



**CUSTOMER SERVICES:
EDUCATION**

OPTIONS APPRAISAL

**ARDCHATTAN PRIMARY
SCHOOL**

1. INTRODUCTION

On 24 April 2014 Argyll and Bute Council approved the mothballing of Ardchattan Primary School. The Council agreed that if there were no registered pupils by the close of the registration period for session 2016/17 the Council would consult formally on the future of school provision at Ardchattan.

<https://www.argyll-bute.gov.uk/moderngov/documents/s87661/ARDCHATTAN%20PRIMARY%20SCHOOL.pdf>

On 14th December 2017, the Community Services Committee agreed that the Education Service would undertake the required preliminary consultation and an options appraisal, for Ardchattan Primary School. The Community Services Committee received a report on 15th March 2018 presenting and outlining details of a potential formal consultation under the Schools (Consultation) (Scotland) Act 2010 (as amended) and a broad timeline of this process.

<https://www.argyll-bute.gov.uk/moderngov/documents/s124759/Pre%20Consultation%20for%20Ardchattan%20Ashfield%20Primary%20Schools.pdf>

The statutory process for the closure of a rural school is laid out in the Schools (Consultation) (Scotland) Act 2010 as amended by the Children and Young People (Scotland) Act 2014.

The Act, as amended, introduced a presumption against closure of a rural school and details specific requirements which the education authority is required to follow if they are formulating a proposal to close a rural school. This includes the introduction of a preliminary consultation process.

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.

Ardchattan Primary School has had zero pupils enrolled since elected members approved the mothballing.

On 14th December 2017, Community Services Committee agreed that the Education Service would undertake the preliminary requirements in relation to considering a rural school closure required and look at an options appraisal for Ardchattan Primary School. This review will enable Community Services: Education to identify and consider the options put forward.

The Schools (Consultation) (Scotland) Act 2010 makes special arrangements in regard to rural schools that is in effect a presumption against their closure. There is a requirement to have special regard to the rural schools factors prior to formulating a

proposal to close a rural school. In particular it is necessary to consider any reasonable alternatives before considering closure. It is also necessary to consider the impact on the wider community of a potential closure and the impact of any different travel arrangements. These factors have been considered in this options appraisal.

2. REASONS FOR THE PROPOSAL

An authority that is formulating a rural school closure proposal must satisfy the preliminary requirements set out in section 12A of the 2010 Act before starting to prepare its proposal paper.

1. The Authority's reasons for formulating a proposal are: Ardchattan Primary School has been mothballed for four years. The school roll was very low and not predicted to rise in the near future. This continues to be the situation.
2. Along with several other rural councils, Argyll and Bute is facing increasing challenges in recruiting staff. In October 2018 there were significant vacancies for both Head Teachers and Teachers.
3. Whilst the school is mothballed, the building is deteriorating with limited budgets for maintenance

The Council is required to consider the future of Ardchattan Primary School. The options are explored within this paper.

3. BACKGROUND

Argyll and Bute is an area of outstanding natural beauty sitting within an ancient landscape with a strong cultural identity. Today, the culture of Argyll and Bute is reflected in its traditional industries of fishing, farming and crofting, sports such as shinty and in its world class musicians and artists as well as its modern commercial industries such as wind turbine production and fish farming.

Argyll and Bute is geographically the second largest authority in Scotland. Education is delivered in a range of settings including schools, partnerships and youth services.

3.1 Argyll and Bute Corporate Plan

The Argyll and Bute Corporate Plan identifies Argyll and Bute as an area of Scotland with outstanding places, people and potential for a prosperous future for everyone. Our Council along with our Community Planning Partners, is committed to ensuring that Argyll and Bute's Economic Success is built on a Growing Population.

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 plans, helping to focus on local outcomes that will achieve meaningful improvements for the area, our local communities and our citizens.

Councils have a statutory responsibility in terms of the Local Government in Scotland Act 2003 to achieve best value. Our Community Services Asset Management Plan provides a review of the property assets used to deliver services. It incorporates the School Estate Management Plan which reflects the local implementation of Building Better Schools: Investing in Scotland's Future, the national school estate strategy developed by the Scottish Government in conjunction with local authorities.

The aspirations, guiding principles and objectives contained within Building Better Schools are reflected throughout Education and Children's Services Asset Management Plan (SAMP) for schools and public buildings, both in the management of the existing assets and in the design and construction of developments.

3.2 Our Children Their Future

Councils, as an Education Authority, 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. This is reflected in Our Children, Their Future: Education Vision and Strategy.

3.3 Ardchattan and the Local Area - the Ardchattan Primary School Setting

Ardchattan is a scenically beautiful area, north of Oban, bordering on Loch Etive. Its name derives from the 6th-century Irish monk Saint Cathan, combined with the Gaelic element *Ard-* or heights. Ardchattan Priory which was founded around the year 1230, is an historic attraction within the parish. The priory's ruins and surrounding gardens are open to the public. In the early 1900s there were about a thousand people living in Bonawe/ Ardchattan. The hub of this community was the Bonawe Quarry which still operates today.

3.4 The School within the Community

Ardchattan Primary School has been very active within the community. It has been a focus for social and educational events. The pupils invited the community to attend events on many occasions every year. Whilst being mothballed, the school continues to be used for Community Council Meetings, Friends of Ardchattan School Meetings and other occasional events. There is no other available community space or hall in the area.

3.5 Population

Argyll and Bute has an average population density of just 0.13 persons per hectare. This coupled with the changing demographic profile of the area presents one of our greatest challenges. The table below refers directly to the Ardchattan area showing the changing population from census 2001 to census 2011:

Table 1: Population Information

Ardchattan Area Census Ref : 60QD000575			
2001		2011	
Total Resident Population	140	Total Resident Population	136
% under 16	25.71	% under 16	15.4
% 16 – 64 (pensionable age)	55.71	% 16 – 64 (pensionable age)	66.2
% pensionable age and over	18.57	% pensionable age and over	16.8

It is recognised that the census area and the catchment area of Ardchattan Primary School differ slightly.

3.6 Development and House Building

The current Local Development Plan (LDP) was adopted in March 2015. A new Local Development Plan (LDP2), which will set out planning and development proposals for the next 10 years from 2020 and a vision for 20 years, is currently being prepared. The Argyll and Bute Local Development Plan provides the local planning framework for the Council area, excluding the Loch Lomond and Trossachs National Park area. The Plan is divided into the written statement and proposals maps. The written statement provides the general policy context against which planning applications for new development proposals should be assessed. This is supported by the proposals maps which show the range of development opportunities and constraints within the area, for example:

- the key development areas i.e. the allocations for housing, industry and business, community facilities and infrastructure;
- the potential areas for future development (Potential Development Areas);
- areas requiring actions such as environmental improvement or regeneration (Areas for Action);
- and environmental designations such as national Scenic Areas, Sites of Specific Scientific Interest (SSSIs), Special Protection Areas and Local Nature Conservation Sites.

Appendix 1 shows the LDP for Bonawe. Within the Ardchattan/ Bonawe LDP there is a designated area suitable for quarrying development whilst there is no area designated specifically for housing development. Within the Lochnell area there are 2 designated areas for housing.

The 'Key Rural Settlement' of Benderloch, where Lochnell Primary School is situated, has a moderate potential for growth with the Council's adopted settlement planning

strategy allowing for 'medium scale' development (between 6 and 30 dwelling units) on appropriate sites within the defined settlement boundary. In addition, the settlement of Benderloch currently has two 'Housing Allocations' within its boundaries with an expectation that these could be developed with a combined total of 61 dwellings. There is a further 'Potential Development Area' identified within the settlement boundary which affords the potential for further residential development of the site to a medium to high density. Benderloch is a relatively large settlement consisting of two discrete built-up areas, both of which have the potential to accommodate further 'windfall' development on appropriate sites.

In addition, the catchment area for Lochnell Primary School also incorporates the settlement of North Connel. North Connel is another relatively large settlement which includes a further two Housing Allocations for a combined total of 38 dwelling units and two additional Potential Development Areas for residential development (at low density).

Appendix 2 shows the LDP for Lochnell.

Appendix 3 provides the key for LDPs.

3.7 Ardchattan Primary School

Ardchattan Primary School was built in 1886 and is an attractive building of local granite in an exceptionally scenic setting. The school is co-educational and non-denominational and has a catchment area extending along the northern shore of Loch Etive including the village of Bonawe. The school has two classrooms, an art area and general purpose room as well as an office, a separate canteen building and a large playground.

Appendix 4 – Ardchattan Primary School Floor Plan.

Ardchattan Primary School is 8.3 miles from Lochnell Primary School. The area is sparsely populated with houses along the loch side, farms and the community of Bonawe. The school is situated on the side of a single track road that leads from North Connel to Ardchattan, there is then a further 0.8 of a mile of road leading to Bonawe Quarry where the road ends.

The Scottish Government's Rural School List 2016 classifies Ardchattan Primary School as 'very remote rural'. This is defined as an area with a population of less than 3,000 people, and with a drive time of over 60 minutes to a settlement of 10,000 or more. Ardchattan Primary is one of a group of over 20 primaries associated with Oban High School.

