

## **CATCHMENT FOR NEW PRIMARY SCHOOL AT BERTHA PARK AND FUTURE OF RUTHVENFIELD PRIMARY SCHOOL OPTIONS APPRAISAL**

### **1. Introduction**

The Council's Corporate Plan identifies the vision of 'a confident and ambitious Perth and Kinross with a strong identity and clear outcomes that everyone works together to achieve. Our area will be vibrant and successful; a safe secure and healthy environment: and a place where people and communities are nurtured and supported'.

This strategic approach embraces the vision for our area, our communities and our people as outlined in the Corporate Plan. Our key service priorities support the delivery of our commitments in the Community Planning Partnership's Single Outcome Agreement and Corporate Plan, helping Education and Children's Services to focus on the local outcomes that will achieve meaningful improvements for the area, our local communities and our citizens.

Councils, as Education Authorities, have a statutory duty in terms of the [Education \(Scotland\) Act 1980](#) to make adequate and efficient provision of school education across their entire area for the current school population and future pattern of demand.

Councils also have a statutory responsibility in terms of the [Local Government in Scotland Act 2003](#) to achieve best value.

The Learning Estate is a significant and valuable asset to the communities of Perth and Kinross. The Council approved its updated 9-year capital programme in September 2020. The programme will deliver £160m of further improvements to the Learning Estate between 2021 and 2029.

As part of this investment, the Council has delivered replacement schools for Alyth Primary School, Kinross Primary School, Oakbank Primary School and Tulloch Primary School. At the same time, upgrade and extension projects were completed at several schools including Longforgan and Pitcairn Primary Schools. Upgrade projects are ongoing at Perth Academy, Perth Grammar School and Pitlochry High School, along with a replacement Perth High School.

In addition, a new secondary school, Bertha Park High School, was completed and opened to pupils in August 2019.

The School Estate Strategy ([Report No. 12/370 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. The School Estate Management Plan details how we plan to deliver the strategy.

It is important, in light of the significant investment and cost 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.

## 2. Background

On 22 June 2016, the Council allocated funding of £14.35m for a new primary school within the Composite Capital Programme ([Report No. 16/277 refers](#)). This new primary school is to be built to accommodate pupil numbers from housebuilding within the strategic sites at the north and north west of Perth as it was previously anticipated that the catchment schools for these strategic sites would not be able to accommodate the projected pupil numbers.

A chronology of decisions leading to this report, including reports and options appraisals presented to Lifelong Learning Committee in relation to Ruthvenfield Primary School, The School Estate Transformation Programme and the new school at Bertha Park are as follows:

- August 2016 - 'Securing the Future of the School Estate' ([Report No. 16/347 refers](#));
- November 2016 - "Securing the Future of the School Estate – Next Steps" ([Report 16/485 refers](#));
- March 2019 – "School Estate Transformation Programme" ([Report No.19/94 refers](#)).
- September 2019 - "School Estate Transformation Programme Strategic Sites North West/North Perth" ([Report No. 19/240 refers](#))

On 22 January 2020, Lifelong Learning Committee approved the following ([Report No. 20/18 refers](#)):

- The proposal to build a new primary school to provide capacity for pupils from the strategic sites being progressed to the north/north west of Perth;
- Bertha Park as the preferred location for a new primary school;
- Agrees that options appraisals, which includes informal consultation, are undertaken in relation to both the catchment for a new school and the future of Ruthvenfield Primary School; and
- Agrees that the establishment of a new primary school at Bertha Park, should not necessarily be predicated on the closure of any neighbouring rural schools and options that keep these schools open are considered as part of the options appraisals.

## 3. Legislation

The [Schools \(Consultation\) \(Scotland\) Act 2010](#) provides a strong, accountable statutory consultation process that local authorities must apply to their handling of all proposals of major changes to schools. These consultation processes are expected to be robust, open, transparent and fair, and seen to be so.

They are also expected to be consistent across Scotland. Education authorities must have special regard to a number of factors before formulating a proposal to close a rural school and in consulting on and reaching a decision as to whether to implement a rural school closure proposal. These factors are:

- Effect on the Community;
- Effect on Travel Arrangements; and
- Educational Benefits.

The duties are outlined in the [Schools \(Consultation\) \(Scotland\) Act 2010](#) and the Accompanying [Statutory Guidance](#).

In order to ensure a robust approach to each Options Appraisal carried out under the School Estate Review for any relevant proposal affecting a rural school, the factors that require to be considered as part of a rural school closure will be adopted in all cases as these are considered to be relevant to most proposals affecting a rural school, not just a closure.

[The Education \(Scotland\) Act 2016](#) amends the Standards in Scotland's Schools Act 2000 by adding in new duties to address inequality of outcome. These duties apply in different ways to both Scottish Ministers and Education Authorities.

Where the Education Authority is making or implementing strategic decisions about school education, it is required to have due regard to the need to carry out its functions in a way which is designed to reduce inequalities of outcome. This is particularly directed in the Act towards pupils who experience those inequalities through socio-economic disadvantage, but there is also a power to extend the range of pupils who are covered by this duty.

In addition, the [Community Empowerment \(Scotland\) Act 2015](#) sets out a new right for community organisations to request the transfer of local assets into local community ownership/management. Public bodies, including Councils, must consider such requests and respond within a reasonable timescale to them.

#### **4. Options Appraisal**

This options appraisal considers the rural factors detailed in Section 3 above and the outcome of the informal pre-Consultation in relation to both the catchment area for the new school and the future of Ruthvenfield Primary School.

#### **5. Housebuilding**

There is a 30-year masterplan for housebuilding at Almond Valley, Bertha Park and Perth West. It is anticipated that approximately 2300 houses will be built by 2032 based on the current Housing Land Audit (HLA). This is estimated to generate approximately 620 primary school pupils who will need to be accommodated in schools near to where they live. In addition, there is approximately 150 houses proposed at a site named H319, which is adjacent to Ruthvenfield Primary School. The sites are shown on a map in Appendix 1. These sites are at different stages of development.

Bertha Park and the former Auction Mart site in Perth West are the most advanced with development underway. Table 1 below details the current number of properties built and occupied at each site.<sup>1</sup>

	<b>Auld Mart</b>	<b>Bertha Park</b>
Houses (Occupied)	98	244

Table 1 – Properties built and occupied.

Almond Valley is an allocated site with development for up to 1280 houses secured with ‘in principle’ planning permission which means that the development will not begin until certain matters have been approved. There are currently two detailed applications seeking approval – one for a primary road access and the other for the first 340 houses and a local centre. It is hoped they will be presented to Development Management Committee in the coming months, and if supported, decision issued by Autumn 2021, with development anticipated to commence in 2022.

Based on the current Housing Land Audit (HLA)<sup>2</sup>, Table 2 below details the number of houses that are proposed to be built in the next 6 years across these sites:

	<b>2021/22</b>	<b>2022/23</b>	<b>2023/24</b>	<b>2024/25</b>	<b>2025/26</b>	<b>2026/27</b>
<b>Auld Mart</b>	40	40	40	40	40	20
<b>Bertha Park</b>	75	100	100	100	100	100
<b>Almond Valley</b>	5	25	50	60	60	60
<b>H319</b>	0	0	5	15	25	25
<b>Total</b>	120	165	195	215	225	205

Table 2 – Planned housebuilding.

Existing catchment schools will not be able to accommodate projected pupil numbers from housebuilding without changes being made to their catchment areas.

## 6. Primary Schools

Information relating to Ruthvenfield Primary School, Pitcairn Primary School, Luncarty Primary School and Tulloch Primary School are detailed in Appendix 2.

The Scottish Government’s Rural School List 2017 classifies all of these schools, other than Tulloch Primary School, as “accessible rural” schools under Section 14 of the Schools (Consultation) (Scotland) Act 2010. The classification is based on two main criteria, settlement size and accessibility based on drive time.

<sup>1</sup> As at August 2021.

<sup>2</sup> Published December 2020.

The classification criteria are “areas with a population of less than 3,000 people and within a 30-minute drive time of a settlement of 10,000 or more” (Source: Scottish Government Rural School List 2017). These factors are taken into account within the options appraisal.

The classification for all rural primary schools is being reviewed by the Scottish Government.

## 7. Catchment Areas

Due to proposed housebuilding, Ruthvenfield Primary School and Pitcairn Primary School will not be able to accommodate all catchment pupils in future years within their existing capacities without changes being made to their catchment areas.

The Council are building a new primary school which will comprise 14<sup>3</sup> teaching classrooms and a nursery on a site next to Bertha Park High School to accommodate pupils from the house building. A school of this size is needed to accommodate pupil numbers generated from all the new housebuilding in the area as detailed in section 5. All schools have catchment areas and therefore a catchment area must be created for the new school.

In reviewing catchment areas, it is important that the catchment areas are formed that consider the long-term housebuilding plan for the area. The basis for development/review of a primary school catchment area is that pupils should be able attend a primary school that is close to where they live and if possible, within a safe walking distance. It is also important that consideration is given to the number of houses in an area and future housebuilding so that schools have sufficient capacity to accommodate all children living in the catchment area.

It should be noted that sites have been identified in Almond Valley and Perth West as locations for future primary schools. Whether these schools are required and developed in future years will be determined by the build out of housing and the number of pupils generated from this housing. Any new school will require its own catchment area and therefore a catchment review and Statutory Consultation will be required prior to any new school being built.

The planned housebuilding is split between school catchment areas as detailed in Table 3 below:

<b>School Catchment Area</b>	<b>Housebuilding Site</b>
Ruthvenfield Primary School	Bertha Park, Almond Valley, part of Perth West and H319
Pitcairn Primary School	Bertha Park and Almond Valley
Luncarty Primary School	Bertha Park

Table 3 – Housebuilding and Primary School Catchment Areas.

The new school is planned to open in August 2026 and a new catchment area will need to be formed.

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<sup>3</sup> A 14-classroom school would have a capacity of 434 pupils.

The future of Ruthvenfield Primary School has been included in the options appraisal for development of a catchment area for a new primary school at Bertha Park for the following reasons:

- The current catchment area for Ruthvenfield Primary School sits within the major housebuilding development of Almond Valley;
- A part of the Perth West development (the Auld Mart) currently forms part of Ruthvenfield Primary School catchment area;
- A new housing development site named H319 in the Local Development Plan also forms part of Ruthvenfield Primary School catchment area and is in close proximity to Ruthvenfield Primary School;
- Ruthvenfield Primary School does not have capacity to accommodate pupils from Almond Valley, Perth West and H319; and
- Ruthvenfield Primary School is currently rated condition 'C' and therefore improvement works are required.

One of the principles, agreed by Lifelong Learning Committee, underpinning any recommendation of this options appraisal, is that the establishment of a new primary school at Bertha Park should not necessarily be predicated on the closure of any neighbouring rural schools and options that keep these schools open are considered as part of the options appraisal. The options that were considered and consulted on are as follows:

#### **Option A**

A new primary school will be built on a site adjacent to Bertha Park High School and a catchment area created for the new school. Ruthvenfield Primary School will continue to operate from its existing building with new catchment area created and the condition improved.

#### **Option B**

A new primary school will be built on a site adjacent to Bertha Park High School. This school will replace Ruthvenfield Primary School and pupils attending Ruthvenfield Primary School will be educated in the new building when it opens. The capacity of the new school will be larger as it will also accommodate pupils from a wider catchment area including a large part of the major housebuilding sites in the area. The current Ruthvenfield Primary School building would close.

It is likely that the new catchment areas would not come into effect until August 2023 at the earliest as a statutory consultation exercise will need to be undertaken on any proposal to establish or change a catchment area. The new school at Bertha Park is unlikely to be operational until August 2026.

If the catchment areas changed before the new school is operational then transition arrangements will be required, regardless of which option was to progress. These arrangements would form part of the statutory consultation which would require to be undertaken on any proposal to change a catchment area.

Any children already attending primary school would not automatically be required to move school if the catchment area for their address changed unless parents wish for their child to move school. Table 10 in Appendix 4 summarises the proposed catchment areas.

## **7.1 Option A**

This option would see a new catchment area formed for the new primary school at Bertha Park. The map contained within Appendix 5 details the proposed catchment areas for the new primary school at Bertha Park, Ruthvenfield Primary School, Pitcairn Primary School, Luncarty Primary School and Tulloch Primary School if this option were to progress.

The proposed catchment areas would provide accommodation at the new primary school for the majority of pupils coming from housebuilding at Bertha Park, Almond Valley and part of Perth West. The development of the Almond Valley site includes the areas surrounding Huntingtowerfield and the Auld Mart and therefore it is proposed that children from these areas would also attend the new primary school.

Pupils living in the existing Luncarty Primary School catchment area within Bertha Park would attend the new primary school and then Bertha Park High School for secondary education. Households in this area will live closer to the new primary school than Luncarty Primary School, so including them in the new school catchment is likely to reduce travel distance and time for pupils. The development of safe walking routes may also allow pupils in this area to safely walk to the new primary school.

The catchment area for Ruthvenfield Primary School would be adjusted to reflect longer term housebuilding plans as well as taking into account houses in close proximity to the school which do not currently form part of the catchment area.

Ruthvenfield Primary School would retain the same capacity and number of classes. Pupils generated from housebuilding at site H319 would attend the school due to its close proximity to the school.

Pupils living in the existing Tulloch Primary School catchment area at Ruthvenfield Road, The Orchard and Ruthvenfield View would move into the Ruthvenfield Primary School catchment area as households in this area are situated directly opposite the school.

Children living within the Double Dykes area would attend the new primary school at Bertha Park and Bertha Park High School for secondary education. Pupils living in this area live closer to the new school site than they do to their current catchment school.

All pupils attending Ruthvenfield Primary School and/or the new primary school will attend Bertha Park High School for secondary education which is a change for some pupils.

