

**RUCHAZIE**

**GROWING & GREENING**



# INTRODUCTION

'Growing and Greening Ruchazie' is a project which will repurpose a large area of vacant and derelict land within the north east of Glasgow which sits at a key nodal point of Ruchazie and the communities which surround it (Hogganfield, Riddrie and Craigend).

The land was previously two primary schools however, it has lain derelict now for a considerable number of years.

As a response to the converging challenges being faced at a local, national and international level, 'Growing and Greening Ruchazie' focuses on how this large extent of land can be transformed as a space for outdoor learning and play, continue to act as a key green corridor for wildlife within the Seven Lochs project area, and provide a number of spaces for community growing.







GLASGOW

● RUCHAZIE

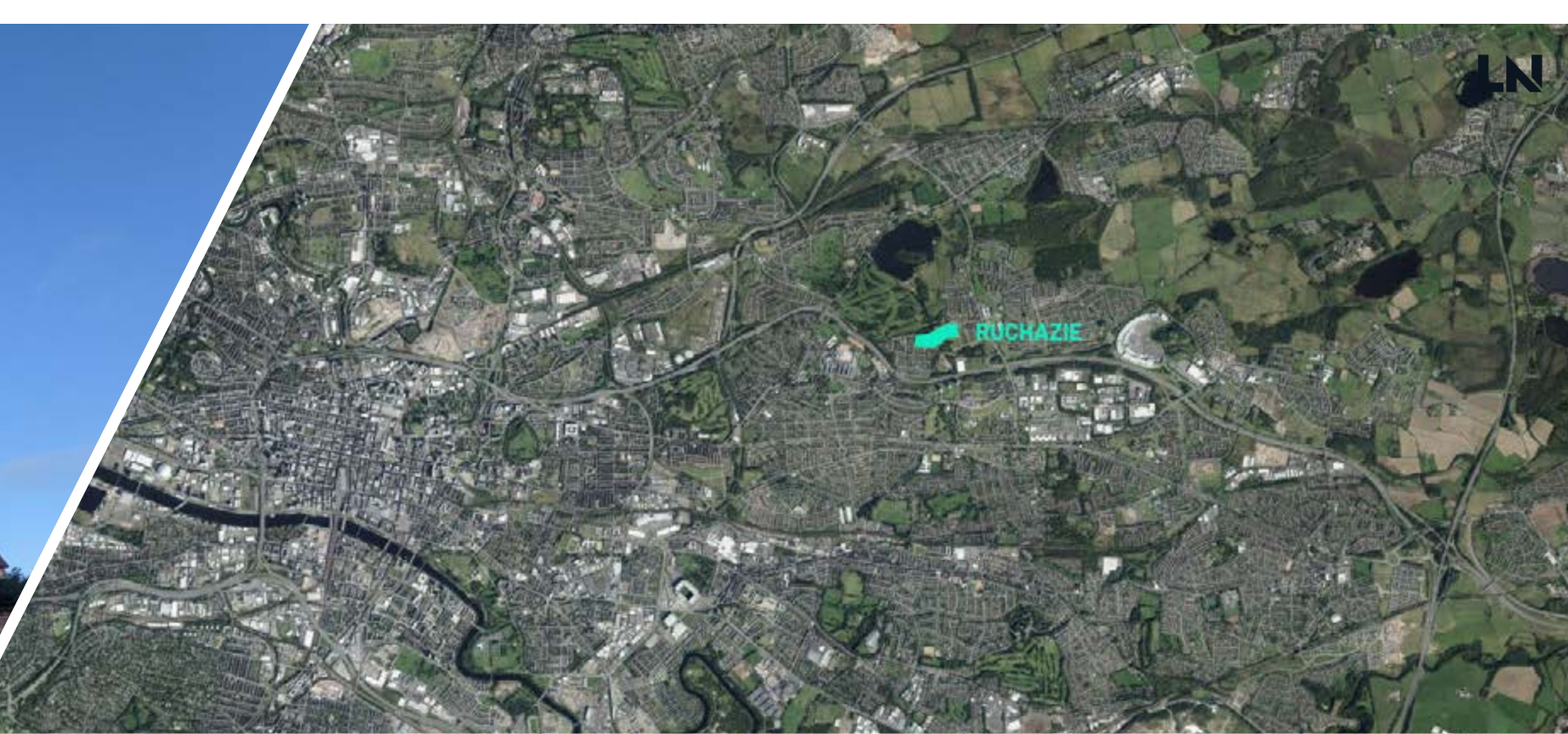


# **PART 01:** **OUR LAND**

*“Having had to live with an eyesore for so many years, the **community being able to take ownership and be actively involved** in bringing back a **space for all to enjoy** allows us to flourish and grow; to be part of the process of creating spaces for ordinary people to access and gain a sense of belonging and enjoy an ordinary life.”*

Denise McGuigan, Growing21, Ruchazie Development Trust





## LOCATION OF LAND

Ruchazie is a community found within the north east of Glasgow. It is bordered to the south and east by the M8 motorway and to the north by Hogganfield Park. To the west is Craigend and where the primary schools which used to inhabit the site in question have been moved to. The vacant and derelict land explored as part of 'Growing and Greening Ruchazie' is a major feature of the local community, constituting a considerable amount of the land which makes up the community.





## HISTORY OF LAND

The land of Ruchazie has historically been used for various industries such as the Gartcraig Colliery being supported by a small hamlet of houses until developments in the middle of the 20th century increased the population considerably. Housing stock, two primary schools (one shown above, top left) and a secondary school were part of the 'Greater Easterhouse' programme in the 1950's. Brick making (middle images) was a large part of the industrial heritage of the community.





# CURRENT SITE CONDITION

The two portions of vacant and derelict land\* which are to be rejuvenated as part of 'Growing and Greening Ruchazie' consist of a number of portions of hard standing (where the former primary schools were situated), a newly created piece of urban design which highlights - through interpretation - the water vole population found within the land, and a series of green spaces where nature has flourished in the absence of human intervention since the primary schools were knocked down.

