

# PERTH AND KINROSS COUNCIL

## Lifelong Learning Committee

31 January 2022

### SCHOOL ESTATE TRANSFORMATION PROGRAMME CLEISH PRIMARY SCHOOL

Report by Executive Director (Education and Children's Services)

(Report No. 22/22)

#### PURPOSE OF REPORT

This report provides an update on the position of Cleish Primary School as part of the School Estate Transformation Programme.

This report seeks approval for the Executive Director (Education and Children's Services) to reduce the capacity of the school from 64 pupils to 50 pupils to facilitate improvements to the suitability of the school in the short term. The report notes the intention to explore in more detail, the preferred option (Option 5) of a major refurbishment of the school in the medium term.

#### 1. BACKGROUND/MAIN ISSUES

- 1.1 The Learning Estate is a significant and valuable asset to the communities of Perth and Kinross. Perth and Kinross Council (PKC) has invested £81m since 2015/2016, and between 2021 and 2029, the Council will invest a further £160m in the Learning Estate.
- 1.2 The Learning Estate Strategy ([Report No. 21/202 refers](#)) sets out the Council's aspirations for our schools, and in particular, the high value we place on learning, through our vision for well designed, maintained and managed schools.
- 1.3 It is important, in light of the significant investment and costs associated with the Learning Estate, that it is managed in an efficient and effective manner, and that the priorities which are addressed meet the wider strategic objectives of the Council and the needs of our communities.
- 1.4 There are significant challenges for managing the Learning Estate over the coming years. These include changing demographics, including population growth and movement, housebuilding in certain locations, ongoing deterioration in building infrastructure, pressure on planned maintenance budgets, increasing revenue costs and net zero climate targets.
- 1.5 The Council's Transformation Strategy 2015-2020 'Building Ambition' and Organisational Development Framework were approved by the Council on 1 July 2015 ([Report No. 15/292 refers](#)). Together, they detail how PKC will deliver transformation over the next five years.

Accompanying the strategy is a programme of major reviews which are considered to be key drivers and enablers of transformation across the organisation. The School Estate Transformation Programme is one such review.

- 1.6 On 24 August 2016, Lifelong Learning Committee ([Report No. 16/347 refers](#)) approved principles to be used as a basis for the transformation review, 'Securing the Future of the School Estate'.

The principles approved by Lifelong Learning Committee, as a basis for the transformation review, were as follows:

- Schools should have an occupancy rate where possible greater than 60% of the capacity and ideally should be operating at over 80%;
- Every school should be rated as A or B, ie at least satisfactory for condition and suitability; and
- Life expired buildings<sup>1</sup> within the school estate should be prioritised for replacement.

- 1.7 On 2 November 2016, Lifelong Learning Committee ([Report No. 16/485 refers](#)) approved the development of a number of options appraisals, to consider in detail, schools which were identified as requiring further consideration.
- 1.8 Cleish Primary School was included in the School Estate Transformation Programme due to the condition and suitability rating of the school. The overall condition of the building was rated "C" (Poor – showing major defects and/or not operating adequately). The overall suitability of the building was rated "C" (Poor – showing major problems and/or not operating optimally). There were life expired buildings on the school site.
- 1.9 A high level feasibility study was undertaken on the school which informed options for improving the suitability and condition of the school building.
- 1.10 On 27 March 2019, Lifelong Learning Committee ([Report No. 19/94 refers](#)) noted that a more detailed analysis of the feasibility was required. This report provides an update on progress to date.

## **2. CLEISH PRIMARY SCHOOL**

- 2.1 The capacity of Cleish Primary School is 64. The school roll as at November 2016 was 52, which is an occupancy rate of 81%. The school roll, detailed in Table 1 below, is currently 42<sup>2</sup>, which is an occupancy rate of 66%.
- 2.2 Table 1 below, details the current and projected school roll. The school roll is projected to decline to 38, which is an occupancy rate of 59%, by 2025/26.

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<sup>1</sup> Life expired buildings are defined as buildings which are uneconomic to maintain.

<sup>2</sup> As at 3 December 2021.

## Cleish Primary School – Current and Projected School Roll

	2021/22	2022/23	2023/24	2024/25	2025/26
<b>Pupils in School</b>	42	40	34	36	38
<b>Capacity</b>	64	64	64	64	64
<b>Occupancy</b>	63%	59%	50%	55%	59%

Table 1: Cleish Primary School – Projected School Roll

2.3 Future projections are developed through a combination of data on children aged under five living in the catchment area; provided by the NHS; and past trends which have impacted the school roll. Rolls at Cleish Primary School are impacted by:

- Pupils from the Cleish Primary School catchment area attending other PKC primary schools through placing requests;
- Pupils from the Cleish Primary School catchment area attending non-PKC schools; and
- Pupils from outwith the Cleish Primary School catchment area attending Cleish Primary School through a successful placing request.

