

Committee	Finance and General Purposes		
Date paper prepared	19/08/2025	Date of committee meeting	02/09/2025
Subject	Estates Capital Works Plan 2025-26		
Author	Doug Rattray – Head of Infrastructure		
Action requested	Approval sought		
Purpose of the paper	The purpose of this paper is to present a prioritised list for approval of capital projects planned to be undertaken in 2025-26. Approval will indicate agreement to proceed with these works within the bounds (scope/cost) indicated in this paper.		
Summary of the paper	The projects presented herein are those major works required to sustain the safe and efficient operation of our estate. The projects are prioritised based on college needs and cost estimates are provided for each project. Capital projects are funded through the annual allocation of capital grant funding from SFC, unless alternative sources of funding are explicitly listed.		
Consultation	Consultation has been ongoing within the estates team, APUC and with staff / functions affected by the planned works.		
Resource implications	<p>Estates team and APUC staff time will be required for scoping works, engagement of professional services and facilitating and overseeing on-campus works once underway.</p> <p>Project management resource may be required depending on the project load.</p>		
Risk implications	<p>Failing to maintain the college estate and undertake essential works in a timely manner has a range of consequences, affecting the college staff, the student body and other users. These include but are not limited to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Safety risks associated with structural issues • Increasing costs of deferred works due to developing issues • Deferred costs being unaffordable at a future date alongside newly emerging works • Estates team being understaffed to manage deferred works programmes. • Energy inefficiency of outdated systems • Aesthetic degradation of buildings and eventual loss of functionality • Reputational damage where deterioration is visible 		
Link with strategy	These works link directly to the Infrastructure Strategy.		

Equality, Diversity, and Inclusion	<p>This report has been written to be readily understandable and accessible to all readers, including those with disabilities or impairments, in line with the Equality Act 2010.</p> <p>It is assumed that the works listed herein will have no direct equality, diversity and inclusion impact other than by enabling the planned operation of the college.</p>
Island Community Impact	<p>Not required in this instance.</p>
Paper status	<p><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Open – The paper may be circulated to non-members of the committee and published online without restriction.</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Restricted – The paper must not be circulated to non-members or published online until after the committee meeting.</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Confidential - The paper must not be circulated beyond the committee members and should not be published online. Some information is considered commercially sensitive. [Please note papers may still be subject to Freedom of Information requests – see below].</p>
Freedom of information	<p>Open</p>

F&GP Paper

Estates Capital Works Plan

25-26



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Introduction

This paper is seeking approval to proceed in procuring and implementing the projects listed on the 2025-26 planned capital works programme presented herein. Approval will indicate agreement to proceed with these works within the bounds (scope & cost) indicated in this paper. Proposed works are those highest priority capital works required to sustain the safe and efficient operation of our estate. The projects are presented in a prioritised list order with those works most urgent clearly highlighted.

A brief summary of each project is presented to illustrate the anticipated scope of works. Cost estimates are provided for each project alongside a discussion of how these estimates have been derived in order to indicate confidence levels. It is anticipated that actual costs for projects will vary as works proceed through procurement. This schedule of planned works will contain contingency, which can be available to call upon to deal with unplanned cost increases or unforeseen emergent works that are deemed urgent. Where projects costs are quoted at significantly greater values than those estimated (>10% estimated cost) further approval will be sought prior to award of contract.

Note on Funding Availability and Eligibility

Capital grant funding from the Scottish Funding Council (SFC) to Scottish colleges is the financial mechanism designed to support capital projects within the further education sector. Generally, infrastructure projects such as the construction or refurbishment of college buildings and the purchase of major equipment are eligible to be funded through this mechanism. Eligibility for access to these funds is currently restricted to works categorised as CDEL; and not those categorised as RDEL.

Note, in previous years this restriction has been partially relaxed allowing this funding to be used more broadly, and we are expecting some degree of the same relaxation to be available this year. This SFC policy has still to be formally confirmed.

The projects presented for approval are therefore only those that are either (a) sufficiently severe and urgent that SFC capital grant allocation should be allocated for the completion of these works or (b) funded through alternative means.

The FE Capital Grant allocation for 2025/26 is £819k.

Project Schedule

The Estates Major Works plan for 2025-26 is presented below.

Table 1: 2024-25 Planned Capital Works Programme

Project	Campus	For Approval	Funding Source		Est. Value (£ inc. VAT)
			SFC CAPEX	Other	
Oil Boiler Replacement	STY	Y	100,000	CnES Match	200,000
E-Block Roof Works	STY	Y	80,000		80,000
LapSafe Cabinet & IT Solution	Thurso	Y	32,000		32,000
Install Emergency Lighting	FW	Y	12,000		12,000
CCTV & Access Controls	FW	Y	30,000		30,000
Dome Lift Control System Overhaul	Thurso	Y	30,000		30,000
Tower Lift Overhaul	Thurso	Approved		SFC Em. Grant	100,000
Biomass Boiler Replacement	FW	Approved		SFC Em. Grant	130,000
Café Development (Caithness Demo)	Thurso	WIP		C-ness Demo	80,000
CFEE Bridge Flat Roof	Thurso	WIP		Sale of Wick	50,400
Asbestos Removal and Reinstate Admissions Windows	Thurso	WIP		Sale of Wick	10,000
Conference Centre Development (tentative)	STY	N	Y		80,000
EV Chargers (tentative)	Various	N	Y		30,000
Training Kitchen Expansion (tentative)	STY	N	Y		30,000
Value of Projects for Approval (SFC Capex)			284,000		
Value of Tentative Projects (including SFC Em Grant)					370,000
Value of Project (ALL Sources)					754,400

It should be noted that the label 'Approved' in column 3 relates to ELT approval. Appropriate F&GP / Board approvals are still required for these projects.

