

## From mountain to sea

### Appendix B

# Fisherford School Options Appraisal

## 1. Introduction

Aberdeenshire Council strives to allocate its resources in a way that ensures the quality of all its services. It attaches particular importance to providing the best possible educational experience for all pupils within its schools.

An update to the Aberdeenshire Learning Estate Strategy will be considered by Education and Children's Services Committee on [1 February 2024](#). The Council's strategy sets out the council's aspirations for our schools using a holistic place-based approach, which will ensure that services can be delivered in an optimum way, making the best use of available assets, whilst potentially identifying underperforming and surplus assets. The strategy also defines the ideal occupancy level of a school, which would be approximately 85%, with a target occupancy band between 75% and 90%. An excessively low level of occupancy is unlikely to be sustainable, affordable, or leading to a best value estate.

Government Guidelines within Scotland's Learning Estate Strategy "Connecting People, Places and Learning" Guiding Principle states that "Learning environments should support the wellbeing of all learners, meet varying needs to support inclusion and support transitions for all learners" and that "the Learning Estate should be well managed and maintained, making the best of existing resources, maximising occupancy and representing and delivering best value."

At its meeting on [7 October 2021](#), Education and Children's Services Committee agreed that when a primary school has eight or fewer pupils, then the Director of Education and Children's Services should consider mothballing, subject to an assessment of the school roll forecast that does not indicate that there will be sufficient in zone pupils to increase the roll above eight pupils in the next two years.

Mothballing is the temporary closure of a school which does not in itself lead to statutory consultation. This decision is taken in accordance with the Scottish Government's statutory guidance contained in the Schools (Consultation) (Scotland) Act of 2010. The Act requires that educational benefits should be at the heart of any proposal to make a significant change to schools, for current and future pupils in the area.

On [9 June 2022](#) Education and Children's Services Committee approved the preparation of an Options Appraisal on the future of Fisherford School and supported community engagement as part of the Options Appraisal process to identify alternative options to consider.

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### 2. Background / Discussion

Officers regularly monitor the school rolls for all schools across Aberdeenshire to track changes to pupil numbers. On 25 May 2021, officers were informed that due to families moving out of the catchment for Fisherford School there was to be a decrease in the roll and this decrease would leave the school with a roll of three pupils for the start of the 2021/22 academic year. Schools with a low roll prompt an assessment around the viability of the school and the educational benefits and wellbeing for the pupils. The Council was no longer able to deliver viable education at Fisherford School.

Officers met with Ward Members to discuss the possible options for Fisherford School due to the decreasing roll.

A decision to temporarily mothball Fisherford School from the start of the new academic year, August 2021, was taken by the Director of Education & Children's Services in May 2021.

Meetings were held with the staff and the parents of Fisherford School on 27 May 2021 to inform them of the intention to mothball the school. At that point, information was shared regarding the relocation of staff and also which schools would be made available to pupils with transport provided.

Pupils from Fisherford School were offered a place at either Auchterless, Largue, Rayne North or Rothienorman Schools.

The families were assured that, should mothballing continue, younger siblings who were yet to start school, would also be guaranteed a place at the school of choice. As Largue, Rayne North and Rothienorman Schools are not within the Turriff Academy catchment area, this would not prevent them from having a place at Turriff Academy. However, their child would also be guaranteed a place at their chosen primary school's cluster Academy.

Individual meetings with parents were held on 31 May 2021 to discuss personal circumstances and to give support to each family.

Upon consultations with affected families and staff, all pupils were successfully placed at their chosen schools, namely: Auchterless, Largue and Rayne North Schools, and all staff were appropriately relocated.

On [7 October 2021](#), a report was presented to Education and Children's Services Committee informing the Committee of the decision that Fisherford School would be mothballed from August 2021.

On 14 April 2022, officers wrote to the parents/carers of pupils residing within the Fisherford School catchment area giving them the opportunity to express their interest in their child(ren)

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enrolling at the school. Only one family expressed an interest in their child(ren) enrolling at the schools.

Due to there being an insufficient number of pupils wishing to return to Fisherford School to make the educational experience viable, the school remained mothballed for the 2022/23 session.

Education and Children's Services Committee were kept informed of the situation. On [9 June 2022](#), a report was presented to the Committee informing of the decision that Fisherford School would be mothballed for a further 2022/23 academic year.

