

Schools Open Day 2017  
Pitgaveny Farm, Elgin



PITGAVENY

IAN  
WHITE  
ASSOCIATES  
LANDSCAPE  
ARCHITECTS





# **Pitgaveny Schools Day, May 2017**

**Around 200 pupils visit Pitgaveny to learn about how the farm functions.**

## **Context**

Pitgaveny Farm Estate schools day invites pupils from Elgin Academy to visit and experience first-hand what running a farm entails. Ian White Associated Landscape Architects were invited to run sessions as part of this open day to give the pupils a taster of what a Landscape Architect does and how that fits into the farm operations.

Our current work for Pitgaveny is focussed on developing a masterplan for 1,500 new homes on a 100ha site over a 25 year period. The masterplan includes parks, amenity greenspace, allotments, community facilities, cycle routes and connections to the surrounding countryside.



## Proposal for the Landscape Architecture sessions

The brief was to carry out an activity with pupils aged 12-13 that would give them an understanding of Landscape Architecture and also be creative and engaging.

Model making was proposed in order to demonstrate how ideas can be tested in three dimensions, whilst giving a fun task for a short 40 minute time-frame.

A programme for the sessions was sent to the client and school to give a structure to the Landscape Architecture sessions. This formed a useful working document and advice from the client and school was incorporated to help inform how the sessions ran. A copy of the programme can be found at the end of this report.

A short introduction to Landscape Architecture was followed by a sketch design period, after which the pupils got into the model making. Three theoretical site options were given to the pupils, all of which had to demonstrate consideration to integration into the landscape:

- Walled Garden
- Skate Park
- Adventure Play Park

The sessions were wrapped up by each group presenting their model ideas in 20 seconds or less.







## Resources

Prior to visiting the schools, A1 sheets were prepared showing various Landscape Architecture projects; examples of model making by IWALA and others; inspirational/reference image sheets of walled gardens, skate parks and adventure play areas.

The class size ranged from 20-26 pupils and advice from the school suggested that a group size of 3-4 pupils would be appropriate to encourage high levels of participation.

Each group was given a thick cardboard base on which they could plan out their site. Pens were provided for each person in the group to get all members to get drawing. A pair of scissors were provided for each group.

Model making materials were supplied, which included: sand, stones, foil, lollipop sticks/stirrers, twigs, crepe paper, paper, cardboard, straws, natural mosses etc. for making trees, wooden skewers, pipe-cleaners, plasticine and various felt items.

Glue, wire, string, sellotape, double-sided sticky pads and hot glue guns were provided for fixing models together. The school advised that supervised hot glue gun use was appropriate for this age group.

The sessions were held in a barn on the Pitgaveny Farm estate, which had lighting, electrical points and hand-washing facilities. Tables and chairs, with 4-seats allowed the group sizes to be pre-determined.



## Model Making Sessions

Four sessions were run over the course of the day. Once divided into groups, the pupils then picked which site option they would like to design. The skate park proved most popular, followed by the adventure play area, some pupils needed encouragement to engage with the walled garden.

The design period was kept to a minimum to allow most of the session to be spent constructing and working through ideas.

Pupils were encouraged to use as many of the materials as they could in order to explain and demonstrate their ideas. Having sufficient resources is key to getting unrestrictive construction.







*"I know what a Landscape Architect does...  
an Architect does the buildings, a Landscape  
Architect does the outdoor space"*







