

CLACKMANNANSHIRE COUNCIL

Report to Clackmannanshire Council

Date of Meeting: 6 October 2022

Subject: Lochies and Deerpark Primary schools Options Appraisal

Report by: Pete Leonard, Strategic Director Place

1.0 Purpose

- 1.1. The purpose of this report is to provide Council with an update on the high level options appraisals undertaken for Lochies and Deerpark schools. It notes that as a consequence of the additional housing development at Carsebridge, Deerpark Primary will need additional capacity. It also notes that current Lochies school needs expanded to meet pupils' needs. The paper recommends relocating Lochies to a new site within the Alloa Academy catchment area. It notes that having considered a number of sites and consulted with parents the preferred site for the replacement Lochies school is beside The Pavilions Business Park near Redwell Primary school in Alloa.
- 1.2. It seeks agreement to submit a bid to the Scottish Government Learning Estate Investment Programme (LEIP) to provide 50% of the funding for the replacement Lochies School and notes that this funding will be revenue funding based on achieving certain outcomes.
- 1.3. It notes that a further paper will be brought back to a future Council on the outcome of the high level options appraisal for the future location of St Mungos primary school.

2.0 Recommendations

- 2.1. It is recommended that:
- 2.2. The Council submits a bid to the Scottish Government Learning Estate Investment Programme (LEIP) for a replacement for Lochies School, noting that this funding will be in the form of revenue funding.
- 2.3. The Council agrees that the new site for Lochies School should be at The Pavilions, Alloa and that officers should carry out a formal consultation under the Schools (Consultation) (Scotland) Act 2010 to relocate Lochies and bring the outcome of the consultation back to Council for approval.

- 2.4. A site feasibility study and RIBA design stages are to be developed to provide more detailed costings on an expanded Deerpark and relocated Lochies schools. The outcome of which should be brought back to Council for formal budgetary approval.
- 2.5. Further work on potential options for St Mungos Primary is to be undertaken with a view to a report coming to Council.

3.0 Background

- 3.1. During 2021-22 academic year, the Council undertook surveys of its entire learning estate and measured them against the criteria that Scottish Government use to ensure consistent reporting across Scotland of the condition and suitability of school buildings. Lochies Primary School was the only school in the Authority to be graded as a category D “unsatisfactory” in the suitability category. The condition of the building was assessed as being category C “poor”. The reason for this is that the needs of children attending Lochies has changed with continued increases in severity and complexity of pupil’s conditions. Children attending Lochies also require a significant amount of equipment (e.g. wheelchairs) to support their needs. Currently the school has inadequate storage facilities to meet children’s needs.
- 3.2. Lochies and Deerpark Primary School currently share the same building. Lochies, located within a wing of Deerpark Primary School, has been retrofitted over many years to attempt to meet the changing needs of the pupils. The building was not designed to meet these needs and has reached a point where staff are meeting the needs of pupils but the building is making this more and more challenging. This has resulted in one pupil having to attend a provision in another local authority. A New Build Lochies would enrich the educational experience of pupils by providing equality, ensuring that the needs of all Clackmannanshire pupils can be met. Retaining pupils within the Authority would reduce fees and other costs paid to other authorities associated with placing requests.
- 3.3. An outline planning application has been submitted for a housing development on the site of the former Carsebridge distillery and warehouse site which is mainly in the catchment area of Deerpark. This will mean that Deerpark primary will need additional accommodation. Lochies School also needs additional accommodation to meet the needs of its current pupils and the demand for additional spaces. Given this, officers, partner colleagues and the design team have been considering a new site for Lochies. As Lochies pupils attend Alloa Academy EASN provision, the school is part of the Alloa cluster of schools so only new sites in the Alloa academy catchment area were considered as potential new locations. Five sites were identified and a high-level options appraisal was undertaken to review all of them. The conclusion of the options appraisal for each of the sites was as follows:

3.4. Site 1 - Land on South Eastern Part of Carsebridge

This lies between the B909 and A907 and is part of the proposed Carsebridge housing site and is in Sunnyside Primary catchment area. It is of sufficient size to accommodate the internal and external space requirements of a new Lochies. The location is accessible and benefits from a road network with sufficient capacity. However, the site is not in Council ownership and the Council would have to purchase it. In evaluating LEIPS bids, the Scottish Government will make an assessment as to whether any school will be completed within 5 years of approval being given. Given the potential time delay associated with acquiring a site as well as the cost, the site is considered unsuitable.

