

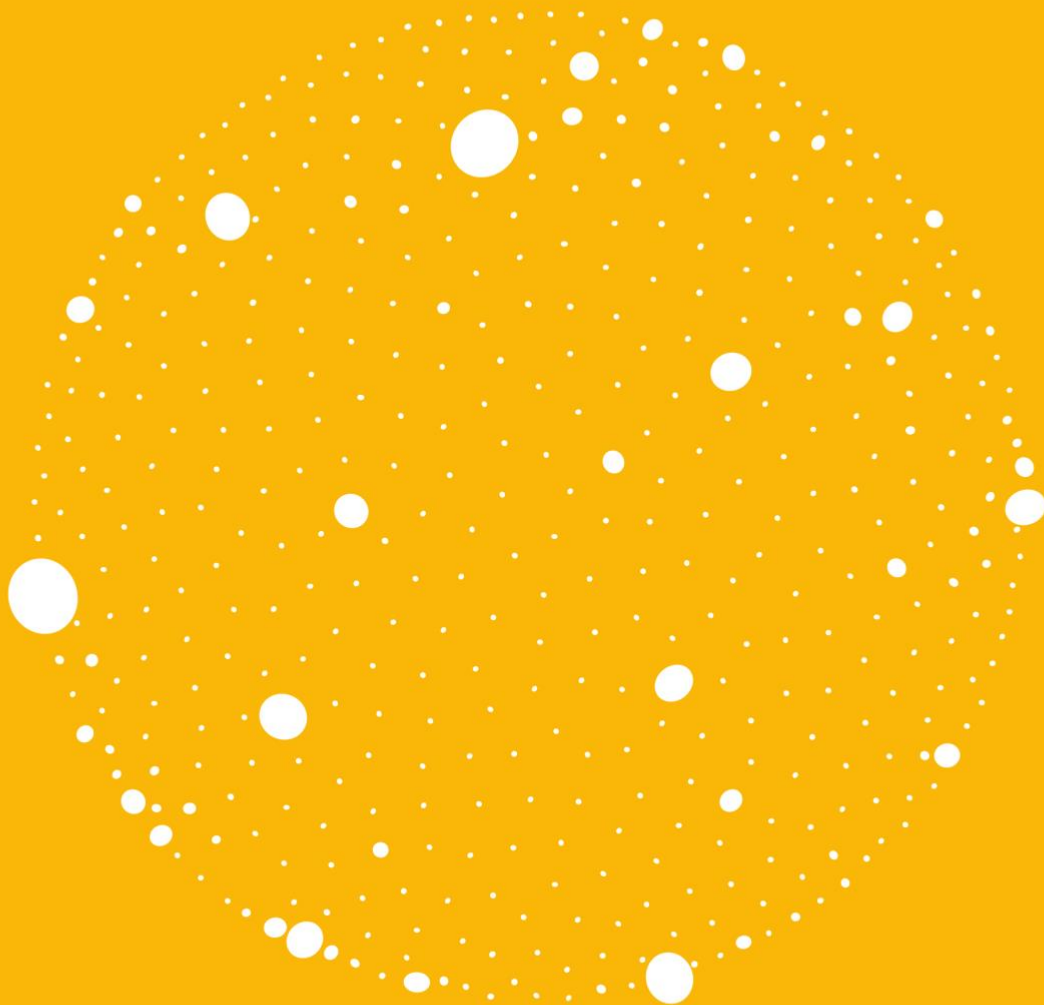


Cambusbarron Village Nursery

Study into the Feasibility of Cambusbarron Village Nursery Constructing a Bespoke Building in Gillies Hill Community Woodland

Cambusbarron Village Nursery CIC

December 2020



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1. Introduction and Background

1.1 Background and Original Drivers

Cambusbarron Village Nursery CIC is a community interest company formed in 2019 to provide high quality early learning experiences for children between age 2 ½ and starting school. Cambusbarron Village Nursery is built upon the strong foundations laid by Cambusbarron Playgroup, a service which served the community of Cambusbarron and the surrounding areas for some 50 years.

Cambusbarron Village Nursery (CVN) plans to relocate their service from its existing location in Cambusbarron Community Centre to a bespoke new building in Gillies Hill Community Woodland, an area of local woodland. This is not an outdoor forest nursery, but a physical construction within the woods. It is intended that the new building will not only meet statutory guidance for early years settings but maximise positive experiences and outcomes for children and families using the service. The indoor space will complement the rich learning experience delivered in the outdoor woodland setting by providing respite from adverse weather conditions, storage, toilet and kitchen facilities and a meeting place for children and families. The building will also be suitable for use by other community groups thus meeting the needs of the wider community.

One of the main drivers for the relocation is the expansion of early learning and childcare, which in recent years has undergone a transformative change to improve outcomes for children and support parents into employment. Under the expansion of early learning and childcare, the Government have committed to almost double the 600 funded hours of support to 1140 funded hours of early learning and childcare by August 2021. In Stirling, the Council committed to a roll out from August 2020 as they and the sector were ready. As a fully funded provider of ELC within Stirling Council, CVN began delivering increased entitlement in August 2019. Prior to this the nursery was delivering three hour sessions on weekday mornings, which has now doubled to six hour sessions.

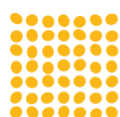
The nursery currently operates from Stirling Council owned Cambusbarron Community Centre as its main base, renting the activity room and utilising the paved area at the front of the centre for outdoor activity. It has become apparent that the current nursery location in the Community Centre is unsuitable for meeting the regulations for early learning and childcare services and developing the service in line with need in the community and surrounding area. One of the primary limitations of the use of this building for the nursery is the lack of free flow access from indoor to outdoor areas, which limits the children's freedom in choice in where to play.

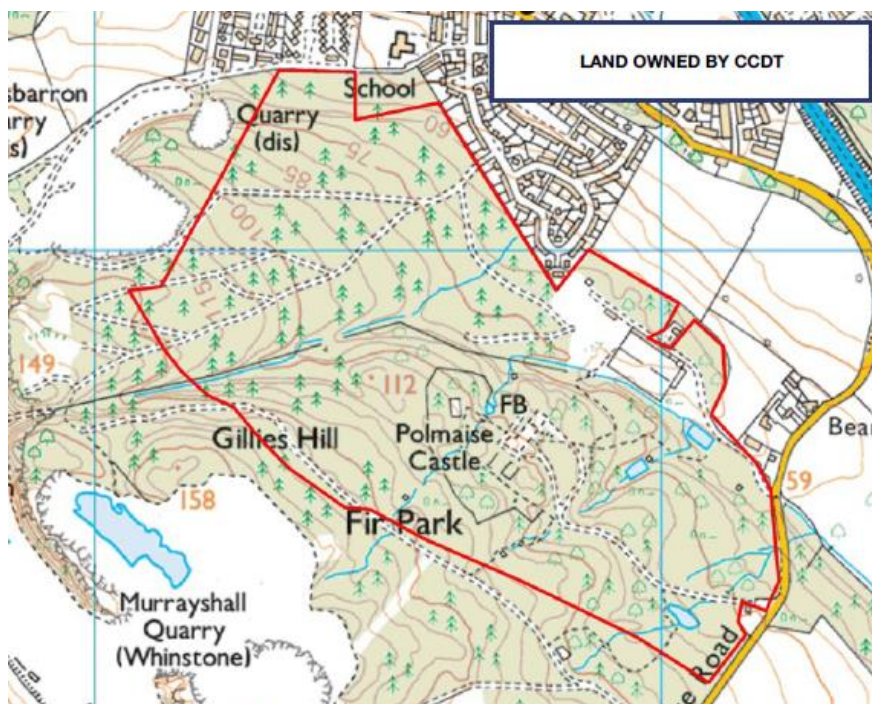
A 60% rent increase at the current premises, which will adversely impact on sustainability, has added extra incentive to establish the woodland based nursery.

1.2 Existing Woodland Play Sessions

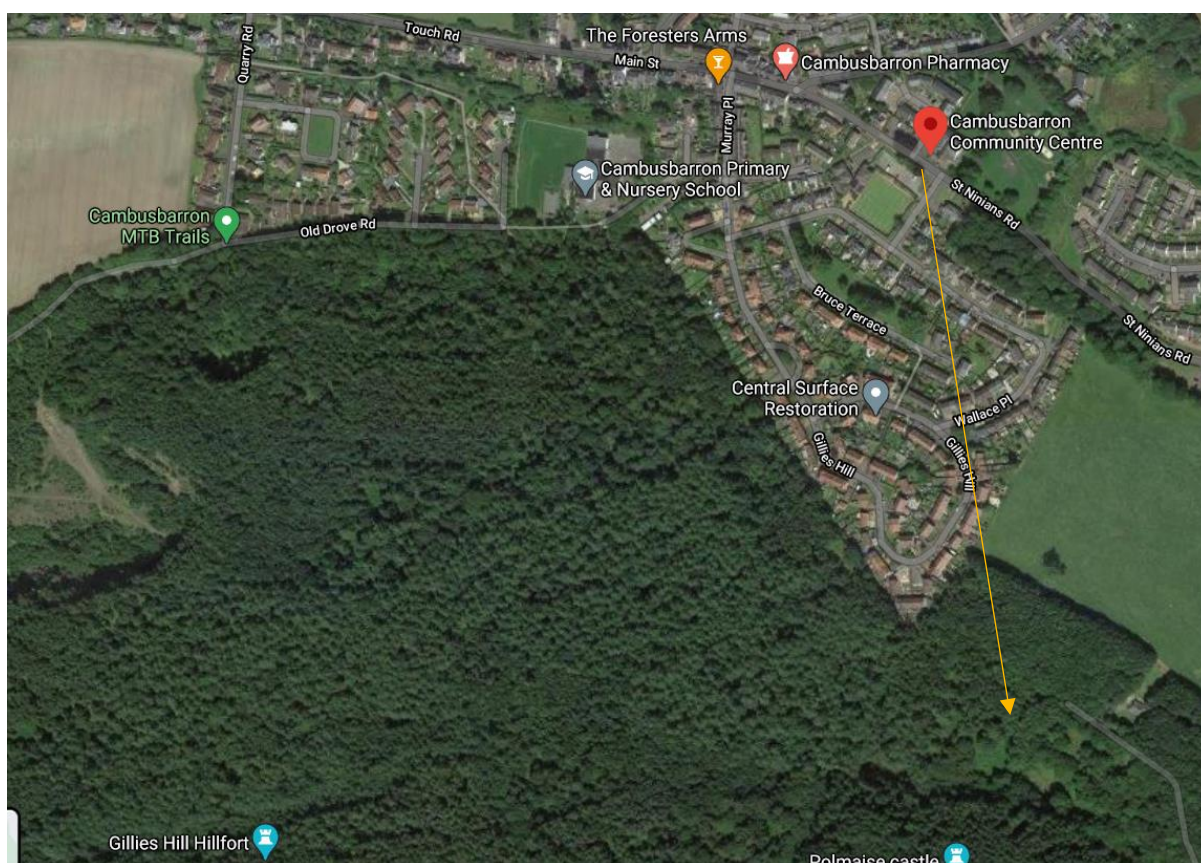
But the motivation to shift to a woodland setting is not just because the existing premises are not suitable. CVN has a strong outdoor learning ethos and run regular (twice weekly) sessions in the local woodland. The woodland play sessions are located in the community owned Gillies Hill Woodland, an ancient woodland situated on the outskirts of the village. In 2019, Cambusbarron Community Development Trust purchased 64 hectares of Polmaise Wood including the Gillies Hill Community Woodland area, giving the community an active role in protecting, managing and developing the Hill.

¹ <https://www.stirling.gov.uk/learning-education/early-learning-childcare/expansion-of-early-learning-childcare/>





This map shows the extent of the wood that is community owned. The map below indicates the distance from the wood to the existing nursery site.



On a woodland play day, staff and children will walk from the village to the woodland together. There is also a nominated woodland gathering point at the edge of the woodland where parents are able to collect their children if they are attending a half-day session.



Depending on the ability of the participants, examples of woodland activities include²;

- Woodland management and nature exploration
- Building dens and other structures
- Fires and cooking
- Games and invitations for imaginative play
- Natural crafts
- Using tools, such as knives and saws
- Scavenger hunts and adventure
- Seasonal celebrations

1.3 Aspiration for the Building

In line with CVN ambitions, a need has been identified to relocate the service to an area of local woodland and to a building specifically designed and built with the principles of early years and outdoor play and learning as a focus.