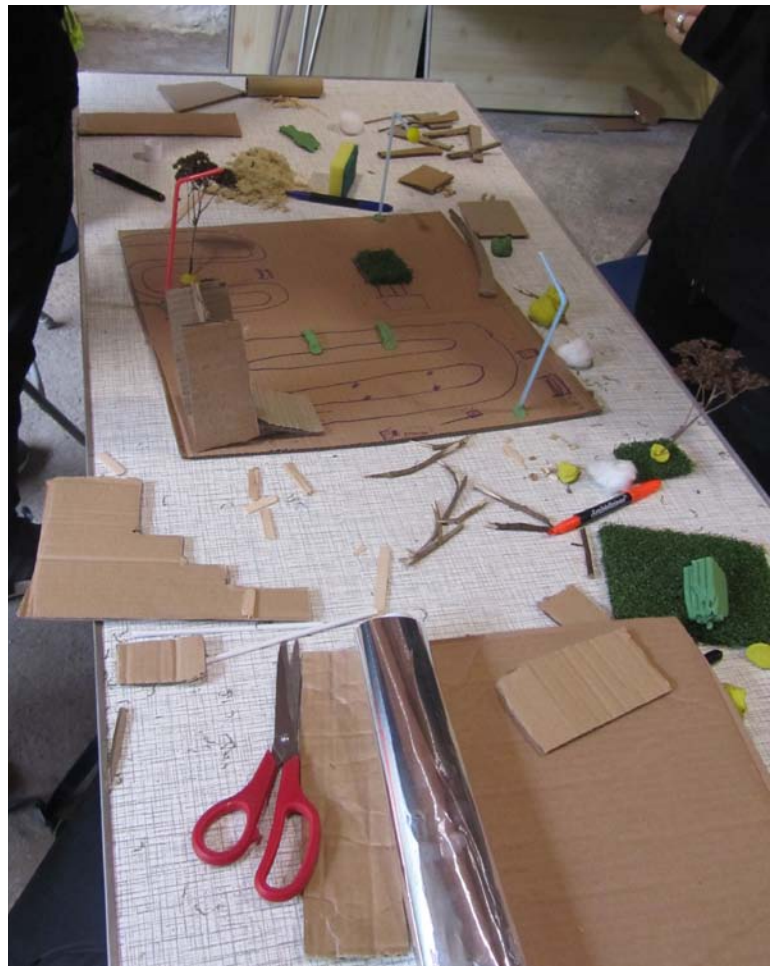


*“Our zip line runs up into the trees, with sand below in case you fall”*



*“We’ve got a river running through the park, but don’t worry - this is the bridge to get to the skate park”*









*“This is the community café, it’s called NAC Bakes - those are our initials!”*



## Outcomes and lessons learned

The allotted time of 40 minutes was sufficient to allow the pupils to design and construct a model.

Regular reminders of the time left kept the groups focussed.

The dimensions of the model bases were generally 50cm x 50cm. Some flexibility on model size was given to more ambitious groups.

The 20 second presentation time was not daunting to most and gave a quick idea of their design intent. It also allowed the designs to be summed up rapidly before the pupils moved on to their next session.

Space to move around was key - large layout areas for materials worked well.

Additional glue guns would be preferable as they proved popular, however turn-taking was well managed by the children themselves.

The sessions were ran by one Landscape Architect, with support from two planners from Savills and a planner from Moray Council. Teachers and chaperones from the farm also helped.

Each person moved around the room dipping into different groups to help overcome design/construction tasks. This worked well and ensured that all groups gained access to individual expertise.

Less enthusiastic pupils were encouraged by discussion to tease out how their interests could be incorporated into their design, whilst maintaining links to the brief. Recognise at the start of a session and encourage.

No judging took place, although some pupils asked which was the best model. The focus was on the task/experience/ability to convey design ideas.



*“Our skate park encourages wildlife, these are our pet snail and goat”*





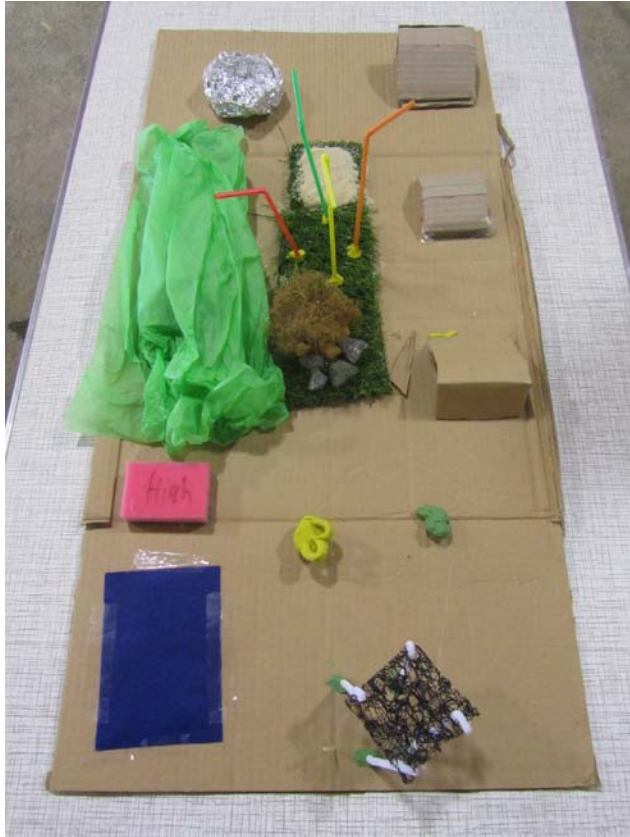
*"The skate park is planned out - everyone's making something for it"*