The land supports a variety of different wildlife from the aforementioned water voles to deer, migratory birds and heron. The site itself is wild with a number of established trees which are decades old through to newly established groupings of trees which have developed within this island of abandonment.

The site - especially during the pandemic - has seen an influx of fly-tipping incidents meaning that the site requires a considerable amount of work to be undertaken to ensure it can be safely accessed by the general public. The site is used by local dog walkers who generally utilise the north edge of the site which backs on to Gartloch Road and is where the majority of the established trees are.

The site is on a considerable slope and flooding does occur in certain areas of the site which should be considered going forward on how to address this or include it as a potential feature of the outdoor play/education.

\* Site code 3976, former Ruchazie Primary School, 1.9ha, vacant land since 2008  
Site code 4001, former St Philip's primary School, 2.8ha, vacant land since 2008







**COLOURS  
& MATERIALS  
OF THE LAND**



# PART 02: OUR VISION



# VISION & STRATEGY

The vacant and derelict land sits within the heart of Ruchazie and is surrounded by various communities and people. This project is an opportunity to turn this disused and under-utilised land into a space of vibrancy, activity and community.

The vision focuses around maintaining the natural elements of the site - including the established trees, green corridors and wildlife - while adding splashes of colour and community focused activities such as an outdoor play space, sport pitches and several areas for growing.

This vision and strategy is led directly by the local people who have established key local organisations such as a development trust, pantry and cafe and is part of a wider move to regenerate the north-east of Glasgow. This land, and what will be done to it, reflect the ambition, scope and scale of the future role of the north east of Glasgow within a citywide move towards a greener place to live, work and play.

The land will primarily serve local people - in particular young people - by providing new outdoor community spaces. However, the land will also be a space where people from throughout Glasgow, the central belt and rest of Scotland will be able to enjoy.