The Primary 1 admission period for all Aberdeenshire Schools takes place in January each year. Press releases were issued to inform families that applications could be made for pupils to enroll at school. The deadline for submitting out of zone placing requests is March each year. No applications or out of zone requests to Fisherford School have been received since the school was mothballed.

As there continued to be no pupils expected to enroll at Fisherford School, the school remains mothballed during the 2023/24 session.

### **3. Community Engagement**

The wider Fisherford community was kept informed and engaged to explore potential options for the future of Fisherford School.

An online survey was made available to all residents across the Fisherford area from 10 June until 14 July 2023 and was completed by 19 respondents. The survey questions and a summary of submitted feedback have been provided in Appendix B1.

A community engagement drop-in session at Auchterless School was held on 3 October 2023. All residents within Fisherford settlement, Auchterless, Inverkeithny and Fisherford Community Council and local Councillors were invited to participate in the event. Communication regarding the session was also published on the Council's website and Facebook pages. The session was attended by eight members of the community and three Elected Members. A summary of comments gathered during the event is appended to this report as Appendix B2.

### **4. Options Appraisal**

An options appraisal has been undertaken to consider the future of Fisherford School to ensure the best educational and wellbeing benefits for Fisherford children.

#### **4.1 Fisherford School**

Fisherford School is non-denominational and serves the village of Fisherford and the

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surrounding rural area. Fisherford is located nine miles east of the town of Huntly, five miles west of the village of Rothienorman.

The school has a capacity of 30 pupils and it comprises of two buildings, the main school, and the dining facility.

The main school building dates from 1932 and comprises of two classrooms and general purpose hall, office, staff room and other ancillary spaces such as storage and toilet facilities, arranged over a single storey at ground floor level. The building is heated by electric storage and panel heaters.

The dining facility comprises of a dining room, staff toilet and storeroom arranged over a single storey at ground floor level. The building is heated by electric storage and panel heaters.

Meals for pupils were prepared by Rothienorman School kitchen and delivered to Fisherford School on a daily basis.

The outdoor areas are a concrete playground with a wooden picnic table, some benches and football goals. Pupils have access to a garden, overgrown woodland and pond on the back of the school. The school ground is adjacent to a grass playground with play equipment which belongs to Fisherford Community Association.

There is a defibrillator located at the front of the main school building.

The school floorplan is attached as Appendix B3, and a map of the school ground and its surrounding amenities is shown in Map 1 below.

Map 1 – Fisherford School site plan



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Fisherford School delivered primary education from P1 to P7 and pupils were taught in a multi-composite single class. There is no nursery on site and local children often attended nursery at other nearby schools.

A high level review of the title deeds suggests no concerns regarding the ownership of the school building or land. There are no title restrictions which would prevent the Council from selling the site. There is also no record of the building, or any part of the building being listed with Historic Scotland.

### 4.2 Fisherford School Core Facts

Condition is an assessment of the physical condition of the school building and its grounds. Fisherford School was assessed in June 2023 and the overall condition rating for the property is 'B – Satisfactory', performing adequately but showing minor deterioration.

Within the condition survey the following elements received a grade 'C':

- Main building – external walls, electrical power and lighting
- Dining hall – electrical power and lighting

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In addition, heating/electrical features at the main building were graded 'D – Bad', not supporting the delivery of services to children and communities.

The condition survey considered maintenance required to maintain service delivery for the next five years and the total investment required is £172,364.50 equating to £615.59/m<sup>2</sup>.

Suitability is an assessment of the school as a whole, the buildings, the grounds and the impact they have on teaching and learning, leisure and social activities, as well as the health and wellbeing of users. The Suitability assessment of Fisherford School was carried out in March 2019, the school was graded as 'B – Satisfactory', performing well but with minor problems (school buildings and grounds generally support the delivery of services).

Fixed furniture and fittings in the learning spaces, and functionality of the general purpose area were graded 'C – Poor', showing major problems and not operating optimally (the school buildings and grounds impede the delivery of activities that are needed for children and communities in the school).

Some car parking is available at the school but can only be accessed by driving through the playground. There is also a small layby next to the playing field that can be used for a drop-off/pick-up. The school is located on a road class 'B' without school bus road markings or a passing place beside the school.

