



Dumfries and Galloway Council Education and Learning Directorate

Review of the proposal document to discontinue education provision at Carsphairn Primary School and Nursery, re-assigning its catchment area to that of Dalry Primary School

This report has been issued by Dumfries and Galloway Council Education and Learning Directorate in accordance with the Schools (Consultation) (Scotland) Act 2010 as amended and Children and Young People (Scotland) Act 2014.

This report has been prepared following a review of the proposal to discontinue education provision at Carsphairn Primary School and Nursery, re-assigning its catchment area to that of Dalry Primary School.

Having regard (in particular) to: relevant written representations received by Dumfries and Galloway Council (from any person) during the consultation period; oral representations made to it (by any person) at the public meetings held at Dalry School and Lagwyne Hall, Carsphairn on Thursday 29th September 2022; the report from HMIE (Education Scotland).

Publication Information

The Consultation Report will be available, free of charge, at:

- Dalry Primary School
- Carsphairn Shop and Tearoom
- Dumfries and Galloway Council Headquarters
-

And published on Dumfries and Galloway Council website:

www.dumgal.gov.uk/consultations

Copies of this paper are also available on request from:

Statutory Consultation – Carsphairn Primary School

Dumfries and Galloway Council

Militia House

109/111 English Street

DG1 2HR

E-mail: statutoryconsultation@dumgal.gov.uk

To request this information in a more accessible format or alternative language, please contact the postal or email address listed above.

Formal notice of the Consultation Report and relevant information will be given and be made available, free of charge, to the consultees listed as follows:

- (a) Parents/carers of pupils within the current Carsphairn Primary School catchment;
- (b) Parents/carers of pupils attending Dalry Primary School; including parents of Dalry Primary School Nursery;
- (c) The Parent Council of Dalry Primary School;
- (d) The parents/carers of any children within the Carsphairn Primary School catchment expected to attend Primary School within two years of the date of publication;
- (e) The parents/carers of any children expected to attend Dalry Primary School within two years of the date of publication;
- (f) The pupils at any affected school;
- (g) Staff of Dalry Primary School and Nursery (teaching and non-teaching);
- (h) Trade union representatives;
- (i) Carsphairn Community Council;
- (j) St John's Town of Dalry Community Council;
- (k) East Ayrshire Education Authority;
- (l) HMle
- (m) Any persons or organisation who made written representation during the consultation process

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1.0 Background

Dumfries and Galloway Council's Education and Learning Committee on 17 March 2020, agreed that the statutory closure consultation process should be undertaken during 2020, in relation to Carsphairn Primary School and Nursery class.

The timeline was agreed at Education and Learning Committee on 13 May 2021 with a revised timeline agreed at the same committee on 1 February 2022.

Appendix A is the original proposal paper and provides full details of the proposal including the appendices to the original proposal paper.

Carsphairn Primary School has been mothballed since the end of academic session 2018/19 and the Nursery since the end of academic session 2011/12. At the time of mothballing there were 2 P7 pupils in attendance at the school and 9 children living within the catchment area. There were ten primary aged children and 2 nursery aged children in the catchment at the time of writing the proposal paper. The figures above are informed by SEEMiS data (correct 30/08/2022) and NHS birth data (correct 12/08/2022).

It is the Council's view that re-opening Carsphairn Primary School would have a negative educational and social impact on the pupils of Carsphairn Primary School. Further details are provided in sections 6, 7 and 10 below.

Carsphairn Primary School is designated as a rural school under the terms of the Schools (Consultation) (Scotland) Act 2010 as amended. In that context, the Council has had special regard to:

- any viable alternatives to the closure proposal; alternatives were considered at Sections 15.0 – 15.4 of the proposal paper (Appendix A) and have been reconsidered again in light of responses received during the consultation period, see sections 6 - 10 below.
- the likely effect on the local community in consequence of the proposal (if implemented). The effect on the local community was considered at Section 15.6 of the Proposal Paper (Appendix A) and is further considered at Sections 6, 7, 8 and 10 below, taking into account representations received during consultation.
- the likely effect caused by any different travelling arrangements that may be required in consequence of the proposal (if implemented). Effects on school transport were considered at section 15.7 of the Proposal Paper (Appendix A) and reconsidered in light of responses received to consultation at Sections 6 and 10 below.

2.0 Consultation Process

The formal consultation process ran from Monday 5 September 2022 to Friday 4th November 2022.

Schools across Dumfries and Galloway were closed on Monday 19th September 2022 as an additional bank holiday to mark the last day of the period of National Mourning in respect of HM Queen Elizabeth II. The consultation timeline was amended to ensure that the consultation period extended to thirty school days as detailed in the Schools (Consultation)

(Scotland) Act 2010 as amended, all consultees were notified and the papers were reissued.

Written representations on the proposal were sought from interested parties as defined within the Schools (Consultation) (Scotland) Act 2010 as amended.

In accordance with statutory requirements, the following were consulted:

- (a) Parents/ carers of pupils within the current Carsphairn Primary School catchment;
- (b) Parents/ carers of pupils attending Dalry Primary School; including parents of Dalry Primary School Nursery;
- (c) The Parent Council of Dalry Primary School;
- (d) The parents/ carers of any children within the Carsphairn Primary School catchment expected to attend Primary School within two years of the date of publication;
- (e) The parents/ carers of any children expected to attend Dalry Primary School within two years of the date of publication;
- (f) The pupils at any affected school;
- (g) Staff of Dalry Primary School and Nursery (teaching and non-teaching);
- (h) Trade union representatives;
- (i) Carsphairn Community Council;
- (j) St John's Town of Dalry Community Council;
- (k) East Ayrshire Education Authority;
- (l) HMIE

The proposal paper was available at the following locations:

- Dalry Primary School
- Carsphairn Shop and Tearoom
- Dumfries and Galloway Council Headquarters

It was also published on Dumfries and Galloway's website.

Two public meetings were held, the details of which are set out below;

Thursday 29th September 2022 3.00pm-5.00pm - Dalry Primary School, Kirkland Street, St Johns Town of Dalry DG7 3UX.

Thursday 29th September 2022 6.00pm-8.00pm - Lagwyne Hall, Carsphairn DG7 3TQ.

The meetings were advertised in advance in the Galloway News and detailed within the proposal paper. The note of the meetings are at Appendix C

3.0 Review of proposals following the consultation period

Following receipt of written representations received by Dumfries and Galloway Council and consideration of oral representations made at the public meetings, officials reviewed the proposals.

Feedback from the consultation was considered by a range of Council officers and directorates. This ensured that the Council met the requirements of the 2010 Act.

The outcome of this review process is reflected in the response, conclusion and recommendations outlined below.

4.0 Responses Received

In total there were thirty-four written representations received during the consultation period, this does not include the parental surveys, oral representations or pupil meetings. All redacted written representations are at Appendix B. The breakdown of these representations is as follows:

Relationship to the School	Total Number
Carsphairn Resident	6
Elected Member	1
Grandparent	5
Parent (Carsphairn Catchment)	8*
Parent (Dalry Catchment)	3
Organisation	7*
Other	4*

*The numbers above include multiple representations made by individuals or organisations.

Two further representations were received after the consultation period, these were considered for inclusion but did not raise any addition points to those representation received during the consultation period.

The ten families of fifteen children age birth to P7 (information collated from by SEEMiS data (correct 30/08/22) and NHS birth data (correct 12/8/22)) were contacted via a mail posted questionnaire to establish their preferences regarding attending Carsphairn Primary School and/or Nursery. Seven families returned the questionnaire, and 1 verbal response was received. These questionnaires are summarised in response 20 below and a redacted copy is at Appendix D.

The views of pupils at Dalry Primary School were sought via two focused group discussions, these are available at appendix E.

5.0 Issues raised during the consultation process

Of the thirty-four written representations received the preferences were clearly stated for the future of Carsphairn Primary School and are detailed in the table below:

Preference	Number
Closure	1
Mothballed	6
Re-opened	7

In addition ten further representations stated that they did not want the school to be closed. The remaining representations did not specify their preference but were not in favour of closure.

The main arguments put forward in the written representations and the public meeting are summarised below. Where different responses raise similar issues, these have been “grouped” for the purpose of the response.

6.0 Responses to the issues raised in public consultation

6.1 Arguments advanced by the pupils in favour of closing Carsphairn P.S are set out at issues 1-5 below and addressed at Responses 1-5:

Issue 1

More people to work with, to help you out and to learn with. Get to make new friends.

More chances of making friends and more of a social life in a larger school.

There are more opportunities to find people with interest like you.

Because there are more people in Dalry Primary, we get to meet people with different personalities.

There are more children so we can take part in team games etc

Response 1

Dumfries and Galloway Council notes and agrees with the views expressed above.

Issue 2

School should be for everyone – we’ve welcomed some Ukrainian families.

Most of us come from Dalry Primary already so it doesn’t make much of a difference to us.

Children from Carsphairn already come here and it works well.

We already live in different villages – Balmaclennan, New Galloway, Dalry, Parton, Mossdale, and from rural farms.

Response 2

Dumfries and Galloway Council notes and agrees with the views expressed above. Dalry Primary School's catchment area includes many small communities. The current roll of 59 (correct at September 2022 census) includes 34% extra territorials for whom Dalry Primary School is not their catchment school. 89% of catchment children have chosen to attend Dalry Primary School.

Issue 3

I would want to close the school. There aren't many children living there, I can only think of three or four. The village is mostly older people.

I don't think there are many children who live in Carsphairn. The numbers will be very small – it wouldn't be good and I wouldn't want to go to a school like that.

There were only two children there before. That isn't enough children for a school.

Response 3

Dumfries and Galloway Council notes the thoughts of the pupils as expressed above. Response 20 below gives further clarity on projected numbers and anticipated rolls.

Issue 4

It is an opportunity to change the school into something else to benefit the community.

The school could be turned into something else, like a community shop.

Response 4

As detailed in the proposal paper –

Dumfries and Galloway Council would be happy to work with the local community to see whether the school building could be suitable for community use.

Dumfries and Galloway Council has a Community Asset Transfer Procedure which must be followed when buildings or land are no longer required for their original purpose. Further information on community asset transfers is available on Dumfries and Galloway Council's website – www.dumgal.gov.uk/article/16441/Community-asset-transfers

Issue 5

It is not far to drive to Dalry and it is a much bigger and better school.

Response 5

Dumfries and Galloway Council recognises that the travel time from the Carsphairn Primary School catchment is the main adverse effect of the proposal. Whilst this adverse effect is recognised it is felt that this is outweighed by the educational benefits of a school with a larger cohort of pupils.

Further information regarding travel times is covered in response 16 below.

6.2 Arguments advanced by the pupils in favour of re-opening Carsphairn P.S are set out at Issues 6-9 below and addressed at Responses 6-9:

Issue 6

New people might settle quicker into a smaller school.

Less people might be an advantage for some children (but not for all of us).

Easier for staff in a smaller school, less children to look after and work with.

Response 6

Dumfries and Galloway Council notes the views expressed above.

Issue 7

What happens if they build more houses in Carsphairn? Where will these people go?

What happens if people change their mind and now want to go to Carsphairn?

Response 7

If the decision to close the school is made, this would be a final decision and the school would be permanently closed. The catchment area will be absorbed into that of Dalry Primary School.

There is more information in Response 11 below regarding housing development and any potential anticipated catchment pupil increase as a direct consequence.

Issue 8

If the school was to re-open we would need to update the building and find a teacher.

The school has been empty for a long time. It will need some work before it could be re-opened.

Response 8

If the school were to reopen Dumfries and Galloway Council would advertise and appoint a teacher. Any works required to reinstate the school would be actioned.

Issue 9

Someone would need to think about transport arrangements.

Response 9

Primary aged pupils living within the Carsphairn Primary School catchment would be entitled to free school transport to Dalry Primary School in line with the Council's transport policy. The provision is already in place for those who qualify and chose to attend Dalry Primary School. Further information can be found on the Council's website - <https://www.dumgal.gov.uk/article/15245/Free-school-transport>

Further information regarding travel times is covered in response 16 below.

6.3 The arguments advanced in written responses and at the public meeting are set out in issues 10-27 Below and addressed at Responses 10-27:

Issue 10

Currently, there have been a number of parents who have tried to enrol their child, or make a placing request, for Carsphairn primary but this has not been possible. This means that you have no idea how many parents were actually interested in sending their children to Carsphairn primary or nursery and have now, out of necessity (not parental choice) made other arrangements, so I believe in fact means that you have not fulfilled your role in leading up to this consultation for closure - how can you claim there is no demand for a school when you have no way of recording demand?

The Community Council along with the Parent Council agreed to mothball the school in February 2019 at a meeting with Mr Thin that we had requested. We agreed on the understanding there would be an annual review. But a year later we were surprised and disappointed to learn that the education e learning committee had agreed to start a statutory consultation for closure. No review of the situation has yet taken place.

"Primary aged children currently attended, Dalry Primary School, Kells Primary School, Moniaive Primary School and Castle Douglas Primary School due to parental choice."

This is a mis-statement and should not be classed as 'parental choice' - it is through necessity as they could not send their children to Carsphairn so must of course make other arrangements.

Response 10

Dumfries and Galloway Council recognises that there has not been a procedure in place for P1 or new families to express an interest in Carsphairn P.S, the Council have taken these views on board and have implemented a process for this and updated the information available to families on the Council website. On review of this process, had it been in place, the number of pupils the data supports is shown below -

In academic year 2018/19 there were 9 catchment children, 7 of which were enrolled and established at alternative schools through parental choice over a number of years in advance of mothballing.

In academic year 2019/20 there were 8 catchment children, 7 of which were enrolled and established at alternative schools through parental choice over a number of years in advance of mothballing. One new Primary 1 did not get the opportunity to express a preference in attending Carsphairn Primary School.

In academic year 2020/21 there were 7 catchment children, 5 of which were enrolled and established at alternative schools through parental choice over a number of years in advance of mothballing. A further new Primary 1 did not get the opportunity to express a preference in attending Carsphairn Primary School.

At the start of academic year 2021/22 there were 9 catchment children, 3 of which were enrolled and established at alternative schools through parental choice over a number of years in advance of mothballing. A further new Primary 1 did not get the opportunity to express a preference in attending Carsphairn Primary School. In addition there were also two Primary 5's and one Primary 3 who moved into the catchment area. A further P4 moved into the area during this year, making ten catchment children in total.

In academic year 2022/23 there were 10 catchment children, 3 of which were enrolled and established at alternative schools through parental choice years in advance of mothballing. One further Primary 1 would have been impacted by the lack of clarity regarding enrolment.

In total 8 children from 6 families were not able to enrol or express their interest in enrolling their children at Carsphairn P.S, as stated above the process regarding this has now been implemented.

Dumfries and Galloway Council recognises that predominantly due to the enforced Covid-19 restrictions opportunities to review the mothballing status were limited but alternative methods of engagement could have been explored. A school in a mothballed status gives a community opportunity for change, from the figures detailed in the table below it can be seen that the number of catchment children are remaining consistent from the point of mothballing into future years. There has been no significant change in the period since mothballing commenced.

Academic Year	Number of Catchment Children
18/19	9
19/20	8
20/21	7
21/22	10
22/23	10
23/24	11
24/25	9
25/26	11
26/27	8

Issue 11

We are currently investigating the building of much needed affordable housing to regenerate our community and attract younger families. We are working with the South of Scotland Community Housing association who have a successful track record in supporting communities build affordable eco family homes. Wind farm community benefit funds will support this project.

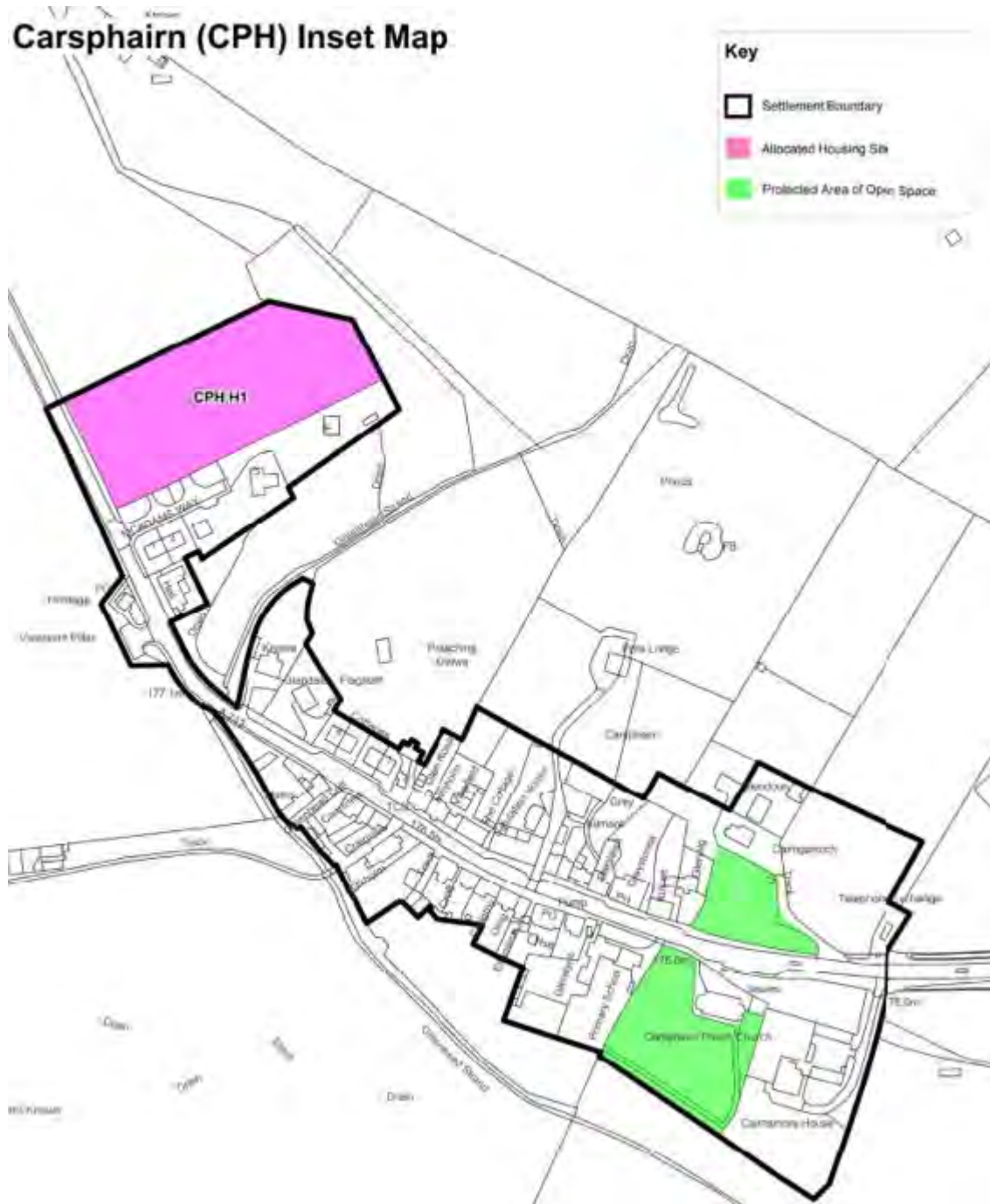
There may be land aplenty available for housing development. Carsphairn Community Council is at least exploring the possibility of developing an affordable housing scheme.

Response 11

LDP1 Published in 2014

Carsphairn was identified in Dumfries and Galloway Council's first Local Development Plan as a Local Centre in the Stewartry Housing Market Area.

Planning objectives for Carsphairn in this plan were to "Consolidate and support Carsphairn's role as a Local Centre in the settlement hierarchy" and "Continue to allocate land to the northern end of the settlement to allow for a reasonable amount of future growth which is proportionate to the size of the settlement." This was reflected in land which was allocated North of McAdams Way (CPH.H1) for 10 units and was considered to form part of the gateway to the settlement from the North".

Map 1: Carsphairn Inset Map from LDP1**Main Issues Report 2017**

In preparing for the Local Development Plan 2, a Main Issues Report was published in 2017 by Dumfries and Galloway Council and set out the key areas of change that had occurred since the previous LDP was adopted.

In relation to Carsphairn, the Main Issues Report stated “There is currently only 1 housing allocation in Carsphairn, Land North of McAdams Way (CPH.H1). However,

recent flood events have resulted in the Council's Flood Risk Management team and SEPA objecting to the continued inclusion of the site in the plan. It is therefore proposed to not include the site in LDP2. The settlement boundary would then be re-drawn to reflect the site's deletion from the plan. No alternative allocations are proposed."

The Main Issues Report can be viewed here:

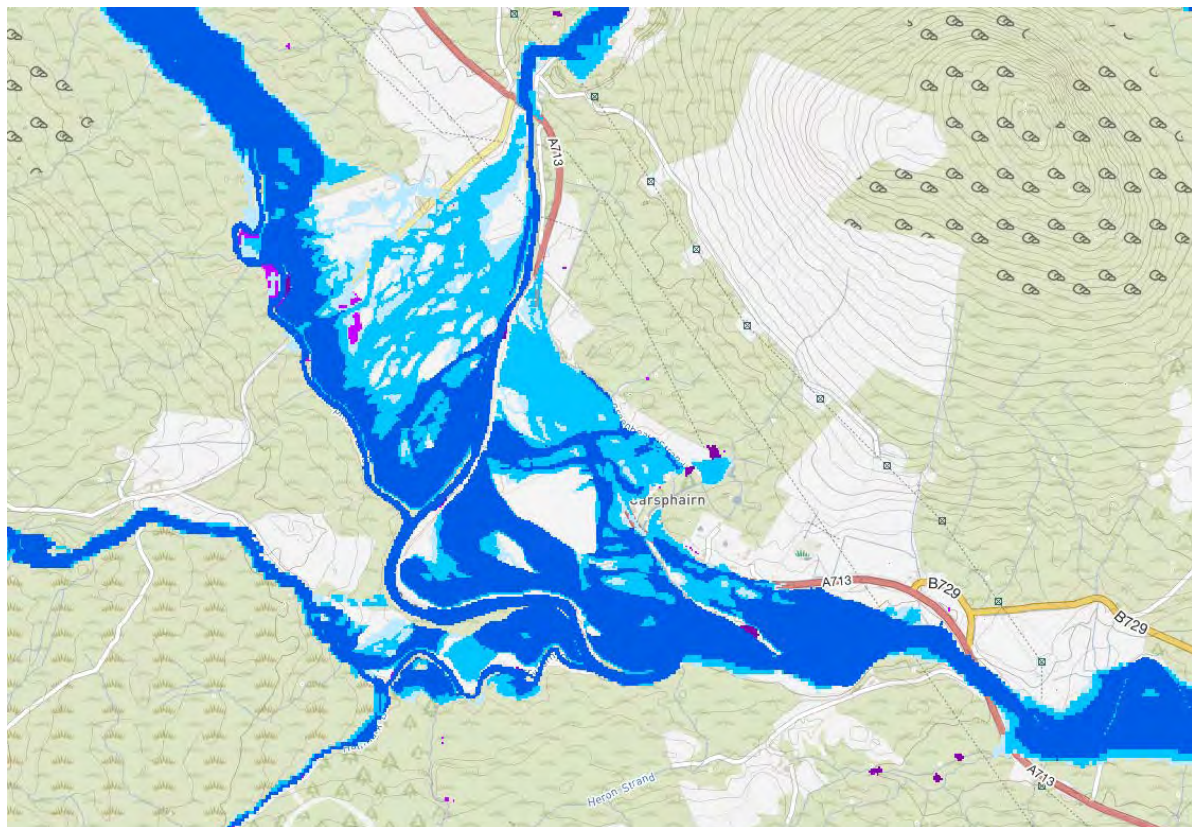
<https://www.dumgal.gov.uk/media/18994/LDP2-Main-Issues-Report/pdf/MIR.pdf?m=636217275492870000> and information regarding Carsphairn can be located on pages 97-98.

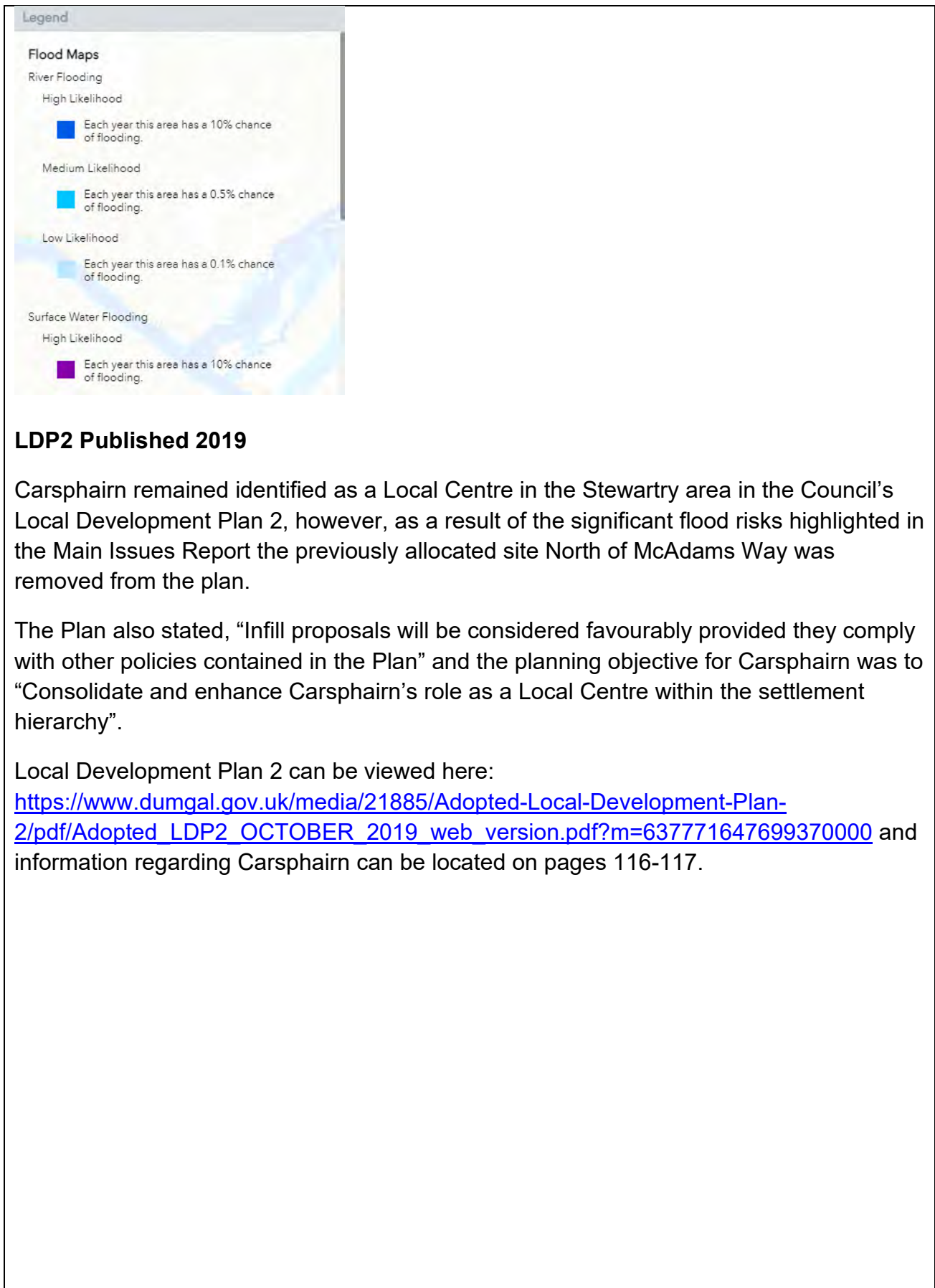
This was based on events where the Water of Deugh overtopped its banks and flooded areas of Carsphairn in December 2013 and was thought to be one of the largest flooding events in recent memory. Subsequently, the village flooded again in January 2015, although to a lesser extent.

Additionally, Dumfries and Galloway Council conducted a Site Assessment and Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) Checklist

(https://www.dumgal.gov.uk/media/19017/Carsphairn-Site-Assessment/pdf/Carsphairn_combined.pdf?m=636215452902330000) in 2016 and concluded that the site should be de-allocated due to flood risk issues and development of a greenfield site.

The SEPA flood map below is also available on the SEPA Flood Maps website - [SEPA Flood Maps \(arcgis.com\)](https://www.sepa.gov.uk/flood-maps)





LDP2 Published 2019

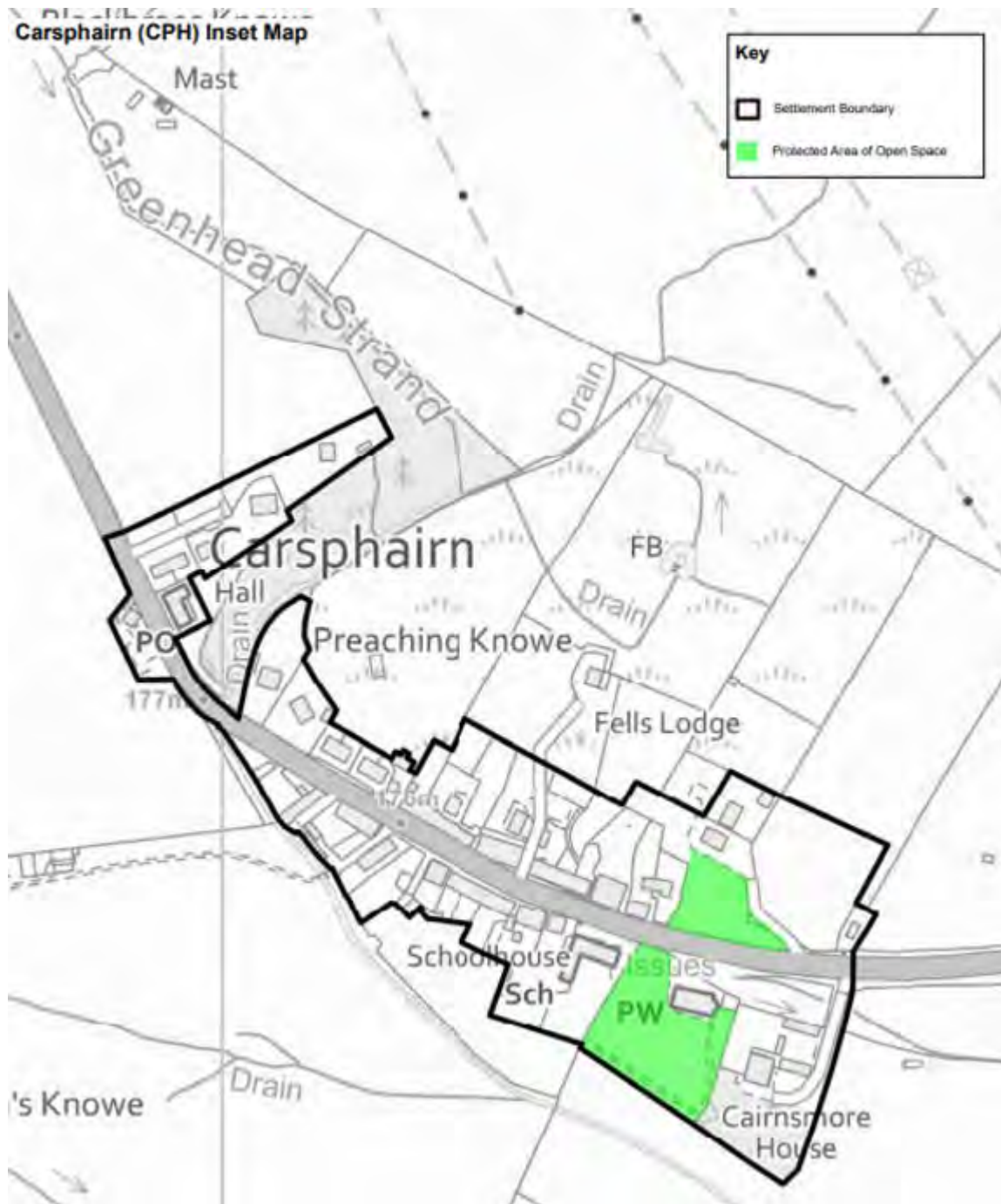
Carsphairn remained identified as a Local Centre in the Stewartry area in the Council's Local Development Plan 2, however, as a result of the significant flood risks highlighted in the Main Issues Report the previously allocated site North of McAdams Way was removed from the plan.

The Plan also stated, "Infill proposals will be considered favourably provided they comply with other policies contained in the Plan" and the planning objective for Carsphairn was to "Consolidate and enhance Carsphairn's role as a Local Centre within the settlement hierarchy".

Local Development Plan 2 can be viewed here:

https://www.dumgal.gov.uk/media/21885/Adopted-Local-Development-Plan-2/pdf/Adopted_LDP2_OCTOBER_2019_web_version.pdf?m=637771647699370000 and information regarding Carsphairn can be located on pages 116-117.

Map 2: Carsphairn Inset Map from LDP2



Dumfries and Galloway Council use a pupil product ratio (PPR) on all housing developments to establish the potential number of nursery, primary and secondary aged pupils that could be anticipated from any housing development, these multipliers are as follows –

Nursery – 0.08 (pupils per household)

Primary – 0.32 (pupils per household)

Secondary – 0.16 (pupils per household)

If these multipliers are applied to the site identified in LDP1 North of McAdams Way (CPH.H1) which was identified for 10 units in LDP1, the outturn would be 1 nursery, 3 primary and 2 secondary aged pupils.

These multipliers are used across the region and are specific to Dumfries and Galloway.

Dumfries and Galloway Council is aware of Carsphairn Communities aspirations to build affordable housing and the commissioning of South of Scotland Community Housing (SOSCH) to undertake a housing need and demands survey, this survey was due to close on Monday 9 January 2023 this has now been extended until the end of January 2023. The final report is anticipated to be available in mid-February 2023.

As detailed above there is currently no site identified within the settlement boundary for housing development, but infill proposals would be considered favourably.

Issue 12

There are many children of pre school age in Carsphairn who will soon need to attend a primary school.

If the nursery had been open, there would be a number of children attending it now.

Response 12

Currently there are 5 children of pre-school age residing within the Carsphairn Primary School catchment, of these 5 children 2 are of an age to currently be in attendance at Carsphairn Primary School Nursery.

If the nursery were open, there is evidence to support a maximum roll of 2 children for academic session 2022/23. Dumfries and Galloway Council does not support the statement that there are 'many' children as detailed in the numbers above.

The information detailed in response 12 is informed by NHS birth data (correct 12/8/22).

Issue 13

Maintaining the school in its current mothballed state costs the council very little, and would give the community peace of mind that they have time to do their best to regenerate their community, after which point the council can potentially close the school if this seems the only option.

I'm assuming there is no financial difference between mothballing and closing, yet it offers both appeal and hope to the community.

Response 13

The cost per annum as detailed in the financial template table 3 is £1,405.00, whilst this may not be a significant sum, Dumfries and Galloway Council has a statutory responsibility to secure best value in its use of resources.

The Schools (Consultation) (Scotland) Act 2010 as amended makes it clear that mothballing is a temporary measure and should not be used to undermine the requirements to undertake a statutory school closure consultation.

Issue 14

Dalry Primary has currently received an unprecedented number of enquiries from new families either in, or hoping to move to, the area – Kells may be in a similar situation. Current and projected figures need to be taken into account, which cannot really be accurate for at least another two years as we begin to see the post-covid impact on rural living, as well as the projected covid 'baby boom'. On what are the projected demographics based? How can they be accurate in these extraordinary times without giving time for changes in demographics to become apparent over the next few years?

Response 14

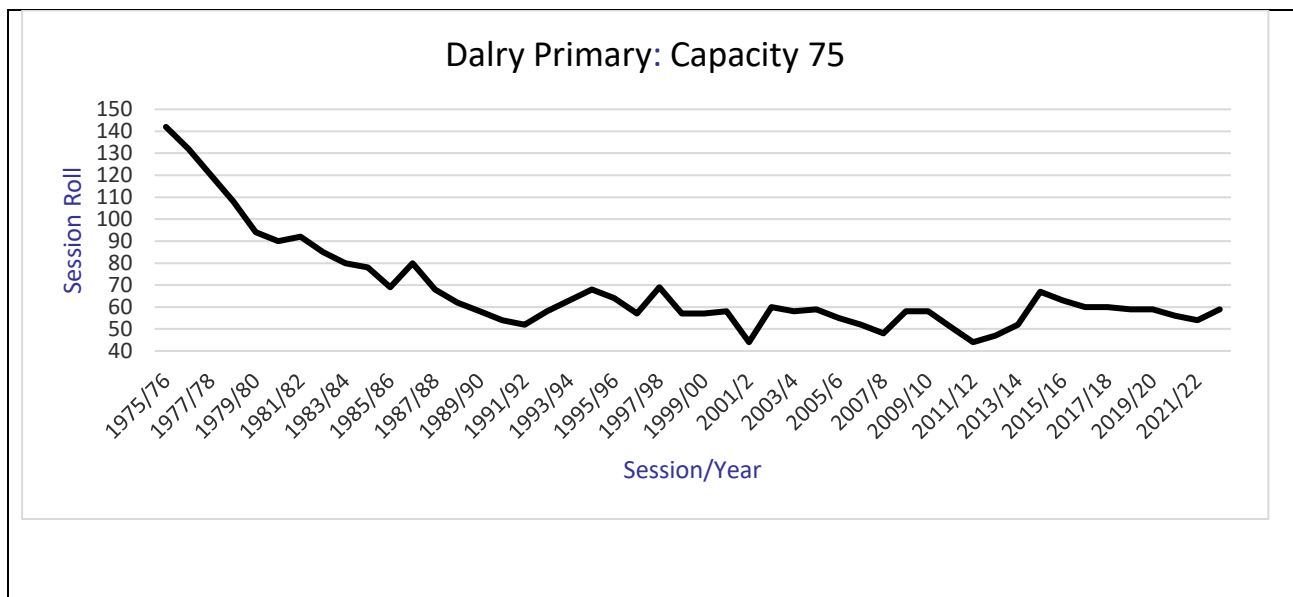
The projected figures detailed for Dalry Primary School in 13.3 of the Proposal Paper:

Academic Year	Catchment Pupils
2022/23	59
2023/24	57
2024/25	57
2025/26	55
2026/27	53

These are accurate projections as of 12/8/2022. This data predicts the roll for the next 4 academic years of catchment children for Dalry Primary School. The projected demographics are based on families that currently live within the catchment area. The current roll of 59 (correct at September 2022 census) includes 34% extra territorials for whom Dalry Primary School is not their catchment school. 89% of catchment children have chosen to attend Dalry Primary School.

Consideration of the anticipated conservative reduction of primary aged children in the region by 14.2% over the next 10 years (source: National Records of Scotland) on top of a decline of approx. 20% over the previous twenty years have to be borne to mind.

The table below clearly shows the decline in Dalry Primary School's roll.



Issue 15

Stakeholder (Parent): Do you have a specific number which will mean opening the school?

Response 15

There is no threshold however the Education and Learning Directorate has approval through committee to engage with schools regarding mothballing. This information can be found Item 10 at the following:

[Agenda for Education and Learning Committee on Thursday, 1st December, 2022, 10.30 am - Dumfries and Galloway Council \(modern.gov.co.uk\)](#)

Issue 16

Space on both buses and dedicated car are limited, parents of young children do not want them travelling on the service bus, the driver will be PVG checked but the service users will not. It is 19 miles from the furthest inhabited dwelling to Dalry, quoting a distance of 9.4 miles and a travel time on a bus of 14 minutes are simply not true.

Carsphairn is our closest local village and nearest primary school. Living rurally, this is already a ten-minute drive. Dumfries and Galloway Council's proposal of the redirection for Carsphairn children to attend Dalry Primary School is unacceptable, as it is an increased journey drive time of twenty-five minutes (more than double the distance to Carsphairn). I stress that these driving times are based on an average journey time to the village itself, and that it does not take into consideration the poorly maintained road conditions, or indeed the treacherous weather conditions of the winter months that can cause many dangers for rural road users travelling longer distances.

Failure to establish what would be an acceptable travelling time for primary pupils, by the authority, at the public meeting, was an unprofessional oversight.

Response 16

There are very few instances of emergency school closure due to bad weather recorded against Carsphairn Primary School or Dalry Primary School. The rurality of the area does increase the likelihood of weather events for example altitude and snow. The A713 is a primary gritting route for the Council, therefore ensuring that if roads are accessible to Carsphairn then pupils would be able to travel safely to St John's Town of Dalry. Should the roads be inaccessible to Carsphairn from the outlying areas then pupils would not be able to access a day of education whether they were in attendance at Carsphairn P.S or Dalry P.S. The other main road between Carsphairn and St John's Town of Dalry, the B729 is a secondary gritting route.

Given the low numbers of catchment pupils, the number of pick ups and drop offs will be limited, they will also be further reduced by the different transport arrangements available, taxi, bus, private transport. Transport arrangements vary each academic year depending on the location and number of pupils. Whilst there are currently limited spaces under current arrangements, those that are entitled and are chosen to utilise available transport have a space, requirements for future years and pupils will be made at those particular points in time. Pupils are entitled to free school transport where they meet the eligibility criteria and attend their catchment school, whilst Carsphairn P.S remains mothballed the catchment school is Dalry P.S.

Dumfries and Galloway Council recognises that for families living in the extreme North of the catchment area there will be longer journey times.

There is currently no national maximum travel distance/time for children to travel to school.

Issue 17

Stakeholder (CCC): would like information on the number of single teacher schools and the distances between schools, Specifically Hutton P.S.

Response 17

There are currently 9 primary schools in Dumfries and Galloway operating with a single class for academic year 2022/23. The travel distances for these 9 schools to the next school range from 2.9 miles to 24.7 miles.