3.8 Lochnell Primary School

Following the mothballing of Ardchattan Primary School children attend either Lochnell Primary School or Dunbeg Primary School. Lochnell Primary School is a non-

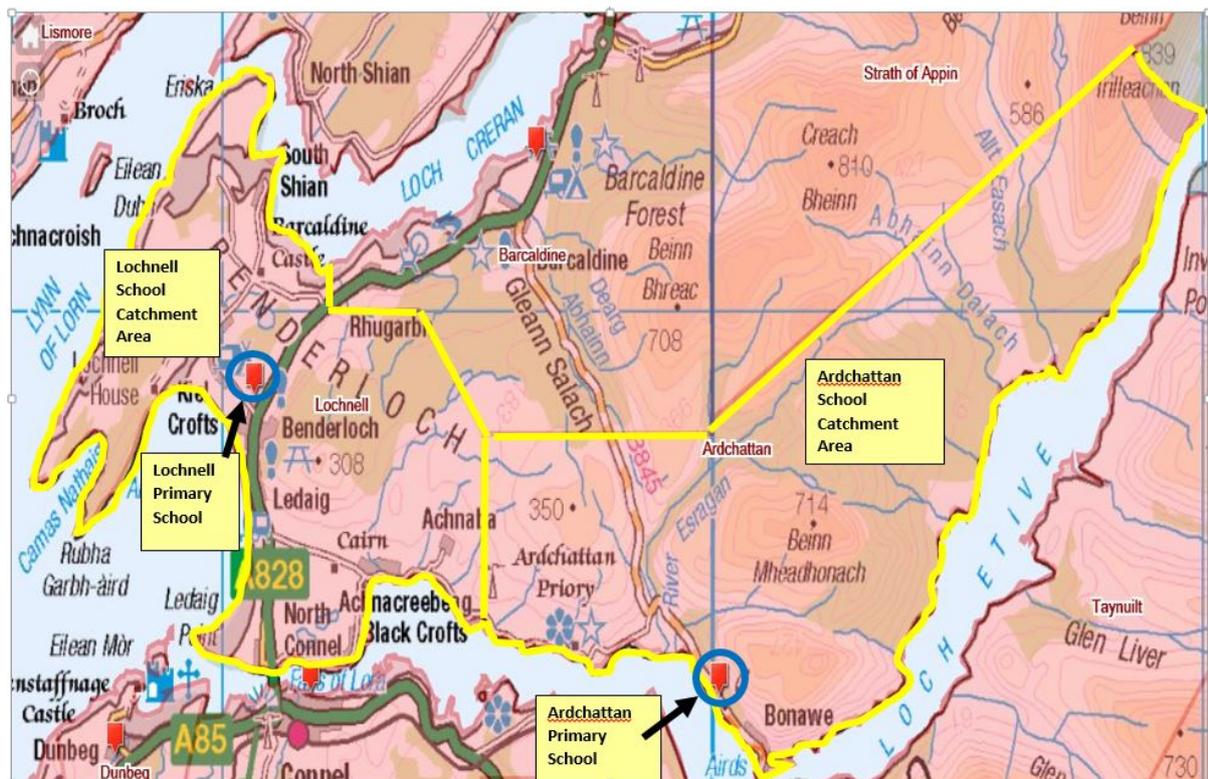
denominational and co-educational school situated in the village of Benderloch on the main Oban to Fort William road. The building is single storey and was opened in 1992. The teaching bays in the original building are semi open plan. The entire building is well maintained and along with the surrounding scenery provides attractive accommodation for the primary school.

Appendix 5 - Lochnell Primary School Floor Plan.

The outdoor area provides many opportunities for learning. A joint school and community project was completed to provide and maintain the all-weather pitch adjacent to the school. There is a hard play area complemented by grass play areas. The school has safe and easy access both the beach and Beinn Lora. There are willow dens to play in and access to the nearby cycle track.

The Lochnell Primary School building has facilities for pupils, visitors and special access needs. The Scottish Government’s Rural School List 2016 classifies Lochnell Primary School as ‘remote rural’. Oban High School is the associated Secondary School for Ardchattan, Lochnell and over 20 other Primary Schools.

The Map below shows the adjoining catchment areas of Ardchattan and Lochnell Primary Schools Catchment Areas:



3.9 Pupil Numbers

Pupil projections, and data for 2017 - 2018 are based on the 2017 pupil census, a return prepared annually for the Scottish Government. Past pupil numbers are historic data from past pupil censuses. Pupil projections for future P1 intakes are from NHS

data taken from children registered with GP practices in the area. This data is anonymised.

Table 2 shows the historic and current pupil numbers for both Ardchattan and Lochnell primary schools:

Table 2:	Ardchattan PS	Lochnell PS
	Roll	Roll
Capacity	57	148
2005-06	13	79
2006-07	10	80
2007-08	12	92
2008-09	10	92
2009-2010	9	87
2010-2011	5	92
2011-2012	3	96
2012-2013	3	101
2013-2014	4	112
2014-2015	0	109
2015-2016	0	114
2016-2017	0	124
2017-2018	0	130

Table 3 shows projected rolls for Lochnell Primary School and estimated numbers of pupils in the Ardchattan Primary School catchment area according to figures held by Argyll and Bute Council:

Table 3:	Ardchattan PS	Lochnell PS
	Roll	Roll
Capacity	57	154
2018 -2019	7	127

2019- 2020	6	128
2020 -2021	5	116*
2021 -2022	6	107*

* A prediction based on information available May 2018.

4. COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

4.1 Meetings

A Community Engagement Meeting was held in Ardchattan Primary School, on Wednesday 28th March 2018, 2-7pm. This was to seek the views of the community on the future of Ardchattan School. This meeting was attended by 15 people. There was also a meeting in Oban High, Dunbeg Primary and Lochnell Primary Schools to gather opinions from the young people from within the catchment area for Ardchattan School. Seven primary age children attended and five secondary aged young people attended.

4.2 Content of Meetings

Attendees at the meetings were given an overview of the information that the council would be using in this options appraisal, this included pupil projections, financial information, development information and local services and facilities.

The questions were as follows:

Over the last three years, what has been the effect of mothballing Ardchattan School on you, your family and community?

In your view what are the pros/cons of the following options:

- *Continue with mothballing*
- *Re- open the school*
- *Close the school*
- *Re-open the school but widen the catchment*

Attendees also noted questions regarding the future of the school, and points of information that should be considered in the options appraisal.

4.3 Feedback

There was a range of viewpoints on the future of Ardchattan School:

The mothballing has had a negative social impact on various examples of village community life, including:

- *Community events have stopped as in the past they were led by the school.*
- *Children have become disconnected from each other and the community - they travel to different schools via different transport arrangements and they don't know each other.*

The Community is disappointed that buildings have been neglected:

- *The school house has been abandoned and is now decaying rapidly. The school building has been neglected, there is significant water ingress, the kitchen has been removed and general disrepair is apparent.*

Parents stated:

- *Pupils are now well settled in other schools – they would not move their children back to Ardchattan.*

The young people stated:

- *Community events stopped.*
- *Make the building a community shop, café, museum*
- *Reopening is not an option because there are not enough pupils to make it viable*
- *Moving the catchment area is not an option because people travel out of the Bonawe area towards Oban / Benderloch to go to work – not many travel the other way.*
- *In a very small school you have arguments and fall out then have to fall in again – so that's OK.*
- *If the school reopened we could walk to school.*
- *A family decision was made to attend another school due to friendships made at Nursery.*

General Comments:

- It was acknowledged by several attendees that the pupil numbers were low and this made a school unsustainable
- Some pupils are travelling out of the Ardchattan Catchment Area with their families to a school nearer their employment that is more convenient for them as a family.
- The community stressed that the school buildings should be looked after as the only public space asset in the Bonawe area. The school has beautiful grounds and is a rich habitat for wildlife.
- Ardchattan/ Bonawe community are actively pursuing options for use of the building as a community hub.

5.0 THE PROPOSAL AND REASONABLE ALTERNATIVES TO THE PROPOSAL AS CONSIDERED BY THE COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

Ardchattan Primary School has been mothballed for four years. The school roll was very low and not predicted to rise in the near future. This continues to be the situation. There is very little support for the reopening of the school.

Whilst the building is mothballed it continues to deteriorate. The Community is very proactive and is planning a future for the building. Along with several other rural councils, Argyll and Bute is facing increasing challenges in recruiting staff. In October 2018 there were significant vacancies for both Head Teachers and Teachers.

The Council is required to consider the future of Ardchattan Primary School. The following options are explored within this paper:

- a. Re-open Ardchattan Primary School.
- b. Continued Mothballing of Ardchattan Primary with the pupils zoned to Lochnell School.
- c. Re-open Ardchattan Primary School and realign the catchment area of Lochnell School.
- d. Ardchattan School is reopened and designated as a resource centre for children with additional support needs.
- e. Close Ardchattan Primary School and realign its catchment area to Lochnell Primary School (The Proposal).

6. OPTION A: RE-OPEN ARDCHATTAN PRIMARY SCHOOL

6.1 Community Feedback

The majority of people who attended the consultation were not in favour of reopening Ardchattan Primary as a school. They commented on how well pupils had settled in to other schools with developed friendships and on the sustainability of the school with respect to low numbers:

'Pupils are now well settled in other schools – they would not move back or away from their friends'

'Lochnell is super school the children are happy where they are.'

'Without a nursery/ preschool – the school will never pick up again'.

'The pupil numbers were low and this made a school unsustainable'.

There was one family who expressed a preference to reopen:

'Reopen the school as a specialist resourced school or a centre for additional support needs including a sensory room.'