## **7.2 Option B**

This option would see a new catchment area formed for the new primary school at Bertha Park. The map contained within Appendix 5 details the proposed catchment areas for the new primary school at Bertha Park, Pitcairn Primary School, Luncarty Primary School and Tulloch Primary School if this option were to progress.

The current Ruthvenfield Primary School building would close, and its catchment area would form part of the new primary school catchment.

The proposed catchment areas would provide accommodation at the new primary school for all pupils from housebuilding at Bertha Park, Almond Valley, part of Perth West, site H319 and Double Dykes. Pupils from these areas would attend Bertha Park High School for secondary education.

Pupils living in the existing Tulloch Primary School catchment area at Ruthvenfield Road, The Orchard and Ruthvenfield View would attend the new primary school.

Any children already attending primary school will not have to move schools unless parents/carers wish for their children to move schools. Pupils at Ruthvenfield Primary School will have to move to the new school as the current school building would close when the new school opens.

The catchment areas for Pitcairn Primary School and Luncarty Primary School will be adjusted to ensure those schools can accommodate catchment pupils.

## **8. Pre-Consultation**

The Council has undertaken an informal pre-consultation exercise to establish the views of the following groups on the options:

- Parents/carers of all children living within the Ruthvenfield Primary School catchment area;
- Parents/carers of those pupils attending Ruthvenfield Primary School as placing requests;
- The wider community living in the Ruthvenfield Primary School catchment area; and
- Parents/carers of all children living in the Tulloch Primary School and Luncarty Primary School catchment areas who would be impacted by the new catchments proposed in the options.

As part of the pre-consultation exercise, Methven and District Community Council (M&DCC) were also consulted. The pre-consultation information can be found in the following link <https://www.pkc.gov.uk/berthaparkstrategicsites>.

### **8.1 Contacting Parents/Carers and the Wider Community**

As a result of the ongoing issues related to the COVID-19 pandemic, the informal pre-consultation exercise was carried out online. Parents/Carers and the wider community had the opportunity to speak to Council Officers if required.



To ensure parents/carers and the wider community were fully informed of how they may be affected by the proposals, specific information was provided on the reasons for the pre-consultation, impact of proposals and timescales involved for each of the school communities affected.

This information was available on the Council website throughout the pre-consultation period (<https://www.pkc.gov.uk/berthaparkstrategicsites>).

Families living in the Double Dykes area were consulted through Housing Services and The Minority Ethnic Carers of People Project (MECOPP).

Ruthvenfield Primary School staff were also consulted on the proposals and asked for their feedback on both options.

## 8.2 Letters

As the Council only holds contact information for parents/carers of children currently attending our schools, letters were issued to every household in the areas detailed in Table 4. This was to ensure that anyone who lived in these areas was aware that the Council was undertaking a pre-consultation exercise and had the opportunity to respond.

The number of letters issued within the catchment areas are detailed in Table 4 below:

<b>Catchment Area</b>	<b>Letters Issued</b>
Ruthvenfield Primary School	337
Luncarty Primary School	9
Tulloch Primary School <sup>4</sup>	50
Placing requests to Ruthvenfield Primary School	27
<b>Total</b>	<b>423</b>

Table 4 – Letters issued.

It should be noted that letters were only issued to those living in the postcode areas that would be affected by the catchment change within the existing Luncarty Primary School and Tulloch Primary School catchment areas.

## 8.3 Pitcairn Primary School

A letter was issued to parents/carers of children currently attending the school living in the Bertha Park area of the catchment only. The letter advised that their views on any proposed catchment change would be sought as part of any statutory consultation process. The letter also confirmed that the catchment school would be the new primary school at Bertha Park.

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<sup>4</sup> Ruthvenfield Road, The Orchard, Ruthvenfield View and Double Dykes Areas Only.

## **8.4 Questionnaire**

All parents/carers and the wider community involved in the pre-consultation were asked to complete a questionnaire.

Individuals were asked different questions depending on the catchment area in which they resided.

Depending on where individuals lived, information was presented relevant to that area and the impact proposals would have. A sample of the specific questions individual groups were asked is as follows:

- Parents/carers of all children living within the Ruthvenfield Primary School catchment area were asked which option they preferred and, if they lived in the community their views on the impact on the community for each option;
- Parents/carers of those pupils attending Ruthvenfield Primary School as placing requests, and the wider community in Ruthvenfield Primary School catchment area, were asked their views on the impact on community for each option;
- Parents/carers of all children living in the Luncarty Primary School catchment areas who would be impacted by the new catchments proposed in the options were asked if they wished to remain in Luncarty Primary School catchment area or attend the new primary school at Bertha Park;
- Parents/carers of children living in the Tulloch Primary School catchment areas who would be impacted by the new catchments proposed in the options were asked if they wished to remain within the Tulloch Primary School catchment area or attend the new primary school at Bertha Park, or attend Ruthvenfield Primary School in its current location; and
- Parents/carers of all children living in Double Dykes in the Tulloch Primary School catchment areas were asked if they wished to remain within the Tulloch Primary School catchment area or attend the new primary school at Bertha Park.

## **8.5 Pre-Consultation – Summary of Responses**

There were 423 letters issued as part of the pre-consultation exercise. There were 34 responses from the Ruthvenfield Primary School catchment area and 6 from the Tulloch Primary School catchment area. This is a response rate of 9%. 45% of Ruthvenfield Primary School parents/carers responded.

The majority of responses received from respondents associated with Ruthvenfield Primary School catchment area, during the pre-consultation exercise, favoured Option A. See Table 5 below.

<b>Respondents (Ruthvenfield Primary School (RPS) Catchment Area)</b>	<b>Total responses</b>	<b>Children</b>	<b>In favour of Option A</b>	<b>In favour of Option B</b>
Parents/Carers of pupils living in the RPS catchment area	9	14	8	1
Parents/Carers of pupils attending RPS on placing requests	12	13	11	1
Parents/carers of under-fives living in the RPS catchment area	7	9	5	2
Wider Community	6	N/A	5	1
<b>Total</b>	<b>34</b>	<b>36</b>	<b>29</b>	<b>5</b>

Table 5 – Summary of Ruthvenfield Primary School catchment area responses.

There were 6 responses from parents/carers of children living in two distinct parts of the Tulloch Primary School catchment area.

- One group of parents/carers, living near Ruthvenfield Primary School, were asked whether they would prefer for their children to attend Tulloch Primary School, Ruthvenfield Primary School, or a new school at Bertha Park. There were two responses, both indicating that they would wish for their children to continue to attend Ruthvenfield Primary School.
- Parents/carers from Double Dykes were asked if they would prefer for their children to attend Tulloch Primary School or a new primary school at Bertha Park. There were 4 responses from parents/carers of children living in the Double Dykes area. These responses indicated that all existing primary school age children would continue to attend their current primary schools but there was a preference from parents/carers of children under the age of five for attending the new school.

There were no responses from parents/carers of children living in the Bertha Park area of the Luncarty Primary School catchment area. However, according to information known to the Council, there are no children under five living in this area currently.

The outcome of the informal pre-consultation exercise is detailed further in Appendix 6.

## **9. Analysis of Options**

As part of the options appraisal, the “rural school factors” specified in the School Consultation (Scotland) Act 2010 have been given special regard.

These are:

- Effect on Community;
- Effect on Travel Arrangements; and
- Educational Benefit.

## **10. Option A**

**A new primary school will be built on a site adjacent to Bertha Park High School and a catchment area created for the new school. Ruthvenfield Primary School will continue to operate from its existing building with new catchment area created and the condition improved.**

This option is about creating a catchment area for both the new school and Ruthvenfield Primary School. The condition of Ruthvenfield Primary School also needs to be improved in this option.

This option will create a catchment area for Ruthvenfield Primary School which will include pupils living in the existing Tulloch Primary School catchment area at Ruthvenfield Road, The Orchard and Ruthvenfield View. This is due to the proximity of these addresses to Ruthvenfield Primary School. The catchment area will also include pupils generated from housebuilding at site H319 which is situated in close proximity to Ruthvenfield Primary School.

The proposed catchment area for the new primary school will provide accommodation for the majority of pupils from housebuilding at Bertha Park, Almond Valley<sup>5</sup> and part of Perth West.

The development of the Almond Valley and Perth West site includes the areas surrounding Huntingtowerfield and the Auld Mart and therefore it is proposed that children from all of these areas would attend the new primary school.

Pupils living in the existing Luncarty Primary School catchment area within Bertha Park and pupils in the Double Dykes area would attend the new primary school.

Households in these areas live closer to the new primary school than they currently do to Luncarty Primary School and Tulloch Primary School.

### **10.1 Parent/Carer Feedback**

The majority of responses received from respondents associated with Ruthvenfield Primary School catchment area, during the pre-consultation exercise, favoured Option A. See Table 6 below.

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<sup>5</sup> It is proposed that a small area of Almond Valley will remain in Pitcairn Primary School catchment area.

<b>Respondents (Ruthvenfield Primary School (RPS) Catchment Area)</b>	<b>Total responses</b>	<b>In favour of Option A</b>
Parents/Carers of pupils living in the RPS catchment area	9	8
Parents/Carers of pupils attending RPS on placing requests	12	11
Parents/carers of under-fives living in the RPS catchment area	7	5
Wider community	6	5
<b>Total</b>	<b>34</b>	<b>29</b>

Table 6 – Responses received associated with Ruthvenfield Primary School.

There were 6 responses from parents/carers of children living in the Tulloch Primary School catchment areas that may be affected. Two responses were received from parents/carers of children living in Ruthvenfield Road, The Orchard and Ruthvenfield View area. Both responses indicated a preference for this option.

There were 4 responses from parents/carers of children living in the Double Dykes area. These responses indicated that all existing primary school age children would continue to attend their current primary schools but all children under the age of five would attend the new school.

No parents/carers of children living in the Bertha Park area of the Luncarty Primary School catchment area responded, however, according to information known to the Council, there are no children under five living in this area.

All comments received during the pre-consultation exercise are including in Appendix 7. Some of these comments include the following:

- *“Smaller class sizes – better education, greater teaching and pupil support”*
- *“Keep Ruthvenfield catchment as it is for the local children”*
- *“Make the updates to the school building”*

## **10.2 Community Feedback**

Methven and District Community Council gathered feedback from parents/carers and the wider community as part of the pre-consultation exercise.

Feedback was provided directly to M&DCC rather than through the online questionnaire therefore the Council are unaware of the exact number of responses they received; however, it is likely to be more community members than responded to the questionnaire.

The feedback M&DCC gathered included the following:

- *“the consensus of opinion is no doubt that Ruthvenfield Primary School should remain open”*
- *“Ruthvenfield School is at the Heart of the Community”*

All comments received during the pre-consultation exercise are included in Appendix 7. Some of these comments include the following:

- *“School is in heart of the community. This would be lost at Bertha Park. Ruthvenfield Primary should be upgraded and kept as the village school it is”*
- *“I believe the school serves the needs of the community and primarily the children more beneficially than if it were to be replaced by a larger school with a larger catchment and higher intake of children. The school is effectively at the heart of the community and it would be a travesty to see PKC rip that away”*

### **10.3 Pupil Impact/Pupil Roll**

This option will create a catchment area for Ruthvenfield Primary School which will include pupils living in the existing Tulloch Primary School catchment area at Ruthvenfield Road, The Orchard and Ruthvenfield View.

Pupils from the existing houses at Huntingtowerfield and Auld Mart site will attend the new school following the catchment review rather than Ruthvenfield Primary School. This change considers the longer-term housebuilding plans.

The projected school roll for the revised catchment area alongside proposed future housebuilding, allows the existing Ruthvenfield Primary School capacity of 91 to be retained.

As detailed in Appendix 3, this option would see the condition rating of the school improved with works carried out in future years.

The new school will deliver education in purpose-built accommodation which has the ability to deliver the curriculum using latest technology. Experience in previous new school buildings has demonstrated that a new and flexible learning environment has inspired and motivated pupils and has a positive impact on the general health and wellbeing of learners.

### **10.4 Community Impact**

There were 6 responses from the wider community to the online questionnaire from households in the Ruthvenfield Primary School catchment area. From those responses received, 5 were in favour of Option A.

The feedback from these households is that the school plays an important part within the community.

From the information detailed in Appendix 3, it has not been possible to evidence that there is significant interaction between the school and the wider community, however the school is the only ‘public’ building in the catchment area. This may change in the future as part of the Almond Valley development with potential retail/commercial units being considered.

This information details that the school is not let out by the Council for community use. The school has confirmed that, due to the size of the hall, community events tend to take place at other venues including Pitcairn Church.

The last school event attended by the community was approximately three years ago to celebrate the schools 150<sup>th</sup> anniversary and this was held in the Huntingtower Hotel.

Fair City Football Club uses the football pitch situated on the school playing field on a regular basis. This area is also used by the local community for recreational use.

The new school could provide space which would support this new community by offering accommodation which is different to Bertha Park High School and may be more attractive for younger children and their families.

## 10.5 Transport Arrangements

It is likely that the majority of pupils living in the new Ruthvenfield Primary School catchment area will live within the statutory walking distance from their catchment school. This includes the children living in the Ruthvenfield Road, The Orchard and Ruthvenfield View areas as they will live directly adjacent to their new catchment school. Any primary school child living more than the statutory walking distance from their catchment school and/or on the grounds of safety where there is no safe walking route to school would be entitled to free home to school transport.

## 10.6 Financial Impact

### Revenue Costs

The financial implications of retaining Ruthvenfield Primary School would be a continuation of the current annual revenue costs of approximately £400,000 per annum. An annual revenue cost of approximately £1.150m will be required to operate the new school at Bertha Park and will become an expenditure pressure for the Council.

