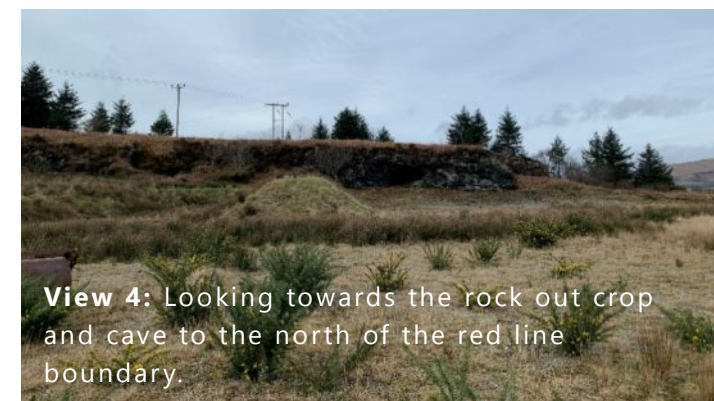
View 1: Looking towards the Sound of Mull across the disused Village Football pitch.



View 2: Looking towards the over head cables and the old Craignure to Tobermory Road. Shallow soil over rock or gravel.



View 3: Looking across Achadh nah Uamha, which translates as "The Field of the Cave".



View 4: Looking towards the rock out crop and cave to the north of the red line boundary.

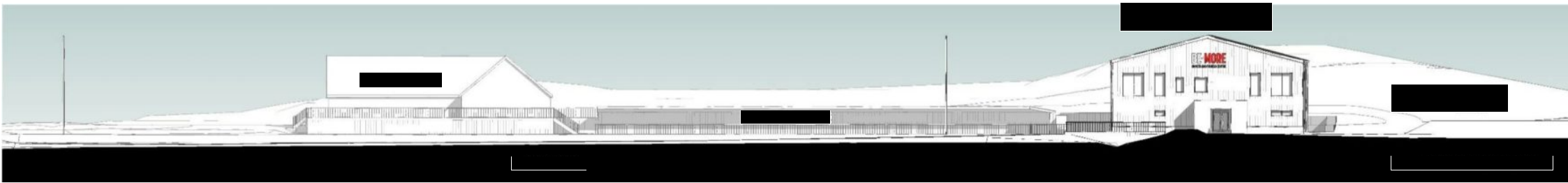
Existing Site

Site Analysis

Legend:

- »» Views into Site
- ➡ Main Access into Site
- Vehicle / Pedestrian Movement
- ➡ Open Vistas from Site
- Existing Contours / slopes
- 33kv electrical lines
- ➡ Prevailing Wind Direction
- Natural Area for Development
- ➡ Area of Rock Outcrop





Cross section to demonstrate the low impact of the Wet Weather Centre when viewed from the main road.

The Brief

With changing weather patterns, weeks of persistent wet weather during the winter months is a regular occurrence on Mull. This often halts the traditional outdoor sporting fixtures and severely impacts on regular community activities, such as team training and school sports. This is frustrating and demoralising for local users as this is the very time of the year that such activities are of the most value.

The brief is for a large indoor facility to accommodate as many user activities as possible. The key to the success of the project is affordability without compromising on the fundamental facilities required under sporting legislation to achieve this. The proposal addresses the lack of a large game's hall on Mull and Iona. For example, Mull and Iona have no full-sized basketball court and are thus discriminated against joining the mainland leagues due to lack of a home facility. With only five members in the team, basketball is an ideal sport activity for an island and fast growing in popularity.

The facility will accommodate, a full-size **Basketball** Court, four competition **Badminton** Courts, five a side **Football**, community **Futsal**, a **Volley Ball** court, a **Netball** Court, indoor **Athletics** (Primary Sports Day), **Conditioning Gym**, Changing facilities, First Aid room, Storage & Spectator Gallery.