3.5. Site 2 - Land Adjacent to Park Nursery and the Bowmar Centre

This site is Council owned and located on open space adjacent to the Bowmar centre and the skate park. This site is of sufficient size to accommodate the internal and external space requirements of a new Lochies. The area suffers from significant drainage issues and location of the school on this site would mean a significant increase in the volume of traffic coming through the housing estate and on roads which were not designed for that volume. The traffic issues deem this site unsuitable.

3.6. Site 3 - Alloa Family Centre

Although this site is almost within the curtilage of Alloa Academy and is adjacent to the sports pitches, it is too small to accommodate the needs of Lochies and the current family centre would need to be relocated. Given this the site is unsuitable.

3.7. Site 4 - Alloa Leisure Bowl

The site is owned by the Council and would also be of sufficient size. The site includes a railway line, which from a sensory perspective would not be advisable for children with moderate/complex needs, who can be triggered by loud noises or varying light levels. The site topography and level changes does not lend itself well to an ASN School design. These design issues meant this site was not considered suitable.

3.8. Site 5 - Alloa West, The Pavilions

This site is the largest of the sites considered at over 13 hectares in total. It is owned by the Council and would be of sufficient size to accommodate the internal and external space requirements of a new Lochies. Other education facilities exist in the area including Redwell Primary School, New Struan School and Little Stars Nursery who are one of the Council's partner nurseries. The site lies on the National Cycling Route. The site is accessible and has good road networks. The Council has recently approved locating the Wellbeing Hub on this site, which will open up potential synergies with the New Lochies School during the development phase. The costs of services

and drainage provisions to the Alloa West site can be shared across both Wellbeing Hub and New Lochies projects.

3.9. High level costs for preferred option Lochies Site 5 - Alloa West, The Pavilions as outlined in the table below:

Cost Category	Option New Build Lochies - The Pavilions
GIFA (Gross Internal Floor Area)	3300
Capital Costs@Q2 24	£16,660,713*
Revenue Lifecycle and Maintenance Costs	£3,246,750*
25 Year Whole life costing comparator	£19,907,463*

*These project costs will be further refined during the site feasibility study and RIBA design stages

The LEIPs bid funding is based on the funding outcomes outlined below which are the conditions that the Council will need to prove to SFT:

- Condition – Council will need to keep the building in Category A or B standard for 25 years
- Energy Efficiency – An energy target of 67/kWh/sqm/p.a for core hour/facilities use of the facility is to be achieved. If the facility exceeds 130/ kWh/sqm/p.a for core hour use of energy use – no funding will be available for that outcome.
- Digitally Enabled learning – Infrastructure is capable of delivering 11GBS
- Economic Growth – Council will need to provide evidence that they have met the target for jobs supported this will be linked to the size of the investment

3.10. Capacity of New Lochies

The current school has a roll of 37. This is the maximum capacity based on the existing pupils needs. In previous years the school has had higher rolls (2018/19 = 41 pupils), when pupil's needs were not as severe and complex.

Consequently, the school has been operating at maximum capacity for the last decade. The maximum capacity being determined by the needs of the pupils. As the level of need has increased over the years and restricted the maximum capacity, it is logical to design the school capacity based on the most complex needs. As the capacity has decreased pupils with more moderate needs have been supported elsewhere in the authority, when they would have been supported in Lochies if there was capacity.

As the new school is not predicted to open until late 2027 and the funding from the LEIP programme is for 25 years, the new school needs to be large enough to accommodate the historically increasing number of children who will require complex needs support. Therefore, the Council are looking at building a school that can accommodate up to 54 pupils. This is based on both the fact that there is an increasing demand for places at Lochies and the experience of new builds in other local authorities is that they were full when opened. This is demonstrated by Carrongrange High School in Falkirk Council having to convert the use of areas in the building and developing plans to expand their provision already. As medical advancements have improved, life expectancy for children with complex needs has in turn increased and the numbers of pupils at Lochies has increased. The needs profile for the pupils has shifted from moderate to more complex. The existing building is no longer fit for purpose nor meets Lochies pupils' future needs. This is the reasoning behind the future increased capacity of 54 pupils for the New Lochies at the Pavilions site.