6.2 Pupil Numbers

If the school were to reopen in August 2019, the maximum pupil numbers from the catchment would be six. Pupils currently within the catchment area attend Lochnell, Dunbeg and Strath of Appin (Gaelic Medium Education) Primary Schools. It has been stated by several families that their children would not return to attend Ardchattan Primary School if it were to re-open. Their children have settled into their new schools with developed friendships. There may be a negative impact on children if they were to be moved from their current school.

If the school were to reopen sustainability may not be viable due to the fact that pupil numbers over the next four years are not predicted to rise and are well below the capacity of the school building.

Table 4: Pupil Numbers

Ardchattan Primary	2018/2019	2019/2020	2020/2021	2021/2022
Approved Capacity	57	57	57	57
Roll Projection	6	6	5	6

6.3 Financial Information

The total amount including employee; premises; supplies and services and catering consideration to re-open the school is **£114,760¹**

The cost to bring the property to an acceptable standard to re-open the school is **£190,000²**

6.4 Assessment of Rural Factors

The reasons for the proposal are as stated at Section 2 of this Report. There is no expectation for the pupil numbers at Ardchattan Primary School to increase. Ardchattan Primary School is currently mothballed and the pupils are rezoned to other schools. To reopen the school would not increase the pupil numbers.

6.4.1 Community Impact

The reopening of the school would enable the premises to be used by the community. It would also be a possibility that the school pupils would invite the community in to specific events. The presence of a school and the facilities/activities that may be offered could make the area a more attractive place to live. Reopening the school may

¹ Annual costs for running a comparative school for Ardchattan.

² No inflation adjustment applies to estimates.

therefore encourage families with school age children to move to the community. This in turn may make the community more sustainable.

However the community have demonstrated no wish for the school to reopen. Almost all who attended the community engagement indicated the need for the school to become a facility for the community to use rather than an educational establishment.

There have been several community events held at the school including Community Council Meetings and social events run by Friends of Ardchattan School. All of which have been reported to be well attended. There was minimal environmental impact in relation to transport as many participants came on foot, as the building is situated centrally within the community. Respondents noted the negative impact of the school mothballing on the community as:

'The community events have stopped as in the past they were led by the school.'

'There was involvement regularly from older members of the community – they now miss the social interaction for example Burns Nights – concerts etc. This lack of interaction has a detrimental effect on the wellbeing of the community in terms of isolation and loneliness.'

If the school were to reopen as an educational establishment there would be an economic impact with respect to the considerable expenditure needed to bring the building up to standard. There would also be costs relating to staffing, and ongoing maintenance. Maintenance and building costs would also have to be met by the community if the school were to reopen as a community hub. The reopening of the school and the potential relocation of families may have a positive effect on the wider economy of the community.

6.4.2 Travel Arrangements

The travel distance from Ardchattan Primary to Lochnell Primary is 8.3 miles via the B845, or 10.2 miles via the A828 (Appendix 6). Travel time is approximately twenty minutes. The travel arrangements have been in place for almost four years, travel is an accepted aspect of living in the Bonawe community. If Ardchattan Primary School was to reopen there could be a positive impact on the health and wellbeing and education of pupils who are able to walk or cycle to school. Staff would either travel to the school by car, or if they live locally could walk or cycle. There may be a positive environmental impact as the use of vehicles to transport pupils may decrease. Conversely, there could be increased car usage by staff which may mean these travel arrangements have a negative environmental impact. The positive and negative impact may balance.

6.5 Educational Benefits

The principles of Curriculum for Excellence recognise the professionalism of teachers and the importance of this in exercising the freedom and responsibility associated with broader guidance. This means that schools are able to design their curriculum to meet the specific needs of their children and community. There are no specific educational benefits from reopening the school as all schools implement Curriculum for Excellence ensuring effective learning and teaching which is matched to the needs of children.

With respect to outdoor learning community spaces could be used either in the school grounds or in the immediate neighbourhood if the school were to reopen. Outdoor learning is provided by all schools.

There would be issues with respect to the current condition and suitability of the school buildings and facilities which would negatively impact learning and teaching.

6.6 Summary

The majority of people who attended the consultation were not in favour of reopening Ardchattan Primary as a school. If the school reopened, pupil numbers would be six, as of the September 2017 census, and this is not predicted to increase over the next three years. *Several families have indicated they would not move their children back to Ardchattan Primary if the school reopened.*

There are financial implications if the school is to be reopened. The total amount including employee; premises; supplies and services and catering consideration to re-open the school is **£114,760³**, with the cost to bring the property to an acceptable standard to re-open the school is **£190,000⁴**.

If the school was to be reopened, the premises would be able to be used by the community as a hub, in addition to its use as an educational facility. The reopening of the school may encourage families with school age children to move to the community, which may make the community more sustainable.

The travel distance from Ardchattan Primary to Lochnell Primary is 8.3 miles via the B845, or 10.2 miles via the A828. Travel time is approximately twenty minutes. Adverse weather can be a factor, however this is the same for other local schools and areas. The travel arrangements have been in place for more than four years. Should the school reopen, there may be a positive environmental impact as the use of vehicles to transport pupils may decrease. Conversely, there could be increased car usage by staff which may mean these travel arrangements have a negative environmental impact. The positive and negative impact may balance.

³ Annual costs for running a comparative school for Ardchattan.

⁴ No inflation adjustment applies to estimates.

There are no specific educational benefits from reopening the school as all schools implement Curriculum for Excellence ensuring effective learning and teaching which is matched to the needs of children.

When considering the above alongside projected low pupil numbers, the challenges in recruiting teaching staff and the considerable expenditure needed to bring the building up to standard, the lack of local support for reopening Ardchattan Primary School this is not a reasonable option.

7. OPTION B: CONTINUED MOTHBALLING OF ARDCHATTAN PRIMARY SCHOOL WITH PUPILS ZONED TO LOCHNELL PRIMARY SCHOOL

The Statutory Guidance for the Schools (Consultation) (Scotland) Act 2010, in relation to mothballing, states “the maximum length of its duration is likely to depend on the location of the school and the desirability of maintaining capacity to re-open a school there, but it is unlikely that it should exceed 3 years in areas that are not very remote.” Ardchattan Primary School has been mothballed for 4 years.

7.1 Community Feedback

There are many ideas for the future of the building being taken forward by Friends of Ardchattan School as a real hub for community life. There was a significant view at the community meeting that mothballing the school over a long period is wasteful due to deterioration of the property and should not be prolonged:

‘The school house has been abandoned and is now decaying rapidly.’

‘The school building has been neglected, there is significant water ingress, the kitchen has been removed and general disrepair is apparent.’

‘This is an asset – the authority needs to consider if we close the school what the council will do to support the community.’

7.2 Pupil Numbers

Pupil numbers are not projected to increase over the next 4 years, as per Table 4 above.

7.3 Financial Information

The current annual cost (2018/19) to the Council of the mothballed Ardchattan Primary School is **£1,035**. This includes electricity, heating oil, and ground maintenance but does not include building maintenance and repair costs. Neither does it take account of the cost to bring the property to an acceptable standard to re-open the school which

is **£190,000**⁵. The current annual transport cost of taking pupils to alternative schools is **£44,187**.

7.4 Assessment of Rural Factors

The reasons for the proposal are as stated at Section 2 of this Report. There is no expectation for the pupil numbers at Ardchattan Primary School to increase. Ardchattan Primary School is currently mothballed and the pupils are rezoned to other schools. To reopen the school would not increase the pupil numbers.

7.4.1 Community Impact

If pupils are to continue their education in Lochnell Primary School there would be no change to the current impact on the community. If the mothballing of Ardchattan was to continue the building would deteriorate further and eventually become unavailable to the community to hold and develop events. This could have a detrimental effect on the sustainability of the community. At present the buildings and grounds are available for community use. For example, Ardchattan School has been used for several community events, these include Community Council meetings, Friends of Ardchattan School meetings and information gathering meeting for the future plans of the building. The community view the buildings and grounds as an opportunity to develop a community hub and there were multiple suggestions for possible usage. This may make the area a more attractive place to live.

There would be no change to the current economic impact of maintaining the mothballed Ardchattan Primary School. The current annual cost (2018/19) to the Council is **£1,035**. This includes electricity, heating oil, and ground maintenance but does not include building maintenance and repair costs. The current annual transport cost of taking pupils to alternative schools is **£44,187**.

7.4.2 Travel Arrangements

There is no change to the travel arrangements that are currently in place nor to the environmental impact from these. The travel distance from Ardchattan Primary to Lochnell Primary is 8.3 miles via the B845, or 10.2 miles via the A828. Travel time is approximately twenty minutes. The travel arrangements have been in place for almost four years. Travel is an accepted aspect of living in the Bonawe community. The continued mothballing would have little effect on current staff travel. The small number of children has minimal effect on staffing within the receiving primary schools.

7.5 Educational Benefits

⁵ No inflation adjustment applies to estimates.

The principles of Curriculum for Excellence recognise the professionalism of teachers and the importance of this in exercising the freedom and responsibility associated with broader guidance. This means that schools are able to design their curriculum to meet the specific needs of their children and community. There are no specific educational benefits from reopening the school as all schools implement Curriculum for Excellence ensuring effective learning and teaching which is matched to the needs of children.