Within Dumfries and Galloway, Hutton Primary School is currently mothballed with the closest school 6.2 miles away.

Issue 18

I would like to make a request that the questionnaire with regard to children who would potentially use the school and/or nursery be posted out to every household on the electoral role in Carsphairn Primary School's catchment area.

It was made clear at last night's meeting that many people felt they were not asked, and they did have children who may attend, or family members who may move to the parish, with children, if the school was open.

Response 18

It was not reasonably practicable to extend the questionnaire to approximately 150 properties and is not a requirement of the Act. The community were asked to encourage anyone who felt they had been unduly missed to make representation, one representation was received from a family residing outwith the authority who own a second property within the catchment, who expressed a desire for their children to attend if the school was reopened. These two children are not included in the figures as they are not catchment children, and we have no clarity on their ages/year group.

In line with the Consultation Act we contacted –

- The parents of any children expected by the Education Authority to attend any affected school within two years of the date of publication of the proposal paper.

And in addition, it was felt relevant that we contacted all known families whose details are held by NHS Dumfries and Galloway or within Dumfries and Galloway Council's recording system for school age children (SEEMiS) to gather further information via the questionnaire. Any children residing within the catchment for whom we do not receive a questionnaire return from will be assumed they would return if the school was reopened.

Issue 19

We would like it recorded as a relevant representation regarding the statutory consultation for the closure of Carsphairn school that we are very disappointed with the complete absence of any of the 21 councillors on the Education and Learning committee at the public meeting last Thursday 29 September 2022.

Response 19

Noted.

Issue 20

While I realise it is not viable to operate the school at the moment due to the number of children in the area this can change at any time.

We believe there are currently 4 primary school age children wishing to attend the school now with other families moving in. It is virtually impossible to predict how many children of primary school age there will be in Carsphairn over the next 5 years.

We firstly challenge the rationale 13.1 and school roll projections 13.2. It must be borne in mind that almost without notice, the school roll jumped to 33 children from we believe nine, many years ago, necessitating the newly built extension and a second full time teacher.

Response 20

As part of the consultation process the families of 15 pupils aged 0 – P7 (data correct as at 12/8/22) living within the Carsphairn Primary catchment area were surveyed to establish their preference for school and nursery. Of the 15 children, responses were received both in written and verbal format for 13 children (for the purpose of this exercise we will assume the 2 that did not respond would attend Carsphairn Primary School). The anticipated school roll of catchment pupils versus the roll reflecting the responses received are detailed in the table below –

Table 1

Academic Year	Catchment Children (total school roll)	Questionnaire Result (total school roll)
22/23	10	6
23/24	11	5
24/25	9	6
25/26	11	4
26/27	8	4

The above figures relate only to catchment children, they do not factor in families moving in or moving out of the catchment area.

As detailed above the roll would be lower than the total catchment children residing in the area and at a significantly lower number than the school has operated at in the past.

Looking back the number of catchment children has been fairly static over the years, as detailed in the table below:

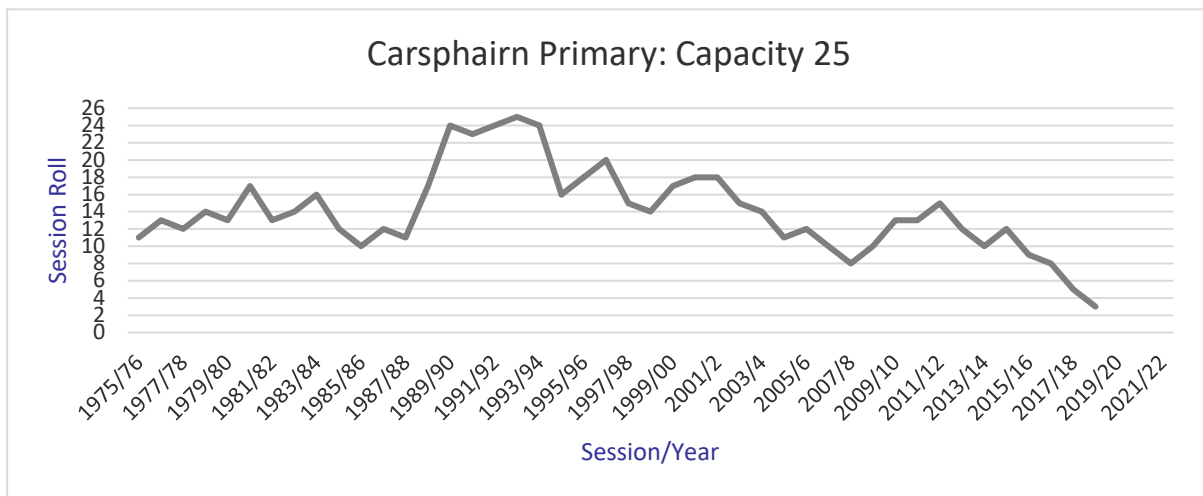
Table 2

Academic Year	Number of Catchment Children
18/19	9
19/20	8
20/21	7
21/22	10
22/23	10
23/24	11
24/25	9
25/26	11
26/27	8

We recognise the marginal increase in catchment children however the total number of catchment children are not dissimilar to the point at which the school was mothballed. It must be noted that the responses received to the survey result in a school with a very low roll. A school of the size indicated from the data above would have serious implications on the successful delivery of curriculum for excellence nor be able to provide adequate social interaction opportunities.

Over the 7 years prior to mothballing, an average of 38% of Carsphairn Primary School catchment pupils chose to attend a school other than Carsphairn Primary School.

It must be noted that at the point of mothballing at the end of academic year 2018/19 there were 9 children living within the catchment, and only 2 Primary 7's had chosen to attend the school (the school was mothballed at the point these P7's completed the academic year). The school was mothballed at the point there were no children in attendance or enrolled. Other catchment children had attended the school over the years however they enrolled elsewhere in 2011, 2016, 2018 or had never attended. The school roll fell due to local families exerting their parental right for their children to attend the school of their choice not due to the action of Dumfries and Galloway Council.



The graph above shows the school roll back to 1975/76. As can be seen the school has historically fluctuated but stayed in the main above single figures until the more recent decline.

There is a significant difference between the historical roll particularly the low points and subsequent recovery of the school. The available data and roll projections from this (inclusive of the questionnaire responses) does not show a level of recovery akin to historical examples.

Dumfries and Galloway Council has also taken steps to scrutinise the available data ensuring roll projections, historical movement of children and anticipated rolls are accurate and also considered identified housing growth in collaboration with colleagues within the planning department and scrutiny of the Local Development Plan 2. Consideration of the anticipated reduction of primary aged children in the region by 14.2% over the next 10 years (source – National Records of Scotland) on top of a decline of approx. 20% over the previous 20 years has been factored into the rationale for closure.

Issue 21

Financial Consequences

Financial Consequences Projected transport costs involved in delivering meals to Carsphairn using a private taxi located in Castle Douglas as there are no local services in Carsphairn or Dalry are disingenuous. If advertised locally, it would undoubtedly be the case that a suitable driver would come forward to transport the meals, this also providing some measure of local employment, similar to the drivers of school runs.

As the catering costs at Dalry do not rise are we to assume that the Carsphairn children will not be served lunch.

Appendix 6 and 7

- Figures are given for past and projected operating costs. However, no comparative figures are given for Dalry School or another local equivalent e.g. Kells in order for assessment of comparative contemporary costs to be made.

Response 21

Financial Consequences –

The cost of a taxi delivery from Castle Douglas is based on known information from an existing service, it would be wrong to assume that this service would be available in Dalry or Carsphairn as it is not currently.

Catering Costs at Dalry –

The additionality for Dalry was so marginal, no additional staff were required as the school is producing a significant number of meals a day. The catchment children not attending Carsphairn Primary School were in attendance at other schools and therefore were in receipt of meals (where eligible) and were already accounted for.

Dumfries and Galloway Council have completed the template as provided as part of the statutory guidance, an additional template was also provided to demonstrate the costs of reinstating Carsphairn Primary School and Nursery. There is no requirement as part of the act to provide a financial comparative.

Issue 22

Educational Benefits statement

Despite statements to the contrary, there are educational benefits in a single figure roll school, as outlined previously. The four pages giving account of the opportunities provided by Dalry are not exclusive to Dalry, Carsphairn provided nearly all of the same subjects and opportunities but in a more focussed manner than experienced in a larger group, both in and out with the classroom.

Carsphairn children attending Dalry cannot easily attend after school classes as they would miss the school bus so parents have to drive to collect them later if this is possible or make other arrangements.

Carsphairn offered many and varied after school clubs including gardening and martial arts. We reject the contention that Support for Learning allocations are better utilised together within Dalry primary – one to one support is both more meaningful and valuable if conducted in a child's own local school within his or her own local community.

Response 22

There are many opportunities available in a larger small school (Dalry Primary School remains a small school but one with multiple class groupings and significantly wider peer groups for pupils). These opportunities can be more challenging to deliver in a school with very low numbers.

The Act is written in reference to schools which are currently operational, it can be challenging to make comparisons with a mothballed school. What our Council is able to state is "by highlighting the educational benefits of Dalry Primary School, it is not implied that many of these benefits did not already exist in Carsphairn Primary School ...".

During the public meeting there were many examples given of the positive experiences received by past pupils, we recognise the importance of these but also recognition needs given to the total pupil roll at the time the community is referring to, the graph at Response 20 shows the school roll back to 1975.

Issue 23

I want my own and other children within the area to receive the highest quality of care attention and quality of education that a small school such as Carsphairn can offer opposed to a larger school/classroom environment. I feel that teachers delivering education to larger classes simply cannot offer the same amount of attention to each pupil due to the ongoing job cuts from the council and the larger ratio of teachers to children.

Response 23

The ratio of pupils to teachers is set by SNCT (Scottish Negotiating Committee for Teachers) and are as follows –

Primary 1 & composite classes = 25

Primary 2 & 3 = 30

Primary 4, 5, 6 & 7 = 33

These are set nationally and are not a reflection of job cuts, teacher numbers have not been cut across Dumfries and Galloway.

Dalry Primary School as a small remote rural school currently has the follow class compositions –

Primary 1/2 = 17

Primary 3/4 = 22

Primary 5/6/7 = 22

Issue 24

I call for an Annually Published census of demographics in CARSPHAIRN Catchment area and St JOHNS TOWN DALRY catchment to be made available to CARSPHAIRN COMMUNITY COUNCIL – and ST JOHNS TOWN DALRY COMMUNITY COUNCIL

Response 24

The National Census in Scotland was last taken in 2022 with the outputs expected in 2023, this is carried out every 10 years.

Dumfries and Galloway Council Education and Learning Directorate do not hold the information on the local demographics of each catchment area; however they do report to Education and Learning Committee with the rolls of each school, detailing the catchment and non-catchment pupils in attendance. This information is taken from the Schools Census carried out in September each year.

Issue 25

Surely it is unacceptable that children in Dumfries and Galloway would have to travel to another local authority to be educated because there is no school close enough to them?

Response 25

There is a cross border-boundary agreement in place which allows pupils to attend schools in other authorities in Scotland and in England. There are currently seventy-six pupils attending schools within Dumfries and Galloway who do not reside in the authority and sixty-seven that attend schools out with the authority.

It is not unreasonable for pupils to attend schools out with Dumfries and Galloway.

Issue 26

We believe cost-cutting may well be playing a significant role in the consideration of closure when it is parental choice over schooling and support for a remote rural community that should be the most important factors.

Response 26

To reiterate from response 22. above, at the point of mothballing at the end of academic year 2018/19 there were 9 children living within the catchment, and only 2 Primary 7's had chosen to attend the school (the school was mothballed at the point these P7's completed the academic year). The school was mothballed at the point there were no children in attendance or enrolled. The school roll fell due to local families exerting their right for their children to attend the school of their choice not due to the action of Dumfries and Galloway Council.

Dumfries and Galloway Council has a statutory responsibility to secure best value in its use of resources. The estimated cost of bringing Carsphairn Primary School and Nursery building to a basic standard and associated staffing for reopening would be difficult to justify since there is no clear prospect of a significant increase in the school roll.

Issue 27

13.2 Current Details – Carsphairn Primary School

- DGC have admitted their failure to adequately maintain the property for 5 years preceding the Covid-19 pandemic - *“The condition survey has not been reassessed since 2014 due to the impact of the Covid-19 pandemic and it is likely that there has been a level of depreciation in the building over this time.”* DGC's historic failure to maintain an ageing property should not be used as a justification for permanent closure.

Response 27

The reference (as quoted above) from the proposal document is referring to the condition surveys, these determine the priority order for investment across the entire school estate, they do not determine any maintenance requirements. The renewed condition surveys were delayed across the entire school estate during the Covid-19 pandemic, the surveys were paused as they were deemed to be non-essential by the joint trade unions at a time when non-essential works were stopped in schools to mitigate against exposure. The school has not received investment in the time period because it is not a condition C or D building, the investment priority order prioritises condition C and D elements of buildings as per Scottish Government guidance and direction. If the school were to reopen steps would be taken to address the areas of minor deterioration that are consistent with any building that has not be occupied for a number of years.

Dumfries and Galloway Council have not failed to maintain the building and the extract above does not support the statement that “DGC have admitted their failure to adequately maintain the property for 5 years.”

The note of the public meetings is at Appendix E. Forty-three questions and comments are recorded from the 2 public meetings. The majority of these were answered during the discussions and can be found in the note, others were also raised in written responses and are covered above.

7.0 Summary of the Issues raised by HMle (education Scotland), and Dumfries and Galloway Council's Response

In line with the legislative requirements, HMle were invited to submit comments on the Council's proposals. A copy of the report from HMle is appended – Appendix F
In their report, HMle reference information from the proposal paper, and information gathered through the course of their report writing and visits to the impacted communities. Within the report HMle detail the following two issues for further consideration;

Issue 28

The Council has provided its rationale and an educational benefits statement outlining how it believes its proposal to close Carsphairn Primary School will benefit children. This includes a statement that the size of the school provides significant impediments to the successful implementation of curriculum for excellence. HM Inspectors do not support this view and do not find that the council's proposal demonstrates clearly enough how children will benefit from the closure of the school.

Response 28

Dumfries and Galloway Council continue to believe the educational benefit statement, which provides clear examples of how small (single figure) schools do not provide the range of opportunities that larger schools can offer. Given that there are no pupils currently at Carsphairn Primary School, it is not possible to determine what the wider aspect of their educational experiences may be, however, again, it is clear that small numbers significantly reduce the peer group and social opportunities that Dalry Primary School is able to provide. Arguments could be made that the level of direct teacher time and classroom-based learning could be beneficial, simply due to low numbers, but this also needs considered against opportunities for discussion, dialogue, debate, all with peers of a similar age and stage. There could be opportunity to gain these experiences with peers of different ages within Carsphairn Primary School, should it reopen, but all of these opportunities exist within Dalry Primary School, as well as the opportunities afforded in larger class sizes.

Issue 29

The Council has assessed the effects of its proposal on children, young people and the community. It has not identified any significant impacts resulting from closure. HM Inspectors believe that the council should provide clearer evidence to support this view. For example, the Carsphairn community believes that closing the school will negatively impact on its plans for the regeneration of the village. In taking forward this proposal, the Council needs to consider further the potential negative impact on the community.

Response 29

The response to issue 11. earlier in the document explicitly details the challenges and concerns colleagues within other council directors have around the growth of Carsphairn village. So much so that the local development plan has seen a reduction of potential housing site growth from 10 units to none. It is accepted that there could be growth through infill, however the opportunities for this within the village is limited. Due to the level of potential housing growth, the additional number of school-aged children this may bring, is significantly low. The ability to regenerate an area is not dependant on a school being present. There are numerous other small communities across Dumfries and Galloway which do not have schools yet are vibrant communities.

8.0 Effects on the Community

Section 15.6 of the Proposal Paper set out Dumfries and Galloway Council's assessment of the effects of closure on the local community, noting that the community has the use of a village hall for public events etc. The following statement from a representation states that;

'The community feels that the loss of their primary school would have a lot more knock-on effects than are being credited. A school is the heart of a community, and key to its regeneration. The council should be looking to work in a more holistic way, supporting Carsphairn when it is obviously actively trying to regenerate, and offering to help with family housing and trying to safeguard the school with the knowledge that this is an important part of a thriving community.' The issue was also covered in the report by HMle (Appendix F), who commented that *'It has not identified any significant impacts resulting from closure. HM Inspectors believe that the council should provide clearer evidence to support this view. For example, the Carsphairn Community Council believes that closing the school will negatively impact on its plans for the regeneration of the village. In taking forward the proposal, the council needs to consider further the potential negative impact on the community.'*

It is difficult to predict the movement of families in or out of the Carsphairn community, we can be fairly confident in saying as our records show, 4 families with primary aged children have moved into the area since the school was mothballed, in addition, since mothballing there remains families of primary aged children who lived in the Carsphairn catchment. The number of children living within the catchment has remained fairly static since 2018/19 as detailed in response 20 Table 2. There are many communities within Dumfries and Galloway that have an aged population with or without the presence of a school, it is reflective of a changing demographic and declining population. The primary aged population of Dumfries and Galloway has dropped by over 7,460 pupils since 1975, the school estate currently has over 4,000 too many spaces for its current cohort of primary aged children.

9.0 Alleged Omissions or Inaccuracies

9.1 One representation suggested that the following statement was incorrect as no cook was employed at Carsphairn P.S;

'Prior to the school being mothballed, meals were cooked at Dalry Secondary School and transported to Carsphairn Primary School where a cook was employed. If the school were re-opened it is likely a cook would be employed 9.75 hours per week (as detailed above) and meals would be cooked and transported as per arrangements prior to mothballing.'

Clarification from colleagues within catering has been sought and the information provided in the Proposal Paper is correct, due to a vacancy for a catering manager and difficulty in appointing to historically vacant posts, a cook was transferred from Dalry School to Carsphairn Primary School (who also delivered the meals) from the point at which the catering manager left up until mothballing. Dumfries and Galloway Council does not support the statement that this is in an inaccuracy.

9.2 One representation stated that there were inaccuracies in relation to the co-located campus of Dalry Primary and Secondary School – *'The primary no longer have access to the art and music areas of the secondary school, so this shows that you have not done your research and your facts are out of date - another inaccurate statement.*

The MUGA has been out of action for many years and cannot be used by school pupils - so as above with regard to misinformation within your document.'

The co-located campus presents the opportunity to access the wider facilities, it is an operational decision between the 2 schools (primary and secondary) to arrange the use of areas designated to the secondary. Whilst these areas may not be used under current arrangements, the facilities are there and those operational arrangements could be easily established.

Dumfries and Galloway Council recognises the need for the replacement of the MUGA surface, however the MUGA is there and established and could be brought up to a useable standard given the capital availability. The statements above are not inaccurate the facilities exist on the Dalry campus, equivalent facilities are not available at Carsphairn P.S.

9.3 The additional travel time stated in the Proposal Paper was queried regarding its accuracy, statement as follows - *"The maximum additional travel time for school pupils to Dalry Primary School is approx. 14 minutes (source: Google Maps)."*

This statement is not inaccurate. The statement refers specifically to the additional journey from Carsphairn Primary School to Dalry Primary School. It is assumed that pupils would need to make the journey to Carsphairn Primary School and we cannot account for the variety of potential locations pupils may reside in, in any given year, therefore only the additional journey was specified.

9.4 It was alleged that the *'appendices do not show the costs to continue mothballing the school. These are necessary to give due consideration to this option'*

Table 3 of Appendix 6 within the proposal paper clearly set out the costs of mothballing. Therefore there had been no omission regarding mothballing costs.

9.5 It was alleged in a representation that there was a financial inaccuracy in the financial template – *‘There is a figure of £9500 as transport costs of opening Carsphairn School but an annual recurring savings of £6642 if they went to Dalry despite the note below the table’*

The figure of £6,642 detailed on row 30 of Appendix 6 of the Proposal Paper are the actual costs for transporting the 2 pupils to Carsphairn Primary School, there were no additional transport costs to other schools at this point in time as the other pupils were not attending their catchment school. The figure of £9,500 in row 30 of Appendix 7 of the Proposal Paper is based on the current catchment pupils attending Carsphairn Primary School, transport would be provided in line with <https://www.dumgal.gov.uk/article/15245/Free-school-transport>

For clarity there is no inaccuracy, appendix 6 relates to the financial costs when the school was last operational, appendix 7 relates to the cost of reopening Carsphairn Primary School.

9.6 It was stated in one representation that the financial statement should be dismissed – *‘The financial statement should be provided in a clear, complete and consistent form for all school closures, this financial statement does not stand up to scrutiny and should be dismissed from the proposal paper.’*

Dumfries and Galloway Council have completed the template as provided as part of the statutory guidance, an additional template was also provided to demonstrate the costs of reinstating Carsphairn Primary School and Nursery. The financial templates will not be dismissed as the act is clear that this information must be included in the format provided.

9.7 Detailed in section 13.2 of the Proposal Paper, the statement reads – ‘Of the ten catchment children, 4 are of an age to have attended Carsphairn Primary School prior to mothballing, all 4 children have chosen to attend other primary schools in the area for the duration of their primary education.’

This information is inaccurate, of the ten catchment children, 3 (not the 4 as stated above) are of an age to have attended Carsphairn Primary School prior to mothballing.

Dumfries and Galloway Council has considered the impact of this inaccuracy on the Proposal and has concluded it does not represent a material consideration relevant to the Authority’s final decision.

10.0 Further Review of Alternatives to Closure

Throughout the consultation Dumfries and Galloway Council has had special regard to the provision for rural schools within section 12 of the Schools (Consultation) (Scotland) Act 2010 as amended. In particular, Dumfries and Galloway Council has had special regard to the following:

- Any viable alternative to the closure proposal;

Section 15.1 of the Proposal Paper identified the following alternatives to closure:

- To reopen Carsphairn Primary School with its current catchment area, or;
- To reopen Carsphairn Primary School with an increased catchment area, or;
- To continue with the current “mothballing” arrangement.

No further alternative to closure was suggested during the consultation exercise.

There is no indication that the roll figures at a re-opened Carsphairn Primary School would be any higher than was suggested in the Proposal Paper. On the contrary, updated roll figures from the questionnaire suggested that a much smaller number than those currently residing within the catchment area would attend Carsphairn Primary School. There is also nothing in the projected rolls that would support the suggestion that the roll at Carsphairn Primary School is likely to rise to a point that would allow the school to become viable.

Dumfries and Galloway Council has always accepted that the additional travel time for pupils was the main adverse effect on the proposal, even though children are already adjusted to the additional travel. The Council’s Proposal Paper suggested the maximum additional transport time would be 14 minutes. The figure was derived from Google maps, which is a neutral source of information on travel times. This additional journey time has been disputed in a number of representations due to the fact that it does not take account of differing weather conditions and the mode of transport. The impact of the travel arrangements is considered at section 16 above. As Carsphairn Primary School has been mothballed since 2018/19, implementation of the proposal would not require the introduction of any different travelling arrangements for staff and pupils.

11.0 Procedure for Call-in by Scottish Ministers

As set out in the Schools (Consultation) (Scotland) Act 2010 as amended, Dumfries and Galloway Council is required to notify the Scottish Ministers of its decision and provide them with a copy of the Proposal Paper and Consultation Report. The Scottish Ministers have an 8 week period from the date of that final decision on 30 March 2023 to decide if they will call-in the proposal. Within the first 3 weeks of that 8 week period, Scottish Ministers will take account of any relevant representations made to them by any person. Therefore, anyone who wishes to make representation to the Scottish Ministers can do so up until midnight on 20 April 2023. The Scottish Ministers will have until midnight on 25 May 2023 to take a decision on the call-in of the Closure Proposal.

Anyone wishing to make a representation to the Scottish Ministers requesting them to call-in the decision to close Carsphairn Primary School and Nursery is asked to email schoolclosure@gov.scot or write to The Scottish Government, School Infrastructure Unit, 2A (South), Victoria Quay, Edinburgh, EH6 6QQ by midnight on 20 April 2023.

Until the outcome of the 8 week call-in process has been notified to Dumfries and Galloway Council, it will not proceed to implement the Proposal. If the Scottish Ministers call-in the proposal, it will be referred to a School Closure Review Panel.

12.0 Legal Issues

Throughout this statutory consultation Dumfries and Galloway Council has complied in full with the requirements of the Schools (Consultation) (Scotland) Act 2010 as amended.

As provided for in section 1 of the Education (Scotland) Act 1980, it is the duty of the Council to ensure adequate and efficient provision of school education within Dumfries and Galloway, such education to be directed towards the development of the personality, talents and mental and physical abilities of children or young persons to their fullest potential (Standards in Scotland's School Etc. Act 2000). As with all Council duties, the Council also has a duty to make arrangements to secure best value, and in securing best value the Council is required to maintain an appropriate balance between, inter alia, the quality of its performance of its functions and the cost to the authority of that performance (Local Government in Scotland Act 2002, section 1). Each of the above, and all other legislative requirements, have been taken into account in the preparation of this Report.

13.0 Financial Implications

The financial templates detailing the financial implications of the proposal was issued as Appendix 6 and 7 of the Proposal Paper.

14.0 Equality Impact assessment

An Equality Impact Assessment was issued with the proposal paper and can be found at Section 16 to the Proposal Paper. The consultation exercise did not identify any additional equality issues.

15.0 Conclusion

The consultation process has complied fully with legislative requirements and has provided an opportunity for all parties to identify key issues of concern. These issues have been fully considered and the Council's response detailed in sections 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10 and 11 above.

HMIe staff visited Dalry Primary School, and the site of Carsphairn Primary School to speak to parents, pupils, staff and community representatives. They also had the opportunity to review in detail the proposal document and all written responses.

Council officials, having reviewed the submissions, note of the public meetings and HMIe report; and having special regard to the alternatives to closure, to the community impact and to the impact of the travel arrangements; concludes that the proposal offers significant educational benefits and officers are still of the view that on balance the evidence supports the closure of Carsphairn Primary School, however giving special regard to the impact of the Covid-19 pandemic and early stages of Carsphairn community's plans to deliver housing within the Carsphairn catchment area and their aspirations for growth, it is felt that it would also be appropriate to provide time for the community to further develop their regeneration plans and establish if there is any growth to pupil numbers within the catchment area, who would seek to enrol at Carsphairn Primary School, were it to reopen. It would be amiss of

Dumfries and Galloway Council to not consider this information in its recommendation nor give the Carsphairn community the time and opportunity to demonstrate the viability and early-stage implementation of their plans.

16.0 Recommendation

It is therefore recommended that in light of the consultation process, the impact of the Covid-19 pandemic and Carsphairn community's aspirations for growth through potential housing development that Dumfries and Galloway Council stops the closure process in favour of a further mothballing period of up to 2 years, at which stage the consultation process would start afresh and seek to capture any changes to the current position.

END OF CONSULTATION REPORT

Appendix A



Dumfries and Galloway Council Education and Learning Directorate

Proposal document to discontinue education provision at Carsphairn Primary School and Nursery, re-assigning its catchment area to that of Dalry Primary School

This Proposal has been issued by Dumfries and Galloway Council Education and Learning Directorate in accordance with the Schools (Consultation) (Scotland) Act 2010 as amended and Children and Young People (Scotland) Act 2014.

Statutory Consultation Period: Monday 5th September to Friday 4th November 2022

Schools across Dumfries and Galloway were closed on Monday 19th September 2022 as an additional bank holiday to mark the last day of the period of National Mourning in respect of HM Queen Elizabeth II. The consultation timeline has been amended to ensure that the consultation period extends to thirty school days as detailed in the Schools (Consultation) (Scotland) Act 2010 as amended, all consultees have been notified and the papers have been reissued.

Dumfries and Galloway Council is proposing, subject to the outcome of the statutory consultation process, to discontinue education provision at Carsphairn Primary School, reassigning its catchment area to that of Dalry Primary School (maps of the current catchment area are available at Appendices 1,2 and 3).

For the avoidance of doubt it should be assumed that the related ELC (Early Learning and Childcare) provision is included within any reference below to a Primary School. In particular, any reference to Carsphairn Primary School should be taken as a reference to both the primary and nursery classes that operated prior to the mothballing of the school.

The proposed changes, if approved, will take place immediately after the conclusion of the statutory process relating to school closures.

HMIe (Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Education) is referred throughout the document in line with the Schools (Consultation) (Scotland) Act (1980). HMIe was amalgamated into Education Scotland which was created on the 1 July 2011 as the lead public body for assessment and education improvement in Scotland.

Publication Information

The proposal paper will be available, free of charge, at:

- Dalry Primary School
- Carsphairn Shop and Tearoom
- Dumfries and Galloway Council Headquarters

And published on Dumfries and Galloway Council website:

www.dumgal.gov.uk/consultations

Copies of this paper are also available on request from:

Statutory Consultation – Carsphairn Primary School
Dumfries and Galloway Council
Militia House
109/111 English Street
DG1 2HR

E-mail: statutoryconsultation@dumgal.gov.uk

To request this information in a more accessible format or alternative language, please contact the postal or email address listed above.

Formal notice of the Proposal and relevant information will be given and be made available, free of charge, to the consultees listed as follows:

- (a) Parents/carers of pupils within the current Carsphairn Primary School catchment;
- (b) Parents/carers of pupils attending Dalry Primary School; including parents of Dalry Primary School Nursery;
- (c) The Parent Council of Dalry Primary School;
- (d) The parents/carers of any children within the Carsphairn Primary School catchment expected to attend Primary School within two years of the date of publication;
- (e) The parents/carers of any children expected to attend Dalry Primary School within two years of the date of publication;
- (f) The pupils at any affected school;
- (g) Staff of Dalry Primary School and Nursery (teaching and non-teaching);
- (h) Trade union representatives;
- (i) Carsphairn Community Council;
- (j) St John's Town of Dalry Community Council;
- (k) East Ayrshire Education Authority;
- (l) HMIE

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Appendix 1 – Carsphairn Primary School catchment map

Appendix 2 – Dalry Primary School catchment map

Appendix 3 – Carsphairn Primary School and surrounding area catchment map

Appendix 4 – Carsphairn Primary School catchment pupil's map

Appendix 5 – Carsphairn Primary School adjusted catchment area map

Appendix 6 – Financial Template

Appendix 7 – Financial Template

1.0 Relevant Proposals and Consultees

Dumfries and Galloway Council is proposing, subject to the outcome of the statutory consultation process, to discontinue education provision at Carsphairn Primary School, reassigning its catchment area to that of Dalry Primary School (maps of the current catchment area are available at Appendices 1,2 and 3).

Formal notice of the Proposal and relevant information will be given and be made available, free of charge, to the consultees listed as follows:

- (a) Parents/ carers of pupils within the current Carsphairn Primary School catchment;
- (b) Parents/ carers of pupils attending Dalry Primary School; including parents of Dalry Primary School Nursery;
- (c) The Parent Council of Dalry Primary School;
- (d) The parents/ carers of any children within the Carsphairn Primary School catchment expected to attend Primary School within two years of the date of publication;
- (e) The parents/ carers of any children expected to attend Dalry Primary School within two years of the date of publication;
- (f) The pupils at any affected school;
- (g) Staff of Dalry Primary School and Nursery (teaching and non-teaching);
- (h) Trade union representatives;
- (i) Carsphairn Community Council;
- (j) St John's Town of Dalry Community Council;
- (k) East Ayrshire Education Authority;
- (l) HMIE

2.0 Correction of the Paper

If any inaccuracy or omission is discovered in this Proposal paper, either by Dumfries and Galloway Council or any other person, Dumfries and Galloway Council will determine if relevant information has been omitted or, if the paper contains an inaccuracy. Dumfries and Galloway Council will then take appropriate action, which may include the issue of a correction or the reissuing of the Proposal or the revision of the timescale for the consultation period, if appropriate. In that event, relevant consultees and HMIE will be advised.

3.0 Consultation Period

The consultation for this Proposal will run from Monday 5th September 2022 and will end on Friday 4th November 2022. This period allows for the statutory minimum of six weeks, including at least thirty school days.

Schools across Dumfries and Galloway were closed on Monday 19th September 2022 as an additional bank holiday to mark the last day of the period of National Mourning in respect of HM Queen Elizabeth II. The consultation timeline has been amended to ensure that the consultation period extends to thirty school days as detailed in the Schools (Consultation) (Scotland) Act 2010 as amended.

3.1 Responses to the Proposals

Interested parties are invited to respond to the proposals by making written or electronic representations on the Proposals to:

Statutory Consultation – Carsphairn Primary School
Dumfries and Galloway Council
Militia House
109/111 English Street
DG1 2HR

E-mail: statutoryconsultation@dumgal.gov.uk

When responding you are invited to state your relationship with the school – for example, “pupil”, “parent”, “carer”, “relative”, “former pupil”, “teacher in school”, “member of the community” etc. However, it is not compulsory to do so.

Those sending in a response, whether by letter or electronically, should know that their response will be open to public scrutiny and may have to be supplied to anyone making a reasonable request to see it. If they do not wish their response to be made publicly available, they should clearly write on the document: “I wish my response to be considered as confidential with access restricted to Councillors and Council Officers of Dumfries and Galloway Council”. Otherwise, it will be assumed that the person making the response agrees to it being made publicly available.

All written responses must be received by the last day of the consultation period, Friday 4th November 2022 at 5:00pm.

4.0 Public Meeting

Two public meetings will be held, the details of which are set out below;

Thursday 29th September 2022 3.00pm-5.00pm - Dalry Primary School, Kirkland Street, St Johns Town of Dalry DG7 3UX.

Thursday 29th September 2022 6.00pm-8.00pm - Lagwyne Hall, Carsphairn DG7 3TQ.

Anyone wishing to attend the public meetings are invited to do so. The meetings will be convened by the Council, will be chaired by a senior Elected Member and will be addressed by Officers of the Education and Learning Directorate.

The meetings will be an opportunity for the public to hear more about the proposal; to ask questions about the proposal; and to have the views of all stakeholders recorded so that they can be taken into account. A note will be taken at the meeting of questions asked and views expressed. This note will be published on the Council website.

The note will be forwarded to HMle, along with other submissions and comments received by the Council during the consultation process.

4.1 Advertisement in Local Media

A notice announcing the public meetings will be placed in the Galloway News and on Dumfries and Galloway Council's website.

4.2 Meetings with Pupils and Staff

School staff will arrange to discuss proposals with pupils (who are considered to be of a suitable age and maturity) in the affected schools. A record of questions, responses and views will be taken, and this will be published in the Consultation Report.

5.0 Involvement of HMle

When the Proposal Document is published, a copy will also be sent to HMle by Dumfries and Galloway Council. HMle will also be sent, by Monday 7th November 2022, a copy of any relevant written representations that are received by the Council from any person during the consultation period, as well as the summary note of the public meetings that will be held. So far as is practicable a copy of any other relevant documentation will also be sent to HMle, by Monday 21st November 2022. HMle will then prepare a report on the educational aspects of the proposal, to be completed no later than 3 weeks after they receive the consultation papers – Friday 9th December 2022. In preparing their report, HMle may visit the school and make such enquiries of persons there as they consider appropriate. HMle may also make reasonable enquiries to such other persons they consider it appropriate.

6.0 Consultation Report

Dumfries and Galloway Council will review the proposal having regard to the HMle report, written representations that it has received, and oral representations made at the public meeting. It will then prepare a Consultation Report. This Report will be published in electronic and printed formats and anyone who submitted a written representation during consultation will be contacted. It will be available on Dumfries and Galloway Council's website as well as Carsphairn Shop and Tearoom, Dalry Primary School and Dumfries and Galloway Headquarters, free of charge. The Report will include a summary of the written and oral representations made during consultation and a copy of the HMle report, together with the Council's considered response to the issues raised. The Report will include details of any alleged inaccurate and/or omissions and how these have been handled. The Consultation Report will be published at least 3 weeks prior to being submitted to the Education and Learning Committee.

7.0 Time for Further Consideration

At this present time Dumfries and Galloway Council intends to publish its Report on Thursday 5th January 2023. In publishing the report the Council will invite any person or party to make further representations to the Education and Learning Committee prior to its meeting within

a 3 week window; Monday 9th January to Friday 27th January 2023. A notice to this effect will also be published on the Dumfries and Galloway Council website.

The final consultation report will be submitted to the Education and Learning Committee in early 2023. However, this timescale may change depending on the nature of issues raised during consultation, and the need to give full consideration to those issues. In the latter event, the report may not be submitted until a later Committee meeting.

8.0 Explanation of Approach

The Proposal is advanced within the context of all applicable legislation. Amongst other duties, education authorities are required to secure adequate and efficient provision of school education (S.1 of the Education Act 1980); and to endeavour to secure improvement in the quality of school education in schools that are managed by them (S.3 of The Standards in Scotland's Schools Act 2000).

9.0 Designation of Rural Schools

Carsphairn Primary School is a rural school within the terms of the Schools (Consultation) (Scotland) Act 2010 as amended (the school is classed as "remote rural") and Dumfries and Galloway Council has had regard to the provisions of the Act, in particular the special regard required for rural school closures. The Council has considered the school roll projections for Carsphairn Primary School (see Section 13.2 below); has given detailed consideration to the viable alternatives to closure (Sections 15.1-15.4 below); to the effect of closure on the community (Section 15.6 below); and to the impact of travel arrangements on children who are not yet of school age but who live in the Carsphairn Primary School catchment (Section 15.7 below). At present the pupils who live within the Carsphairn Primary School catchment attend Dalry Primary School, Castle Douglas Primary School, Kells Primary School and Moniaive Primary School. Children living within the Carsphairn Primary School catchment who are eligible for funded ELC (Early Learning and Childcare) are zoned to Dalry Primary School Nursery. Local Authority and Partner Provider nurseries are also available in Castle Douglas, Moniaive and Glenlochar.

10.0 Call-in of Closure Proposals

In the event that Dumfries and Galloway Council decides to close the school at this stage, it is required to notify the Scottish Ministers of that decision and provide them with a copy of the Proposal Document and Consultation Report in accordance with the Schools (Consultation) (Scotland) Act 2010 as amended within 6 working days of the decision being made, and to publish on its website a notice that it has done so, detailing the opportunity to make further representations within 3 weeks. The Scottish Ministers have an 8-week period from the date of that final decision to decide if they will call-in the proposal. If the Scottish Ministers call-in the proposal, it will be referred to a School Closure Review Panel. Within the first 3 weeks of the 8-week period, the Scottish Ministers will take account of any relevant representations made to them by any person.

11.0 Determination of Case

Scottish Ministers may refuse to consent to the proposal or grant their consent to the proposal subject to conditions or unconditionally. Until the outcome of the 8-week call-in process has been notified to Dumfries and Galloway Council, Dumfries and Galloway Council will not proceed to implement the proposal.

12.0 Grounds for Call-In etc

The Scottish Ministers may issue a call-in notice where it appears to the Scottish Ministers that Dumfries and Galloway Council may have failed;

- (a) in a significant regard to comply with the requirements imposed on it by (or under) the Schools (Consultation) (Scotland) Act 2010 as amended so far as they are relevant in relation to the closure proposal, or
- (b) to take proper account of a material consideration relevant to its decision to implement the proposal.

13.0 Proposal Paper

13.1 Rationale

This proposal is being advanced for the following reasons:

- No children have attended Carsphairn Primary School since the end of academic session 2018/19.
- No children have attended Carsphairn Primary School Nursery since the end of academic session 2011/12.
- Current population figures within the school catchment indicate a maximum school roll of around eleven pupils over the next 5 years assuming all catchment children attended Carsphairn Primary School.
- A school roll of this size provides significant impediments to the successful implementation of a Curriculum for Excellence.
- A low school roll hampers social interaction opportunities for children who conversely benefit from attending larger schools amongst more children of their own age.
- The neighbouring school Dalry Primary School is itself projected to experience a falling roll over the next few years.

13.2 Current Details – Carsphairn Primary School

Carsphairn Primary School is a small, remote rural school situated in the most northerly parish in the Glenkens. The catchment area is approx. 107 square miles in area with around 154 residential properties. The village is situated approximately half-way between Dalmellington to the North (East Ayrshire) and St John's Town of Dalry to the South. The geography of the area served by the school is predominately forests and hills with small rural communities linked by the A713 and B729 road infrastructure beyond the main transport links

are a network of forestry roads. The school has seen a reducing roll down to single figures in academic year 2015/16 and has been mothballed since the end of academic session 2018/19 when only two pupils were in attendance (3 pupils were in attendance when the academic year commenced), no children have attended the nursery since the end of academic session 2011/12. Since then, nursery age pupils have been zoned with Dalry Primary School nursery. Primary aged children currently attended, Dalry Primary School, Kells Primary School, Moniaive Primary School and Castle Douglas Primary School due to parental choice. Current numbers indicate that, there are ten pupils of P1-P7 age living within the catchment area of the school for academic year 2022/23. There will be 2 children from the Carsphairn Primary School catchment due to enter P1 in August 2023, no children are due to enter P1 in August 2024.

The year group numbers for academic year 2022/32 are as follows:

Year/Stage	Number of Pupils
N4	0
N5	2
P1	1
P2	1
P3	1
P4	3
P5	1
P6	2
P7	1

The expected rolls per academic year (detailed below) assume all catchment children attend and there are no placing requests, the nursey roll figures assume all zoned children attend from the Carsphairn Primary School Nursery zone (the nursery zone for Carsphairn Primary School Nursery mirrors that of Carsphairn Primary School catchment). The figures for the forthcoming few years would be:

Primary

Academic Year	Catchment Pupils
2022/23	10
2023/24	11
2024/25	9
2025/26	11
2026/27	8

Nursery

Academic Year	Catchment Nursery Pupils
2022/23	2
2023/24	3
2024/25	3
2025/26	0*

*Partial data for academic year 2025/26 as there remains 7 months of potential birth data.