The annual operating cost for the new school is based on the new school operating with 7 classes. The annual operating cost for Ruthvenfield Primary School is based on the school operating with 4 classes. These figures are based on pupil numbers in 2026/27. Costs for the new school will increase as pupil numbers increase.

The revenue implications of this option are detailed in Table 7 below and reflect recurring costs per annum:

<b>Item</b>	<b>Annual Revenue</b>
Operate Ruthvenfield Primary School	£400,000
Operate New Primary School	£1,150,000
<b>Total</b>	<b>£1,550,000</b>

Table 7 – Option A - Revenue Costs.

### Capital Costs

Feasibility studies are required to be carried out to establish a programme of works and cost certainty to improve the condition rating of Ruthvenfield Primary School and works required in future years to ensure the school continues to operate effectively.

A capital cost of approximately £275,000 will be required, as a minimum, to improve the condition rating of the school building within the next 5 years. These capital costs will be applicable for both options as the new school will not be built until 2026. This cost is associated with the works required which are detailed in Appendix 3.

If this option was to progress, additional funding will be required beyond 5 years to ensure Ruthvenfield Primary School operates effectively and the condition rating is maintained. Climate change improvements will also be required. Feasibility studies will be required to determine the level of work required and associated costs at the appropriate time, however, previous estimated for this work from Property Services are Services are £2,000,000. This funding will also be required to be identified in setting the future Capital budget for the Council.

The budget for the new school is £14.35m.

The capital costs required for this option are summarised in Table 8 below:

<b>Item</b>	<b>Capital</b>
Capital Budget for new school	£14,350,000
Improve the condition rating of Ruthvenfield Primary School 2022/25	£275,000 <sup>6</sup>
Replace life expired buildings at Ruthvenfield Primary School post 2026 & further maintenance upgrades	£2,000,000 <sup>7</sup>
<b>Total Capital Cost</b>	<b>£16,625,000</b>

Table 8 – Option A – Capital Costs.

## **10.7 Assessment of Option A**

This option is about creating a catchment area for the new school and revising the catchment area for Ruthvenfield Primary School. The condition of Ruthvenfield Primary School also needs to be improved as the existing building will be retained.

The creation of new catchment areas and the provision of a new school will provide certainty for parents/carers and pupils that they can attend a school which is near the community in which they live. This includes pupils at Ruthvenfield Road, The Orchard, Ruthvenfield View and housebuilding at site H319 which is adjacent to the school. The catchment area of Pitcairn Primary School will be adjusted to ensure that it can continue to accommodate catchment pupils without breaching capacity.

85% of all parents/carers that responded to the questionnaire were in favour of Option A. 43% of those parents/carers are not resident in the Ruthvenfield Primary School catchment area, ie their children attend Ruthvenfield Primary School as placing requests.

The condition of Ruthvenfield Primary School, which is currently rated as ‘C’ will be improved. This will be over a period of time, with maintenance works taking place in the next five years and replacement of life expired buildings following this.

<sup>6</sup> It should be noted that this is the minimum cost. A feasibility study is required to establish any future works required.

<sup>7</sup> This is based on a feasibility study. The feasibility and costs will have to be revised to take into account climate change requirements and any maintenance required beyond 2025.



It has not been possible to evidence that there is significant interaction between the school and the wider community, however, the school is the only 'public' building in the catchment. This may change in the future as part of the Almond Valley development with potential retail/commercial units being considered.

The majority of pupils from housebuilding at Bertha Park, Almond Valley and part of Perth West will attend the new primary school.

The new school would provide children with purpose-built accommodation to deliver the curriculum. The building will also provide a focal point for families of primary school children. The wider community, including those with families, will be able to utilise facilities within the new primary school outwith school hours.

Once the new catchment areas are created, an exercise will need to be undertaken to establish those pupils that will require to be transported to school, however, it is anticipated that many pupils, who currently must be transported to school, will be able to walk to school.

The total revenue cost for this option is £1,550,000. This option will cost approximately £265,000 more in annual revenue costs than Option B.

The capital budget for the new school is £14,350,000, this together with further condition related capital works for Ruthvenfield Primary School gives a total capital cost of £16,625,000. The capital cost based on current information is £2,000,000 greater than Option B.

## **11. Option B**

**A new primary school will be built on a site adjacent to Bertha Park High School. This school will replace Ruthvenfield Primary School and pupils attending Ruthvenfield Primary School will be educated in the new building when it opens. The capacity of the new school will be larger as it will also accommodate pupils from a wider catchment area including a large part of the major housebuilding sites in the area. The current Ruthvenfield Primary School building would close.**

This option will create a catchment area for the new school which will include the existing Ruthvenfield Primary School catchment area. All pupils attending Ruthvenfield Primary School would move to the new school when it opens.

The proposed catchment areas for the new school would provide accommodation for all pupils from housebuilding at Bertha Park, Almond Valley<sup>8</sup>, part of Perth West, site H319 and Double Dykes.

Pupils living in the existing Tulloch Primary School catchment area at Ruthvenfield Road, The Orchard and Ruthvenfield View would attend the new school.

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<sup>8</sup> Ruthvenfield Primary School catchment only.

## 11.1 Parent/Carer Feedback

The responses received from respondents associated with Ruthvenfield Primary School catchment area in relation to Option B during the pre-consultation exercise, is detailed below in Table 9 below. 45% of Ruthvenfield parents/carers responded to the survey. This option is not supported by the majority of parents/carers from Ruthvenfield Primary School that responded to consultation.

<b>Respondents (Ruthvenfield Primary School (RPS) Catchment Area)</b>	<b>Total responses</b>	<b>In favour of Option B</b>
Parents/Carers of pupils living in the RPS catchment area	9	1
Parents/Carers of pupils attending RPS on placing requests	12	1
Parents/carers of under-fives living in the RPS catchment area	7	2
Wider community	6	1
<b>Total</b>	<b>34</b>	<b>5</b>

Table 9 - Summary of Ruthvenfield Primary School catchment area.

Of the 34 responses received from parents/carers to the online questionnaire, 4 were in favour of Option B.

Of the 4 responses that were received in favour of Option B, 3 were for children living in the existing Ruthvenfield Primary School catchment area.

All comments received during the pre-consultation exercise are including in Appendix 7. Some of these comments include the following:

- *“May make the transition easier to secondary school”*
- *“Benefit to wraparound care and after school clubs”*

## 11.2 Community Feedback

One response, out of a total of six responses from the wider community living in the Ruthvenfield Primary School catchment area, was in favour of this option. All comments received during the pre-consultation exercise are including in Appendix 7.

## 11.3 Pupil Impact/Pupil Roll

The new school is likely to be operational in August 2026. The Ruthvenfield Primary School building would close, and all pupils would move to the new school when it opens.

The creation of the new catchment areas and the provision of a new school will provide certainty for parents/carers and children that they can attend their catchment school.

The new school will deliver education in purpose-built modern accommodation which has the ability to deliver the curriculum using latest technology.

The new school would offer families additional facilities such as nursery accommodation. The transition for nursery children to primary school will be improved as there will be familiarity with surroundings and existing friendships and relationships will be able to continue.

#### **11.4 Community Impact**

The new school could provide a focal point for parents/carers of nursery and primary age children, the majority of whom are in new housing, to integrate and socialise with each other and with existing communities including those who live in the current Ruthvenfield Primary School catchment.

The new school could provide space which would support this new community by offering accommodation which is different to Bertha Park High School and may be more appropriate for younger children and their families. The new school building would offer accommodation for activities and events for group which may not have been able to operate previously due to a lack of numbers, interest and/or suitable space within existing facilities.

#### **11.5 Transport Arrangements**

The creation of new catchment areas and provision of a new school considers current and future transport arrangements.

Pupils living in the Bertha Park and Double Dykes areas will live close to their new catchment school and will have the opportunity to walk to school rather than be transported to Pitcairn Primary School, Luncarty Primary School or Tulloch Primary School.

Pupils living in the Ruthvenfield Primary School catchment area are likely to require transport to school, at least in the short term, until safer routes to school are developed as part of the wider housebuilding development.

Once the new school is operational any primary school child living more than the statutory walking distance from their catchment school and/or on the grounds of safety would be entitled to free home to school transport.

#### **11.6 Financial Impact**

##### **Revenue Costs**

There would be an annual recurring revenue saving of approximately £400,000 if Ruthvenfield Primary School was to close. An annual revenue cost of approximately £1,285,000 will be required to operate the new school at Bertha Park, from 2026/27 at the earliest, based on operating with 9 classes.

The revenue implications of this option are summarised in Table 10 below and reflect recurring costs per annum.

<b>Funding</b>	<b>Revenue</b>
Annual Operating Costs – New School from 2026/27	£1,285,000
Annual Operating Costs – Ruthvenfield Primary School	£0
<b>Total</b>	<b>£1,285,000</b>

Table 10 - Option B Revenue Costs 2026/27.

## Capital Costs

As with Option A, the budget for the new school is £14.35m. Although the school is being funded initially through the Council's Capital Programme, agreements are in place with housebuilders to recoup the cost of the school through developer contributions

The capital cost of £275,000 to improve the condition rating of Ruthvenfield Primary School will be required within the next 5 years to improve the condition rating of the school building at Ruthvenfield Primary School. These capital costs will be applicable for both options as the new school will not be built until 2026. There will be no requirement for funding to replace the life expired buildings at Ruthvenfield Primary School.

Table 11 below details the capital costs associated with Option B:

<b>Item</b>	<b>Option B Indicative Capital Cost</b>
Capital Budget for a new school	£14,350,000
Improve the condition rating of Ruthvenfield Primary School – 2022/2025	£275,000 <sup>9</sup>
Replace life expired buildings at Ruthvenfield Primary School post 2026 & further maintenance upgrades	N/A
<b>Total Capital Cost</b>	<b>£14,625,000</b>

Table 11 – Capital Costs Option B.

### 11.7 Assessment of Option B

This option would create a catchment area for the new school which will include the existing Ruthvenfield Primary School catchment area. All pupils attending Ruthvenfield Primary School would move to the new school when it opens.

This option creates a catchment for the new primary school for children from new housebuilding, children from areas near the new school and from Ruthvenfield Primary School catchment area. As in Option A, it will provide certainty for parents/carers and children that they can attend their catchment school and that some children are more likely to be able to walk to school.

The catchment area of Pitcairn Primary School will be adjusted to ensure that it can continue to accommodate catchment pupils without breaching capacity. Luncarty Primary School catchment area and Tulloch Primary School catchment areas will also be adjusted with pupils from a small number of houses attending the new school

<sup>9</sup> Note this figure is at current prices.

Pupils attending the new school will be educated in purpose built modern accommodation. This will bring together the majority of pupils from new housebuilding at Bertha Park, Almond Valley, part of Perth West and site H319 as well as those from the Ruthvenfield Primary School catchment area.

The new school will provide the opportunity for the majority of pupils living in areas of new housebuilding to walk to school rather than be transported to a number of different schools, which is current practice. The new school would offer families additional facilities such as nursery accommodation. The transition for nursery children to primary school will be improved as there will be familiarity with surroundings and existing friendships and relationships will be able to continue.

New communities would have the opportunity to integrate with existing communities. They will benefit from the use of the new school building which will offer accommodation for activities and events for groups and clubs which may not have been able to operate previously due to a lack of numbers, interest and/or suitable space.

A single new school will create an opportunity for new communities and existing communities to come together through shared experiences and a shared facility.

The capital budget for the new school is £14,350,000, this together with further condition related capital works for Ruthvenfield Primary School gives a total capital cost of £14,625,000.

The total revenue cost for this option is £1,285,000 to operate the new school from 2026/27. This option would save the Council approximately £265,000 per annum in comparison with Option A. The capital cost based on current information and considering developer contributions is approximately £2,000,000 less than Option A.

## **12. Parent/Carers Alternative Suggestions**

As part of the pre-consultation exercise, parents/carers were invited to comment or to suggest any alternative options that the Council may not have considered.

The following alternative suggestions were put forward:

- a) A parent/carer suggested the Council consider expanding the Ruthvenfield Primary School catchment area to include parts of Hillyland/Lower Western Edge where the time taken to travel to and from Ruthvenfield Primary School by foot compared to the current catchment school of Letham Primary School is negligible.

The areas of the school catchments involved in this option are heavily populated and if they were to form part of the Ruthvenfield Primary School catchment the existing school capacity would be breached. This suggestion is therefore not feasible.

- b) Three responses received from Parent/carers living in the Tulloch Primary School catchment area indicated a concern with the reduced size of the catchment area for Ruthvenfield Primary School, as detailed in Option A, and suggested the catchment area be expanded.

Although the new Ruthvenfield Primary School catchment area, as detailed in option A, is reducing in size the number of houses in the catchment is similar to the current catchment:

- 141 houses at the Auld Mart site and a further 89 houses in the rest of the existing catchment area will move to the catchment area for the new school because of the catchment change.
- 153 new houses from site H319 and 40 houses currently within the Tulloch Primary School catchment area that will be included in the revised Ruthvenfield Primary School catchment.

Projections indicate that 4 classes will be required within Ruthvenfield Primary School to accommodate the revised catchment area therefore this suggestion will not be progressed.

### 13. Temporary Accommodation

Projected school rolls indicate that it is likely that temporary additional accommodation may be required to accommodate pupils from housebuilding from academic session 2023/24.

If the catchment areas changed before the new school is operational then transition arrangements will be required regardless of which option was to progress.

Additional temporary accommodation and transition arrangements, if required, would be further explored as part of any statutory consultation exercise.

### 14. Options – Summary

Table 12 below summarises the impact for each option detailed in Sections 10 and 11.