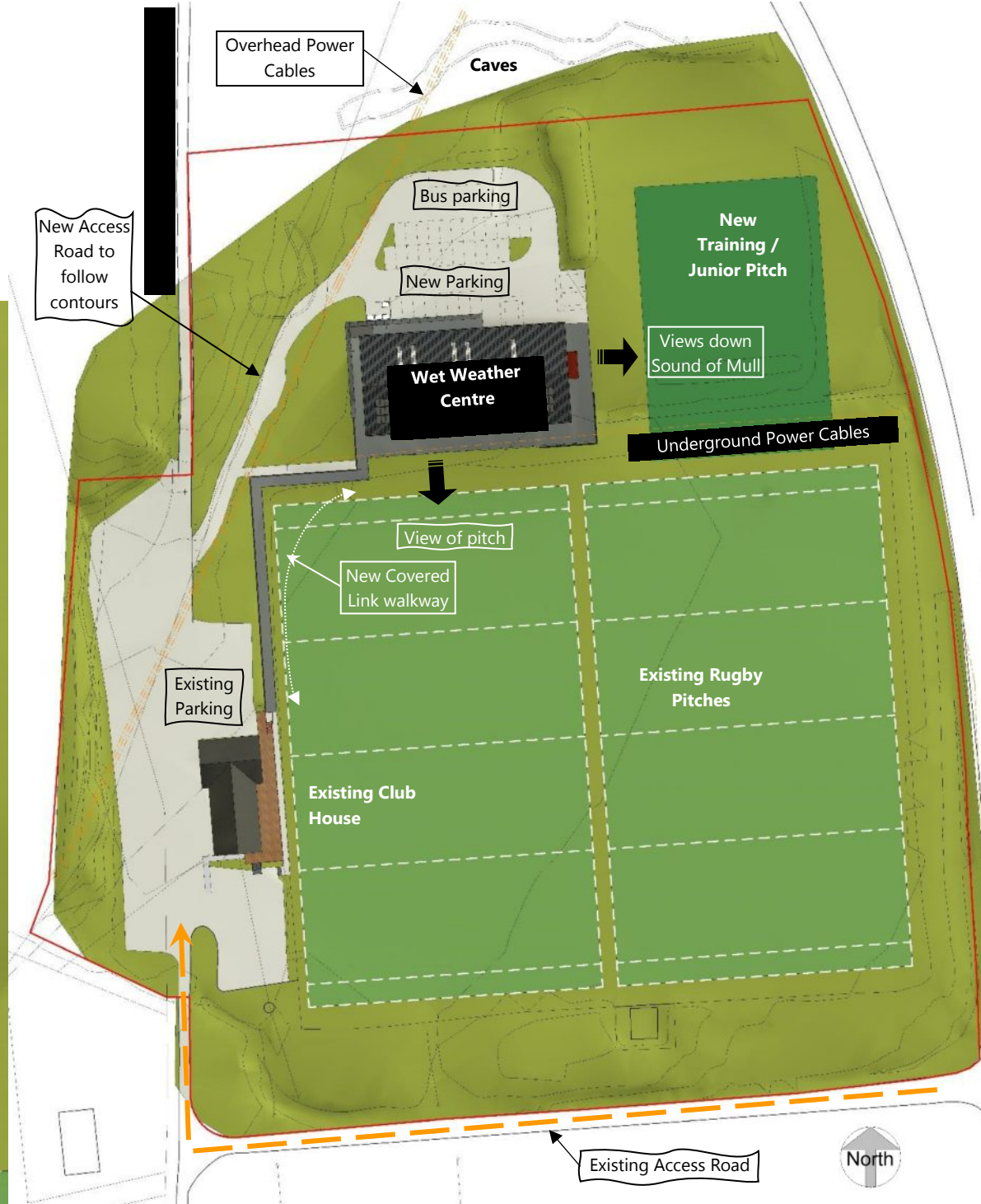
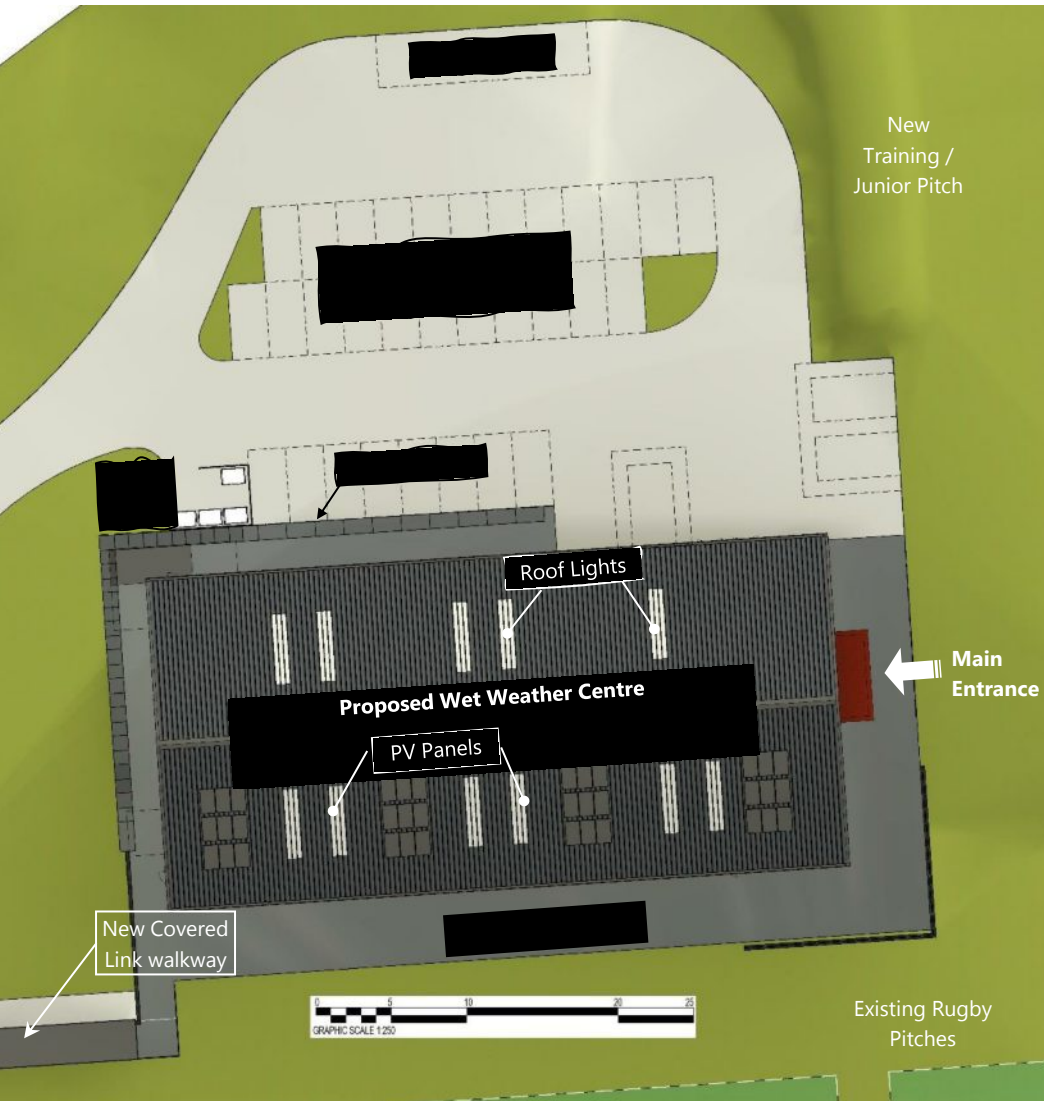