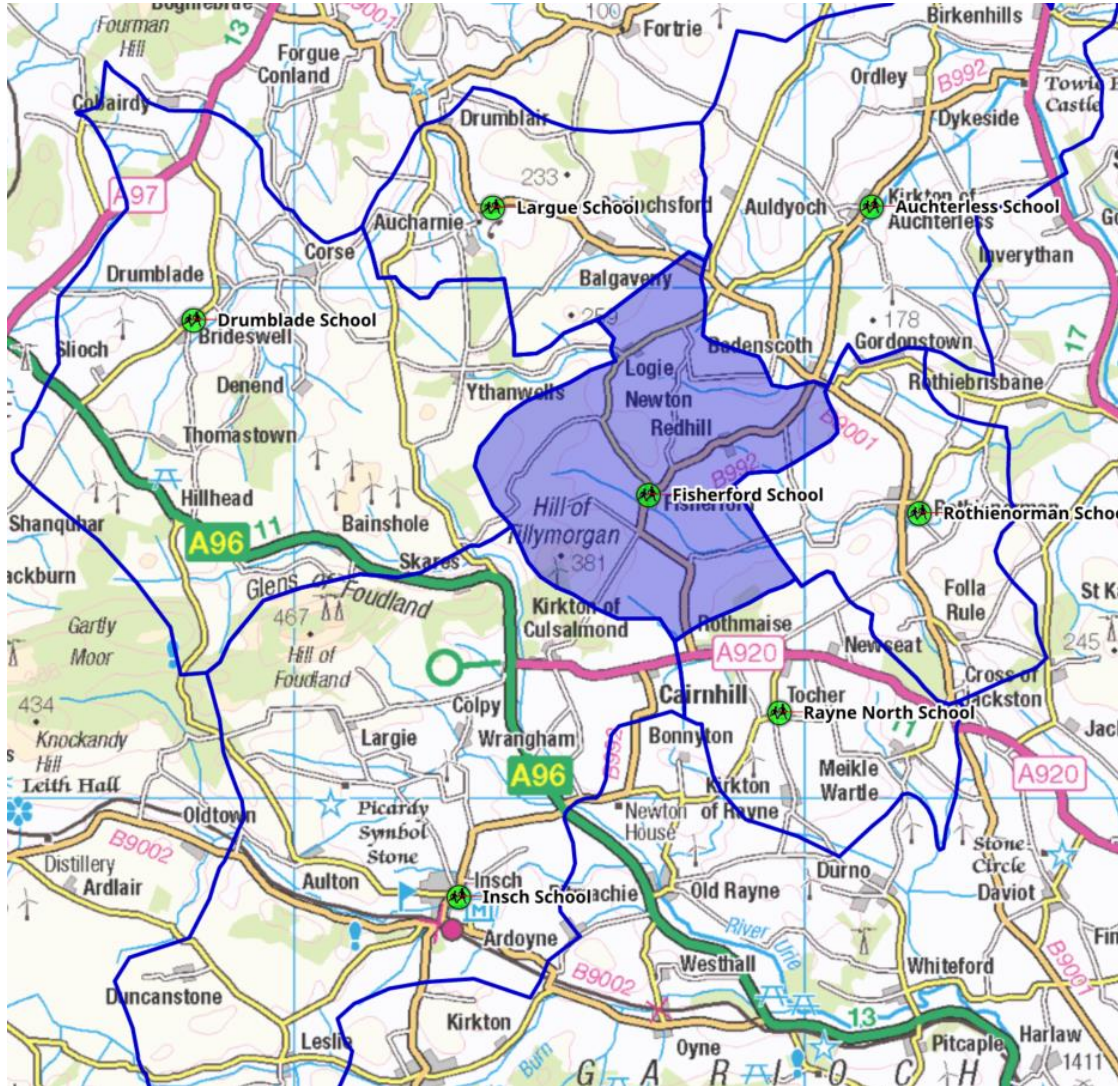
### **4.3 Fisherford and Local Area**

Under the Scottish Government Urban Rural Classification Fisherford School is an 'accessible rural school' (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).

The catchment area for the school, which stretches from Drumsinnie on the east to Wether Hill on the west and from south of Newton of Rothmaise to north of Logie Newton, is shown in Map 2 below.

Map 2 – Catchment area for Fisherford School and surrounding schools

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Fisherford School borders with Auchterless, Rotherienorman, Rayne North, Inch, Drumblade and Largue Schools. Auchterless School is located within the Turriff Cluster, Rotherienorman and Rayne North Schools sit within the Meldrum Cluster and Inch, Drumblade and Largue Schools within the Huntly Cluster.