'Growing and Greening Ruchazie' will be biodiverse, playful and exciting.

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# COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

This project is shaped by the people of Ruchazie. The community is close-knit and as such it is no surprise that the community engagement which has been undertaken so far highlights that 'a sense of community' is one of the strongest features of the area.

The community engagement which has so far taken place has asked the local people what they would like to see happen within the vacant and derelict land with a particular focus placed on how it can be made greener and used as a space for the community to grow.

The first set of questions focused on the positives and negatives of Ruchazie at the moment. As noted above, the main positive was the sense of community and community spirit, while the negatives were dominated by the lack of activities for young people within the area. Reflecting on this, the proposal for 'Growing and Greening Ruchazie' takes into consideration how the land can be used by young people of all ages and throughout different parts of the day.

The second set of questions explored the different installations or activities which people wanted to see happen within the space. Spaces for children to play and learn were high on the agenda while providing more growing opportunities for local people and organisations alike were also heavily featured. The Ruchazie Pantry was highlighted as a key organisation which should be supported with food grown within the local community provided for this local-centric organisation.

Outdoor nursery's, education spaces and play areas were highlighted as key requirements to engage young people and respond to the pandemic by having classrooms of children outside.

Outdoor spaces for community gatherings (there are currently none) within the area and spaces for dog walking, sitting and relaxing, and wildflower areas/orchards were also put forward as suggestions from the community.





# DESIGN PRINCIPLES

Based on the community engagement, stakeholder engagement and site considerations the following three design principles have been drawn up to lead the approach to how 'Greening and Growing Ruchazie' can be taken forward and developed:

1. Maintain green corridors and a natural greenspace which supports local people and wildlife alike.
2. Develop and focus on biodiversity, outdoor education and play, food growing and community opportunities.
3. Create pockets of colour within the space to encourage creativity and engagement.

These principles and the ideas of the community are developed in more detail throughout this document.







**MOODBOARD 01**





**MOODBOARD 02**



# MASTERPLAN & VISION

Following community consultation, stakeholder engagement and a detailed analysis of the site a masterplan has been drawn up which splits the overall site into 8 areas.

These areas are considered as part of a holistic master plan which ties together key themes explored further within this document.

In some cases the spaces will be left to be 'wild' to encourage local wildlife to continue to use the spaces as green corridors, while in other cases the pockets of land will be transformed to be colourful and vibrant - this we believe is key to the success of the project and to make the space a happier, friendly and more engaging place to be.



KEY/LEGEND	
1:	Sports play area
2:	Orchard
3:	Outdoor play area
4:	Community gathering space
5:	Sports play area
6:	Outdoor classroom
7:	Growing space 1
8:	Growing space 2