Long section through site to demonstrate the height of the wet weather centre in relation to the club house.



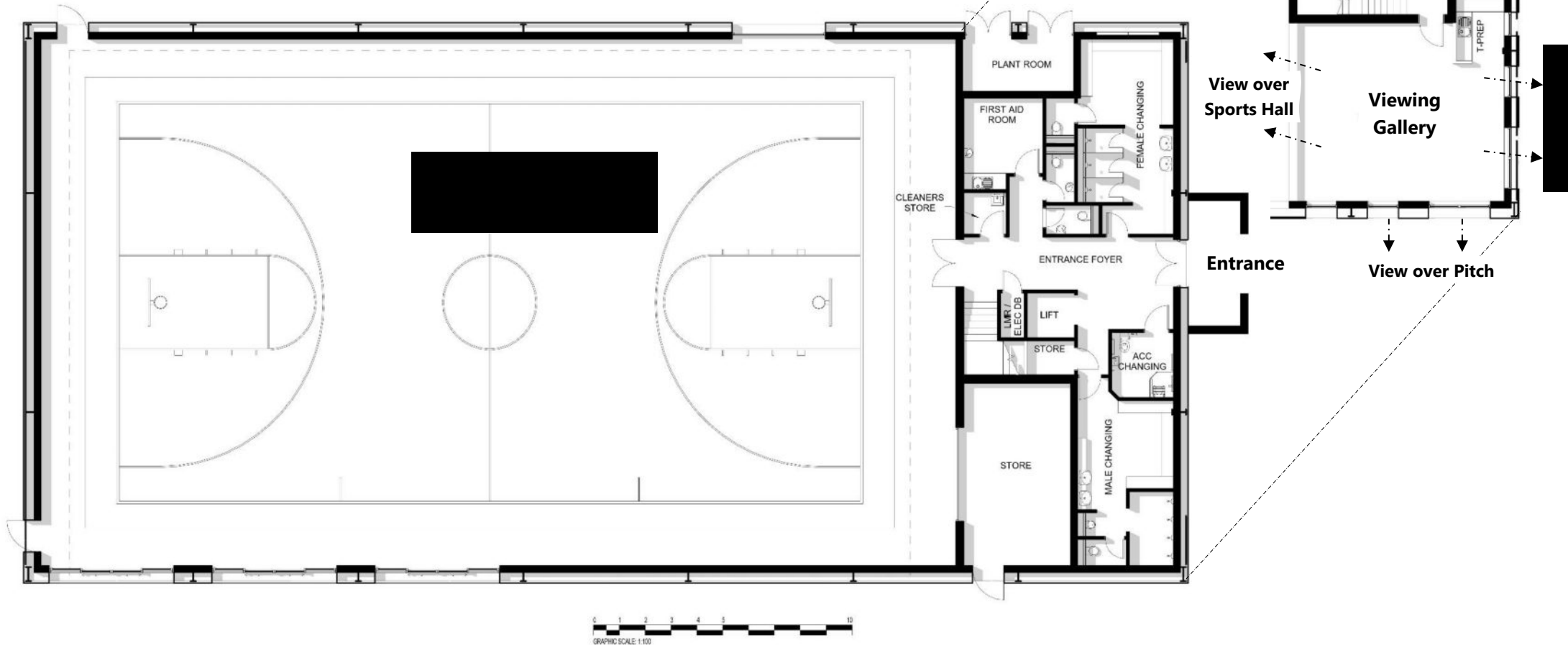
Proposed Site Layout

The building is to be located to the north of the pitches with the access road following the site contours.



Proposed Floor Plans

The design comprises a simple rectangular footprint of 965m² contained within a steel portal frame building. The structure and basic specification proposed for the building has been chosen to provide the most cost-effective building system for this type of structure. The service core is located to the east end of the plan with a centralised entrance, thus leaving the remainder of the footprint with a clear open space for the game's hall.



Scale and Design

The scale and design is comparable with the shape and form of a large agricultural structure. A form that is common place around the island, such as that recently developed on Mull's Cheese Farm.

The proposed elevation design will be in a mix of charred timber boarding and metal cladding to mimic the style of a rural agricultural building. This approach will negate the scale of the development. Unlike a contemporary sports hall, it will be in keeping with the rural nature of the site.

The proposed materials are:

- ❑ Metal composite panels to the roof
- ❑ Charred timber boarding and steel cladding to the walls
- ❑ Aluminium doors and windows



View of the Entrance Gable



Mull Cheese Farm as an example building style



View from the Access Road



Scale and Design

Continued ...

View from the new car park to the back of the building with the new car park access road following the site contours.



View from the Rugby Club from taken from the main road. The scale and mass of the building complements the setting designed in the style of an agricultural shed.



View from the Rugby Pitch

Sustainability

General Considerations

Whilst the amenity section will be heated, the intention is that the sports hall will be provided with frost protection only. The following LZCGT will be adopted to provide sustainable heating, hot water and electricity.

- ❑ Air source heat pump
- ❑ Mechanical Ventilation Heat Recovery System (MVHR)
- ❑ Photovoltaic Panels
- ❑ Electric Car Charging Points

The construction of a new wet weather facility at Garmony would sustain the life of the thriving Rugby Club and the Island Community as a whole. Such a facility would be the only one of its kind on the island and would become pivotal to the well-being of the residents on the island in providing a place to exercise and compete in the dry, given that the Isle of Mull with climate change, is becoming an increasingly wet environment.

The location is well suited centrally to serve all the far-reaching island communities including Iona. The location can be reached from all communities on Mull within an hour, with the average travel time being 40 minutes. The location is also situated equidistance between the two main ferry services serving Mull – Craignure (8 mins) and Fishnish (5mins), essential for visiting mainland teams. Although the location is served by the Craignure to Tobermory bus service this service only runs up until 8pm at night. Travelling by bus from the more remote communities such as Bunessan and Calgary, although not impossible, is more compatible for the tourist rather than the local user given the travel time. Island life, by its very nature relies more on individual transport rather than public transport. Electric Car charging points will be provided at the new facility to encourage the change to sustainable transport.

The site lies within the rural opportunity area identified under LDP2 and the Tobermory to Dalmally growth corridor, Argyll's only area of existing natural demographic growth. Oban plays a key role as a nodal gateway to the islands for commerce, residents and tourists and the centre will be well served therefore by visiting mainland sports teams, with connectivity to both the central belt and the highlands.

Planning Policy

NPF4 Sustainable Places

Policy 1 & 3 Tackling the climate and nature crisis & Biodiversity

The existing sports pitches were constructed at Garmony after the site was declared suitable for sports development as a result of a historic determination by Argyll and Bute Council circa 30 years ago. The area highlighted for development utilises ground that for over 100 years was the site of the Craignure football pitch. The new training pitch will revitalise the waste ground whilst the carpark and building will be placed on ground that struggles to sustain vegetation. The area around the carpark access road will be landscaped with new top soil provided as required. The proposal does not negatively impact on the biodiversity of the site and will restore the area adjacent to the main road, mitigating any loss of diversity on the footprint of the building and carpark.