Distances between Fisherford School and surrounding schools sourced from Google Maps are listed below:

- Auchterless School – 4.9 miles
- Rotherienorman School – 5 miles
- Rayne North School – 3.9 miles
- Inch School – 7 miles
- Drumblade School – 8.4 miles
- Largue School – 6.8 miles

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The Scottish Index of Multiple Deprivation (SIMD) is a measure of deprivation across 6,976 data zones. SIMD ranks data zones from most deprived (ranked as 1) to least deprived (ranked as 6,976). The lowest ranking Fisherford data zone is ranked at position 4005 and the highest at 5642. This indicates that pupils living within the Fisherford School catchment are not considered living in socio-economical deprived households.

### **4.4 Rural Sustainability and Housing Development**

Fisherford is a small village, in rural Aberdeenshire, sited amongst farms and fields. Members of the community are involved in the farming industry and the residences are scattered over a wide area.

Residents of Fisherford access shops, post office, health centre, library, and community sports facilities at nearby settlements such as Insch or Turriff.

There are no Masterplans agreed for Fisherford and any other housing developments located within the Fisherford School catchment area. Therefore, there is limited prospect of generating new pupils into the area to reinstate the school.

### **4.5 Demographics and Pupil Numbers**

Prior to the school being mothballed the roll at Fisherford School had been changing due to parents submitting placing requests both in and out of the school. The P1 intake ranged from one to six pupils.

In August 2021, when the school was mothballed, there would have been only three pupils on the roll taught in one composite P1 to P7 class.

There are currently 13 children of P1-P7 age residing within the catchment area of Fisherford School (SEEMIS extract 18 October 2023). These children all attend other schools in the area, some through placement when the school was mothballed and others through parental choice in previous academic sessions. The majority attends Rayne North School.

School roll forecasts show a small number of families living in the catchment area with children that are under school age. According to the NHS data there are 6 children within the catchment area that could enroll for P1 in August 2024 and five or fewer in August 2025 and 2026.

### **4.6 Occupancy**

During the 2020/21 session at its peak there were 10 pupils on the school roll. With the capacity of 30 the occupancy level was 33%. From August 2021, with a roll of only three pupils the utilisation of the school would have reduced to 10% had the school remained operational. Such a low occupancy level does not support the wellbeing of all learners and



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does not meet their varying needs. In addition, low occupancy is unsustainable, unaffordable and does not offer the best value.

### **4.7 Pupil Enrolments**

As outlined above in Section 2 of this report, Aberdeenshire Council had written to parents/carers of pupils residing within the Fisherford School catchment if they wished their children to continue their education at Fisherford School, but there was an insufficient number of pupils wanting to return for the school to become operational again and to ensure the educational experience is viable.

Each year in January press release is issued to inform families that applications can be made for pupils to enroll at the school. Since 2022/23 academic year no families have approached Aberdeenshire Council to enroll their children at Fisherford School. Similarly, each year the deadline for submitting placing requests for August start is 15 March and no applications have been received for pupils wishing to attend Fisherford School since the school was mothballed.

From the data held by the Service, all children known to be residing in the Fisherford School catchment have submitted placing requests to attend other schools.

### **4.8 Fisherford Community**

While in operation, the school did not operate a breakfast or after school club. The building was used for Parent Council meetings and Fisherford Community Association had a designated keyholder for the canteen building, without access to the school building, to hold their meetings, approximately four times per year. The main school building has not operated as a community facility during the time it was operational as a school, or during the periods of mothballing.

As discussed above in Section 4.4, residents travel to the nearby settlements to access services, such as GP, dental surgeries, shops, and other community facilities.

The evidence outlined above indicates that there will be little impact on the existing arrangements of the community as well as its sustainability if the school was closed.

## **5. Options for Consideration**

Alternative suggestions for the school building were received, some are educational / community based, whilst others would involve commitment from other agencies or private companies. These cannot be implemented or trialed without the formal closure of the school.

A full list of suggestions and comments with an overview of the requirements for them to be implemented can be found in the below table.