Buildings will be designed to specific area and cost metrics in addition to particular terms and conditions. All rates will be multiplied by the "like for like" pupil on a capacity basis. Consequently, further discussion with SFT is scheduled to explain the impact of complex needs on determining existing capacity and future proofing for increasing numbers in scale and complexity. Subsequently, the agreed capacity will impact on the funding available from LEIP funding.

4.0 Partnership Approach

- 4.1. Discussions have taken place with NHS Forth Valley with a view to ensuring there would be space in the new school for children to access health services that they traditionally would have had to go out of school to access leading to loss of learning time. It will also provide a better service to families as some struggle to attend wheelchair clinics. NHS Forth Valley has said that they would be able to run clinics from the school and that it would promote better multidisciplinary working. At present Speech and Language, Physiotherapists and Occupational Therapists all attend Lochies on a different day/time as there is not enough space. This would allow all the therapists to work with children and staff at the same time.

5.0 Consultation Process

- 5.1. The 5 sites in the options appraisal were discussed with current Lochies parents and they expressed the following views:

Parents and carers believe that a new school is needed to provide the space to facilitate improved support mechanisms that will allow their children to develop and become more independent learners. Increasing space and improving ease of access throughout will be life-changing for so many of these children. Doing so would provide far greater outdoor learning opportunities, further enhancing health and wellbeing of the children.

It is the opinion of parents and carers that the school would benefit from having their own building. They think The Pavilions site will be easier to access than the current site and provide more space than currently available to them for outdoor learning.

As this project involves a formal relocation of Lochies School, a formal consultation will be required under the Schools (Consultation) (Scotland) Act 2010. This will be undertaken by Education staff over the winter/ spring 2022/23. The consultation will be overseen by Education Scotland who will prepare a report on the consultation. A copy of the report will be incorporated into the final report which will be brought back to Council for final approval.

At the same time as the consultation report is brought back to Council a projects scoping document will be brought back to Council for final approval prior to the finalised design and build work being undertaken.

6.0 Learning Estate Investment Programme (LEIP)

- 6.1. The LEIP programme is jointly funded by Scottish and Local Government and is designed to improve the condition of the school estate and in particular schools that are in an unsatisfactory condition as well as support sustainable estate planning with clear investment and maintenance strategies. It is likely that next round of funding for this programme will be the final round. Clackmannanshire is one of a few local authorities who have not benefited from previous phases of this programme and the Lochies school project gives the Council an opportunity to submit a bid.

The funding model for the LEIP programme is based on the principle that Scottish Government and local authority funding is provided 50:50 and the Government funding is in the form of revenue funding over a 25 year period subject to satisfactory achievement of the programme's outcomes around maintaining the condition of the school, meeting embodied carbon criteria, achieving energy efficiency targets, ensuring that the facility infrastructure is

capable of supporting 11Gbps and ensuring that the project contributes to economic growth in the form of creation of jobs, mainly during the construction period.

The deadline for submitting an application for Phase 3 of the LEIP programme is the end of October and officers have been working up a bid during the summer based on the replacement for Lochies School at the Pavilions site.

7.0 Deerpark Primary

- 7.1. Due to the potential rising pupil numbers caused by proposed housing development at Carsebridge the following options were identified based on assumptions increased school roll scenarios at Deerpark Primary School caused by increased numbers of additional dwellings at Carsebridge site. The Design Team worked with two scenarios 360, 426 and 650 new dwellings within the Carsebridge development site. With the opportunity that presents from Lochies moving out to a new build site at the Pavilions this frees up a wing of the school for the increasing school roll for both scenarios above. The conclusion of the options appraisal for each of the sites was as follows:
- 7.2. **Option 1** – Refurbish existing consistent with Condition Surveys, remodel vacated space and new build Lochies off-site. This would be considered a “do minimum” option to bring the building in line with current building regulations, improving building fabric and condition standards. The site is already Council owned and pupils could be decanted in different wings of the existing school while works are underway. This option would continue to give Deerpark 13 classrooms as per their existing layout with additional general purpose space. This Option does not address the continuing issues identified with site access and does not improve the condition nor improve to energy performance to reduce future rises in utilities costs. There would be a shortfall with this option to provide the target GIFA for the 650 potential maximum new dwellings in the Carsebridge development.
- 7.3. **Option 1A** - Refurbish, remodel and extend on existing site, new build ELC on existing site and new build Lochies off-site. Under this option remodelling of the Lochies wing takes place to create an active learning zone offering breakout spaces and more flexible learning environment. Two new classrooms are added to achieve a total of 14 through a new build extension to the Lochies wing. This option, from a teaching and learning perspective delivers the GIFA required in line with SFT space metrics.
- 7.4. **Option 2** – Tandem new build Deerpark on existing site and new build Lochies off site. As a new build, this option delivers the full target GIFA and provides a high quality, digitally enabled, energy efficient, flexible teaching and learning environment with more robust linkages to outdoor learning