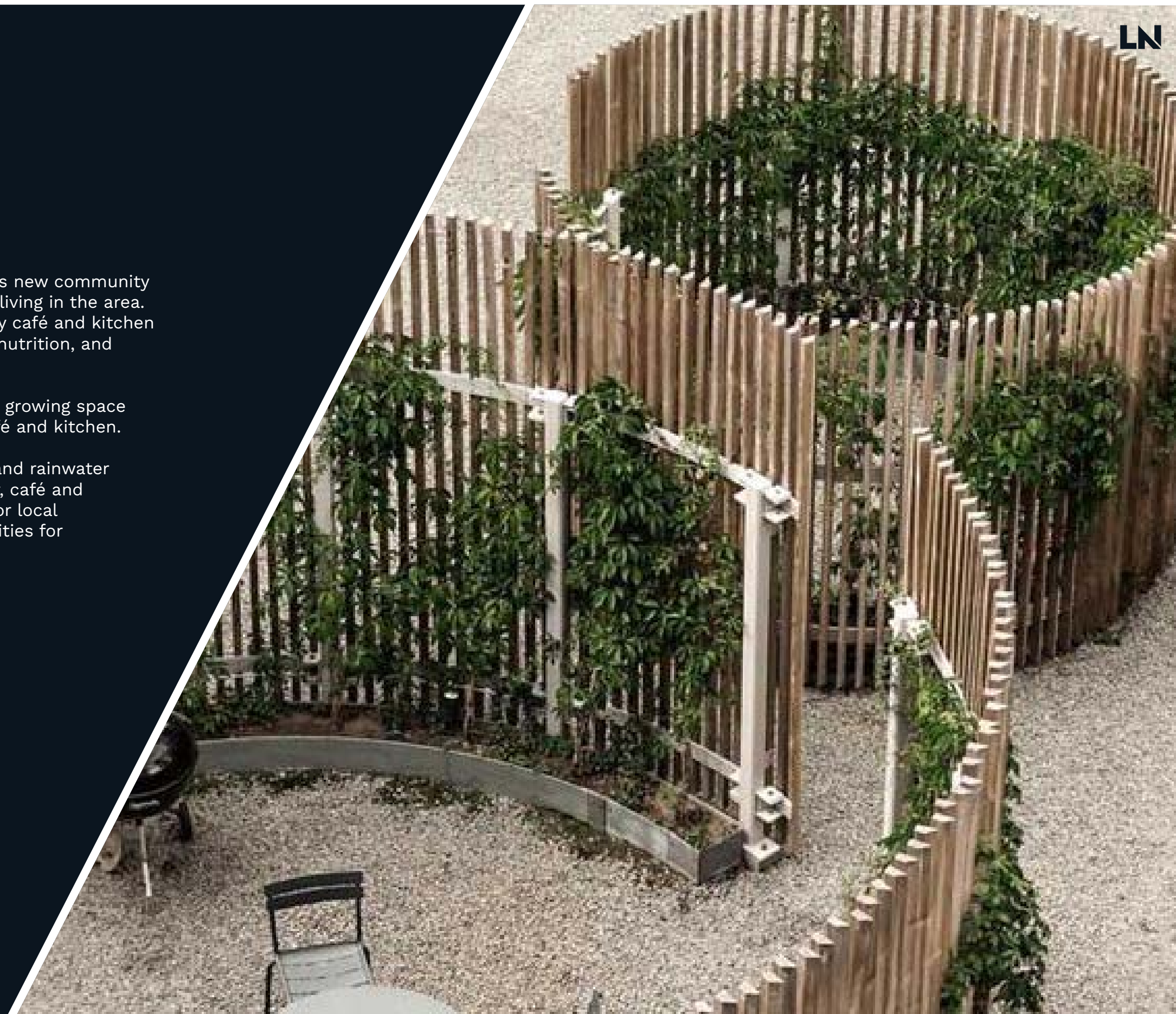


# PRECEDENTS 01: GROWING

Growing 21 currently run a community Pantry on Gartloch Rd. This new community membership shop provides high quality, low cost food to people living in the area. Growing 21 have now been awarded funding to open a community café and kitchen that will be used to deliver cookery classes, training in food and nutrition, and community meals.

A key element of Greening and Growing is to create a community growing space and allotments to provide fresh, local produce for the pantry, café and kitchen.

The growing space will include raised beds, polytunnel, orchard and rainwater collection. As well as growing fresh produce for use in the pantry, café and kitchen the growing space will provide a range of opportunities for local people to get involved in gardening / food growing, and opportunities for training and learning.