Both Lochnell and Ardchattan are remote rural schools. Each school is set within a remote rural area (Scottish Government classification). Children from Ardchattan area, attending Lochnell Primary School are benefitting from the rural broader environment, whilst not moving their learning to a school that is completely different to their home environment. Outdoor learning is currently provided at Lochnell.

The co-location of the nursery and the primary classes at Lochnell enhances the transition process for the children moving from Nursery in to Primary one, through joint educational processes and liaison between the two settings. Transition to secondary school is enhanced through joint planning and educational experiences.

7.6 Summary

The majority of people who attended the consultation were not in favour of continuing the four year mothballing of Ardchattan Primary School. There was a significant view at the community meetings that mothballing the school over a long period was wasteful due to deterioration of the property and potentially affected sustainability of the community. Pupil numbers are not predicted to rise in terms of pre-school children living within the catchment area. Mothballing had no positive impact on the reasons for the proposal.

The current annual cost (2018/19) to the Council of the mothballed Ardchattan Primary School is **£1,035**. This includes electricity, heating oil, and ground maintenance but does not include building maintenance and repair costs. Neither does it take account of the cost to bring the property to an acceptable standard to re-open the school which is **£190,000**⁶. The current annual transport cost of taking pupils to alternative schools is **£44,187**.

The travel distance from Ardchattan Primary to Lochnell Primary is 8.3 miles via the B845, or 10.2 miles via the A828. Travel time is approximately twenty minutes. Adverse weather can be a factor, however this is the same for other local schools and areas. The travel arrangements have been in place for more than four years. Should the school continue to be mothballed these travel arrangements would continue.

There are no specific educational benefits from continuing the mothballing of the

⁶ No inflation adjustment applies to estimates.

On the basis that pupil numbers are not expected to increase and the buildings, mothballing is not of benefit to the community or the Council, therefore continued mothballing is not viewed as a reasonable option.

8. OPTION C: RE-OPEN ARDCHATTAN PRIMARY SCHOOL AND REALIGN THE CATCHMENT AREA OF LOCHNELL PRIMARY SCHOOL

8.1 Community Feedback

The existing catchment area for Ardchattan School is very rural and very sparsely populated. Ardchattan School is 0.8 mile from Bonawe Quarry. The road then becomes a track and continues up Loch Etive – no children/ families live there with the housing being mainly deer stalker bothies or holiday cottages. The track terminates several miles past Cadderlie.

When considering the option to realign the catchment area of Ardchattan, the boundary for Ardchattan School has been hypothetically moved west to include the area of North Connel east of the A828.

Community views are:

‘Moving the catchment area is not a viable option because people travel out of the Bonawe area towards Oban / Benderloch to go to work – very few people travel the other way.’

‘I believe the catchment area for this school and physical location restrict reopening options for this school.’

‘Pupils are now well settled in other schools – they would not move back or away from their friends’

8.2 Pupil Numbers

The pupil numbers within this new catchment area would increase the roll significantly. As part of any forthcoming consultation there will be discussions with the parent body of Lochnell School regarding the future of Ardchattan School. There was no representation from the Lochnell Parent Council at the Options Appraisal Meeting. It was felt by attendees at the options appraisal meeting that moving the catchment area was not an option due to the remote nature of the location, the road and accepted direction of travel.

8.3 Financial Information

The total amount including employee; premises; supplies and services and catering consideration to re-open the school is **£114,760**⁷.

To bring the property to an acceptable standard to re-open the school would cost **£190,000**⁸.

The cost to use minibuses to transport the children to Ardchattan Primary School would be **£66,000**⁹ (These transport costs are calculated assuming the boundary has moved to include all children who live to the east of the A828).

There would also be a financial cost associated with the recruitment of additional staff and ongoing associated costs.

8.4 Assessment of Rural Factors

The reasons for the proposal are as stated at Section 2 of this Report. There is no expectation for the pupil numbers at Ardchattan Primary School to increase. Ardchattan Primary School is currently mothballed and the pupils are rezoned to other schools.

To reopen Ardchattan Primary School **and** realign the catchment area of Lochnell School would increase the pupil numbers, if families were to send their children to Ardchattan Primary School.

8.4.1 Community Impact

The reopening of the school would enable the premises to be used by the community. It would also be a possibility that the school pupils would invite the community in to specific events. The presence of a school and the facilities/activities that may be offered could make the area a more attractive place to live. Reopening the school may therefore encourage families with school age children to move to the community. This in turn may make the community more sustainable. However, the community has given very little support for this option.

If the school were to reopen as an educational establishment there would be an economic impact with respect to the considerable expenditure needed to bring the building up to standard. There would also be costs relating to staffing, and ongoing maintenance. The reopening of the school and the potential relocation of families may have a positive effect on the wider economy of the community.

⁷ Annual costs for running a comparative school for Ardchattan.

⁸ No inflation adjustment applies to estimates.

⁹ This would be the cost of three mini buses.

8.4.2 Travel Arrangements

The travel distance from Ardchattan Primary to Lochnell Primary is 8.3 miles via the B845, or 10.2 miles via the A828. Travel for children within this new boundary would be less than twenty minutes and would be a new 'bus route'. Therefore, appropriate risk assessments would be necessary. Travel is an accepted aspect of living in the Bonawe community.

If Ardchattan Primary School was to reopen there could be a positive impact on the health and wellbeing and education of pupils who are able to walk or cycle to school. Local members of staff could also walk or cycle to school. There would be an increase in the number of pupils at the school and therefore an increase in staff numbers. There could be increased car usage by staff resulting in a negative environmental impact.

8.5 Educational Benefits

The principles of Curriculum for Excellence recognise the professionalism of teachers and the importance of this in exercising the freedom and responsibility associated with broader guidance. This means that schools are able to design their curriculum to meet the specific needs of their children and community. There are no specific educational benefits from reopening the school as all schools implement Curriculum for Excellence ensuring effective learning and teaching which is matched to the needs of children.

Both Lochnell and Ardchattan are remote rural schools. Each school is set within a remote rural area (Scottish Government classification). Children from Ardchattan area, attending Lochnell Primary School are benefitting from the rural broader environment, whilst not moving their learning to a school that is completely different to their home environment. Outdoor learning is currently provided at Lochnell.

The outdoor facilities either in the school grounds or in the immediate neighbourhood would offer the opportunity to develop a curriculum that maximises the use of the local environment supporting the individual needs of the learners.

8.6 Summary

The majority of people who attended the consultation were not in favour of reopening Ardchattan Primary as a school, and realigning the catchment area of Lochnell Primary School due to the remote nature of the school's location.

There are financial implications if the school is to be reopened. The total amount including employee; premises; supplies and services and catering consideration to re-

open the school is **£114,760¹⁰**, with the cost to bring the property to an acceptable standard to re-open the school is **£190,000¹¹**.

If the school was to be reopened, the premises would be able to be used by the community as a hub, in addition to its use as an educational facility. The reopening of the school may encourage families with school age children to move to the community, which may make the community more sustainable.

The travel distance from Ardchattan Primary to Lochnell Primary is 8.3 miles via the B845, or 10.2 miles via the A828. Travel for children within this new boundary would be less than twenty minutes and would be a new 'bus route'.

There are no specific educational benefits from reopening the school as all schools implement Curriculum for Excellence ensuring effective learning and teaching which is matched to the needs of children.

Due to the geographic location of this remote rural primary school it is unlikely that the catchment area could be made more sustainable. While this option could in theory contribute to sustainability of the community that may not be the case as most pupils in the neighbouring catchment area travel in the direction of Benderloch or Oban - that is towards the larger centres of population, and not towards Bonawe. It would require pupils who are presently settled in Lochnell Primary School to move to Ardchattan Primary School. Ardchattan families have stated they would not move their children back to Ardchattan if it reopened. All families would be entitled to submit a placing request to attend Lochnell Primary School. It is unlikely that pupil numbers would increase significantly.

When considering the above alongside the challenges in recruiting teaching staff, the considerable expenditure needed to bring the building up to standard and the lack of local support for reopening Ardchattan Primary School, this is not a reasonable option.

9. OPTION D: ARDCHATTAN SCHOOL IS RE-OPENED AS A RESOURCE CENTRE FOR CHILDREN WITH ADDITIONAL SUPPORT NEEDS

9.1 Community Feedback

'The school has good outdoor facilities including a poly tunnel, climbing area, football pitch, tennis court, pond and extensive garden area with access to the hill woodland and path. Wildlife is abundant and this should be considered when making a decision about the future of the school.'

¹⁰ Annual costs for running a comparative school for Ardchattan.

¹¹ No inflation adjustment applies to estimates.

‘Through spending time at Ardchattan Primary School we have realised how special the area is. It is rich in wildlife, peaceful and a pleasant place to do activities.’ ‘In our rural area and restricted house and garden, there are limited opportunities for sports and leisure locally.’

‘Ardchattan is a place where a child can cope. Staying in is detrimental to the health of children and their carers’

9.2 Pupil Numbers

It is not possible at this stage to give an indication of projected pupil numbers for this option as the majority of pupils with additional support needs are educated within other existing schools.

9.3 Financial Information

The cost to equip a small sensory room for a child with significant needs is in excess of **£5000**. To equip a whole school would cost significantly more.

The total running cost - including employee; premises; supplies and services and catering consideration is **£114,760**.

The cost to bring the property to an acceptable standard is **£190,000**.

Travel, being the approximate cost of one minibus travelling 17 miles daily - **£22,000**. Bringing children from a wider catchment would cost significantly more. Escorts would also be required.