*"We've got a massive drop-in ramp, it's got a ladder to get to the top"*



# The models...











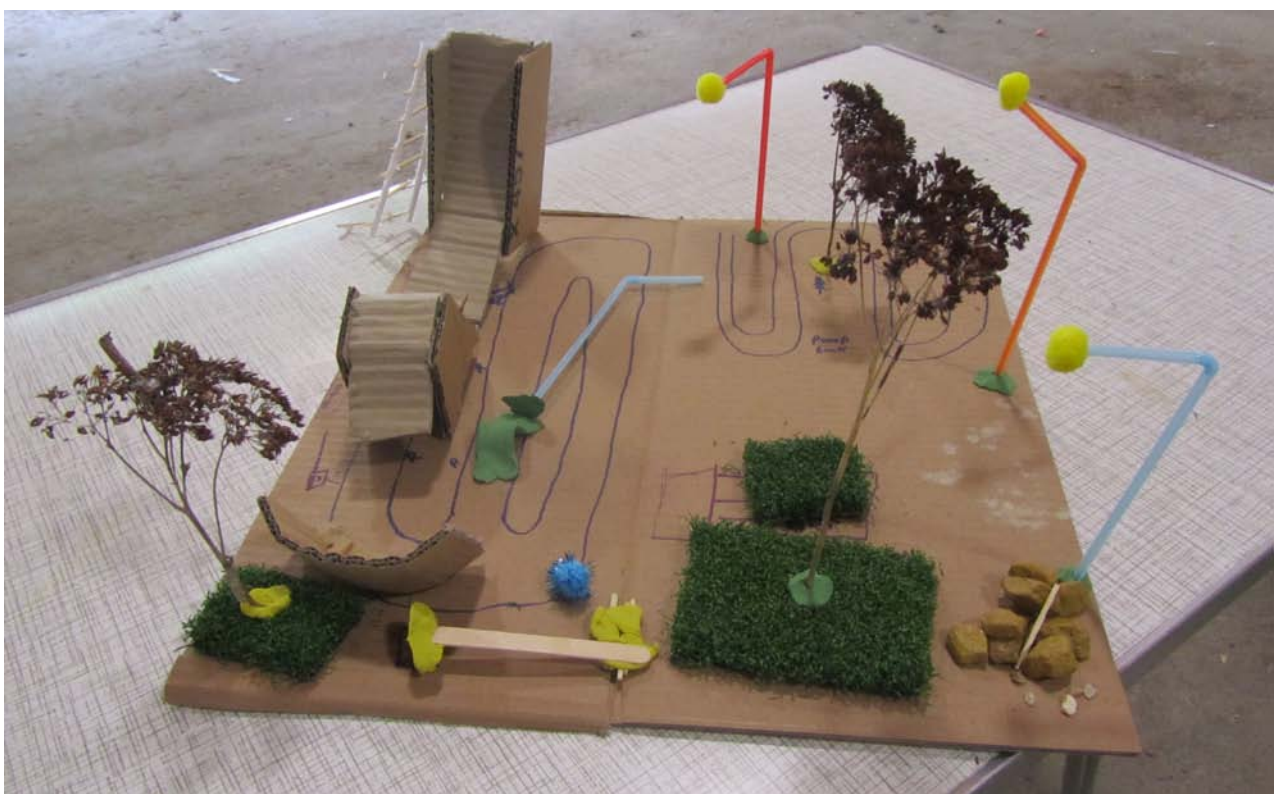
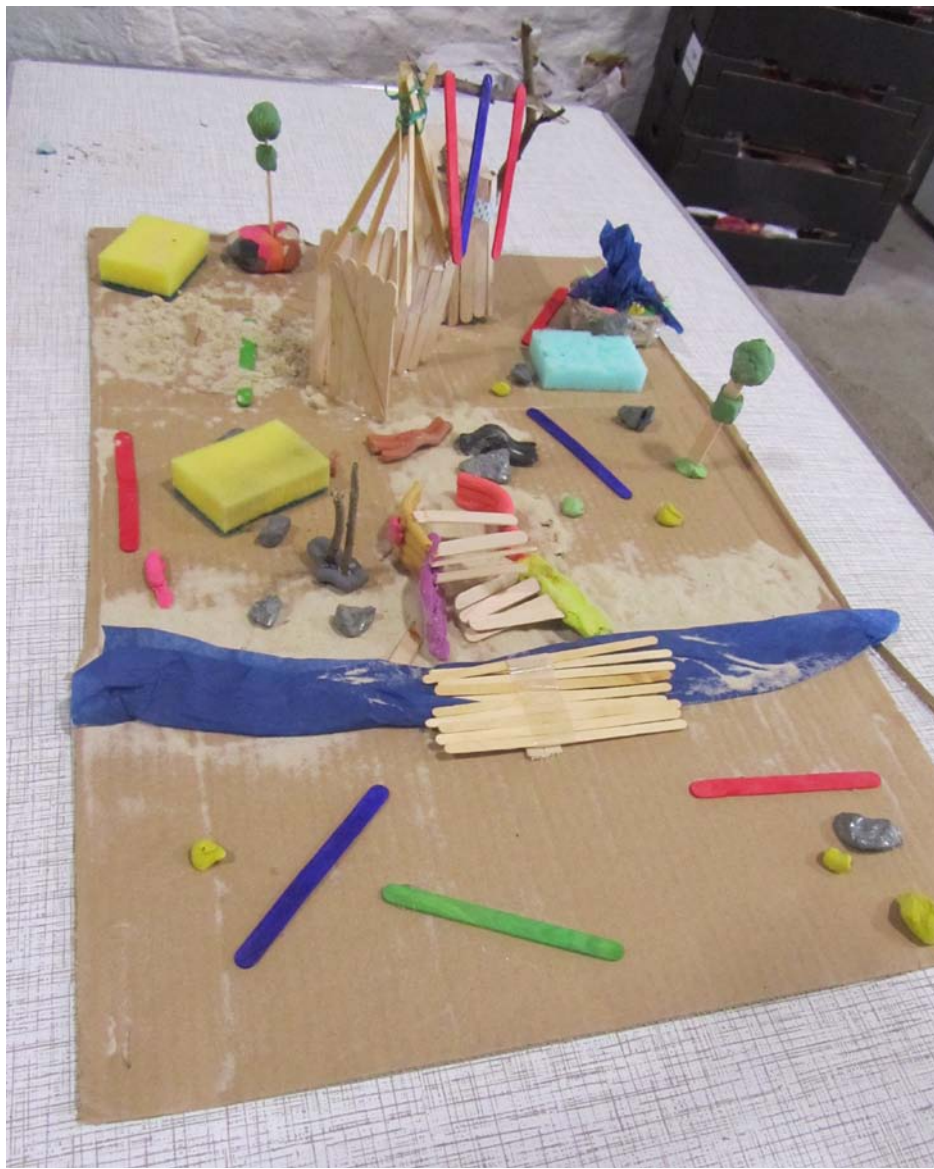


