Option A	Option B
<p><b>Pupil/Travel Impact</b></p> <p>The creation of new catchment areas and the provision of a new school will provide certainty for parents/carers and pupils that they can attend a school which is near the community in which they live and considers current and future transport arrangements.</p>	<p><b>Pupil Impact/Travel Impact</b></p> <p>This option creates a catchment for the new primary school for children from new housebuilding, children from areas near the new school and from Ruthvenfield Primary School catchment area. As in Option A, it will provide certainty for parents/carers and children that they can attend their catchment school. Some</p>

<p>The change to the catchment area will allow pupils who live closest to Ruthvenfield Primary School to attend a school close by to where they live. This option is the preferred option of 85% of parents/carers who responded to the consultation.</p> <p>Pupils at Ruthvenfield Primary School will benefit from improvements to the school over a period of time. Pupils at the new school will benefit from a modern learning environment. Experience in previous new school buildings has demonstrated that a new and flexible learning environment has inspired and motivated pupils and has a positive impact on the general health and wellbeing of learners.</p>	<p>children are more likely to be able to walk to school.</p> <p>Pupils at the new school, including those from the previous Ruthvenfield Primary School catchment area, will benefit from a modern learning environment. Experience in previous new school buildings has demonstrated that a new and flexible learning environment has inspired and motivated pupils and has a positive impact on the general health and wellbeing of learners.</p> <p>This option is not supported by the majority of parents/carers from Ruthvenfield Primary School that responded to consultation.</p>
<p><b>Community Impact</b></p> <p>There was a limited response, from the wider community in the Ruthvenfield Primary School catchment area, to the consultation, however, those who responded were in favour of Ruthvenfield Primary School continuing to operate in its current location. It has not been possible to evidence that there is significant interaction between the school and the wider community, however, the school is the only 'public' building in the catchment area.</p> <p>This may change in the future as part of the Almond Valley development with potential retail/commercial units being considered.</p>	<p><b>Community Impact</b></p> <p>A single new school will create an opportunity for new communities and existing communities to come together through shared experiences and a shared facility.</p> <p>This option is not supported by the wider community from Ruthvenfield Primary School catchment area who responded to the consultation.</p>
<p><b>Financial Impact</b></p> <p>This option will cost approximately £265,000 more in annual revenue costs than Option B.</p> <p>The capital cost based on current information is approximately £2,000,000 greater than Option B.</p>	<p><b>Financial Impact</b></p> <p>This option would save the Council approximately £265,000 per annum in comparison with Option A.</p> <p>The capital cost, based on current information, is approximately £2,000,000 less in total than Option A.</p>

Table 12 – Summary of Options.

## 15. The Masterplan

There is a 30-year masterplan for housebuilding at Almond Valley, Bertha Park and Perth West. It is necessary at this time to build a new primary school, so that there is certainty for parents/carers and pupils, from new house building and houses nearby, that they can attend a school which is near the community in which they live.

It is also necessary that a catchment is determined in the next year for the new primary school so that the design and build project can be completed by August 2026 in order to accommodate pupils from the housebuilding. This necessitates a review of neighbouring catchment areas, to create the most appropriate catchments for both the new primary school and existing schools in the vicinity.

As detailed in Section 7 above, it is anticipated that further schools may be required to accommodate pupils in the medium to long term. The timing will be determined by the buoyancy of the housing market and the pupils generated by this housing. A further catchment review will be required to create a catchment for any new school at the pertinent time.

There is also an expectation that as the new housebuilding proceeds, the travel infrastructure including the core path network will be developed as per the masterplan. Facilities for health, retail, leisure and employment are also planned in the area. This will change the makeup and dynamic of communities in these areas

In considering all of the above, it is proposed that a statutory consultation progresses based on Option A at this time. This would allow housebuilding to progress and for a better understanding of future requirements in relation to the school estate. It would also allow officers to take into account wider changes within these communities as they develop.

On this basis, it is proposed that the statutory consultation progresses based on Option A at this time.

## 16. Recommendation

In conclusion, it is proposed to recommend **Option A** – A new primary school will be built on a site adjacent to Bertha Park High School and a catchment area created for the new school. Ruthvenfield Primary School will continue to operate from its existing building with new catchment area created and the condition improved.

This recommendation has been made on the basis that while a catchment area is needed for the new school in the immediate future it would be prudent to have a better understanding of the delivery of the housing masterplan and the dynamics of the communities, as local services and travel/transport options develop, before making further changes to the school estate.



## **17. Educational Benefits**

The following educational benefits relate to the recommended Option A.

### **Learning and Teaching**

- The new primary school will provide an opportunity for the curriculum to be designed for and with learners, parents and the community which is relevant and takes into account the context of the community.
- The new primary school will have an early year's provision which will support learning across early level of curriculum for excellence and provide opportunities for effective transition for those entering primary 1.
- Staff in the new primary school will have access to a range of peers to work with collaboratively and support their continuous professional learning including development of effective approaches to learning, teaching and assessment.
- Learning and teaching approaches within the new school will include the use of modern, digital approaches to enhance learning experiences.
- Pupils within the new school will have opportunities to access a wide range of extra-curricular activities and clubs within their community.
- Pupils in Ruthvenfield Primary School will continue to experience a curriculum which is designed for learners to achieve across all curricular areas and develop skills, attributes and capabilities through learning aligned to the principles of Curriculum for Excellence. They will continue to experience learning which focusses on raising attainment and achievement for all.

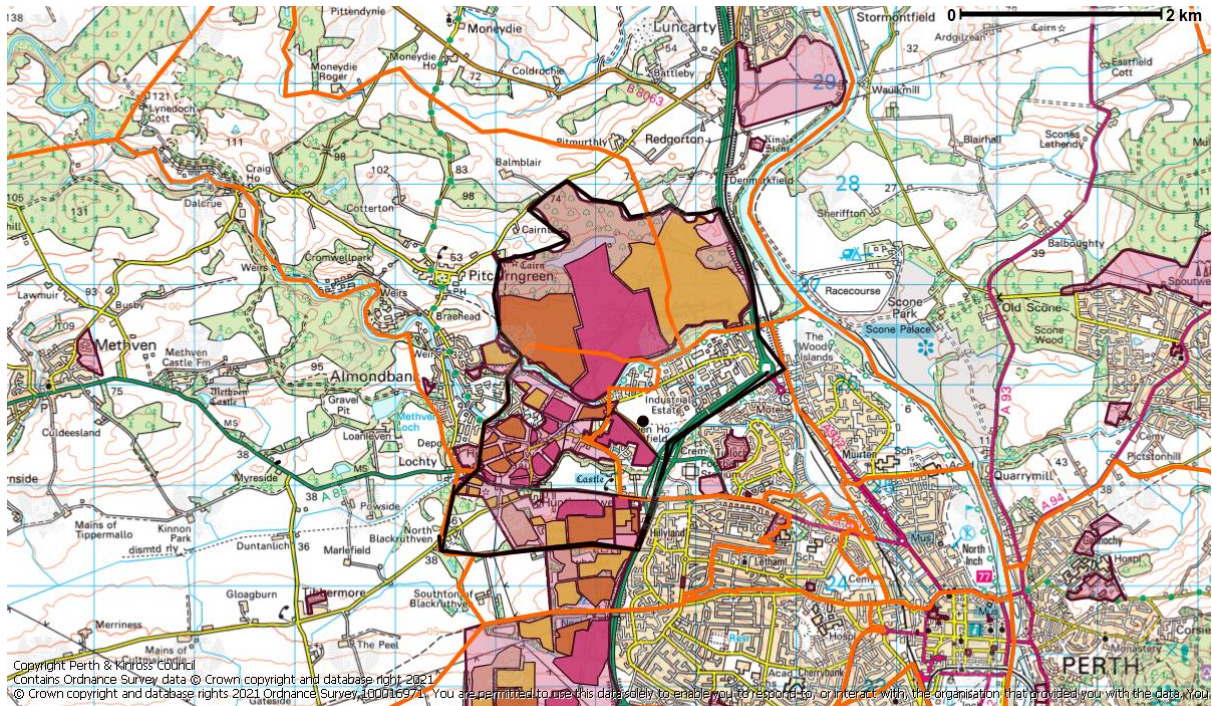
### **Environment for Learning**

- The new primary school will provide accommodation for pupils generated from new housebuilding in the western area of Perth city. It will be designed and built to accommodate 21<sup>st</sup> century learning.
- The new primary school will benefit from design principles which support the varied range of teaching environments that best deliver learning. Space for learning will be designed in such a way as to allow a range of styles and approaches including play-based learning, interdisciplinary learning and outdoor learning.
- The benefits realised in other new build primary schools in Perth and Kinross will be built upon to ensure that the accommodation is designed to meet the needs of learners and provides flexibility for whole class, small group and individual learning activities as required.
- Experience in previous new school buildings has demonstrated that a new and flexible learning environment has inspired and motivated pupils and has a positive impact on the general health and wellbeing of learners.

- Relationships in the new school will be developed with Bertha Park High School, to allow the seamless transition from primary to secondary, within a community. Existing primary school catchments are being aligned to ensure children who attend these schools' benefit from the same considerations.
- The improved condition of the existing Ruthvenfield Primary school building will support school staff to continue to deliver learning using a range of approaches including play-based learning, interdisciplinary learning and outdoor learning in a more suitable learning environment.

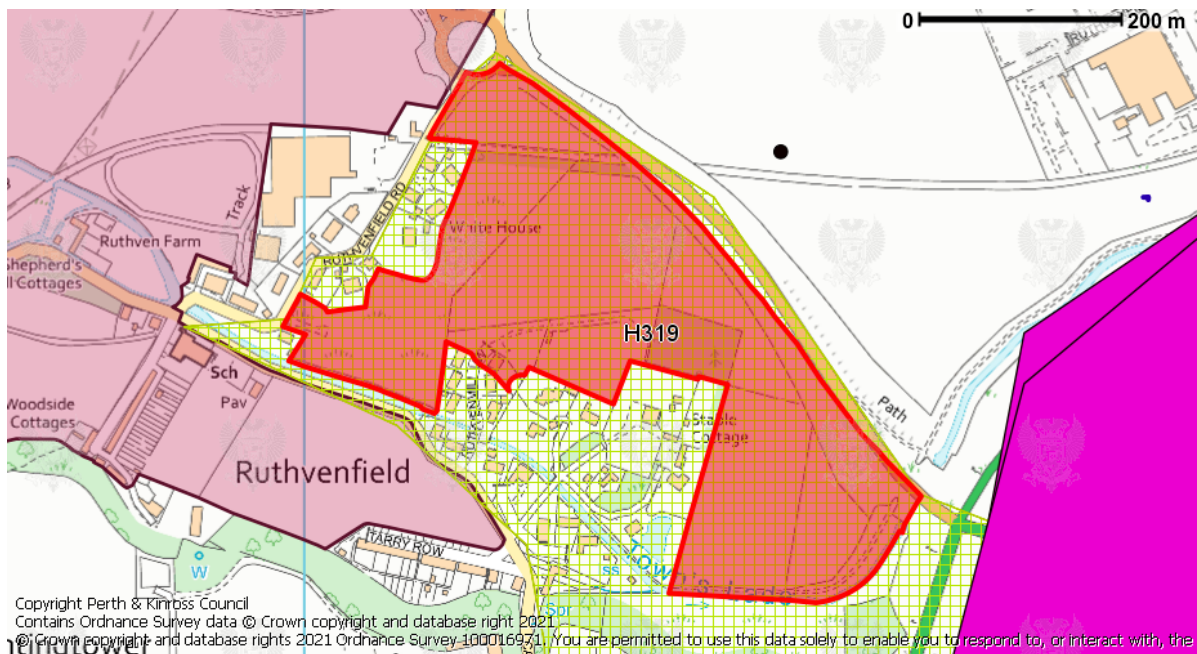
# Appendix 1

## Proposed Housebuilding - Phasing



Phase 1, Phase 2, Phase 3, Phase 4, Phase 5

### Site H319



## Appendix 2

### Primary Schools - Current Position – 2020/21<sup>10</sup>

School	Capacity	Current Roll	Classrooms	Classroom Used
Ruthvenfield Primary School	91	61	4	3
Pitcairn Primary School	125	84	5	4
Luncarty Primary School	194	132	7	7
Tulloch Primary School	434	363	14	14

Table 13 – Primary Schools Current Position.

Ruthvenfield Primary School is a popular non-denominational school situated in Ruthvenfield on the outskirts of Perth. The catchment area currently covers a widespread rural area and is bordered by the Perth By-pass from Broxden to Crieff Road, Huntingtower Castle, Inveralmond Industrial Estate, Almondbank and round to Lochty and over to Blackruthven and Newhouse Farm on the outskirts of Perth City.

Pitcairn Primary School is a non-denominational school situated in Almondbank on the outskirts of Perth. The catchment area covers a rural area and includes the settlements of Lochty, Almondbank and Pitcairngreen. The catchment area is bordered by the primary school catchment areas of Luncarty, Logiealmond and Methven. The current catchment area includes the strategic development site of Bertha Park.

Luncarty Primary School is situated approximately 6 miles north west of Perth, turning off the A9 at the Luncarty signpost. The school is situated in Marshall Road, which is a cul-de-sac. The school's delineated boundary extends to the River Tay in the east, from Ordie Cottage in a north westerly line to Woodend Farm and South East to Bertha Park.

Tulloch Primary School is a non-denominational Perth City primary school situated in Gillespie Place, Perth. The catchment area covers the Hillyland area of Perth contained by the Crieff Road and Dunkeld Road and stretches to Inveralmond and to the boundary with Ruthvenfield.

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<sup>10</sup> As at June 2021.

## **Appendix 3 – Ruthvenfield Primary School**

### **Ownership**

The Council do not own the school building. If the Council wish to relinquish the school premises for educational purposes or wish to dispose of the building, they are bound to offer the school building to the descendants of the original trustees. This burden was not preserved under the Title Conditions (Scotland) Act 2003, the burden may be contractual.