Policy 2 Climate mitigation and adaptation

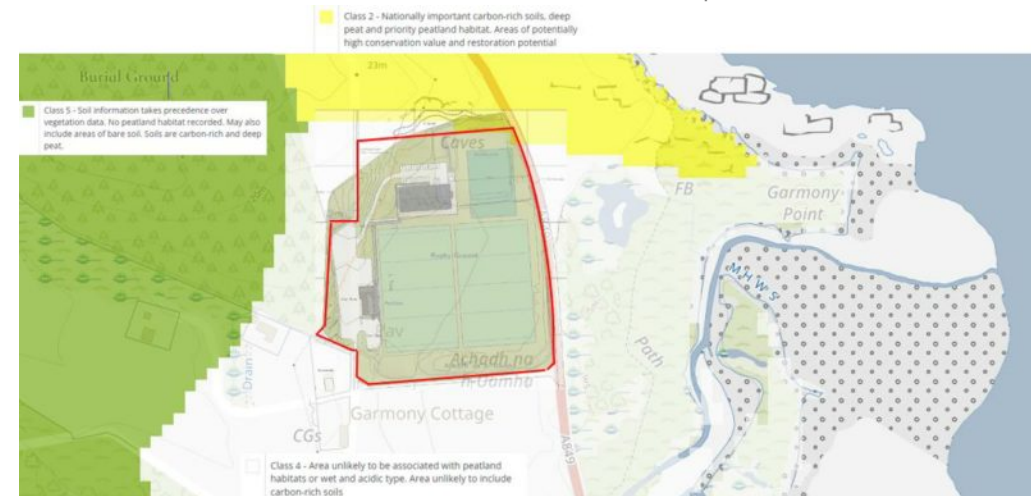
Refer to the sustainability section on page 10. In addition, the location is sited out with the flood plain.

Policy 4 Natural Places

Refer to Scale and Design (p8-9) for reflection on the appropriate scale in terms of no adverse impact on the natural environment. The site is not designated as a National Park, National Scenic Area, Site of Special Scientific Interest, National Nature Reserve or Special Area of Conservation, Special Protection Areas or Nature Scot Wild Land.

Policy 5 Soils

The Nature Scot, Carbon and Peat Map 2016, classes the area as Class 4, predominately mineral soil with some peat. The area in question is unlikely therefore to be peat or at the most, shallow peat of less than one foot deep on top of rock. The area north of the caves however, out with the site area is designated as deep peat and priority peatland habitat. Refer to page 3 for further substantiation.



NPF4 Sustainable Places Continued ...

Policy 12 Zero Waste

The main “materials/consumables” to be used once the centre is operational will be for cleaning the building, for the toilets and for the sports hall. These will all be from ethical sources and wherever and whenever possible they will all be fully recyclable to maximise waste reduction. The by-products of the cleaning materials used will need to be suitable for the waste treatment plant.

Drinks will be available for purchase via a vending machine which would generate recyclable drink containers. No food will be prepared or sold on the site on a day-to-day basis. Recycling containers will be provided on site adjacent to vending machines and at strategic locations around the outdoor grounds. There will be careful separation of all materials to avoid cross-contamination. There is a bin storage area marked on the Proposed Site Plan and bins for recycling and general waste will be clearly identified and provided for accessible Council collection as happens for other businesses on the island.

Policy 13 Sustainable Transport

Refer to sustainability section of the Design and Access Statement page 10.

Liveable Places

Policy 14 Design, quality and place and the six qualities of a successful place.

The choice of materials, the rural agricultural aesthetic as opposed to modern urban will enhance the facilities and quality of the Mull Rugby Club, whilst the scale and form respect and enhance the setting.

Healthy: The sports function for all, supports the health and wellbeing of the community and whatever your gender, science supports the theory that any sport improves a person’s mental health.

Pleasant: The setting is attractive and offers fantastic views down the sound of Mull from the facility. The design respects the rural environment.

Connected: Given the nature of an island and limited public service connectivity, the car will be relied upon to visit the centre for the majority. Reducing car dependency on an island is unrealistic but the move to electric cars is already underway and EV charging points will be provided to mitigate the damage to the environment. The fundamental point regarding connectivity is that Garmony is at the heart of the community and set equidistance between the two main ferries serving the mainland. It is worth noting that Tobermory High School has recently undertaken a justification survey for the location of a new high school for Mull and Garmony being central to all Mull communities was highlighted as the most suitable location.

NPF4 Liveable Places Continued ...

Distinctive: The building form supports the local rural agricultural aesthetic style, with distinctive branding that makes reference to Ben More (B~More) in the Rugby Club colours. This reinforces the local identity and sense of place literally and creatively.

Sustainable: A community sports facility that will permit the Island Sports teams to compete in the mainland leagues. Presently this is not possible as each team must be able to host home games and there is no facility of this size on the island that currently facilitates this. With the Community partnering with the successful Isle of Mull Rugby Club, this facility expands on a current successful resource whilst opening up sport to all. With the Island classed as “mostly wet” with only April, May and June just dipping below this threshold of classification, the facility will offer year around respite from the predominately wet days, ensuring climate resilience.