Table 1

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No.	Comment/Suggestion	Requirement for implementation
1	Community centre; community hall; satellite community centre; hand over to a community group; community classes - yoga, coffee mornings, café, catering hub, men's shed, hire out for parties	School closure process - further engagement with other sectors within Aberdeenshire Council, community or private sector commitment
2	Childcare centre for working parents in the area	School closure process - community or private sector commitment
3	Something related to families and children	School closure process - further engagement with other sectors within Aberdeenshire Council, community or private sector commitment
4	Nursery, pre-school, after school club	School reopening or closure process - further engagement with other sectors within Aberdeenshire Council, community or private sector commitment
5	Primary school, council nursery/afterschool	School reopening process - sufficient school roll
6	Education setting for children who struggling with mainstream education; ASL provision in the area; alternative learning environment specializing in additional support or inclusive learning for children who cannot thrive in a large setting	School closure process - further engagement with other sectors within Aberdeenshire Council or private sector commitment
7	Adult education	School closure process - community or private sector commitment
8	Social enterprise project	School closure process - community or private sector commitment
9	Office spaces for local businesses;	School closure process - private sector commitment
10	Satellite Council offices	School closure process - further engagement with other sectors within Aberdeenshire Council
11	Community Asset Transfer	School closure process - further engagement with other sectors within Aberdeenshire Council
12	Business that would be of service to community	School closure process - private sector commitment
13	Recreational facility, sports facility, skate area, basketball, soft ball, team sports	School closure process - further engagement with other sectors within Aberdeenshire Council, community or private sector commitment
14	Facility led by Live Life Aberdeenshire, like Culsalmond School or Ellon Castle Park	School closure process - further engagement with Live Life Aberdeenshire
15	Sell the school	School closure process - private sector commitment

The following options were considered for the future of Fisherford School as part of the

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options appraisal:

- 1 Reopen the school – Reopening of the school requires families wishing to enroll their children at the school. No pupils have enrolled at the school and no families have indicated that they would wish to attend the school. This option has been discounted.
- 2 Continue Status Quo – School remains mothballed for a further session and potentially beyond. The school has been mothballed since August 2021. The longer the school is mothballed the more uncertainty for families and the community the situation causes. There is also a greater chance of mechanical failure of the heating system while it is not operational. Unoccupied buildings deteriorate more quickly than operational premises and are more likely exposed to potential crimes and acts of vandalism. This option has been discounted.
- 3 Consider closure of Fisherford School and rezoning pupils to attend another school in the area.

### **6 Conclusion**

One of the options identified as part of the options appraisal is to close Fisherford School. This is currently considered to be the only viable option for the school; therefore, Aberdeenshire Council must undertake a statutory consultation under the Schools (Consultation) (Scotland) Act 2010. As a rural school, there is a presumption against closure and Aberdeenshire Council must ensure all other alternatives have been identified and robustly considered prior to undertaking any statutory consultation on this matter.

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### Appendix B1

#### Online Survey Summary

On 19 June 2023, a total of 115 letters were sent to all residents living within the Fisherford School catchment area to obtain their views on the future of the school. The survey was open until 14 July 2023 and anyone in a household, including children, could have participated.

A total of 19 people completed the survey. It is recognised that respondents may have more than one child, therefore more than one answer was provided for some of the questions. A few respondents left multiple comments covering more than one topic and some left no comments.

Additionally, any further suggestions could have been submitted by email to [LearningEstates@aberdeenshire.gov.uk](mailto:LearningEstates@aberdeenshire.gov.uk) or posted to Aberdeenshire Council, Gordon House, Blackhall Road, Inverurie, AB51 3WA by Friday 14 July 2023. No submissions were received.

The survey asked questions about the future of Fisherford School as well as any alternatives and suggestions to the school closure. This report shows a summary of the results received.

Question 1 - The participants were asked what group of interest they represent.

The survey was completed by 11 parents/carers and eight members of the community.

Question 2 - The participants were asked if they live in the Fisherford School catchment area.

A total of 17 participants who completed the survey reside in the Fisherford area and two outwith. Of those who don't live in the Fisherford School catchment area, one is a parent/carer and the other is a community member.

Question 3 - The participants were asked whether they have school aged children and which school or nursery they attend.

The respondents have children attending five different schools or nursery settings across Turriff, Meldrum and Huntly Clusters. Some have children at secondary school, and some are too young to have started school.

Question 4 - The participants were asked what year group their children are in.

Parents/carers who responded to the survey have children in different age ranges, from pre-nursery up to secondary stage. They have four under school age children, five primary aged children and four secondary aged.

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Question 5 – The participants were asked if they wished their children to attend the school if it reopens.