### **Schoolhouse**

There is a schoolhouse located adjacent to the school building. This property has been on the Council's Housing Revenue Account since April 2016. There is a tenant currently in the property who holds a Scottish Secure Tenancy Agreement.

### **School Building and Playing Field - Use by Community**

The school playing field is owned by the Council.

Fair City Football Club own and use a pavilion which is situated on the school playing field which serves as a football pitch available for use by the club and wider public. A local football club uses the football pitch on a regular basis. There is currently no formal management agreement or lease in place with the club for the use of either the pavilion or football pitch. This area is also used by the local community for recreational use.

The school confirmed the last community gathering, for a school event, took place approximately 3 years ago for the schools 150<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Celebrations. This took place at the Huntingtower Hotel.

The Council do not let the school building out for bookings.

### **School Building - Use by School/Council**

The Council use the school building as a polling station.

Prior to the COVID-19 pandemic, the school had open afternoons for parents. School shows were usually held at Pitcairn Church Hall as there is insufficient space in the school hall.

After school clubs, led by parent volunteers, also took place which included clubs for running, football and gymnastics. Badminton and climbing clubs also took place led by a combination of parents and teachers.

## **Building Information**

The school is on one level with the capacity of 91 split between 4 teaching spaces. The current school roll is accommodated in 3 classes. There is a hall for Physical Education (PE) and dining, toilets, school office and a servery kitchen.

## **Suitability and Condition**

Suitability is an assessment of the school as a whole, its buildings and its grounds and the impact they have on teaching and learning, leisure and social activities and the health and wellbeing of users. The overall suitability of the building is rated 'A' (Performing well and operating effectively).

A survey of the building was carried out in March 2020 to assess the current condition of the building. Condition is an assessment of the physical condition of the school and its grounds. The condition of the building is rated 'C' (Poor – showing major defects and/or not operating effectively). Mechanical and Electrical (M&E) surveys were also carried out during 2020.

The works required to the building to improve the condition rating include the following:

- Roof Replacement & Replacement Rainwater goods; and
- Electrical Infrastructure Works.

The costs of this work are approximately £274,975 as a minimum. It is estimated that these works could be carried out within the next 3-5 years. The condition rating of the school would increase to a B: Satisfactory (Performing adequately but showing minor deterioration (physical element carries out function satisfactorily) following these works.

If option A was to progress, additional cost will be required in future years to ensure the school operates effectively and the condition rating is maintained. Feasibility studies are required to determine the level of work required and associated costs.

Feasibility studies would require to be undertaken to establish any additional works required to the building and confirm cost certainty. It is likely these works would need to commence within the next 5-10 years and would include the following:

- Removal of life-expired modular building replacing toilet facilities; and
- Works associated with climate change.

The planned and unplanned maintenance on the school building in the last 3 financial years cost approximately £59,569 with the majority of works to improve the condition of the roof.

## Appendix 4 – Proposed Catchment Areas

Table 14 below summarises the proposed catchment changes.

Site	Current Catchment School	OPTION A Proposed New Primary Catchment	OPTION B Proposed New Primary Catchment
Perth West (north side) <sup>11</sup>	Ruthvenfield Primary	New primary school	New primary school
Almond Valley	Ruthvenfield Primary (Small area remains in Pitcairn Primary catchment)	New primary school	New primary school
Bertha Park	Pitcairn, Ruthvenfield & Luncarty* Primaries	New primary school	New primary school
Double Dykes	Tulloch*	New primary school	New primary school
Ruthvenfield <sup>12</sup> Primary	Ruthvenfield Primary (Existing catchment)	Split between New primary school and Ruthvenfield Primary	New primary school
Houses as identified in close proximity to Ruthvenfield Primary <sup>13</sup>	Tulloch Primary*	Ruthvenfield Primary	New primary school
Site H319 (Adjacent to Ruthvenfield Primary)	Tulloch Primary*	Ruthvenfield Primary	New primary school

Table 14 – Catchment Areas.

<sup>11</sup> Includes houses at Auld Mart site, eg Auld Mart Road, Shorthorn Drive area.

<sup>12</sup> Pupils living in Huntingtowerfield area would attend new primary school for option A.

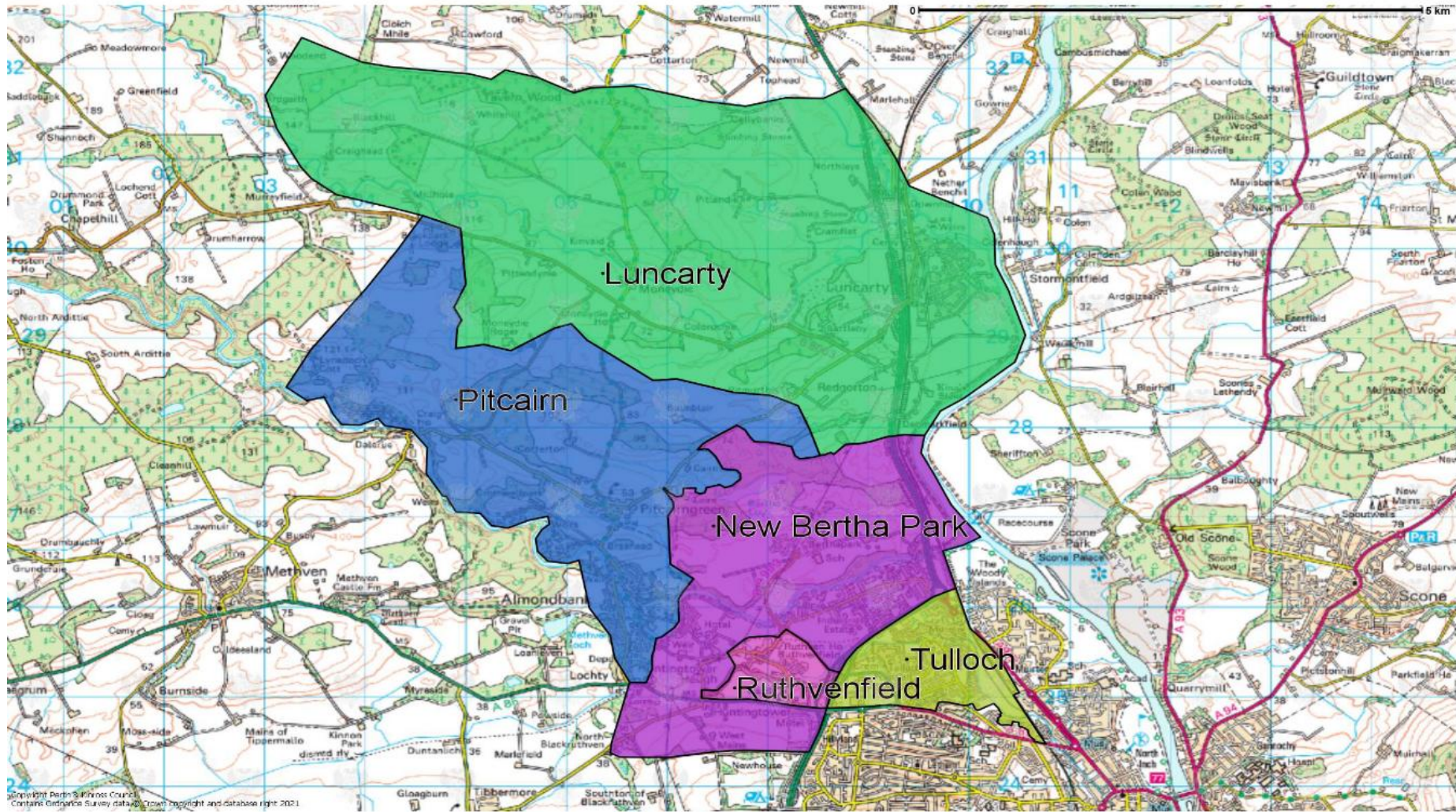
<sup>13</sup> Pupils living in The Orchard, Ruthvenfield View and Ruthvenfield Road.

All pupils attending Ruthvenfield Primary School and/or the new primary school will attend Bertha Park High School for secondary education. This would result in a change in secondary school catchment area for those pupils currently within Luncarty and Tulloch catchment areas. These are noted with an asterisk\* in table 10 above.