The proposed new building is intended to provide cover from adverse weather conditions whilst maximising and enriching the woodland learning experience.

When not used as a nursery, CVN want to be open to partnership and community as much as possible. The building will also serve as a multi-functional space that can be used by a variety of local groups of all ages. It is hoped that a permanent base in the woodland will ensure sessions can be extended allowing for deeper learning opportunities. As well as providing the facilities to enrich the learning experience, it should support the basic day to day requirements of the children and staff including toilet facilities and a kitchen.

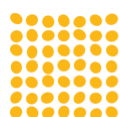
1.4 The Organisation

CVN provides high quality early learning and childcare (ELC) to children aged from 2½ to 5 in the village of Cambusbarrow and the surrounding areas. CVN operates in partnership with Stirling Council to offer fully funded places to eligible children. Additional hours are also provided for younger children on a fee paying basis. CVN is currently registered for a maximum of 16 children at each session.

CVN's overall mission is to provide a community focussed service which meets the needs of local children, their families and the community. CVN is a Community Interest Company (CIC) and reinvests any surplus or positives back into meeting its social aims and objectives which are as follows. To,

1. provide a safe, inclusive and nurturing environment where all children can develop confidence, take risks, learn from their mistakes, make informed decisions and develop a "can do" attitude.
2. encourage and celebrate creativity, curiosity and a life-long love of learning.
3. develop skills for the future by providing opportunities for children to engage in high quality, motivating, challenging and purposeful learning experiences across a broad curriculum.
4. work in partnership with parents and the local community to ensure that children are supported to achieve their full potential, be fit and healthy, have high aspirations and recognise the positive contribution they can make to society
5. provide high quality, accessible, flexible and affordable service for parents

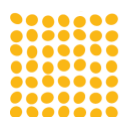
² CVN Woodland Play Handbook



6. be a community focussed service
7. facilitate parental employment and/or education
8. promote the benefits of outdoor play and learning particularly in the natural environment
9. promote learning for sustainability
10. provide outdoor play and learning opportunities to economically and educationally disadvantaged children and adults
11. provide training opportunities for fellow professionals
12. be a fair ethical and supportive employer

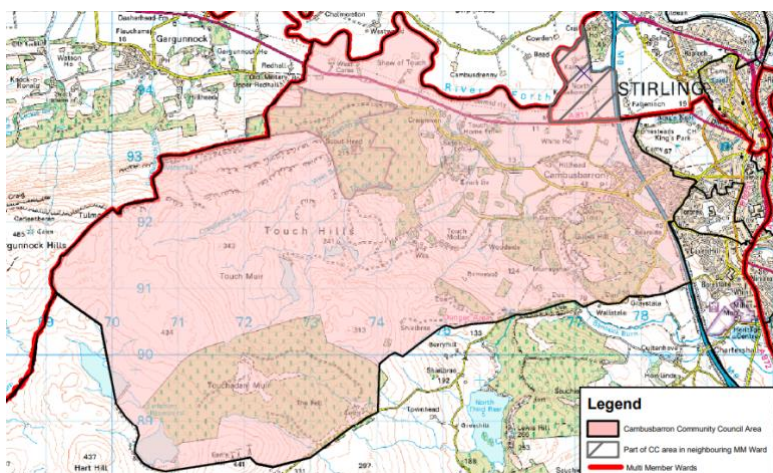
1.5 Methodology

Inception meeting	Due to the research being delivered during the covid-19 pandemic, lockdown restrictions meant that the inception meeting had to take place remotely with the CEO of the Village Nursery. A clearly articulated document was shared which clarified the motivation for this concept.
Demographic and Policy Study	Study of key demographic trends in the local area using Community Insight, a software package that collects data from over 30 databases and a range of other sources. Analysis of key national and regional policies to show strategic fit with Scottish Government, and Stirling Council priorities.
Market Research	Market research to establish the demand for an outdoor early learning and childcare service.
Survey	A local survey aimed at families with young children was distributed online only due to the pandemic (using SurveyMonkey). This was circulated by CVN, through parent networks and on the Cambusbarron Community Council Facebook page. A total of 56 family responses were received which is a good representative sample.
Stakeholder interviews	In-depth interviews carried out by phone with local and external stakeholders from the following organisations; Stirling Council, Inspire Scotland, Cambusbarron Community Development Trust, Cambusbarron Community Council
Parent interviews	1-1 telephone interviews conducted with four families who have used the CVN service to identify qualitative input to the concept and future vision.
Technical Appraisal	We worked in close partnership with a technical consultant who has a particular interest in carbon neutral construction. Site visit by building consultant to assess the practicality of constructing a bespoke building in the woodland and to make recommendations on the most practical and cost effective way to develop and take the project to completion. Further thinking was undertaken on how to ensure the woodland building could be safely powered off grid.
Research report and options	Research report produced for discussion with CVN staff and way forward agreed



2. Demographics and Statistics

2.1 Nature of the Area



Cambusbarron is a village located to the southwest of Stirling. The area highlighted represents the total area covered by Cambusbarron Community Council, which includes the Carron Valley as well as the village itself.

The community of Cambusbarron is steeped in heritage, with evidence of settlement since the Bronze Age. Gillies Hill Woodland is widely regarded to be one of the

village's most important historical assets, the hill from which Robert the Bruce's camp followers descended onto the field of the Battle of Bannockburn in 1314. A large portion of the ancient woodland was taken into community ownership in 2019. Today, the village of Cambusbarron offers residents a 'village way of life' while being within close proximity to the city of Stirling.

2.2 Statistics

Desktop research was conducted to explore some of the statistics available for Cambusbarron. Principal sources being the 2011 Census, Stirling Council strategies and the Scottish Index of Multiple Deprivation.

- The village of Cambusbarron has a total population of 3,800.
- Cambusbarron has a slightly higher than average number of children and young people under the age of 16 than the national average (17.1% v 16.9% nationally).
- Stirling as a whole has a projected growth of around 8% in the under threes population between 2017 and 2039.³
- In Stirling, the population of children aged 0 to 4 years and 5 to 9 years is set to increase to 5,299 and 5,126 children respectively by 2026, further increasing childcare demand.⁴
- By 2037, the population of Stirling is projected to be 105,850, an increase of 12% since 2016 and 16.3% compared to the population in 2012. This is ahead of the 8.8% population projections for Scotland as a whole from 2012 to 2037. The projected birth rate for Stirling area is just over one thousand births per annum from 2017 to 2020.⁵
- Stirling as a whole is a broadly affluent and prosperous area while also being home to some of the most economically and socially deprived in Scotland.
- While Cambusbarron is generally regarded to be one of the more affluent areas in Stirling, it is also an area of mixed deprivation. As shown by the SIMD 2020 map below, Cambusbarron consists of four data zones which vary from the 10% least deprived (shaded in dark blue) to the 40% least deprived. The more deprived areas are located

³ Stirling Council Children's Services Plan

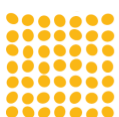
⁴ Stirling Council Delivery Plan for the Extension of ELC

⁵ Stirling Council Delivery Plan for the Extension of ELC



south and north of Birkill Road. These areas are in the middle of the SIMD scale and the domains of deprivation are education, employment and access to services.

- 9.2% of children in Cambusbarron live in poverty, which is lower than the Stirling 12.5% and Scottish average (16.8%).
- According to figures modelled from the annual Community Life Survey (2015/16), people living in Cambusbarron have a strong sense of belonging and strong local relationships when compared with that of Stirling and Scotland as a whole.



3. Policy Context

3.1 Outdoor Play

It should be noted that CVN's vision is to create a physical nursery in the woods which will facilitate outdoor play but it does have a physical building which distinguishes it from forest schools and outdoor nurseries.

The Scottish Government strongly supports the development of outdoor early learning activity and has taken a number of positive policy actions in this area. The Scottish Government has committed to expanding entitlement to funded early learning and childcare to 1140 hours/year by August 2021. Outdoor play and learning and delivering high quality experiences for children are key priorities for the government. In partnership with Inspiring Scotland, the government published [Scotland's Coalition for Outdoor Play and Learning position statement](https://www.inspiringscotland.org.uk/publication/scotlands-coalition-outdoor-play-learning-position-statement/)⁶. This commits over 100 signatories to embedding playing and learning outdoors as an everyday activity and celebrating it as a fundamental part of growing up in Scotland by:

- Widening access to the high-quality, diverse greenspaces and natural landscapes that exist throughout all our communities to ensure that all children, young people and families have easy, local access to excellent outdoor play.
- Opening up more of our communal and publicly managed spaces for learning outdoors, ensuring that children and young people know they are entitled to access these spaces and feel safe and comfortable using them.
- Enhancing and enriching urban greenspace and built environments to be inviting, play-friendly places, offering easy access to the outdoors and nature close to home.
- Empowering every adult involved in the lives of our children and young people with the confidence, enthusiasm and skills to encourage and support them to play and learn outdoors.
- Generating and sharing knowledge and evidence-based research to promote better understanding of the benefits of playing and learning outdoors.

[Out to Play](https://www.gov.scot/publications/out-play-practical-guidance-creating-outdoor-play-experiences-children/)⁷ provides practical guidance for ELC practitioners with practical advice on how to access outdoor spaces and highlights the multitude of physical and mental benefits outdoor play and learning delivers:

- Improving physical health; increases physical activity and encourages a healthy, active lifestyle and reduces health inequalities
- Promoting wellbeing; reduces stress, increases emotional resilience, builds confidence and increases self-esteem and the ability to manage risk
- Supports wider learning; provides challenges, encourages child led play, boosts creativity and understanding and prepares children for more structured learning
- Connects children to their environment; encourages understanding and enjoyment of the natural world, creates a sense of ownership and teaches children to value and protect the natural world around them

⁶ <https://www.inspiringscotland.org.uk/publication/scotlands-coalition-outdoor-play-learning-position-statement/>

⁷ <https://www.gov.scot/publications/out-play-practical-guidance-creating-outdoor-play-experiences-children/>



Similarly, Education Scotland's report '[Outdoor Learning: Practical guidance, ideas and support for teachers and practitioners in Scotland](https://education.gov.scot/improvement/Documents/hwb24-ol-support.pdf)'⁸ acknowledges that learning outdoors is relevant across the curriculum and the potential, when meaningful connections are developed with the curriculum, that every experience and outcome can be developed outdoors in a 'bigger, better or different way than when being developed inside'. The guidance also highlights certain areas where outdoor learning has a unique and enhanced role in meeting the learning needs of children and young people. These areas include;

- Early years outdoors
- Health and wellbeing
- Sustainable development education
- Creativity
- Skills for learning, work and life

The guidance also highlights the importance of engaging parents and carers and enhancing their interest and understanding of outdoor play and learning. This will support them to continue to provide outdoor experiences for their child on a day to day basis, outside of early years provision.

The 2016 Care Inspectorate report '[My World Outdoors](https://hub.careinspectorate.com/how-we-support-improvement/care-inspectorate-programmes-and-publications/my-world-outdoors/)'⁹ encourages the further development of outdoor play. The report sets out the expectation that as a minimum that children of all ages should have daily opportunities to spend time outdoors in early learning settings, have ample opportunity to explore the natural environment and should have the *freedom of choice to move between indoor and outdoor environments wherever practicable*.

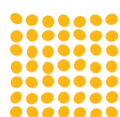
A subsequent report [Space to Grow](https://hub.careinspectorate.com/media/1623/space-to-grow.pdf)¹⁰ was produced in 2017, promoting outdoor play as a part of the ELC expansion. Space to Grow describes good quality outdoor space and sets out additional information to support the provision of indoor/outdoor settings with a focus on high quality outcomes for children. The report highlights some key considerations to ensure quality ELC provision which are directly relevant to CVN's plans to relocate from the Community Centre to a bespoke building in the woodland:

- **Environment**
 - Access; Children should be able to move independently and freely between indoor and outdoor settings, without the assistance of staff.
 - There should be proper provision for *hand washing* within the service, this is particularly important in light of COVID-19.
 - Storage; the accessibility of outdoor clothing is very important in outdoor settings (especially for those children who don't have the appropriate clothing), as is where the clothing is stored and dried. Storage should be available for play equipment/resources, including large equipment, prams, bedding, kitchen utensils and food, towels, linen and personal care items
 - Children should have a *place to sleep and rest* should they need to without being disturbed. With the expansion to 1140 hours, it is likely that instead of the traditional model of early learning and childcare where children attend morning or afternoon sessions, more children may attend for a longer day and are therefore more likely to

⁸ <https://education.gov.scot/improvement/Documents/hwb24-ol-support.pdf>

⁹ <https://hub.careinspectorate.com/how-we-support-improvement/care-inspectorate-programmes-and-publications/my-world-outdoors/>

¹⁰ <https://hub.careinspectorate.com/media/1623/space-to-grow.pdf>



need time to rest. The guidance does note that in a small play room setting, children can rest comfortably in the room other children are playing in.