9.4 Assessment of Rural Factors

The reasons for the proposal are stated at Section 2 of this report. There is currently no expectation for the pupil numbers to increase. Ardchattan Primary School is mothballed and the pupils all attend other schools. As it is considered best practice that the needs of most of our young people are met within the mainstream context, either in class or in a learning centre, this option would not increase the pupil numbers.

9.4.1 Community Impact

The community’s wish for the building to be used for a positive purpose would be met by this option. However, areas of the school may not be available for let due to the requirement for specialist equipment/areas. This option would also ensure the building and facilities are returned to a reasonable standard. This option may offer some local employment contributing to the sustainability of the community. However the school would not be a mainstream school, thus not meeting best practice for educating pupils with additional support needs, most local children would continue to travel out of the

area to school and therefore may not add to the attractiveness for families moving to the village or ultimately to the local community's sustainability.

If the school were to reopen as an educational establishment there would be an economic impact with respect to the considerable expenditure needed to bring the building up to standard. There would also be costs relating to staffing, and ongoing maintenance. The reopening of the school and the potential relocation of families may have a positive effect on the wider economy of the community. There may be additional travel costs associated with specialist vehicles that may be required.

9.4.2 *Travel Arrangements*

Travel for children within this type of school catchment would be variable. Appropriate risk assessments for children with additional support needs would be necessary. Staff would travel by car, there would be multiple car journeys considering staffing levels for a specialist school. Local children would continue to travel out to school whilst pupils attending the school would travel inwards. This would have a negative environmental impact.

9.5 Educational Benefits

The principles of Curriculum for Excellence recognise the professionalism of teachers and the importance of this in exercising the freedom and responsibility associated with broader guidance. This means that schools are able to design their curriculum to meet the specific needs of their children and community. There are no specific educational benefits from reopening the school as all schools implement Curriculum for Excellence ensuring effective learning and teaching which is matched to the needs of children.

The outdoor facilities either in the school grounds or in the immediate neighbourhood would offer the opportunity to develop a curriculum that maximises the use of the local environment supporting the individual needs of the learners.

9.6 Summary

It is considered best practice that the needs of most of our young people are met within the mainstream context, either in class or in a learning centre. This is both authority and national practice. When considering the above alongside the likely neutral impact of sustainability, negative environmental impact, challenges in recruiting teaching staff and the considerable expenditure needed to equip and bring the building up to standard, and the lack of local support for reopening Ardchattan Primary School, this is not a reasonable option.

10. OPTION E: CLOSE ARDCHATTAN PRIMARY SCHOOL AND REALIGN ITS CATCHMENT AREA TO LOCHNELL PRIMARY SCHOOL

10.1 Community Feedback

The majority of people who attended the consultation were not in favour of reopening Ardchattan Primary as a school. They commented on how well pupils had settled in to other schools with developed friendships and on the sustainability of the school with respect to low numbers. Comments in relation to the closure of Ardchattan Primary School and attendance at Lochnell Primary School were very positive:

'Pupils are now well settled in other schools – they would not move their children back to Ardchattan.'

'Lochnell is super school the children are happy where they are.'

'Pupils are now well settled in other schools – they would not move back or away from their friends'

'The pupil numbers were low and this made a school unsustainable'.

One comment observed the interactions of the children in the village as children have opted to attend different schools:

'Children have become disconnected from each other and the community - they travel to different schools via different transport arrangements and they don't know each other.'

Another commented on the school premises and potential for this to become a community asset:

'The school buildings should be looked after as the only public space asset in the Bonawe area. The school has beautiful grounds and is a rich habitat for wildlife.'

The Ardchattan/Bonawe community and Friends of Ardchattan School are actively pursuing options for use of the building as a community hub.

10.2 Pupil Numbers

Table 5: Schools Occupancy:

<i>Lochnell Primary</i>	<i>2018/2019</i>	<i>2019/20</i>
<i>Approved Capacity</i>	<i>154</i>	<i>154</i>

<i>Lochnell Projected Roll</i>	127	128
<i>Ardchattan Projected Roll</i>	6	5
<i>Total Roll Projection</i>	129	128
<i>Lochnell Occupancy</i>	83.7%	83%

Pupils from Ardchattan Primary catchment area currently attend Dunbeg Primary School, Lochnell Primary School and the Gaelic Medium Department in Strath of Appin Primary School. The current occupancy rate for Lochnell School including six pupils from Ardchattan catchment area is 83.7%.

10.3 Financial Information

The annual cost to transport pupils to alternative schools is **£44,187**.

The annual transport cost for six pupils to travel to Lochnell Primary School is **£18,152**.

10.4 Assessment of Rural Factors

The reasons for the proposal are as stated at Section 2 of this Report. There is no expectation for the pupil numbers at Ardchattan Primary School to increase. Ardchattan Primary School is currently mothballed and the pupils are rezoned to other schools. To reopen the school would not increase the pupil numbers.

10.4.1 Community Impact

The community overwhelmingly supported closure of the school with the building and adjoining grounds being retained for community use. Within the Ardchattan/Bonawe there is no hall or other community building. All people who attended the consultation strongly stated the school building should be retained for community use and not allowed to fall in to further disrepair, as that would adversely impact on the community's access to the premises. It is accepted that school closure may have an adverse effect on a community, a vibrant community hub could be an asset to a community. This could potentially have a very positive impact on sustainability of the community if this option were to progress. If the Community wished to create a community hub, they would require to find a mechanism to acquire the property from

the Council and deliver that aspiration. The buildings forming the school premises are situated within walking distance of the village.

10.4.2 Travel Arrangements

The travel distance from Ardchattan Primary to Lochnell Primary is 8.3 miles via the B845, or 10.2 miles via the A828. Travel time is approximately twenty minutes. The travel arrangements have been in place for almost four years. Travel is an accepted aspect of living in the Bonawe community. This option would have no effect on the current travel arrangements of staff and pupils. The closure of Ardchattan Primary School, in terms of travel would have a neutral effect on the environment. The current annual transport cost for six pupils to travel to Lochnell Primary School is **£18,152**. The current annual transport cost of taking pupils to alternative schools is **£44,187**.

10.5 Educational Benefits

The principles of Curriculum for Excellence recognise the professionalism of teachers and the importance of this in exercising the freedom and responsibility associated with broader guidance. This means that schools are able to design their curriculum to meet the specific needs of their children and community. There are no specific educational benefits from reopening the school as all schools implement Curriculum for Excellence ensuring effective learning and teaching which is matched to the needs of children.

Both Lochnell and Ardchattan are remote rural schools. Each school is set within a remote rural area (Scottish Government classification). Children from Ardchattan area, attending Lochnell Primary School are benefitting from the rural broader environment, whilst not moving their learning to a school that is completely different to their home environment. Outdoor learning is currently provided at Lochnell. The pupils are then transitioning to Oban High School with an established friendship group.

In Lochnell Primary School children are taught in classes composed of children from more than one year group. Children benefit from being part of a social context in which they can build relationships with different groups and individuals, develop social skills, meet challenges and exercise responsibilities as members of a social group. They are able to interact and socialise with groups of children of their own gender, take part in team activities and move with their peers to secondary school.

10.6 Summary

The majority of people who attended the consultation commented on how well pupils had settled into other schools they attend and were not in favour of reopening Ardchattan Primary as a school, and realigning the catchment area of Lochnell Primary

School due to the remote nature of the school’s location. They also commented on the potential for the school premises to be used as a community asset.

Current capacity for Lochnell Primary School including the six pupils from Ardchattan Primary School is 83.7%. The annual cost to transport pupils to alternative schools is **£44,187**. The annual transport cost for six pupils to travel to Lochnell Primary School is **£18,152**.

The travel distance from Ardchattan Primary to Lochnell Primary is 8.3 miles via the B845, or 10.2 miles via the A828, and this option would have no effect on the current travel arrangements of staff and pupils. The closure of Ardchattan Primary School would have a neutral effect on the environment. Lochnell School currently accommodates pupils from Ardchattan School and pupil numbers are not projected to increase significantly. Lochnell Primary has capacity to continue to accommodate the projected pupil numbers.

In Lochnell Primary School, children benefit from a positive learning environment with learning and teaching which is better matched to the needs of the young people who attend the school. In addition there are more opportunities for personal and social development in this setting.

This has been identified as a reasonable option for further consideration.

11. OVERVIEW OF OPTIONS

Option	Option Description	Outcome
A	Re-open Ardchattan Primary School with the existing catchment area	Not a reasonable option.
B	Continued Mothballing of Ardchattan Primary School with the pupils zoned to Lochnell Primary School	Not a reasonable option.
C	Re-open Ardchattan Primary School and realign the catchment area of Lochnell School to include pupils in the North Connel area to the east of the A828.	Not a reasonable option
D (Community Suggestion)	The school is re-opened and designated as a resource centre for children with additional support needs.	Not a reasonable option
E	Close Ardchattan Primary School and realign the catchment area of Lochnell Primary School to include the catchment area for Ardchattan	A reasonable option with strong representation that the school becomes a facility the community can develop.