Adaptable: The games hall will be fully adaptable to host a variety of indoors sports. Primary school sports day will also be revived, an event which brings together all the remote primary schools on the island. Sadly, this annual event is generally rained off. The facility will also be capable of hosting social functions for the Mull community.

Policy 15: Local Living and 20 minute neighbourhoods

Whilst Island living on the micro level, within a settlement can sustain a 20 minute neighbourhood, the size and type of facilities that a small settlement can sustain are limited. For that reason, settlements cannot be taken in isolation and community facilities for an island community need to be considered that are central to all. Garmony offer the perfect centralised location for such a facility. Refer to the Sustainability section of the Design and Access statement on page 10.

Policy 21: Play, recreation and sport

The development promotes sport for the island community all and will be accessible to all. The proposal expands on an existing sports facility creating an all-inclusive facility. The site is out with the flood plain and the land on which the building and training pitch are to be located need restoration to enhance the biodiversity.

Policy 22:

The site does not lie within a river or coastal flood plain – refer to appendix.

Policy 23:

By its very nature of being a sports facility, the facility will have positive effects on health, and promote exercise. With regards to noise, the new facility being of an indoor nature and situated at the far side of the existing rugby pitches remote from the Garmony Settlement, will not contribute adversely to the current acceptable noise levels associated with an outdoor rugby match.

There are existing overhead power cables and an underground cable on the site. The building has been located at safe distances from the overhead and underground cables in close discussion with the power network provider SSE.

NPF4 Productive Places

Policy 25: Community Wealth Building

The Wet Weather Centre is a community lead project. The land on which the building is to be located is owned by the Garmony Trust, except for the land west of the disused B road to the rear of the club house which is owned by the Rugby Club. The land and club house are and maintained by the Isle of Mull Rugby Club with no additional public funding and it is anticipated that the new building will fall under the existing management. The building will be administered therefore by the Rugby Club in collaboration with the community stakeholders. The facilities that this development will provide for the Island will help to level up the Island in terms of facilities currently only available on the mainland.