Of the four parents/carers with under school age children residing in the Fisherford area, two would like to enroll their children at Fisherford School if it reopened, one would not and one did not know.

Of the five parents/carers of primary aged children residing in the Fisherford area, two would not wish to attend Fisherford School if it reopened and two did not know. One parent/carer would like their child to attend the school if it reopened; however, their child is in Primary 6-7 which means that within a year or two they will move to the secondary stage of education.

Question 6 – The participants were asked what in their opinion should happen with the school: reopen, continue mothballing or permanently close.

Some respondents selected more than one option.

Parents/carers who responded to the question were either not sure what should happen with the school or voted for reopening, continuation of mothballing or both. Of those, five voted for reopening, but only two of them have children who would be eligible to attend the school due to their age. None of the parents/carers selected permanent closure.

Choices of the community members were evenly distributed, there were three votes for each option: reopening, continuing mothballing and permanent closure.

Question 7 - The participants were asked if there is anything that they thought Aberdeenshire Council could do to encourage families to register at Fisherford School and help the school to reopen.

The respondents' comments were as follows:

- Maintain the school grounds so that potential students' parents would find it an attractive option.
- Explore childcare options, providing a before and after school club etc.
- Enlarge the catchment area with a choice of high schools to attend.
- Publish a newspaper article with reviews from former pupils.
- Advise people that the school will close if not in use.
- Upgrade parts of the school and encourage young families to build/move to the area.
- Enlarge the catchment area to relieve overcrowding in other schools.
- Provide some guarantee of continuity of education.
- Address the lack of before school childcare to reopen the school; turn the school into a council nursery/after school. The main reason many kids were put to out of zone schools is the lack of childcare/nursery provision in the area. Working parents need to

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be able to drop their kids off at childcare early in order to get to work on time; the reverse at the end of the day.

- People will lose confidence that you may close it again. Assurance needs to be put in place that the school will remain open for x amount of years.
- Social activities, charity events, document age of school in posters, advertise advantages of small schools.
- Nothing.

Question 8 - The participants were asked which school catchment area Fisherford School should be realigned to if a decision is made in the future to close it: Auchterless School, Largue School, Rayne North School or Rothienorman School.

Some respondents selected more than one option, some steered through the survey without answering the question and some did not know to which catchment area should Fisherford School be realigned in case of closure. As an outcome, there were nine votes cast for Auchterless School, seven for Rothienorman School, six for Rayne North School and two for Largue School.

Of the parents/carers of under school age children, there were two votes for Rothienorman School. Of the parents/carers of primary aged children, there were three votes for Rayne North School, two for Rothienorman School and one for Auchterless School. Of the parents/carers of secondary aged children, there were three votes for Auchterless School, two each for Rothienorman School and Largue School and one for Rayne North School.

Of the community members who completed the survey, there were five votes for Auchterless School, two for Rayne North School and one for Rothienorman School.

Question 9 - The participants were asked for suggestions on the future of Fisherford School, including alternative uses for the building.

The participants provided comments on the future of the school and ideas on how the space could be used:

- Strongly support retaining the school buildings and grounds for use as a community centre.
- The building should be offered for sale as soon as possible to avoid further deterioration.
- Hire out for parties.
- Community classes - yoga, coffee mornings.
- The building should be used for something related to families and children.
- Community building, nursery, men's shed, sports facility, skate area for kids from local areas - Auchterless, Large, Fergie, Rothienorman.
- Education setting for children who struggle with mainstream education.
- A pre-school nursery & after school to cater for rural children.

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- If not open as a school, then it should be maintained and used as a community hall. It's too good a place to just leave empty and deteriorate.
- Continuation as an education center: preschool, primary or adult education.
- Childcare centre for working parents in the area.
- Hand over to a community group.
- Turn the school into a council nursery/after school.
- A pre-school nursery & after school to cater for rural children. Not everyone wants to be centralised. Otherwise, you are adding to the neglect of rural areas further contributing to the decline of the Fisherford community.
- A community hall option would require a lot of input and commitment from the residents which is unlikely to happen; the community struggled to keep a community group going for years.
- It is detrimental to the village to have an empty building in the village so if closure is the only option, then selling the school and grounds would be a preferred option.
- If it never opens as a school, it should be offered as a community centre.