- Adequate *toilet and changing facilities* should be provided, they should be within easy reach in order to promote independence. Separate toilet facilities should be provided for staff.
- *Spaces to eat*; Provision of food is a central part of the early learning and care environment and with the expansion of childcare, it is more likely that children will need lunch during their time at the nursery. Where possible, there should be opportunities for the children to help prepare their own meals and snacks.
- *Staff areas*; Staff should be able to take breaks away from the children and must have a space where they can safely store their personal belongings and where they can meet others, in accordance with workplace health and safety regulations. The guidance sets out that there should also be an office for administrative work and for storing documentation.
- *Parents and the wider community*; Settings should attract children and families to encourage parents not only to use the service for their child but for them to be involved, enjoy, and benefit from the wider community. It is also advised to have a parent's room where parents can meet informally, spend time while their children settle and support one another.
- *Sustainability* should be a key aspect in planning and designing early learning and childcare and out of school care settings.

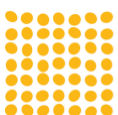
3.2 Local Level Policy Considerations

Stirling Council's delivery plan¹¹ for the expansion of early learning and childcare takes into account the feedback from Stirling families and identifies the following key priorities for improving childcare provision;

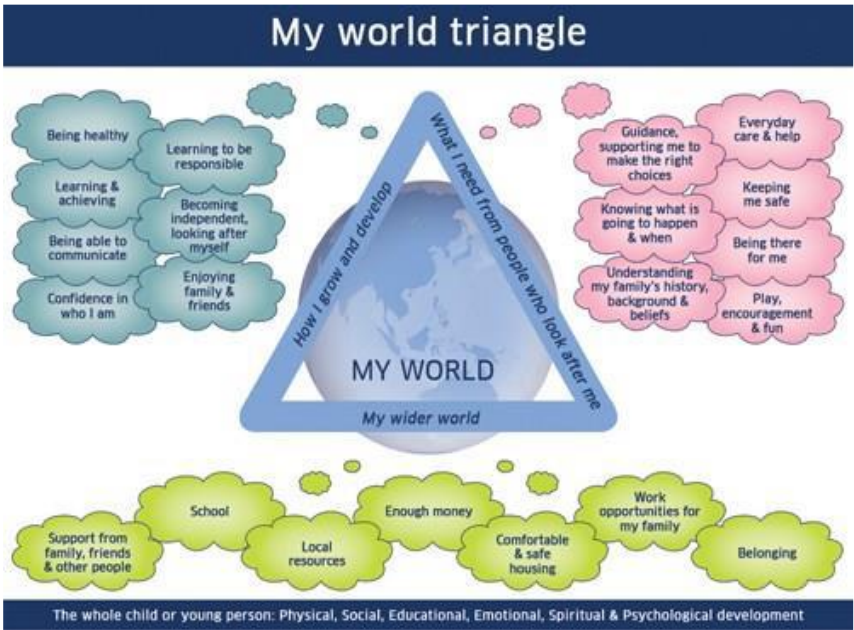
- Increase the proportion of free entitlement places available on a full day-care/extended basis across all communities.
- There is a preference for full day-care over 9 hours a day.
- There is a clear demand for earlier opening hours and later closing hours in order for parents to meet work commitments. This is flagged as a sufficiency gap for communities, where choice may be confined to childminder provision.
- (71%) parents said they would prefer to use 1140 hours almost every week of the year as opposed to term time only.
- (65%) parents said they would prefer to use 1140 hours in longer sessions on fewer days of the week as opposed to shorter sessions spread over more days per week.

It should be noted that parental choice is at the heart of the roll out. CVN undertook their own research and the indications were that parents wanted provision during school hours (9am till 3pm) which is what is currently offered. It is likely that this will be extended in the nursery in the woodland, but this will be scoped out further in the business plan.

¹¹ <https://www.stirling.gov.uk/learning-education/early-learning-childcare/expansion-of-early-learning-childcare/>



3.3 Child Related Policy

Name	Details
Getting it Right for Every Child (GIRFEC)	<p>GIRFEC Scotland's national approach to supporting the wellbeing of our children and young people by offering the right help at the right time from the right people</p> <p>GIRFEC encourages a child centred approach, focusing on the needs of each child individually. Key outcomes are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • children get the best start in life; • we build on the family's strengths to help them become more confident parents or carers;
SHANARRI wellbeing indicators	<p>GIRFEC has also introduced the concept of "My World Triangle" which demonstrates GIRFEC's SHANARRI wellbeing indicators which are Safe, Healthy, Achieving, Nurtured, Active, Respected, Responsible, and Included. It is important that outcomes and any measurement framework must address GIRFEC and how it applies to each child. These indicators are also reflected in the Care Inspectorate's My World Outdoors report referenced earlier.</p>  <p>The diagram illustrates the 'My World Triangle' concept. At the center is a globe labeled 'MY WORLD' with 'My wider world' written below it. The triangle is formed by three blue lines: the left side is labeled 'How I grow and develop', the right side is 'What I need from people who look after me', and the bottom side is 'My wider world'. Surrounding the triangle are three clusters of thought bubbles. The left cluster (blue) includes: 'Being healthy', 'Learning & achieving', 'Being able to communicate', 'Confidence in who I am', 'Learning to be responsible', 'Becoming independent, looking after myself', and 'Enjoying family & friends'. The right cluster (pink) includes: 'Guidance, supporting me to make the right choices', 'Knowing what is going to happen & when', 'Understanding my family's history, background & beliefs', 'Everyday care & help', 'Keeping me safe', 'Being there for me', and 'Play, encouragement & fun'. The bottom cluster (green) includes: 'School', 'Local resources', 'Enough money', 'Comfortable & safe housing', 'Work opportunities for my family', 'Belonging', and 'Support from family, friends & other people'. A dark blue banner at the bottom of the diagram reads: 'The whole child or young person: Physical, Social, Educational, Emotional, Spiritual & Psychological development'.</p> <p>The learning from the "My World Triangle" illustrates the opportunity for integrated play activities and how it fits with the child's wider world, focusing on outcomes and learned skills that will encourage children to become more confident individuals and successful learners and contributors</p>
Scotland's Early Years Framework	One of 10 key principles of this Framework is 'Improving outcomes and children's quality of life through play'
Scotland's Play Strategy 2015	Many studies are referenced in Scotland's Play Strategy 2015, pointing to the key outcomes for children as including enjoyment, physical health,



	<p>adaptability, emotional regulation, resistance to stress and anxiety, risk assessment, friendship and attachment, cognitive ability and problem solving abilities.</p> <p>Circumstantial deprivation studies whilst not able to identify cause and effect, do suggest the impacts of play deprivation: Brown (1998) found consistent child and adult play deficits in criminally violent young men. Valentino et al (2011) found that children in maltreating families displayed less child-initiated play and less socially competent behaviour than children of the same age in non-maltreating families.</p> <p>Review of the evidence in these studies shows how the benefits and outcomes of play for children contribute to the Scottish Government's SHANARRI outcomes framework.</p> <p>The strategy states "all children and young people have sufficient time and space (physical and social) for playing within their community and play is valued, encouraged and supported in communities" – whilst general, this statement will be delivered through outdoor play being more available either within the school or childcare setting, or more informally through holiday clubs.</p> <p>The Strategy also calls for the four domains of the Plan being home, nursery and school, community, positive support for play – to overlap and support each other. Training will ensure that schools and childcare providers are able to offer outdoor play as part of the larger curriculum, thereby meeting the needs of children both indoors and outdoors.</p> <p>Section 8.4 specifically refers to support for outdoor play encouraging local authorities and partners to "promote and support the implementation of existing materials for outdoor play audits (Getting It Right for Play)".</p> <p>Section 8.6 suggests "that new and existing places allow positive and safe access to a variety of options for play within neighbourhoods".</p> <p>Sections 8.7 and 8.8 both call for more opportunities for outdoor play, aiming to reduce negative impact of antisocial behaviour on neighbourhoods.</p> <p>Section 9 provides 15 actions around positive support for play. These support the need for both training and access to more "organised" outdoor play initiatives.</p>
Future of Play Report	<p>The five ways of playing according to the Lego Foundation are physical play, play with objects, symbolic play, pretence/ socio-dramatic play, games with rules.</p> <p>Through a range of activities the outdoor play initiative, and training program, will be designed to cover each of these play methods, all delivered outdoors.</p> <p>Design of the play programme and its training will ensure the involvement of adults to enhance the benefits of play through creating a supportive environment, providing a range of opportunities, structuring play and participating.</p> <p>Whilst working with pre-school children, parents will be encouraged to participate; for school age children, adults/carers/supervisors will be encouraged to deliver and support outdoor play.</p>



	<p>The four elements of play as described by the Lego Foundation, and shown in section 3.1 of this research below, suggests these may be combined and effectively delivered, particularly in outdoor play.</p> <p>The gifts from play will be reflection, awareness and integration; self-expression; positive emotions; new ways of seeing; mastery (or technical expertise); innovation; connecting with and learning about others; and self-realisation</p>
taking learning outdoors partnerships for Excellence	<p>This Stirling Council 2007 report by the Outdoor Connections Advisory Group was one of the early proponents of getting children learning outside.</p> <p>“It made the commitment to “work in partnership to overcome the barriers and provide all children and young people across all school subject areas and beyond, and at all stages 3–18, with opportunities to learn outdoors regularly.”</p>
Getting It Right for Play	This Play Scotland document set out the importance of play and offers a Template and Toolkit for Play
Growing up in Scotland	<p>Growing up in Scotland (GUS) is an important longitudinal research study, tracking the lives of thousands of children and their families from birth through to the teenage years and beyond. Launched in 2005, to date, GUS has collected information on three nationally representative cohorts of children.</p> <p>The study sets out in detail, and from different perspectives, the greater awareness across sectors about the impact of very early circumstances and experiences on children and young people.</p>
<p>Towards a mentally Flourishing Scotland</p> <p>Mental Health Strategy 2017-2027</p>	<p>Priority 1 of this document was directly related to “Mentally Healthy Infants, Children and Young People”</p> <p>The Mental Health Strategy 2017-2027 continues the commitment to children and young people.</p>

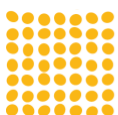
3.4 Broader Policy Landscape

Beyond child care, there is a broad policy landscape which has relevance to the way this project operates and how it is managed and delivered.