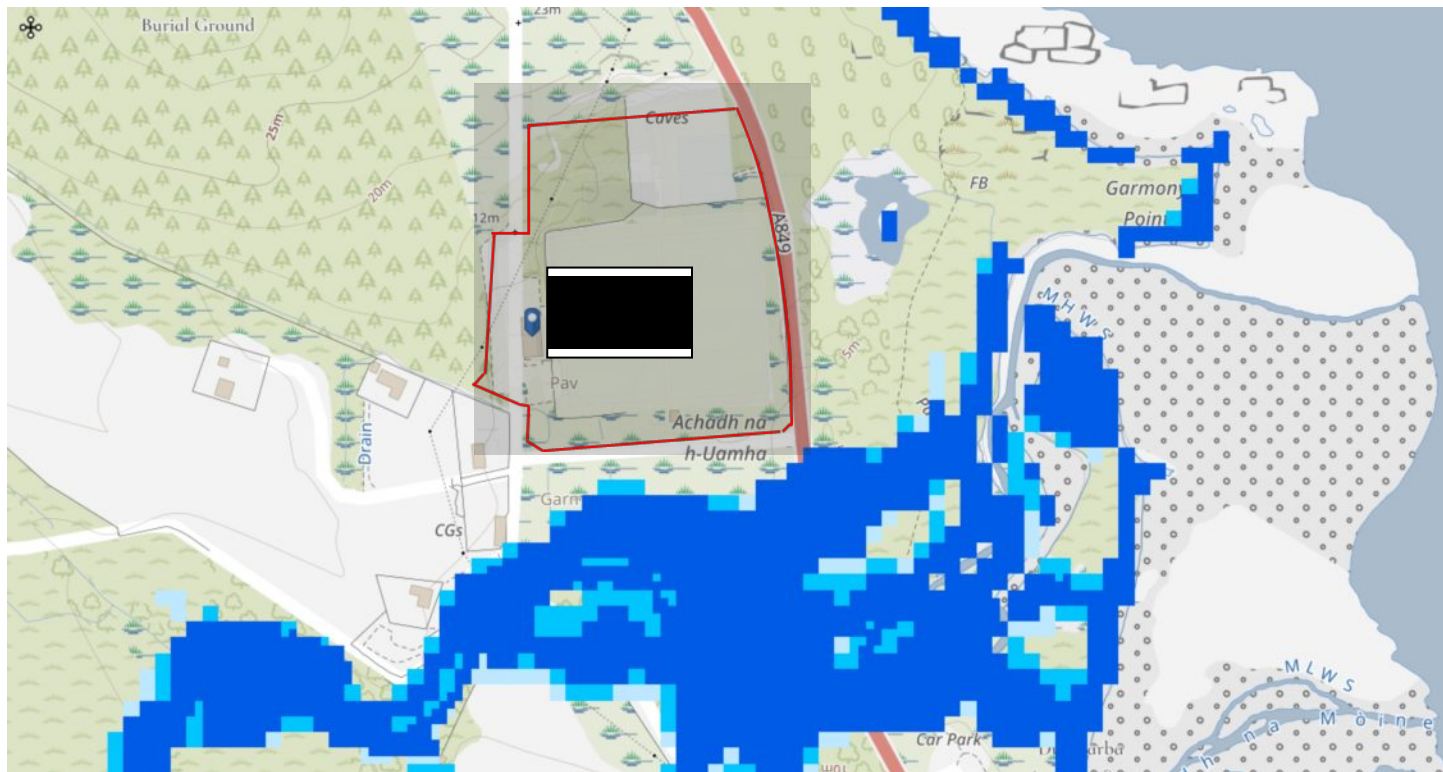
Policy 29: Rural development

As an existing well-established sports club offering at present only rugby and on occasion football, the construction of a Wet Weather Centre will diversify the centre offering community facilities capable of accommodating a variety of different sports for all abilities. Although of a rural location, the club is well established on the island, centrally located to all the major island settlements such as Craignure, Bunessan, Tobermory and Salen. The development will provide