12. DETAILED ANALYSIS OF REASONABLE OPTION: CLOSE ARDCHATTAN PRIMARY SCHOOL AND REALIGN THE CATCHMENT AREA FOR LOCHNELL PRIMARY SCHOOL TO INCLUDE THE FORMER ARDCHATTAN CATCHMENT AREA

12.1 Pupil Projections

<i>Lochnell Primary</i>	<i>2018/2019</i>	<i>2019/20</i>
<i>Approved Capacity</i>	<i>154</i>	<i>154</i>
<i>Lochnell Projected Roll</i>	<i>127</i>	<i>128</i>
<i>Ardchattan Projected Roll</i>	<i>6</i>	<i>5</i>
<i>Total Roll Projection</i>	<i>129</i>	<i>128</i>
<i>Lochnell Occupancy</i>	<i>83.7%</i>	<i>83%</i>

12.2 Educational Benefits

This statement focusses on Lochnell Primary School, which is the school the majority of the Ardchattan Pupils have been attending since August 2014.

12.2.1 Learning and Teaching

The curriculum includes a broad range of experiences which are planned for children and young people through their education, to help every child and young person to develop knowledge, skills and attributes for success in learning, life and work.

In Lochnell Primary School, children are encouraged to be eager and active participants who are engaged, resilient and highly motivated during their learning. Children know that their views are sought, valued and acted upon. The learning environment encourages high level of achievement, providing a wide range of opportunities for children to achieve their full potential within the four contexts of learning.

In Lochnell Primary School children may be taught in classes composed of children from more than one year group. Children benefit from being part of a social context in which they can build relationships with different groups and individuals, develop social

skills, meet challenges and exercise responsibilities as members of a social group. They are able to interact and socialise with groups of children of varying sizes and composition, take part in team activities and move with their peers to secondary school.

There is a continual challenge for all schools to deliver a school improvement agenda and deliver effectively the principles and outcomes of curriculum for excellence. The National Improvement Framework priorities include raising attainment for all, and closing the gap between the most and least disadvantaged children.

The principles of Curriculum for Excellence recognise the professionalism of teachers and the importance of this in exercising the freedom and responsibility associated with broader guidance. This means that schools are able to design their curriculum to meet the specific needs of their children and community. At Lochnell Primary School, staff are challenged and supported through a range of continuous professional development and review opportunities gained by working and learning with a range of colleagues. Lochnell Primary School is part of the Oban, Lorn and the Isles Cluster, and a smaller local cluster which means that staff can be supported together, moderation and tracking of pupil progress is enabled and staff work across stage appropriate groups. Colleagues within Lochnell Primary School are able to support and challenge each other on a daily basis. The whole staff are able to bring a range of talents and skills to benefit outcomes for learners.

Lochnell Primary School encourages nurturing and positivity. One aspect of this work is a successful Buddy System. Children from different stages work and learn together. This vertical support is particularly evident on Sports Day and in the dining room when groups of children are together in a social context. This system develops and benefits both the 'buddy' and the 'buddied'. To implement this system there needs to be children across a range of stages in the school.

Both Lochnell and Ardchattan are remote rural schools. Each school is set within a remote rural area (Scottish Government classification). Children from Ardchattan area, attending Lochnell Primary School are benefitting from the rural broader environment, whilst not moving their learning to a school that is completely different to their home environment.

The co-location of the nursery and the primary classes at Lochnell enhances the transition process for the children moving from Nursery in to Primary one, through joint educational processes and liaison between the two settings.

12.2.2 Outcomes

Through the GIRFEC practice mode, meeting the needs of every child continues to be a priority and teachers carefully plan and assess to ensure each child has the opportunity to reach their potential. Careful tracking and monitoring procedures are in place to evidence pupil progress. This includes professional dialogue with teachers, learning discussions with children, classroom observations, assessment and looking

at pupil work. Planning for Progress meetings are being further strengthened. These discussions between home and school improve parental engagement whilst focussing on next steps for learning. Where appropriate, intervention is put in place, while working effectively with other agencies and parents to ensure the needs of each child are met.

In the primary classes, standards of attainment have been maintained over the last three years. Almost all children are achieving national expectations in reading, writing, listening, talking and numeracy. Lochnell continues to develop within the PATHS program supporting positive behaviours and relationship within the school. A larger staff, parent body and partner group by nature increases the breadth of talent and interest that may be available to share within a school setting. This applies both in terms of the wider curriculum and within aspects of the curriculum that may be enhanced by staff individual expertise e.g. PE, language, science, expressive arts teaching.

12.2.3 Experiences - Broadening the Range of Opportunities

Children are offered a range of active, planned experiences which help them develop the knowledge and understanding, skills, capabilities and attributes which they need for their mental, emotional, social and physical wellbeing both now and in the future.

12.2.4 Environment for Learning

Lochnell Primary School is a suitably-equipped and well supported school, situated in the village of Benderloch. The entire building is well maintained and along with the surrounding scenery provides attractive accommodation for the primary school. The school has an all-weather pitch adjacent to the school. The pitch is used very well by the school. The building has facilities for pupils and visitors with special access needs.

12.3 Assessment of Rural Factors

The reasons for the proposal are stated on page 2 of this report. There is currently no expectation for the pupil numbers to increase at the school. Ardchattan Primary School is mothballed and the pupils all attend other schools. Having considered all the alternatives above, the option to close Ardchattan Primary School and realign the catchment area for Lochnell Primary School to include the former Ardchattan catchment area is considered the most reasonable means to address the reasons identified at page 2 of this report.

12.3.1 Community Impact

The community overwhelmingly supported closure of the school with the suggestion that the building and adjoining grounds could potentially be retained for community use. Within Ardchattan/Bonawe there is no hall or other community building. All people who attended the consultation strongly stated the school building should be retained for community use and not allowed to fall in to further disrepair, as that would adversely impact on the community's access to the premises. It is accepted that a school closure

may have an adverse effect on a community, but a vibrant community hub could be an asset to the community. The school premises are situated within walking distance of the village. If the local plans for the building progress, this would have a positive impact on the sustainability of the village. Formal closure of the school would mean that these plans could potentially be progressed by the community.

12.3.2 Travel Arrangements

The travel distance from Ardchattan Primary to Lochnell Primary is 8.3 miles via the B845, or 10.2 miles via the A828. Travel time is approximately twenty minutes. The travel arrangements have been in place for almost four years. Travel is an accepted aspect of living in the Bonawe community. Pupils will travel in one minibus and eventually all the pupils will travel to Lochnell Primary School. At present, some travel to Dunbeg Primary School. The environmental impact of travel will be minimal, as these arrangements are currently in place due to the mothballing of Ardchattan Primary School. The closure of Ardchattan Primary School, in terms of travel, would have a neutral effect on the environment. The current annual transport cost for six pupils to travel to Lochnell Primary School is **£18,152**. The current annual transport cost of taking pupils to alternative schools is **£44,187**. These costs remain unchanged from the current costs.

12.4 Financial Impact

The main elements included within a school budget are Teacher employment costs (ie basic salary costs plus related employer's National Insurance and Superannuation contributions plus any relevant individual allowances); Local Government employee costs and an allocation for discretionary expenditure incurred by the school (i.e. educational equipment, materials, staff travel, etc.). Teacher staffing budgets are calculated on an annual basis and within the Primary sector are determined, taking cognisance of the SNCT class size maxima, by the number of classes required to provide for the specific number and age of the pupils in each school. When a school ceases to be operational the Teacher staffing budget is adjusted (at the appropriate time), per entitlement information from Education HR, with the staffing budget resulting in a nil value. As a result of the authority's policy for no Teacher redundancies it is presumed that the staff are deployed elsewhere within the authority and therefore their salary costs still exist with an increase to the receiving school's budget. This is also in line with the national priority of maintaining teacher numbers. This methodology also applies to the school's discretionary budget which again is formula based. The budget of the receiving school, in terms of any pupils being transferred, will have increased. The figures outlined below take account of the fact that the staffing and discretionary budgets have been adjusted to nil.

The annual running costs during mothballing of Ardchattan Primary School are a total of **£1,035**.

Savings generated through closing Ardchattan Primary School would be **£746**.

The costs/savings outlined above assumes all revenue expenditure would cease. This includes non-domestic rates, utility costs, insurances, etc. If the school was to be formally closed, this would allow the council to take steps towards selling the school to a third party or local community.

12.5 Environmental Impact

Currently four pupils travel to Dunbeg Primary School and six pupils travel to Lochnell Primary School from the Ardchattan Primary School Catchment area, for which there is an environmental impact. However this option would have a neutral environmental impact on the current position and would have no impact on the current travel arrangements for staff and pupils. Eventually all pupils will attend Lochnell Primary School, a relatively short journey. Travel is an accepted aspect of rural life.

13. CONCLUSION

Five alternative options have been reviewed in considering the future of Ardchattan Primary School. For each option, information was collated and consideration was given to:

- Community feedback;
- Pupil numbers;
- Financial Information;
- Assessment of rural factors, including community impact, economic impact and travel arrangements, and
- Educational Benefits.

An authority that is formulating a rural school closure proposal must satisfy the preliminary requirements set out in section 12A of the Schools (Consultation) (Scotland) Act 2010 before starting to prepare its proposal paper.

After consideration of the preliminary requirements, as set out in the Act, and the options, and having regard to the specific reasons identified at section 2 of this report closing Ardchattan Primary School and redrawing its catchment area to Lochnell Primary School is the most reasonable option in order to address the reasons for the possible proposal.