Policy area:	Policy:	Key Priorities:	Comments on alignment:
National Performance	Scottish Government's National Performance Framework	Provides a vision for Scotland with broad measures of national wellbeing covering a range of economic, health, social	Strong alignment with many of the outcomes but particularly to children but also to the physical environment and communities of people



		<p>and environmental indicators and targets.</p> <p>Reference points to the UN Sustainable Development Goals</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We grow up loved, safe and respected so that we realise our full potential • We value, enjoy, protect and enhance our environment • We are well educated, skilled and able to contribute to society • We live in communities that are inclusive, empowered, resilient and safe • We are healthy and active <p>Sustainability , community control and well-being will be at the heart of policy areas and fits well with CVN approach</p>
	<p>Programme for Government 2020-21</p>	<p>Statement of commitment to the Green New Deal with aims to address the climate emergency while focusing on jobs and economic development.</p> <p>Continuation of the journey towards community empowerment and “place-based economic development and cohesion”. This is aimed at giving control to communities and addressing the “democratic decision deficit”.</p> <p>A commitment to health and broader well-being</p> <p>Youth Guarantee – a new funding stream to get young people into work and a National Transition Training Fund</p>	<p>The climate emergency focus and desire to develop programmes such as the climate hubs and to grow the renewables industry, fits well with the desire of CVN to create a carbon neutral physical space within a woodland environment.</p> <p>The merging of climate action initiatives with jobs, particularly youth jobs skills development and the economy fits well with the desire of CVN to develop an innovative and committed staff team.</p> <p>CVN are committed to training other professionals in the early years work and this commitment to employment fits well with their vision.</p> <p>Place based work and genuine community empowerment are at the heart of the programme which dovetails with CVN’s approach.</p> <p>Investing £150 million over the next five years in forestry</p>



			is one of many specific funding investments that could support local investment in the woods.
	Fairer Scotland Action Plan, 2016 with progress reports beyond	<p>Aims to create, “by 2030, a fair, smart, inclusive Scotland, where everyone can feel at home, where fair work helps businesses to thrive and create jobs, where poverty rates are amongst the lowest in Europe, and where there is genuinely equal opportunity for all”. 50 Actions fall under 5 overall ambitions:</p> <p>A fairer Scotland for all</p> <p>End child poverty</p> <p>A strong start for all young people</p> <p>Fairer working lives</p> <p>A thriving third age</p>	Fairness for people of all ages as well as ending child poverty and giving a strong start to young people are clear priorities which can be embedded in the work of CVN.
Community Empowerment	<p>Community Empowerment (Scotland) Act 2015</p> <p>Land Reform Act (2016)</p>	<p>Helps to empower community bodies through the ownership or control of land and buildings, and by strengthening their voices in decision making around public services.</p> <p>Policy move to shift control of assets from the public and private sector to the people.</p> <p>Other initiatives such as Participatory Budgeting (The Scottish Government recommends that all councils allocate at least 1% of their budgets via PB by the financial year 2020/21.) indicate the move to more local democracy</p>	<p>Community control of land should be, by default, held within local communities.</p> <p>CVN is a place based social enterprise committed to the people of Cambusbarron</p>
Social Enterprise and	Scotland's Social Enterprise	The vision is that “Over the next decade social enterprise will be at the	CVN is and will continue to be a social enterprise, structured as a community interest



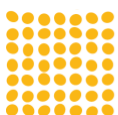
a Well-being economy	Strategy, 2016-2026	forefront of a new wave of ethical and socially responsible business in Scotland. It will become a far reaching and valued alternative and a key part of the Scottish way of doing business". A second action plan under the Strategy was due to be published (prior to the coronavirus pandemic).	company with an objective to be fully self-sustainable
	Social Enterprise Action plan 2020-2023	The second social enterprise action plan was due to be launched in April 2020 but has been delayed due to covid-19. Direction of travel was towards strengthening the social enterprise sector, opening up procurement opportunities and increasing public awareness of the model. Despite this hiatus, it is highly likely that this will be a key policy area for some time to come with the Action Plan due to be published in the Autumn	
	A Well-being economy Wellbeing Economy Governments (WEGo) and First Minister speech at Panmure House 2019	"Growth is not the only measure of a successful economy, in fact in some respects it might not be the best measure of a successful economy. And there is a growing realisation that we must give much greater priority to the wellbeing – and the quality of life - of people living in a country".	CVN are comfortable with this ethos and are actively contributing to the local well-being economy
	Towards a Robust, Resilient Wellbeing Economy for Scotland: Report of the Advisory Group on	This seeks to find a vision to "Build Back Better" "If the monumental scale and nature of this economic shock is not a catalyst to accelerate change and to find new	This is part of the Scottish Government's response to the economic impact of the covid-19 pandemic. Though there is less prominence here than the sector hoped, there is a



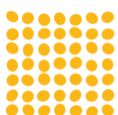
	Economic Recovery (2020)	<p>bold, radical interventions that will transform Scotland's economy, then nothing ever will be."</p> <p>Despite the rhetoric, key recommendations are relatively private sector related but the following are of interest</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • New investment in infrastructure • Place based solutions • Funding "natural capital" (i.e. the environment) • Strengthening the third sector • Focus on "People place and community" 	significant mention of the third and social enterprise sectors which would encompass CVN and work that is place based and impacts on "natural capital" i.e. the woods.
Regeneration	Achieving a sustainable future: Regeneration Strategy, 2011	<p>Vision is "a Scotland where our most disadvantaged communities are supported and where all places are sustainable and promote well-being", which must be addressed holistically looking at economic, physical and social needs of communities.</p> <p>Regeneration is defined as "the holistic process of reversing the economic, physical and social decline of places where market forces alone won't suffice".</p>	Place based work with the aim of creating thriving communities that will address, rural and urban economic challenges, will be a key focus and CVN can be a part of this approach, though coming at it from a child and family perspective.
	Place Principle, 2019	<p>Adopted by the Scottish Government in 2019, and intended to provide a collective focus to support inclusive economic growth and create places which are both successful and sustainable. It recognises that:</p> <p>Place is where people, location and resources</p>	<p>The Place Principle is already a strong policy framework within CVN work</p> <p>CVN work closely with the Cambusbarron Development Trust and others in the local community</p> <p>New initiative such as "20 minute communities" will encourage people to use</p>



		combine to create a sense of identity and purpose, and is at the heart of addressing the needs and realising the full potential of communities.	childcare in their own communities.
	Community Wealth Building	<p>CWB is a model whereby locally based anchor institutions (such as local authorities, NHS, etc.) focus spend locally to encourage the development of local economies and to limit procurement spend leaking out of the area.</p> <p>The Scottish Government have bought into this concept and have seconded the lead individual from Manchester to lead on its implementation over the coming year</p>	<p>This is driven by statutory sector spend. One key element is the drive to strengthen local, community and social enterprise businesses (and co-operatives in particular) so that when opportunities arise, the sector is strong enough to exploit them.</p> <p>There are likely to be opportunities for CVN with the desire to invest locally.</p>
Climate Emergency	<p>Statement to Parliament 2019</p> <p>Scottish Government Emission targets (Climate Change (Emissions Reduction Targets) (Scotland) Act 2019)</p> <p>The Big Climate Conversation (2019)</p> <p>UN Climate Change Conference (COP) to meet in Glasgow</p>	<p>Recognition of the climate emergency and a need for “transformative change”. With an increasing focus on this as a cross cutting theme in Government this is resulting in new policy areas and funding streams from Government and other bodies such as the Lottery distributors.</p> <p>Rescoping the Climate Challenge Fund is seeing concepts emerge of Climate Towns and Climate Action Hubs.</p>	<p>Responding to the climate emergency with a project that is carbon neutral, uses renewables, is off grid and encourages the importance of the environment is central to the CVN vision.</p> <p>There is an educational aspect to the work of CVN who will not only embed renewables in the building, but will design in display boards that are child friendly so that the children (and parents and visitors) can see the impact on the environment of good design and good energy solutions.</p> <p>The technical team are currently researching designs for 100% off-grid energy sufficiency.</p>



Bio-diversity and the Environment	Scotland's Bio-diversity Strategy	<p>The Aim is to “conserve biodiversity for the health, enjoyment and wellbeing of the people of Scotland now and in the future”</p> <p>There is focus on species and habitants, people, landscape and eco-systems, integration and co-ordination and knowledge.</p> <p>It sets out a 25 year strategy of major change.</p>	<p>The programme for Government commits to the twin objectives of climate emergency and bio-diversity loss</p> <p>CVN's vision is for a woodland based nursery that embeds learning and appreciation of the environment and bio-diversity from a young age as well as within it staffing.</p> <p>The learning about bio-diversity will also be rolled out to the training and teaching programmes CVN will delivery and to parents, carers and families who visit and use the site.</p>
	Facilitating Local Natural Capital Investment Project	<p>Led by Scottish Natural Heritage, this is a package of evidence, tools and financial mechanisms and structures, to “facilitate financing of nature-based solutions”</p> <p>It is an investment in the impact of nature.</p>	
	2020 Challenge for Scotland's Biodiversity	<p>This places bio-diversity at the heart of the Government's economic strategy</p>	



4. Gap Analysis

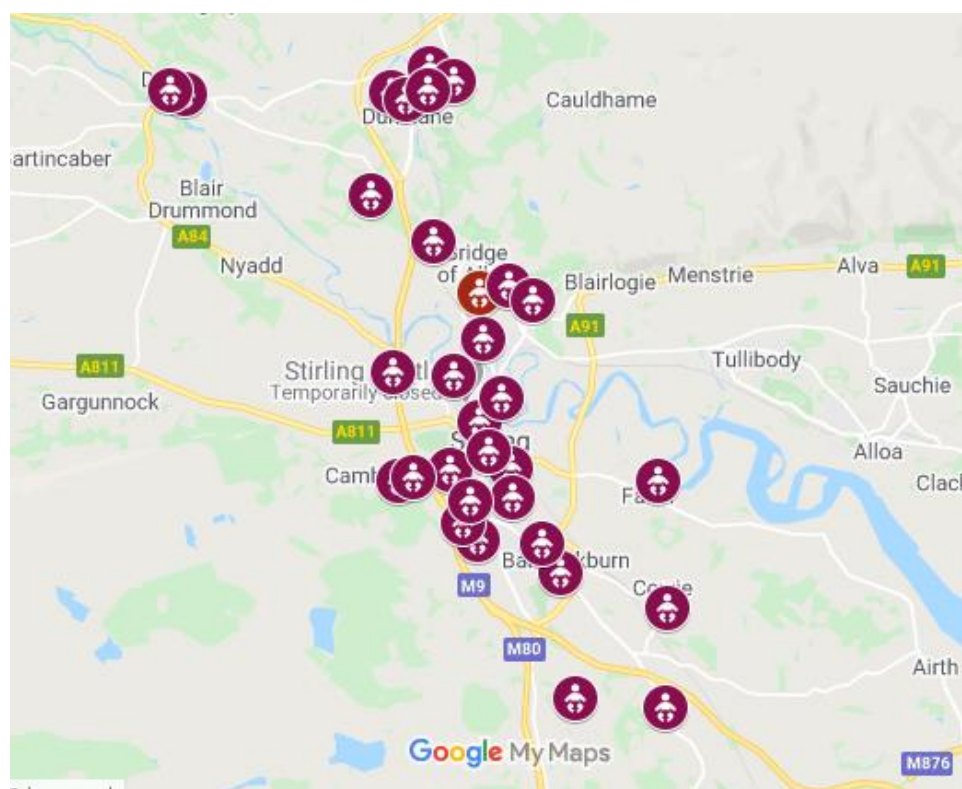
4.1 Nursery Provision

This section indicates that CVN is uniquely placed and positioned and its model does not impact negatively on any other provision. There is no displacement issue because of the unique model and because demand continues to outstrip supply.

Early year's provision in Stirling is met by a number of providers including local authority nurseries, private partners, childminders and the third sector (NB, CVN is the only third sector provider in the area). When Stirling Council started to roll out its delivery plan for the expansion of ELC provision in 2016/17 there were 44 nurseries offering funded places in the Stirling Council area. 14 of these were private nurseries working in partnership with Stirling Council, accounting for 34% of registered places for 0-5 year olds.¹² As a part of the delivery plan, partner providers were consulted to map out future capacity. It was found that the majority of partner providers had no plans to expand or increase their numbers of registered places by 2020, many expressed concerns about the impact of the expansion of early learning and childcare on their business. In line with the predictions set out in the delivery plan, Stirling Council is currently experiencing a gap in childcare provision (see stakeholder interview with Stirling Council).

In the specific area in which CVN operates there is significant demand and limited supply.