The figures above are informed by SEEMiS data (correct 30/08/22) and NHS birth data (correct 12/8/22)

If Carsphairn Primary School were reopened, it would be as a single teacher school with a total roll of ten, assuming all catchment children attended. Of the ten catchment children, 4 are of an age to have attended Carsphairn Primary School prior to mothballing, all 4 children have chosen to attend other primary schools in the area for the duration of their primary education. Historically 19% of potential catchment children chose to attend a school other than Carsphairn Primary School. The school did not attract any non-catchment pupils in the 7 years prior to mothballing.

The school has 1 classroom, an office/staff room, kitchen, pupil toilets, staff/accessible, plus a GP room, which when the school last operated functioned as a library and dining space, it was also the space the nursery historically operated from. Externally there is a tarred playground and grassed area to the rear of the school building which is approx. 1,335 sq. m. The GIA (gross internal area) for the building is 190.98 sq. m.

The school has a capacity of 25, however Dumfries and Galloway Council Elected Members agreed a policy at Education and Learning Committee on 24th March 2022 that small schools with a roll between 19 and 25 would be staffed with an additional teacher. This means a single teacher teaching a composite class of P1-7 would not be expected to teach more than 18 pupils, therefore whilst the functional capacity of the school is 25 the operational capacity is restricted to 18, if the school was to reach 19 pupils a second teacher would be required for a team teach approach.

Dumfries and Galloway Council assesses all its schools for suitability and condition, in line with the Scottish Government's School Estate Management guidelines. Schools are assessed on a scale with the ratings "A" (good) "B" (satisfactory) "C" (poor) and "D" (bad). The Carsphairn Primary School building has been previously rated as "C" for suitability and "B" for condition. The condition survey has not been reassessed since 2014 due to the impact of the Covid-19 pandemic and it is likely that there has been a level of depreciation in the building over this time. The suitability survey was reassessed in line with the Scottish Governments revised school estates: suitability reporting core facts documentation.

The school was last inspected on the 9th November 2009, with the findings published on the 19th January 2010, there has not been a further inspection by HMIE in recent years. Were the school to re-open with the roll figures indicated, the staffing entitlement would be as follows;

Partnership Head Teacher – 1.00 FTE (three school partnership 0.33)

Principal Teacher – 1.00 FTE

Non-class contact time – 0.2 FTE (includes management time)

Clerical Assistant – 14.4 hours per week

Facilities Assistant – 4.75 hours per week

Cook - 9.75 hours per week

Playground Supervision - 0 hours per week

Nursery Manager – 36 hours per week

Nursery Nurse – 36 hours per week

Nursery Nurse – 20 hours per week

(In line with current nursery staffing models)

In addition, Additional Support Needs teaching and non-teaching staff would be allocated to the school in accordance with an annual assessment of need.

Prior to the school being mothballed, meals were cooked at Dalry Secondary School and transported to Carsphairn Primary School where a cook was employed. If the school were re-opened it is likely a cook would be employed 9.75 hours per week (as detailed above) and meals would be cooked and transported as per arrangements prior to mothballing. In line with the Scottish Government's commitment to universal free school meals, all children in P1-P5 are entitled to a free school meal.

Were Carsphairn Primary School to re-open for academic session 2022/23 four potential pupils within the catchment would qualify for free school transport. The other pupils live within the village of Carsphairn. Currently 3 children access free transport to Dalry Primary School, a further 2 children are also eligible but are transported by other means. The remaining 5 children from the Carsphairn Primary School catchment are enrolled out of catchment and are therefore not entitled to free school transport (Dalry Primary School has been the assumed catchment for Carsphairn Primary School pupils since mothballing in relation to free transport entitlement). The map in Appendix 4 represents pupils living within the Carsphairn Primary School catchment area (please note that some pupils reside at the same address and therefore 1 dot may represent more than 1 pupil).

Were Carsphairn Primary School Nursery to reopen it would be unlikely the Care Inspectorate would re-register the previous service. Since 2012 ELC provision has changed significantly, particularly with the introduction of 1140 hours. Along with this expansion came the Care Inspectorates 'Space to Grow' guidance which sets out the basic requirements for a nursery facility which must be met in order to be registered. The space previously utilised as a nursery within Carsphairn Primary School, is not a designated nursery space, instead it is a true general-purpose room delivering many functions for the school. Since the expansion to 1140

hours of ELC, children are entitled to access all day care and therefore the room could not be used for other purposes. Under the expansion, the playroom would also now be required to be utilised for rest/ sleep and for meal provision. It is likely that a new space on the existing site would be required to meet the requirements of the Care Inspectorate. Using the Scottish Future Trusts current cost metrics for nurseries outturns a capital cost of approx. £390,000.00. Dumfries and Galloway Council fully rolled out 1140 hours ELC in August 2020 following a phased introduction targeting areas high on the Scottish Index of Multiple Deprivation (SIMD) and all nursery capacity requirements have been met.

13.3 Current Details – Dalry Primary School

Dalry Primary School is a remote rural school situated in St John's Town of Dalry that serves the villages of St John's Town of Dalry, Balmaclellan and surrounding rural area. The catchment area is approx. 84 square miles in area with around 581 residential properties. St John's Town of Dalry is situated approx. 16 miles to the north of Castle Douglas. The geography of the area served by the school is predominately forests, hills and lochs with small rural communities that link to St John's Town of Dalry linked by the A713 and B700 and A702 road infrastructure. Since the mothballing of Carsphairn Primary School, Dalry Primary School has, for practical purposes, also taken pupils from that school's catchment, as has Kells Primary School, Moniaive Primary School and Castle Douglas Primary School due to parental choice.

The accommodation consists of 3 classrooms, office, library and toilets. The primary school is co-located with the secondary school and has access to a staffroom, large general purpose hall with stage, changing rooms, campus dining/canteen, PE facilities, car park plus a wide range of secondary school specialist areas. Externally there are extensive grounds and access to a Multi-Use Games Area the area extends to approx. 17,146 sq. m and is shared with the secondary and nursery. The nursery occupies a classroom within the primary school, which in turn has access to all the facilities on the campus. The GIA (gross internal area) for the building (primary and nursery) is 467.73 sq. m, this figure does not take into account the shared facilities.

The school roll for academic year 2022/23 is 59 (correct 30/8/22), in 3 classes. The expected rolls per academic year (detailed below) assume all catchment children attend and there are no placing requests, the nursey roll figures assume all zoned children attend from the Dalry Primary School catchment and do not include children zoned from other schools. The figures for the forthcoming few years would be:

Primary

Academic Year	Catchment Pupils
2022/23	59
2023/24	57
2024/25	57
2025/26	55
2026/27	53

Nursery

Academic Year	Catchment Nursery Pupils
2022/23	10
2023/24	9
2024/25	16
2025/26	14*

*Partial data for academic year 2025/26 as there remains 7 months of potential birth data.

The figures above are informed by SEEMiS data (correct 30/08/22) and NHS birth data (correct 12/8/22)

Current pupils out with their catchment primary schools are included in the figures above but only known catchment children are included in the figures for future academic years. The school has a capacity of 75, a roll of 59 for academic year 2022/23 represents a utilisation of 79%.

The Dalry Primary School building has been rated as “B” for suitability and “B” for condition.

The school was last inspected by HMIE on the 9th November 2009, with the findings published on the 19th January 2010, there has not been a further inspection by HMIE in recent years.

The year group numbers for academic year 2022/23 are as follows (the number of pupils detailed for N4 and N5 specifically refers to catchment nursery aged children, not those registered at Dalry Primary School Nursery) -

Year/Stage	Number of Pupils
N4	4
N5	6
P1	10
P2	8
P3	9
P4	13
P5	7
P6	4
P7	8

The figures above are informed by SEEMiS data (correct 30/08/22) and NHS birth data (correct 12/8/22).

The school's 2022/23 staffing entitlement is as follows;

Partnership Head Teacher – 1.0 FTE (three school partnership 0.33)

Principal Teacher – 1.0 FTE

Class Teacher – 2.0 FTE

Non class contact time – 0.33 FTE

Management Time – 0.08 FTE

Clerical Assistant – 21.68 hours per week

Facilities Assistant – 9.75 hours per week

Playground Supervisor – 9.75 hours per week

Nursery Manager – 36 hours per week

Nursery Nurse – 36 hours per week

Nursery Nurse – 20 hours per week

In addition, Additional Support Needs teaching and non-teaching staff would be allocated to the school in accordance with an annual assessment of need.

There is no cook detailed in the list above as Dalry Primary School has access to the shared catering and dining facilities of Dalry Secondary School. The production kitchen within Dalry Secondary School not only caters to the pupils of Dalry Primary School, Nursery and Secondary School but also provides meals to schools with a servery kitchen. No additional staff were required as a result of the mothballing of Carsphairn Primary School, nor would there be an additional requirement if all 10 Carsphairn Primary School catchment pupils chose to attend Dalry Primary School. If Carsphairn Primary School were to reopen there would be no reduction in catering staff at Dalry Secondary School.

If Carsphairn Primary School re-opened the clerical hours allocated to Dalry Primary School would be reduced as the number of hours allocated to the partnership of 3 schools (Carsphairn Primary School, Dalry Primary School and Kells Primary School) would need to be reallocated across all the 3 schools.

Dalry Primary School has an anticipated falling school roll, this combined with the impact of Carsphairn Primary School re-opening (assuming the catchment children attended) would result in a school roll at Dalry Primary School close to the threshold for a reduction in teacher numbers. A further fall in the school roll would result in the staffing numbers being reduced by 1.00 FTE, the reduction would reduce teacher numbers and therefore classes to 2 at such point in time the school roll falls below fifty. In line with The Schools (Safety and Supervision of Pupils) (Scotland) Regulations 1990, a school roll below fifty pupils would not be allocated playground supervision.

There would be no staffing impact on the other schools (Moniaive, Kells and Castle Douglas) attended by Carsphairn Primary School catchment pupils if the school was reopened and the catchment pupils attended.

13.4 Financial Consequences

Appendix 6 and Appendix 7 contain two tables in relation to the financial assessment for the proposed closure. Appendix 6 reflects the actual in year financial costs for Carsphairn when it was last open in academic year 2018/19. In line with the Schools (Consultation) (Scotland) Act 2010 as amended, this table assesses the financial impact on the receiving school, Dalry. Due to the low number of pupils, there is limited impact across the financial headings. The most significant factor is staffing. Dumfries and Galloway Council recognises that the members of staff no longer in employment at Carsphairn Primary School did not collectively cease their employment at the time of mothballing however their costs were not subsequently directly associated with Dalry Primary School, therefore these costs do not show on the financial template. Over time, and through the annual staffing exercise the overprovision has been managed and at this current time the staffing saving has been realised through natural retirements within the Authority.

Given the time period from the school being mothballed there have been some significant changes to operational costs. Appendix 7 presents data on projected costs, should the school reopen with all 10 primary aged pupils living within the catchment area in attendance. Whilst some of the costs have been a straight lift with only a level of inflation added, others are more significant. Higher catering costs are due to the transportation costs in delivering meals to Carsphairn, the transport costs are projected on a private taxi located in Castle Douglas as there is no local service in Carsphairn or St John's Town of Dalry previous in-house transport is no longer available. The home to school transport cost increase is purely as a result of the change in the number of eligible pupils. The nursery staffing costs are the biggest significant factor in changes to operational costs. As previously stated, Early Learning and Childcare undergone a reform since the nursery was mothballed. Eligibility has increased to 1140 hours per annum and on Appendix 6, which reflects academic year 2018/19 the nursery was not operational, so no costs are associated with it.

Looking purely at Appendix 6 and the level of saving generated at the time of mothballing, and with the acknowledgement that the staffing element was not a direct saving at that time the annual recurring saving amounts to £29,138. However subsequently the staffing element has been realised presenting an annual recurring saving of £90,620.

Should the school reopen, Appendix 7 reflects the level of financial operational costs that would be incurred. The costs reflect the nursery also reopening with the changes to deliver in relation to ELC. The total costs amount to £270,619 an increase from the 2018/19 operational costs of £90,790 by £179,829.

14.0 Educational Benefits Statement

This Educational Benefits Statement considers the educational benefits for pupils to attend Dalry Primary School, which would be designated as the catchment school, should the proposal be implemented. By highlighting the educational benefits of Dalry Primary School, it is not implied that many of these benefits did not already exist in Carsphairn Primary School however if Carsphairn Primary School were to re-open, with a reduced number of pupils over a greater age range, there would be increased challenges in ensuring that all children develop

Curriculum for Excellence's four capacities of Successful Learners, Confident Individuals, Responsible Citizens and Effective Contributors.

The larger school roll at Dalry Primary School and nursery enhances the sustainability and viability of the school and nursery and offers greater opportunities to learners. There would be pupils of all age groups within the school which allows pupils the opportunity to work in pairs, groups, at peer level and across stages in the school.

If Carsphairn Primary School re-opened with a very low school roll, that would mean that learning groups would not only be limited in size but also static and there would be no possibility of changing the membership of learning groups. The pupils may not be of a similar age and could be spread across P1-P7. A low school roll would further limit the variety of skills and social interaction that pupils could bring to groups, and there would be a smaller range of work to use in terms of sharing standards. Similarly, a larger nursery cohort, with child aged three to five years, offers children the opportunity to socialise in a wider group and learn developing skills across the curriculum through interaction with their peers.

The proposal would provide the opportunity for learners to access a broad and rich curriculum with motivating learning contexts. Dalry Primary School would provide improved opportunities for children to develop skills for learning, life and work e.g. increasing opportunities for working with others of a similar age and stage across the larger Dalry Primary School. The facilities at Carsphairn Primary School Nursery, particularly within the indoor environment, are limited. Where the nursery was previously located (within the general-purpose room) created challenges in providing the breadth of play experiences that would be expected within high quality ELC. 1140 hours is already being delivered at Dalry Primary School Nursery. All ELC providers are expected to meet the National Standard, including evaluations from the regulatory body Care Inspectorate of Good or above across all key questions; How good is our care, play and learning? How good is our setting? How good is our leadership? How good is our staff team? Dalry Primary School Nursery currently has evaluations of 'good' across all themes.

The larger school roll at Dalry Primary School is more likely to represent a diverse cross section of society. Pupils benefit from being members of diverse classes because they have the opportunity to hear viewpoints that differ greatly from their own. While some smaller schools do have a diverse array of members, many are relatively homogeneous in nature and, as such, do not offer pupils the opportunity to learn in a diverse setting. Children in nursery also benefit from being part of a more diverse community and wider social network.

Opportunities for social interaction will increase for learners as a result of attending Dalry Primary School. Working with others across a wide range of settings is one of the core elements of the modern school curriculum. This includes planning and carrying out projects in small groups, sharing tasks and responsibilities, and being ready and willing to learn from and with others. Dalry Primary School has sufficient pupils to allow the children to work collaboratively on various topics and activities, very small numbers at Carsphairn Primary would limit these opportunities. Within Dalry Primary School class teachers work with

individuals and groups at each stage of the curriculum, and group working allows pupils to develop different skills from those that are developed during individual work.

The majority of children attending Dalry Primary School transition to Dalry Secondary School at the end of Primary 7. These children attend Dalry Secondary from S1-S4 and then transition to Castle Douglas High School. The shared learning campus within Dalry provides many opportunities for effective, ongoing and enhanced transition which would not be possible in the same way for these learners should they attend Carsphairn Primary School. Transition both into and beyond nursery is an important consideration for all very young children irrespective of the choice of provision and subsequent choice of primary school.

Learning experiences are differentiated to meet the pupils' needs and pupils benefit from being able to work on co-operative learning tasks with others. Children's progress is reviewed regularly, and a range of interventions are planned to provide additional support as required. The wider range of teaching and support staff within Dalry Primary School have been trained to deliver a range of interventions including Closing the Literacy Gap, Literacy Ladders, Closing the Numeracy Gap and PEEP, an early intervention programme which supports parents/carers to support their child's development.

Building on the very good work of the Early Learning & Childcare Setting, outdoor learning is an important element of Dalry Primary School. In the past pupils at Dalry Primary School have benefitted from partnership working with pupils & staff from Dalry Secondary School and from parents, community members, Scottish Power and the local Red Squirrel group. Economies of scale would suggest the benefits of the larger school roll here, and part of the larger Dalry community supporting the work of the school. Within the school grounds of Dalry Primary School there is access to a trim trail, vegetable garden, quiet reflection space, large grass sports area and climbing wall. There is also access to Dalry Secondary's space, and wider spaces within the town of Dalry. These facilities would not be as readily accessible should the learners attend Carsphairn Primary School.

Dumfries and Galloway Council is committed to providing Information Technology devices at a 3:1 ratio for Primary 1-4 and a 2:1 ratio for Primary 5-7. Dalry Primary School has a 2:1 ratio across all year groups with access to a range of technologies including iPads, laptops and desktops. Sharing a campus with Dalry Secondary School offers access to support from a dedicated Computing Science teacher as well as a dedicated IT suite.

Dalry Primary School has a well-resourced library with a range of both fiction & non-fiction materials. The school also has also developed a nurture space which is used during the morning soft-start and provides breakfast to a number of pupils each morning. Dalry Primary shares an onsite catering kitchen and dining room with Dalry Secondary. The uptake of primary meals is very positive.

French is taught from Primary 1 through to Primary 7, with Spanish being introduced as a third language from Primary 5. This is able to be developed further at Dalry Secondary School.

The larger school roll of Dalry Primary School offers children an increased possibility of participating in educational, cultural and sporting activities which would not be readily available to the smaller school roll of Carsphairn Primary School. These provide a number of benefits for children in terms of both academic and social development and support the process of transition towards the larger and more varied educational setting of a secondary school.

Pupils at Dalry Primary School can access a wide range of additional opportunities in and out of the classroom, many of which due to school role and rurality of location would not be possible within Carsphairn Primary School. These opportunities help to stimulate and motivate the children and provide a wide range of skills. Over the past years these opportunities have included:

- Choir
- Music Festival
- Residential Trips
- Excursions
- Church Services
- Annual Sports Day
- Active Schools
- Youth Music Initiative/Feis Rois
- Christmas Fair
- Football Tournament
- Charity Days

Working with others also plays a part in the development of leadership skills, which become increasingly important to pupils as they move through their ELC and school years and beyond school education into adulthood. Dalry Primary School offers pupils the opportunity to take on leadership roles including Pupil Council, Buddies with Nursery children into Primary 1 and House Captains.

Some of the educational benefits arise not only from larger pupil numbers but also because of a larger staff and parent body. This increases the likelihood of interested adults leading a range of activities.

As part of the larger staff team within Dalry Primary School, with access to a wider selection of resources, a wider range of staff are available to support the needs of individuals and groups. Economy of scale further supports the work of Dalry Primary School i.e. through annual subscription costs etc. Support for Learning allocations of Learning Assistant and Additional Support for Learning Teacher are arguably better utilised together within Dalry Primary School to meet the needs of all learners than spread out between both Dalry Primary School and Carsphairn Primary School.

Careful planning and management of Pupil Equity Funding support a range of pupils. This funding has supported additional staff training to support a menu of interventions including

some bespoke interventions created by staff at Dalry Primary School. External support has also been accessed from Quarriers.

Sharing a campus with Dalry Secondary offers access to a range of secondary practitioners who are able to support their primary colleagues. Areas where this can work particularly well include Art & Design, Science and Technologies. The ability to borrow more specialist resources is also advantageous.

A number of teachers within Dalry Primary School are involved in leadership of change through involvement in a working group, leading a specific aspect of school improvement including play pedagogy, STEM, numeracy & music. Access to a larger staff group at Dalry Primary School provides a wider range of leadership opportunities and therefore a wider range of developments which can be taken forward to enhance learning & teaching. Due to small staffing numbers this would be very limited at Carsphairn Primary School

A number of after school activities and clubs are run by parents, staff, and volunteers. These include football, gardening club and a new IT after-school club is also planned.

Dalry Primary School has a Parent Council who support the school and nursery with school improvements. All parents are welcome to attend Parent Council Meetings. If Carsphairn Primary School were to reopen there would be an opportunity for a Parent Council to operate, however with a small pupil cohort there would be a smaller number of families to participate results on a greater reliance on individuals to support the school.

Dalry Primary School also has a specific fundraising group called Friends of Dalry School (FODS). This group have been successful in fundraising for a new trim trail, playground equipment and subsidise trips and residential.

There are strong links with community organisations and businesses. Links have been established with the local shop & church and with the Lock Ken Trust, Galloway & South Ayrshire Biosphere, CatStrand and Galloway Glens Landscape Partnership. Dalry Primary is able to utilise the Community Bus taking children on local visits linked to curricular learning.

15.0 Factors for Rural Closure Proposals

As Carsphairn Primary School is designated as a rural primary school, factors for rural school closure have been considered within this proposal paper, detailed within sections; 15.1-15.9 below .

15.1 Examination of Alternatives to the Proposal

In bringing forward this proposal for closure, the Council must have special regard to any viable alternatives to closure. The alternatives to closure would be:

- To reopen Carsphairn Primary School with its current catchment area, or;
- To reopen Carsphairn Primary School with an increased catchment area, or;
- To continue with the current “mothballing” arrangement.

15.2 Re-opening of Carsphairn Primary School with its current catchment

Although there has been a slight rise in the school age population in the Carsphairn area since the school was mothballed, it is clear that if Carsphairn Primary School re-opened it would always be a school with low numbers and a single teacher. Due to the catchment geography the school did not attract any non-catchment pupils in the seven years prior to mothballing. Section 14 above discusses in detail the educational issues arising from the low school roll figures.

If the school were to reopen, the potential pupils would have shorter journey times to school than they do at present. The additional distance is 9.4 miles, which is approx. 14 minutes travel time (Source: Google Maps).

15.3 Re-opening of Carsphairn Primary School with an Increased Catchment Area

Any increase to the catchment area for Carsphairn Primary School would come at the expense of Dalry Primary School taking into account the road infrastructure, the geographical nature of the area and the border with East Ayrshire Council. As Dalry Primary School is itself projected to see a falling roll, any increase of the Carsphairn Primary School catchment risks undermining Dalry Primary School without increasing the roll at Carsphairn Primary School to viable numbers. Any such move would cause considerable disruption to pupils and potential pupils particularly siblings within the current Dalry Primary School catchment.

Taking into account the geography of the area and the road infrastructure there are limitations to the options surrounding an increased catchment area. If the catchment area was adjusted just beyond Earlston Loch, see appendix 5, this would increase the catchment area for Carsphairn Primary School to 130 sq. miles and increase the number of residential properties to 258, an additional 3 pupils could be expected at Carsphairn Primary School having assessed the number of pupils currently living in that area. The resulting consequence would be that Dalry Primary Schools catchment area would be reduced along with the number of residential properties and any current and prospective pupils would reside within the Carsphairn Primary School catchment area.

A revised catchment area would in time result in a reduced school roll for Dalry Primary School. A school roll below 50 would result in the reduction of a member of teaching staff, playground supervision and clerical hours. A school roll of less than fifty would have no playground supervision and only 2 teachers and therefore teaching classes.

Whilst the increased catchment area increases pupil numbers marginally, in order to increase to a viable number the catchment area would need to encroach much further into Dalry

Primary Schools catchment and likely into the settlement of St John's Town of Dalry, the impact of which would be that the Dalry Primary School pupils who subsequently fall within Carsphairn Primary School's catchment would be faced with a much greater travel distance to reach their catchment school (Carsphairn Primary School) than the distance to Dalry Primary School.

15.4 Continuation of "Mothballing"

Although it would be possible to continue with the current "mothballing" arrangement, Dumfries and Galloway Council does not consider that that would represent the best option for the community. The primary school has already been mothballed since July 2019 and the nursery since July 2012 and there is no data supporting a significant rise in the local population of school age children that would allow Carsphairn Primary School to become viable. "Mothballing" would mean the continuation of the current lack of clarity regarding the future status of the school.

The Schools (Consultation) (Scotland) Act 2010 as amended makes it clear that mothballing is a temporary measure and should not be used to undermine the requirements to undertake a statutory school closure consultation.

Current school transport arrangements would not be affected by a continuation of mothballing. New pupils either reaching school age or moving into the catchment, who attend Dalry Primary School would be entitled to free school transport. Those pupils who choose to attend a school other than Dalry Primary School are not/would not be entitled to free school transport.

As Carsphairn Primary School building is not currently in use, a continuation of mothballing would have no further impact on the community.

15.5 Effects on Staff and School Management Arrangements

As Carsphairn Primary School has not operated since the academic year 2018/19, there will be no impact on staff and school management arrangements from a formal closure.

A continuation of the current mothballing arrangements will have no effect on current staffing arrangements.

The staffing implications of re-opening Carsphairn Primary School are set out in sections 13.2 and 13.3 details Dalry staffing and potential implications, whilst the financial implications are set out at Section 13.4 above, and the associated Appendix 6.

15.6 Effect on the Local Community

Dumfries and Galloway Council recognise that the uncertainty surrounding the future of the school has impacted on the community and it is hoped that this statutory consultation to discontinue education at Carsphairn Primary School will give clarity to the community and a sense of certainty regarding their children's education.

There is an existing village hall in Carsphairn, which provides a public space for the local community. It is a fully accessible building with kitchen facilities and designated parking. The hall operates as an outreach Post Office for the community.

The mothballed Carsphairn Primary School building is not currently accessible to the community however agreement was given for the grounds to be utilised by the community for an Easter egg hunt by a local community group “Bairn Banter” and remains available for community access.

Dumfries and Galloway Council would be happy to work with the local community to see whether the school building could be suitable for community use.

Dumfries and Galloway Council has a Community Asset Transfer Procedure which must be followed when buildings or land are no longer required for their original purpose. Further information on community asset transfers is available on Dumfries and Galloway Council's website – www.dumgal.gov.uk/article/16441/Community-asset-transfers

15.7 Effects on School Transport

During the academic session 2022/23 of the ten pupils living within the Carsphairn Primary School catchment area, school transport is provided to 3 of them to Dalry Primary School. The other pupils are either transported by their parents/carers or enrolled at other local schools out of catchment.

When Carsphairn Primary School was mothballed existing transport provision to Dalry Primary School was amended to cover the subsequent additional pupils from Carsphairn Primary School that chose to attend Dalry Primary School at no additional cost.

Assuming Carsphairn Primary School reopened three pupils would be entitled to school transport at a cost of £9,500.00 per year (figure correct Aug 2022), the cost of transporting all ten pupils between the Carsphairn Primary School catchment and Dalry Primary school would be £24,500.00 per year (figure correct Aug 2022). The higher costs would be as a result of having to procure additional transport as the current school transport has limited spaces available. The annual cost of transport to both schools would vary across the academic years according to where individual pupils lived and the number accessing school transport.

Current transport arrangements include the use of a service bus, dedicated minibus and dedicated car. These three vehicles transport primary and secondary aged pupils to Dalry Primary and Secondary School. For academic year 2022/23 there is one available space on the dedicated minibus and one available space within the dedicated car, space within the service bus is dependent on other service users. The two current N5's could be accommodated when they reach primary school age within the existing transport however if children moved into the catchment area or transferred school to Dalry Primary School or chose to access free school transport who currently travel to Dalry Primary School by their own means, further transport would be required and there would be an associated cost to this, as detailed above. Equally pupils leaving the area or transferring school would also impact on the availability within the current provision. Existing routes may need to be adjusted to take into account the home location of any additional pupils accessing school transport.

The dedicated minibus and dedicated car are transporting pupils to Dalry Secondary School and Dalry Primary School and would continue to run irrelevant of the outcome of the proposal. There is no additional environmental impact of transporting the 3 additional pupils on the existing school transport, in fact it could be argued that the additional pupils has made the dedicated minibus more efficient by transporting additional pupils within the existing transport arrangements.

15.8 Rural Impact assessment

Although the proposal involves a formal closure of service, the school itself has not operated since the summer of 2019. The proposal will not change the current position. The relocation of service (which in practical terms has already taken place) involves moving local school provision from Carsphairn to St John's Town of Dalry, a distance of 9.4 miles.

Carsphairn Primary School was mothballed when the pupil roll fell to 3. Details of the potential future rolls are provided at paragraph 13.2 above. Section 14 above sets out the educational benefits of pupils attending Dalry Primary School.

At present Dalry Primary School has a pupil roll of 59 (correct 30/8/22), 79% of the school's capacity for academic year 2022/23. The school is comfortably able to accommodate the pupils from Carsphairn Primary School and no adverse effects for Dalry Primary School would arise. On the contrary, including the pupils from Carsphairn Primary School within the Dalry Primary School catchment will help to maintain a healthy roll at Dalry Primary School.

15.9 Mitigation of Adverse Effects

The main adverse effect for children in the P1-7 age group is the length of journey time from the Carsphairn catchment to St John's Town of Dalry, details of which are provided above. The maximum additional travel time for school pupils to Dalry Primary School is approx. 14 minutes (source: Google Maps). However, as the school has been mothballed since 2019, the current pupils are already making this journey (or greater, depending on the school attending). The population in this area is accustomed to making long journeys to access things that people in urban areas take for granted.

Funded school transport will be provided to P1-7 pupils from the Carsphairn catchment attending Dalry Primary School.

Although funded transport is not provided for nursery age children, these children can attend Dalry Primary School Nursery (or another provider of their choice) for their ELC entitlement.

There would undoubtedly be an adverse effect on any parent of nursery aged children in the Carsphairn Primary School catchment however nursery provision has not been delivered in Carsphairn Primary School since the end of academic year 2011/12. The geography of Dumfries and Galloway, and the low population densities across some areas, means that it is not possible to provide ELC facilities close to every parent.

In overall terms, the adverse effects arising from the additional travelling time for pupils must be balanced against the educational benefits that will arise for pupils as set out in section 14 above.

16.0 Equalities Impact Assessment

The proposal has been assessed as having no impact on the following Equality Areas:

- Age
- Disability
- Gender Reassignment
- Marriage and Civil Partnership
- Pregnancy or Maternity
- Race
- Religion or Belief
- Sex
- Sexual Orientation

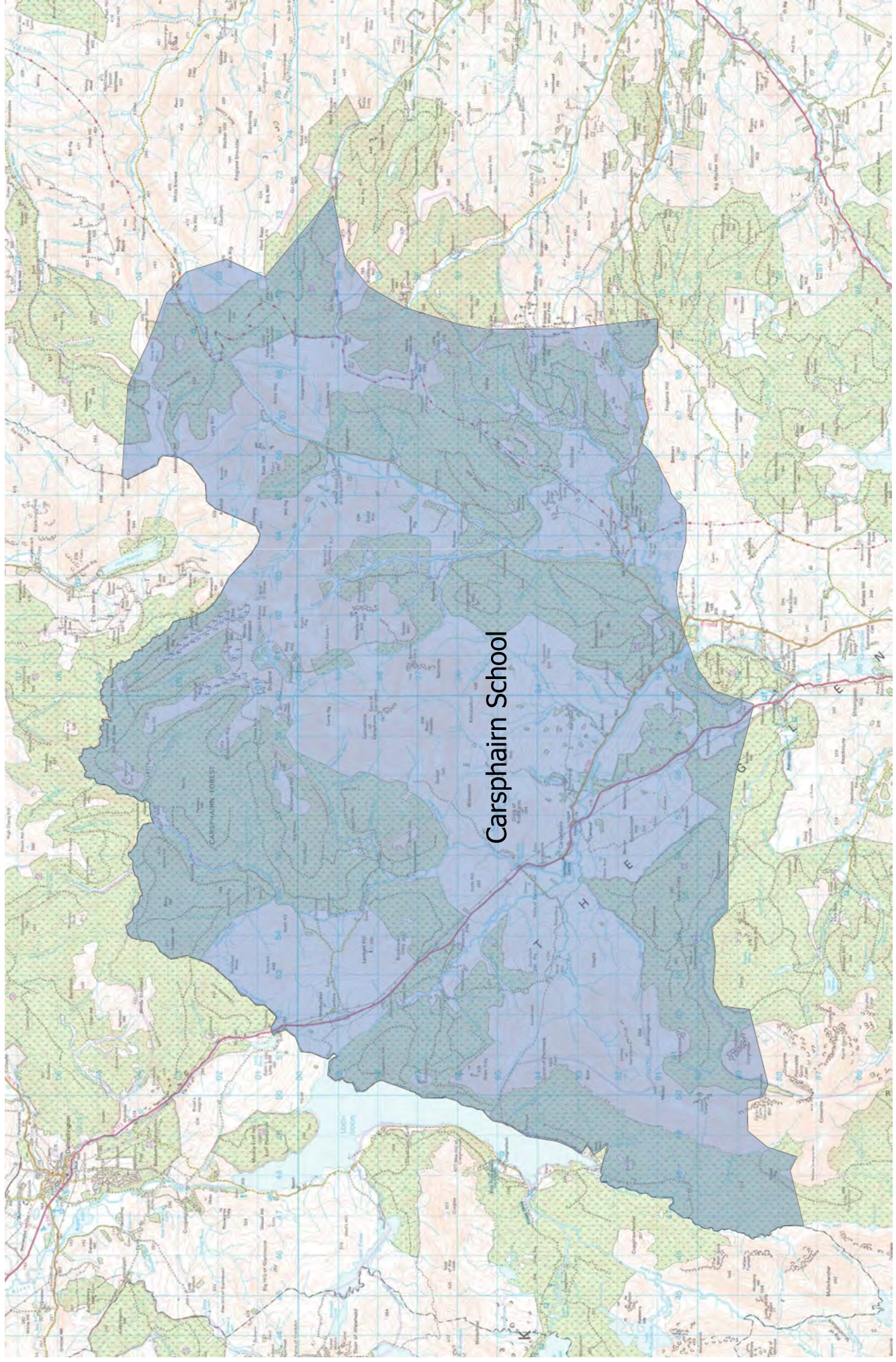
With regard to age equality, the proposal relates to 2 primary schools and associated nurseries and as such primarily affects children in the 3-12 age group, and their parents. The proposal is advanced on the basis of educational benefit to the children in the area concerned. No negative age related effects arise. Age is not a protected characteristic for the purposes of schools provision.

17.0 Recommendation

Taking the above into account Dumfries and Galloway Council recommends that education at Carsphairn Primary School, currently “mothballed,” is discontinued and the catchment area assigned to Dalry Primary School.

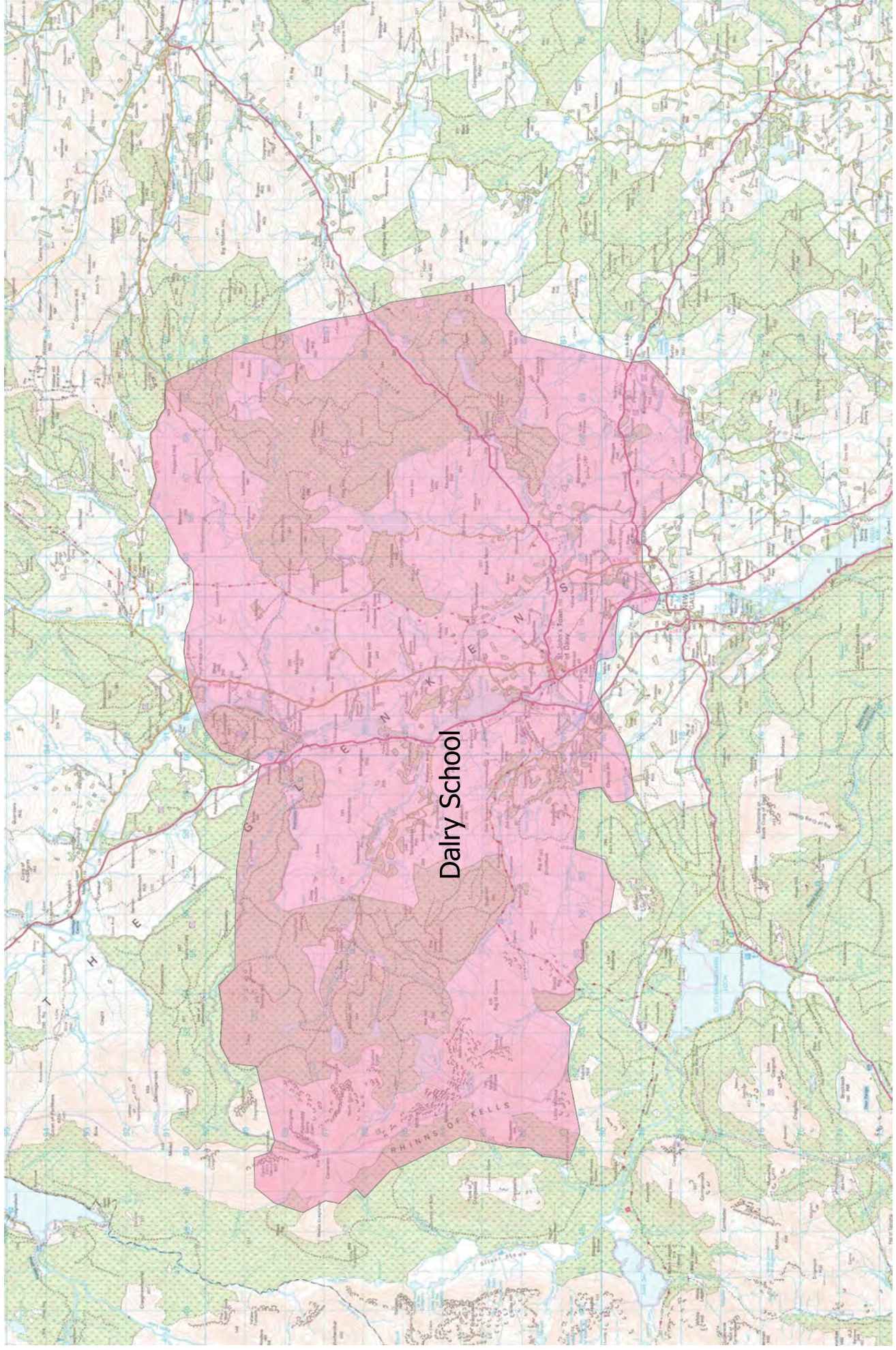
Dumfries and Galloway Council must formally consult on changes to provision. The consultation paper is issued in terms of the Authority’s agreed procedures to meet the relevant statutory requirements. Following the consultation period, a report and submissions received will be presented to the Education and Learning Committee of Dumfries and Galloway Council.