2.4 The projections in Table 1 reflect a reduction in the number of under-fives living in the area in recent years. Table 2 below shows the NHS data for expected P1 intakes from 2012/13 to 2020/21 as well as the actual P1 intakes.

	2012/13	2013/14	2014/15	2015/16	2016/17	2017/18	2018/19	2019/20	2020/21
<b>Expected P1 intake</b>	15	14	11	13	10	6	5	9	7
<b>Actual P1 intake</b>	8	9	5	7	6	3	3	8	2

Table 2: Cleish Primary School P1 intake 2012 to 2020

2.5 The P1 intake can also include placing requests, however pupils can join and leave the school throughout the school year if there is capacity. There are currently 8 children in the school who live outwith the catchment area, from a roll of 42. Placing requests for Cleish Primary School from 2012 to 2020 are as follows:

	2012/13	2013/14	2014/15	2015/16	2016/17	2017/18	2018/19	2019/20	2020/21
<b>Placing requests</b>	4	5	2	2	1	8	3	2	4

Table 3: Placing requests Cleish Primary School 2012 to 2020

2.6 Cleish Primary School is currently classified as an ‘accessible rural’ school in terms of the Scottish Government’s Urban Rural Classification.

2.7 There is minimal development for the Cleish area contained within the Housing Land Audit<sup>3</sup> (HLA) 2020 and Local Development Plan (LDP2). Therefore, it is unlikely that the school roll will increase because of planned housebuilding.

<sup>3</sup> The Housing Land Audit is compiled by PKC Planning on an annual basis. It estimates build out rates for sites over 5 houses across Perth and Kinross.

## 2.8 Cleish Primary School – Existing Accommodation

The accommodation at Cleish Primary School consists of a main school building and two adjacent mobile buildings. The main school building is a C listed building with Historic Environment Scotland.

### Main School Building

- Two teaching spaces (25 pupils and 14 pupils);
- Office accommodation;
- Staff toilets; and
- Storage space.

A floor plan of the main school building is provided as Appendix 1. The smaller of the teaching spaces, which can accommodate up to 14 pupils, was not originally used as a teaching space. It is understood that it began to be used, initially on a temporary basis around 2002 to accommodate the school roll.

### Classroom Block

- One teaching space (25 pupils);
- Storage space; and
- Pupil toilets.

This building is classed as life expired<sup>1</sup>.

### Dining Block

- Dining Area; and
- Kitchen (servery kitchen – not a production kitchen as meals are delivered from Milnathort Primary School).

This building is classed as life expired<sup>1</sup>.

- 2.9 The condition rating for the school primarily relates to the classroom and dining blocks being life expired but upgrades are also required to electrics, heating and windows. In terms of suitability, access to office spaces is through classrooms and there are no pupil toilets in the original school building.

## 3. PROGRESS AND OPTIONS

- 3.1 An initial feasibility study was commissioned to examine whether the condition and suitability rating of the school could be improved. The school roll has decreased in recent years, and it was proposed that for the feasibility study that the capacity of the school could be reduced to 50 pupils, with a minimum of two classroom spaces.

- 3.2 In addition to two classrooms, the brief for the feasibility included:
- The provision for sufficient staff and pupil toilets being accessible from within each building;
  - General purpose space;
  - Office accommodation; and
  - Dining, including servery kitchen and external play space. PE was to continue to be accommodated in the village hall, hence supporting its sustainability.
- 3.3 The feasibility study was also to indicate whether the school could remain operational during any proposed works or whether pupils would need to be decanted.

### **Initial Feasibility**

- 3.4 Options considered as part of this feasibility study included:

#### **Option 1 – Extension for 50 pupils**

- a) Build an extension on to the existing accommodation for the new servery and dining, classrooms and ancillary accommodation and use the existing building for administration.
- b) Alternatively, build an extension on to the existing accommodation for administration, classrooms and ancillary accommodation and use the existing building for servery and dining.

#### **Option 2 – Extension for 75 pupils**

This option considered similar outcomes as detailed in Option 1, however, three classrooms and a capacity of 75 pupils was considered.