Current early learning and childcare provision with the Stirling Council local authority as a whole is mapped below¹³:



Stirling Council is split into 'learning communities'. CVN is a part of the Stirling learning community which encompasses the city centre and surrounding areas including Cambusbarron and St Ninians/Torbren. The majority of provision in the Stirling learning community is local authority, consisting of three nursery classes, Borestone,

Cambusbarron and St Ninians. Nursery classes take children from the age of three until they start primary school. There are also three stand-alone local authority nurseries; Hillview, Wellgreen and Allan's Nursery. There is limited private sector provision with only two partner

¹² Stirling Council Delivery Plan for the Expansion of ELC

¹³ <https://www.stirling.gov.uk/learning-education/early-learning-childcare/nurseries-map/>



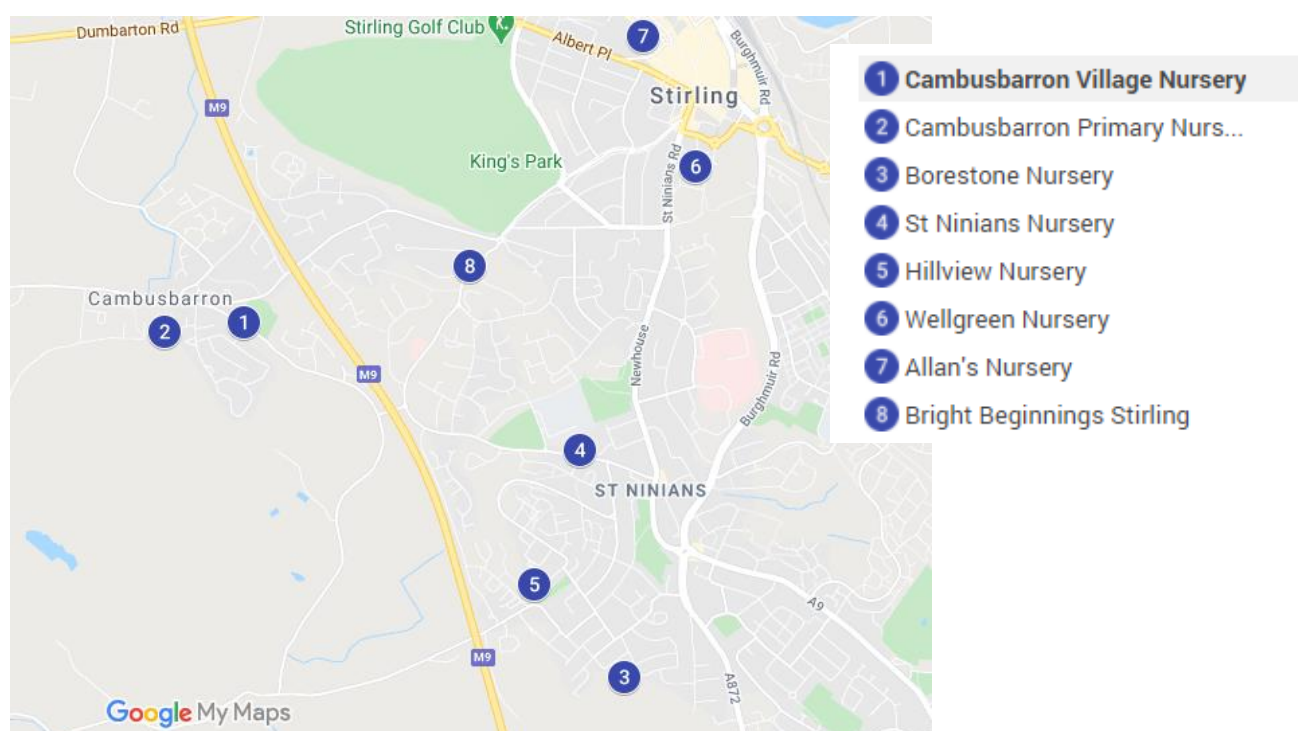
providers (including CVN). There are no outdoor focused nurseries in the Stirling learning community.

There are a significant new housing developments that are currently in progress that will cause the population of the Stirling Learning Community area to increase, putting additional strain on the already stretched ELC provision within the area. New developments in close proximity to CVN include:

- Ogilvie Homes Kings Meadow- 185 new homes (including 46 affordable homes) located between Cambusbarron, Torbrex/St Ninians area. Mixed development of 2 to 4 bedroom homes. Phase 1 is currently under construction.
- Allanwater Homes- 34 new 2 bedroom flats, 3 and 4 bedroom homes located in the village of Cambusbarron. All 4 bedroom houses are already reserved.
- A 265 home development is planned for the Seven Sisters field by Barret Homes. Though planning has currently been denied, it is thought likely that new housing will be developed here in time.

The main competitor for CVN is Cambusbarron School Nursery. The outdoor and community based focus of CVN sets it apart from other nurseries currently operating in the area, complementing existing services by offering an alternative choice for families. The other local authority and private nurseries in the Stirling learning community include;

Stirling Learning Community Providers	Number of Places	Age Range
Borestone Nursery	24	3-5 years
Cambusbarron Primary School Nursery	30	3-5 years
St Ninians Nursery	30	3-5 years
Hillview	36	0-5 years
Wellgreen	34	2-5 years
Baker Street (Allan's Nursery)	51	0-5 years
Bright Beginnings Stirling (Private Partner)	90	0-5 years



4.2 Outdoor Nurseries

It should be noted that CVN's vision is not to establish an outdoor nursery but to absorb the best elements of outdoor nurseries while creating a physical nursery in the woods. This will facilitate outdoor play but it does have a physical building which distinguishes it from forest schools and outdoor nurseries. This section is set out to show the broader context, particularly as parents do have choice.

While many of the nurseries across the Stirling Council area have expressed a commitment to providing high quality outdoor learning experiences and have taken steps to create their own outdoor areas, there are very few early learning and childcare settings that are registered as fully outdoor settings. Despite the Scottish Government's policy focus on improving outdoor learning for early years, there are now around 36 fully outdoor settings across the country, with more planned, this is still less than 1.4% of the ELC market in Scotland.

Outdoor nurseries, sometimes referred to as forest nursery or kindergarten has been defined by the care inspectorate as a setting in which the *'children are outdoors all of the time except in extreme weather conditions. Children and staff will have access to a sheltered area this could be a permanent or temporary structure. There may also be a meeting point, premises or a base camp used for the drop off and collection of children. These settings will have a comprehensive contingency plan which has been articulated and agreed with parents in the rare occasion where severe weather conditions prevent children from being outside.'*¹⁴

In October 2020, the Scottish Government produced non-statutory guidance to support the continued safe operation of ELC settings. Unsurprisingly maximising the use of outdoor space is a priority to limit the virus transmission and allow physical distancing. It is likely that more nursery providers will begin to look at taking their services outdoors in response to the COVID-19 pandemic.

Other outdoor focused early learning and childcare providers in the Stirling Council area include;

- Wild Wellies; an outdoor based childminding service in Blairlogie for children up to age 16. In line with guidance for childminders the service can only take a maximum of 6 children at any one time (no more than 3 under 2 and a half years and no more than 1 under 12 months at any one time).

<https://alisonb1964.wixsite.com/wildwellies/about>

- Dunblane Nature Kindergarten; an outdoor focused nursery based in Dunblane, also offers out of school care and holiday clubs.

<https://dunblanenaturekindergarten.co.uk/>

Inspire Scotland Outdoor Nursery

In addition to the two outdoor focused ELC providers listed above, Inspiring Scotland are in the planning stages of setting up an outdoor nursery at Bannockburn House. The Thrive Outdoors team at Inspiring Scotland have spent the past 3 years funding and supporting local authorities and charities to develop fully outdoor provision for children 3-5 years in Scotland. Inspiring Scotland has made a commitment to increase the impact and accessibility of fully outdoor ELC provision to more children in Scotland by opening its own settings. With an organisational mission 'for a Scotland without poverty or disadvantage,'

The nursery will have 32 places and is due to open in August 2022. While some of the activity will be located in the 24 acre estates woodland, woodland play and learning will not be the main

¹⁴ <https://hub.careinspectorate.com/media/1157/delivering-play-and-learning-environments-outdoors-practice-note.pdf>

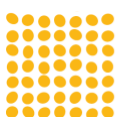


focus. While the new nursery will be in close proximity to CVS (within 5 miles), it is also worth noting that the location of the nursery is likely to attract a different demographic, mainly families living in South East Stirling and those commuting to Glasgow and Edinburgh due to its close proximity to the M9 and M80 motorways. CVN has more of a ‘village nursery’ and community focused ethos and will likely continue to attract families looking for an outdoor experience who either live in the village or in the surrounding areas.

Inspire Scotland, and its new trading arm, has not been created to usurp existing provision; more to work collaboratively with the charities we have funded (and are funding), and to work positively with other providers too. There are likely to be multiple positive partnership opportunities with Inspire Scotland but the development is very different and too far away to constitute competition.

Key:

- 1** Bannockburn House
- 2** CVN site



5. Community and Families Consultation

5.1 Summary of Previous Consultation

In late 2019, CVN commissioned Community Enterprise to explore income generation and service development ideas through the Accelerate programme. The research included a parent's survey to find out what parents value about early learning and what sets CVN apart from local authority nurseries in the surrounding area: The findings below from parents were in relation to ideal ELC provision rather than reactions to current CVN provision.

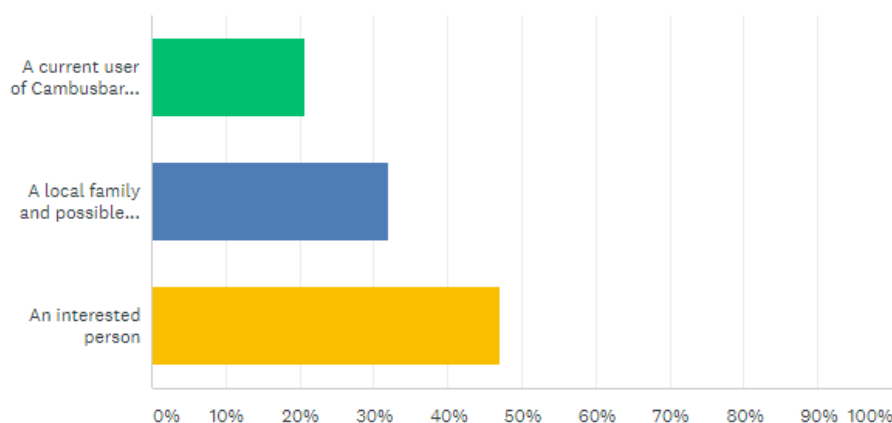
- Friendly environment, and good nursery staff were seen as the most important factors, along with range of activities.
- Quality of space was also ranked as an important factor– this should be considered as CVN is currently hosted in the Cambusbarrow Community Centre rather than purpose built facilities.
- Cost was broadly viewed as one of the less important factors, which is important given the lower pricing of local authority nurseries in the area. Small class size was also seen as one of the less significant factors.

5.2 2020 Survey Analysis

A survey was circulated to parents and families living in the local area, as well as the wider community between September and November 2020. This survey focused on the woodland setting and CVN's plans to relocate to a purpose built facility in the woodland. The survey also investigated the potential to develop additional services to run alongside the core nursery service.

Profile of Respondents

A total of 56 survey responses were received. Responses included a good mix of current users (21%), local families and potential future users (32%) and interested people (47%).



The vast majority of respondents live in Cambusbarrow (77%), 19% live in the nearby area and 4% live further afield.

- 44 respondents have children aged between 2 and a half years and starting school
- 37 respondents have children younger than 2 and a half years of age
- 44 respondents have primary school aged children



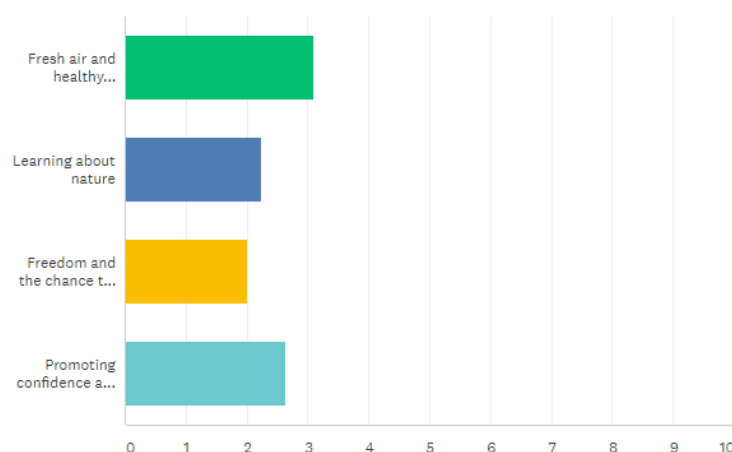
- 37 respondents are planning to have children

Woodland Setting Advantages

The most appealing aspect of a woodland setting to respondents and their children was the fresh air and healthy environment, followed by promoting confidence and independence, learning about nature and the chance to take risks under supervision and promoting confidence and independence. Blueprint 2020 says that parents should have choice. CVN is offering something different.

What would attract you and your children to a woodland setting in order of importance?