END OF PROPOSAL PAPER



0 2 4 6 8 10 12 14 16 18 miles

Dairy P.S. Catchment Area



14 miles

12

10

8

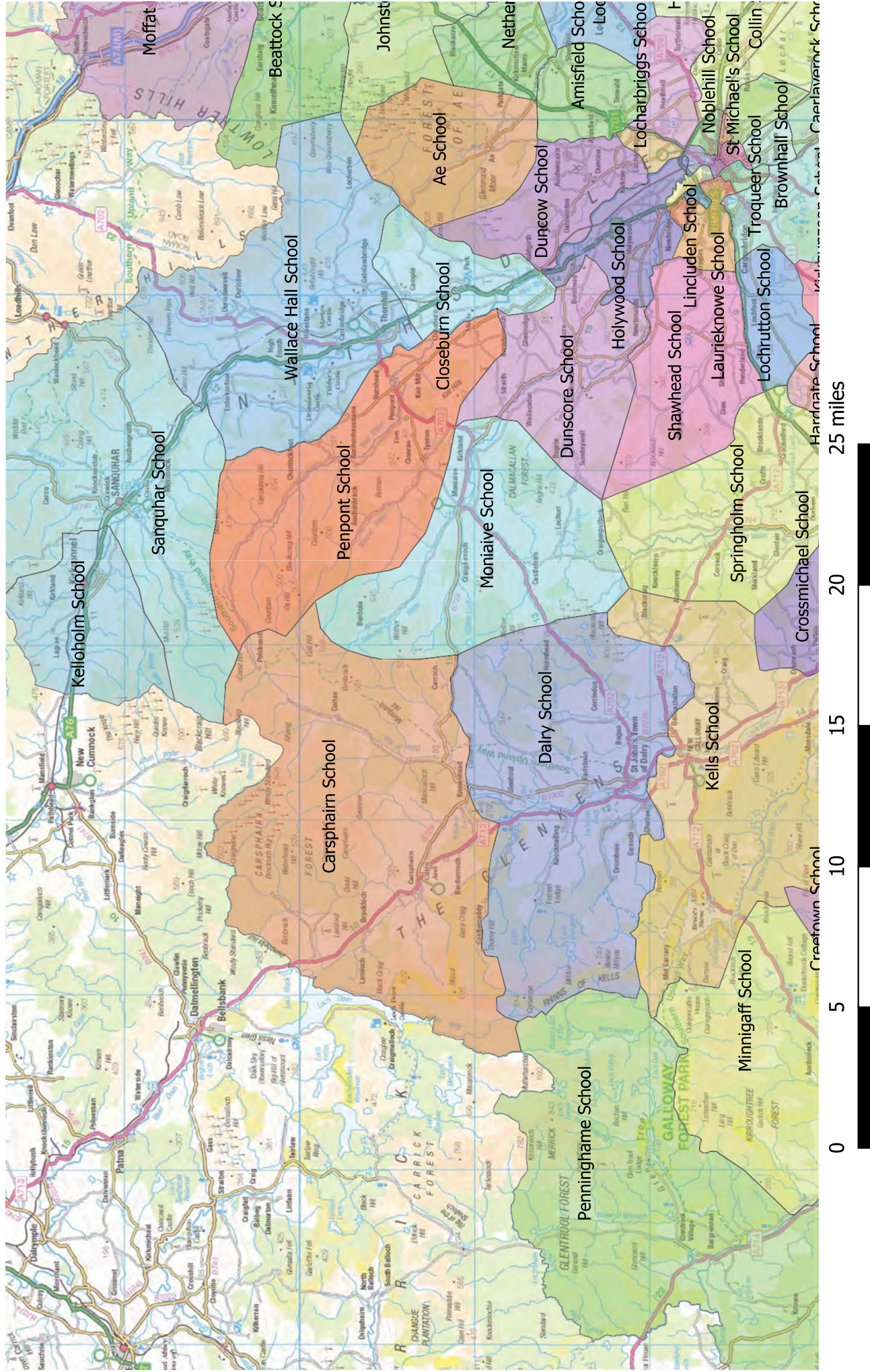
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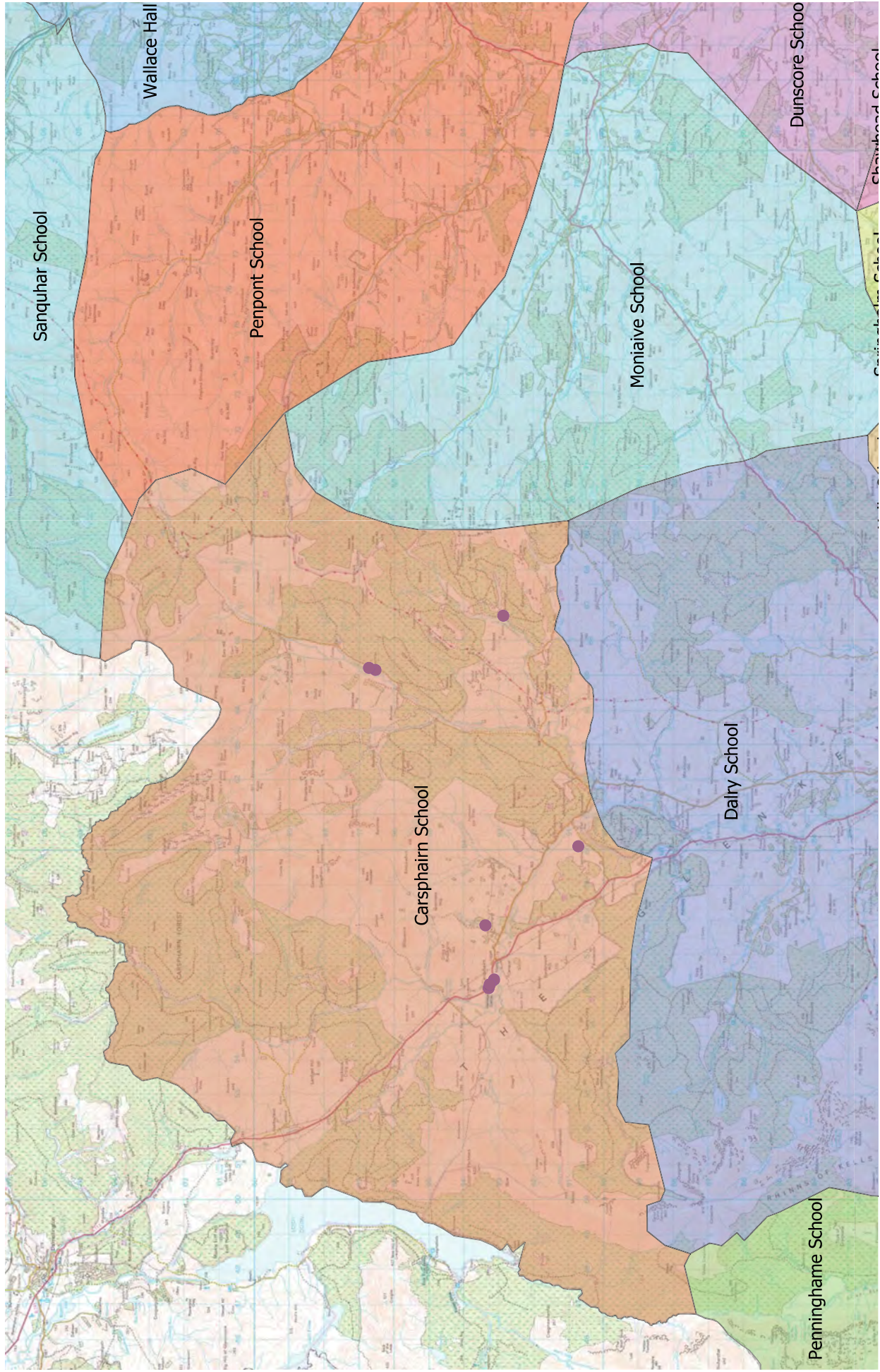
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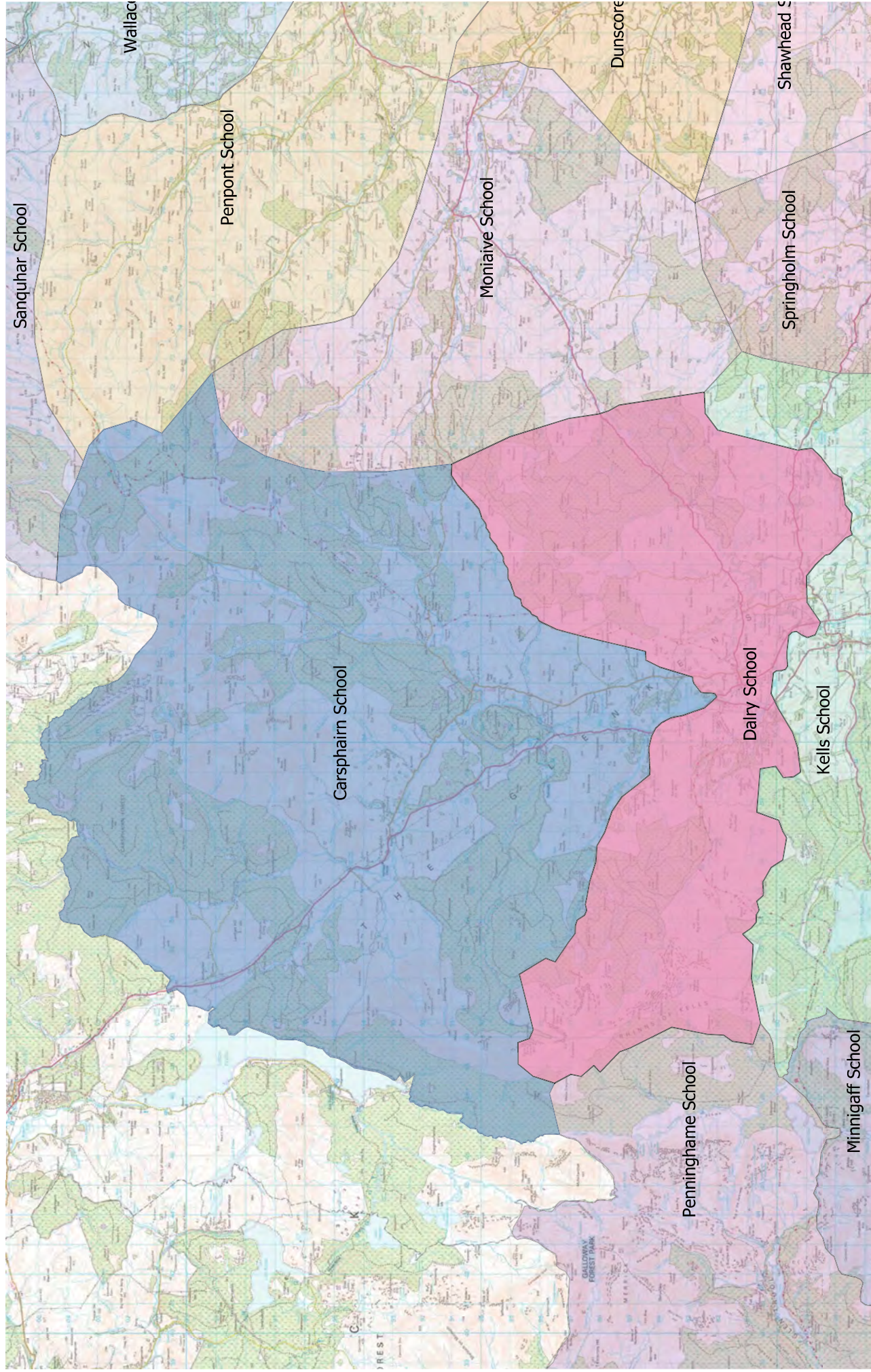
Carsphairn P.S. & Surrounding Catchment Areas



Appendix 4 Pupils in Carsphairn P.S Catchment Pupils August 2022



Carsphairn P.S. Increased Catchment Area



Financial Template - Actual costs last full year before mothballing

Row	Column 1	Column 2	Column 3	Column 4
Row 1	Current revenue costs for school proposed for closure			
	Name of School Dunfermline Primary School	Costs for full financial year (projected annual costs) when school was open.	Additional financial impact on Daily Primary School	Annual recurring savings (column 2 minus column 3)
Row 2	Capital costs			
Row 3	Capital Life Cycle cost - note 7			
Row 4	Third party contributions to capital costs			
Row 5	Employee costs - note 1	61482	0	61482
Row 6	teaching staff	5277	0	5277
Row 7	teaching staff training (LFD etc)	0	0	0
Row 8	support staff training	0	0	0
Row 9	Supply costs - note 2	828	0	828
Row 10	Building costs:			
Row 11	property insurance	284	0	284
Row 12	non domestic rates	615	0	615
Row 13	water & sewerage charges	3265	0	3265
Row 14	energy costs	5775	0	5775
Row 15	cleaning (contract or inhouse)	1396	0	1396
Row 16	building repair & maintenance	463	0	463
Row 17	grounds maintenance	0	0	0
Row 18	other school operational costs (e.g. licences)	0	0	0
Row 19	revenue costs rising from capital	453	0	453
Row 20	other	0	0	0
Row 21	School operational costs:			
Row 22	learning materials	988	170	818
Row 23	catering (contract or inhouse)	3230	0	3230
Row 24	SEA costs	0	0	0
Row 25	other school operational costs (e.g. licences)	237	0	237
Row 26	Transport costs: note 3			
Row 27	home to school	6642	0	6642
Row 28	other pupil transport costs	0	0	0
Row 29	staff travel	0	0	0
Row 30	SCHOOL COSTS SUB-TOTAL	90790	170	90620
Row 31	Income:			
Row 32	rate of month	0	0	0
Row 33	External care provider	0	0	0
Row 34	Other	0	0	0
Row 35	SCHOOL INCOME SUB-TOTAL	0	0	0
Row 36	TOTAL COSTS MINUS INCOME FOR SCHOOL	90790	170	90620
Row 37	UNIT COST PER PUPIL PER YEAR	43395		

Row 5 - Teaching staff costs are shown as if full saving due to the template calculation format. The staffing allocation did not require the member of teaching staff to transfer to Dalry as the receiving school, however it is acknowledged that this would not have been a direct saving at the time due to a no redundancy policy within Dumfries and Galloway and the member of staff allocated to another school through the annual staffing exercise.

Row 13 - non domestic rates do not apply to facilities of this size.

Row 19 - The £32 costs within this row are associated with fire alarm/security only. D&G council operate a buildings facilities assistant staffing model, so janitorial duty costs are within this function and are accounted for within row 16.

Row 30 - The value against the annual cost in column C for home to school transport is associated with the two pupils at the school at the time of mothballing. The pupils were both P7 and moved to S1 in Dalry secondary the following academic year. Due to this there was no impact on Dalry as the receiving school because no additional transport was required.

Appendix 6

Table 2	Column 5	Column 6	Column 7
Capital costs		School proposed for closure	Receiving school
Capital Life Cycle cost - note 7			
Third party contributions to capital costs			

Table 3	Annual Property costs incurred (month balling) until disposal
property insurance	284
non domestic rates	0
water & sewerage charges	334
energy costs	202
cleaning (contract or inhouse)	0
grounds maintenance	0
building repair & maintenance	172
facilities management costs	0
other - waste	413
TOTAL ANNUAL COST UNTIL DISPOSAL	1405

Table 4	Non-recurring revenue costs
TOTAL NON-RECURRING REVENUE COSTS	0

Table 5	Impact on GAE - note 5
No impact	0
GAE IMPACT	0

Notes

1. The total costs incurred for teaching staff (row 5) and support staff (row 6) are required to be included in the current revenue costs for the school proposed for closure. The additional costs proposed for closure, and column 3 should include the additional cost to the receiving school as a result of staff transferring.

For teaching staff this should include regular teachers, itinerant teachers, learning support teaching staff and special education (ASN) staff.

Itinerant teaching staff includes central support services such as English as an additional language support, hearing, visually impaired services, educational psychology services.

For support staff, this should include classroom assistants, administration staff and janitorial staff.

For all staff the costs entered should include salary, NI and pension costs.

If the school proposed for closure has less than 3 staff members, then the cumulative staff costs should include the costs for both teaching and support staff, so as to avoid possible disclosure of individual salaries.

Training costs should be identified separately in rows 7 and 8.

2. Supply costs to cover teaching and support staff. This may be held in a central budget, be devolved or shared across the budgets.

3. Home to school pupil transport costs should include those school transport costs incurred in accordance with Council policy. Other pupil transport costs will cover costs incurred for the transport of pupils for activities such as swimming etc

4. Row 20 of column 3 should include the additional transport costs related to the increased home to school transport arrangements that are put in place in accordance with Council policy. This figure is therefore likely to be considerably higher than current costs.

5. This table is to capture the impact on the revenue support grant as a result of changes to GAE. Impact on GAE should consider the issues covered in the GAE section of the guidance document that accompany this template.

6. Facilities management costs will include costs related to caretaking, janitorial and security.

7. The capital costs for the receiving school should be taken across the life cycle of the school in line with the life expectancy of that school. The capital costs for the school proposed for closure should be taken across the same life cycle period.

Financial Template - Projected Annual Costs Carsphairn P.S

Appendix 7

Table 1		Column 1	Column 2
Row 1	Current revenue costs for school proposed for closure		Costs for full financial year (projected annual costs if Carsphairn was open in financial year 2022/23)
Row 2	Name of School	Carsphairn Primary School	
Row 3	School costs		
Row 4	Employee costs - note 1		70275
Row 5	teaching staff		6993
Row 6	support staff		152121
Row 7	nursery staff		0
Row 8	teaching staff training (CPD etc)		0
Row 9	support staff training		828
Row 10	Supply costs - note 2		
Row 11	Building costs:		
Row 12	property insurance		299
Row 13	non domestic rates		0
Row 14	water & sewerage charges		647
Row 15	energy costs		3438
Row 16	cleaning (contract or inhouse)		6637
Row 17	building repair & maintenance		1259
Row 18	grounds maintenance		487
Row 19	facilities management costs - note 6		35
Row 20	revenue costs arising from capital		0
Row 21	other		477
Row 22	School operational costs:		
Row 23	learning materials		1606
Row 24	catering (contract or inhouse)		15747
Row 25	SOA costs		0
Row 26	other school operational costs (e.g. licences)		270
Row 27	Transport costs: note 3		
Row 28	home to school		
Row 29	other pupil transport costs		9500
Row 30	staff travel		0
Row 31	SCHOOL COSTS SUB-TOTAL		270619
Row 32	Income:		
Row 33	Sale of meals		0
Row 34	Lets		0
Row 35	External care provider		0
Row 36	Other		0
Row 37	SCHOOL INCOME SUB-TOTAL		0
Row 38	TOTAL COSTS MINUS INCOME FOR SCHOOL		0
Row 39	UNIT COST PER PUPIL PER YEAR		

Notes

- The total costs incurred for teaching staff (row 5) and support staff (row 6) are required to be included. Column 2 should include the current costs for a full financial year for the school proposed for closure, and column 3 should include the *additional* cost to the receiving school as a result of staff transferring.
- For teaching staff, this should include regular teachers, itinerant teachers, learning support teaching staff and special education (ASN) staff.
- Itinerant teaching staff includes central support services such as English as additional language support, hearing, visually impaired services, educational psychology services.
- For support staff, this should include classroom assistants, administration staff and janitorial staff.
- For all staff the costs entered should include salary, NI and pension costs.
- If the school proposed for closure has less than 3 staff members, then the cumulative staff costs only should be given in row 5 (for both teaching and support staff), so as to avoid possible disclosure of individual salaries.
- Training costs should be identified separately in rows 7 and 8.
- Supply costs to cover teaching and support staff. This may be held in a central budget, be devolved or shared across the budgets.
- 'Home to school' pupil transport costs should include those school transport costs incurred in accordance with Council policy. 'Other pupil transport costs' will cover costs incurred for the transport of pupils for activities such as swimming etc
- Row 30 of column 3 should include the additional transport costs related to the increased home to school transport arrangements that are put in place in accordance with Council policy. This figure is therefore likely to be considerably higher than current costs.
- This table is to capture the impact on the revenue support grant as a result of changes to GAE. Impact on GAE should consider the issues covered in the GAE section of the guidance document that accompany this template.
- Facilities management costs will include costs related to caretaking, janitorial and security.
- The capital costs for the receiving school should be taken across the life cycle of the school in line with the life expectancy of that school. The capital costs for the school proposed for closure should be taken across the same life cycle period.

Row 13 - non domestic rates do not apply to facilities of this size.
 Row 19 - The £35 costs within this row are associated with fire alarm/security only. D&G council operate a buildings facilities assistant staffing model, so janitorial duty costs are within this function and are accounted for within row 16.

Appendix B

[REDACTED]

From: [REDACTED]
Sent: 05 September 2022 17:57
To: statutory consultation
Subject: Carsphairn School closure

OFFICIAL

I was saddened to read that the catchment area of Carsphairn Primary School will be taken into that of Dalry School so the school can be closed. I taught at the school as Headteacher Management Support for a year from 2008 to 2009, and it was one of the best years I had teaching here in Scotland, even though only 10 hours a week. The children taught me so much about the farming calendar. I am still in touch with one of the families, especially the pupils who were in P1 and P3.

However, I fully understand the need to close the school with the building sitting empty as it has for a couple of years. I attended the celebration of 297 years of education in Carsphairn and met a number of the 8 pupils I taught from P1 to P6. The teachers for French, PE, music and art made the journey up to the school in many weathers, as did I, and to enjoy many of the opportunities available at larger schools they had to join Dalry and/or Kells Primary Schools.

As a member of the Education Committee I can see the need to move the catchment boundaries, but it's a sad day that the school could not get to 300 years of educating the children of Carsphairn.

[REDACTED]

OFFICIAL

[REDACTED]

From: statutory consultation
Sent: 20 September 2022 16:05
To: [REDACTED]
Subject: RE: EXTERNAL: Proposed closure of Carsphairn School

OFFICIAL

Thank you for your email.

Your comments will be made available, in full, to Education Scotland (HMIE) and included within the consultation report, which will be published on www.dumgal.gov.uk/consultations on Thursday 5th January 2023.

Statutory Consultation
Education & Learning Directorate
Dumfries and Galloway Council

OFFICIAL

-----Original Message-----

From: [REDACTED]
Sent: 19 September 2022 20:51
To: statutory consultation <statutoryconsultation@dumgal.gov.uk>
Subject: EXTERNAL: Proposed closure of Carsphairn School

Dear Sir/Madam,

I strongly disagree with the proposal to close Carsphairn Primary School. At the moment, the school is mothballed and this status should be kept for the next 4-5 years at least. Once the school has closed, it cannot be reopened, even if more families move into the Carsphairn area.

It has been impossible to enrol at Carsphairn Primary so neither Carsphairn residents nor D&G Councillors, actually know how many children would have enrolled had this been possible. Any enquiry regarding enrolment in Carsphairn is automatically sent to Dalry. In effect, the school has had no chance.

I strongly urge the council to keep Carsphairn school mothballed and not permanently closed.

Kind regards,

[REDACTED]

Sent from my iPad

From: statutory consultation
Sent: 20 September 2022 16:06
To: [REDACTED]
Subject: RE: EXTERNAL: Proposal to close Carsphairn School

OFFICIAL

Thank you for your email.

Your comments will be made available, in full, to Education Scotland (HMIE) and included within the consultation report, which will be published on www.dumgal.gov.uk/consultations on Thursday 5th January 2023.

Statutory Consultation
Education & Learning Directorate
Dumfries and Galloway Council

OFFICIAL

From: [REDACTED]
Sent: 20 September 2022 10:05
To: statutory consultation <statutoryconsultation@dumgal.gov.uk>
Subject: EXTERNAL: Proposal to close Carsphairn School

Dear Sir/Madam,

Carsphairn Community Council will be in receipt of a significant and substantial sum of money from 2023 onwards, the source of which being wind farms.

Whilst I agree that the population is ageing and there are a small number of primary aged children in the community at the moment, I believe the decision to close Carsphairn School is short sighted.

As a community we are working toward the re-opening of the Village Restaurant and Bar, the opening of 3 or more Bed and Breakfasts, the formalising and marketing of significant walking routes to attract visitors. A car parking area has also been proposed at the north end of the village.

The Heritage Centre has re-opened after Covid, and there is a thriving play group. Therefore it is reasonable to suggest that there is plenty of will, within the community to drive forward.

The wind farm money will allow for capital projects, which in turn will bring employment. Our major concern is that without any prospect of the school re-opening, we have no real chance of attracting high calibre people into our community.

I would ask the team working on this project to think seriously about the negative effect of current local business, as well as potential.

Regards

[REDACTED]

From: statutory consultation
Sent: 20 September 2022 16:07
To: [REDACTED]
Subject: RE: EXTERNAL: Carsphairn Primary Consultation for Closure

OFFICIAL

Thank you for your email.

Your comments will be made available, in full, to Education Scotland (HMIE) and included within the consultation report, which will be published on www.dumgal.gov.uk/consultations on Thursday 5th January 2023.

Statutory Consultation
Education & Learning Directorate
Dumfries and Galloway Council

From: [REDACTED]
Sent: 20 September 2022 12:59
To: statutory consultation <statutoryconsultation@dumgal.gov.uk>
Subject: EXTERNAL: Carsphairn Primary Consultation for Closure

Dear Sir/Madam,

I am writing as a member of Carsphairn community and a parent of children in Carsphairn parish.

I believe that Carsphairn Primary School should remain mothballed for a further five-year period. Carsphairn is working hard to regenerate the community, which has suffered through flooding and of course covid. It needs time to do this, and it would be short-sighted of the council, and also not in keeping with the wishes of the community, to close the school permanently.

The community is working with SOSCH on an affordable housing project to bring families to the village, and there are numerous pre-school and school age children in the parish.

Maintaining the school in its current mothballed state costs the council very little, and would give the community peace of mind that they have time to do their best to regenerate their community, after which point the council can potentially close the school if this seems the only option.

Currently, there have been a number of parents who have tried to enrol their child, or make a placing request, for Carsphairn primary but this has not been possible. There is no way for them to do this - John Thin himself acknowledged this when asked, as did the head of the Glenkens Partnership. This means that you have no idea how many parents were actually interested in sending their children to Carsphairn primary or nursery and have now, out of necessity (not parental choice) made other arrangements, so I believe in fact means that you have not fulfilled your role in leading up to this consultation for closure - how can you claim there is no demand for a school when you have no way of recording demand?

Below are some comments on the proposal document.

I would be grateful if you could please confirm receipt of this email.

Best wishes,



13.1 Rationale

This proposal is being advanced for the following reasons:

- No children have attended Carsphairn Primary School since the end of academic session 2018/19.
- No children have attended Carsphairn Primary School Nursery since the end of academic session 2011/12.
- A low school roll hampers social interaction opportunities for children who conversely benefit from attending larger schools amongst more children of their own age.

Addressing above points in order:

There was no way for children to attend, or even to enrol in order to illustrate their desire to attend Carsphairn Primary School, so of course there have been no children attending the school.

As the school is a partnership school with Dalry and Kells as the Glenkens Partnership, this means that the three schools should work closely, facilitating social interaction among pupils.

13.2 Current Details – Carsphairn Primary School

No children have attended the nursery since the end of academic session.

2011/12. Since then, nursery age pupils have been zoned with Dalry Primary School nursery.

Primary aged children currently attended, Dalry Primary School, Kells Primary School, Moniaive Primary School and Castle Douglas Primary School due to parental choice.

The expected rolls per academic year (detailed below) assume all catchment children attend and there are no placing requests.

Addressing above points in order:

If the nursery had been open, there would be a number of children attending it now.

This is a mis-statement and should not be classed as 'parental choice' - it is through necessity as they could not send their children to Carsphairn so must of course make other arrangements.

There is no way to make a placing request for Carsphairn Primary, so this is an inaccurate statement.

13.3 Current Details – Dalry Primary School

wide range of secondary school specialist areas.

Externally there are extensive grounds and access to a Multi-Use Games Area the area extends to approx. 17,146 sq. m and is shared with the secondary and nursery.

Addressing above points in order:

The primary no longer have access to the art and music areas of the secondary school, so this shows that you have not done your research and your facts are out of date - another inaccurate statement.

The MUGA has been out of action for many years and cannot be used by school pupils - so as above with regard to misinformation within your document.

14.0 Educational Benefits Statement

By highlighting the educational benefits of Dalry Primary School, it is not implied that many of these benefits did not already exist in Carsphairn Primary School however if Carsphairn Primary School were to re-open, with a reduced number of pupils over a greater age range, there would be increased challenges in ensuring that all children develop Curriculum for Excellence's four capacities of Successful Learners, Confident Individuals, Responsible Citizens and Effective Contributors.

Building on the very good work of the Early Learning & Childcare Setting, outdoor learning is an important element of Dalry Primary School. In the past pupils at Dalry Primary School have benefitted from partnership working with pupils & staff from Dalry Secondary School and from parents, community members, Scottish Power and the local Red Squirrel group.

Economies of scale would suggest the benefits of the larger school roll here, and part of the larger Dalry community supporting the work of the school. Within the school grounds of Dalry Primary School there is access to a trim trail, vegetable garden, quiet reflection space, large grass sports area and climbing wall. There is also access to Dalry Secondary's space, and wider spaces within the town of Dalry. These facilities would not be as readily accessible should the learners attend Carsphairn Primary School.

Addressing above points in order:

As a Glenkens Partnership, teachers would presumably ensure pupils engaged regularly with the larger pupil cohort of both Dalry and Kells primaries through joint sports days, events and activities, as well as on a regular weekly basis.

There is no reason why Carsphairn children can't also benefit from these things also, if the school was open.

15.0 Factors for Rural Closure Proposals

As Carsphairn Primary School is designated as a rural primary school, factors for rural school closure have been considered within this proposal paper, detailed within sections; 15.1-15.9 below .

It is classed as 'remote rural' not just 'rural', which give is very specific status in regard to closure/funding, etc, I believe.

15.2 Re-opening of Carsphairn Primary School with its current catchment

Although there has been a slight rise in the school age population in the Carsphairn area since the school was mothballed, it is clear that if Carsphairn Primary School re-opened it would always be a school with low numbers and a single teacher. Due to the catchment geography the school did not attract any non-catchment pupils in the seven years prior to mothballing. Section 14 above discusses in detail the educational issues arising from the low school roll figures.

If the school were to reopen, the potential pupils would have shorter journey times to school than they do at present. The additional distance is 9.4 miles, which is approx. 14 minutes travel time (Source: Google Maps).

Addressing above points in order:

Carsphairn is working to regenerate the community and encourage families to move to the parish, so the demand is likely to rise, and also due to an post-covid influx of families to the countryside, which seems set to continue.

The distance/travel time for pupils from the furthest part of Carsphairn Parish is incorrect - see final point at the end of this email for details.

15.4 Continuation of “Mothballing”

Although it would be possible to continue with the current “mothballing” arrangement, Dumfries and Galloway Council does not consider that that would represent the best option for the community. The primary school has already been mothballed since July 2019 and the nursery since July 2012 and there is no data supporting a significant rise in the local population of school age children that would allow Carsphairn Primary School to become viable. “Mothballing” would mean the continuation of the current lack of clarity regarding the future status of the school.

The Schools (Consultation) (Scotland) Act 2010 as amended makes it clear that mothballing is a temporary measure and should not be used to undermine the requirements to undertake a statutory school closure consultation.

Current school transport arrangements would not be affected by a continuation of mothballing. New pupils either reaching school age or moving into the catchment, who attend Dalry Primary School would be entitled to free school transport. Those pupils who choose to attend a school other than Dalry Primary School are not/would not be entitled to free school transport.

As Carsphairn Primary School building is not currently in use, a continuation of mothballing would have no further impact on the community.

This would seem to be the obvious option, giving Carsphairn the opportunity to regenerate and encourage new families to move in, with the potential for closure in five years time if nothing has changed.

15.6 Effect on the Local Community

Dumfries and Galloway Council recognise that the uncertainty surrounding the future of the school has impacted on the community and it is hoped that this statutory consultation to discontinue education at Carsphairn Primary School will give clarity to the community and a sense of certainty regarding their children's education.

There is an existing village hall in Carsphairn, which provides a public space for the local community. It is a fully accessible building with kitchen facilities and designated parking. The hall operates as an outreach Post Office for the community.

The mothballed Carsphairn Primary School building is not currently accessible to the community however agreement was given for the grounds to be utilised by the community for an Easter egg hunt by a local community group "Bairn Banter" and remains available for community access.

Dumfries and Galloway Council would be happy to work with the local community to see whether the school building could be suitable for community use.

Dumfries and Galloway Council has a Community Asset Transfer Procedure which must be followed when buildings or land are no longer required for their original purpose. Further information on community asset transfers is available on Dumfries and Galloway Council's website – www.dumgal.gov.uk/article/16441/Community-asset-transfers

The community feels that the loss of their primary school would have a lot more knock-on effects than are being credited. A school is the heart of a community, and key to its regeneration. The council should be looking to work in a more holistic way, supporting Carsphairn when it is obviously actively trying to regenerate, and offering to help with family housing and trying to safeguard the school with the knowledge that this is an important part of a thriving community.

15.9 Mitigation of Adverse Effects

The main adverse effect for children in the P1-7 age group is the length of journey time from the Carsphairn catchment to St John's Town of Dalry, details of which are provided above.

The maximum additional travel time for school pupils to Dalry Primary School is approx. 14 minutes (source: Google Maps). However, as the school has been mothballed since 2019, the current pupils are already making this journey (or greater, depending on the school attending). The population in this area is accustomed to making long journeys to access things that people in urban areas take for granted.

Funded school transport will be provided to P1-7 pupils from the Carsphairn catchment attending Dalry Primary School.

Although funded transport is not provided for nursery age children, these children can attend Dalry Primary School Nursery (or another provider of their choice) for their ELC entitlement.

There would undoubtedly be an adverse effect on any parent of nursery aged children in the Carsphairn Primary School catchment however nursery provision has not been delivered in Carsphairn Primary School since the end of academic year 2011/12. The geography of Dumfries and Galloway, and the low population densities across some areas, means that it is not possible to provide ELC facilities close to every parent.

In overall terms, the adverse effects arising from the additional travelling time for pupils must be balanced against the educational benefits that will arise for pupils as set out in section 14 above.

This is incorrect: The distance of travel for pupils from the furthest part of Carsphairn Parish is around 14 miles each way to and from Dalry if the bus travelled as fast as a car and went directly. On Google Maps this is recorded as 20 minutes, but this is not accurate. The actual travel time for a pupil on the school bus who recently had to travel this distance was over an hour on the bus each way. This is far too long for a younger primary aged child to travel each day, unsupervised.

OFFICIAL

[REDACTED]

From: statutory consultation
Sent: 21 September 2022 11:08
To: [REDACTED]
Subject: RE: EXTERNAL: Carsphairn school closure

OFFICIAL

Thank you for your email.

Your comments will be made available, in full, to Education Scotland (HMIE) and included within the consultation report, which will be published on www.dumgal.gov.uk/consultations on Thursday 5th January 2023.

Statutory Consultation
Education & Learning Directorate
Dumfries and Galloway Council

OFFICIAL

-----Original Message-----

From: [REDACTED]
Sent: 21 September 2022 09:38
To: statutory consultation <statutoryconsultation@dumgal.gov.uk>
Subject: EXTERNAL: Carsphairn school closure

Please do not permanently close Carsphairn School. All three of my children started their education there and have gone on to become valued members of the Carsphairn community. They live locally and would like to send their children there.

Carsphairn School was threatened with closure before but its location kept it open - it has a wide rural catchment and it was considered important not to impose long bus journeys on such small children. Also, as you know, a primary school is part of a village's heart. We are trying to regenerate the area and have lots of interest. Rural housing is desperately needed and goes hand in hand with local facilities like school, shop and post office. We are working on the housing, have a community owned shop and tearoom, and need the school to bring in young families.

A small country school like Carsphairn with a composite classroom instils a confidence in its pupils and promotes a helpful and cooperative attitude. I am amazed at what my children have accomplished and am sure their early education is largely responsible. When you are small it is so much better to be a big fish in a little sea and to swim in the big ocean when one is more prepared.

Living in hope - [REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

From: [REDACTED]
Sent: 22 September 2022 16:51
To: statutory consultation
Subject: Re: EXTERNAL: Carsphairn School

Thank you for the extract. I did read the paper. But what's written in a paper and what can be observed in person is different.

Also the "free transfer service" you speak of I've never used. I'm not sure of anyone that would surrender their 5 year old, or 7 as [REDACTED] is now to a service bus!

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From: statutory consultation <statutoryconsultation@dumgal.gov.uk>
Sent: Thursday, September 22, 2022 4:34:08 PM
To: [REDACTED]
Subject: RE: EXTERNAL: Carsphairn School

OFFICIAL

Good Afternoon [REDACTED]

Thank you for your email.

Your comments will be made available, in full, to Education Scotland (HMIE) and included within the consultation report, which will be published on www.dumgal.gov.uk/consultations on Thursday 5th January 2023.

Just to make you aware, as your daughter lives within the Dalry catchment if you were to transfer her to Carsphairn P.S you would no longer be entitled to free school transport.

With regard to the facilities available at the school, I have taken an extract from the proposal paper that briefly describes the available facilities –

The school has 1 classroom, an office/staff room, kitchen, pupil toilets, staff/accessible toilet, plus a GP room, which when the school last operated functioned as a library and dining space, it was also the space the nursery historically operated from. Externally there is a tarred playground and grassed area to the rear of the school building which is approx. 1,335 sq. m. The GIA (gross internal area) for the building is 190.98 sq. m.

If you require any further information, please feel free to get in touch.

Statutory Consultation

Education & Learning Directorate

Dumfries and Galloway Council

OFFICIAL

From: [REDACTED]
Sent: 21 September 2022 20:46
To: statutory consultation <statutoryconsultation@dumgal.gov.uk>
Subject: EXTERNAL: Carsphairn School

I am writing to put forward my intention that if Carsphairn school were to open I would seriously consider my [REDACTED] attending the school, subject to suitable facilities. (It has been mothballed since my [REDACTED] started school, so I haven't had the opportunity to visit.) I feel others families, given the option may feel the same.

I feel that Carsphairn school and school options in our rural area is vital.

Despite Carsphairn not being in our catchment area (we live on [REDACTED], in-between Dalry and Carsphairn) [REDACTED] has a Grandparent living in Carsphairn.

Warm regards

[REDACTED]

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[REDACTED]

Statutory Consultation - Carsphairn Primary School

Dumfries & Galloway Council

Militia House

109/111 English Street

Dumfries

DG1 2HR

20 September 2022

Dear Sir / Madam,

So you want to put the final nail in Carsphairn's coffin!

While our community councillors are working hard to regenerate our tiny village after a series of closures over the past ten years – pub, Post Office, two bed and breakfast businesses, and the temporary closure of our primary school – you are proposing the permanent closure of the school which will inevitably lead to a further decline in local facilities.

How on earth can the community council attract young families to Carsphairn when their primary age children will be subjected to a 20-mile round trip for their education – and that in a school which is nowhere near as 'personal' as the one in our village?

The primary school has served our community for almost 300 years and in that time it has provided pupils with an above average education and has passed all inspections with flying colours.

Our community council is, quite rightly, fighting to prevent closure and is investigating the building of much needed affordable housing to attract younger families. Consequently, closure of the school would seriously undermine the village's sustainability into the future as younger families are needed to help regenerate our area.

Closure of the school is a very short-sighted and narrow-minded move and it would leave Carsphairn without yet another badly needed resource to ensure the long-term viability of the village.

Please reconsider your decision to permanently close the school, otherwise it will be another fatal blow to local residents.

Yours faithfully,

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

From: statutory consultation
Sent: 26 September 2022 14:20
To: [REDACTED]
Subject: RE: EXTERNAL: Objection to carsphairn school closure.

OFFICIAL

Thank you for your email.

Your comments will be made available, in full, to Education Scotland (HMIE) and included within the consultation report, which will be published on www.dumgal.gov.uk/consultations on Thursday 5th January 2023.

Statutory Consultation
Education & Learning Directorate
Dumfries and Galloway Council

From: [REDACTED]
Sent: 23 September 2022 16:18
To: statutoryconsultation <statutoryconsultation@dumgal.gov.uk>
Subject: EXTERNAL: Objection to carsphairn school closure.

Thank you for bringing the proposed closure of Carsphairn school to our attention.
I am a parent in the Glenkens and have children in Dalry school.
I would be extremely sad to see the school close and would be in favour of mothballing indefinitely.

There has been a lot of movement in the housing market in Dumfries and Galloway in the past 3 years. I expect to see some rapid change in the demographic and culture of the smaller communities. Closing the school would make it very unappealing for families and would exclude Carsphairn from the potential regeneration that comes with a fast moving property market.

We need to do all we can to support our small rural communities in their quest to thrive.

I'm assuming there is no financial difference between mothballing and closing, yet it offers both appeal and hope to the community.
Let's keep it open.

Warm regards
[REDACTED]

OFFICIAL

From: statutory consultation
Sent: 26 September 2022 14:56
To: [REDACTED]
Subject: RE: EXTERNAL: Proposed Closure of Carsphairn School.

OFFICIAL

Thank you for your email.

In relation to questions 1 and 3, around housing and business opportunities, colleagues in other directorates support communities in these areas and is not something the Education and Learning Directorate is involved in or has direct influence over. However we are aware of the aspirations of the community and have discussed these with colleagues in housing and planning to inform our own knowledge in relation to the proposal paper. With regard to question 2, as detailed in the proposal paper, the school was mothballed when numbers dropped to a very low level, we recognise that whilst there has been a slight increase in pupil numbers within the catchment area these numbers remain low and do not provide the best opportunities for the pupils. Catchment realignment is considered within the proposal paper to increase the catchment area which may improve the school roll however this comes with the reduction of pupil numbers at other school(s) within the wider communities.

Your comments will be made available, in full, to Education Scotland (HMIE) and included within the consultation report, which will be published on www.dumgal.gov.uk/consultations on Thursday 5th January 2023.

Statutory Consultation
Education & Learning Directorate
Dumfries and Galloway Council

OFFICIAL

From: [REDACTED]
Sent: 24 September 2022 12:49
To: statutory consultation <statutoryconsultation@dumgal.gov.uk>
Subject: EXTERNAL: Proposed Closure of Carsphairn School.

Dear Sir or Madam,

We write to express our concerns about the proposed closure of Carsphairn Village School.

The village of Carsphairn is, unfortunately, peopled in the main by elderly folk who are past child bearing age. There is a need to attract new, young families to the area to regenerate the life of the village.

This requires three main factors:-

- 1:- The availability of housing in the area.
- 2:- The necessity of available schooling to attract young families.
- 3:- The availability of work opportunities.

1:- The housing stock in the village is mainly old with few new builds. There are many absent landlords and a good few holiday lets. There may be land aplenty available for housing development. Carsphairn Community Council is at least exploring the possibility of developing an affordable housing scheme.

What is Dumfries & Galloway Council proposing to do to improve this situation?

2:- In proposing to close the school in Carsphairn, Dumfries & Galloway Council are blighting any chance of attracting new families to the area. Schooling of a local nature is a vital element in attracting new families to the area. It is understood that as Carsphairn village school is currently mothballed, Dumfries & Galloway Council are actively discouraging parents new to the area to register an interest for their children to attend Carsphairn school.

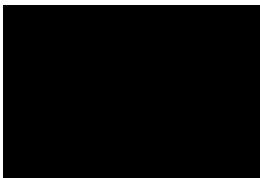
Why is Dumfries & Galloway following this route instead of trying to improve the school role.

3:- Given the rural nature of Carsphairn and it's surroundings it is difficult to see how new jobs can be created. But, we have reasonable internet connectivity, and with the governments declaired intention to improve such services in rural areas we forsee a much improved service for this area at some future time.

What is Dumfries & Galloway Council doing to attract new businesses to the area?

We are dismayed and disappointed at the attitude and lack of support from Dumfries & Galloway Council to this area. We are against the closure of Carsphairn school and very annoyed at the Councils attitude. We know we are "small fry" in the grand scheme of things and that money is very tight at the moment but still, we expect our Council to give what support they can to our area.

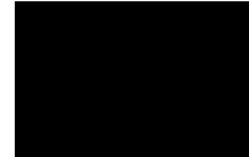
Please, don't close our school and abandon us in this way.



Carsphairn Community Trust



Carsphairn Community Trust



28th September 2022

To Whom it may concern

The Trustees of Carsphairn Community Trust would like to note their support for Carsphairn School remaining open. The school is a vital part of the community and helps keep the community viable. If it shut, Carsphairn would be a much less attractive place to live for families in particular, but also for older residents.

