



Consultation

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3.0 Consultation

3.1 Consultation + Engagement

Engagement with stakeholders is of primary importance in the creation of any successful design. Our team's approach to consultation is always a collaborative and inclusive one, conducted in a clear and transparent manner. We will ultimately be seeking to provide a design which achieves tangible benefits from genuinely effective engagement, ensuring that people are listened to carefully and that their views are used to influence the design both at a detailed and a strategic level.

This feasibility study has, however, been carried out in the first half of 2020, during the worldwide COVID-19 virus pandemic, a situation which has understandably impacted on the consultation process to date. The level of engagement has not been as detailed as we would ideally have liked, but we have nevertheless sought to engage wherever possible. Given the importance of the Peebles High School project, Scottish Borders Council also appointed a Community Liaison Officer who has been very helpful in supporting and facilitating the following initial engagements to help inform the feasibility design work:

- Active engagement with senior Council representatives, including senior education and property officers
- A limited public engagement exercise was carried out on Thursday 12th March, just before lockdown procedures were introduced by the Scottish Government
- An online consultation meeting was also held on Wednesday 22nd April with a representative cross-section of students, the headteacher and a Deputy Head Teacher, which was both enjoyable and informative
- Further online engagement took place utilising the Council's Citizen Forum website with a total of 239 online assessments and comments being received.



All of these initiatives have been helpful to the team, with a detailed list of suggestions, thoughts and comments being received, both on the existing school and in relation to aspirations for the new project. These are included in Appendix A of this document, however, a brief summary of some of the wide variety of points from a range of stakeholders in all 3 exercises regarding any new development would be as follows, many of which follow familiar and consistent themes:

Social Areas

- Larger shared spaces but also calm, smaller areas
- Spaces perhaps relevant to different year groups so that pupils can feel that they "belong"
- Couches, fitted furniture and smaller sections to give more of a university/café feel
- For younger pupils, an outside area/quiet area to relax in would be good
- A good environment to help with mental health
- Tiered seating could be very interesting
- Lots of natural light
- An exciting space

Learning Spaces

- Open technology spaces
- All areas should be fully accessible for all pupils; the design should encourage more interaction with ASN pupils
- Variety of space desirable
- Adjustable and adaptable classrooms/learning areas - not just rows of desks
- Choice of where/how pupils learn (alternative arrangements are used at exam time but not at other times)
- Previous art classrooms did not inspire creativity – should be more like art "studios"

Circulation

- More flexible and varied to avoid narrow, stressful "one way" systems
- Avoid lots of corridors
- Breakout areas with supporting technology would be great
- More artwork or graphics to make it feel like "our" school (like at Kingsland)

Learning Support

- ASN/pupil support areas should be at the very heart of the school; an integral part of its community

Entrance area

- Should be obvious, welcoming, open and light, and unique to Peebles High – a statement