Answered: 41 Skipped: 15



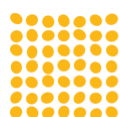
The following aspects also attract families and children to a woodland setting:

- Services integrated with other community provision
- Growing and learning in a low tech environment
- Exploring different ways of learning and 'learning by doing'
- Offering an alternative choice of nursery setting
- Encouraging imaginative play
- Encouraging engagement with the outdoors and the environment
- Eating healthily and growing their own food
- Having access to a purpose built unit for the children

Concerns/Drawbacks of Woodland Setting

When asked about their concerns and what would put them off sending their children to a woodland nursery, the highest concern was lack of security, followed by cold weather. A small proportion of parents were concerned their child would get dirty and felt the nursery was too far away. 20 respondents skipped this question, potentially indicating the above reasons were not a concern to them.

Some other concerns included; difficulty of access, cost, possibility of vandalism, difficulty keeping track of children, not having somewhere indoors to use if needed. The majority of comments left highlighted that they were not put off by the woodland setting at all.



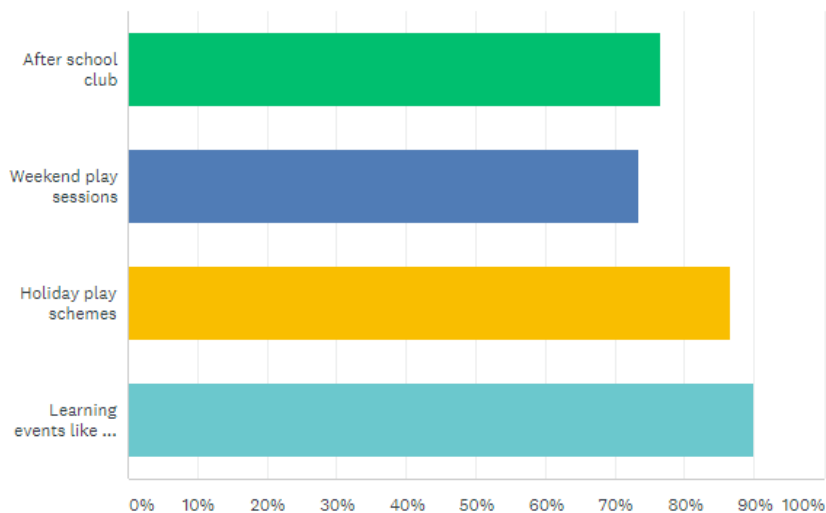
Interest in Additional Services

90% of respondents said they would be interested in attending learning events like bat walks and foraging, 87% said they would use holiday play schemes, 77% said they would use an after school club and 73% said they would use weekend play sessions.

Comments highlighted that it will be important not to displace the current out of school club running in the village.

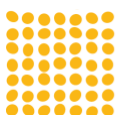
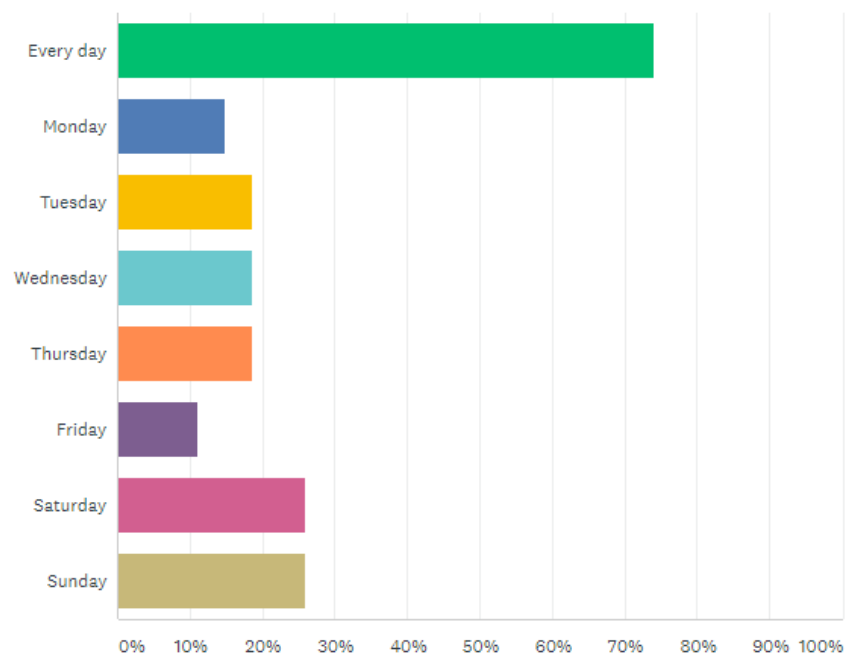
Which of these might you be interested in using. Please tick all that apply

Answered: 30 Skipped: 26



Woodland Facility Use

74% of respondents said they would use the woodland facility every week day. 26% said they would use the facility on a Saturday and a Sunday.



100% of respondents said they would use the facility for pre-school age children all year round, not just during term time or holiday time only. A further 91% of respondents said they would use the facility for primary school aged children all year round, 2% said they would use it for primary age children at holiday time only.

Comments and Testimonials

The final section of the survey gave respondents the opportunity to share experiences relevant to the development of the project. A selection of the comments and testimonials are shown below and a full list of testimonials are shown in Appendix A.

“As a family we spend a lot of time in the woods and have chosen to send our youngest to the nursery due to the outdoor learning element which we feel is very important and beneficial to development. A specific area (shelter) would allow the staff to maximise the time they have in the woods, meaning they don’t have to worry and stress about setting up an appropriate space for each visit.”

“I think the village and the Stirling area in general would benefit from a woodland nursery. The benefits to children are insurmountable and it offers the children a great start in life to have an understanding and cultivate a love for nature and to learn to nurture their environment.”

“I have seen the amazing work that the nursery has already done with its woodland play sessions would love to see an expansion of its sessions.”



5.3 Parent Interviews

To complement findings from the community survey, in-depth one to one interviews were conducted with families who either use the service or have used it in the past. The main conversation points have been summarised below. It is strongly felt that the Gillies Hill Community Woodland is a real asset to the village and the surrounding area. It is very well used and loved by the local community, who are fiercely protective over it. This has only increased during lockdown as people have realised the real value of outdoor spaces.

Benefits

Children

- Children are more independent, confident, resilient and self sufficient
- Children are able to play and have fun while learning in a low tech environment
- Children are more environmentally aware and focused on looking after their surroundings
- Children have a deep appreciation for nature and understand how important it is to value and protect the environment
- Gives children living in the surrounding urban area (Stirling) the opportunity to experience a more village orientated way of life
- Increased services for older children like weekend activities will enable children to stay connected to nursery and continue to benefit from spending time outdoors

Parents and Families

- Opportunity for parents to enjoy walking their children to nursery through the woodland
- Changing the mentality of parents towards spending time outside (e.g. not so concerned about mud and rain)
- Can be very difficult to find childcare during the school holidays, especially for those who don't have secondary care givers to rely on

Wider Community

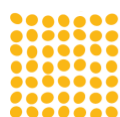
- Having a nursery in the woodland would raise awareness and encourage more people to use the woodland
- Attracting more families with children or who are planning to have children to live in the area and get involved in community life
- Children are interested in the nature that surrounds them and are more likely to look after the environment and the woodland, an attitude change which will hopefully pass down through generations

Challenges/Drawbacks

- Logistics and access;
 - Similar drop off times at the nursery and primary school could be a challenge with the two being located further apart¹⁵
 - Need for improvements to footpaths running from the village to the proposed site through the woodland in order to accommodate buggies and wheelchairs¹⁶
 - Need for an access road leading to the nursery
- May lose connection to the wider community being situated in the woodland rather than in the heart of the community

¹⁵ In fact this has been considered in the site, design and timings and we believe it can be accommodated.

¹⁶ This is part of the CDT plans for the site so pathways are planned to be developed to the school and past the nursery site



6. Stakeholder Consultation

CVN plans to relocate to Gillies Hill Community Woodland have been well received and supported by Cambusbarron Community Development Trust (CCDT), Cambusbarron Community Council and Stirling Council.

Telephone interviews/Zoom conversations were conducted with Cambusbarron Community Development Trust, Cambusbarron Community Council, Stirling Council and Inspire Scotland. A summary of the main conversation points are listed below, including more detailed partnership opportunities.

General Thoughts

- Very supportive and feel it will be very popular locally and further afield
- A woodland nursery will be a huge asset for the village
- Fits in well with the Development Trust goal to use the woodland as an educational resource for the community, working towards common goals together
- More parents moving towards outdoor learning as a preference. COVID has been a big wake up call for a lot of people as outdoor nurseries were the only ones able to continue delivering services during pandemic.
- Childcare in Stirling is massively oversubscribed and as Stirling is growing this is only going to become more of a challenge. Roughly 40 nurseries and 43 private childminders and all of them are fully subscribed.
- Fits in with the move towards focus on outdoor play/learning in the Scottish curriculum.
- Forest based outdoor learning is more practical than outdoor areas at other nurseries. The forest provides a level of covering from the elements and allows the children to be outdoors more often.

Concerns/Challenges

- Potential displacement of the existing out of school club in the village. There is a need for more out of school provision but any plans would need to be developed with these existing services in mind.
- Traffic/vehicles coming in and out of the woodland should be kept to an absolute minimum.
- Local authority nursery in Cambusbarron are starting to use the woodland more often and are developing their outdoor learning offer.

Partnership Opportunities with CCDT

Cambusbarron Community Development Trust owns the land which the nursery proposes to relocate to, which they purchased as a community resource. Woodland Play Sessions are fully supported both by the CCDT and also by the Community Council. Permission has been received from CCDT to progress planning a permanent base within the woods. Expansion of the Woodland play sessions presents an opportunity for CVN and CCDT to work towards a common goal, encouraging children in the community to value the woodland and look after it now and in the future. The woodland is a well loved and respected asset in the community, the importance of which has been highlighted throughout the lockdown period. It is important for both CVN and CCDT to take advantage of this renewed enthusiasm for spending time in the woodland.



It has been proposed by CCDT that they lease the land to CVN on a (rent free) basis but on a long term lease. Cambusbarron Community Development Trust will make available a site that is safe, accessible and compliant, for CVN to use as a Woodland based Nursery, including the siting of a building there. CCDT will continue to own the site on behalf of the community, in perpetuity but will not own the building that CVN will site there. CVN would build and own the building and would be responsible for all internal maintenance. CCDT would want to have an input on the design of the building, so that it is in keeping with the woodland exterior.

To attract funding, a minimum 20 year lease will be required and this will be clarified with CCDT during the business planning stage.

Other Partnership Opportunities

A full list of Cambusbarron community groups is listed in Appendix B. Partnership opportunities should be explored with all locally based groups.

Organisation	Scope for Partnership
Cambusbarron Community Development Trust	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Working alongside CCDT plans to develop a community growing space which the children could use within the walled garden. This could also provide a space for intergenerational activity. - Facilitating art based woodland activities (e.g. woodland sculptures) and traditional skills/woodland management for older primary school aged children (CCDT Forest Manager) <p>Organised walks and family days</p>
Stirling Council (Early Years Officer)	Supporting nurseries operating within the Stirling Council to work together; facilitating cross referral systems, potentially sharing training opportunities and staff for cover.
Inspire Scotland	Potential to explore cross referrals of families interested in accessing outdoor learning opportunities in the Stirling Council area.
Local churches reminiscence and history groups.	Mind the gap inter-generational project



7. Technical Appraisal

7.1 Site Appraisal

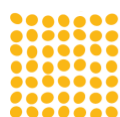
As a part of the project, a technical appraisal was commissioned to assess the practicality of constructing a single story woodland centre to serve the needs of CVN as it develops the delivery of woodland play sessions. In developing the appraisal, a practical approach was taken to produce a building that is environmentally sympathetic to its surroundings. The brief also considered the use of traditional and locally based skills and locally produced materials and building products, as well as following best practice in the use of sustainable energy and renewable resources to minimise the buildings impact on the environment.

The technical appraisal considered the selected location to be practical in building terms and well suited for the proposed new building and the activities planned for its use. The exact location of the proposed building is shown below. It is located west of and adjacent to the existing walled garden within the woodland and can be reached using an existing service road which connects to Polmaise Road. It is understood that CCDT will be improving the service road to facilitate construction access (for construction access it is only necessary to upgrade the road to 'forestry road' standard with a compacted gravel surface).