The trend of centralising activities etc. is now seen as a hindrance to rural areas and, with all the benefits now recognised of rural life we believe this would be a serious error on the part of the Council.

Kind regards



Chair, Carsphairn Community Trust

Scottish Registered Charity No. SC044308

The Secretary:

Email: carsphairn.trust@gmail.com



Carsphairn Community Woodland



28th September 2022

To whom it may concern

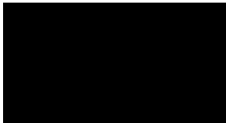
When Carsphairn Community Woodland Ltd was seeking to acquire woodland within the Carsphairn area, Carsphairn School was still open, albeit with low numbers. One of the drivers for woodland acquisition was to help regenerate the area through job creation, which would help draw more people to the area. We are now up and running and the woodland is providing a small number of jobs and an attractive place to visit which is becoming increasingly popular.

The Covid-19 pandemic has highlighted the benefits of living in a rural area and this community has seen a significant increase in new families to the area.

We are in total support of keeping the school open to help keep this community alive. Without it, children have to travel to Dalry or further afield – if Dalry and Kells also closed it would see 5 year olds having to spend significant time travelling 26 miles to and from school each day which is unjustifiable. It would become a much less attractive place for families to move to and the area will decline further.

We would urge the Council to keep the school open particularly in light of the recent increase in families to the area

Regards



Secretary, Carsphairn Community Woodland

[REDACTED]

From: statutory consultation
Sent: 04 October 2022 10:10
To: [REDACTED]
Subject: RE: EXTERNAL: Proposed closure of Carsphairn school

OFFICIAL

Thank you for your email.

Your comments will be made available, in full, to Education Scotland (HMIE) and included within the consultation report, which will be published on www.dumgal.gov.uk/consultations on Thursday 19th January 2023.

Statutory Consultation
Education & Learning Directorate
Dumfries and Galloway Council

From: [REDACTED]
Sent: 30 September 2022 09:18
To: statutory consultation <statutoryconsultation@dumgal.gov.uk>
Subject: EXTERNAL: Proposed closure of Carsphairn school

While I realise it is not viable to operate the school at the moment due to the number of children in the area this can change at any time.

As a community we are keen to encourage families to move into the area and with so many willing to work from home this is a distinct possibility. However not to have a local primary school available is a definite disadvantage and not encouraging.

I therefore propose the school is mothballed for the time being so that it can be made available if the need arises as I hope it will.

Yours sincerely

OFFICIAL

SOUTH OF SCOTLAND COMMUNITY HOUSING
COMMUNITY-LED HOUSING COORDINATOR

PUE

Public Meeting Representation

Name: [REDACTED]	Capacity: (staff, parent/carer etc)
E-mail Address: [REDACTED]	

Comment in relation to proposal:

South of Scotland Community Housing (SOSCH) are working with Caerphain Community Council to explore affordable housing solutions following the outcomes of the Glenkens Housing Need and Demand Assessment (HNDA). Evidence showed that there was a demand for housing for local needs in the wider Glenkens. A further HNDA is to be undertaken specifically centred on Caerphain. If the survey evidences a need for family housing, there is anecdotal evidence at present, then this may result in the number of school and pre-school children increasing ~~even~~ further.

Please note your representation will be open to public scrutiny and may have to be supplied to anyone making a reasonable request to see it. If you do not wish your response to be made publicly available, you should clearly write on the document: "I wish my response to be considered as confidential with access restricted to Councillors and Council Officers of Dumfries and Galloway Council". Otherwise, it will be assumed that the person making the response agrees to it being made publicly available.

From: statutory consultation
Sent: 04 October 2022 12:57
To: [REDACTED]
Subject: RE: EXTERNAL: letter

OFFICIAL

Good Afternoon,

In line with the consultation act we have contacted –

- The parents of any children expected by the Education Authority to attend any affected school within two years of the date of publication of the proposal paper.

And in addition it was felt relevant that we contacted all known families whose details are held by NHS Dumfries and Galloway or within Dumfries and Galloway Council's recording system for school age children (SEEMiS) to gather further information via the questionnaire. Any children residing within the catchment for whom we do not receive a questionnaire return from will be assumed they would return if the school was reopened.

If there are families living within the catchment that feel they have been unduly missed we urge them to make contact directly and/or make representation.

We will not be extending the questionnaire to all residents within the catchment area as reasonable steps have been taken to capture this information and there are opportunities for families within the catchment area to make representation if they so choose.

Statutory Consultation
Education & Learning Directorate
Dumfries and Galloway Council

From: [REDACTED]
Sent: 30 September 2022 10:48
To: statutory consultation <statutoryconsultation@dumgal.gov.uk>
Subject: EXTERNAL: letter

Hi,

I would like to make a request that the questionnaire with regard to children who would potentially use the school and/or nursery be posted out to every household on the electoral role in Carsphairn Primary School's catchment area.

It was made clear at last night's meeting that many people felt they were not asked, and they did have children who may attend, or family members who may move to the parish, with children, if the school was open.

Please could you confirm that you will, in response to the community's wishes, extend the paper questionnaire as suggested asap, in time to gather responses for the consultation and, if not, why not? After all, you surely want as much, and as accurate, information to be gathered during the consultation as possible? Otherwise it feels very much that you are only doing this as tick box exercise for a decision you have already made, which is surely not what this process is supposed to be?

OFFICIAL

[REDACTED]

From: statutory consultation
Sent: 05 October 2022 11:10
To: [REDACTED]
Cc: [REDACTED]
Subject: RE: EXTERNAL: Re: Fwd: Carsphairn P.S Public Consultation

OFFICIAL

Thank you for your email.

Your comments will be made available, in full, to Education Scotland (HMIE) and included within the consultation report, which will be published on www.dumgal.gov.uk/consultations on Thursday 19th January 2023.

The revised timeline has been uploaded to the website and is available via the following link - <https://dumgal.gov.uk/article/25440/Statutory-Consultation-Proposal-Carsphairn-Primary-School>

Statutory Consultation
Education & Learning Directorate
Dumfries and Galloway Council

OFFICIAL

From: [REDACTED]
Sent: 03 October 2022 09:18
To: [REDACTED] statutory consultation <statutoryconsultation@dumgal.gov.uk>
Cc: [REDACTED]
Subject: Re: EXTERNAL: Re: Fwd: Carsphairn P.S Public Consultation

Hi Louise

please email through the revised latest timeline as requested so that we are aware of revised deadlines for representations.

We would like it recorded as a relevant representation regarding the statutory consultation for the closure of Carsphairn school that we are very disappointed with the complete absence of any of the 21 councillors on the Education and Learning committee at the public meeting last Thursday 29 September 2022.

As elected representatives of local communities and for such an important issue for Carsphairn surely the Council should have ensured that the meeting had proper scrutiny from the councillors, also that they understood the issues.

We understood their role to be to help represent local communities on matters relating to Education and Learning.


Since the committee also have the authority to proceed with the proposal after the second period of consultation/further consideration we feel it would undoubtedly have given them a better understanding of the reasons for our opposition to closure had they attended the meeting to hear first hand the strength of opposition and the many valid arguments presented. We are aware they should be receiving records of all representations but live representation is always more effective and meaningful.

We appreciate that illness and/or injury prevents attendance at meetings but nevertheless their comprehensive absence at the meeting on 29 September gives us little confidence in this committee making fair and properly informed decision on the future of our school.

We look forward to receiving the latest timeline.

Regards


Chair
Carsphairn Community Council.

On 30/09/2022 10:44,  wrote:

Hi Louise
with regard to yesterday's meeting and as agreed, please send through the **latest current** timeline for the statutory consultation for closure of Carsphairn school.
If the timeline changes yet again, please send through the latest revised version.

Thanks


Chair
Carsphairn Community Council

[REDACTED]

From: statutory consultation
Sent: 05 October 2022 11:08
To: [REDACTED] statutory consultation
Cc: [REDACTED]
Subject: RE: EXTERNAL: Carsphairn Communiy Council-objection to the closure of Carsphairn school

OFFICIAL

Thank you for your email.
Your comments will be made available, in full, to Education Scotland (HMIE) and included within the consultation report, which will be published on www.dumgal.gov.uk/consultations on Thursday 19th January 2023.

Statutory Consultation
Education & Learning Directorate
Dumfries and Galloway Council

OFFICIAL

-----Original Message-----

From: [REDACTED]
Sent: 03 October 2022 14:39
To: statutory consultation <statutoryconsultation@dumgal.gov.uk>
Cc: [REDACTED]

Subject: EXTERNAL: Carsphairn Communiy Council-objection to the closure of Carsphairn school

To statutoryconsultation@dumgal.gov.uk

Please find attached Carsphairn Community Council's objection to the proposed closure of Carsphairn school.

A similar objection was presented by the community council at the public meeting on 29 September 2022 but we now provide our arguments in written form.

We will be commenting on appendices 6 and 7 - Financial templates of the report in due course.

Please acknowledge receipt of our objection

[REDACTED]
Chair

Carsphairn Community Council

To: statutoryconsultation@dumgal.gov.uk

From: **Carsphairn Community Council**

3rd October 2022

Objection to the proposed closure of Carsphairn Primary School

First statutory consultation period: Monday 5th September to Friday 4th November 2022.

This statement covers

1 - a brief background to the activity leading to the education & learning committee's agreement to start statutory consultation for the closure of Carsphairn school on 17th March 2022 and why this agreement did not follow the Schools (Consultation) (Scotland) Act 2010 – Statutory Guidance

2 - -compelling reasons to not close the school

3 - some comments challenging statements in the proposal for closure document.

We quote from the Schools (Consultation) (Scotland) Act 2010 – Statutory Guidance where relevant.

1 - The school has served the community for close to 300 years and in that time has provided its pupils with a good education, passing all inspections with flying colours.

We largely disagree with the Education & Learning Committee's statements on the following vital concerns as identified in the Schools (Consultation) (Scotland) Act 2010 – Statutory Guidance - any reasonable alternatives to closure, likely educational benefits, the likely effect on Carsphairn community and the likely effect of any different travelling arrangements caused by the proposed closure.

From point 74 of the statutory guidance - We maintain that there was **no** pre-consultation with the community and that there was **no** proper exploration of all reasonable alternatives before the authority proceeded to consult on closure.

The Community Council along with the Parent Council agreed to mothball the school in February 2019 at a meeting with Mr Thin that we had requested. We agreed on the understanding there would be an annual review. But a year later we were surprised and disappointed to learn that the education e learning committee had agreed to start a statutory consultation for closure. No review of the situation has yet taken place.

Quote from the Statutory Guidance:

24 It is important for authorities to consider how to engage constructively with communities in advance of statutory consultation, so that the statutory consultation is not a surprise to the community and addresses the issues that concern them.

64 Mothballing is only appropriate for a temporary period and should be subject to regular review, at least annually, against the same requirements which led to the original decision to mothball the school (or stage of education)

We were also informed that if new pupils were to arrive before or during mothballing that they could enrol at Carsphairn (dependant on there being available suitable staff] This information was **incorrect** as it was not possible to enrol any child at Carsphairn – any enrolment queries went straight to Dalry.

2 – compelling reasons to not close the school

- a] A primary school in a small community such as Carsphairn represents the beating heart of the community and brings the community together in so many ways - school plays and concerts, beetle drives, Christmas and other fairs, regional music competitions, singing in our community garden, involving members of the community in supporting reading activities amongst many other activities.
- b] We are witnessing a movement of people often from urban areas to rural locations as a result of the pandemic and the community council believe this trend will continue, including families with young children.
- c] BT Openreach will be installing even faster super high speed internet connections - further incentive for people to settle in the Carsphairn area as home working becomes even more feasible.
- d] Enrolment figures for the Glenkens partnership show a slow but steady annual increase from 2018/19.
- e] Increasing employment opportunities in the renewables sector should also attract new workers..
- f] Most of the houses that were for sale in Carsphairn over roughly the past four years have sold in the last couple of years.
- g] We are currently investigating the building of much needed affordable housing to regenerate our community and attract younger families. We are working with the South of Scotland Community Housing association who have a successful track record in supporting communities build affordable eco family homes. Wind farm community benefit funds will support this project.
- h] Travel times for Carsphairn children to Dalry school, are currently a good hour for children who reside in the Upper Deugh valley which is surely unacceptable, especially so for young children and especially during the winter months bearing in mind Carsphairn is upland and there is considerably more winter snow and ice here than in surrounding areas.
- i] From the village it is certainly longer than the 14 minutes quoted in the proposal paper..
- j] There is an existing immediate demand for the school with parents waiting to use it if were to reopen.
- k] Currently a Change.org campaign to Save our School has over 300 signatures..

3 – Comments challenging statements in the proposal document

- we firstly challenge the rationale **13.1** and school roll projections **13.2**. It must be borne in mind that almost without notice, the school roll jumped to 33 children from we believe nine, many years ago, necessitating the newly built extension and a second full time teacher.
- We do not dispute that the roll has fallen drastically since then but it is impossible to predict accurately what the school roll for Carsphairn would be over the next 5 years.
- We believe the figures in the proposal paper may already be outdated.
- It is disingenuous to state that no children have attended the school since the 2018/19 session as it was mothballed and there was no option to attend Carsphairn school.
- We strongly disagree that a small school roll provides significant impediments to the successful implementation of a Curriculum for Excellence.
- A small school roll facilitates one to one learning where no child gets left behind and where any learning difficulties can be identified and worked on.
- This individual learning is much less at the expense of the rest of the class in a small school.
- Academically gifted children can also move forward more easily at their own pace.
- Valuable social interaction opportunities can be provided for children in a family grouping situation where the older ones look out for the younger ones, bullying is unknown or stopped in its tracks instantly.

- If the school had not been mothballed it **must** be true to say that Carsphairn children who currently attend other schools [there being no option to attend Carsphairn school] might well have decided to attend the school in their own community and close to their home with significantly shorter or virtually no travelling times. .

13.4 Financial Consequences Projected transport costs involved in delivering meals to Carsphairn using a private taxi located in Castle Douglas as there are no local services in Carsphairn or Dalry are disingenuous. If advertised locally, it would undoubtedly be the case that a suitable driver would come forward to transport the meals, this also providing some measure of local employment, similar to the drivers of school runs.

14.0 Educational Benefits statement

- Despite statements to the contrary, there are educational benefits in a single figure roll school, as outlined previously. The four pages giving account of the opportunities provided by Dalry are not exclusive to Dalry, Carsphairn provided nearly all of the same subjects and opportunities but in a more focussed manner than experienced in a larger group, both in and outwith the classroom.
- Carsphairn children attending Dalry cannot easily attend after school classes as they would miss the school bus so parents have to drive to collect them later if this is possible or make other arrangements.
- Carsphairn offered many and varied after school clubs including gardening and martial arts.
- We reject the contention that Support for Learning allocations are better utilised together within Dalry primary – one to one support is both more meaningful and valuable if conducted in a child's own local school within his or her own local community.

15.1 and 2 Alternatives to the proposal and school re-opening

- We see no reason to increase the catchment area.
- In the circumstances the continuation of mothballing would seem the best way forward to allow for more primary school age children and their families moving to Carsphairn, compelling reasons for which have already been given.
- We strongly dispute the contention that if the school re-opened it would always be a school with low numbers and a single teacher. This implies that low numbers and a single teacher automatically result in a poor academic and social education, quite the reverse in fact as has been proved by the many children educated at Carsphairn leading happy and successful lives.
- It is also possible that younger families may move into the upper Deugh valley from where currently an S1 pupil travels for an hour to reach Dalry. It is 15 to 20 minutes from the same location to travel to Carsphairn school.

15.9 Mitigation of adverse effects

Carsphairn families have chosen to live in Carsphairn and surely their children are entitled to be educated in their local school as close to home as possible..

Final Quote from the statutory guidance - point 63

When a school roll falls very low, the authority and/or community may consider that the school is not presently viable but do not wish to close it immediately because there is a reasonable prospect that the number of pupils in the area will increase such that it should be re-opened in the future.

NB We will be challenging Appendices 6 and 7 - Financial templates in due course

End

Dear Parent Council,

If there are potential pupils in Carsphair, then it seems if the school was 'mothballed' then it should reopen to accommodate them.

Best wishes,

A solid black rectangular box used to redact the signature of the sender.

Response to Carsphairn proposal- statutory consultation 2022

General comment- Rural schools are a focal point of most thriving rural communities. There are specific characteristics that make them unique to the communities they serve. The impact of mixed age teaching of small numbers of pupils is very difficult to quantify without dedicated research but should not be underestimated. Schools have generally been divided by age and taught as single age groups where numbers allow- mainly for ease of teaching rather than - arguably- effectiveness of learning. Where a mixed age and stage class exists, every individual's teaching and learning must be carefully tracked and progress monitored. A single teacher with long term contact with a small number of pupils has the potential for rich and coherent learning experience. Historically pupils from Carsphairn School moving onto Dalry Secondary and Castle Douglas High School have achieved relatively well and have featured strongly and disproportionately well in annual prize lists. I believe this is testament to the independent learning style of these pupils as they have moved through a small primary. These students have also demonstrated empathetic capacity for supporting others- which is a valuable life skill.

Detailed response to the proposal.

13.2 Current Details

The reduction in Carsphairn school roll must be seen in the light of extensive discussion of the future of Glenkens schools over the period in question. Parents are very clear that their children only get one shot at their early education and were not willing to take risks of disruption. Discussion of closure runs the risk of becoming a self-fulfilling prophecy. I would agree completely that the numbers for pre-school do not warrant the re-establishment of a Nursery sector. The socialization for this age group requires a larger group/ opportunity for interaction with a range of different people. A mixed age grouping as they move into primary years is arguably a more 'normal' situation. Adults have a wide range of colleagues and friends of varying ages and experience. The difficult question is when is small- too small? and should that be an economic decision? The discussion in this section does seem to involve the Glenkens provision as a whole, rather than just Carsphairn.

It would be interesting to know why the parents of 4 Carsphairn children have chosen not to send their children to Dalry Primary which is currently their designated school. Is it proximity, size of school? Or something else. This could be relevant to the discussion. There have not been placing requests for the school since 'mothballing' because parents have not been offered Carsphairn as an option.

14.0 Educational Benefits Statement

There are several assertions in this statement that I would take issue with.

learning groups would not only be limited in size but also static I have been privileged to watch mixed age learning groups where the coaching capacity of more advanced pupils has supported learning in others and in so doing has dramatically consolidated their own learning. I have watched the questions of younger pupils in particular, stimulate discussion and higher order thinking in a way that is more difficult in a single age group. A mixed age group I believe does stimulate good learning and far greater independence of learning style.

While some smaller schools do have a diverse array of members, many are relatively homogeneous in nature This is a very spurious argument and ignores the reality of the 'relatively homogenous' population of Dumfries and Galloway.

outdoor learning is an important element of Dalry Primary School Absolutely it is and most would agree that Carsphairn Primary moved first in that direction and supported the development elsewhere in the cluster.

Pupils at Dalry Primary School can access a wide range of additional opportunities in and out of the classroom

The benefit of a cluster primary group is that opportunities created in one school can be shared by others and thus opportunities are multiplied. Carsphairn pupils have usually been involved in the opportunities listed- either by setting them up or by getting in the minibus and coming down to be involved. The small school also had a range of other opportunities that could take place because the whole school could fit in a minibus! Examples would include a day in Maryhill Primary- a huge conurbation school- improving exposure to a more diverse community and metal detecting in response to the discovery of the Galloway Viking hoard. Responsive, innovative, stimulating and relevant. Similarly, staff interaction is cross cluster, staff development opportunities are universal in the cluster and isolation is actively worked against.

Carsphairn was not in the recent past an isolated school, but an integrated part of a cluster- a model that Dumfries and Galloway has fostered through partnership headteachers and that it should be proud of, because it does address the issues raised in this section. The residential opportunities were cluster based ensuring cohesion of the student group that would move on to Dalry Secondary.

15.2 I would agree that the school is likely to always be single class and teacher. That could be seen as an advantage and the economic argument needs to be fully addressed to see if this could be achieved in a sustainable way

15.4 A continuation of 'mothballing' has an impact on a community struggling to optimise its appeal to young families by keeping a door open to a village school -should a plan be devised with a critical roll being achieved. Scotland's rural communities may experience further revival with the investment of windfarm funding, changes in remote working and urban relocations.

Conclusion

Decisions need to be made with accurate information, due consideration for the future and a degree of challenge to the status quo. The per capita cost of the school can be reduced with good cluster management and if the current and foreseeable parent/ carers of primary age children express the firm desire to have their children educated within the current Carsphairn catchment, then careful reconstruction of a sustainable Carsphairn Primary school could be a vital part of this community.

██████████ retired teacher

17/10/22

[REDACTED]

From: statutory consultation
Sent: 31 October 2022 13:32
To: [REDACTED]
Subject: RE: EXTERNAL: Carsphairn Primary School

OFFICIAL

Thank you for your email.

Your comments will be made available, in full, to Education Scotland (HMIE) and included within the consultation report, which will be published on www.dumgal.gov.uk/consultations on Thursday 19th January 2023.

Statutory Consultation
Education & Learning Directorate
Dumfries and Galloway Council

OFFICIAL

From: [REDACTED]
Sent: 18 October 2022 17:50
To: statutory consultation <statutoryconsultation@dumgal.gov.uk>
Subject: Re: EXTERNAL: Carsphairn Primary School

Thank you for your response.

We, like many families, moved back to Carsphairn just before lockdown. The writing was on the wall and, working in teaching, I was acutely aware of how I'll prepared the inner city schools were for lockdown.

My father died in 2018 and it is important to me that I'm not seen as a second home statistic. This house had no potable water but we still chose Carsphairn.

On arrival, our children were registered in Edinburgh City. Had we been able to register our children at Carsphairn Primary School, we would have done so. The D&G council website made it clear Carsphairn was not an option. We still intend to move here permanently, if education allows.

Regards
[REDACTED]

Sent from my iPhone

On 18 Oct 2022, at 13:58, statutory consultation <statutoryconsultation@dumgal.gov.uk> wrote:

OFFICIAL

Good Afternoon [REDACTED],

Thank you for your email.

Your comments will be made available, in full, to Education Scotland (HMIE) and included within the consultation report, which will be published on www.dumgal.gov.uk/consultations on Thursday 19th January 2023.

All families of children known to NHS Dumfries and Galloway and currently in attendance at a school within Dumfries and Galloway were contacted. Could you please confirm where (Authority) your children currently attending school?

Thank you

Statutory Consultation
Education & Learning Directorate
Dumfries and Galloway Council

OFFICIAL

Sent: 17 October 2022 19:42

To: statutory consultation <statutoryconsultation@dumgal.gov.uk>

Subject: EXTERNAL: Carsphairn Primary School

Dear All,

I was grateful to have the opportunity to meet in Carsphairn on Thursday night although I left feeling incredibly disheartened.

Here are my points which you asked that I e-mail in.

When we arrived in Carsphairn in March 2020 we were told we could only enroll in Dalry Primary School. All available employment for me at the time was in Ayrshire, and therefore driving south to go North for work was not an option. At the time I had 3 primary aged children, I still have two primary aged children. I still want to move back to the area but I cannot currently see anyway of being employed and making the journey to Dalry and back work for my children.

We live in the north of Carsphairn and it appears from what you told me on Thursday, that I did not receive a letter asking me because our family are not registered in D&G for health services. Our family have always used Dalmellington as it is closer and has a Chemist. All my children were born in Crosshouse. Therefore I believe your original methodology had inherent bias. I don't believe it would have taken much at all to contact 140+ households. Therefore I ask that you write to every household in the community and carry out an accurate survey.

Because of the inconsistent methodology and incorrect information, it is unfair now to tell us we have lost 2 and a half years. I ask that the 3 years periods starts again from the date of the meeting last week.

I was very disappointed to hear that D&G Council is carrying out its own future planning which made no reference to the National Discussion on Education which was launched on 21st September. Education in Scotland is failing its learners, and the Carsphairn School review will be over a year before the findings of the National discussion are collated, reflected upon and a plan made, so it is unfair to expect Carsphairn residents to be pushed into something which might not even fit the National picture.

I do not give any credibility to the argument that old school buildings should be replaced by new to enhance pupils education. What we have learnt from the pandemic is that the old buildings with high ceilings, built with natural materials, reduced the transmission rate. We are also acutely aware across the whole of Scotland that many of the PPI funded schools were built to low standards causing horrific accidents to happen which have resulted in loss of life. Carsphairn School has stood the test of time.

I think the audience gave clear and relevant opinion to contradict your beliefs regarding the availability of after school clubs and activities. The transport is so poor in this area that the children of Carsphairn have been unable to access these clubs. As a community we have a consistently strong record of funding educational trips, and staffing worthwhile after school activities. These have also enhanced the strength of the community.

Over the last 2 and a half years, shocking evidence has emerged of the deterioration of young peoples mental health. Children have felt isolated and disengaged. The levels of self harm have been appalling, and it is well documented that the enhanced relationship between pupils, parents and teachers, has significantly helped to support young people. Carsphairn Primary School has a long history of Community Engagement. Our children should have the opportunity to attend school in the community they live in, without endless hours of travel, in the dark winters, on what are now significantly more dangerous roads.

There are now large numbers of wood lorries and low loaders in the area due to mature forests and wind farms, which you will find evidence of if you look to Council Planning Permission and Felling licences. CCC has consistently requested that local roads are better maintained by the Council. This has not been granted on many occasions and our roads are now dangerous in the dark, with adverse weather conditions.

At the meeting we also discussed the lack of connection made between Education and the Economy. In order to promote growth, we need education. In D&G we have seen an influx of people leaving city life, many of whom are skilled and working from home. We have also seen a large uptake in outdoor pursuits. I live north of the Village and have land which we as a community, would like to make into a Car park to allow access to the Kells Range, and Cairnsmore. In turn, as a community, we would like to purchase and open the Village pub, this encouraging visitors to eat in the Village.

The funding from this will be accessible from 2023 with a large amount of Wind-farm money coming to the Community Council. I have three agricultural buildings to convert to short term holiday accomodation, which will bring in more tourists to the area, eating in the Village.

We want to use some of the Community resources to buy a mini bus and train a number of drivers so we have more employment from the village, and a local taxi to collect walkers from the end of the Kells Range. This would provide a taxi service to the Clachan in Dalry which would help boost their business as well.

The hope is that other private home owners would want to move into the B&B market.

It is reasonable to suggest that money becoming available in 2023, will take a number of months to be allocated to applicants, and therefore we can't suddenly produce a large number of children over night.

However, without an open primary school, we cannot attract the workers to the area to grow our economy. You will, in effect, have robbed us of our future.

I ask again that the clock is reset in order to allow a full and proper consultation period.

Regards



[Sent from Yahoo Mail for iPad](#)

From: statutory consultation
Sent: 31 October 2022 13:32
To: [REDACTED]
Subject: RE: EXTERNAL: Re closure of Carsphairn School

OFFICIAL

Thank you for your email.

Your comments will be made available, in full, to Education Scotland (HMIE) and included within the consultation report, which will be published on www.dumgal.gov.uk/consultations on Thursday 19th January 2023.

Statutory Consultation
Education & Learning Directorate
Dumfries and Galloway Council

From: [REDACTED]
Sent: 27 October 2022 19:34
To: statutory consultation <statutoryconsultation@dumgal.gov.uk>
Subject: EXTERNAL: Re closure of Carsphairn School

Dear sirs

As a parent of a former pupil at the school I would like to comment on 2 things

1. For the 7 years my daughter attended the school I was challenged many times by the winter weather and its effect on the road conditions when driving my daughter to and from school but I was grateful she did not have to go the further distance to Dalry over even more dangerous roads.
2. An argument for closing small schools is that they do not provide a good education and particularly pupils are disadvantaged by the lack of socialization, yet I see no evidence of this, my daughter after 7 productive years at Carsphairn flew through the school system picking up good grades and good friends and is now a student at Stirling University, hoping to become a geography teacher.

Yours sincerely

[REDACTED]

OFFICIAL

From: statutory consultation
Sent: 31 October 2022 13:32
To: [REDACTED]
Subject: RE: EXTERNAL: Carsphairn Primary School Closure

OFFICIAL

Thank you for your email.

Your comments will be made available, in full, to Education Scotland (HMIE) and included within the consultation report, which will be published on www.dumgal.gov.uk/consultations on Thursday 19th January 2023.

Statutory Consultation
Education & Learning Directorate
Dumfries and Galloway Council

OFFICIAL

From: [REDACTED]
Sent: 30 October 2022 20:22
To: statutory consultation <statutoryconsultation@dumgal.gov.uk>
Subject: EXTERNAL: Carsphairn Primary School Closure

Dear Sir/Madam,

I am writing to you as a concerned parent of three children living within the Carsphairn catchment area. I understand that Carsphairn Primary School is undergoing a consultation process to sadly close the school. My children are currently ages ■, ■ and ■. I find this a distressing prospect, as I wish for my children to attend their local school and indeed the nursery too if it was to re-open.

As an active member of the community and trained childcare practitioner, I organise the voluntary run [REDACTED] [REDACTED] which provides a vital regular social opportunity for many families both with pre-school and school aged children from within the Carsphairn and the surrounding Glenkens area in absence of the current mothballed school.

I stress that I am strongly against the closure of Carsphairn Primary School for many various reasons;

Firstly, Carsphairn is our closest local village and nearest primary school. Living rurally, this is already a ten-minute drive. Dumfries and Galloway Council's proposal of the redirection for Carsphairn children to attend Dalry Primary School is unacceptable, as it is an increased journey drive time of twenty-five minutes (more than double the distance to Carsphairn). I stress that these driving times are based on an average journey time to the village itself, and that it does not take into consideration the poorly maintained road conditions, or indeed the treacherous weather conditions of the winter months that can cause many dangers for rural road users travelling longer distances.

Secondly, I understand that the Scottish Government is encouraging the increase of green energy and windfarm development within our area to cope with national demand. However, this also presents a concern for parents when planning regular journeys to and from school out with our catchment area. Many of our rural roads are single tracks and with increased traffic travelling along our fragile roads this presents a range of difficulties such as delays, road closures, speeding traffic along small unfamiliar roads, etc.

Thirdly, as a parent of three young children, I feel that we should not be pressured into sending our small children via bus or taxi any further distance to attend education when we already have a perfectly usable school within an

acceptable driving distance. Therefore, our family will have to home school our children as a result, but not by our own choice.

Finally, the loss of this historic 300-year-old school will have a devastating impact on our local community and indeed the children of the area. I feel that the children need and have a right to access their local school to make vital connections within their local community and develop lifelong links with their local area, which in turn encourages them to grow, learn and sustain the future of the Carsphairn's economy for future generations. The beautiful surroundings of Carsphairn offer a multitude of outdoor learning opportunities for children, which some schools simply cannot offer so easily.

In summary, I personally would like to see Carsphairn Primary School reopen for the August 2023 intake, as I wish my children to enrol into P1 at this school. I want my own and other children within the area to receive the highest quality of care attention and quality of education that a small school such as Carsphairn can offer opposed to a larger school/classroom environment. I feel that teachers delivering education to larger classes simply cannot offer the same amount of attention to each pupil due to the ongoing job cuts from the council and the larger ratio of teachers to children. At the very least Carsphairn Primary School should remain open as a supporting school for the Dalry and Kells cluster so that the school could stay open and potentially offer children who may benefit from the additional support of a smaller school.

Your Sincerely,

A solid black rectangular box used to redact the signature of the sender.

[REDACTED]

From: statutory consultation
Sent: 31 October 2022 13:31
To: [REDACTED]
Subject: RE: EXTERNAL: Proposed Closure of Carsphairn Primary School

OFFICIAL

Thank you for your email.

Your comments will be made available, in full, to Education Scotland (HMIE) and included within the consultation report, which will be published on www.dumgal.gov.uk/consultations on Thursday 19th January 2023.

Statutory Consultation
Education & Learning Directorate
Dumfries and Galloway Council

From: [REDACTED]
Sent: 31 October 2022 06:39
To: statutory consultation <statutoryconsultation@dumgal.gov.uk>
Subject: EXTERNAL: Proposed Closure of Carsphairn Primary School

Dear Sir / Madam

At the meeting of Carsphairn SWI on 20th October 2022 the subject of Carsphairn Primary School was brought to the attention of the meeting. A discussion ensued and a number of members expressed their views that it was not in the best interests of the children in the Carsphairn community or indeed in the best interests of the community itself to have the primary school and nursery remain closed. I have been asked by all present at the meeting to communicate with you and express the view that Carsphairn SWI is opposed to the closure of Carsphairn Primary school and nursery.

Yours faithfully, [REDACTED] (secretary)

OFFICIAL

From: statutory consultation
Sent: 01 November 2022 13:25
To: [REDACTED]
Subject: RE: EXTERNAL: FW: Carsphairn School...

OFFICIAL

Thank you for your email.

Your comments will be made available, in full, to Education Scotland (HMIE) and included within the consultation report, which will be published on www.dumgal.gov.uk/consultations on Thursday 19th January 2023.

Statutory Consultation
Education & Learning Directorate
Dumfries and Galloway Council

OFFICIAL

From: [REDACTED]
Sent: 01 November 2022 10:20
To: statutory consultation <statutoryconsultation@dumgal.gov.uk>
Subject: EXTERNAL: FW: Carsphairn School...

Dear Sir/Madam,

I am writing in response to the local council proposing closure of our primary school. I have been a resident of Carsphairn parish for nearly 40 years now, attending the primary school myself for 7 years as a child and am now settling here with my wife and 3 young children who all intend to use Carsphairn primary. One of the reasons for settling here with children was knowing that there was a nearby very good primary school, in Carsphairn. The school is situated 10 minutes drive from our rural homestead, whereas Dalry or Moniaive are both a 20 minute drive from here. If we cannot use Carsphairn we will have to consider home schooling, due to the excess travel time for youngsters but also as we want our children to have a good connection to the Carsphairn community. As an adult I am very involved with all the Carsphairn groups, as a member of the Community Council, the Carsphairn Heritage group, Carsphairn Community Trust and other voluntary organisations. I only feel such a connection and responsibility to our area due to being educated in my local village along with all the other Carsphairn children, if I had to attend Dalry or Moniaive school there would be no such bond to Carsphairn which would be a shame. The school also keeps young families wanting to live within the area, as there is a school, without it Carsphairn risks becoming a retired community with very little future prospect. There have been a number of new families arriving in recent times but all are dismayed to discover the school is currently not in use. Only a month ago a new family moved in nearby us, with 3 primary school aged children. They are home schooling all the children but have said that if Carsphairn was to reopen they may well use it as its close enough and also small enough for the kids to have personal attention.

It is surely our right to educate our children within our own community. Please don't force closure of this much loved and historic school, help our community in the best way you can by helping this gem of a school to thrive again.

Best Regards,



Sent from [Mail](#) for Windows

Carsphairn School Closure Consultation

We are writing as members of the community in regard to the Proposal Paper (the paper) that has been produced by Dumfries & Galloway Council (DGC) in an attempt to permanently close Carsphairn Primary School.

Having read the paper in conjunction with the "Schools (Consultation) (Scotland) Act 2010" and "Schools (Consultation) (Scotland) Act 2010 - Statutory Guidance", we have a number of comments.

The closure proposal is for a remote school and the paper should therefore have clearly covered, with evidence, the steps undertaken by DGC to ensure that the additional requirements for remote schools were fully met. The paper lacked detail and did not provide evidence to demonstrate a thorough and rigorous process was followed.

Particular concerns relate to the implementation of the Statutory Guidance, specifically:

- Pre-consultation¹ - Although not specifically catered for in the Act, the Guidance is clear that a pre-statutory consultation is needed to ensure that community and parents feel properly engaged and that the consultation properly addresses the issues that concern them. The paper fails to demonstrate that adequate engagement was carried out.
- Consulting widely² - The paper does not establish that this had taken place.
- Factors to cover in the proposal paper³ - The proposal paper does not provide sufficient detail about areas likely to be of concern to the community and the paper fails to acknowledge the importance of the school to the wider community. Ignoring the fact that the community wish the school to remain open, the paper does not detail the future use of the buildings and simply indicates that the community has a village hall, and that there is a CATS process that exists to take on the building.
- Rural Aspects - Presumption against closure⁴
 - The paper ignores the presumption against closure, does not mention the requirement, and does not explain how it has overcome this presumption.
 - The Act and Guidance indicate that an authority is required to carry out 'very thorough consideration of why it wishes to close a rural school prior to consulting on a closure ...'⁵ and '... is required to assess, ... the likely community impact'⁶. No such very thorough consideration or assessment is included in the paper.
 - DGC have not shown that the school's '... future is considered not just from an education perspective but across the full range of an authority's responsibilities.'⁷
 - DGC have not demonstrated how they have endeavoured to increase the school roll, for instance by "encouraging or supporting community initiatives aimed at attracting employment or other inward migration"⁸.
 - "Steps taken to address the reasons for the proposal"⁹ is very clear that "... there is a duty on the authority to **set out the steps it has taken, if any, to address these reasons before formulating the proposal.**"¹⁰. DGC have not demonstrated any such steps in their document.

Specific areas of concern in the paper itself are:

13.1 Rationale

- The reasons provided as a rationale for the proposal are not properly justified or proven.
 - DGC have not made it possible for parents to enrol their children at Carsphairn since mothballing began and have spuriously used this as a reason that the school roll has not increased.

- Although there had been a falling school roll, this is now increasing for Carsphairn catchment and, given time, the community is confident that a sustainable school roll can be achieved. The estimated maximum school roll of around eleven pupils over the next 5 years has been a level at which the school had successfully operated prior to mothballing, and at which it had not attracted unfavourable inspection reports.
- No evidence was provided to indicate that a re-opened Carsphairn school would be unable to deliver successfully on the Curriculum for Excellence, nor fail to provide adequate social interaction opportunities. As these factors had not previously been an issue, there is no reason to presume they would be so in future.

13.2 Current Details – Carsphairn Primary School

- DGC have admitted their failure to adequately maintain the property for 5 years preceding the Covid-19 pandemic - *“The condition survey has not been reassessed since 2014 due to the impact of the Covid-19 pandemic and it is likely that there has been a level of depreciation in the building over this time.”* DGC’s historic failure to maintain an ageing property should not be used as a justification for permanent closure.
- The paper states *“The school was last inspected on the 9th November 2009, with the findings published on the 19th January 2010, there has not been a further inspection by HMIE in recent years.”* The link to this report has been removed from the DGC and government website so it is not possible to objectively assess the schools performance prior to its mothballing. However, Community Council minutes at the time did not record any statutory concerns regarding the quality of school provision in Carsphairn.

14.0 Education Benefits Statement -

- No specific evidence is given that provision of a school at Carsphairn would not provide a good rounded education for pupils. In fact the report states: *“By highlighting the educational benefits of Dalry Primary School, it is not implied that many of these benefits did not already exist in Carsphairn Primary School ...”*. It however then proceeds to assume that all of the benefits listed for Dalry did not, and could not, be provided at Carsphairn, without giving evidence to support this.
- The paper fails to acknowledge the wide range of additional opportunities afforded to Carsphairn Primary School pupils prior to being mothballed.

15.2 Re-opening of Carsphairn Primary School with its current catchment

- The paper states *“... it is clear that if Carsphairn Primary School re-opened it would always be a school with low numbers and a single teacher”*. This had been the case in Carsphairn for many years while the school was successfully meeting educational standards and is not a viable reason to close the school permanently.

15.3 Re-opening of Carsphairn Primary School with an Increased Catchment Area

- The likely effect of travelling arrangements is contradictory. While no-one would like to see pupils enduring long travelling distances and times, distances which are deemed satisfactory for pupils in the current Carsphairn catchment area to travel to Dalry¹¹, are classed as unsatisfactory when applied to pupils currently at Dalry if the catchment area was to be increased¹².
- Rural travel, particularly in the Upper Glenkens is subject to regular bad weather, and if using the school transport, pupils will routinely incur longer journeys to facilitate multiple pick-up and drop-offs to reach Dalry school. (*“In some instances longer journeys to school may increase the likelihood of bad weather impacting on home to school travel.”*¹³)

15.4 Continuation of “Mothballing”

- DGC did not undertake annual reviews of the mothballing as required, despite repeated requests from the Community Council to do so, and chose instead to start the process to close the school.

- The paper indicates that DGC “does not consider that [the mothballing] would represent the best option for the community.” However it has not asked the community who surely should be invited to help inform DGC’s consideration of what is ‘best’ for them.
- Although the continuation of mothballing may lead to temporary uncertainty, this is preferable to the permanent closure of the school and the negative impact this would have on the local community, particularly when trying to attract new families to the area.
- The paper states that mothballing should be a temporary measure, however it fails to acknowledge that the school roll has increased in the catchment area post-mothballing - “When a school roll falls very low, the authority and/or community may consider that the school is not presently viable but do not wish to close it immediately because there is a reasonable prospect that the number of pupils in the area will increase such that it should be re-opened in the future.”¹⁴

15.6 Effect on the Local Community

- The report does not assess the likely effect of the school’s closure on the local community. Specifically it has not shown that it has considered “whether closure would encourage families with school-age children to leave the community or discourage young families from moving to the community;”¹⁵ and “whether, or not, the loss of the school, and potentially families, would have a detrimental effect on the wider economy of the community.”¹⁶ Both are significant problems for a small rural community like Carsphairn.

15.8 Rural Impact assessment

- The paper states “Although the proposal involves a formal closure of service, the school itself has not operated since the summer of 2019. The proposal will not change the current position.” This is both incorrect and disingenuous; the impact on the on-going lack of school facilities in the village has had, and continues to have, a strong negative impact on the rural area.
- Carsphairn Primary School has been part of the community since 1723 and plays a strong part in the identity of the area. This identity will be eroded by the permanent closure of one of the pillars on which the community is based.
- Being situated at the top of the Glenkens and remote from regional centres, Carsphairn Community has suffered from an historic lack of investment. This latest marginalisation will continue this trend and will not enhance, protect or promote the area.