a community facility essential for the well-being and physical fitness of the residents on the Isle of Mull and Iona. The proposals will also have a great value in retaining and attracting young families to stay thus helping stem the trend of the declining population in the west coast islands.

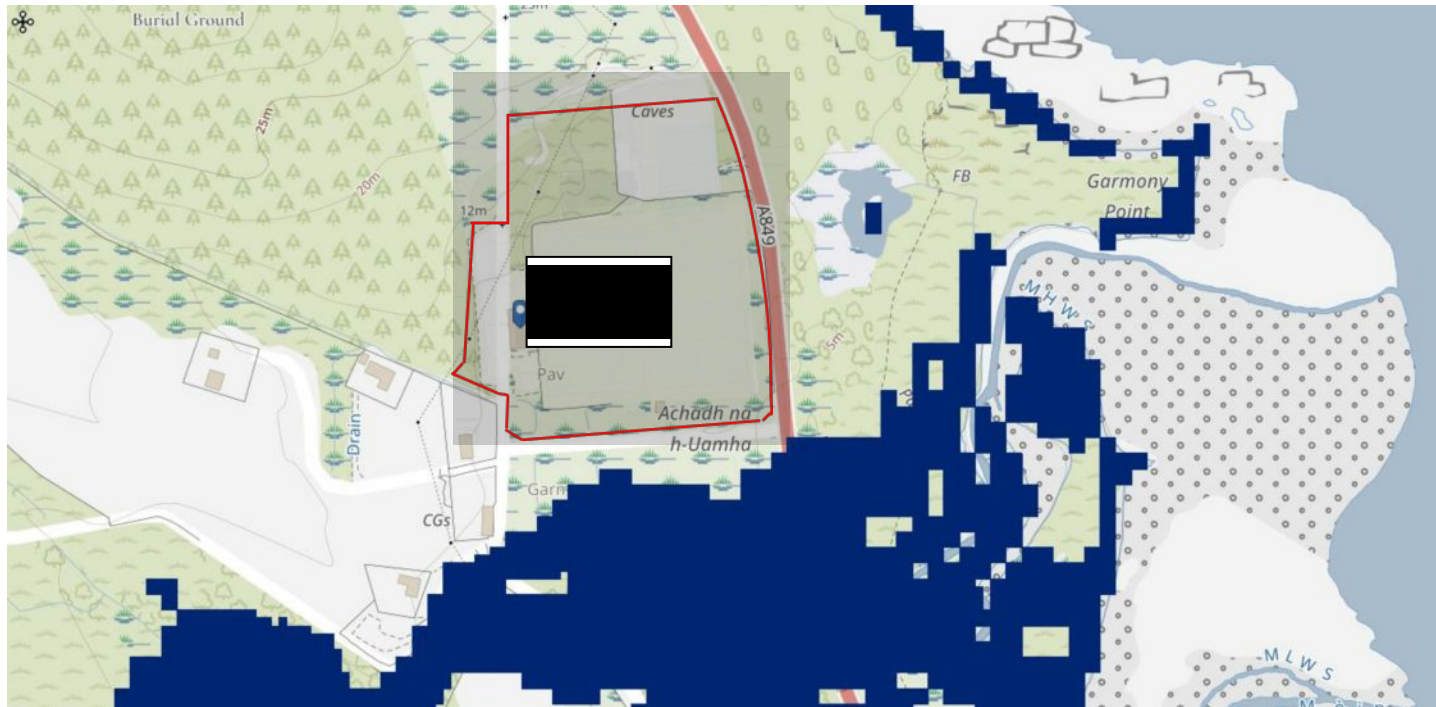
Flood Assessment

The following maps are extracted from the SEPA Flood Hazard Risk Information which contains public sector information licensed under the Open Government Licence v3.0. which can be viewed at:-