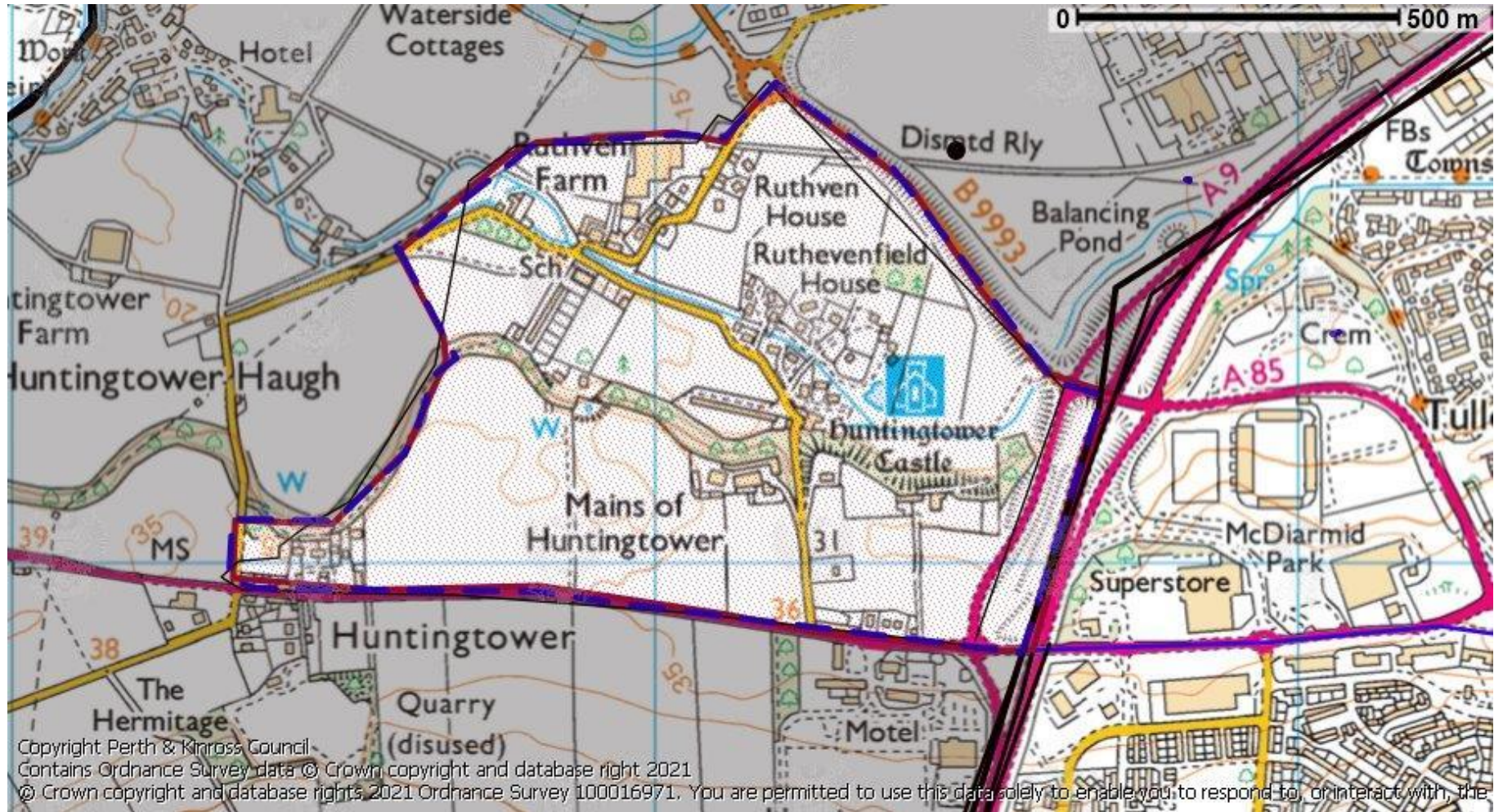
## Appendix 5

### Catchment Areas – Option A

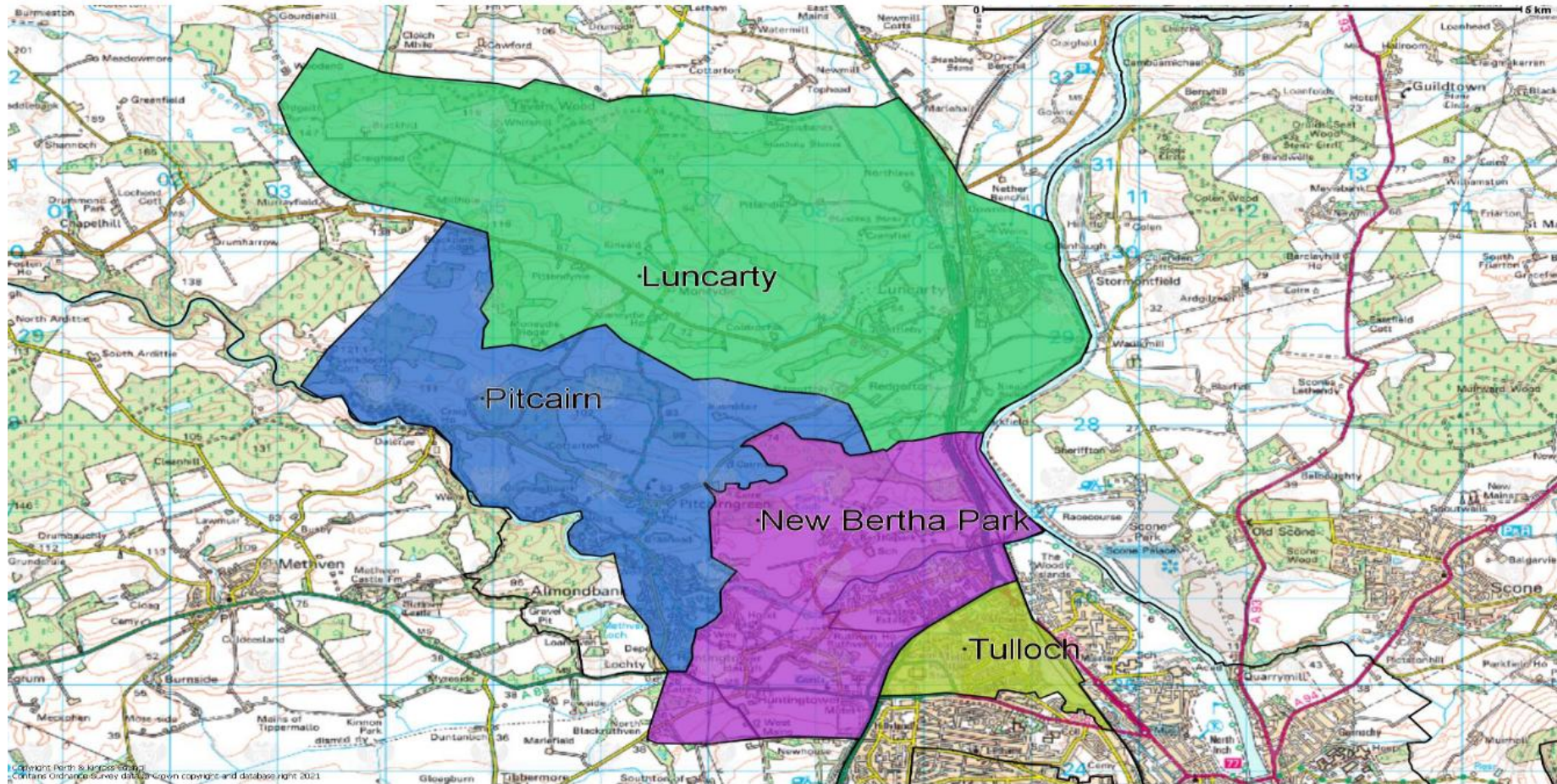


Catchment Area Colours; Green – Luncarty, Blue – Pitcairn, Purple – New School, Pink – Ruthvenfield, Yellow – Tulloch

### Ruthvenfield Primary School – Proposed catchment area – Option A



## Catchment Areas – Option B



Catchment Area Colours; Green – Luncarty, Blue – Pitcairn, Purple – New School, Yellow - Tulloch

## Appendix 6 – Pre-Consultation

The Council is aware of the approximate number of children under the age of five living within each school catchment area. This information is provided by the NHS and relates to the number of children registered at a GP practice in a catchment area.

Table 15 below shows the number of primary school age children currently attending Perth and Kinross Council schools and the number of children under the age of five due to start primary school between 2021 and 2025 in the catchment areas involved in the pre-consultation exercise.

<b>Catchment Area</b>	<b>Primary School Age Children Attending PKC Schools</b>	<b>Children under the age of five known to the Council</b>
<b>Ruthvenfield Primary School</b>	39	30
<b>Luncarty Primary School (Bertha Park)</b>	2	0
<b>Tulloch Primary School<sup>14</sup></b>	2	9
<b>Total</b>	<b>43</b>	<b>39</b>

Table 15 – Number of Children.

### Questionnaire Response

Table 16 below details the number of letters issued and the responses received for each catchment area. This table also shows the number of children the responses covered in relation to the overall number of children living in the catchment areas.

<b>Catchment Area</b>	<b>Letters Issued (Households)</b>	<b>Responses (Households)</b>
<b>Ruthvenfield Primary School</b>	337	22
<b>Luncarty Primary School (Bertha Park)</b>	9	0
<b>Tulloch Primary<sup>15</sup> School</b>	50	6
<b>Total</b>	<b>396</b>	<b>28</b>

Table 16 – Response to letters issued.

There are 34 pupils from 27 households who attend Ruthvenfield Primary School on placing requests.

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<sup>14</sup> Ruthvenfield Road, The Orchard, Ruthvenfield View. Double Dykes not included in data.

<sup>15</sup> Ruthvenfield Road, The Orchard, Ruthvenfield View and Double Dykes areas only.

The school issued a letter to each of the parents/carers of these pupils. A summary of the response from parents/carers of these pupils is detailed in Table 17 below.

### Ruthvenfield Primary School Placing Requests - Response

Preferred Option			
Issued	Responses	Option A	Option B
27	12	11	1

Table 17 – Ruthvenfield Primary School Placing Requests Response.

Out of the 12 responses, 2 families live in the Tulloch Primary School catchment area<sup>16</sup>. Both families indicated they would favour their children continuing to attend Ruthvenfield Primary School in its current location.

### Ruthvenfield Primary School Catchment Area – Response

A total of 16 responses were received from parents/carers living in the Ruthvenfield Primary School catchment area. A summary of the responses received are detailed in Table 18 below.

Parents/Carers			
Responses		Option A	Option B
Primary Children	9	8	1
Children under 5	7	5	2

Table 18– Parents/Carers Ruthvenfield Primary School Catchment Response.

A total of 6 responses were received from the wider community living in the Ruthvenfield Primary School catchment area. A summary of the responses is detailed in Table 19 below.

Wider Community		
Responses	Option A	Option B
6	5	1

Table 19 – Ruthvenfield Primary School Catchment – Wider Community Response.

### Luncarty Primary School – Bertha Park

Of the 9 letters issued to households in this area, there were no responses received. The Council are unable to determine the views of any parents/carers of children who may currently live within this area.

### Tulloch Primary School

Children from two out of the 6 responses received from households in the Tulloch Primary School catchment areas that may be affected currently attend Ruthvenfield Primary School on placing requests. These responses are included in Table 17.

The other 4 responses were from families living in the Double Dykes area. These responses indicated that all existing primary school age children would continue to attend their current primary schools but all children under the age of five would attend the new school.

<sup>16</sup> Ruthvenfield Road, The Orchard, Ruthvenfield View.

## Appendix 7 – Pre-Consultation – Comments

**Please can you tell us why you have chosen your preferred option? And, do you have any comments on the proposed catchment areas? - Please give us your comments on the option chosen**

My XXX is to commence primary school at Ruthvenfield in August of this year. I would far sooner that he did not have to go through the upheaval of moving school again after he has started. Additionally, having shared all of this news with xxxx , his preference would be to go to Ruthvenfield and remain there.

Whilst I fully understand the need for a primary at Bertha park the reason for our move to Huntingtower was to allow XXXX access to Ruthvenfield primary. A rural, community school is hugely important to us!

I chose Ruthvenfield based on the small rural school feel. It's a very small school which suits us perfect and we like the community feel. My XXXX was XXXX and so the smaller numbers suited her. I think the catchment area should be wider.

As a mother who has had children at XXXXX schools in Perth, I can't recommend Ruthvenfield enough, it is a fantastic school with great teachers that have been there years! My XXX has additional support XXXXX, the school has been a fantastic support, I could not have wished for better.

This school is a credit to p&k and would be so sorely missed by the local community. I have had XXXXXXX in Perth, I cannot rate Ruthvenfield highly enough, My XXXXX and the support Ruthvenfield have offered us is fantastic. The teachers have been at the school years!

It is a great asset to the local community and much loved by the local children.

I feel that as a parent Ruthvenfield has allowed XXXXX start XXX school education in a setting where he is respected and has been taught key values. As it is a small school the children are kind to one another and are very accepting of each other's needs. There is no bullying going on as the school has clear values and the children are often given the opportunity to engage in whole school experiences. As a XXXXXX I have seen first hand the difference between a small school and a bigger school. My XXXX has strong friendships with many of his peers and his age group are very close. They have all started school together and their friendships model this. I feel I'm bigger schools there so much more going on around them that the children are not always as engaged. Another positive for Ruthvenfield is that the classrooms have walls and doors. XXXX I cannot explain how vital these aspects are for teaching. Open plan schools are noisy and don't work for a lot of children. At Ruthvenfield primary the children are given quality learning opportunities through having the safe space of a classroom with a door. The last aspect I feel is a positive for Ruthvenfield is that the staff are very close with the children and they know all of the children's needs. They are like a little family and it would be heart breaking to see these opportunities taken away from the future children.

We wish XXXX to attend Ruthvenfield primary as we believe the smaller class sizes and more intimate school setting is more beneficial than a large school. Pupils in a smaller school will get to know every other pupil, from all years with creates a fantastic community within the school. It encourages the younger ones to learn from the elder and older pupils the chance to show leadership and responsibility in caring for youngsters. We are also in favour of composite classes which Ruthvenfield has.

We feel that one pupil will feel lost in the crowd in a school as large as Bertha Park will be (especially at primary age).

Attending school with pupils living in your immediate area allows for more interaction out of school and better friendships to form. The home of our XXXX friends could be a number of miles away if XXX attended Bertha park which would severely limit the possibility and time XXX could spend playing with them out of school.

A close support network amongst parents is also much more likely within a small catchment area which are often relied upon by parents of young children, be it for informal childcare or parental moral support. As we are relatively new to Perth and have no family here and no friends with similar age children, we are really hopeful of meeting other parents and families close to us.

Seems like the easier option for all children to attend a brand new school and may make the transition from primary to high less intimidating. I'm sure there are advantages of having a small primary such as Ruthvenfield but perhaps the kids would be less intimidated by a move from a reasonable sized primary to a high that's nearby.

We initially chose move oldest child from XXXX primary school to Ruthvenfield due to XXX feeling overwhelmed and anxious in such a big open environment.

XXX was refusing to go to school and complained daily of not feeling well, we moved XXX to the small school and XXX has got on fantastic since. I feel that there should still be the need for smaller capacity schools, especially for children like XXX who struggle.

I would like to see the school being upgraded in areas but still keep the size.

We live in the heart of Ruthvenfield village and believe being part of a community with the school at the heart of it is very important. We believe that growing up in an environment where your school reflects the place you and the people who live there gives confidence and allows for schools to have genuinely nurturing conditions.

The community school environment also provides a benefit to the wider fabric of society and was a significant factor in our choice of location. Being schooled in an environment where you know, respect and have a relationship with those who live around you increases social awareness and responsibility. The scale of Ruthvenfield is such that the children are able to spend time with other children of varying ages and backgrounds increasing their confidence whilst being large enough to give them access to broad opportunities, clubs, societies, and events. Small enough to be a community, large enough to give variety, experience and diversity.

Our XXXX is at Ruthvenfield Primary School and we would like XXXX two younger XXX to be at the same school getting the very best from the community schooling she is receiving. (This desire has been increased during the recent Pandemic where keeping families together, safe and to support them with their anxieties and mental health is even more important)

We can walk to Ruthvenfield Primary School which is important for our family's health and wellbeing. It reduces travel time and therefore allows the family to be together more and focus on a healthy life balance.

We would like our children to grow up in the situation described above and then transfer from Ruthvenfield Primary to Bertha Park High School with their school and community friends to create continuity and confidence in their educational environment.

We are really pleased to see that the houses in the Orchard and Ruthvenfield View are included in the proposed catchment for Ruthvenfield primary and indeed that of the new school at Bertha park should Option B be the ultimate outcome. We have found it difficult to understand how a small community such as Ruthvenfield with a school at its heart can be split in two in the existing catchment in relation to its children's education.

Our main question around the catchment design for Option A is one of size, population and therefore longevity for Ruthvenfield Primary School. It appears to have a much-reduced catchment size in terms of housing/population and therefore we are concerned that it will mean the school would become too small and therefore unviable rather than operate at an optimum level of being much closer to its capacity. This declining population would also have a detrimental impact on our children as whilst a community feel to the school is important it cannot be so small as to negatively impact their social skills and ability to mix. We appreciate this is a tricky balance and that we are not party to population and house building plans that this may consider and were surprised that Huntingtowerfield was not an area which remained within catchment for example

Because its very important to keep the integrity of a village school & its community. It in my opinion, from Ruthvenfield is not a safe journey or within walking distance for the majority of Ruthvenfield pupils. The school is well occupied & has a fantastic community spirit which would be totally lost

The School has a good history and is close to my address and easy for dropping the kids off before we go to work.

I feel it would be a bad move to close Ruthvenfield primary school. The class numbers are smaller meaning the kids are learning more.

Ruthvenfield is a great school and the class sizes are ideal for learning. I do not want my children in a bigger classroom with the ratio of teachers to pupils

I moved to Perth and based my decision around the school choice.

Ruthvenfield Primary school building is very outdated with minimal outdoor facilities. It's obvious that a new school is required to replace it. The new housing surrounding the area will naturally bring larger numbers of children requiring access to nearby schooling and Bertha Park is a very obvious choice of central location for this allowing a wide catchment area.

I think it would be sad to see Ruthvenfield Primary close. It is a great school with 150yrs of history. Ruthvenmill View is not in the current catchment area and I had to put a placing request in for my XXX. I'm glad to see that it is included in the proposed new catchment area.

Ruthvenfield primary school is a fantastic school. The community spirit and ethos is amazing. I moved my child from a large School to a smaller country school and would be extremely disappointed to therefore have to send him to a larger school when he is settled where he is. The smaller classes and learning environment better suites my child's learning and development.

Smaller classes at Ruthvenfield Primary means greater teaching and pupil support, especially to those children in need of additional learning. There could be a substantial number of children given the amount of new housing developments being built in the area for both schools to be open.



I believe my XXX will get more opportunities to take part in more sport and leisure and school activities in a larger school. I also think there will be the benefit of more wraparound care eg breakfast clubs and after school clubs not currently available at Ruthvenfield. Ruthvenfield is a lovely school and I hope the staff would also transition with this option.