Appendix 6 and 7

- Figures are given for past and projected operating costs. However, no comparative figures are given for Dalry School or another local equivalent e.g. Kells in order for assessment of comparative contemporary costs to be made.
- The appendices do not show the costs to continue mothballing the school. These are necessary to give due consideration to this option

In summary:

There is a presumption against closure for rural schools, however DGC have failed to make clear how their recommendation for closure of Carsphairn Primary School outweighs this presumption.

There has been poor consultation, inadequate consideration of issues affecting the wider community, optimistic and contradictory findings in terms of travel arrangements, no specific demonstration that Carsphairn School could not provide the required educational standards, and the matter of a steady and potentially increasing school roll was ignored.

For these reasons the presumption against closure must hold, and the school should remain mothballed until adequate time is given for DGC, Carsphairn Community Council and the wider community to undertake steps to increase the roll sufficiently to re-open the school.

- 1 Schools (Consultation) (Scotland) Act 2010 Statutory Guidance [2.2]
- 2 Schools (Consultation) (Scotland) Act 2010 Statutory Guidance [32]
- 3 Schools (Consultation) (Scotland) Act 2010 Statutory Guidance [52]
- 4 Schools (Consultation) (Scotland) Act 2010 Statutory Guidance [2.5]
- 5 Schools (Consultation) (Scotland) Act 2010 Statutory Guidance [67]
- 6 Schools (Consultation) (Scotland) Act 2010 Statutory Guidance [72]
- 7 Schools (Consultation) (Scotland) Act 2010 Statutory Guidance [75]
- 8 Schools (Consultation) (Scotland) Act 2010 Statutory Guidance [75]
- 9 Schools (Consultation) (Scotland) Act 2010 Statutory Guidance [82]
- 10 Schools (Consultation) (Scotland) Act 2010 Statutory Guidance [82]
- 11 Consultation Paper [15.2]
- 12 Consultation Paper [15.3]
- 13 Schools (Consultation) (Scotland) Act 2010 Statutory Guidance [81]
- 14 Schools (Consultation) (Scotland) Act 2010 Statutory Guidance [63]
- 15 Schools (Consultation) (Scotland) Act 2010 Statutory Guidance [79]
- 16 Schools (Consultation) (Scotland) Act 2010 Statutory Guidance [79]

██████████ past parent and grandparent living in the Carsphairn catchment area, I would like to make comments on the below proposal for closure.

Proposal document to discontinue education at Carsphairn Primary School and Nursery. Re-assigning its catchment area to that of Dalry Primary School

Statutory consultation consultation period Monday 5th September to Friday 4th November 2022

Carsphairn School was mothballed at the end of June 2019 nursery 2011/12 no yearly review has been held with the community since then, a breach of the rural schools act 2010. On Tuesday the 17th of March 2020 members of Education and Learning Committee were asked to agree that the statutory closure consultation process should be undertaken during 2022, no prior consultation was held with the community to look at viable alternatives to closure,

Public meetings were held on Thursday 29th September at both Dalry and Carsphairn, neither meeting was chaired by a senior Elected member of the Council as stated in the proposal paper, no elected members or ward councillors were present at either meeting.

The catchment area is described as an area of forests and hills no mention of the sheep farms and the families living there.

School rolls in rural areas can fluctuate from one year to the next cannot be predicted accurately, figures given are only an assumption and could easily be double that stated. Carsphairn School has had two families from outwith the catchment enrolled within seven years of mothballing.

Dalry School was last inspected in November 2009 thirteen years ago, the last inspection report will not give potential parents any indication of the quality of education provided, benefits of attending Dalry includes the use of the Multi-Use Games Area this has not been in use for more than three years as found to be unsafe.

Clerical hours. When Carsphairn School was mothballed Dalry would have gained Carsphairn's allocation, that would be reallocated come back to Carsphairn.

Prior to Carsphairn School being mothballed no cook or janitor was employed, school meals were brought up from Dalry by a member of the kitchen staff and served by her at Carsphairn, similar arrangements could be made again using local people.

The closure of Carsphairn cannot be used to improve the falling roll at Dalry and to prevent a reduction in staff numbers.

Prior to mothballing Carsphairn had all IT technology devices and had after school IT classes, it has a good up to date library, had specialist teachers in art, music and PE. All additional opportunities listed were available at Carsphairn except football, basketball was part of after school clubs along with gardening

Carsphairn Parent Council was very active, every parent was a member and had very good fund raising adventures that allow the whole school to go on great outings every year.

Examination of Alternatives to the proposal. 12A(2) 12(4) Early engagement with the local community and others with an interest should have been held prior to the proposal paper being published to fully discuss and identify alternatives. These have not been properly explored and does not comply with the special regard matters these are set out in 11 to 14 of the 2010 Act and 2.5.3 4.2 of the Statutory Guidance.

School transport to Dalry. Space on both buses and dedicated cars are limited, parents of young children do not want them travelling on the service bus, the driver will be PVG checked but the service users will not. It is 19 miles from the furthest inhabited dwelling to Dalry, quoting a distance of 9.4 miles and a travel time on a bus of 14 minutes are simply not true. Pupils will not be able to take part in after school clubs and activities. Stating that the population of the area are accustomed to making long journeys to access things that urban areas take for granted seems to make it OK for Carsphairn children to travel long distances to school.

Financial information

The way it has been presented is misleading especially in regard to costs to pupil transport, it does not reflect what is written in the text about additional costs at Dalry, as a result the projected savings in the template don't make sense. There is a figure of £9500 as transport costs of opening Carsphairn School but an annual recurring savings of £6642 if they went to Dalry despite the note below the table, this is at odds with what is written in the text of an additional £24k cost making over £30k difference to the projected annual savings.

As the catering costs at Dalry do not rise are we to assume that the Carsphairn children will not be served lunch. The template should be an accurate representative as possible of the current and future cost implications on the decision to close, that short time period in history cannot be used to further argument for closure. The financial statement should be provided in a clear, complete and consistent form for all school closures, this financial statement does not stand up to scrutiny and should be dismissed from the proposal paper.

Future Development and regeneration of Carsphairn

Carsphairn Community Council Area has at the moment four wind farms providing community funds to the area with more under construction and consented. The 50 turbine South Kyle wind farm will be providing community funds by 2023 allowing Carsphairn to carry out a large development plan for the area which will include housing to provide family homes. Closing the school will undermine the hard work volunteers have put in over the last 18 months consulting by Zoom with many communities from John O'Groats in the north to Whithorn in the south and many communities in between, sharing ideas on their approach to planning different developments to regenerate their rural communities. Mothballing should be continued for Carsphairn School with 2022 being treated as year one because of Covid restrictions and failure of Dumfries and Galloway Council to review since 2019.

November 3rd 2022

[REDACTED]

From: [REDACTED]
Sent: 03 November 2022 17:26
To: statutory consultation
Cc: [REDACTED]
Subject: EXTERNAL: Carsphairn School closure - statutory consultation

To whom it may concern,

I would like to take this opportunity to clearly state my objection to the proposed closure of Carsphairn Primary school.

My Name is [REDACTED], I moved into the village of Carsphairn on 29th April 2022 with my Wife and our two [REDACTED] (aged [REDACTED] years and [REDACTED] years).

I attended the public consultation meeting held at Lagwyne Hall, Carsphairn on Thursday 29th September 2022 – at this meeting I was very vocal and elaborated upon all of the issues which I personally feel should be considered. To avoid repeating myself and writing an overly lengthy email, I have summarised my objection as follows:

1. Healthy competition for schools in the area which helps to ensure the strength of available education would be compromised by the school closure. Dalry School would be the only viable option – whilst I have no complaints relating to the quality of education currently provided, a long term ‘monopoly’ could be unhealthy.
2. We allowed our [REDACTED] to choose the school she attended. After visits to Kells School and Dalry School [REDACTED] chose Dalry – I am sure [REDACTED] would have been very interested in a school to which [REDACTED] could walk through the churchyard. Carsphairn School is 100 yards from our family home, a short walk away. Dalry School is approaching 10 miles away! The drive is along a relatively narrow road, which has many sharp bends. The road is used by forestry lorries travelling at speed. I do not consider the journey to be a safe one at all. I anticipate poor weather conditions having an impact on our ability to safely get our [REDACTED] to school at times. Should this ever be for a prolonged period of time then [REDACTED] education will surely suffer as a result – this would never be the case at Carsphairn school.
3. The community wants to build upon its own identity, the school is an essential ‘hub’. Without the school, Carsphairn is at risk of simply becoming a satellite of Dalry. The school is a vital element in attracting young families, providing the future life and blood of the community. Without young families moving into the village, it will likely become nothing other than holiday rentals within the next ten to twenty years – this is not at all in line with the community strategy that the available wind farm funding has allowed for.
4. Small class numbers have been proven to provide benefit to children, including but not limited to one-to-one education benefits. My eldest [REDACTED] certainly thrives within a small group. I know what is best for my children and what they want themselves – surely we should be allowed to select the school based upon this alone. At the consultation; people spoke positively regarding the education their children had previously received at Carsphairn School – many of whom seem to have had very successful lives thereafter.

I very much hope that you will consider my thoughts along with those of the many other persons who strongly object to the closure of Carsphairn School. There are a number of families who would opt to send children to the school right away – please do not ignore the views held by the local community.

Best regards

[REDACTED]

Head of Operational Quality

QHSE



t: +44 1902 353 353 m: 07917242014

NES House, Spring Road, Wolverhampton, West Midlands, WV4 6JX, United Kingdom



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To whom it may concern

I write in support of the reopening of Carsphairn School. I am both a resident and a grandmother of two children aged ■ and ■ years who also reside in the village and whose parents are very keen that they should attend Carsphairn School.

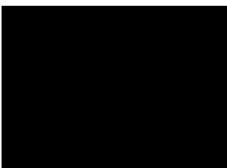
When we moved into this community earlier this year, we understood that the school was mothballed and would reopen should pupil numbers increase and there be sufficient local support for the school. The well attended meeting held on the 29th September at Lagwyne Hall demonstrated not only the demand for pupil places at the school but also the overwhelming support for our school to be reopened from residents, with and without primary aged pupils. A large number of individuals gave extremely valid and varied arguments in support of Carsphairn School at this meeting and I most certainly hope that due thought and consideration will be given to the feelings expressed through reading the notes that we were told were being taken throughout that evening.

The school is the beating heart and focus for our community. We have an ageing population and when our more senior residents pass on it is vital that young families are attracted to our village ensuring its longer term survival and prosperity. Without the school I fear these properties will either become holiday homes occupied for just a few months each year or worse still could remain unoccupied and fall into a state of disrepair leading to a downward spiral for the village of Carsphairn.

As an ex primary Headteacher with over 30 years teaching experience I understand the immense value small schools with their smaller classes offer pupils. Individualised teaching aimed at the needs and abilities of each child becomes possible when the teacher pupil ratio is lower enabling all pupils from the most able to those with specific educational needs to progress and achieve at a level that is suitable for them. Within mixed aged classes caring attitudes develop alongside a feeling of belonging, family and community. Within this culture it is rare for bullying or poor behaviour to arise and if it does it is often more swiftly dealt with as in small settings undesirable behaviour is more visible and transparent. Additional home school communication is enhanced with a teacher more accessible to parents due to the lower numbers within these smaller communities.

I trust that those making the final decision regarding the future of Carsphairn School consider carefully each and every argument submitted by 5pm Friday 4th November as well as points raised at the meeting held on 29th September. Please understanding the strength of feeling within our tight knit community and consider carefully the impact your decision will have upon Carsphairn children, residents and community both now and in the future.

Yours Faithfully



[REDACTED]

From: [REDACTED]
Sent: 04 November 2022 13:22
To: statutory consultation
Subject: EXTERNAL: Proposed closure Carsphairn Primary School

Dear Sir / Madam

I attended an open meeting relating to the proposed closure of Carsphairn Primary School in Lagwyne Hall on 29th September 2022. At the meeting a representative of the Council informed those present that the Council plans to undertake a full review of education provision across Dumfries and Galloway. I understand from what was said that the review will be wide ranging and take many factors into account. I oppose the current plan to close Carsphairn Primary School on the grounds that it should be included in the full review. I believe this is the correct course of action for the children in the Carsphairn area, the whole Carsphairn Community and the quality of educational provision in Dumfries and Galloway. Education provision at Carsphairn should not be ruled out at this stage when given many factors, not least the geographical position of the school there would be significant advantages to keeping Carsphairn School open.

Yours faithfully

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

From: [REDACTED]
Sent: 04 November 2022 14:18
To: statutory consultation
Subject: EXTERNAL: Statutory-Consultation-Proposal-Carsphairn-Primary-School

As a parent of two children who flourished at Carsphairn Primary due to be if it's of small class ratio of children to teachers
Also immersion in our natural equity and fabulous dynamic climate
Having experienced the effects of Flooding in 2015 (Storm Frank) it's essential to point out that our two public buildings School and Community Centre were virtually the only buildings not effected

I think that in the interests of cost effective options for increased pressures on the current Primary Provisory of St Johns Town Dalry Primary it is very obvious that it would be a LUDICROUS SHORT SIGHTED DECISION not based on any TRUE ACCOUNTING as the money raised short term by the sale of the building would be NEGLIGIBLE

The costs of continuing to mothball the school are tiny (cleaning and annual survey of building)
In recognition of the need to encourage cost effective travel to school - shorter distance to walk , bike , bus , or car option for Primary age group is ESSENTIAL

I call for an Annually Published census of demographics in
CARSPHAIRN Catchment area and St JOHNS TOWN DALRY catchment to be made available to CARSPHAIRN COMMUNITY COUNCIL - andST JOHNS TOWN DALRY COMMUNITY COUNCIL

[REDACTED]

From: [REDACTED]
Sent: 04 November 2022 15:38
To: statutory consultation
Subject: EXTERNAL: Proposal to close Carsphairn School

To whom it may concern

I am writing with my response to the proposal document to discontinue education provision from Carsphairn Primary School and Nursery and re-assign its catchment area to Dalry.

I grew up at Knockengoroch, which sits 10 miles from Carsphairn to the North 4 miles off the A713 on the way to Dalmellington and very near the Ayrshire border. I attended Carsphairn primary school from age 5 to 11. There are several reasons why I wish to oppose the proposal to close and feel very strongly that Carsphairn School must stay open for the life of the community and the health and well being of existing and potential families to the parish. The Deugh river valley in which Knockengoroch is located has another 5 residencies, of which a further 3 have had children residing who have attended Carsphairn School. Each of these 5 residencies is still populated and there is every reason to believe that children of school age will reside there again. To travel to Carsphairn school we walked 1.5 miles to meet a school run car. The trip to Dalry primary school is much longer, would take up to an hour or longer if a school bus. In my view this is prohibitive for young children to travel twice daily. English school guidelines recommend that young children travel no longer than 45minutes to reach their school. In effect if any of these Deugh river valley residencies had children of school age they would have to go over the border to Ayrshire in order to reach a school in a reasonable amount of travel time. Surely it is unacceptable that children in Dumfries and Galloway would have to travel to another local authority to be educated because there is no school close enough to them?

I have a masters degree from the University of Edinburgh and a successful career in the international music industry. I disagree that small class sizes are detrimental to children's learning outcomes.

I'm sure that I benefitted from the one on one teacher attention and also the mixed age ranges in the classroom. We would travel to Dalry and New Galloway for sports days and other activities such as music and benefitted from the socialising opportunities this provided.

There are many children of pre school age in Carsphairn who will soon need to attend a primary school.

In terms of the attraction of the village to new families, closing the school is an enormous deterrent. In all honesty, the existence of a school in Carsphairn would personally affect my decision to return to the parish. Carsphairn has a plan to attract more residents to the village, there are many opportunities to capitalise on the beautiful location and take advantage of the new community funding coming in from the numerous wind farms being built. Carsphairn is poised to enter a new era and there couldn't be a worse time to close the school.

I believe it would be short sighted and simplistic for the council to close the school, especially as the community is offering to provide some of the costs to keep it moth balled as the role call grows.

I know that many in the community feel very strongly about this subject and I hope this in itself as well as the points I have made above proves the importance of not closing this school

I look forward to your response

Very best

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

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From: [REDACTED]
Sent: 04 November 2022 15:48
To: statutory consultation
Subject: EXTERNAL: Proposed closure of Carsphairn school - further representations from Carsphairn Community Council
Attachments: Carsphairn School- all email correspondence - Carsphairn CC - John Thin plus others- 8.2.19 to.docx; Proposed school closure- further challenges to the proposal document.docx; School - proposed closure - updated info-children attending the school.docx; SOSCH HNDA Proposal 5.10.22 e acceptance.pdf

To statutoryconsultation@dumgal.gov.uk

I attach 4 more representations from Carsphairn community council [CCC] providing further comments and arguments against permanent closure of our school:

- A record of all email correspondence between mainly CCC and John Thin [JT] including the two proposal papers prepared by JT to inform the Education and Learning committee to agree to start the statutory consultation to close Carsphairn school at meetings on 17 March 2020 and 13 May/22 June 2021 [the meeting on 13 May was continued on 22 June]. In the interests of transparency and to provide a comprehensive record, all the exchanges are recorded.
- Further challenges to the proposal document for Carsphairn school closure: 'rationale' and factual error
- Children in Carsphairn catchment-impossible to predict numbers over the next 5 years.
- South of Scotland Community Housing proposal for the affordable housing project accepted by Carsphairn CC with work planned to start this month

Please acknowledge receipt of all 4 documents and that their contents will be sent to HMIE (Education Scotland) and included in the consultation report.

Regards



Carsphairn Community Council

From Carsphairn Community Council

To statutoryconsultation@dumgal.gov.uk

The Proposed Closure of Carsphairn School

A comprehensive record of all communication via mostly email regarding mothballing and agreement to start consultation for school closure from 8.2.19 to 23.9.22 in consecutive order

Mainly between Carsphairn Community Council [CCC] and John Thin [JT]

It clearly illustrates the lack of pre-consultation as required by the Schools (Consultation) (Scotland) Act 2010 – Statutory Guidance in addition to other failings on the part of Dumfries & Galloway Council Education and Learning Directorate regarding their proposal to close Carsphairn school.

Appendix 1:

Report authored by JT advising Education committee meeting on 17 March 2020 to agree that the statutory closure consultation process should be undertaken during 2020, in relation to Carsphairn Primary School and Nursery class.
CCC commented on the report in an email of 19.7.20

Appendix 2:

Report by JT to advise Education committee meetings on 13 May 2021 and 22 June 2021 re agreed consultation for closure. **CCC's comments and disagreements were added to this report in red and were sent to JT and the education committee members on 11 May in advance of the meeting. CCC received no response of any kind to our comments either before or after the meeting of 22 June 2021.**

Date	From	To	Correspondence
2019			
8.2	CCC	JT	Dear Mr Thin, Our community in Carsphairn is extremely concerned about the future of our primary school. Carsphairn School Action Group and Carsphairn Community Council request that a meeting be arranged to discuss this issue and inform us of the Education Department's plans. As this is a matter of great urgency, we request that the meeting should be held at the earliest opportunity and we further request that the meeting be held in Carsphairn to allow as many residents as possible to attend. Could you kindly provide a date or dates in the very near future for this meeting
8.2	JT	CCC	Thank you for your email. We shall try to identify a date to meet in the near future to discuss matters.
15.2	JT	CCC PTC	Thank you for your recent correspondence relating to Carsphairn Primary School. I would be pleased to meet with you, along with Paul Scrimshaw, Headteacher and the school's Education Officer, Rosie Smith to discuss this and to agree next steps. Rosie and I are available at 2.00pm on Thursday 28 th February and can come to Carsphairn Primary School. Hopefully this date is suitable and we look forward to meeting with you then.
28.2			Meeting took place – 2pm
4.3	JT	CCC PTC	Good morning all Thank you again for your attendance at last week's meeting to discuss the future of Carsphairn Primary School. Your input was greatly appreciated and it was helpful obtaining a parent and community perspective. In summary of the meeting:

			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The predicted roll for August 2019 is zero with both the current P7 pupils transferring to Dalry Secondary. • A discussion took place around the procedures and potential timescales which required to be followed should school closure be considered. • Rural school closures involved special provisions which require to be considered. • Discussions had taken place in the past about mothballing the Nursery however it was explained that the roll out of 1140hours of Early learning & Childcare did not have Carsphairn as a delivery site. • It was agreed that the most appropriate way forward was to mothball the school and to review the arrangement within the next twelve months. This could only last for up to a maximum of three years. • If new pupils arrived between now and the summer they would enrol at Carsphairn if that was their choice. (This would be dependant on there being availability of suitable staff). • If new pupils arrived after the summer (i.e. when the school was mothballed) then they could request to be enrolled at the school. (This would be dependant on there being availability of suitable staff). • All decisions will be based on the educational benefits for the children. • Dumfries and Galloway Council may make decisions on the overall school estate which may impact on Carsphairn. <p>If you are content that the above reflects accurately the main points from our discussion or if you have any amendments you'd like to make can you let me know by this Wednesday? I'll then share with Elected Members and would ask Ingrid, as Ward Worker, to consider the most appropriate means of sharing this within the wider community.</p> <p>Kind Regards <i>John</i></p>
6.3	CCC	JT	<p>thanks for the resume of our meeting last Thursday. I believe we have some comments but it is unlikely that I can get them to you by today with such short notice. Feedback will be sent to you asap</p>
27.3	CCC	JT	<p>I apologise for the delay in relaying my feedback on behalf of the Community Council to your email following our meeting on 28 February.</p> <p>We have further questions relating to Carsphairn Nursery as follows:</p> <p>Carsphairn Nursery was, we believe, mothballed at the end of June 2012, with reviews of this situation to follow.</p> <p>Below is an extract from Carsphairn CC's minutes of August 2011 which pre-dates the nursery mothballing:</p>

6. Nursery School Consultation

Hew Smith and Sandra Fisher of D &G Council Educational Services indicated that Carsphairn residents were being consulted because some residents had made use of the pre- pre- school facilities in Dalry. Given there is an over capacity of these facilities in Dalry provided by both the Council and the Glenkens Playgroup, the Council were investigating options for rationalisation. It was stressed that the existence of nursery facilities in Carsphairn is not being questioned, and that even if numbers reduced the key issue would be maintaining educational quality.

The meeting stressed that the Glenkens Playgroup is the only option for pre- pre- school care in Carsphairn, as there are no child minders in the village.

A revised consultation questionnaire (hard copy and survey monkey) will be sent to Walker McKenna and the Community Council Secretary.

The cut-off for consultation is the end of September, and a report is due to be submitted to the November D&G Council Educational Committee meeting

There are also references to this questionnaire in the PTC minutes over the same period.

We cannot find further reference to this consultation or report, neither can we find anything on the decision made by DGC's Educational Committee as a result of this report. Can you throw any light on this?

We believe there may have been no review of the nursery situation since June 2012 despite the minutes above stating 'it was stressed that the existence of nursery facilities in Carsphairn is not being questioned'. We can of course be corrected on this.

On the same subject, please will you explain why the roll out of 1140hours of Early learning & Childcare did not have Carsphairn as a delivery site since Carsphairn nursery was successfully meeting the needs of nursery age Carsphairn children until June 2012, in a well-equipped room in a well maintained and fit-for-purpose building .

As stated I believe at the meeting, there are one or two, possibly 3 nursery age children [over 3 years old] in Carsphairn now and with no nursery provision in Carsphairn their right to a properly local nursery education has been removed. One child attends Dalry nursery not through choice as any choices have been removed through the absence of the nursery in Carsphairn. The parent in question would prefer to send her child to a smaller nursery, but we currently cannot help her.

On the subject of school mothballing, we question why reviews of the school mothballing can only continue for a maximum of 3 years. Is this statutory legislation?

Can you confirm it is the DGC Education Committee who make all the decisions, including final decisions?

If new primary age children came to live in Carsphairn before the end of this school year, there would of course be no reliance on the availability of suitable staff to accommodate their attendance at the school.

We all fervently hope that more families will come to stay in Carsphairn to keep our school open and we are sure you appreciate the sad situation that would result from

			Carsphairn losing its school which to all intents and purposes represents the beating heart of the community.
4.4	JT	CCC	<p>Thank you for responding. I have attempted to answer your questions.</p> <p>On the 17 Nov 2011 Education Committee AGREED</p> <p>6.1 to cease purchasing pre-school education from Glenkens Playgroup from the start of the 2012 school session (August 2012) and 6.2 that in future, over-provision of pre-school education be addressed using the existing agreed strategy and delegations put in place by this Committee. (below) The strategy, agreed by Members and outlined in the Childcare Review November 2009, to “build on the strengths of Dumfries and Galloway’s mixed economy of service provision while addressing best value and sustainability, through rationalising and better managing capacity and investing in quality”.</p> <p>The considerations taken into account when implementing this strategy include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> o Quality of educational provision o Quality of social educational experience (number of children attending) o Duplication of provision o Sustainability of the provision o Support for parental employability (existence of wrap-around care)’ <p>extract from the paper attached (extract from attached report)</p> <p>With regard to planning for the expansion of ELC to 1140 hours provision: ‘A Blueprint for 2020: the Expansion of Early Learning and Childcare (ELC) in Scotland - ELC expansion planning guidance for local authorities set out the principles for planning for the expansion’.</p> <p>Making best use of assets - effective expansion plans will take account of a sequential decision-making process as follows –</p> <p>a. Use what we have: Making full use of existing assets within the local authority (including, workforce, potential of the natural environment, buildings and infrastructure);</p> <p>b. Use what we purchase: Enhancing the use of partner assets- developing and extending existing partnership models against a default assumption of a continued mixed economy - strengthening both local authority and other provision (including, for example, childminders and blended models);</p> <p>c. Create what we need - where full use of existing local authority services and assets, plus enhanced commissioning, still leaves a gap, plan to create or build new capacity, including outdoor nurseries</p> <p>At the time of planning for the expansion there had been no nursery at Carsphairn Primary for a number of years. To ensure that the Council adhered to the planning principles set out in ‘A Blueprint for 2020: the expansion of early learning and childcare (ELC) in Scotland - ELC expansion planning guidance for local authorities’ and make best use of its existing nursery provision when planning for the expansion of Early Learning and Childcare, officers reviewed the current capacity of provision within the geographical area, the number of children attending this provision, and</p>

projected numbers going forward. The nursery at Dalry Primary and the two year old provision funded at Bright Stars (Glenkens Children's Club) will provide capacity for the expansion and in line with a provider neutral approach will offer parents' choice, flexibility and accessibility within the area.

I hope this helps respond to your questions regarding the nursery provision.

In terms of the questions about mothballing I have pasted below the Statutory Guidance from the Schools (Consultation) (Scotland) Act 2010:

Schools (Consultation) (Scotland) Act 2010 – Statutory Guidance

Mothballing

63. In considering alternatives to closure, authorities may choose to consider "mothballing" a school (or a stage of education or a nursery class at a school). This is a temporary closure which does not lead to a consultation under the 2010 Act. It is only appropriate in very restricted circumstances. When a school roll falls very low, the authority and/or community may consider that the school is not presently viable but do not wish to close it immediately because there is a reasonable prospect that the number of pupils in the area will increase such that it should be re-opened in the future.

64. It is vital that this flexibility to close a school for a temporary period is not used to undermine the requirements under the 2010 Act to consult on all school closure proposals. Mothballing is only appropriate for a temporary period and should be subject to regular review, at least annually, against the same requirements which led to the original decision to mothball the school (or stage page 5

of education). 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. The condition of the school building and cost of maintaining the mothballed provision will also be relevant.

65. A school can be mothballed where the school roll has fallen to zero and continues to be zero. It may also be appropriate where the roll or potential roll is very low and the authority considers the only other option to be closure. However, in circumstances where a school is mothballed rather than closed and some children and young people remain in the catchment area, this decision should be taken in consultation with the parents involved, and the possibility should be raised as early as possible, in order to ensure that families can understand the options open to them. Mothballing should not be a way of denying parents access to the statutory consultation process required under the 2010 Act and if the majority of parents oppose mothballing, it would be appropriate to move to statutory consultation on closure as soon as possible.

And to your last question, the recommendation to close the school would rest with Dumfries and Galloway Council following the consultation process.

I hope this helps answer your questions however please feel free to come back to me should you wish to.

18.11	CCC	JT	<p>Re school heating</p> <p>Carsphairn Community Council has received reports that the heating has been turned off and that the water has been drained in Carsphairn School.</p> <p>Following discussions early in the year with Carsphairn Community Council, the PTC and yourself regarding potential mothballing, we were led to believe that the school would be heated during the winter months to maintain the contents and fabric of the building</p> <p>Can you please let us know what the current situation is.</p>
20.11	JT	CCC	<p>Thank you for your email. I have asked Property Services about this and am advised that draining the building ensures that there is little risk of pipes bursting and causing damage to the building.</p> <p>This is a better option than leaving water in the pipes. I trust this makes sense.</p>
2020			<p>Carsphairn CC expected a review of the mothballing in early spring 2020 as agreed at the meeting on 28 February 2019, instead we received the below on 24.02.20</p>
24.2	JT	CCC	<p>I am emailing to inform you that it is intended that a paper will be presented to our Skills, Education & Learning Committee on the 17th March 2020 to seek Members' approval to commence a Statutory Consultation on the closure of Carsphairn School. Should you wish to discuss this, please don't hesitate to contact me</p>
3.3	CCC	JT	<p>[CCC used the bold text in this email to re-inforce significant points]</p> <p>Thank you for your email to Carsphairn Community Council regarding the seeking of Members' approval to commence a Statutory Consultation on the closure of Carsphairn School.</p> <p>We would like to draw your attention to the following regarding 'mothballing' which you sent us last March:</p> <p>the Statutory Guidance from the Schools (Consultation) (Scotland) Act 2010:</p> <p>Schools (Consultation) (Scotland) Act 2010 – Statutory Guidance</p> <p>Mothballing</p> <p>63. In considering alternatives to closure, authorities may choose to consider "mothballing" a school (or a stage of education or a nursery class at a school). This is a temporary closure which does not lead to a consultation under the 2010 Act. It is only appropriate in very restricted circumstances. When a school roll falls very low, the authority and/or community may consider that the school is not presently viable but do not wish to close it immediately because there is a reasonable prospect that the number of pupils in the area will increase such that it should be re-opened in the future.</p> <p>64. It is vital that this flexibility to close a school for a temporary period is not used to undermine the requirements under the 2010 Act to consult on all school closure proposals. Mothballing is only appropriate for a temporary period and should be subject to regular review, at least annually, against the same requirements which led to the original decision to mothball the school (or stage of education). 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. The condition of the school building and cost of maintaining the mothballed provision will also be relevant.</p> <p>65. A school can be mothballed where the school roll has fallen to zero and</p>

		<p>continues to be zero. It may also be appropriate where the roll or potential roll is very low and the authority considers the only other option to be closure. However, in circumstances where a school is mothballed rather than closed and some children and young people remain in the catchment area, this decision should be taken in consultation with the parents involved, and the possibility should be raised as early as possible, in order to ensure that families can understand the options open to them. Mothballing should not be a way of denying parents access to the statutory consultation process required under the 2010 Act and if the majority of parents oppose mothballing, it would be appropriate to move to statutory consultation on closure as soon as possible.</p> <p>We strongly oppose this rush to consultation on closure which has come quite unexpectedly.</p> <p>We understand from 64 above: ‘Mothballing is only appropriate for a temporary period and should be subject to regular review, at least annually, against the same requirements which led to the original decision to mothball the school (or stage of education)’ that the current situation should be reviewed.</p> <p>We were going to request an annual review, but certainly not a consultation on closure.</p> <p>With regard to 65 ‘some children and young people remain in the catchment area’, this is the case in Carsphairn. Currently one Carsphairn child travels 20 miles to Dalry as there is no option and there is another child, due to start Primary 1 this August, whose parents moved to Carsphairn primarily as there was a school in the village.</p> <p>There are also younger children who would be attending nursery in Carsphairn if one existed, and other parents who strongly express their desire to send their children to Carsphairn school when they reach school age. This also brings in the matter of the absence of a Carsphairn nursery which we have discussed.</p> <p>We draw your attention to the following Scottish Government policy regarding pre-school education : ‘From August 2020 all 3-5 year olds will be entitled to 1140 hours per year of funded (free) early learning and childcare. This is a significant increase from the current 600 hours’. We take this to mean that early learning and childcare hours should be easily accessible to children within Carsphairn. We believe that Carsphairn Nursery was closed without undergoing ‘proper’ procedures.</p> <p>We understand that the Council is obliged to consider budget constraints, but school closure does not only involve the complete lack of educational facilities for Carsphairn primary age children, unless they travel in some cases 20 miles to and 20 miles back from Dalry in all weathers, but the seriously adverse repercussions on the social cohesion of the community of Carsphairn. The school concerts, fetes and other school projects bring the community together to support and encourage our children and we are already experiencing the gap in community sharing caused by the absence of our school. Carsphairn is and always will be a ‘special’ case owing to it’s geographical and upland location. We also point out the health and safety issues of young children travelling up to 20 miles to attend school in all weathers.</p> <p>There is a poor future for Carsphairn community without a school to attract younger families with children to settle in the Carsphairn area. The school was our most effective asset to encourage ‘new blood’ to Carsphairn.</p> <p>We request the cancellation of what you propose and instead the annual review on mothballing we were expecting.</p> <p>As Carsphairn is in a remote location [64] we would expect an annual review for a minimum of 3 years.</p> <p>The review should take place in Carsphairn school, the most relevant place to discuss the school’s future.</p>
4.3	JT	<p>CCC</p> <p>Thank you for your communication. Should Members agree to commence Statutory Consultation on closure these comments will be included. Following</p>

			the outcome of the Committee meeting, we will arrange to communicate this directly with you in determining any next steps?
17.3			Skills, Education & Learning Committee meeting – to agree to commence the statutory consultation process for closure
30.3	Galloway News reporter	CCC	Here's the audio recording of the meeting - the link should take you directly to the start of the item on Carsphairn. https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=nao34ZXTuME&t=6058s
19.7	CCC	JT, all cllrs on Education c'ttee	<p>Carsphairn Community Council wish to raise two important issues regarding our school: the consultation for closure on 17 March this year, and how the school building might be utilised when the schools return next month.</p> <p>The decision to reach closure was based on incorrect information provided at the 17 March meeting [see below]. We understand all children will return to full-time education next month, but if part-time schooling takes place owing to covid-19 restrictions, the Carsphairn school building should be utilised as we are aware social distancing and other measures may be taken to help ensure the safety of pupils and staff. The building [we assume] is more or less ready for use and is certainly fit for purpose. This may also mean that primary school children living in the Carsphairn catchment area can receive their education locally, including a new P1 child whose parents moved to Carsphairn village as there was a school here. We suggest that children from Dalry and possibly Kells could also attend Carsphairn if part-time schooling takes place as we assume the school bus will be travelling to Carsphairn anyway. This should already be part of the contingency plan, but if not, would help solve some issues of lack of suitable classroom space if the need arises.</p> <p><u>Consultation for closure:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> we received no response at all to our letter of 3 March this year in response to your email below [of 24.2.20]. This is despite the fact your email stated 'Should you wish to discuss this, please don't hesitate to contact me'. [JT did actually respond 4.3.20, see above.] we received no information as to the outcome of the meeting from you. We quote from your summary of 4 March 2019 of our meeting of 28 February: 'It was agreed that the most appropriate way forward was to mothball the school and to review the arrangement within the next twelve months. This could only last for up to a maximum of three years'. <p>We were therefore expecting a review as agreed by you to take place earlier this year, not consultation for closure. We only learnt of the decision apparently reached by the skills, education & learning committee on 17 March, when a Galloway News reporter sent us the recording of the meeting.</p> <p>We wish to comment on the disappointing lack of support during the meeting, especially as the closure of a school in as remote an area as Carsphairn has far reaching repercussions on the community's sustainability, quite apart from the removal of the local schooling that Carsphairn children are entitled to.</p> <p>More importantly, if, as seems to be the case, the decision to commence statutory consultation on the closure of our school was agreed, we maintain it was based on erroneous information ie it was stated at the meeting that current information indicated there are only 2 children attending or who would attend Carsphairn Primary in the Carsphairn catchment area in the next five years. This is absolutely not the case.</p>

			<p>The decision was taken on the basis of incorrect information and consequently is surely invalid. We therefore request that this decision is rescinded on legitimate grounds. Mothballing for at least 3 years for the primary school should be followed as agreed last year.</p> <p>To put the record straight – there are currently 4 to 5 children aged 3 and 4 years resident now in the Carsphairn catchment area including 3 relative newcomers, all eligible and entitled to early learning in Carsphairn. The parents of these nursery aged children have expressed a desire to attend Carsphairn nursery, We state again these children are entitled to be educated in Carsphairn. It is patently unjust that these children are being denied nursery education close to their homes.</p> <p>Furthermore there are at least 5 children younger than those alluded to above, in the catchment area, whose parents would wish them to access Early Learning and Childcare provision at Carsphairn prior to their entry to Primary 1 at Carsphairn Primary School. We stress that Carsphairn School is ideal for nursery aged children – fully equipped classroom, plenty of outdoor space, two good sized sheds and classroom doors that open straight out into the outside play area. Social distancing would present few problems if this measure is required.</p> <p>We request that investigation into the reopening of at least Carsphairn nursery be instigated – there is clearly a demand now for early learning provision in Carsphairn. An operating nursery would also be an encouragement for younger families to settle in Carsphairn and a hope for Carsphairn community’s future.</p> <p>We still remain perplexed as to why the nursery was closed in the first place. Your explanations after our initial meeting last year were not satisfactory. Why was Carsphairn Nursery closed all those years ago without any proper community consultation?</p> <p>We look forward to your response.</p>
1.8	JT	CCC	<p>Thank you for your email dated 19th July 2020 to members of the Education & Learning Committee and further email sent to the Director, Skills, Education & Learning on the 29 July, concerning the proposal to carry out a consultation on the future of Carsphairn Primary School.</p> <p>I understand your concerns around the process but I wish to reassure you that the recommendations agreed at Education and Learning Committee on 17th March 2020 only gave approval to commence the statutory consultation process and not to proceed in any way with the closure of the school. This agreement was a necessary step to meet the legal requirements of the School (Consultation) (Scotland) Act 2010 (updated in 2014) and is the statutory method we must use to consult further with you on the future of the school.</p> <p>With regard to your queries around the accuracy of the data used within the report, this information was based on the latest projected roll information available to us at the time of preparing the report at the start of the year. This data is collated using our current nursery and school enrolment data along with birth figures received from the NHS, on an annual basis. It is recognised that this information can vary throughout the year, as is demonstrated by your statement that there “are currently 4 to 5 children aged 3 and 4 years resident now within the Carsphairn catchment area” but that this figure includes “3 relative newcomers”. The commencement of the statutory consultation process would require us to collate the latest quantitative and qualitative</p>

			<p>information to provide to Elected Members prior to the Education and Learning Committee making any further decisions on the future of the school.</p> <p>I appreciate your suggestion that the Carsphairn School building could be used should we have a need to return to a blended learning approach, however, that would not be feasible due to several issues. The part time schooling model is more difficult to implement due to several areas where we have limited capacity, e.g. cleaning, transport, equipment, catering, teaching and learning support staff and janitorial staff; and we would not be able to spread these resources further to accommodate opening another building where this is not required to meet the needs of pupils. A significant amount of planning, risk assessment and preparation is required to re-open any of our buildings and this would be far greater for a building that has been mothballed for the duration of the Carsphairn School building. We have also removed the majority of resources and equipment from the school temporarily for security and data protection reasons, and this would need to be returned to the building to commence any teaching. Unfortunately the factors above would far outweigh any benefit to staff or pupils in re-opening the building at this difficult time, for this purpose.</p> <p>Due to the significant restrictions on the Council as a result of COVID we have not been in a position to commence this statutory consultation process, but we will be in touch to discuss the timescales and arrangements for this as soon as we are in a position to confirm this.</p>
5.10	CCC	JT	<p>Thank you for your response of 1st August, 2020. We apologise for our delayed response.</p> <p>However, you have failed to respond fully to the issues raised:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. As the school is mothballed, may we have the annual review, as agreed, when it is safe to do so? 2. With regard to your 3rd paragraph, obviously the data collated using current nursery and school enrolment data along with birth figures received from the NHS, on an annual basis, was incorrect. There are currently 5 children, some of whom are very young, who would attend Carsphairn school and nursery in the future. With the possible exception of one, all the others were permanently resident in Carsphairn before you informed us of the consultation for closure meeting in March this year. 3. The required review will clarify the number of Carsphairn children requiring education at Carsphairn school/nursery. 4. We will continue to push for the re-opening of the nursery. No satisfactory explanations were given for it's closure, and we now have eligible pre-school/early learning children in Carsphairn who would take advantage of the facilities to which they are entitled. 5. The agreement to start the consultation for closure was based on erroneous information and should be rescinded.
7.10	Cllr Fairbairn	CCC	<p>From Cllr Fairbairn – Education Committee member whom Cllr Drysdale alerted to our email to John Thin immediately above</p>