It should be noted that award of 'Other' funding (column 5), is speculative and not guaranteed, e.g., SFC Emergency Grant Funding is subject to bid process and business case acceptance. Should these funds be unavailable in 2025-26, consideration will be sought on funding these works through allocation of SFC CAPEX funding, subject to appropriate approvals. As such, these projects are included in those labelled 'Tentative'.

Table 2: CDEL/RDEL Spend Analysis

	CDEL	RDEL
Value of Projects for Approval (SFC Capex)	284,000	
FW Curtain Wall Project (part funded from 25-26 CAPEX)	113,877*	
SFC FE Capital Grant Allocation 2025/26	819,000	
Remaining Value (RDEL potential)		421,123

* Final value to be confirmed in meeting, following finalisation of 2024-25 CAPEX return.

The College has sought from SFC a relaxation of the CDEL/RDEL eligibility restriction for access to the SFC FE Capital Grant Allocation. Should this be granted, the 'remaining value' illustrated above may be allocated to RDEL works or to other tentative projects, subject to approval.

Further Information – Project Summaries

Oil Boiler Replacement

Backlog condition surveys note that the oil boiler system at our Stornoway campus is ageing. The system requires a high level of maintenance and is energy inefficient. The equipment is near end-of-life and we are at high risk of experiencing a catastrophic failure of the system. Such a failure would leave our campus (blocks A-E) with no heating and may affect our ability to open the building to staff and students. A system replacement will enable reductions in energy use costs, will be more energy efficient (enabling net-zero transition), will enable zoning of the building (currently unavailable) and will reduce the maintenance burden.

The boiler feeds a district heating system and also provides heat to Lews Castle and Museum. We are in discussion with CnES to agree match funding options for replacement of the system, which will include exploration of a decarbonised solution.

Estimated cost of £200,000 is based on a pre-scoping cost estimate of a like-for-like replacement.

E-Block Roof Sectional Replacement

The engineering building in Stornoway contains four large workshops & training spaces for the delivery of curricula associated with STEM, construction, joinery, fabrication & welding and future energy technologies. The interior of the building has recently seen significant redevelopment through the Islands Growth Deal to create a modern Technology and Innovation centre providing the College with modern fit for purpose facilities that form a key asset in supporting the delivery of modern curricula and supporting the workforce development needs in the Western Isles.

The space is roofed using a Kalzip style cladding with domed windows. Recent incidents of water ingress have led to the discovery of an extensive suite of issues and instances of degradation that require immediate attention. The package of works will include various instances of repairing & replacing roof cladding sections that have degraded or deformed over time, various instances of replacing roof flashing, significantly improvements to the guttering, and significant improvements to the dome window systems, which have degraded over time.

These works represent an urgent Health and Safety issue and failure to complete these works in a timely manner would risk further water ingress into the building potentially causing damage to the building fabric, damage to engineering equipment and the need to restrict access to areas of the training facility. As the redeveloped technology and innovation centre is a major attractor to the College, any unavailability of these facilities would have a severe impact on students who working towards their apprenticeship or who study engineering and construction courses.

An initial survey of the roof has been conducted by Graham + Sibbald who have estimated that the costs associated with rectifying the full suite of issues is around £80k.

LapSafe Cabinet and IT Solution

The LapSafe Cabinet and IT Solution is a fixed asset allowing for students to check out laptops for use in personal study or in the classroom. Fort William and Stornoway both have such installations, and these support the move to a flexible IT outfitting on these campuses, that includes a reduction in fixed IT assets.

The cost of £32,000 is based on a recent purchase of the equipment in Stornoway.

Install Emergency Lighting

In a recent survey of our Fort William campus, it was noted that the main building was insufficiently outfitted with emergency lighting, particularly in the main building. This installation is required to ensure the safe evacuation of persons from the premises during an emergency.

The cost of £12,000 is based on the cost estimate provided during the survey.

CCTV & Access Controls

The Fort William campus is lacking in physical access controls or CCTV systems meaning that College staff have little ability to ensure that only authorised persons are able to enter the campus. In recent years, a number of incidents have raised concerns including various instances of members of public entering the campus unsupervised, various instances of motorhomes parking in college bays and various incidents of student misconduct and vandalism. The proposal is to install key card access control systems that would restrict the public access to the building to the reception and café area only.

The cost of £30,000 is a pre-scoping cost estimate to install key card access controls and a modern CCTV system on the campus.

Dome Lift Control System Overhaul

Following recent repairs of the lift in the Dome building of our Thurso campus, we have been advised that the control system for the lift is passed its economic life expectancy and that further repair would be uneconomical. The Dome lift was out of order for several weeks in 2024-25 resulting in significant disruption to students, particularly those with accessibility needs as this lift links the main campus to the café area.

The estimated cost of £30,000 is based on discussions with our contracted lift engineers for replacement of the control system. Works could be undertaken at a time that would not cause further disruption to students.