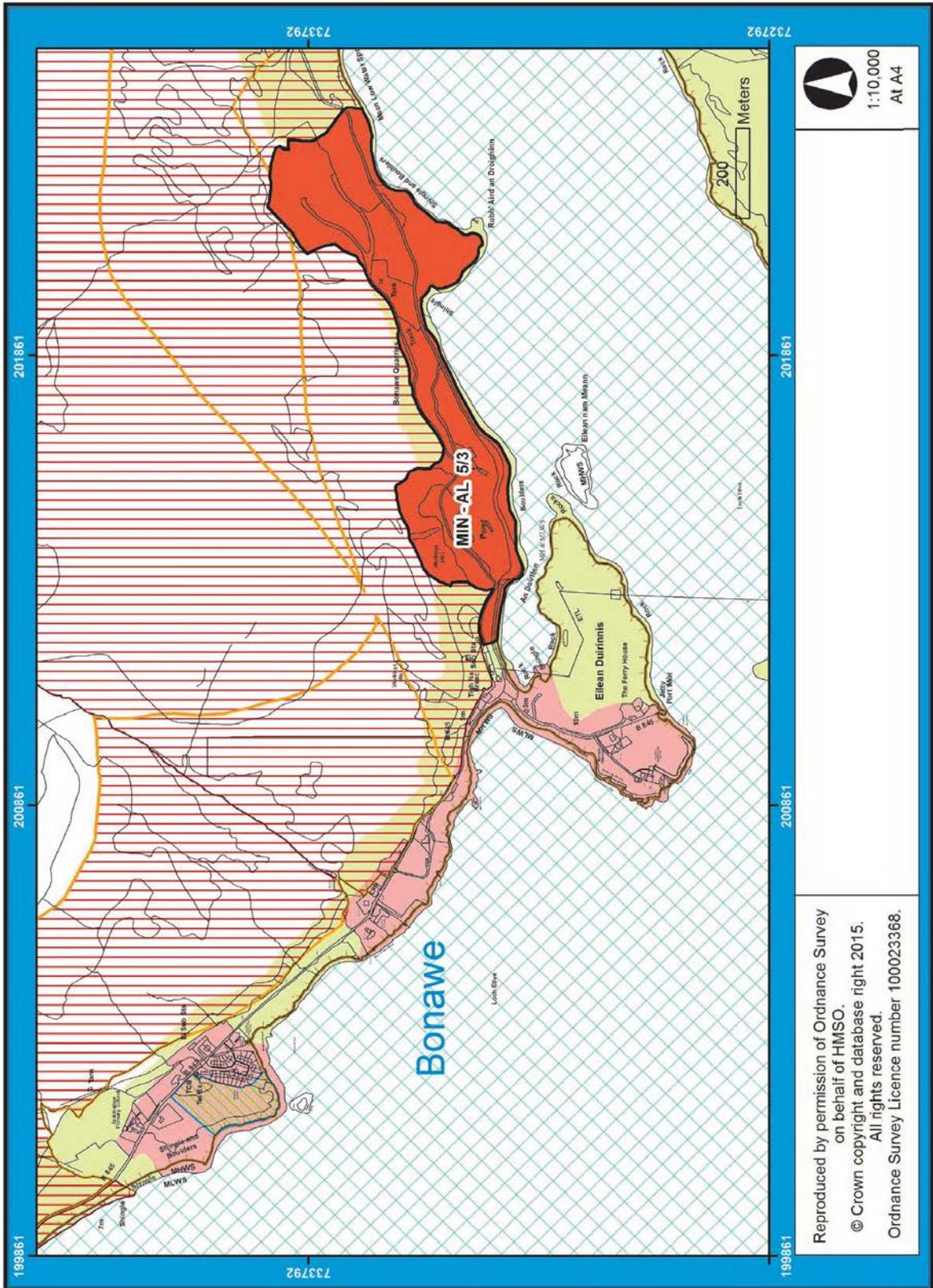
Members are asked to:

- Note the outcome of this consideration of the preliminary requirements; and
- Agree that Officers now formulate a draft proposal that will come back to a future meeting of the Committee for approval by Members which would

subsequently trigger the formal consultation process under the Schools (Consultation) (Scotland) Act 2010.

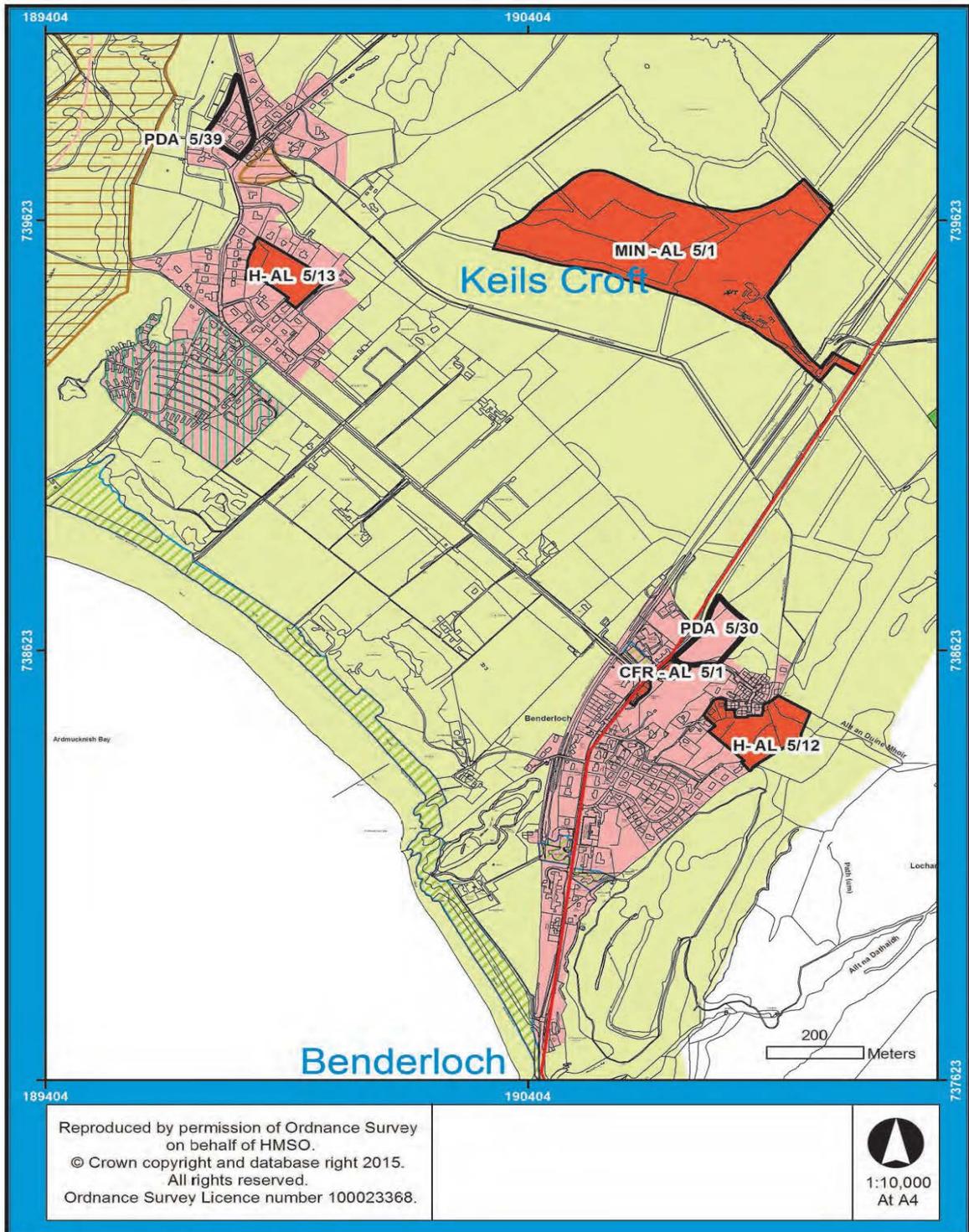
- Appendix 1.
- Local Development Map 161 Ardchattan

Appendix 1 - LDP for Bonawe



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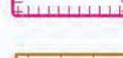
Appendix 2 - Local Development Plan Map 159 Benderloch