**GROWING  
INSPIRATION**

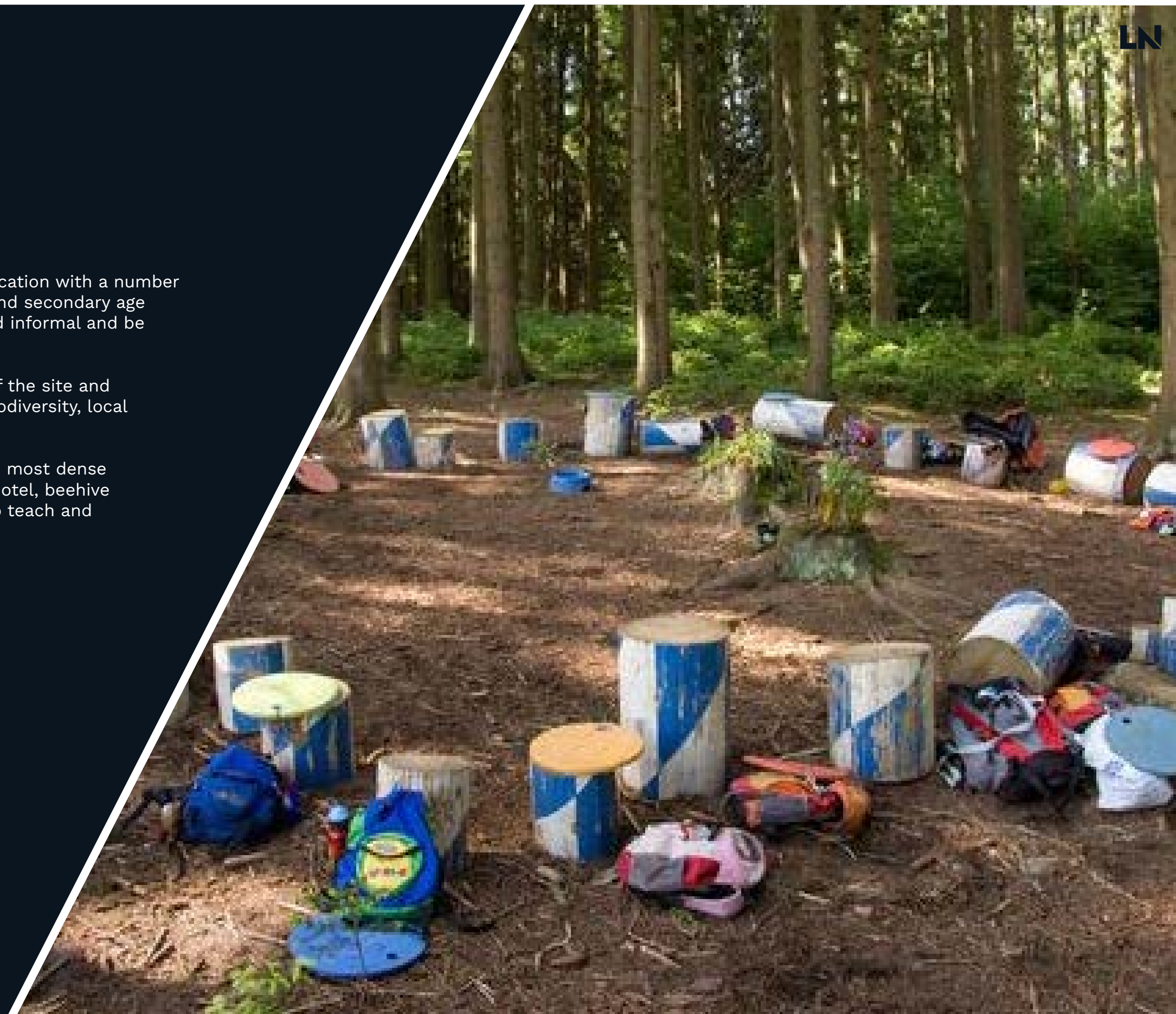


# PRECEDENTS 02: EDUCATION

Throughout the space consideration will be given to outdoor education with a number of spaces created to offer new experiences to nursery, primary and secondary age schoolchildren. These educational spaces will be both formal and informal and be set within the different landscapes found within the site.

The educational spaces will be split across the different zones of the site and result in young people learning about wildlife, flora and fauna, biodiversity, local history, geology and a host of other themes.