### Conclusions

Only 10 parents/carers residing within the Fisherford School catchment area completed the survey. Of these, seven parents/carers have children who could possibly attend Fisherford School now or in the future. Three were uncertain about what should happen to the school, four supported further mothballing and two of those four selected reopening or mothballing.

There were some conflicting responses, such as a parent/carer of a secondary aged child who stated that they would wish to attend the school if it reopened.

Generally, the community is inclined to keep the school as there were 13 votes between reopening or continuing mothballing, three votes for permanent closure and three respondents did not know what should happen with the school.

There is an emotional attachment for some community members stating that the school was a happy and enriched education setting for children. Some participants wished there was a school available for families living in the area, and some were of the opinion that the school should continue to be mothballed and its position reviewed after a few years. Comments were made about the lack of an early education setting or breakfast/afterschool club in the area which forces families to choose other schools for childcare reasons. A comment was made that the Council is adding to the neglect of rural areas further contributing to the decline of the Fisherford community.

Other participants commented that there is little or no community in the area due to the scattered population, so in their opinion, alternative options for the building's use by the community would not work. A community hall option would require commitment from the residents which is unlikely to happen as the community struggled to keep a community group in previous years.



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The majority of the respondents believed that the Fisherford School zone should be realigned to the Auchterless School catchment area. There were comments that Fisherford children should be able to go to their nearest school, but not already fully occupied like Rayne North or Rothienorman Schools. Others commented that the Fisherford School catchment area should be realigned with a primary that already comes under Turriff Academy. Some believed that families should be allowed to choose from any school bordering with Fisherford.



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### Appendix B2

#### Community Engagement Event Summary

On 3 October 2023, a drop-in session was held at Auchterless School Hall. The session was attended by eight members of the community, including villagers and parents of over primary school age children, and three Elected Members.

During the session attendees were provided with key information regarding the school. They had an opportunity to ask questions, which were answered by officers at the time, and to provide comments and suggestions regarding the future of Fisherford School.

During discussions, the following topics were debated:

- School's sustainability.
- School admissions and placing requests.
- Catchment areas and rezoning.
- Closure options.
- Future of the building.
- Access to the school canteen.
- Turning Fisherford School into a special education setting.
- Site maintenance.

The attendees were provided with comment cards to leave their views and comments on the future of the school. Five comment cards with multiple comments were submitted and they were as follows:

- Increase catchment area – oversubscribed schools Rayne North, Drumblade and Rothienorman.
- Disgrace maintenance of a “mothballed building” – it’s been effectively abandoned since its closure.
- Huge need for additional ASL provision in the area – forest nurture school etc, woodland area, hens, pets etc. garden for growing, playpark, football pitch already exists on the site.
- Preschool education.
- If not for education – potential for a social enterprise project.
- Potential for office spaces for local businesses.
- Not to leave it empty as it will/has become a target for vandalism.
- Enlarge the catchment area for Fisherford.
- Keep the building in use, maintain and secure; currently the building is neglected, not respectful display for the community.
- Satellite community centre or satellite authority offices.
- Café/catering hub.

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- A business that would be of service to the community.
- Community Asset Transfer.
- Recreational facility.
- The school would be an ideal location and set up for an alternative learning environment, somewhere to specialise for additional support or inclusive learning for children who cannot thrive in a large setting.
- For keeping the school increase the catchment area rather than split
- The school must be used and maintained.
- Fabric, aesthetics, and security must be maintained.
- For an abandoned building to be left without consideration is disrespectful to the residents.
- In view to keep the building open and maintained, alternative uses could be local business rentals, sport/recreation facilities, catering/café, satellite office for Council, preschool/nursery provisions, ASL (excellent provision – garden, space, playpark, hall, catering, education, woodland), basketball, safe ball, team sports.
- Parallel to Culsalmond School – no community asset transfer – now Live Life Aberdeenshire; Ellon – Castle Park – very well organised.
- Put out a survey to areas nearby – are there families/non-attending pupils that might benefit from support at Fisherford School.

In addition to comment cards participants were provided with cards to mark a line on a map where they thought the boundary should be if the Fisherford School catchment area was to be split between neighbouring schools. Three responses were submitted. Two attendees were of the opinion that the Fisherford School catchment should be split between Auchterless and Rothienorman Schools, with a line going from Roman Camp in the north-west to the west of Wood of Middleton. One card did not show any boundary lines suggestions but some comments: Drumblade 50+ pupils, Rothienorman and Rayne North oversubscribed and Largue closed.