			<p>I spoke with The Director Gillian Brydson this morning and reinforced the current concerns the community of Carsphairn has in relation to the school estate. Gillian assured me that there would be a response in relation to your concerns! I believe however the bulk of the current situation lies with Education Scotland. Please feel free to contact me at any point and also include me in any relevant communication.</p>
8.10	JT	CCC and ward councillors	<p>Thank you for your email regarding Carsphairn Primary School. As we are continuing to respond to emerging Covid -19 issues I intended writing to the Community Council to explain that we do not currently have the capacity to carry out the school closure consultation for Carsphairn Primary. This means that the mothballing will continue, with the intention that we commence our consultation process at the start of the next school session, depending on the situation with regards Covid-19 at that time. The report taken to Committee in March was not seeking any decision on closure but was simply a necessary step in the statutory process to allow for us to carry out a review of the future of the school. No further review work or formal consultation on the future of the school will take place until we are in a position to proceed, in line with the legislation. At that point a full review of the current position will take place.</p> <p>I trust this provides helpful comment.</p>
2021			
5.5			<p>A resident sent CCC the following BBC News online article which they had spotted. No one in Carsphairn had been made aware of this timetable [nor it seems had the head of the Glenkens schools cluster]. At no time was CCC made aware of this consultation, no notice of this meeting was given by JT.</p> <p>‘Carsphairn Primary closure timetable drawn up Published 4 May 2021 A timetable has been drawn up to permanently close a school which has had no pupils for the past two years. Carsphairn Primary in Dumfries and Galloway has been mothballed since the summer of 2019. <u>A report to councillors</u> said there had been no placing requests to attend the school since then. The pandemic meant no progress was made in a consultation on closing the school last year but a fresh timetable has been drawn up to start in August. The primary was mothballed nearly two years ago and staff relocated to other sites. A review of demographics in the area has also suggested there would be "no future significant demand" for the school. Pupils in the catchment area now attend Dalry Primary - about 10 miles (16km) away - which is also predicted to see a fall in school roll in years to come. The council report said that even if the site in Carsphairn was to be reopened its projected pupil numbers would be "single figures or still at zero". On that basis, councillors are being asked to agree to begin a consultation on closing the school permanently later this year. Any such move would have to conform with legislation regarding the closure of small rural schools.’</p>

11.5	CCC	JT, all educ cttee mbs	<p>Carsphairn CC have been made aware of the meeting on 13 May for the Skills, Education and Learning committee to agree to start formal consultation to close Carsphairn school.</p> <p>We have read the report on which education committee members will base their decision and wish to comment on this report, some points of which are incorrect and with which we disagree. Please find the report with our comments attached.</p> <p>We request information on how parents can enrol their child at Carsphairn from now on. On making enquiries, it seems to be difficult if not impossible which should clearly not be the case. Potential parents may already have been discouraged or will be without this information.</p> <p>This report with CCC comments is attached – ‘2nd Report’</p>
Tel 15 May 2021	Cllr Drysdale	CCC	<p>Cllr Drysdale is one of our ward cllrs and is an education committee member.</p> <p>Telephone conversation with Cllr Drysdale informing CCC that the decision to start the closure consultation had been postponed to the 22 June meeting [as CCC had been involved in lengthy transport issues relating to a wind farm development which temporarily diverted CCC’s attention from school issues].</p>
18.5	CCC	Cllr Drysdale	<p>Having finally listened to the meeting on 13 May re the school, it seems as though an 'informal meeting' will be arranged to discuss the issues further? At least that's what I understood.</p> <p>Should I email Ingrid Gemmell - I feel we have so little time and the June meeting will be upon us in no time at all!</p> <p>Thanks for your support</p>
19.5	Cllr Drysdale	CCC	<p>I have met with John Thin today & literally just mailed him with my understanding as to the next steps. When I get this back I shall copy it to you for the CC. I will then be arranging a meeting with myself & the other ward members, alongside Ingrid. After that we will arrange a meeting with the CC to progress with the community consultation. I hope that this alleviates your worries. Please forward this to the CC.</p>
19.5	CCC	Cllr Drysdale	<p>Thanks Pauline CC councillors copied in</p> <p>It would be great to have a live meeting with ward members if at all possible, socially distanced etc.</p> <p>Are you able to find out how a parent enrolls their child at Carsphairn - it's not closed yet! If there have been any requests, we won't know about them as all such requests go straight to Dalry where we believe enquirers are told there is no school at Carsphairn. I quote from John Thin's summary of our first meeting with him at the end of February 2019 when we agreed mothballing was the way forward [the head of the Glenkens cluster apparently does not know how to go about it]:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • If new pupils arrived between now and the summer they would enrol at Carsphairn if that was their choice. (This would be dependant on there being availability of suitable staff). • If new pupils arrived after the summer (i.e. when the school was mothballed) then they could request to be enrolled at the school. (This would be dependant on there being availability of suitable staff).
21.5	Cllr Drysdale	EMESmailbox@dumgal.gov.uk	<p>PUBLIC</p> <p>FAO EDUCATION</p> <p>Please could the education team officially respond to the query below from the representative of the Community Council?</p>

24.5	EM ES	Cllr Drysdale to CCC	<p>In response to the enquiry made by [REDACTED] I have been advised as follows:</p> <p>1. If new pupils arrived between now and the summer they would enrol at Carsphairn if that was their choice. (This would be dependent on there being availability of suitable staff). RESPONSE: Currently pupils wishing to enrol at Carsphairn will be directed to Dalry School.</p> <p>2. If new pupils arrived after the summer (i.e. when the school was mothballed) then they could request to be enrolled at the school. (This would be dependent on there being availability of suitable staff). RESPONSE: If pupils arrive after the summer and wish to enrol at Carsphairn they will be directed to Dalry School.</p> <p>The above arrangements will continue until a decision is made as to the future of the school.</p>
24.5	Cllr Drysdale	CCC	<p>Please see the response [above]. To be fair they would have to say that they wated Carsphairn School. I shall chase the ward officer for the meeting regarding the new timing plan. At the June Education meeting the extended timing plan will be presented. Please don't panic though as I think we have the autumn to organise the community consultation. The most important thing is ensuring that everyone starts talking & throwing some ideas into the pot. I have had a look at the floor plan & it certainly looks to be a great layout offering countless opportunities using windfarm funds or other in the meantime! I hope to arrange a visit through the relevant officer.</p>
24.5	CCC	Cllr Drysdale	<p>thanks for keeping us posted. So basically, potential parents can't enrol their child at Carsphairn! Seems a catch 22 situation.</p>
1st week June 2021	CCC	FOI enquiry service	<p>Request to FOI enquiry service re costs of mothballing the school I am a Community Councillor in Carsphairn and would be grateful if you could supply a comprehensive breakdown of all the costs involved in maintaining Carsphairn Primary School during the period it has been "mothballed" since the summer holidays of 2019.</p>
6.6.21	FOI enquiry service	CCC via a CCC cllr	<p>Email from a CC cllr with forwarded response from FOI unit</p> <p>This is the reply to my FOI enquiry re costs of keeping the school mothballed for nearly 2 years. Some of these costs will need scrutinising further but it seems to indicate about £50 a week.</p> <p>----- Forwarded message ----- From: <FOI@dumgal.gov.uk> Date: Thu, 3 Jun 2021 at 12:33 Subject: OFFICIAL: Case Reference 5160403 Carsphairn Primary School Costs To: [REDACTED], <FOIResponses@dumgal.gov.uk></p> <p>Please find below the Council's response to your request 5160403 which was received on 13/05/2021. Details of request: A comprehensive breakdown of all the costs involved in maintaining Carsphairn Primary School during the period it has been "mothballed" since the summer holidays of 2019. Response:</p>

			<p>Breakdown of Costs:</p> <p>Repairs - Emergency 821.72</p> <p>Rates Metered Water 758.73</p> <p>Refuse Chg - Internal Contract 737.64</p> <p>Health & Safety Legionella 512.32</p> <p>Hygiene Supplies/Disposals 51.96</p> <p>Other classroom materials 416.00</p> <p>H&S Gas Appliances 256.50</p> <p>H&S Asbestos Management 97.06</p> <p>Photocopying 142.27</p> <p>Pest Control 164.84</p> <p>TV Licences 154.50</p> <p>Non Corp Quarterly Telephone Bills 1.35</p> <p>Total = £4,114.89</p> <p>FOI Unit</p> <p>Dumfries and Galloway Council</p> <p>So, as I'm understanding it, those figures should be historic costs from maintaining the school since summer 2019.</p> <p>I was suspicious of items like the TV license and appreciate your comments above.</p> <p>Perhaps we should now make a CCES to establish their predicted costs into the future if the building continues in it's mothballed condition. I'd also thought it might be worth employing a surveyor to establish if the building is in a sound condition and any further "emergency" maintenance costs are expected.</p> <p>All with the intention of building a case that the costs of continuing with mothballing are so insignificant and the damage to our community caused by closure so catastrophic that, on balance, the review board should refuse the Councils request and give us 5 years to attract appropriate repopulation by creative use of the vast windfarm money expected soon.</p>
6.6.21	CCC	CCC	<p>CCC vice chair's response to FOI reply to CCC:</p> <p>Are they saying that they have still to pay all these costs even when the school is mothballed ?</p> <p>Water is turned off</p> <p>No refuse to collect</p> <p>No need for legionella tests as water is turned off</p> <p>'Hygiene supplies and disposal no supplies needed so no disposal.</p> <p>H&S gas appliances none</p> <p>Photo copying no photo copier in the school.</p> <p>Pest control that doesn't happen routinely only when there are signs of pests</p> <p>No TV signal in the school.</p> <p>Will these costs be Carsphairn School's portion of the overall school budget for these items for Dumfries & Galloway.</p>
7.6.21	CCC	Cllr Ros Surtees Education Committee member	<p>Belated thanks for speaking for our school at last month's education committee meeting.</p>

FYI we made a FOI query re costs of mothballing the school, which I believe you also requested at May's committee meeting, and now have the following info:

Please find below the Council's response to your request 5160403 which was received on 13/05/2021.

Details of request: A comprehensive breakdown of all the costs involved in maintaining Carsphairn Primary School during the period it has been "mothballed" since the summer holidays of 2019.

Response:

Breakdown of Costs:

Repairs - Emergency 821.72

Rates Metered Water 758.73

Refuse Chg - Internal Contract 737.64

Health & Safety Legionella 512.32

Hygiene Supplies/Disposals 51.96

Other classroom materials 416.00

H&S Gas Appliances 256.50

H&S Asbestos Management 97.06

Photocopying 142.27

Pest Control 164.84

TV Licences 154.50

Non Corp Quarterly Telephone Bills 1.35

Total = £4,114.89

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Some of these costs will need scrutinising further but it seems to indicate about £50 a week. We've worked out that's nearly 2 years - Aug 2019 to now. However we maintain that these costs are possibly incorrect:

Water is turned off

No refuse to collect

No need for legionella tests as water is turned off

'Hygiene supplies and disposal no supplies needed so no disposal.

H&S gas appliances none

Photo copying no photo copier in the school.

Pest control that doesn't happen routinely only when there are signs of pests

No TV signal in the school.

Will these costs be Carsphairn School's portion of the overall school budget for these items for Dumfries & Galloway.

On the basis of these costs which we question, we would hope to build a case where the costs of continuing with mothballing are so insignificant and the damage to our community caused by closure so catastrophic that, on balance, the review board should refuse the Council's request and give us 5 years to attract appropriate repopulation by creative use of the vast windfarm money expected soon.

We have frequently requested the annual review that we were expecting when we agreed to mothball in Feb/March 2019 but no mention of this review [for at least 3

			<p>years annually] has been forthcoming, rather a jump to agree to start consultation for closure.</p> <p>It also seems impossible to enrol a child in Carsphairn if a parent wished to. We will have a few nursery age children by the start of the new school year and currently it looks as though they'll be denied ELC at Carsphairn which is of course their school of choice.</p> <p>Pauline Drysdale informs us that a meeting is being arranged with the community but we're still waiting notification of this..</p> <p>It would be helpful to us if you are also aware of mothballing costs.</p> <p>I wonder if it's worth sending these mothballing costs to all the education committee councillors?</p> <p>No response from Cllr Surtees</p>
15.6.2 1	CCC	Cllr Drysdale	<p>still awaiting notice of the meeting with the community - I quote from your email of 24 May: 'I shall chase Ingrid up to organise a meeting regarding this'.</p> <p>Apparently there has been "informal engagement with the Carsphairn community Ward Members and Ward worker has taken place since Education and Learning Committee on 13 May 2021" which is of little use to the actual Carsphairn community. We've been waiting for a meeting date between CCC/the community and our ward officers [and an education committee rep apart from you?] before the June education committee meet which you assured me would happen.</p> <p>What was the point of putting off the proposed agreement to start consultation for closure if we cannot have a meeting to discuss the issues?</p> <p>With the next meeting of the committee on the 22nd June, where is our input!? It really seems quite clear to us that the education dept have already made up their minds.</p> <p>We made a FOI query re costs of mothballing the school to date and the below came back [in italics], followed by our thoughts on these 'costs':</p> <p><i>Please find below the Council's response to your request 5160403 which was received on 13/05/2021.</i></p> <p><i>Details of request: A comprehensive breakdown of all the costs involved in maintaining Carsphairn Primary School during the period it has been "mothballed" since the summer holidays of 2019.</i></p> <p><i>Response:</i></p> <p><i>Breakdown of Costs:</i></p> <p><i>Repairs - Emergency 821.72</i></p> <p><i>Rates Metered Water 758.73</i></p> <p><i>Refuse Chg - Internal Contract 737.64</i></p> <p><i>Health & Safety Legionella 512.32</i></p> <p><i>Hygiene Supplies/Disposals 51.96</i></p> <p><i>Other classroom materials 416.00</i></p> <p><i>H&S Gas Appliances 256.50</i></p> <p><i>H&S Asbestos Management 97.06</i></p> <p><i>Photocopying 142.27</i></p> <p><i>Pest Control 164.84</i></p> <p><i>TV Licences 154.50</i></p> <p><i>Non Corp Quarterly Telephone Bills 1.35</i></p> <p><i>Total = £4,114.89</i></p>

			<p>and our thoughts re the above list: Water is turned off No refuse to collect No need for legionella tests as water is turned off 'Hygiene supplies and disposal no supplies needed so no disposal. H&S gas appliances none Photo copying no photo copier in the school. Pest control that doesn't happen routinely only when there are signs of pests No TV signal in the school. Will these costs be Carsphairn School's portion of the overall school budget for these items for Dumfries & Galloway.</p> <p>But currently we hope to build a case showing that the costs of continuing with mothballing are so insignificant and the damage to our community caused by closure so catastrophic that, on balance, the review board should refuse the Councils request and give us 5 years [maybe 3 years or at least much more time] to attract appropriate repopulation by creative use of the vast windfarm money expected soon.</p> <p>Please can this meeting about the school involving the community be arranged please asap? We feel pretty let down by the situation which is different now as Carsphairn will have access to large amounts of windfarm community benefit, some of which could be used to creatively 'solve' the issue of DGC wanting to close the school against the wishes of the community and the preschool children wanting to enrol in Carsphairn nursery from the new school year.</p>
15.6.2 1	Cllr Drysdale	CCC	<p>We did meet last week with Ingrid Gemmil the ward manager and John Thin Head of Education. At this meeting it was concurred that between us a report would go to Education and Learning Committee on 22nd June to ask members to agree to the revised statutory closure timeline. This was what the community requested and I suggest that it's advisable that we await the result of next week's Education Committee (the papers for this meeting are now public and on the Council's website) until we meet again with the community to discuss the next steps forward.</p>
15.6.2 1	CCC	Cllr Drysdale	<p>Thanks Pauline</p> <p>I copy below from your email to me of 19 May: <i>'I have met with John Thin today & literally just mailed him with my understanding as to the next steps. When I get this back I shall copy it to you for the CC. I will then be arranging a meeting with myself & the other ward members, alongside Ingrid. After that we will arrange a meeting with the CC to progress with the community consultation. I hope that this alleviates your worries. Please forward this to the CC.'</i></p> <p>Clearly CCC have received none of what we have been waiting for ie nothing about 'the next steps' and we would have wanted to know what was concurred at the meeting with Ingrid and JT. What is the reason we were not informed of any of this activity - it is our community that will be seriously affected by decisions taken above our heads.</p> <p>So no meeting with the community has been arranged despite 'we will arrange a meeting with the CC to progress with the community consultation'. We requested this to take place before the June education committee meeting.</p>

			<p>I have looked at the revised statutory closure timeline. And we disagree that 'This was what the community requested', far from it. We strongly oppose any proposal to agree to start any consultation for closure.</p> <p>There has been therefore no community consultation and decisions have been made without any reference to the community whatsoever.</p> <p>CCC has not received any acknowledgement whatsoever to the points raised in response to the report presented to the education committee for the May meeting. A lot of work was put into our responses and many valid points were made, but we have been ignored.</p> <p>It seems clear closure has already been decided - a short sighted decision that will result in some children living north of the village a journey of over 20 miles to Dalry [who are already referring children it appears to Kells primary owing to the unprecedented number of enquiries for schooling in the Glenkens in which Carsphairn plays no part].</p> <p>Carsphairn CC remain highly dissatisfied with the way the future of Carsphairn school has been handled. Without our school the sustainability of our community is seriously undermined.</p>
23.6.2 1	Cllr Drysdale	CCC	<p>Re Education Committee – the extended timelines for the consultation were agreed yesterday and I spoke out as necessary. That gives yourselves & the community the summer to consult and get feedback & any relevant views from the community regarding the school. I can't co-ordinate this but I believe that the ward officers would be happy to facilitate or assist with any consultations you might want to hold before the October one. Do let me know if I can help in any way re co ordinating this.</p>
17.9.2 1	JT	CCC, ward cllrs, glenkens cluster head, education committee members	<p>Subject: Statutory Closure Consultation Timeline for Carsphairn Primary School</p> <p>Dear Education & Learning Committee Member/ Ward Member/ Community Council Member/ Headteacher</p> <p>At Education & Learning Committee on the 22 June 2021, Members agreed the revised statutory closure consultation timeline for Carsphairn Primary School. Due to the ongoing challenges due to COVID-19, it is not appropriate to progress with a Public Meeting which was due in November 2021, which is a statutory requirement of the process. Therefore it is our intention to bring a further paper to Education & Learning Committee in January 2022 with an updated Timeline.</p> <p>We understand this leaves uncertainty for the community but hope that this course of action provides reassurance that due processes will be undertaken when appropriate.</p> <p>Kind Regards</p> <p><i>John</i></p> <p>John Thin Head of Education (Learning & Resources), Education & Learning Directorate</p>
1.9.22	JT	CCC	<p>Dear Consultee,</p> <p>Carsphairn Primary School and Nursery – Statutory Consultation</p> <p>Statutory Consultation Period: Monday 5th September to Friday 14th October 2022</p>

			<p>Dumfries and Galloway Council is proposing, subject to the outcome of the statutory consultation process, to discontinue education provision at Carsphairn Primary School, reassigning its catchment area to that of Dalry Primary School.</p> <p>This Proposal has been issued by Dumfries and Galloway Council Education and Learning Directorate in accordance with the Schools (Consultation) (Scotland) Act 2010 as amended and Children and Young People (Scotland) Act 2014. Dumfries and Galloway Council now wishes to seek views on this proposal from interested parties.</p> <p>Copies of the published proposal document will be available from Thursday 1st September at the following locations:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Dumfries and Galloway Council Headquarters, 109-115 English Street, Dumfries, DG1 2DD • Carsphairn Shop and Tearoom, Carsphairn, Castle Douglas, DG& 3TQ • Dalry Primary School, Kirkland Street, St John's Town of Dalry, DG7 3UX • Dumfries and Galloway Council website: dumgal.gov.uk/consultations <p>Any written representations must be received by 5pm on Friday 14th October 2022 (clearly stating the capacity in which the correspondent is expressing their view) and should be sent to:</p> <p>Statutory Consultation – Carsphairn Primary School Dumfries and Galloway Council Militia House 109/111 English Street Dumfries and Galloway Council DG1 2HR</p> <p>Or by email to: statutoryconsultation@dumgal.gov.uk</p>
14.9.22	statutory consultation/ Louise Rae		<p>Good Morning, You'll hopefully be aware that we are consulting on the discontinuation of education provision at Carsphairn Primary School and Nursery, re-assigning its catchment area to that of Dalry Primary School.</p> <p>We'd be keen to meet with the community council in advance of the public meeting on the 29th September.</p> <p>If there's a suitable date/time for us to meet please can you let me know, ideally in person but more than happy to consider other means.</p> <p>Note: CCC did not meet in advance of the public meeting</p>
23.9.22	JT	CCC	<p>Identical email to that of 1.9.22 above save for the Statutory Consultation Period: now Monday 5th September to Friday 4th November 2022</p>

Appendix 1:

Report [in italics] authored by JT advising Education committee meeting on 17 March 2020 to agree that the statutory closure consultation process should be undertaken during 2020, in relation to Carsphairn Primary School and Nursery class:

'1st Report'

CCC commented on the report in an email of 19.7.20 above.

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RURAL SCHOOL PROVISION – CARSPHAIRN PRIMARY SCHOOL

1. Reason for Report

Carsphairn Primary School operated as part of a partnership with Kells Primary School and Dalry Primary School. The school roll at census day in September 2018 was given as three pupils. Since the census date, the roll diminished until the last remaining two pupils left at the end of June 2019 to attend secondary school.

This report requests Members to agree that a statutory closure consultation is undertaken in relation to Carsphairn Primary School and Nursery class.

2. Recommendations

Members are asked to:

2.1 note that Carsphairn Primary School has had no pupils on the school roll since August 2019; and

2.2 agree that the statutory closure consultation process should be undertaken during 2020, in relation to Carsphairn Primary School and Nursery class.

3. Considerations

Background

3.1 Since the summer holidays of 2019, the school has been 'mothballed' with all remaining equipment relocated to ensure its safety. The building has been secured and any remaining staff temporarily relocated until a decision on the future of the school is made.

3.2 There have been no further Placing Requests since the school was 'mothballed' and a review of the projected demographics has indicated no future significant demand for the school in Carsphairn. At present the pupils who live in the Carsphairn catchment choose to attend Dalry Primary School. Concerns regarding the upkeep of the fabric of the building have recently been raised by the local community. Officers would now suggest that it would be prudent to commence formal consultation with the local community on closing the school on a permanent basis.

3.3 For the avoidance of doubt, this report does not ask Members to agree to the closure of Carsphairn Primary School and Nursery class, but to agree to the commencement of the statutory consultation process prior to making any further decision.

Rationale

3.4 The proposal to close the school is being advanced for the following reasons:

- No children have attended Carsphairn Primary School since the end of the 2018-19 academic session

- Pupils within Carsphairn Primary's catchment are attending Dalry Primary School.

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- The Nursery class in Carsphairn School has been not been in operation since 2011/12 due to very low numbers.

- Current population figures within the school catchment indicate a maximum school roll of around two pupils over the next 5 years. These children could be accommodated at Dalry Primary School A school roll of this size provides significant impediments to the successful implementation of Curriculum for Excellence, and

· The neighbouring school, Dalry Primary School, is itself projected to experience a falling roll over the next few years.

Legislative Background

3.5 Members may be aware that, in 2011, the Scottish Government requested Councils adhered to a voluntary moratorium on rural school closures. This was to allow a Rural Schools Commission to investigate the issues surrounding the Schools (Consultation) (Scotland) Act which came into effect in 2010. The legislation was revised, and an updated version came into law in 2014, alongside updated guidance documentation.

3.6 If Elected Members decide to proceed with the commencement of the statutory consultation, this would be within the context of all applicable legislation. Carsphairn Primary School is a rural school within the terms of the Schools (Consultation) (Scotland) Act 2010 (the school is classed as “very remote rural”) and the Council has had to consider the provisions of the Act, in particular the special regard required for rural school closures.

Educational Benefits

3.7 Pupils from the Carsphairn catchment derive educational benefits from their current attendance at Dalry Primary School. Formalising the current arrangement that has arisen through parental choice would provide several benefits.

3.8 Working with others across a wide range of settings is one of the core elements on the modern school curriculum. This includes planning and carrying out projects in small groups, sharing tasks and responsibilities and being ready and willing to learn from others. Dalry Primary School has sufficient pupils to allow children to work collaboratively on various topics and activities. Pupils are also afforded the opportunity to become skilled in social interaction within a similarly aged age peer group of a sufficient size. Collaborative working within the classroom and group musical/artistic and sports opportunities all benefit from the larger numbers of pupils at Dalry Primary School.

Examination of alternatives to the proposal

3.9 In bringing forward this report, Officers have examined the school projections for Carsphairn Primary School and have considered the viable alternatives to closure with regard to:

- the educational benefits
- the effect of the community
- the impact of different travel arrangements

3.10 The alternatives to closure would be:

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· To re-open Carsphairn Primary School and Nursery class either with its current catchment area or an extended catchment area, or:

- To continue with the current “mothballing” arrangement.

Re-opening of Carsphairn Primary School with its current catchment

3.11 The school roll is currently zero due to a combination of a lack of primary school aged children and parental choice. It is clear from the projected school roll figures that, if the school were to be re-opened, it would remain a school with a total roll in single figures or still at zero. There are several educational issues that arise from such a low school roll figure as referred to above.

3.12 If the school were to re-open the potential pupils would have shorter journey times to school than they do at present, should they choose to return to their catchment

school.

3.13 It is thought that the school re-opening would be welcomed by the local community however the issues over the long-term sustainability of the school would likely remain.

Re-opening of Carsphairn Primary School and Nursery class with its current catchment

3.14 Any extension to the catchment area for Carsphairn Primary School could only come at the expense of the neighbouring catchments for Dalry Primary School and Moniaive Primary School. As these schools are themselves projected to see falling rolls, any expansion of the Carsphairn catchment risks undermining the future viability of the neighbouring schools and may still result in a roll at Carsphairn that is not viable. This would mean that the educational benefits outlined in the paragraph above still cannot be achieved.

3.15 Any such move to redefine the catchments could also cause potential disruption to the pupils within the current neighbouring catchment schools.

3.16 Carsphairn lies approximately six miles from the boundary of the region of Dumfries and Galloway and, as such, represents one of our more outlying schools. Any amendment to the catchment of Moniaive Primary School to make Carsphairn sustainable would result in increased travelling for affected pupils. The majority of Dalry Primary's current roll comes from within the town itself, therefore an amendment to their catchment of a large enough size to make Carsphairn viable might be difficult to achieve.

3.17 As stated above, it is believed that the school re-opening would be welcomed by the Carsphairn community. It is unlikely to be welcomed by neighbouring communities if the realignment of the catchment boundaries to achieve this is detrimental to the viability of the school within their community.

Continuation of "mothballing"

3.18 Although it would be possible to continue with the current "mothballing" arrangement, it may not represent the best value for the taxpayer or the community. The school has been mothballed since August 2019 and there were no Placing Requests during the recent primary school enrolments in January 2020. There is no realistic prospect of a significant rise in the local population of school age children that would allow the school to become viable. "Mothballing" would also mean the continuation of the current lack of clarity regarding the future status of the school.

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3.19 Scottish Government guidance relating to the mothballing of schools makes it clear that mothballing is a temporary measure and should not be used to undermine the requirements of a statutory school closure consultation.

3.20 Current school transport arrangements would not be affected by a continuation of mothballing.

3.21 The community has raised some concerns over the future condition of the building deteriorating as a result of the current situation and these concerns may remain if the mothballing is continued.

Implications on Staffing

3.22 The staff members (teaching and non-teaching) who formerly worked at the school were relocated when the school was 'mothballed' in summer 2019. There will be no impact on staff and school management arrangements from the proposal.

3.23 The majority of the equipment within the school has been relocated to avoid any potential losses, but it is anticipated that all resources would be permanently relocated to other schools in the area were the school closure to go ahead.

3.24 Those parents who elected to relocate their children to Dalry Primary School are currently not entitled to free school transport on a long-term basis due to the voluntary

nature of their decision. By obtaining clarity on the future of Carsphairn Primary School we would then be in a position to make long term transport arrangements for all former pupils, in accordance with Council policy.

4. Governance Assurance

The Corporate Management Team and Education and Learning Management Team have been consulted and are in agreement with the terms of this report.

5. Impact Assessment

This report does not impose a change in policy or the formal adoption of a plan, policy or strategy, therefore it is not necessary to complete an Impact Assessment.

Author(s)

NAME DESIGNATION CONTACT DETAILS

John Thin Schools' Manager 64410

Approved by

NAME DESIGNATION

Gillian Brydson Director, Skills, Education & Learning

Appendices – none

Background papers - none

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Appendix 2:

Report by JT to advise/inform Education committee meetings on 13 May 2021 and 22 June 2021 re agreed consultation for closure. CCC's comments and disagreements were added to this report [in red] and were sent to JT and the education committee members on 11 May in advance of the meeting:

'2ND Report'.

No response was received from JT or any councillors on the Education & Learning Committee to CCC's comments on the report, either before or after the committee meetings on 13 May 2021 and 22 June 2021.

RURAL SCHOOL PROVISION – CARSPHAIRN PRIMARY SCHOOL

1. Reason for Report

1.1 This report provides Members with an updated position on Carsphairn Primary School which operated as part of a partnership with Kells Primary School and Dalry Primary School until August 2019 when it became mothballed due to there being no pupils attending the school.

1.2 This report also requests Members to agree the updated statutory closure consultation timeline be undertaken in relation to Carsphairn Primary School and Nursery class.

2. Recommendations

Members are asked to:

2.1 note that Carsphairn Primary School has had no pupils on the school roll since August 2019; and

2.2 agree the statutory closure consultation timeline in the **Appendix**.

3. Considerations

Background

3.1 Since the summer holidays of 2019, the school has been 'mothballed' with all remaining equipment relocated to ensure its safety. The building has been secured and any remaining staff temporarily relocated until a decision on the future of the school is made.

3.2 There have been no further Placing Requests since the school was 'mothballed' and a review of the projected demographics has indicated no future significant demand for the school in Carsphairn. At present the pupils who live in the Carsphairn catchment choose to attend Dalry Primary School. Education and Learning Committee agreed, on the 17 March 2020, to commence a formal consultation with the local community on closing the school on a permanent basis.

We report that it currently appears to be very difficult, if not impossible, to submit a placing or enrolment request for Carsphairn School. Any queries to Carsphairn school go straight to Dalry school. The Glenkens Partnership Head Teacher situated at Dalry Primary does not know how to enrol a child at Carsphairn Primary. So how would it be possible to know that there have been no Placing or Enrolment Requests for Carsphairn?

The second sentence implies that parents willingly relocated their offspring to Dalry. On the contrary - the flooding of homes in Carsphairn in 2015 resulted in at least one child being rehoused temporarily in Dalry. Although the parent drove his child to Carsphairn school for some time, it was clearly much more convenient to send his child to Dalry school which was within walking distance. Another parent took on a job outside the area so took their child out of Carsphairn as the timings for attendance were incompatible with work timings. There is also the case of a P1 child whose move to Carsphairn was largely due to the presence of Carsphairn school, which is a minute's walk away from his home. More information can be provided about this case where the parent is currently very reluctantly home-schooling his son.

We quote from the summary from the initial meeting to discuss the school's future in 2019: "It was agreed that the most appropriate way forward was to mothball the school and to review the arrangement within the next twelve months. This could only last for up to a maximum of three years". As Carsphairn is classed as 'very remote rural' the review over three years can be extended. We request again the agreed first review of the situation, especially in light of the extraordinary circumstances since March 2020.

3.3 The impact of COVID -19 meant that officers were unable to carry out a formal consultation therefore no progress was made during the academic session 2020/21.

Rationale

3.4 Members are reminded that the proposal to close the school is being advanced for the following reasons:

- No children have attended Carsphairn Primary School since the end of the 2018-19 academic session;
- Pupils within Carsphairn Primary's catchment are attending Dalry Primary School;
- Dalry Primary School is itself projected to experience a falling roll over the next few years;
- The Nursery class in Carsphairn School not been in operation since 2011/12 due to very low numbers.

We question the third point: Dalry Primary has currently received an unprecedented number of enquiries from new families either in, or hoping to move to, the area – Kells may be in a similar situation. Current and projected figures need to be taken into account, which cannot really be accurate for at least another two years as we begin to see the post-covid impact on rural living, as well as the projected covid 'baby boom'. On what are the projected demographics based? How can they be accurate in these extraordinary times without giving time for changes in demographics to become apparent over the next few years?

With regard to the Nursery, there are currently at least three children of nursery age by next August resident in Carsphairn - one family with an additional younger child moved in just before Christmas. Sending nursery-age and younger primary children on a minimum of a 20-mile round trip in all weathers to Dalry is undeniably extremely undesirable. Plans to attract new families to Carsphairn may be fruitful but without the school our plans are seriously undermined

Legislative Background

3.5 Members may be aware that, in 2011, the Scottish Government requested Councils adhered to a voluntary moratorium on rural school closures. This was to allow a Rural Schools Commission to investigate the issues surrounding the Schools (Consultation) (Scotland) Act which came into effect in 2010. The legislation was revised, and an updated version came into law in 2014, alongside updated guidance documentation.

3.6 If Elected Members decide to proceed with the commencement of the statutory consultation, this would be within the context of all applicable legislation. Carsphairn Primary School is a rural school within the terms of the Schools (Consultation) (Scotland) Act 2010 (the school is classed as "very remote rural") and the Council has had to consider the provisions of the Act, in particular the special regard required for rural school closures.

Educational Benefits

3.7 Pupils from the Carsphairn catchment derive educational benefits from their current attendance at Dalry Primary School. Formalising the current arrangement that has arisen through parental choice would provide several benefits.

3.8 Working with others across a wide range of settings is one of the core elements on the modern school curriculum. This includes planning and carrying out projects in small groups, sharing tasks and responsibilities and being ready and willing to learn from others. Dalry Primary School has sufficient pupils to allow children to work collaboratively on various topics and activities. Pupils are also afforded the opportunity to become skilled in social interaction within a similarly aged age peer group of a sufficient size. Collaborative working within the classroom and group musical/artistic and sports opportunities all benefit from the larger numbers of pupils at Dalry Primary School.

Carsphairn Primary is currently part of the Glenkens Partnership, which includes three primary schools - Dalry, Kells and Carsphairn. This enables pupils across the schools to engage in projects and activities together, benefitting from collaboration with larger numbers of children on a regular basis. This has successfully been the case for Carsphairn pupils, though the true family aspect of care and schooling experienced at Carsphairn when numbers have been low cannot be undervalued.

Please note that we do not consider a school with only two pupils to be viable, but looking to the future, we believe the school can/should be up and running again - the school has had periods in the past where numbers have dropped very low, and then within a few years risen into double figures again, and we believe this is likely to be the case again.

Examination of alternatives to the proposal

3.9 In bringing forward this report, Officers have examined the school projections for Carsphairn Primary School and have considered the viable alternatives to closure with regard to:

- the educational benefits
- the effect of the community
- the impact of different travel arrangements

3.10 The alternatives to closure would be:

- To re-open Carsphairn Primary School and Nursery class either with its current catchment area or an extended catchment area, or:
- To continue with the current “mothballing” arrangement.

Re-opening of Carsphairn Primary School with its current catchment

3.11 The school roll is currently zero due to a combination of a lack of primary school aged children and parental choice. It is clear from the projected school roll figures that, if the school were to be re-opened, it would remain a school with a total roll in single figures or still at zero. There are several educational issues that arise from such a low school roll figure as referred to above.

We do not believe that the projected school roll figures can be predicted accurately due to these unprecedented times. We propose that at least another two years are needed with Carsphairn Primary continuing to be mothballed in order to gain an insight into current trends for rural families moving to the area for accurate future projections. It is short-sighted to consider closure within the next year. We believe cost-cutting may well be playing a significant role in the consideration of closure when it is parental choice over schooling and support for a remote rural community that should be the most important factors.

3.12 If the school were to re-open the potential pupils would have shorter journey times to school than they do at present, should they choose to return to their catchment school.

3.13 It is thought that the school re-opening would be welcomed by the local community however the issues over the long-term sustainability of the school would likely remain.

Re-opening of Carsphairn Primary School and Nursery class with its current catchment

3.14 Any extension to the catchment area for Carsphairn Primary School could only come at the expense of the neighbouring catchments for Dalry Primary School and Moniaive Primary School. As these schools are themselves projected to see falling rolls, any expansion of the Carsphairn catchment risks undermining the future viability of the neighbouring schools and may still result in a roll at Carsphairn that is not viable. This would mean that the educational benefits outlined in the paragraph above still cannot be achieved.

3.15 Any such move to redefine the catchments could also cause potential disruption to the pupils within the current neighbouring catchment schools.

3.16 Carsphairn lies approximately six miles from the boundary of the region of Dumfries and Galloway and, as such, represents one of our more outlying schools. Any amendment to the catchment of Moniaive Primary School to make Carsphairn sustainable would result in increased travelling for affected pupils. The majority of Dalry Primary's current roll comes from within the town itself, therefore an amendment to their catchment of a large enough size to make Carsphairn viable might be difficult to achieve.

3.17 As stated above, it is believed that the school re-opening would be welcomed by the Carsphairn community. It is unlikely to be welcomed by neighbouring communities if the realignment of the catchment boundaries to achieve this is detrimental to the viability of the school within their community.

One important reason for Carsphairn school's continuing presence in the fairly recent past, even with a roll in single figures, has been travel distances, especially with regard to children living north of the village. Currently one P6 child travels a round trip of 40 miles in all weathers. This journey length is unacceptable for nursery/younger primary children. Furthermore, Carsphairn is higher than the rest of the Glenkens and winter weather can be more severe. The idea of redefining catchment areas is unrealistic. Comments regarding 'increased travelling for affected pupils' holds true for the current situation Carsphairn children find themselves in.

Continuation of "mothballing"

3.18 Although it would be possible to continue with the current "mothballing" arrangement, it may not represent the best value for the taxpayer or the community. The school has been mothballed since August 2019 and there were no Placing Requests during the recent primary school enrolments in January 2020. There is no realistic prospect of a significant rise in the local population of school age children that would allow the school to become viable. "Mothballing" would also mean the continuation of the current lack of clarity regarding the future status of the school.

As stated in response to point 3.2, there seems to be no means for parents to express any interest in Carsphairn school, let alone placing requests. There is a very realistic prospect of a significant rise in the local population of

school age children that would allow the school to become viable over the next two to three years, and continuing the mothballing process for this period, with annual reviews, would allow for this potential

3.19 Scottish Government guidance relating to the mothballing of schools makes it clear that mothballing is a temporary measure and should not be used to undermine the requirements of a statutory school closure consultation.

3.20 Current school transport arrangements would not be affected by a continuation of mothballing.

3.21 The community has raised some concerns over the future condition of the building deteriorating as a result of the current situation and these concerns may remain if the mothballing is continued.

Implications on Staffing

3.22 The staff members (teaching and non-teaching) who formerly worked at the school were relocated when the school was 'mothballed' in summer 2019. There will be no impact on staff and school management arrangements from the proposal.

3.23 The majority of the equipment within the school has been relocated to avoid any potential losses, but it is anticipated that all resources would be permanently relocated to other schools in the area were the school closure to go ahead.

3.24 Those parents who elected to relocate their children to Dalry Primary School are currently not entitled to free school transport on a long-term basis due to the voluntary nature of their decision. By obtaining clarity on the future of Carsphairn Primary School we would then be in a position to make long term transport arrangements for all former pupils, in accordance with Council policy.

There are at least three primary age children in Carsphairn whose parents did not choose to relocate, circumstances obliged relocation. It seems unreasonable for Carsphairn children to have to pay for transport for their schooling when they are offered no options. Not only can they not attend their closer local school, they must pay to attend a school they have not chosen to attend in the first place. However, with the possibility of more children for Carsphairn school and nursery age children already in the community, transport would not be an issue allowing for statutory transport provision.

4. Governance Assurance

The Corporate Management Team and Education and Learning Management Team have been consulted and are in agreement with the terms of this report.

5. Impact Assessment

This report does not impose a change in policy or the formal adoption of a plan, policy or strategy, therefore it is not necessary to complete an Impact Assessment.

Author(s)

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Approved by

NAME	DESIGNATION
Gillian Brydson	Director, Skills, Education & Learning

Appendices – 1

Appendix - Statutory Closure Consultation Timeline

Background papers - none

From Carsphairn Community Council

To statutoryconsultation@dumgal.gov.uk

31st October 2022

Proposed closure of Carsphairn School – Proposal document

Carsphairn Community Council [CCC] wish to

- 1 - challenge 13.1 Rationale. We quote from the 'Rationale' with our response in red.
- 2 - point out some factual errors in the proposal for closure document, statements which have been used to argue the case for school closure but which are invalid as they are incorrect.