Assembly Hall

- Could be used more flexibly but large enough for assemblies too

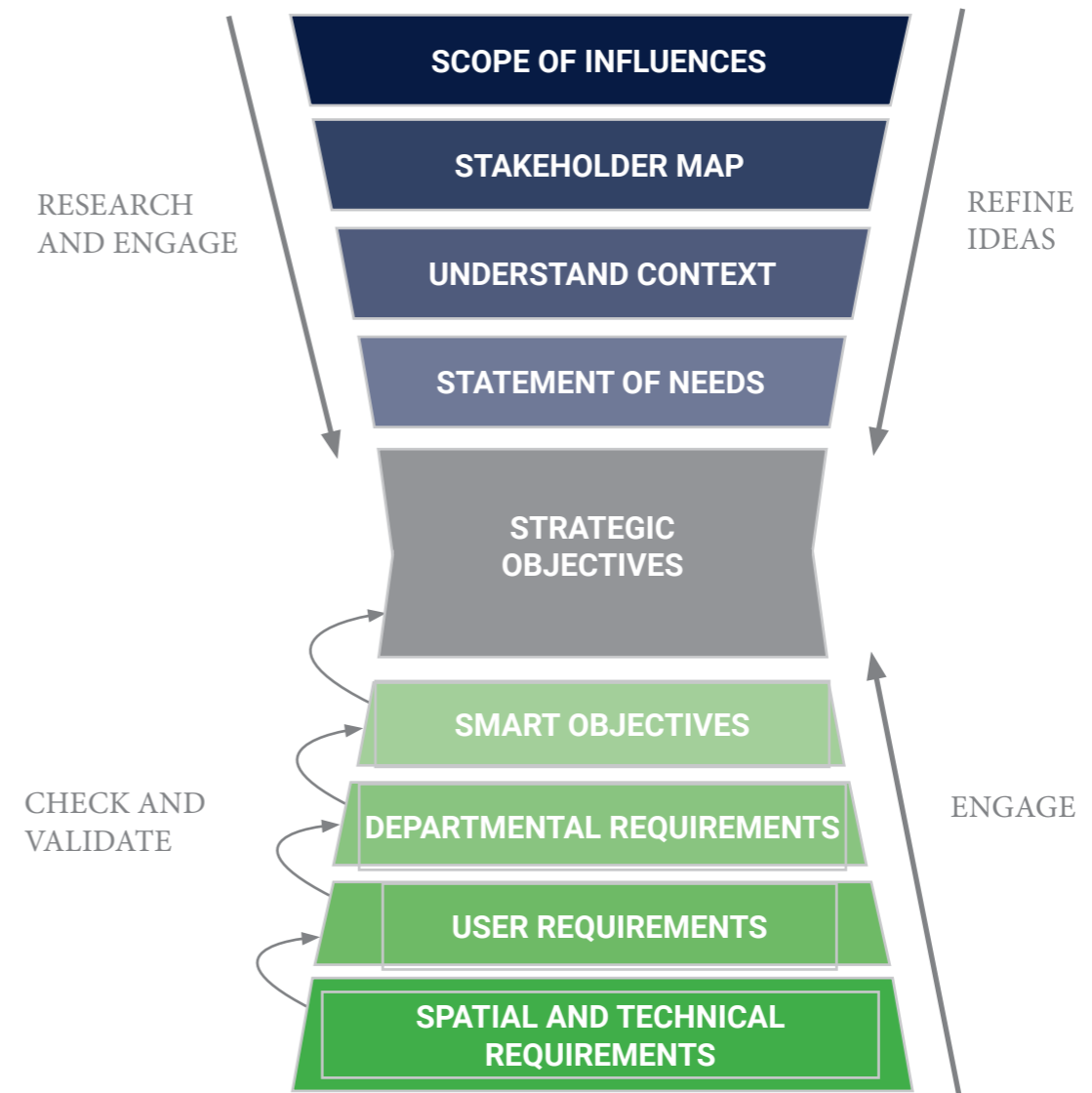
General Aspirations for the new Project

- A modern, bright building, with a wide variety of spaces
- More common spaces and areas for pupils; a more "open" feel generally
- Provision of great sports facilities, including an artificial pitch
- Large dining area
- Wide corridors; effective, interesting circulation
- Space for the community
- All education on one site - including tertiary education aspects and excellent STEAM facilities
- Enough capacity for expanding roll
- Eco building and grounds; a sustainable project
- Creative Arts faculty
- State of the art technology throughout the building
- Interesting outdoor areas
- More vocational opportunities on site
- The new building should reflect the importance of the school to its community
- Connections between inside and out
- A Peebles Campus, perhaps including tertiary education – interwoven across secondary and tertiary education/ apprenticeships
- An enterprise hub
- A catalyst for boosting the local community and economy with skills/tertiary education hub

These comments have all helped to inform the evolving design and will continue to do so moving forward. In so doing, to have an effective engagement process it is important to keep people informed through good communication and to ensure that the process remains relatively simple and direct. Typical meetings envisaged moving forward would include:

- Strategic consultation meetings with senior staff
- Structured discussions with pupils, parents and wider staff
- Design development meetings
- Room layout discussions
- Meetings regarding Fixed Furniture + Equipment
- Engagement meetings during construction
- Completion and feedback sessions

It is important to stress that the above interactions are merely the first steps on the road to creating an inclusive design. They will be the first of many steps and a detailed programme of ongoing engagement with pupils, parents, staff and the wider community will be developed and shared in due course.



Creating an intelligent brief