There seems to be some misunderstanding in terms of the position of some neighbouring schools, namely: Drumblade, Rothienorman and Rayne North Schools are not oversubscribed, they are between 72% to 86% of occupancy.

Although the attendees were disappointed with the existing position of the school, there was a sense of understanding that a school cannot exist without families wishing to attend the school. Some community members at the meeting realised educational and social benefits for children over the desire to reopen the school at all costs.

The attendees were concerned about the building and its site not being maintained and secured, and that it was left abandoned. However, they provided many suggestions for the use of the school building in case the school was to be permanently closed in the future. Many voices indicated that they do not want the building to deteriorate whilst not in use.

None of the attendees had children under school age or primary aged children.

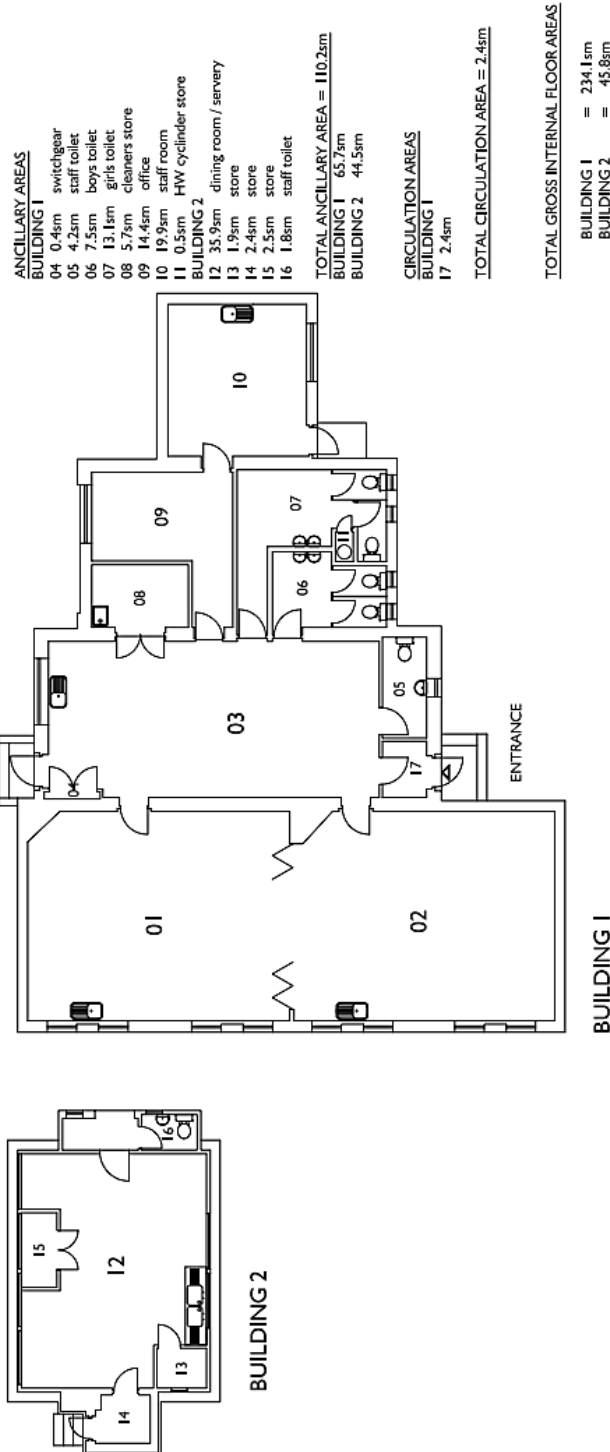


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**Appendix B3**

**Fisherford School Floorplan**

THIS DRAWING IS FOR GENERAL REFERENCE PURPOSES ONLY - ALL DIMENSIONS ARE TO BE CHECKED ON SITE.



Amended 15th January 2003

Floor Plan - NOT TO SCALE sheet 1 of 2

REFERENCE DRAWING No. **B2905RF1** Date Surveyed **WES 16FEB00** Date Drawn **WES 16FEB00**  
**FISHERFORD PRIMARY SCHOOL**  
 Rothienorman Inverurie



**Aberdeenshire**  
COUNCIL  
 Woodhill House Westburn Road Aberdeen AB16 5GB Tel. (01467) 620981  
 Property  
 Property is a part of the Transportation, Roads and Property Service.