spaces. This option whilst, unavoidably resulting in some disruption, would allow pupils to remain in current Deerpark PS building during construction. Once complete the existing school would be demolished and new green spaces with possible options of an outdoor nursery, sports provision and access / parking would be established on the existing Deerpark PS site frontage.

- 7.5. **Option 3** – Demolish and new build Deerpark on existing site and new build Lochies off-site. As a new build, this option delivers the full target GIFA and provides a high quality, digitally enabled, energy efficient, flexible teaching and learning environment with more robust linkages to outdoor learning spaces. It occupies a similar location to the existing school and as such would require demolition of the existing school. Decant accommodation would also be required unless the pupils could be accommodated elsewhere for the duration of construction.
- 7.6. **Option 4** - New build Deerpark on within Carsebridge Development and new build Lochies off-site. The school location proposed within the Carsebridge Housing development masterplan has been used to give an indication of the scale of land a new build Deerpark would require to meet its internal and external space requirements. The site at this Carsebridge location has not been the subject of mechanical and electrical and civil and structural desktop review at this time.
- 7.7. Although construction work at Deerpark Primary school cannot commence until Lochies have moved to their new site, a project brief needs to be developed further. This brief will be brought back to Council for approval.

8.0 St Mungos Primary

- 8.1. Given the time pressures associated with undertaking the work to complete a LEIP bid and the need for a consultation to be undertaken on the Lochies move, the work on the options appraisal to consider the future location of St Mungos Primary has not been completed. A report will be brought back to a future Council meeting to enable the Council to consider the options.

9.0 Sustainability Implications

- 9.1. A condition of the LEIP funding is that all projects must have zero emissions heating, include electric vehicle charging infrastructure and have an embodied carbon target. It should be noted these can be achieved for new build options identified in earlier sections. These will contribute to the Council's climate change agenda.

10.0 Resource Implications

10.1. Financial Details

The work to undertake project briefs for Lochies and Deerpark schools can be funded from the Capital budget for the Learning Estate that was approved as part of the Council's budget setting in March 2022.

If a LEIP bid is successful the funding would be paid as a revenue grant after the school was operational and would be subject to the Council achieving previously agreed operating targets.

11.0 Exempt Reports

- 11.1. Is this report exempt? Yes (please detail the reasons for exemption below) No

12.0 Declarations

The recommendations contained within this report support or implement our Corporate Priorities and Council Policies.

- (1) **Our Priorities** (Please double click on the check box)

Clackmannanshire will be attractive to businesses & people and ensure fair opportunities for all

Our families; children and young people will have the best possible start in life

Women and girls will be confident and aspirational, and achieve their full potential

Our communities will be resilient and empowered so that they can thrive and flourish

- (2) **Council Policies** (Please detail)

13.0 Equalities Impact

- 13.1 Have you undertaken the required equalities impact assessment to ensure that no groups are adversely affected by the recommendations?
 Yes No

14.0 Legality

- 14.1 It has been confirmed that in adopting the recommendations contained in this report, the Council is acting within its legal powers. Yes No

15.0 Appendices

Condition Surveys Deerpark and Lochies
 Options Appraisals Deerpark and Lochies
 Architects Reports Deerpark and Lochies

16.0 Background Papers

- 16.1 Have you used other documents to compile your report? (All documents must be kept available by the author for public inspection for four years from the date of meeting at which the report is considered)
 YES (please list the documents below) No
 Clackmannanshire Council 10 February 2022 Learning Estate Update
 Clackmannanshire Council 19 December 2019 Learning Estate Strategy 2019 - 2040

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