# Session programme

## PITGAVENY SCHOOLS OPEN DAY

CLIENT:	PROJECT:	JOB REF:	DATE :
Pitgaveny Estate	Findrassie	2050	11/05/2017

### Short introduction (1min)

What is a Landscape Architect? Brief description of our work; members of multidisciplinary design teams (with Architects/Engineers/Ecologists etc) to large scale master-planning projects such as Findrassie.

### Introduction to Model Making (2mins)

Use of models to test ideas and create a 3D version of design concepts. Explain how models are useful to demonstrate how spaces will look. Present three options to the pupils:

#### *Option 1*

Walled Garden - associated with the community hub.

#### *Option 2*

Skate/BMX park - as part of the main park.

#### *Option 3*

Wildlife pond - consider how to attract visitors and create habitat.

Sheets of images from which the pupils can draw inspiration.

### Model Making (35mins)

Working in groups of 3/4, make a model at 50cm x 50cm size. Using materials that can be manipulated by hand.

- Plasticine
- Sand
- Leaves
- Matchsticks
- Cardboard
- Paper
- Cotton Wool
- Glue
- Straws
- Polystyrene
- Sticks

### Presentation of ideas (2mins)

Each group talks through their ideas in 20 seconds or less, considering design philosophy and how that has been demonstrated in their model making.