I have chosen option A as my child has settled in so well at Ruthvenfield since starting in xx. As a parent it's important to me to have a small community feel to a school and the class sizes at Ruthvenfield fit the bill perfectly. As a family we have been made to feel very welcome to the community, all the parents are friendly & the staff have been fantastic. As much as a new campus is lovely, I do feel some children are often overlooked in large, multi purpose schools especially those who are a bit quieter by nature. Most larger campuses accommodate more than one class of P1/2/3 etc. How can a school make sure that each child gets individual attention to ensure they thrive in that sort of environment? My XXX has come on leaps and bounds since starting at Ruthvenfield and I know for a fact that is down to the smaller, more individual teaching methods in place.

Moving to the new build Barrett houses as we have done I was pleased to hear Ruthvenfield was the catchment school for our area, however speaking to a few parents who reside in Ruthvenfield I was very surprised to hear that they're not actually in the catchment for Ruthvenfield Primary School, they're catchment is Tulloch, which is a tad mind boggling! I do think the catchment areas need to be looked to accommodate children actually residing in Ruthvenfield.

My child is now in her xx and has attended Ruthvenfield Primary since xx. This is a great school and (as you know) has been around for many, many years. I feel it would be a shame to get replaced now, it has been a great learning place for alot of kids in its 150yrs standing. An upgrade in parts would be the better option out of the two in my opinion. Thanks.

Ruthvenfield is a fantastic school and gives our children the best start. A small school has been a massive benefit to our children who would have found a larger school extremely overwhelming. This school is at the heart of our community and creates confidence, respect and gives our children the tools to grow into well rounded adults. We are able to walk to school which is a fantastic start to the day which obviously wouldn't be possible if school was further away, due to work commitments. There are many opportunities at Ruthvenfield for our children to explore, and any issues are identified and followed through with support so that when they move up to secondary, support is in place for their individual needs. This is not always the case in larger schools where children slip through the net and therefore start in secondary struggling which isn't good for self esteem.

Taking away the school would have a negative impact on our children who love to play with their friends who live close by and you would be taking away the heart of our community.

Both my children are at Ruthvenfield School and it is brilliant. My eldest XXX has learning difficulties which the school brought to my attention and have support my XXX and myself through the process of getting the correct help.

Without the schools support my XXX would not be getting the help she needs. Over lockdown the school were amazing and the work supplied help my elder XXX make great progress even though XXX was at home.

My younger XXX is in xx. She has also need support with her speech and again the school has supported me 100% in getting the correct help.

Our XXX has been attending Ruthvenfield Primary School for xxx years now and has been made to feel very welcome as well as learning and developing well. In part, I feel this is due to the location of the school. The school has a real close-knit, village feel which is beneficial to the children. The facilities available to the children, including the large playing field to the rear as well as the recently built adventure trail are unmatched at many other schools in the area.

I have chosen option A as I feel it is the better option as the school is currently well attended and amongst other things at the school, the staff and pupils have worked hard on their outdoor learning spaces. Improving the current school was previously noted as the best option. It is not clear if the school is shut down what would become of the building? Would it be used for other purposes or demolished?

We recently moved to a new build at Huntingtower with our now xx month old XXX, school catchment was a big factor in our decision to buy this house.

To close Ruthvenfield Primary would be absolutely devastating in multiple ways for the children, their families, the teaching staff, the local community and also the environment. We believe that its closure would result in:

- The demise of a historic institution which has sat at the heart of Ruthvenfield community for longer than 150 years. Rural schools strengthen and bond a community together. Rural Primary Schools are crucial for maintaining the social structures in any community.
- A detrimental impact on the academic achievement of the children living in our community. Children educated in small schools consistently do well academically. Indeed, the Scottish Executive (2006) reported that pupils in small, rural schools had a 25% higher chance of entering into higher education.
- The loss of a highly personalised school system which is too precious to lose. Small schools are able to offer a curriculum and learning experience which is highly personalised and relevant to individual children. For example, this has led to rural schools being very well positioned to help economically disadvantaged pupils make excellent progress (Scottish Executive 2006).
- Potential economic disadvantage for the community. Research has found that rural schools benefit communities economically. For example, the presence of a rural school is associated with higher property values and is less likely to have a high percentage of children living in poverty (Lyson 2002).
- The loss of a close-knit teaching community. Rural Schools impact positively on the teaching environment. Vulliamy, Kimonen, Nevalainen, & Webb (1997) found high levels of mutual involvement and companionship in the very small schools, which helped teachers to maintain their value and belief systems.

- Lack of parental and community involvement in school-based activities. Related to the above point, there is a greater likelihood with rural schools that there will be increased parental involvement. Researchers and educators have long agreed that when parents get involved in education, children achieve more at school (Epstein, 1995). Parents who help and encourage their children to learn at home, and who help develop positive attitudes toward school, contribute to the personal growth and academic success of their children. As parents we were very much looking forward to being part of the Ruthvenfield Primary community.
- Unnecessary Environmental Impacts. When rural schools close this impacts negatively on the environment and can also raise considerable safety concerns for our children. Rural students are forced to face long bus or car rides often across considerable distances, and if this is not possible, children then face a long walk often over poorly paved (or unpaved) roads.
- Counteracting against the current active lifestyle campaigns and 'walk to school' initiatives. When rural schools are closed this can impact negatively on fostering an active lifestyle. Children are much less likely or not physically able to walk to schools.

We are also very concerned about the new proposed catchment area. Our main contention is that the catchment area of the primary school has been drastically reduced. Should this catchment area hold, we feel it is inevitable that the school will close further in the future. It's remarkable that for a school which has consistently run well below full capacity, that houses would be removed from the catchment area. Thus, we believe that to secure the future of Ruthvenfield, the catchment area should be expanded slightly.

I live very close to Ruthvenfield Primary and my xxx is currently in primary xx there. I also have a xx year old xxx, who when the time comes will attend Ruthvenfield Primary.

I enjoy that we can walk to school, as does my xxx, this is great for the exercise but also the environment. This would simply not be possible if my children attended Bertha park. I imagine there will be a lot of congestion which goes against the current Scottish Government's strategy on cutting down carbon emissions. Another factor is the small community in this area. This was one of the main reasons for moving here, my parents have lived in Huntingtowerfield since I was young and it is a great community.

Another is the Ruthvenfield Primary itself, it's a fantastic school with great teachers. My xxx receives far more one on one time with her teacher that she wouldn't get attending a larger school with bigger class sizes.

We are within walking distance of Ruthvenfield Primary School, and we would prefer that our xxx attend a smaller school. We feel the existing school is part of our community, and we wouldn't be comfortable sending our children to a school that is much bigger, and further away. We feel the catchment area would be far too large, if the only primary school was located at Bertha Park.

I don't want to see Ruthvenfield primary close, my xxx went there and my xxx is due to start this summer. I don't feel it is financially viable to keep it open along with a new build primary.

**Are there any alternative options or proposals that you feel should be considered?**  
**Please give details. - If you have any options that PKC should consider, please give details below.**

I feel you should consider the fact a big school isn't for everyone . There are some very shy kids which are suited for the smaller schools. I feel the smaller and larger schools have very different feels to them.

Keep Ruthvenfield for local huntingtower/Ruthvenfield children! There is enough upheaval to the community with housing!

Bertha park already have a bus park, use this second primary for Bertha park and out of catchment children.

Not really. Option A isn't a terrible option either. I suppose it's more about making sure if 1 child goes to Bertha primary, that their sibling(s) are guaranteed to attend the same primary and not being split between 2 primaries etc.

As above we believe that Option A is a great contender giving a combination of community schooling for Ruthvenfield whilst providing a new catchment and school for the forthcoming developments. We are however concerned that the proposed catchment for Ruthvenfield is too small for the schools viability in the future.

As above, we appreciate this is a tricky balance and that we are not party to population and house building plans that this may consider and were surprised that Huntingtowerfield was not an area which remained within catchment for example.

Make updates to existing building and keep catchment as it is.

Keep Ruthvenfield PS open, keep catchment area as is and include to accommodate children actually residing in Ruthvenfield.

I think the school should remain open

Perhaps give consideration to expanding the catchment area to include parts of Hillyland/ lower Western Edge where the time taken to travel to and from Ruthvenfield Primary by foot compared to the current catchment school of Letham Primary is negligible.

We understand that the maintenance of rural schools can sometimes present considerable financial challenges. With a new school based in Bertha Park, perhaps there may be some way to reduce costs through inter-school collaboration and/or some type of shared governance? As a side note if there is an opportunity for the community to help fundraise for resources in Ruthvenfield Primary school then we would be more than happy to be involved in this.

**Please tell us what you think the impact on your community is for each option and give your reasons. - Please detail your thoughts on Option A**

No impact - prefer this option.

My xxx attends Ruthvenfield Primary.

Children can walk/cycle/scoot to school which they could not do if attending Bertha Park.

Small class sizes which is of huge importance and benefit to learning.

School is in heart of the community. This would be lost at Bertha Park.

Ruthvenfield Primary should be upgraded and kept as the village school it is.

I think some parents will be disappointed that their children would not be able to take advantage of a purpose-built primary school.

The old building would incur costs that would be in addition to the new school at Bertha Park, therefore the economies of scale from the new school would not be optimised.

At peak times, the traffic hazard around the old primary school would remain. The roads in the vicinity of the school are in poor condition and the proximity of the regularly damaged, weak and narrow bridge opposite the school during these peak times only exacerbates the problem for children, parents, other pedestrians, and road users.

Clear preference for me. Easier commute for school pupils than the alternative. As part of improvements however I would like to see pavement installed all the way down Castle Brae.

Stability, continuity in education

Inefficient use of the school estate.

I think families will continue to make placing requests to alternative schools.

Many of the Ruthvenfield children walk to school as and friendships exist amongst families which is clearly seen when they interact at the school gates. There is a real sense of community here which I am very keen to keep for when your daughter reaches school age.

Confusion around which children from the area go to Bertha or Ruthvenfield, what's the split based on, will it create barriers for example friends from the same area but are attending different primaries.

With the proposal for near on 1500 homes in the Almond Valley there will be the need for a Primary School at Ruthvenfield to accommodate these new families. I would be interested to find out what the new catchment area may look like

Does not make sense to have children being taken via transport to Bertha Park when they are within walking distance of Ruthvenfield Primary. Carbon emissions must be considered.

Having lived and worked in the local community for the past xx years and now having a xxx in attendance at Ruthvenfield Primary School, I have witnessed first hand both in the long and short term the full impact of the integral role the school plays in the local community, bringing people closer together and providing the local children with a smaller scale environment in which to grow and learn, which is significantly more beneficial for the children themselves. I believe the school serves the needs of the community and primarily the children more beneficially than if it were to be replaced by a larger school with a larger catchment and higher intake of children. The school is effectively at the heart of the community and it would be a travesty to see PKC rip that away.

I dont feel like there will be to much impact on my community.

No bad impact created, new catchment may mean increased numbers of pupils in some classes but nothing Ruthvenfield won't be able to manage/support.  
Ruthvenfield school deserves an improvement to its building.  
Limited impact here.

I believe I covered this in my previous comments. It would be wonderful to see any upgrades needed to the school building. I think these old school building have such a sense of history to them. I would love to see it preserved.

This is the preferred option for us as we would like our child to attend a small community country school

The impact be little to none as would carry on as is now and the pupils would benefit from the upgrades.

To close Ruthvenfield Primary would be absolutely devastating in multiple ways for the children, their families, the teaching staff, the local community and also the environment. We believe that its closure would result in:

- The demise of a historic institution which has sat at the heart of Ruthvenfield community for longer than 150 years. Rural schools strengthen and bond a community together. Rural Primary Schools are crucial for maintaining the social structures in any community.
- The loss of a highly personalised school system which is too precious to lose. Small schools are able to offer a curriculum and learning experience which is highly personalised and relevant to individual children. For example, this has led to rural schools being very well positioned to help economically disadvantaged pupils make excellent progress (Scottish Executive 2006).
- Potential economic disadvantage for the community. Research has found that rural schools benefit communities economically. For example, the presence of a rural school is associated with higher property values and is less likely to have a high percentage of children living in poverty (Lyson 2002).
- Lack of parental and community involvement in school-based activities. Related to the above point, there is a greater likelihood with rural schools that there will be increased parental involvement. Researchers and educators have long agreed that when parents get involved in education, children achieve more at school (Epstein, 1995). Parents who help and encourage their children to learn at home, and who help develop positive attitudes toward school, contribute to the personal growth and academic success of their children. As parents we were very much looking forward to being part of the Ruthvenfield Primary community.

- Unnecessary Environmental Impacts. When rural schools close this impacts negatively on the environment and can also raise considerable safety concerns for our children. Rural students are forced to face long bus or car rides often across considerable distances, and if this is not possible, children then face a long walk often over poorly paved (or unpaved) roads.

- Counteracting against the current active lifestyle campaigns and 'walk to school' initiatives. When rural schools are closed this can impact negatively on fostering an active lifestyle. Children are much less likely or not physically able to walk to schools.

I think this impact would be minimal as things would remain as they are. The upgrade to the school would be fantastic but I feel it's already an amazing and lovely countryside school. It would be great for the children attending the school as they will live in the same area as the children they attend school with.

This option would benefit our community, by keeping our local school open, and maintaining smaller class sizes. Moreover, children within our community would still be able to walk/cycle to school safely - which is something we should be promoting for environmental and health reasons. In addition, improving the condition of the building would certainly help to keep the school going for many years to come.

**Please tell us what you think the impact on your community is for each option and give your reasons. - Please give your thoughts on Option B**

The impact would be yet another loss of a potential community facility. Small rural communities have lost so many facilities/resources in recent years.