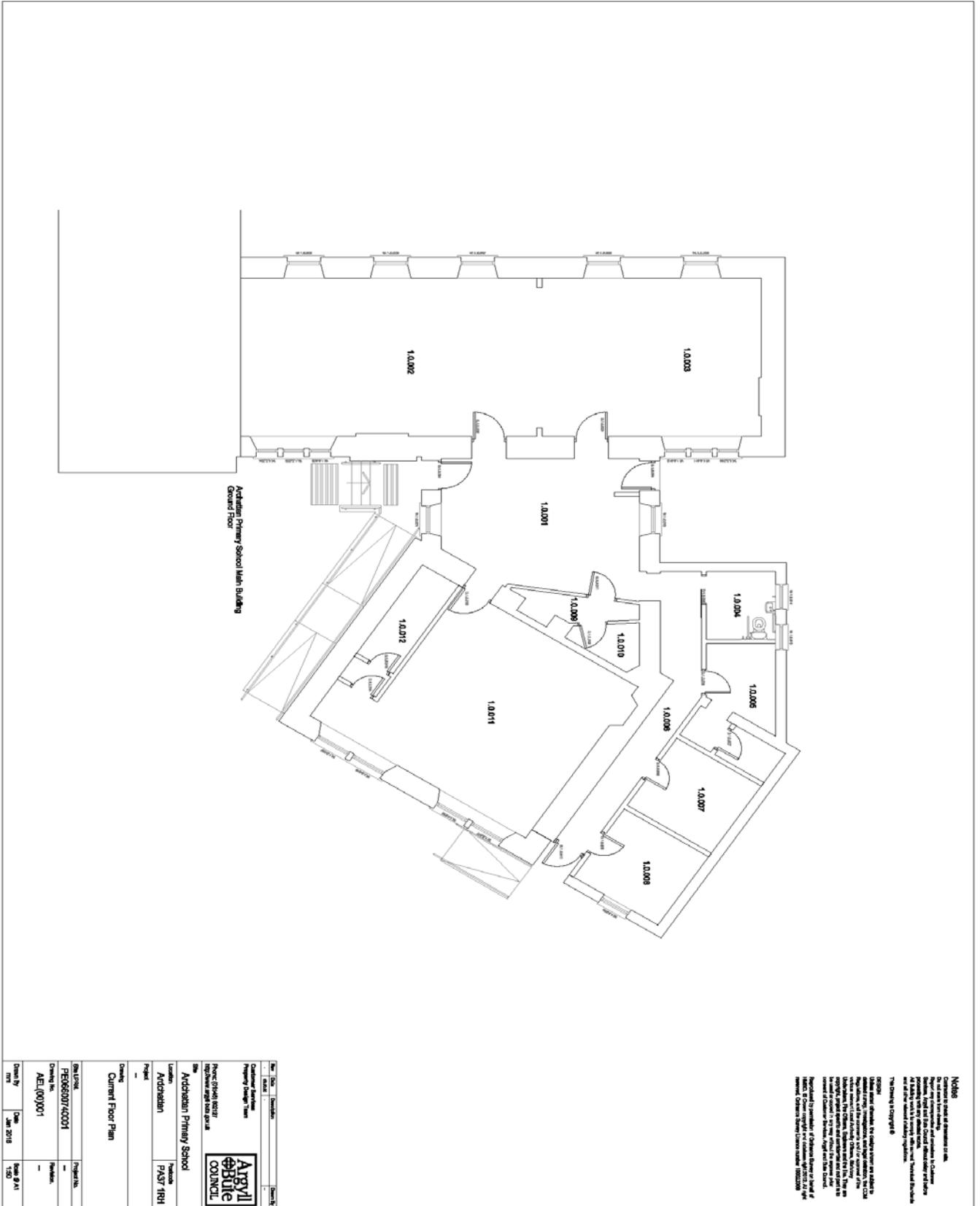
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Appendix 3 – Local Development Plan Key

Local Development Plan Key					
	Settlement Zone		Waste Management Site		Marine Consultation Area
	Greenbelt		Open Space Protection Area		Main Road
	Rural Opportunity Area		Open Space Protection Area (Part)		National Park/Other Council Area
	Countryside Zone		Wild Land		
	Very Sensitive Countryside		Ramsar		
	Strategic Masterplan Area		Special Area of Conservation		
	Allocation		Special Protection Area		
	Potential Development Area		SSSI		
	Main Town Centre		National Nature Reserve		
	Edge of Town Centre		Local Nature Reserve		
	Core Shopping Area		Local Nature Conservation Site		
	Strategic Industrial & Business Location		National Scenic Area		
	Edge of Town Centre & Bus. & Ind. Area Overlap		Garden & Designed Landscape		
	Established Business & Industry Area		Area of Panoramic Quality		
	Area for Action		Conservation Area		
	Development Road Action Area		Special Built Environment Area (SBEA)		
	Transport Management Area		Valued Tourist Areas Vulnerable to Change of Use		

Appendix 4 - Ardchattan Primary School Floor Plan



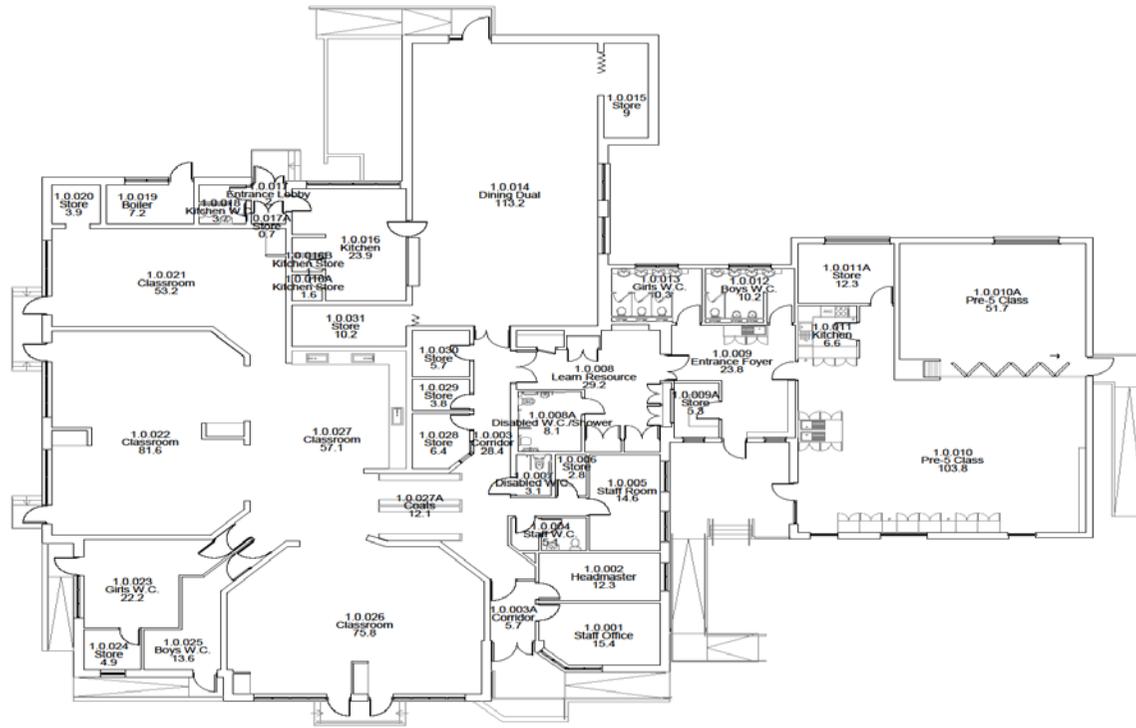
NOTES
 1. Construction to meet all requirements of the Building Regulations and standards in Scotland.
 2. All work shall be carried out in accordance with the Building Regulations and standards in Scotland.
 3. All work shall be carried out in accordance with the Building Regulations and standards in Scotland.
 4. All work shall be carried out in accordance with the Building Regulations and standards in Scotland.
 5. All work shall be carried out in accordance with the Building Regulations and standards in Scotland.
 6. All work shall be carried out in accordance with the Building Regulations and standards in Scotland.
 7. All work shall be carried out in accordance with the Building Regulations and standards in Scotland.
 8. All work shall be carried out in accordance with the Building Regulations and standards in Scotland.
 9. All work shall be carried out in accordance with the Building Regulations and standards in Scotland.
 10. All work shall be carried out in accordance with the Building Regulations and standards in Scotland.

No.	Date	Description	Checked By
1	15/01/2018	Issue for Tender	AEI
2	15/01/2018	Issue for Tender	AEI
3	15/01/2018	Issue for Tender	AEI
4	15/01/2018	Issue for Tender	AEI
5	15/01/2018	Issue for Tender	AEI
6	15/01/2018	Issue for Tender	AEI
7	15/01/2018	Issue for Tender	AEI
8	15/01/2018	Issue for Tender	AEI
9	15/01/2018	Issue for Tender	AEI
10	15/01/2018	Issue for Tender	AEI

Customer Name: **Argyll & Bute Council**
 Project Name: **Ardchattan Primary School**
 Project No: **PA37 18H**
 Drawing No: **Current Floor Plan**
 Drawing Date: **15/01/2018**
 Drawing Scale: **1:50**

Author: **AEI**
 Checker: **AEI**
 Date: **15/01/2018**

Appendix 5 - Lochnell Primary School Floor Plan



Lochnell Primary School Main Building
Ground Floor Plan

Notes
 Consider to check all dimensions on site.
 Do not scale from drawings.
 Report any discrepancies and omissions to Customer Services, Argyll and Bute Council without delay and before proceeding with any affected works.
 All building work is to comply with current Technical Standards and all other relevant statutory regulations.

DECISION
 Unless stated otherwise, the designs shown are subject to detailed survey, investigations, and legal definition, the CDM Regulations, and the agreement and/or approval of the various relevant Local Authority Officers, Statutory Undertakers, Fire Officers, Engineers and Police. They are copyright, project specific and confidential and not part to be used or copied in any way without the express prior consent of Customer Services, Argyll and Bute Council.

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Current School GIA on 28.01.14 = 917m ²		Drawn By:
File:	Description:	
Customer Services Property Design Team		
		
Phone: (01546) 802127 http://www.argyll-bute.gov.uk		
Site Lochnell Primary School		
Location: Lodaig	Postcode: PA37 1RZ	
Project ---		
Drawing Current Ground Floor Plan		
Site UPRN: PE04705860001	Project No.:	---
Drawing No.:	Revision:	---
AEL(00)001		
Drawn By: mm	Date: January 2014	Scale @ A1: 1:100

Ardchattan Primary School

Author: MJ
Scale: 1:40,000
Date: November 22, 2018



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