The proposed location will also offer satisfactory access to incoming services such as electrical power and water. The location also offers good pedestrian access from the nearest housing areas in Cambusbarron into the woodland via an existing pathway network.




Based on the current and anticipated future requirements of CVN, the minimal space requirements, in line with *Space to Grow* guidance, would be in the region of 100 - 125 sqm. This space includes for toilets, an indoor play/rest area, kitchen and other necessary access and service areas. There would be external sheltered space provided in the final design which would be linked to the building. This would be in the form of a roofed external courtyard space. The proposals within this appraisal provide approximately 125sqm internal floor area.



7.2 Construction Options

In terms of building methods, it is recommended that to minimise impact on the fragile woodland site during the construction phase, it is proposed that maximum use be made of “Off Site” and modular building methods. It is possible to reduce on site building operations to 2-3 weeks. In this case, having most of the building constructed off site, then delivered in sections to site, offers major advantages. The off-site work can be completed locally. Reduction of building time on site will reduce the negative impact on the environment and the site location itself, as well as reducing security issues during building. The appraisal also includes “On Site” building options for comparative purposes.

Building Option 1	
On Site construction of Timber Frame sloping roof structure with structural beams to give open internal space.	
Pros	Cons
Local skilled trades possibly used	Longer construction time, material deliveries impacting site, increased security issues, damage to access road, fixed costs more difficult to achieve. Site management very important.
Cost Guide	125sqm - £135,000



Building Option 2

Off Site Timber Frame panelised system.



Pros

Reduced construction time on site compared to Type 1 option and possible local skilled trades used. Less impact on site than

Cons

Not many disadvantages for this project but skilled site management important to ensure quality delivered throughout the build process.

Cost Guide

125sqm - £140,000

Building Option 3

Log Construction method. This would produce a Log House look building with pitched roof.



Pros

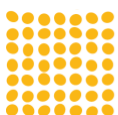
Premanufactured off site and delivered ready to construct on site. Package delivered from experienced log building company. Very “woodland “ look to finished building.

Cons

Experienced and specialised construction team needed. Could be more difficult to achieve open play space in the building due to construction method. Maintenance on completed building can be an issue. Longer time /impact on site due to the way the structure is delivered.

Cost Guide

125sqm - £145,000



Building Option 4

Factory manufactured building by company specialising in “holiday park” type homes.



Pros

Delivered by lorries in “fit together” sections. Complete with external and internal finishes, windows and doors factory installed. Effectively a “plug and play” building which is located on minimal foundations and connected together. Very rapid on site completion. Could have timber external cladding.

Cons

Highest cost of the options being considered.

Cost Guide

125sqm – £160,000

Building Option 5

2 x 40' shipping containers side by side and further 40' container at right angles giving the required floor area. This construction solution is used for many types of buildings including children's nurseries. It offers a number of features which suit the CVN project



Pros

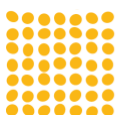
Minimal foundation required. Off site preparation of containers to allow minimal on site finishing work. Rapid on site progress. Minimal on site impact. Simple to produce a “woodland “ look. Offers excellent security options. Simple and inexpensive to add an upper floor or extend the building in the future.

Cons

Initially this solution has an industrial look but suitable external timber finishes would “soften” the look.

Cost Guide

125sqm - £120,000



Conclusions

- The function of the appraisal was to produce technical opinion on construction practicality and budget costs of a building which will satisfy the needs of CVN. Subjective opinion on the final look of the building is not part of the remit.
- Due to the location and nature of the selected site, this project will benefit from minimising “on site” construction by taking maximum advantage of “off-site” and or modular construction methods.
- On a “Value for Money” and practicality basis this appraisal comes to the conclusion that Construction Option Type 5, which develops the space and practicality offered by 3 x 40’ shipping containers, is the most cost effective, practical and flexible option.
- Discussion has taken place with Dunsire’s about delivering the building through them as a local supplier (understanding that this may need to go out to tender).
- The other 4 types studied are all possible and all offer advantages and disadvantages over each other but do not combine the practical and budgetary benefits of Type 5 – The Container Option.

7.3 Services

A detailed options appraisal on services is set out in the technical report.

7.4 Stirling Council Pre-Planning Application

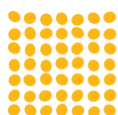
Stirling Council have issued the following advice regarding the construction of a purpose built nursery situated within the Gillies Hill Community Woodland. It is acknowledged that the principle of the project will receive policy support but with a few key considerations to be made:

A nursery is defined as a community facility, and it is first and foremost encouraged to locate within town centres. There is an understanding that outdoor nurseries are becoming more popular. However, these should still be located as close to existing settlements as possible. As from the location plan, it can be seen that it is located close to Cambusbarron, and there could be the option of walking to the site, reducing the dependency on car travel. Therefore, there is likely to be policy support for the principle of the project. It should be demonstrated as part of any submission measures taken to reduce the dependency on car travel to reach this site.¹⁷

7.5 Advice on Off-Grid Energy Supply

CCDT may be arranging for power to be installed onsite and this will be clarified at business planning stage. In the meantime, the technical advisor is endeavouring to design an off-grid system for the woodland based nursery.

¹⁷+ Stirling Council Pre-application enquiry



8. Funding And Finance

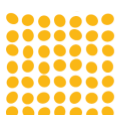
8.1 Costs and Funding Opportunities

The cost estimates above are indicative costs for a variety of solutions. These are industry standard estimates but a bespoke solution will need to be costed at the next stage if this is felt to be viable. This will require additional fees in relation to the following;

- Design team fees (for architect, structural engineer, mechanical and electrical engineer and quantity surveyor), say 12%
- Planning and building warrant fees
- Legal fees
- Site investigations – topographical survey, bore holes, environmental impact assessment etc
- Ground works
- Landscaping
- Fit out
- Equipment and furniture
- VAT (complex mix on childcare buildings)
- Inflation (currently 5.4% from RIAS)
- Contingency (funders require 10%)

This will be fully costed but an estimate of £500,000 has been used for the following fundability test. Funds below are related to capital options only. It should be noted that, due to covid, many traditional funders of capital projects are no longer funding buildings.

Fund	Details and estimated amount
Regeneration Capital Grant Fund	Minimum £100,000, average grant is £1m. Say £250,000. Bid through Stirling Council. Focus would need to be on the woodland nursery being the catalyst for well-being but also for enabling parents to access work and learning.
Stirling Council	Scottish Government states “Local authorities are responsible for ensuring that funded entitlement is available for all eligible children in their area. We are supporting them to build the capacity needed in their communities to phase in extended entitlement. We have a multi-year capital and revenue funding agreement in place with the Convention of Scottish Local Authorities (COSLA) which is fully funding the expansion in funded entitlement. We have provided councils with capital funding of £476 million to support associated building projects.”



	Discussions with Stirling Council indicated that this funding was already allocated but further discussion will be had with the Council during the business planning phase.
Robertson Trust (need to focus on poverty and trauma and individuals who are particularly disadvantaged)	Depends on cost of refurb, say £75,000 The building must be multi-use so the objective to open this facility up to the community and access inside and outside space is really important to access this funding.
Place based regeneration funding Part of the Infrastructure Investment Plan	£275m announced by Scottish Government likely to be funded via initiatives such as Town Centre Fund. Unknown
The Clothworkers Foundation Working within their thematic area of "Disadvantaged Young People"	£35,000
Wolfson Foundation though this does not fit with their thematic areas	£50,000
Garfield Weston – fits with Education, Community and Environment strands	Say £50,000
Share offer, loan or community bonds	Say £50,000 of re-payable finance
Cambusbarron Community Fund	Possible to secure strategic funding over £10,000
Target	£500,000

8.2 Financial Modelling

The financial model can be seen at appendix 3. This will be fleshed out in the full business plan but at the moment shows that, with current numbers of children and using the facility for some additional activity and letting, there is a surplus of £16,801. This will be interrogated more closely in the business planning phase but at this stage indicates clear financial viability.



9. Findings and Recommendations

9.1 Findings

Demand for ELC Services

1. Demographics and statistics show a rapidly growing population, thereby increasing the demand for ELC services. CVN is currently registered to provide a service to 16 children. Relocating to a new building in the woodland will enable CVN to grow this number.
2. Stirling Council began rolling out the expansion of ELC from 600 to 1400 hours in 2017. This has had a significant impact on local ELC providers and the services they offer. CVN began to deliver the increased entitlement in August 2019. Where the service previously was open for 3 hour 10 min sessions every weekday morning it now is open from 0845 and 1515 providing 6 hour sessions. Initial parent consultation indicated that longer sessions outdoors without an indoor base may be challenging for younger children, this was one of the drivers behind seeking a physical base located in the woodland.
3. Feedback from the Early Years Officer at Stirling Council indicated that the vast majority of ELC providers in the Stirling Council area are at full capacity.
4. There are no other outdoor or forest ELC providers in the learning community. Though Inspire Scotland are in the planning stages of setting up an outdoor nursery at Bannockburn House, it is likely that CVN will continue to attract families from the village and surrounding areas who want their children to attend a local 'village' based nursery. The CVN in the woods has a more local and village feel and is not an outdoor nursery so there is no element of competition here.
5. Population growth in Stirling is accelerating faster than the national average with a projected 8% growth in children under the age of three years between 2017 and 2039, further increasing demand for childcare.
6. There is a large new housing development currently in progress, located close to the Gillies Hill Community Woodland area, as well as a new housing development within the village of Cambusbarron. It is likely that both developments will be popular with families and therefore will further increase demand for ELC services in the area. There is a further housing development planned by Barret at the 7 sisters field which is likely to bring more housing.
7. Blueprint 2020 says that parents should have choice. CVN is offering something different.

Support for the Project

8. There is a strong interest and enthusiasm amongst families for the further development of woodland play and learning. 100% of families with pre-school children said they would send them to the nursery *all year round*, including during school holidays and weekends. This strongly indicates that having a base within the woodland mitigates previous concern around being outdoors all day in adverse weather conditions.
9. Testimonials left in survey responses and 1-1 conversations with parents revealed the numerous benefits learning in an outdoor setting has for their children. Parents felt that their children's confidence and independence had grown from spending time outdoors in a low-tech environment. Children were much more environmentally aware and appreciative of nature.
10. Parents and families felt that one of the major selling points of the nursery is its *village* focus, giving the children the opportunity to experience a strong sense of community and 'village way of life'. The new nursery building has the potential to become an important community asset, connecting children to their local community and retaining the village feel that is valued by families using the service. Therefore, it is important to find ways that



the building and surrounding woodland can be used for people of all ages to enjoy the woodland together, for example through learning events.

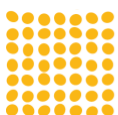
11. One of the main concerns related to the relocation to a permanent woodland nursery was security.
12. Logistics and access were also common concerns among parents; particularly being able to access the premises by car. One parent also expressed concern that with the woodland nursery being further away from the primary school, similar drop off times could be a challenge moving forwards. Flexibility can be built into the business plan.

Accessibility

13. Stirling Council Planning Department have advised that there should be accessible walking options to the new nursery site, reducing the dependency on car travel. The planning permission submission should demonstrate measures taken to reduce car travel to reach the site.
14. The forest access road is connected to Polmaise Road which parents felt is unsuitable for walking due to its frequent use by quarry traffic and lack of pedestrian footpath. The technical appraisal indicates that location also offers good pedestrian access from the nearest housing areas in Cambusbarron into the woodland via an existing pathway network.
15. CCDT has plans to create community allotments inside the Walled Garden. In consequence there are already plans to up-grade the access track leading up to the proposed nursery site, providing good vehicular access. However, CCDT have also expressed a preference for limiting the amount of traffic going in and out of the woodland to a minimum.
16. It is understood that the CCDT will be improving the service road and this will facilitate construction work access. For construction access, it would only be required to bring the road up to "forestry road" standard with a compacted gravel surface. The improved road leading to the nursery will also improve disabled access and parking will be improved. In addition, CVN are keen to provide vehicle free access to encourage active travel.