#### **Option 3 – Temporary accommodation**

This option explored the possibility of replacing life expired accommodation with new temporary accommodation.

- 3.5 The conclusion of the feasibility study was as follows:

Due to the shape and challenges of the existing site (Appendix 2), it was not possible to create an extension to the original building and therefore the school would need to continue to operate out of two buildings on the existing site.

Therefore Options 1 and 2 were ruled out. The feasibility also noted that regardless of the option chosen, access for contractors during any period of refurbishment would likely be challenging and issues in respect of buildability could be encountered. Due to this, the costs of the project were highly uncertain.

Any new temporary building would need to be replaced sooner than a conventional building and would not provide the same energy efficiency standards. For this reason, Option 3 would not be best value.

#### **Option 4 – Alternative site**

- 3.6 In considering how the access issues could be addressed, a number of potential sites within Cleish were identified. The location, access and potential buildability of each site was considered at a high level with one site being preferred.
- 3.7 The Local Development Plan for Cleish states: “Cleish is designated as a Conservation Area and is unique in Kinross-shire by merit of spatial arrangement of the dwellings and its open spaces. A tight settlement boundary has been drawn and open spaces identified to limit any significant future growth to protect the historic environment.”

Further growth within the village is not encouraged, and the settlement boundary has been drawn to reflect this position. The conservation area boundary has been drawn to include the fields surrounding the village to effectively create a “buffer zone” to protect its historic character and setting (Appendix 3).

- 3.8 Discussions have taken place with Planning Officers to determine whether planning permission could be gained for a new build school at the preferred location. It was determined that the sites highlighted in the study, and any new school, would have to be justifiable on the basis of operational and locational need. In addition, it would need to be demonstrated that all alternative options to a new build school on a new site have been explored fully and the reasons that they have been discounted presented.

#### **Option 5 – Two buildings on the current site for 50 pupils**

- 3.9 In consideration of the previous options, a further feasibility option was developed. This option is to replace the life expired mobile buildings with a new permanent standalone building and also to reuse as much as possible of the existing accommodation to provide enhanced school facilities within the existing school site boundary.
- 3.10 The outcome of the feasibility study concluded the following accommodation could be provided in a new building which will replace the life expired buildings:
- Classroom provision for 50 pupils;
  - Toilet facilities for staff and pupils with accessible toilet and personal care provision;
  - General purpose space; and
  - Resource store.
- 3.11 The original school building would accommodate dining and a servery kitchen and other ancillary accommodation, including office accommodation and a staff room.

The building would be totally refurbished as part of the project. The renovation of the original school building will be subject to restrictions due to its listed status and position within a conservation area.

- 3.12 The reorganisation of facilities between both buildings will provide a more suitable environment including improved room adjacencies, with spaces used for administration, accessed independently from teaching spaces.
- 3.13 Access routes are restricted by the external walls of the existing listed building located to the front of the site and the existing stone boundary wall to the west. This means that no large vehicles will be able to access the rear of the site to carry out demolitions and follow-on construction works. Access routes are also required for maintenance and emergency vehicle access. The feasibility puts forward options for addressing this.
- 3.14 Decant accommodation would be required during any period of construction under this proposal. The most likely solution would be for pupils to be accommodated at a neighbouring school.
- 3.15 An initial cost for Option 5 has been estimated at approximately £3 million. This cost will increase as key elements, including the alternative access to the school site and any decant requirements, are not included. It is likely that any decant would involve transport to a neighbouring school. Additional transport costs are likely to be between £13,000 and £23,000 per annum depending on the cost of the contract.

#### 4. SUMMARY/PROPOSALS

- 4.1 Several options have been considered to improve the condition and suitability of Cleish Primary School. These options are summarised in Table 4 below as follows:

Option	Description	Outcome	Conclusion
<b>Option 1</b>	Extension for 50 pupils	Due to the shape and challenges of the existing site, it was not possible to create an extension to the original building.	Not feasible.
<b>Option 2</b>	Extension for 75 pupils	Due to the shape and challenges of the existing site, it was not possible to create an extension to the original building.	Not feasible.
<b>Option 3</b>	Temporary accommodation	Temporary accommodation would need to be replaced sooner than a conventional building and would not have the same energy efficiency.	Not best value and may not meet energy standards.

<b>Option 4</b>	Alternative sites	The preferred site is outwith the boundary of the village and as such all other options to improve the school would have to be ruled out to achieve planning permission.	Would not achieve planning permission at this point.
<b>Option 5</b>	Two buildings on the current site for 50 pupils	The feasibility for this option meets the brief and deals with the site challenges. Further detailed design work is required before costs and a final proposal is confirmed.	Recommended option.