<https://www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/doc/open-government-licence/version/3/>



Extract from SEPA map of river flood risk in this area



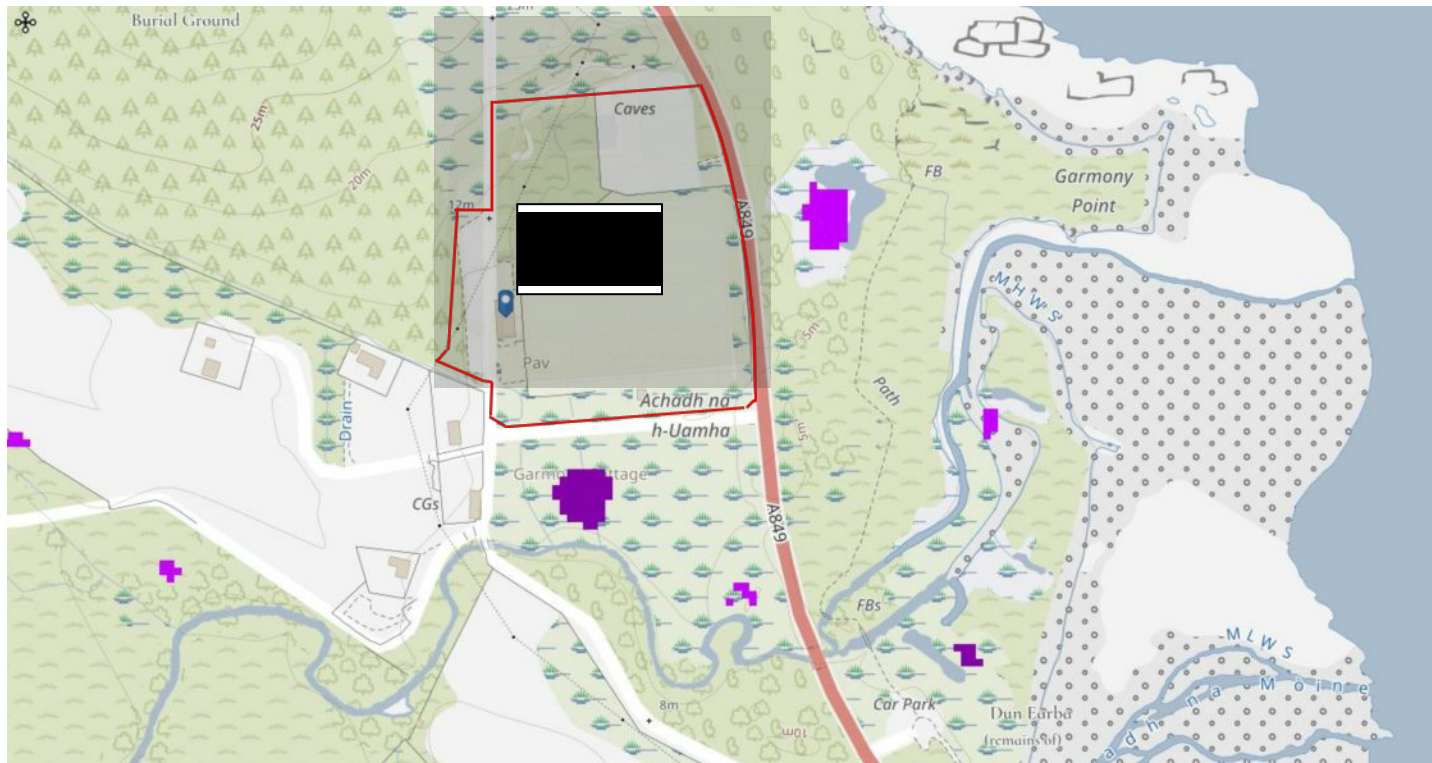
Extract from SEPA Future River Flood Map – by the 2080's each year this area will have a 0.5% chance of flooding



Extract from SEPA map of coastal flood risk in this area



Extract from SEPA Future Coastal Flood Map – by the 2080's each year this area will have a 0.5% chance of flooding



Extract from SEPA map of surface water flood risk in this area

Conclusion

The development lies out with the Flood Plain for Coastal, River and Surface Water flooding. The extracts also demonstrate that the by the 2080's the development area will still be out with the projected flood plains.