A formal outdoor classroom pavilion will be developed within the most dense area of trees which will look out over the rest of the site. A bug hotel, beehive and other forms of citizen science will ensure the land is used to teach and educate young people in unique and innovative ways.







**EDUCATION  
INSPIRATION**



# PRECEDENTS 03: PLAY

The project will create areas for both formal and informal play. Two multi-use games areas will be found within the development and offer opportunities to both young and old people to undertake formal/informal play.

An innovative approach to outdoor, nature-based play will involve a partnership with Baltic Street Adventure Playground to develop an adventure play area that focuses on encouraging children to explore ideas, try new things and use the natural environment for play.

The adventure play space will be designed and developed over the full 18 months of the project, with children actively involved in its design and development to ensure a fully child-led approach. Two accessible outdoor learning areas will be developed to support learning activities for both school groups and out-of-school providers.







**PLAY  
INSPIRATION**



# PRECEDENTS 04: COMMUNITY

New entrances into the site will be created, linked to a network of paths. Entrances will be co-designed with local people, and will include welcome / orientation signage and artworks inspired by local heritage. The access network will create new walking connections from housing areas to the shops and community facilities on Gartloch Rd, as well as new links to the existing active travel route on the site. An outdoor community space with seating, lighting and power will be created to enable the site to be used for a range of events and activities throughout the year.

The new greenspace will be part of a wider Greater Easterhouse green network, creating a new high quality, accessible community greenspace as a central feature of Ruchazie. The approach to transforming the area will include a range of community engagement and learning activities to help develop skills and employability, community cohesion and engender a sense of local pride.

The project also links to the Seven Lochs Project, and large scale greenspace regeneration initiative that will establish the Seven Lochs Wetland Park as a new heritage and nature park of national significance, linked to a wider network of green spaces that link the park to surrounding communities.







**COMMUNITY  
INSPIRATION**





# PRECEDENTS 05: NATURE

As noted above, signage and interpretation will be placed at the entrances and used as directional and spaces to welcome people to the site. Further to this, interpretation panels, wayfinding panels and signage embedded into the ground will help form a series of different routes such as a heritage walk to learn about the local community and wildlife walk to educate about the biodiverse landscape.

Interpretation will be a combination of natural and colourful to reflect the overall brand, identity and vision of 'Growing and Greening Ruchazie', tying in with the existing moodboard for the site. These interpretation panels/signage/wayfinding will take into consideration work which has already been undertaken around biodiversity as well as focus on the climate emergency and how the land can respond to and address this global challenge at a local level.

The Seven Lochs Project carried out a water vole survey of the site and surrounding area in 2021. This identified some areas of unmanaged grassland at the site as strongholds for the unique population of grassland water voles that is found in N.E. Glasgow. This population is recognised by Nature Scot as being of national significance, and it is extremely unusual to find a thriving population of this threatened and legally protected species in such an urban area.

The site also includes areas of mature trees and new, naturally regenerating woodland. Greening and Growing project will bring grassland areas for water vole into conservation management, and enhance these habitats to benefit a wider range of species. Mature trees will be surveyed and assessed, and tree management works carried out to ensure their long term health. Areas of new woodland will be brought into management, with thinning, tree management and planting to improve their diversity and nature conservation value.







**NATURE  
INSPIRATION**



# PRECEDENTS 06: POCKETS OF COLOUR

As has been noted, pockets of colour will surprise, delight and engage people as they walk around the 'Growing and Greening Ruchazie' space. These will range from the interpretation panels and posters to advertise local events/etc through to more permanent features such as colourful and vibrant play areas and spaces.

Inspiration has been taken from international projects which have achieved this with huge success through to more local projects such as Glasgow-based social enterprise Colour Ways.

Young people from the local community will be involved and engaged with this process as it develops over the course of the project timeline.







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**POCKETS OF COLOUR  
INSPIRATION**



**LATERAL  
NORTH**