Table 4: Cleish Primary School – Summary of Options

- 4.2 The feasibility study for Option 5 has identified solutions which will improve the suitability and condition of the school, including the replacement of life expired buildings, which will allow the school buildings to operate efficiently and independently of each other in the long-term.
- 4.3 The feasibility study has delivered a scope of works which requires further design development including identifying solutions to key issues such as improving access to the site in order for works to take place.
- 4.4 There are a number of capital projects already underway and planned within the Learning Estate. It is therefore likely, that a project to take forward Option 5, would be four to five years away from beginning on site.
- 4.5 The existing listed building maintenance cost for the next five years has been estimated at £200,000. This cost is to maintain the building condition for its current use and further works will be required as part of the delivery of Option 5. Maintenance works would also be required for the two life expired buildings. These works will consider the timing of the replacement building project.
- 4.6 The lower pupil numbers, and the possibility of maintaining a maximum of two classes, would allow the school to operate slightly differently. A small project to create pupil toilets, breakout space and provide alternative visitor access, would improve the suitability of the school for staff and pupils.
- 4.7 Section 2.2 in this report indicates that the school roll is projected to remain below 50 pupils based on current information regarding under-five's living in the catchment area and considering historic trends for placing requests both in and out of the school. Information on historic pupil rolls show that the school roll has exceeded 50 pupils in the past, however, this is because of placing requests being granted into the school.
- 4.8 The Council's School Admission Policy sets out the arrangements for the placing of catchment pupils and handling of placing requests. Children normally resident within the catchment area of Cleish Primary School have priority over all other children. This proposed reduction in the school capacity would not impact catchment children, and based on current projections, there may continue to be sufficient capacity for placing requests to also attend the school.



- 4.9 The reduction in school capacity will also support the sustainability of the school, through increasing occupancy. This will mean that although the school roll is decreasing, the use of the small classroom to improve the suitability will result in the school operating at above 60%, in line with the principles of the transformation review, as detailed in Table 5 below.

	<b>2021/22</b>	<b>2022/23</b>	<b>2023/24</b>	<b>2024/25</b>	<b>2025/26</b>
<b>Pupils in School</b>	42	40	34	36	38
<b>Capacity</b>	50	50	50	50	50
<b>Occupancy</b>	84%	80%	68%	72%	76%

Table 5: Cleish Primary School occupancy based on capacity of 50 pupils

- 4.10 It is proposed therefore, that the capacity of the school is reduced from 64 pupils to 50 pupils and that work takes place to improve the condition and suitability of the building in the short-term. This will allow the school to operate more effectively while the larger refurbishment programme detailed in Option 5 is developed further.

## **5. CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS**

- 5.1 A range of options have been considered to improve the condition and suitability of Cleish Primary School. The feasibility study for Option 5, carried out in 2021, has identified at a high level, an option that would improve the suitability and condition of the school and replace life expired buildings in the medium to long term.
- 5.2 The project is complex and more design development will be required to establish what can be delivered and at what cost.
- 5.3 There are several capital projects in the Learning Estate which are already underway or planned. It is therefore likely that the project detailed in Option 5, is at least four years away from beginning on site, assuming the detailed design is feasible, and all approvals are granted.
- 5.4 There are a number of works, detailed in paragraph 4.6, that could be undertaken to improve the condition of the building and to improve suitability/operation of the school in the short to medium term. There will still be a requirement to replace the life expired units through a major refurbishment project in the medium term.
- 5.5 Pupil numbers are decreasing and a reduction in the capacity of the school from 64 pupils to 50 pupils will facilitate short-term improvements being able to be undertaken and increase the occupancy rate of the school.
- 5.6 It is recommended that the Committee:
- (i) Notes the proposal to improve the suitability and condition of Cleish Primary School in the short, medium and long-term;
  - (ii) Notes the complexities associated with the refurbishment project detailed under Option 5 and the uncertainties over cost;

- (iii) Notes that more detailed design work on the most recent feasibility, as described under Option 5, will be taken forward;
- (iv) Notes the proposal at 4.6 in the report to undertake works to improve the condition and suitability of the building allowing the school to operate more effectively while detailed design work takes place; and
- (v) Approves that the capacity of Cleish Primary School is reduced from 64 pupils to 50 pupils.