Additional Services

17. Stirling Council consultation with parents indicates that there is a clear demand for earlier opening hours and later closing hours to help parents to meet work commitments. The majority of parents said they would prefer to use their childcare hours every week of the year as opposed to term time only and would rather use longer sessions and fewer days. This reflects the results of the survey and parent consultation which shows a strong interest in out of school and holiday activities.
18. Initial research conducted on behalf of CVN in December 2019 exploring income generating possibilities concluded that as there is already a breakfast club, afterschool club and summer school operating in the village, it was recommended that these additional activities be developed in partnership with existing providers to prevent displacement of existing services.
19. The survey indicates a strong interest in participating in learning events in the woodland. Partnership opportunities should be explored further with CCDT Forest Manager who has expressed an interest in facilitating learning opportunities for children in a forest setting.
20. There is promising potential to explore parent/child learning opportunities, as well as intergenerational activity in the forest, further supporting CCDT aims to use the forest as a learning resource and will encourage community members to use and enjoy the woodland. Increasing community engagement in the woodland is likely to have a number of positive ripple effects including an improved sense of community and promoting active citizenship and volunteering in the woodland.



9.2 Recommendations

Based on the research, we would recommend the following:

The Way forward

1. Cambusbarron Village Nursery should pursue the concept of the woodland based nursery. There is demand, it is potentially fundable (though this is the main challenge) and is financially viable.
2. CVN should continue to business planning stage
3. CVN should continue negotiations with the Cambusbarron Development Trust regarding a lease on the site.

Considerations for the design of the facilities

Taking into account *national and local policy priorities*, there are a number of factors and considerations that should be made when thinking about relocating CVN's service:

4. The building should enable children to move freely and independently between indoor and outdoor setting. This will not only provide enhanced learning opportunities but will further increase the children's self-reliance and confidence.
5. With the expansion of ELC provision and children spending longer days in nursery, having the option to spend time outside on a daily basis is essential. The ease at which children can move between indoor and outdoor setting is largely reliant on the design of the building, for this reason a bespoke building designed around the outdoor space will make it much easier for staff and children to spend time outdoors.
6. Guidance indicates that staff should have appropriate areas to take breaks away from the children, store their belongings safely and access an office for administrative work. There should also be a separate staff toilet.
7. Security should be considered carefully when designing the facilities. It is crucial that parents and carers feel the children are in a safe and secure environment while attending nursery. Appropriate building and site security should be ensured; security measures may include video entry/intercom system, locked gates in certain areas, CCTV covering external area which should be factored into the costing. However it is vital to point out that security should be sensitively built in while the building and site is as available to the local community as possible.
8. Due to its location within a designated semi natural woodland it is crucial, to both CCDT and Stirling Council that the visual impact of the building is as minimal as possible and blend in well with the woodland surroundings. CCDT should be included in the decision making process where the exterior of the building is concerned.
9. Stirling Council Planning department have expressed a strong preference for limiting car travel to the site and making the building as accessible as possible by foot. The proposed location offers good pedestrian access from the nearest housing areas in Cambusbarron into the woodland via an existing pathway network. This will also facilitate increased use of the woodland by parents and families as they walk their children to and from the nursery. A walking bus or shuttle service with a drop off point near Cambusbarron Primary School may support parents that have to drop two children off at similar times and limit the need for multiple vehicles to access the woodland area.
10. The building itself should be fully accessible, not only for the children but for use by the wider community. Stirling Council Planning department have recommended early engagement with Stirling Area Access Panel. The access panel will be able to provide feedback and suggestions regarding specific design elements of a proposal, and highlight any accessibility implications or issues that could be addressed prior to the submission of a planning application.



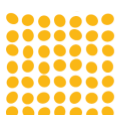
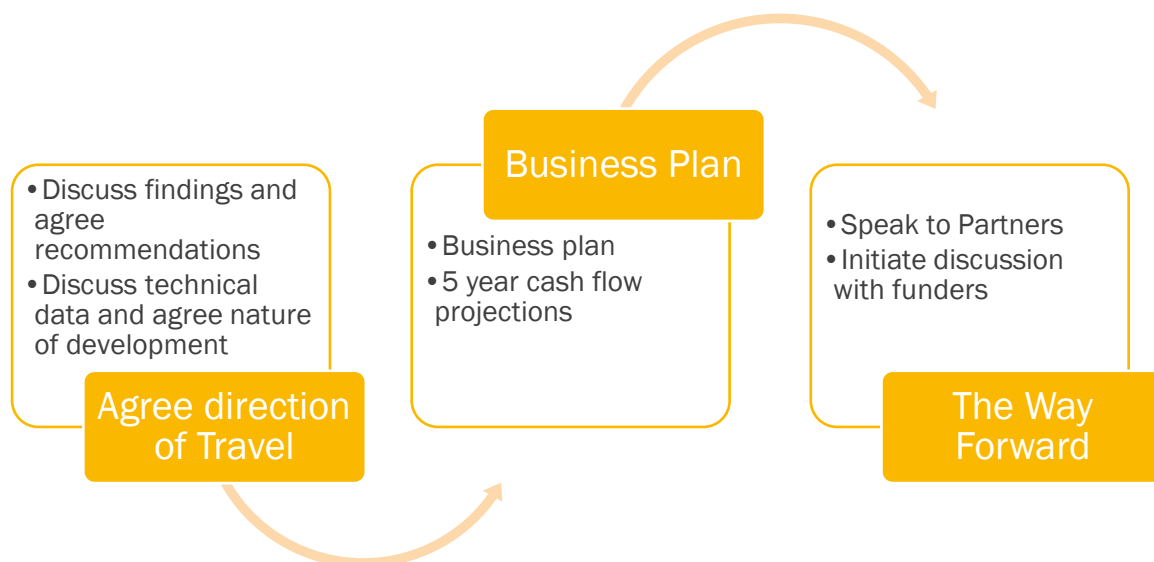
Additional Services

11. All additional services out with core nursery provision, including out of school care, should be developed with careful consideration not to displace the local childminding and after-school club that already exists within the community. While there is an appetite for increased out of school care and holiday club options for primary age children, services should be developed alongside existing providers within the community.
12. Explore the development of learning events. There is a potential to develop activities alongside CCDT for parents and children and the wider community to learn together such as nature walks. There is also potential to use the woodland to facilitate inter-generational work and connect children to their local community, establishing the facility as an important community asset. CVN should work with CCDT to incorporate intergenerational activity into the woodland management programme. Bringing children and older people together around a shared project will bring benefits to both groups and will strengthen social networks and promote a spirit of community participation.

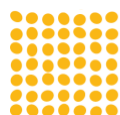
Partnership Working:

13. CVN should work closely with CCDT to ensure the facility is of benefit to the wider community and supports the broader aims of woodland community ownership.
14. CVN should work alongside other community groups in order to establish the nursery building as an important community asset. This will encourage other groups in the community to benefit from the community owned woodland. A list of active community groups operating within the village has been included in the appendices.
15. CVN should work closely with other childcare providers in the village when developing its additional services.
16. CVN should work with Inspire Scotland to set up a cross referral system for families in the area interested in accessing outdoor nursery provision.

9.3 Next Steps



Appendices

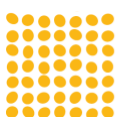


Appendix 1 : Testimonials and Comments from Survey Responses

- *"I think that the village and the Stirling area in general would benefit from a woodland nursery. The benefits to the children are insurmountable and it offers the children a great start in life to have an understanding and cultivate a love for nature and to learn nurture their environment."*
- *"Our son has flourished at CVN under the care of the staff and also within the setting. The ability to engage with nature and the local community is laying really strong foundations for his future."*
- *"My daughter currently uses CVN and I am blown away by how much she loves it. She runs in the door every day so excited to be there and is bouncing (yet tired from all the fun of the day) when I pick her up. She is a high energy child and sleeps so much better due to her activity level at CVN. Her increased confidence and the friendships she has built is a delight to see. The nursery very much reflects our home ethos, but I especially love it when she shows us something she has learned to do with CVN. She is only 3 and frequently surprises me with skills that many adults don't seem to have! She can make pancakes by herself, chop vegetables helping prepare dinner, help light a fire, and is able to use a hammer and a screw driver with confidence. She is also tremendously resilient, completing a family walk of 9k the other week with ease, she launches herself into the muddiest of puddles with such a grin, she can also scale climbing frames despite her little size! I would also like to add on a personal note that CVN has helped me make better choices as a parent. I have found the information shared by CVN especially useful, such as the early years childhood development information and also personal feedback about my child's development. I have been inspired to get outside and enjoy our beautiful woodland more, to take the time to allow my girls to do more for themselves, and not be afraid to let them take risks. It has certainly made a happier home life for all of us."*
- *"Only significant concern is security. A deterrent (cameras, fence?) might help mitigate the risk of local children vandalising the property. It might be more difficult to keep track of the children once they stop seeing the woods as a special trip. Not that they couldn't be managed, just a worry."*
- *"We think it's a great idea!!!"*
- *"I am a grandparent and took my children and now my grandchildren"*
- *"There is already a breakfast/after school club so I don't think it'd be fair to set up another after school club as that could potentially take business away from the existing one. I do, however, think it'd be good to run a couple of activities once or twice a week e.g. nature club etc."*
- *"I think this is a really good idea."*
- *"I strongly feel this facility should have a dedicated space for CVN children only to use and an additional space for other use."*
- *"My children are beyond primary age but would have loved to of had a woodland nursery when they were at that age."*
- *"I would love Ru to be able to continue his relationship with CVN beyond his nursery years. I am also always looking for hut type accommodation for some of the work I do with fathers and sons would love the potential possibility of being able to work together and use the space."*



- *“I have seen the amazing work that the nursery has already done with its woodland play sessions and would love to see an expansion of their sessions.”*
- *“CVN staff are well-organized and have many ideas for improvements to their educational play activities, which I feel should be supported on an ongoing basis. I encourage the involvement of families and carers in this regard, and would like, where available, for resources to continue to be allocated to the team in furtherance of their goals.”*
- *“As a family we spend a lot of time in the woods and have chosen to send our youngest to the village nursery due to the outdoor learning element which we feel is very important and beneficial to development. A specific area (shelter) would allow the staff to maximise the time they have in the woods, meaning they don’t have the worry and stress of setting up an appropriate space each visit. Our youngest loves the woodland sessions and it would be fantastic if that could develop for future kids.”*
- *“Our children are now high school age. I am an interested person and it appears that the survey has been designed to be answered only by those with children in early years. Our children would have loved, even more, the nursery experience in the woodland venue. Only concern is that some may demand drive up access and parking at any facility which might alter the setting.”*



Appendix 2 : Community Groups in Cambusbarron

1. Cambusbarron Community Council

Cambusbarron Community Council is an elected body of local people that represent the views of the community to Stirling Council, business and other groups. Meetings are usually held monthly on the 3rd Tuesday of the month and are held at Cambusbarron Primary School at 7pm. Currently there are nine members on the community council.

2. Greener Cambusbarron

Greener Cambusbarron is a sub-group of the Community Council and they are responsible for the upkeep of the green landscape of Cambusbarron. For the last three years Cambusbarron has been awarded the “It’s Your Neighbourhood – Keep Scotland beautiful - Outstanding Village” status, which is in large part down to the hard work and dedication of the group, through planting, watering and general upkeep of the village environment.

3. Cambusbarron Community Development Trust

A community-owned charitable company (SC041449), promoting and responding to the needs and interests of Cambusbarron community. CCDT has been awarded over £425,000 by the Scottish Land Fund to buy and manage around 160 acres of woodland on Gillies Hill, Cambusbarron.

4. Cambusbarron Community Events group

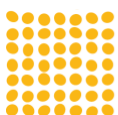
Cambusbarron Community Events group is made up of local people who volunteer their time to organise a range of community events, which help raise funds to put on the Gala day in June every year in the King George V Park. Other events throughout the year include bingo and race nights, and Halloween, Easter and Christmas themed events.

5. Cambusbarron Primary School Parent Council

All parents of school pupils are offered the opportunity to be members of the Parent Council to support the life and work of the school community. There is an active Parent Council with 4 sub-groups – Fund-raising and events group (FREG), Communication, School Grounds, and Safer Routes to School. Each group has an action plan which feeds in to and supports the actions on the Parent Council plan. Each group is led by a parent and supported by a member of staff.

6. Reminiscence / History Group

This is a group run by Cambusbarron Parish Church. The aim is to improve memory in older people by providing an informal get together around a table over a cup of coffee. They provide opportunities to discuss various topics as well as local history and there are opportunities for inter-generational work with the CVN.



Appendix 3 : Financial Modelling

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