Unable to walk/cycle/scoot to school - too far and busy roads which will only get busier  
Large number of pupils  
Large class sizes  
Loss of identity from a small village school

Children and parents will be able to take full advantage of a purpose-built primary school. The access roads and parking will be presumably be designed to be safe, and undoubtedly safer than the current situation at the old Primary School.

Greater economies of scale can be achieved by having more pupils at one school, without compromising optimal classroom sizes. I believe currently children at the old school have to have mixed classes due to the class sizes being too small.

Not moving to the new primary school when it opens will always leave the old school vulnerable to any shrinkage in pupil numbers, creating uncertainty for parents and children alike. This uncertainty can be removed if the new primary school can absorb the children from the old primary school catchment area.

I would quite simply not like to see the school close and everything that comes with it (jobs and the close association with the local area).

This is a better option. It results in more efficient use of resources. Depending on the new school, parents may have better options available for wraparound childcare etc.

Our close community in Ruthvenfield with undoubtedly be lost if all pupils move to Bertha park. Most will end up being driven to school (with the associated decrease in health and fitness) and pupils may not even know their peers who live only a street away from them, especially if each age group is split into multiple classes due to large numbers. Their parents will also have fewer chances to interact if merely dropping off and collecting pupils in cars. I really worry for the community spirit of my neighbourhood if primary pupils attend such a large school which is not an easy walk away.

Positive option and means children from this catchment area are all attending one school, and a brand new one which is brilliant.

With 3000 houses in Bertha Park, 1500 houses in Almond Valley, you will need to build a massive Primary School. Not sure that offers the best for the kids.

Ruthvenfield has an excellent reputation within the learning community. Several Head Girl/Boy, School Dux, Senior Leadership team have been named at Perth Grammar school - all were primary educated at Ruthvenfield.

Mixed year classes encourage children to accept what is in front of them rather than anxious of progressing through school.

Small size classes permit personalities grow rather than overcome in large numbers.

Potential extra learning requirements easily identified in small numbers.

Option B is "progress for progress" sake rather than for any tangible benefit for our community and the children within. See my views in point A. Given the Local Authority plans for housing developments in the area, the proposed new school will be at capacity anyway without the need to intake the children from Ruthvenfield. Whichever course of action PKC takes, they should at least make sure that the proposed new school is large enough for the planned housing developments due to be built and also that it is built sensibly. (see Abernethy Primary built too small initially for the intake and with substantial glass frontage facing the sun making classrooms excessively hot). Generally, I see no need for the closure of Ruthvenfield and that funds should be set aside to improve the existing building for future use.

This will impact parents with regards to travel as well as disruption to the kids at a time they are settled in to the school they are already attending.

Loss of local school

Greater numbers in class, losing benefits to children's teaching/support

No 'close knit community' feel

Too large a community/school at Bertha with new houses let along with new catchment including Ruthvenfield.

More traffic/use of cars to get children to and from school with large catchment area.

Children may not settle in larger school/classes and education therefore affected.

Hopefully better transport routes from Huntingtower / Ruthvenfield areas elsewhere and of course to the new school.

I covered this in my previous comments. I feel children get lost and overlooked in large campus classes. It's such a shame small, rural community schools possibly have to close, it loses such a sense of history and community. The old school buildings are nostalgic.

There would potentially be a. Holding that is not used for community purposes and worst case becomes derelict.



Pursuing Option B at the expense of keeping Ruthvenfield open would have a number of community impacts:

- A detrimental impact on the academic achievement of the children living in our rural Ruthvenfield community. Children educated in small schools consistently do well academically. Indeed, the Scottish Executive (2006) reported that pupils in small, rural schools had a 25% higher chance of entering into higher education.
- The loss of a close-knit teaching community. Rural Schools impact positively on the teaching environment. Vulliamy, Kimonen, Nevalainen, & Webb (1997) found high levels of mutual involvement and companionship in the very small schools, which helped teachers to maintain their value and belief systems.

I think this would have a major impact on the entire community as the children would no longer attend a small school where they know everyone and all the teachers. The children wouldn't grow up living near their friends in class, and parents wouldn't be acquainted due to the number of children attending the larger new school.

This option would create a higher pupil-to-teacher ratio, leading to potentially worse academic achievement, since the teaching staff would be "spread thinly". We would not feel confident that our children would be receiving the best school experience, or quality of education.

Not only that, it would affect our community by causing additional traffic, since it would no longer be practicable to walk or cycle to the new school. Even taking car pooling, or public transport into account, this would have knock-on effects such as increased pollution, and increased traffic in the smaller communities, potentially even leading to higher risks of traffic accidents.



**How would you describe the community and what are your thoughts on Ruthvenfield Primary School as part of the community? - Please tell us about the community in Ruthvenfield.**

Excellent school  
Small class sizes  
Children have a strong community identity  
Part of the community of Huntingtower/Huntingtowerfield and Ruthvenfield  
Active travel to and from school

It is a small community and that can have advantages and disadvantages.  
One advantage is that it has a pleasant 'community feel' to it.

For the school, the main disadvantage, as I see it, is its vulnerability due to its small size. Any enterprise or organisation needs a critical mass of people and whilst there are benefits to having a small school in terms of pupil/teacher engagement, there have to be enough pupils for the children to engage with. My knowledge is limited here, but I get the impression that there are mixed classes (different year groups brought together) and whilst there may be benefits to this too, overall I can't see it being the best learning environment for the children.

I love the fact that it is a small close knit school where my xxx will have lots of one on one time with his teacher.

Equally, growing up in a small village myself, I know the benefits that not being just a number would bring xxx,

Hugely important

The primary school is the heart of the community in Ruthvenfield. There are currently no other facilities or services in Ruthvenfield so the school is the one thing that brings many local families together.

Looking ahead to the likely Almond Valley development and the location of the planned shops, it would help greatly in creating a real "village" centre in the community if the school remained next door.

From What I hear it's a brilliant wee school.

Ruthvenfield has great support from all involved in the school from parents to pupils & even former pupils. When it comes to fundraisers, winter school shows or sports days the volume of support is huge. Running club, climbing club, football club among other groups are all the same, being run by volunteer parents who all support the school

The school is the main focal point for our community. They organise excellent events that bring our community together. This would be lost if the school were to close.

Hamlet network where families have chosen to settle due to remoteness /small community.  
Ruthvenfield school is very much part of the community - well supported with successful sports days, shows, garden days etc

See previous answers. I believe the School plays a vital role in the community and the community needs the school. Additionally, one small part of the larger picture are the health benefits for the children, a large number of whom walk or cycle to School each day, which just would not be possible at a larger school much further away.

This School is a wonderful part of the community. It boasts nothing but great reports hence the reason we moved as a family to this area.

Close, quiet community of people, many who have met through children being at the local school or having family members attend.

Ruthvenfield is the main hub/support for the local children and families, the school has offered use of its gym hall over the years for many events as well as using local churches/hotels to hold primary events in return.

Very lovely wee school. Impact within community was stronger under xxxxx, although this has also likely been impacted by COVID.

I feel very lucky to be a part of such a lovely and friendly community. I feel safe in the knowledge that I can leave my child in the playground if I need to and know that there are other parents there to keep an eye on them. The school is an integral part of the community and to see that swept away by a fancy new building would be such a shame.

Ruthvenfield is a unique asset to the community providing an alternative form of education for those that want their children to benefit from a smaller rural community setting

The school is a big part of the community. The building is used for voting purposes and in non COVID times the school held annual fete which was open to all members of the community not just the school community. There were also other events that encompassed the whole community.

We have lived in the Ruthvenfield community since xxxx. We first moved to xxxx and upon having children have since moved to xxxxx. We wanted to stay within Ruthvenfield to bring our children up given the strength of community life here and all of the benefits that brings. To learn that the school is under consideration for closure is very concerning to hear. We know many families within the community and the school is at the heart of community living. Ruthvenfield has no social buildings apart from the school itself (there are no pubs or a post office for example). To remove the one and only community hub would have a devastating impact.

The community is lovely with everyone being aquatinted and looking out for each other. Something that doesn't happen with larger schools, my xxx attended Tulloch nursery so I have first hand experience of what it's like at larger schools/nurseries. The school plays a huge role within the community as everyone knows each other and out with COVID times they run many extra curricular activities with the help of parents volunteering.

Our community is quiet, friendly, and benefits from the school being in easy reach for our children.

Within our area of the community, we regularly see children walking to the primary school on school days - and it's delightful to see their activity from initiatives such as the "running club".

**If Option B was progressed and the current Ruthvenfield Primary School building was to close, what would your thoughts be on the future use of the building? Please give your thoughts below. - Please give your thoughts if Ruthvenfield Primary School were to close. Do you have a use for the building.**

Offered as a community centre

I feel strongly that it should not be closed. If it is then it would probably be swallowed up and houses built on the site which would result in yet more loss of green space for our community.

Hard to see much residential or commercial value in the school as it is at present, without significant investment. It would be nice if the building could be saved though.

For me, it would be a pity if the descendants of the original trustees choose to have the building removed to enable the land to be re-purposed. However, financially, that might be the right thing for them to do and that wouldn't necessarily be a bad thing, depending on what would replace it.

Don't wish to consider that.

Establish as a community hub / shop selling local produce.

It would be nice for the building still to have a public use, perhaps as a community centre as there are no such facilities in the area and it will be needed particularly when the new surrounding developments are complete. We just especially wish the external, traditional school building shape to remain as it shows the heritage of the community.

Not sure what this questions means. Who are the original decendants? We would have no say or choice?

Community Hall

No thoughts on the future use of the building. Given the ways of the current world, no doubt whoever has the final say will sell it to the highest bidder for development of housing private or otherwise and maximum profit.

This would be a disaster in my eyes.

-Library

-Morning or afternoon club for children

-After school activities centre

- additional learning needs centre (extra tuition studies)

Space used for teachers training/education/further professional development/meetings

Something beneficial for the whole community

It should be used for community purposes. Youth clubs etc.

It could perhaps be used as a community centre for the area to benefit from.

It's sad to think that a thriving school would have to close down for no good reason. The only sensible use for such a building is to continue to use it as a much-needed school for our community.

**Do you have any other comments? - If you have any comments, please leave them below in the box.**

It is not safe for children to walk to the new school as there is no safe walking routes. It would take too long for children to walk to the new school.

I hope that this consultation exercise will actually listen to those opposing the closure of Ruthvenfield Primary.

I believe it would be a travesty if Ruthvenfield closed. I am all for a new school at Bertha park as the housing development there dictates that it is needed, we don't need to close other schools because of that however.

The existing options for out-of-school care in the locality are poor. It is vital that the new Bertha Park Primary addresses this and provides viable choices.

Keep Ruthvenfield open.

No

We are very concerned about the new proposed catchment area. Our main contention is that the catchment area of Ruthvenfield primary school has been drastically reduced. Should this catchment area hold, we feel it is inevitable that the school will close further in the future. It's remarkable that for a school which has consistently run below full capacity, that houses would be removed from the catchment area. Thus, we believe that to secure the future of Ruthvenfield, the catchment area should be expanded slightly.

I along with many others would be hugely disappointed if Ruthvenfield Primary closed as I moved to this area so my children would attend a small countryside school with a great community, along with all the benefits a small school provides. xxx first day of school went so well because it was a small class, this was massively different compared to her first day at Tulloch nursery which has many children attending.

We're sure our views reflect that of our community, and we hope that the council takes this into account during this consultation.

**Please can you tell us why you have chosen your preferred option? - Please give you reasons for choosing option a or option b**

All chosen Option A

Not all parents want to send their children to a large 300+ primary school. This is borne out by the number of placing requests we receive from parents who are in the catchment areas of large primary schools like Tulloch, Letham, Oakbank but don't want their child to go to a large school. There should always be a place for smaller primary schools with a local authority so that parents can make the best choice of school for their children's needs.

Larger schools just do not have the community feel that our school has. We are still a small hamlet/village and the school is the only community facility that Ruthvenfield has, again evidenced by the use of the school as a Polling Station. Closing the school will take the community feel away from the Ruthvenfield inhabitants.

Until the larger development proposed by the Pilkington Trust actually starts to get built which will necessitate another new primary school, I see no reason why the existing school cannot co-exist along side the new Primary School at Bertha Park.

Ruthvenfield has a great feel about it. All the children are confident and are supported so well. They benefit from the small numbers and have the opportunity to develop in a quiet, safe, stable, rural, supportive, family feel setting where children look out for each other, and who grow up showing manners and respect to each other and adults.

The school although small, provides many amazing opportunities inside and out and has fantastic support available for those who need it, academically, emotionally and mentally.

I think a new school has a place, but I think Ruthvenfield can offer a huge amount where a large school couldn't. I think keeping it open, and spending the money to refurbish would continue to be a great asset to PKC .

Some of our families tell us that they have moved to Ruthvenfield Primary from larger schools as they feel this context suits their children better therefore option A gives families more choice.

Happy with either option A or B and tried to click on both but this wasn't available. Option A - as appreciate some families would still like the choice of a small school. Option B - would like to find out more about how this would affect my job role. There isn't usually a PT role at a large school. It would be a non-teaching Depute role at a large school. Therefore would we automatically have the same positions at the new school, have to apply for jobs etc?

**Are there any alternative options or proposals that you feel should be considered? Please give details. - if you can think of any options you would like to be explored further, please give details in the box below.**

None that I can think of at the moment.

**Your address is within the current Tulloch Primary School catchment area, would you rather: - Preferred statement**

Attend Ruthvenfield Primary School in its current location

**Your address is within the current Tulloch Primary School catchment area, would you rather: - Please give comments to your previous answer**

091 would prefer my xxx to go to Ruthvenfield but wouldn't be adverse to him going to a new school with classmates together in the future.