#### Author

Name	Designation	Contact Details
Carol Taylor	Service Manager (Resource Management)	<a href="mailto:ECSCcommittee@pkc.gov.uk">ECSCcommittee@pkc.gov.uk</a>  01738 475000

#### Approved

Name	Designation	Date
Sheena Devlin	<b>Executive Director (Education and Children's Services)</b>	<b>19 January 2022</b>

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## 1. IMPLICATIONS, ASSESSMENTS, CONSULTATION AND COMMUNICATION

<b>Strategic Implications</b>	<b>Yes / None</b>
Community Plan/Single Outcome Agreement	<b>Yes</b>
Corporate Plan	<b>Yes</b>
<b>Resource Implications</b>	
Financial	<b>Yes</b>
Workforce	<b>Yes</b>
Asset Management (land, property, IST)	<b>Yes</b>
<b>Assessments</b>	
Equality Impact Assessment	<b>No</b>
Strategic Environmental Assessment	<b>No</b>
Sustainability (community, economic, environmental)	<b>No</b>
Legal and Governance	<b>No</b>
Risk	<b>No</b>
<b>Consultation</b>	
Internal	<b>Yes</b>
External	<b>Yes</b>
<b>Communication</b>	
Communications Plan	<b>Yes</b>

### 1. Strategic Implications

#### Community Plan/Single Outcome Agreement

1.1 This section should set out how the proposals relate to the delivery of the Perth and Kinross Community Plan/Single Outcome Agreement in terms of the following priorities:

- (i) Giving every child the best start in life;
- (ii) Developing educated, responsible and informed citizens;
- (iii) Promoting a prosperous, inclusive and sustainable economy;
- (iv) Supporting people to lead independent, healthy and active lives; and
- (v) Creating a safe and sustainable place for future generations

This report relates to all of these objectives.

#### Corporate Plan

1.2 This section sets out how the proposals relate to the achievement of the Council's Corporate Plan Objectives.

- (i) Giving every child the best start in life;
- (ii) Developing educated, responsible and informed citizens;
- (iii) Promoting a prosperous, inclusive and sustainable economy;
- (iv) Supporting people to lead independent, healthy and active lives; and
- (v) Creating a safe and sustainable place for future generations.

This report relates to all of these objectives.

1.3 The report also links to the Education & Children's Services Vision, Values and Priorities in respect of the following key Priority area:

- Learning and Achievement.

## 2. Resource Implications

### Financial

2.1 There are financial implications associated with the short to medium term project detailed in paragraph 4.6 of the main report, however the costs of this proposed project are not available as yet. Other financial implications are noted in the main body of the report.

### Workforce

2.2 There are no workforce implications other than those noted in the main body of the report.

### Asset Management (land, property, IT)

2.3 There are no asset management implications other than those noted in the main body of the report.

## 3. Assessments

### Equality Impact Assessment

3.1 Under the Equality Act 2010, the Council is required to eliminate discrimination, advance equality of opportunity, and foster good relations between equality groups. Carrying out Equality Impact Assessments for plans and policies allows the Council to demonstrate that it is meeting these duties.

This proposal has been considered under the Corporate Equalities Impact Assessment process (EqIA) with the following outcome:

- (i) Assessed as **relevant** and an EQIA will be considered as part of the design development project.

### Strategic Environmental Assessment

3.2 The Environmental Assessment (Scotland) Act 2005 places a duty on the Council to identify and assess the environmental consequences of its proposals.

3.2.1 However, no action is required as the Act does not apply to the matters presented in this report. This is because the Committee are requested to note the contents of the report only and the Committee are not being requested to approve, adopt, or agree to an action or to set the framework for future decisions.

### Sustainability

3.3 N/A.

Legal and Governance

3.4 N/A.

3.5 N/A.

Risk

3.6 N/A.

**4. Consultation**

Internal

4.1 The Head of Finance, the Head of Legal and Governance and the Head of Property Services have been consulted in the preparation of this report.

External

4.2 External consultation has not taken place in the preparation of this report.

**5. Communication**

5.1 Meetings have taken place with the school and the Parent Council regarding progress.

**2. BACKGROUND PAPERS**

2.1 No background papers, as defined by Section 50D of the Local Government (Scotland) Act 1973 (other than any containing confidential or exempt information) were relied on to any material extent in preparing the above report.

**3. APPENDICES**

3.1 Appendix 1 - Cleish Primary School – Main Building Layout  
Appendix 2 - Cleish Primary School Site  
Appendix 3 - Cleish Settlement and Conservation Area Boundary