1 -13.1 Rationale

This proposal is being advanced for the following reasons:

- No children have attended Carsphairn Primary School since the end of academic session 2018/19. **It was and is impossible for any child to attend the school since the end of academic session 2018/19– it had been mothballed! This is clearly not a valid argument to prove anything!**
- No children have attended Carsphairn Primary School Nursery since the end of academic session 2011/12. **Again, you closed the nursery – no child was able to attend – not a valid argument!**
- Current population figures within the school catchment indicate a maximum school roll of around eleven pupils over the next 5 years assuming all catchment children attended Carsphairn Primary School. **We believe there are currently 4 primary school age children wishing to attend the school now with other families moving in. It is virtually impossible to predict how many children of primary school age there will be in Carsphairn over the next 5 years. As stated earlier, and in conjunction with the affordable housing project in Carsphairn, numbers of families with young children are predicted to rise. We believe there will be a demand for the school and these children have the right to be educated in their own local community.**
- A school roll of this size provides significant impediments to the successful implementation of a Curriculum for Excellence. **This is by no means true, in fact the direct opposite can be argued as testified by the primary school teachers attendant at the public meeting on 29 September 2022.**
- A low school roll hampers social interaction opportunities for children who conversely benefit from attending larger schools amongst more children of their own age. **This is not necessarily true, the family grouping of small rural schools leads to a cohesive family feel in the classroom and playground.**
- The neighbouring school Dalry Primary School is itself projected to experience a falling roll over the next few years. **CCC have heard otherwise. Again, it is impossible to predict the movement of families into rural areas such as Carsphairn and the Glenkens, especially with new employment possibilities in the renewables sector and the implementation of faster broadband speeds. It is extremely short sighted to close Carsphairn school. If there may be plans to close Dalry secondary school in the future, the existence of an operational Carsphairn primary school will help prevent this highly undesirable action.**

2 Errors in the proposal document.

4 Public Meeting

Despite this statement: 'The meetings will be convened by the Council, will be chaired by a senior Elected Member...' the meetings were chaired by Mr Thin, head of education and not an unbiased councillor. Illness cannot be prevented but it would surely have been possible to find another councillor on the education and learning committee to chair the meetings. We have already commented on the absence of any of these councillors in attendance at the public meetings.

13.2 Current details- Carsphairn Primary School

The following statement is incorrect: 'The school did not attract any non-catchment pupils in the 7 years prior to mothballing.'

A boy entered P5 and stayed to the end of P7 who was not in the Carsphairn catchment area. His parents sought out the school owing to its small nature.

The following statement is also incorrect in that there was no cook employed at Carsphairn school: 'Prior to the school being mothballed, meals were cooked at Dalry Secondary School and transported to Carsphairn Primary School where **a cook was employed**. If the school were re-opened it is likely a cook would be employed 9.75 hours per week (as detailed above) and meals would be cooked and transported as per arrangements prior to mothballing.'

If the school were to reopen, we cannot see any argument against the employment of a cook for 9.75 hours weekly anyway but there was no cook employed.

13.3 Current details – Dalry Primary School

We comment on Dalry Primary's campus dining/canteen as it is inaccessible to persons with a physical disability being down one or two flights of stairs. Carsphairn school's dining area is accessible to everyone being on ground level.

Mention of 'access to a Multi-Use Games Area the area extends to approx. 17,146 sq. m and is shared with the secondary and nursery' is very misleading. This area has been out of action for many years owing to its dangerous surface, a fact which we must assume was known about before the proposal paper was composed. It should not have been used to describe the many facilities offered at Dalry Primary.

It appears to CCC that Carsphairn primary is planned to be sacrificed in order to 'save' Dalry Primary. We object to this attitude in the strongest terms – as part of the Glenkens cluster

Carsphairn played its part to the full in educating the children of Carsphairn who are entitled to be educated in their local school in their local community. In some cases, depending how far north of the village children live, it may already be 10 miles to Carsphairn primary and an unacceptable 20 miles to Dalry, in all weathers including Carsphairn's upland winter.

The points made in this document are largely new comments as CCC find more statements in the proposal document to challenge in their belief that Carsphairn Primary should not be closed. The Education and Learning Directorate have not made valid arguments and have not adhered to the Schools [Consultation] [Scotland] Act 2010 Statutory Guidance in many respects.

From Carsphairn Community Council

To statutoryconsultation@dumgal.gov.uk

4th November 2022

Proposed closure of Carsphairn school – updated information regarding the number of children who would like to attend the school now

Two primary aged children have just moved into a property north of Carsphairn village who have expressed their desire to attend Carsphairn primary, a choice that is denied them.

There is also a child who would attend Carsphairn school who is being educated elsewhere but who we have been informed would settle in Carsphairn to attend the school were it operational.

We estimate there are now six primary school aged children who would attend the school now with the possibility of at least 3 more who may choose to attend Carsphairn as their current journey times to their current schools are obviously much longer, and in all weathers with the onset of winter, than attending their local Carsphairn school in their local community.

They have been denied the choice of attending their local school at Carsphairn.

As stated earlier it is impossible to predict how many children will be in the Carsphairn school catchment area over the next 5 years. For the many reasons given in earlier communications, including the affordable housing project now made possible with wind farm community benefit, we are confident the numbers of primary aged children in Carsphairn will significantly increase. These children require to be educated locally in their own community, avoiding in many cases unacceptable travelling times to attend other schools if Carsphairn were to close.

We have asked on more than one occasion – what is the number ‘required’ for Carsphairn school to re-open, according to the Education and Learning Directorate. We have as yet received no response to this highly relevant question.



Carsphairn Community Council have accepted the proposal below and the project is planned to start as soon as possible in November 2022

Confirmation of SOSCH's engagement with CCC:

South of Scotland Community Housing (SOSCH) are currently engaged with Carsphairn Community Council to undertake a Housing Needs and Demands Assessment of the Carsphairn Community Council area. The Carsphairn Community Council, with the support of SOSCH are exploring housing solutions with the aim of supporting repopulation.

Alison Gordon
Community-led Housing Coordinator (SW Scotland)
South of Scotland Community Housing

Proposal for Carsphairn Community Council Community-led Housing Project Housing Needs and Demands Assessment

South of Scotland Community Housing (SOSCH)

SOSCH is a Scottish Charitable Incorporated Organisation (SCIO) that provides support to rural and community-led housing across the South of Scotland area as an affordable housing “enabler.” We provide expert advice to community organisations at each stage of a housing project, from the initial idea, through project development and viability assessment, during the delivery phase and beyond.

We have developed a track record in supporting the delivery of projects supported by the Scottish Government's Rural Housing Fund. This has been inclusive of the development and delivery of low energy new-build homes, reinstatement of empty homes and repurposing of vacant and derelict buildings as affordable homes. Projects we have recently supported have included the Closeburn Passivhaus project, the redevelopment of the Old Police Station, Langholm, the repurposing of Wigtown Bank as affordable homes and community-run bunkhouse, The Grapes Hotel in Whithorn and the refurbishing of Glentroll village housing as affordable homes.

For further information, please visit – <http://www.sosch.org>

About SOSCH

SOSCH have been supporting affordable and community-led housing projects across Dumfries & Galloway since 2006. In 2020 we converted to a new governance structure to offer our services to community organisations across the wider South of Scotland region.

The work of the SOSCH team has, to date, secured more than £6 Million of investment from the Rural Housing Fund, Scottish Land Fund, and other capital grant funders, in addition to securing private finance from ethical lenders. We have developed a track record in delivering affordable, community owned homes in line with identified local needs and demands and related localised Allocations Policies. Our ability to deliver is testament to the positive working relationships SOSCH develop with organisations, partners, professionals, and other stakeholders.

SOSCH is currently engaged with over 30 community-led, affordable housing projects at various



stages, and are the only organisation working exclusively in this field in the South of Scotland. Our work has gained national and international recognition thanks to our links as a partner organisation with the North-West European Interreg project, SHICC (Sustainable Housing for Inclusive and Cohesive Communities) and the European CLT Network, and our award winning, affordable community-owned housing projects:



- Closeburn Passivhaus – SURF Award winner 2020, Best Housing and Regeneration project.
- Moniaive Initiative – Best Long-term Restoration, Scottish Empty Homes Awards 2021.
- Langholm Police Station – SURF Awards finalist 2021, Housing and Regeneration category and Scottish Empty Homes Awards 2022 Best ‘Old Wreck’ category.
- Wigtown Flats and Bunkhouse – SURF Awards finalist 2022, Housing and Regeneration project.

Our Project Team offers broad experience and technical knowledge of affordable housing, funding, community planning and engagement, strategic regeneration, and related processes. Our approach relates to working closely and in partnership with community organisations to achieve their aims, particularly relative to supporting Rural Housing Fund application and the wider funding landscape. The combined team offer extensive experience around the planning and delivery of community-led, affordable housing delivery, Community Empowerment and Land Reform legislation and all wider aspects of housing development and delivery. Our wider team is skilled in finance, research and learning/knowledge exchange and we will draw on all aspects of our expertise to support the planning and delivery of your bespoke, community-led housing project.

Our Track Record

SOSCH understands that communities are best placed to appraise the needs of those who live in and engage with their “place,” and we are committed to working in partnership to ensure your project is reflective of your wider aspirations. We believe that housing goes beyond the concept-built form and understand that rural communities face specific challenges to address, whether that is lack of suitable or available housing in a low wage economy, fuel poverty, demographic balance, depopulation, climate emergency or a desire to create more resilient, sustainable places. We aim to assist communities to develop projects holistically to address these wider challenges and ensure adaptability, placing housing within the wider context of community-led regeneration.

With a pipeline of projects that will deliver more than 70 homes across rural communities in Dumfries & Galloway, SOSCH offer experience and local knowledge to support planning and delivery at each individual stage of community-led housing, from inception to post-delivery. Our stakeholder relationships and wider regional and national partnerships are positive, and we pride ourselves on strong, successful working relationships across our field.

We also believe partnership is integral to the successful delivery of individual projects. As experienced delivery partners, we work with a range of professional teams including architects, engineers, quantity surveyors and – where non-housing aspects are included within developments, community development specialists. SOSCH also work to support groups through the process of community engagement across the lifecycle of a project.

Over the course of the last five years, SOSCH has:

- Secured Rural Housing Fund full grant on seven individual community-led housing project.
- Secured Rural Housing Fund feasibility grant on twelve individual community-led housing projects.



- Undertaken Business Planning for twelve individual community-led housing projects.
- Completed Housing Needs and Demand Assessment for sixteen communities.

SOSCH's passion for community-led regeneration, repopulation, adequate (warm, safe, secure, affordable) housing and community sustainability makes us the ideal team to work with communities in the South of Scotland to plan and deliver community-led housing projects. In addition, we offer a unique understanding of the South of Scotland landscape – housing needs and trends, political environment, partners and stakeholders, opportunities, and challenges. SOSCH's reputation for engagement and delivery is well known and respected, regularly documented in both local and national press and is founded on the hard work and commitment our small, specialist team offers.

Outline Project Milestones

Each community-led housing project SOSCH works to deliver is different and unique, as they respond to the needs and demands of local communities and work with assets available for project delivery, be that refurbishment or new build. As a result, projects can vary in terms of timescales and outcomes, however the basic principles of the process we have formulated runs across all projects, and the general outline is as follows:



- **Ideas**

SOSCH work with community organisations from the very outset of the project, to help explore their ideas and start initial discussions around what kind of development might be possible within their community, what resources they have and what their purpose in delivering community-led housing will be. At this stage we consider your community organisation's understanding of community-led housing, your aspirations, and your overall aims, to establish how the project can fit with your overall purpose.

- **Housing Needs and Demands Assessment**

Using our specifically designed Housing Needs and Demands assessment processes, we will facilitate online surveying, face-to-face community engagement partner and stakeholder engagement, liaison with relevant bodies, research and report writing, delivery of findings to your community group and the wider community. Every aspect of this stage is aligned to the requirements of the main funding bodies of community-led housing projects in Scotland – the Rural Housing Fund and the Scottish Land Fund. (This process allows the community group to develop their idea(s) and understand their community's requirements more clearly, ahead of technical appraisal of the project). SOSCH have completed 16 Housing Needs and Demands Assessments for communities over the past five years.



- **Feasibility**

SOSCH support community groups to access funding from the Rural Housing Fund (up to £15k, aligned to requirements) and the Scottish Land Fund (up to £30k, aligned to requirements) to assess the viability of the project. SOSCH are experienced in developing successful applications for feasibility funding, liaising with relevant authorities to secure support for the concept, tendering for the appropriate team to undertake technical appraisal of all aspect of the proposed project. This stage is where ideas really come to life and SOSCH support groups to engage with their community, stakeholders, and the design team throughout.

- **Business Planning and Finance**

Pulling together the findings of technical appraisals, SOSCH have developed an effective and valuable approach to developing the required Business Plans and Financial Modelling required to establish the route to delivery of your project, and in line with the Rural Housing Fund and Scottish Land Fund main grant awards, which will secure most of the capital costs required to deliver your affordable, community owned housing project. Using our experience and expertise, we will work with the community group to seek funding from all relevant sources, as well as private finance from lenders who understand our sector, and support our aims.

- **Allocations and Management**

Drawing on the Housing Needs and Demands and Feasibility work, SOSCH will assist your community organisation to create a bespoke Allocations Policy, application and allocation process, landlord registration, statutory requirements and establishing a suitable means to ensure long-term management and maintenance of your project, in line with the project business plan and cash flows.

- **Project Delivery**

With assistance from SOSCH to tender the capital works to deliver your project, the next step is to make a start on site! Whether a refurbishment, repurposing, or new build, this is always an exciting point in the project as now, all the work we have undertaken begins to become a reality. SOSCH will continue to work with the community organisation throughout this phase, participating in community engagement, team meetings discussing progress, helping communities to ensure their project stays on track and supporting them with the technical and liaising with strategic partners. Once the works are complete, SOSCH will celebrate your project's delivery, help to welcome your new tenants and work with your group to establish appropriate long-term monitoring and evaluation of your success.



Proposal: Housing Needs and Demands Assessment for Carsphairn

South of Scotland Community Housing (SOSCH) understands that Carsphairn Community Council wish to explore and understand a profile relative to potential demand for affordable, community-led housing at Carsphairn.

To fully appraise the profile of this demand, SOSCH propose to undertake the following work on behalf of Carsphairn Community Council:

- To complete a comprehensive Housing Needs and Demands assessment and develop a consultation program to focus on engagement around the type and tenure of housing, aiming to establish local priorities to support future proposals for community-led and affordable housing. The specific nature of this process for this will be agreed in advance with Carsphairn Community Council, and is likely to include:
 - Development of an online survey (SurveyMonkey).
 - Face to face engagement with specific identified groups within the wider community.
 - Hosting/attending specific Carsphairn Community Council engagement and consultation events.
 - Working with partners to achieve a wider understanding of housing need in this area, including – as appropriate – Dumfries and Galloway Council, Registered Social Landlords and South of Scotland Enterprise.
 - Support and development of an approach to wider distribution and social media reach for the survey, allowing us to secure responses from participants currently located out-with the area, but with an interest in relocation – particularly where there exists a local connection.
- From this, SOSCH will produce a Housing Needs and Demands Report, which will both inform the community organisation and underpin any subsequent full grant application to the Rural Housing Fund.
- We will engage with Carsphairn Community Council in the development of the survey and reporting format to ensure that clear conclusions are reached and presented around scale, type, nature, and tenure of demand. We will also determine whether the survey should focus entirely on affordable housing demand, or also assess demand for market rent or sale. This work will also be oriented towards developing a profile of the type of individual or family who may be interested in living and working in Carsphairn.
- We will investigate demand and interest in opportunities for individual workspace within housing development to support regeneration, economic growth and live-work opportunities. This approach will also align to net-zero objectives and localised Place Planning. This content will be included within the survey.



- We will engage with key stakeholders throughout this process to ensure that, as housing proposals are developed by Carsphairn Community Council, this early-stage work is ensuring – wherever possible – strategic support for the principle of creating new opportunities to live in Carsphairn. This will be particularly relevant to Dumfries and Galloway Council and Scottish Government.
- SOSCH will undertake a Site Audit to identify potential sites and buildings that might be suitable for the development of community-led housing. This will entail a planning search aligned to Local Development Plan policy as well as a 'Call for Sites' exercise within the community to local landowners.

We will develop our methods in consultation with Carsphairn Community Council and in line with their aim of achieving delivery of affordable housing for those who will reside within Carsphairn.

Prepared By South of Scotland Community Housing

5 October 2022

[REDACTED]

From: [REDACTED]
Sent: 04 November 2022 16:04
To: statutory consultation
Subject: EXTERNAL: Carsphairn Primary School Closure Proposal

To whom it may concern,

Hello, my name is [REDACTED] and I live at [REDACTED] in Carsphairn. Me and my family moved into the village in April 2022. [REDACTED] is currently at Dalry Primary School in [REDACTED], [REDACTED] is [REDACTED] years old.

I attended the meeting at Lagwyne Hall in September and I hope my positive opinion of the school reopening was taken onboard.

I have read through the proposal a few times and I would like to make a few comments:

There is currently no school bus that would take the children from the village to Dalry school. The only option would be to catch the public bus which I do not want to put an [REDACTED] year old on, nor would I want to put a four year old on when [REDACTED] is ready to attend P1. (This has been verified by Mr Scrimshaw, Headteacher of Dalry Primary School) If Carsphairn School was not to reopen I would appreciate this being looked into. I drive to school and back twice a day and it's just under 40 miles per day, 200 miles per week.

In the proposal it states it takes 14 minutes to get to Dalry (Google maps). This isn't the case on days of rain/flood water/ice/snow/timber lorries. The roads are very windy and there are shear drops to the river and lochs along the road. I won't feel comfortable driving my children to school on days of bad weather.

I would like to note there are parents just outside of the Carsphairn catchment area that are also interested in sending their children to the school if it was to reopen. These parents are in the Carsphairn P.S. Increased Catchment Area Appendix 5, it would be wonderful if this could be explored more.

I believe that lost time to due the impact of the Covid pandemic should be taken into consideration i.e. I think a two year extension should be put in place or considered at least to allow more time being spent talking to children/parents/community groups for the correct decision to made for the benefit of the residents, but also for the village itself.

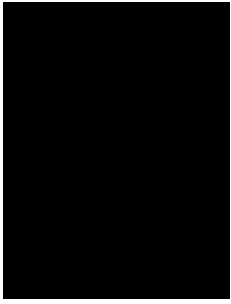
When this proposal was first put together, our family and another family in the village had not moved into the area. There may be more families moving in, if local job opportunities arise. A village school is vital to the community to keep families wanting to move into a rural area.

The playground is currently in a fantastic condition, with local people regularly maintaining the flower and vegetable garden. The building itself looks in great condition with no vandalism apparent.

I do think having a smaller school with smaller numbers is helpful to a child's education, they will get more individual time with the teacher. The children will be able to work together as a group if topic work is followed, it will allow each child to work to their age group if not above by listening to the elder children. They will also have far more respect for each other, look out for each other and understand how to work together.

[REDACTED] very much enjoys attending Dalry Primary School and has a wonderful teacher in [REDACTED], Mr Scrimshaw is also a wonderful Headteacher. [REDACTED] has expressed [REDACTED] would like to attend Carsphairn Primary School, if only for a short time before returning to Dalry Secondary School. We regularly use the playground to safely play ball games, use the equipment (that is in very good condition) and plant/pick vegetables that have been grown. As a family we'd love the opportunity to help the school and village grow into an even better community that we currently reside in.

Thank you very much for your time,



██████████
Carsphairn resident and parent of former pupils, past Chair of Carsphairn PTC

I have several issues to raise regarding the consultation for closure.

1. When the decision was taken to mothball the school, there was a meeting between D&G Council representative Mr Thin, ██████████ Chair of Carsphairn Community Council and myself as Chair of the Parent Teacher Council. At this meeting myself and ██████████ were informed (and the Schools (Consultation) (Scotland) Act 2010 refers to) that a decision to mothball should be reviewed annually. There has been no such review. In addition it is worth noting from the Schools (Consultation) (Scotland) Act 2010 that the normal 3 year maximum period of mothballing can be extended to 5 years where the school meets the “remote rural” designation which Carsphairn does.
2. At this same meeting, ██████████ and I were also informed that if, during the mothballed period, a parent requested a placing, the council were duty bound to consider it – from conversations with several parents of potentially eligible children, those who did express an interest in their child(ren) going to Carsphairn were informed that it was not possible because the school was mothballed and that they would have to apply for placing at an alternative school. Within section 13.1 of the consultation reference is made to the fact that no children had attended since 2018/2019. This is rather disingenuous of the council as there were children who wished to attend/asked to be able to make a placing request but were dissuaded and/or were told it was impossible “because it was mothballed”. How then were they to attend when they were prevented in this way? A similar issue had previously affected the Nursery. This is, in effect, closure by stealth.
3. Small potential pupil numbers. While this does bring challenges, it also brings remarkable opportunities. One the best things about attending a small school is learning to interact with children of a range of ages rather than restricting to a single age group. This is great training for later life when interactions across a range of social groupings is the norm. It also is an excellent way of learning about caring for others, the older children have multiple opportunities to mentor younger ones and the younger ones able to learn from the older ones. I found it very telling that my children and others from Carsphairn were at the forefront of similar activities eg paired reading with primary children, membership of school councils etc when they moved to High School when compared to those children from the larger school. Being part of the Glenkens cluster ensured that they also had multiple opportunities for peer working too.
4. Section 13.2
There is a point that whilst it is technically correct, the truth is somewhat different. To quote “of the 10 catchment children, 4 are of an age to have attended Carsphairn Primary prior to mothballing, all 4 have chosen to attend other primary schools in the area”. Technically true but to my knowledge not all of those children lived within the catchment at the time of mothballing and are therefore some of the children prevented from attending Carsphairn because it is mothballed, not because they didn’t want to attend Carsphairn. I think those parents should have had the option because the school was not closed at that point and it is again disingenuous to imply that these children did not wish to attend Carsphairn.
5. Transport – whilst an extra distance of 10 miles may not seem huge, it should be remembered that children can potentially already have a journey of several miles to get to Carsphairn before the extra 10 miles are added. The transport from Carsphairn to Dalry for

many is via the service bus, not dedicated school transport. Carsphairn residents have regularly had issues with buses being late and or not running especially in poor weather. This is a difficult enough issue where the older High school children are involved and would be much more so for younger primary aged children. Transport is also a issue where after school activities are concerned which has in the past led to Carsphairn pupils not being able to participate. In effect, far from benefiting from the claimed wider activities available, Carsphairn pupils are more likely to be excluded due to distance and lack of suitable transport. Prior to mothballing, a wide range of activities were available from gardening club to basketball, tai jitsu, cycling proficiency, community interaction via astronomy sessions, volunteer reading schemes, coffee mornings, fund raising both for school/PTC and for charity – at the last Children in Need coffee morning Carsphairn children raised substantially more than the larger schools nearby, music festivals, active schools, residential trips for example across to Ireland to view the Titanic exhibition, Christmas fayres, Christmas plays where all children were included which avoided the feelings of exclusion found in a larger school. Feis Rois actually attended Carsphairn before any of the other local primaries. Carsphairn school was very much the centre of the community and the level of community support for the school was and still is huge.

6. My youngest child was one of those last two to leave prior to mothballing and both elder siblings had attended too. As all 3 were very able maths students, they were able to be challenged and provided with work that enjoyably stretched them in a way that now at a larger school, my child now finds maths “boring”. The two older children both went on to be selected for a University of Glasgow Maths Masterclass when in S3.
7. At no point did we, as parents, feel that the small school atmosphere was to our children’s detriment. Indeed we thought they were very privileged to have had that opportunity to be part of something special.

4 /11/ 2022

To whom It may concern,

As a new resident of Carsphairn and grandfather of two [redacted] aged [redacted] and [redacted], who would have attended Carsphairn Primary, had it been an option, I wish to express my opinions regarding the proposed closure of Carsphairn Primary School.

As a retired head teacher, class teacher, advisory teacher and headteacher representative to the authority in which I worked, my comments are based on over thirty years' experience in primary education. Some of my observations may be repeated in the notes taken at the meeting at Lagwyne Hall, Carsphairn on Thursday 29th September 2022.

Any Curriculum with excellence at its heart starts in the local community, where the child resides, not one to which it has to travel. Quality primary education starts with what pupils know, Carsphairn children know only the community that they inhabit. In my considerable experience, one of the reasons why so many pupils do so well in small rural schools, is the unique level of community support and involvement within the school. This point was well made by residents and families of ex pupils at the meeting. Pupils thrive in such a supportive community of which they feel an integral and valued part.

Through no fault of their own Carsphairn residents were denied the regular reviews of the temporary closure of the Carsphairn Primary school, due in part to Covid. The authority owes it to the community to extend the process a little longer to at least correct some of the erroneous errors and assumptions that seem to have been made during that time, probably due to the lack of consultation reviews. This failure has ignored the rights of the community to present information and views as set out in the consultation process.

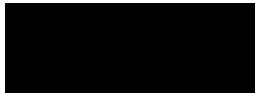
The failure to allow prospective parents to express Carsphairn as there first choice of school during the consultation period has skewed the figures. As an outsider, with my background, I interpret this as being deliberate, as closure was already decided and any choices expressed for Carsphairn School would be an embarrassing inconvenience.

Busing children should all way be a last resort. Having a larger school serving a wider area will lead to many pupils be disadvantaged due to travel time. Those traveling large distances on sometime dangerous roads will miss out on after school activities, have less time at home with their family, and face greater pressures to complete homework. They will not have the same educational opportunities as those who live close to the school.

Failure to establish what would be an acceptable travelling time for primary pupils, by the authority, at the public meeting, was an unprofessional oversight. Which reinforces the view within the community that the welfare of pupils of Carsphairn and the surrounding area are secondary to ideology. It appears what matters most is the numbers to make a central school viable. This is a gross failure to recognise the needs of pupils and the community in which they reside.

I was shocked to read the comments about the perceived inadequacies of small school education. It's a misnomer that small schools cannot deliver an excellent curriculum and excellent education. As an advisory teacher for small rural schools, I worked in sixty such schools over five years. The quality of education provided in most instances was better than that in larger schools, due to the more individualised learning opportunities provided. On the contrary meeting the individual needs of all children is a greater challenge in much larger schools. Many parents choose small rural schools for their child, as the environment is more intimate and supportive of individuals who might otherwise be overlooked or simply not cope in much larger schools. Many previous Carsphairn pupils came to the school for precisely this reason and thrived. It is our duty as educationalist to understand that not all pupils thrive in bigger institutions. You are ignoring the individual, and the rights of parents to choose with this one size fits all approach.

Carsphairn is a progressive forward thinking community, wind farm money is going to be used to build new affordable eco homes to attract young families to the village, with some employment opportunities being offered through other projects funded by windfarm money. Without a school at the heart of its community, the ability to attract young families, the life blood of any community, will be considerably reduced. The plan to replace small rural schools with larger central schools will have a devastating impact on these remote rural communities. This policy could have long term impact a similar to the clearances of the 1700s. In small rural communities the school is at the heart, remove that heart and decline will be inevitable. The education department and council need to recognise the significant impact of this financial/political strategy for larger centralised schools on more than just education, failure to do so will have significant long term consequences for all remote communities.



Appendix C

PUBLIC MEETING – DALRY SCHOOL

Thursday 29th September, 3.00 – 5.00 pm.

Education and Learning Directorate Officers present: John Thin (JT), Larann Foss (LF), Louise Rae (LR).

Alice Bainbridge (AB), Scott Brown (SB) (notes)

Stakeholders: 4

JT welcomed everyone to the meeting and outlined the process and key aspects of the proposal paper.

LR explained changes in the timeline due to the additional bank holiday and a further request from HMle (Education Scotland).

- HMle (Education Scotland) Consideration period 28 November – 16 December 2022
- Final paper will be published 19 January 2023
- Further representation 23 January – 10 February
- Final report and any further submissions will be presented to E&L Committee in early 2023 (Awaiting Education and Learning Committee dates).

No opportunity for enrollment

Stakeholder: Since school has been mothballed it has been impossible to enroll and the community are aware of many parents who would have enrolled their children had the school been open.

Officer response: A valid point which is why we have sent out a questionnaire to all known families who live in the Carsphairn catchment, these contacts are from SEEMiS (school database) and NHS database of preschool children. So far 50% have been returned with some saying they would keep their child/ren at their current school.

Officer acknowledged possibility that some families may not have received the questionnaire which is why the public meeting and opportunity to provide written representations as part of the consultation is such a key part of the process and will allow Councilors to make informed decisions.

Stakeholder: What about the families which moved away because there was no school?

Officer response: Movement in and out of the area is beyond our control.

Falling school roll at Dalry

Stakeholder: Disputed that Dalry is predicted to have a falling school role and that one pupil has had to enroll at Kells because the class numbers were too high.

Officer response: Clarified that figures are based on placing requests for pupils who currently live within catchment area, unable to base numbers on Extra Territorial movement as this cannot be predicted. National trend for D&G is for a decline in 0–15-year-olds.

Provision of rural childcare

Stakeholder: Message from Authority to improve rural childcare provision is at odds with this process. If Carsphairn school is closed then it is the final nail in the coffin, with the lack of provision meaning childcare providers would not be attracted to the village, mothballing would at least provide some hope for the future.

Officer response: The catchment area for Carsphairn at present does not demonstrate the potential for population growth.

Small class sizes / P1- P7 within same class

Stakeholder: Attended Carsphairn school and disagrees with the opinion in the proposal document that small class sizes are not equitable and detrimental to learning.

Officer response: Authority's role is to provide the best opportunities and to ensure these are equitable across the school estate. Evidence is available to support the view that small class sizes do not provide the best opportunities for learning and delivery of the Curriculum for Excellence.

Stakeholder: Surely the purpose of partnership schools is to provide opportunities for pupils to come together for learning.

Stakeholder: Acknowledged the skills required for a teacher to successfully teach a single class of P1- P7 pupils.

Officer response: Education has transformed with changes in the fundamental principles of what education is, what is the best class size, what learning opportunities should be available etc. Consequently, there is a need to modernise the school estate. The main driver is to provide the best and fair opportunities for pupils, it is not driven by economics.

Transport

Stakeholder: disputes the statement in the proposal document that travel time for Carsphairn pupils is 14 minutes, cannot just use Google Maps.

Officer response: clarified this is the travel time from Carsphairn Primary School to Dalry Primary School.

Stakeholder: Need to remember that current transport does not use the main road, needs to pick up and drop off on the back road therefore impacting significantly on travel time.

Stakeholder: asked for clarification on arrangement should closure be agreed. Parent had problems arranging transport for their child to Dalry when Carsphairn was initially mothballed, it took a year and a half for the situation to be sorted and had a significant financial impact as they needed to provide transport themselves.

Officer response: Dalry Primary School catchment would be extended to include the Carsphairn catchment. Pupils opting to attend Dalry Primary would be entitled to transport, this may be a bespoke solution with a mixture of cars and minibus provision. Officer apologised for the initial issues experienced by the parent.

Clarification on consultees

Stakeholder: requested clarification on who was being consulted.

Officer response: To ensure a competent consultation is carried out it is important to consult with all relevant consultees. The process has been to publish the proposal document, hold two public meetings, provide a nine-week period in which written representations can be made and for Education Officer's to visit the affected schools to speak with staff and pupils. Reassurance made that all representations and views will be shared with Councilors so that an informed decision can be made.

Mothballing

Stakeholder: Why is mothballing not a preferred option?

Officer response: We would be in exactly the same place in 5 years time so not in favor of mothballing as it would feel like the issue was being 'kicked into the long grass', however, the decision is for the Councilors to make.

Stakeholder: Appreciate the comment about the 'long grass' but could there have been more engagement during the mothballing period? Closure is permanent, what is there to be gained from this? Mothballing with consultation continuing throughout the period is a more favorable option than closure.

Stakeholder: When initial decision was made to mothball was this with a long term plan for closure?

Officer response: Following the recommendations of the Schools (Consultation) (Scotland) Act 2010 which allows for temporary mothballing of schools when the roll has fallen to very low or even no pupils, the suggested period of time is three years.

Nursery provision

Officer: Clarification that the existing nursery provision at Carsphairn Primary would not meet the Care Inspectorate standards. Nursery children are now entitled to all day provision and therefore a single shared room at Carsphairn P.S does not provide space for rest/sleep or for meal provision. Expected that significant investment would be needed to meet the Care Inspectorate requirements.

Potential for new housing in the area

Stakeholder: Community is looking into potential for affordable housing to be built within village. The Carsphairn Community Woodland initiative also have plans to build accommodation to attract families to the area and address rural depopulation.

Officer response: The pupil product ratio for housing development in Dumfries and Galloway is 0.32 for primary pupils and 0.16 for secondary pupils and 0.08 for nursery pupils, so to see a meaningful increase in potential school role for Carsphairn a significant number of houses would need to be built. Often new rural housing means a movement of people within the area with existing families opting for modern and more energy efficient homes, it doesn't always mean new pupil move into an area. Consequently along with statistics demonstrating a decline in rural populations it is unlikely that enough families would move to area to significantly increase the school population.

View in support

Stakeholder: Lives in Carsphairn catchment and accepts that there are not many families in the area and not a huge amount for children to participate in. Had Carphairn Primary

remained open their child would have been the only one enrolled. Happy with decision to enroll at Dalry primary, child has settled in well and would stay there even if Carphairn school was reopened.

Meeting ended at 3.58 pm

PUBLIC MEETING – Carsphairn

Thursday 29th September, 6.00 – 8.00 pm.

Education and Learning Directorate Officers present: John Thin (JT), Larann Foss (LF), Louise Rae (LR).

Alice Bainbridge (AB), Scott Brown (SB) (notes)

Stakeholders: 33 (in addition 4 children were signed in on the attendance sheet but were in an adjacent room)

JT welcomed everyone to the meeting and outlined the process and key aspects of the proposal paper.

LR explained changes in the timeline due to the additional bank holiday and a further request from HMle.

- HMle Consideration period 28 November – 16 December 2022
- Final paper will be published 19 January 2023
- Further representation 23 January – 10 February
- Final report and any further submissions will be presented to E&L Committee in early 2023 (Awaiting Education and Learning Committee dates).

Stakeholder (Carsphairn Community Council (CCC)): asked if the updated timeline was available on the Council website.

Officer response: new version will be update and added following request from HMle (Education Scotland) for extension to consultation period.

Stakeholder (CCC): Read out statement and raised a number of questions and issues. The full statement is included with individual representations.

- When CCC and Parent Council (PC) discussed and agreed the mothballing of Carsphairn Primary School it was agreed that there would be an annual review to allow for ongoing consultation and exploration of alternatives. This did not happen and strongly feel that a pre-consultation phase has not taken place and instead the process has moved directly to proposal for closure.
- Parents have been unable to enroll pupils at Carsphairn due to being mothballed, how can the authority truly know the number of pupils who would enroll.
- There has been a movement of people into the community during and as a result of the COVID pandemic. This has included families. South of Scotland Community Housing are also looking at affordable housing possibilities within the village.
- Dispute the travel times to Dalry primary for pupils detailed in the proposal paper. For some children it will take up to an hour to travel from rural locations to Dalry Primary, this is unacceptable for young children and there are concerns regarding safety during the winter months. Also disagree with statement that finding someone to operate a service would be difficult, the community are confident that someone would come forward.
- Disagree with educational benefits statement that delivery of the Curriculum for Excellence is impacted due to small numbers within a school. A smaller school can offer excellent opportunities for pupils to learn, there can be individual one to one

<p>learning, pupils can learn at their own pace, receive support from older pupils within the classroom and pupils with learning difficulties feel supported.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Disagree with statement regarding after school opportunities at Dalry Primary. If families are reliant on using school transport, then pupils are unable to attend after school clubs and activities.
<p>Four families who had moved into the Carsphairn catchment following mothballing stated that they had only been informed of the option to attend Dalry or Kells Primary schools.</p>
<p>Officer: Pre consultation was hindered due to the COVID pandemic. Authority have sent out questionnaires to known families within the catchment area (data from SEEMiS and NHS database). Authority is keen to capture all opinions and get clarity on potential number, families are encouraged to return the questionnaire and if any have not received one please email the statutory consultations email with details. Officers clarified that mothballing does not mean the school can be reopened over night.</p>
<p>Stakeholder (former Parent): Reiterated that mothballing process has not gone forward as agreed at initial meeting, ongoing consultation has not taken place. Believes that the role at Carsphairn fell because the Authority were reluctant to offer a permanent position and at the time were only offering a two year contract, there was no permanency.</p>
<p>Stakholder (Grandparent): Has a background in education and takes issue with the view that small schools are an impediment to successful learning. Small schools offer a personalised and individualised curriculum. Pupils can work alongside older or more able pupils and this helps build confidence, pupils with special needs can be catered for, they can feel safe and secure within the learning environment. Where is the data to suggest otherwise?</p>
<p>Officer: It is not just about reading and writing it is about all the other activities which go on in larger schools which provide important interaction between pupils. What happens if a teacher and pupil do not bond, they are in the same class for seven years. I would expect pupils to feel nurtured and supported in all of our schools.</p>
<p>Stakeholder (Grandparent): has spent part of career working as an advisor to small schools. Disagrees with the educational benefits statement and supports the statement made by his wife previously.</p>
<p>Stakeholder (Parent): Wanted the small school experience for her children. Moved from a school of over 700 pupils, many people choose to move to rural locations for smaller schools and a better education for their children.</p>
<p>South of Scotland Community Housing, Community-led Housing Coordinator: Explained there is a demand for a rural housing with people wanting the unique experience of living in communities such as Carsphairn. Research is in the early stages and will look at planning for bespoke housing needs and demands. Have already been working in the Glenkens area and will share this report with officers.</p>
<p>Stakeholder (Parent): Do you have a specific number which will mean opening the school?</p>
<p>Officers: we are seeing an overall decline in rural populations and anticipate there being ten schools with a roll of less than ten pupils. Communities are changing, depopulation is</p>

<p>taking place and increase in Airbnb and holiday homes is not helping. Authority is looking at educational provision across the region, looking at aspects such as historical changes in school roll, transport needs, changes in the facilities required so that the school estate can be modernised and there will be equity across the board.</p>
<p>Stakeholder (Parent): so there is no threshold? This gives the impression there is a hidden agenda to close rural schools.</p>
<p>Officer: absolutely not, difficult to give a specific number because the right size will be different for each school's situation.</p>
<p>Stakeholder (Parent): The pandemic has changed how people work, internet connection is improving all the time and this will encourage people to move to more rural areas. By closing the school you are robbing the village of the opportunity to renew, who knows what the numbers will be in 2, 5 or even 10 years time.</p>
<p>Stakeholder (Parent): Moved to the area earlier this year, have been welcomed by everyone. Agreed that the population is older but if the school is exists then this will encourage new families and hopefully housing will not be bought up for Airbnb etc.</p>
<p>Stakeholder (Grandparent): Grandchildren would have gone to Carsphairn had it been open but they have now been enrolled elsewhere and are settled so would have to give considerable thought to any decision to put them through the upheaval of moving schools. Feels strongly that should have been able to register an interest in attending Carsphairn, it should have been an option.</p>
<p>Officer: Completely agree, Authority recognises that this choice was not available. Urge families to fill in the questionnaire or email with details of pupils who would choose Carsphairn if it was an option. Important that the situation is clarified. Families have been contacted using SEEMiS (school database) and NHS database.</p>
<p>Stakeholder: Many people use Dalmellington NHS so possible you have not capture everyone.</p>
<p>Stakeholder (Parent): Emphasised that the reason the Authority do not know is because they haven't carried out any pre consultation. If the yearly meetings had taken place then parents would have been able to register interest and accurate numbers would be known.</p>
<p>Stakeholder (CCC): would like information on the number of single teacher schools and the distances between schools, Specifically Hutton P.S.</p>
<p>Officer: explained that Hutton P.S is currently mothballed and pupils are travelling to Applegarth Primary, a distance of 6 miles. There are a significant number of schools with only one teacher.</p>
<p>Stakeholder (CC): requested clarification on these figures.</p>
<p>Stakeholder (Resident): what are the maximum travelling distances for pupils? What is reasonable, definitely not an hour for a primary aged pupil.</p>
<p>Officer: Not aware of any statutory guidance on distance. We have a transport policy which looks at provision and entitlement.</p>
<p>Stakeholder (Grandparent): highlighted the risks of travel, weather and road conditions can change quickly and frequently there can be snow in Carsphairn but on arrival at school in Moniaive there isn't any. Children can miss schooling because of road conditions.</p>

<p>Stakeholder (CCC): would like to stress again about the lack of pre consultation, an annual review was agreed when the decision for mothballing took place, this has not happened. There has been no warning. So much is changing, the improvements in internet connection is significant in influencing people's decisions to move to a rural area, regular reviews were needed.</p>
<p>Officer: COVID has had an impact on the ability for consultation. Agreed that in the post COVID world people are looking very differently at the way in which work can be carried out.</p>
<p>Stakeholder (Parent): Taking away choice of parents to choose a school which does not involve significant travel. Currently his child could walk the 100 yards to Carsphairn school safely but instead has to be transported eight miles on a road which can be dangerous in winter and has a significant number of large forestry lorries using it. Can envisage that in winter months child would miss schooling due to conditions. Would like the choice to be his and not the Authorities.</p>
<p>Stakeholder (Parent): Rain can have an impact on travel to school, they have been contacted to collect their children because of flooding, this isn't always possible and have had to rely on support from neighbours who have kindly helped out. Can make you feel stranded, relying on other people to help. Children also lose days of education, around ten last year.</p>
<p>Stakeholder (CCC): Interested in officer explaining about the work on schools modelling and effective educational experiences. However, feel that the timing for Carsphairn Primary is wrong, this should have been included in the work, is there a potential for this to be included so that more informed decisions can be made?</p>
<p>Officer: yes, Carsphairn is being included in this work.</p>
<p>Stakeholder (former pupil): has a journey of 40 minutes to travel to Dalry Secondary, this can be up to 1 hour in winter. Definitely feels that primary age children should be able to attend Carsphairn Primary and not have to travel these distances and on a dangerous route in winter.</p>
<p>Stakeholder (Parent): reiterated question regarding the number which would result in the reopening of the school.</p>
<p>Officer: the process is to look at facts and then decide if there is potential for a sustainable school.</p>
<p>Stakeholder (Parent): what are the cost of mothballing versus reopening?</p>
<p>Officer: The decision for closure is not about finance, it is about providing equity in educational provision.</p>
<p>Stakeholder (Parent): What is the benefit of closing rather than continuing to mothball?</p>
<p>Officer: mothballing is not used as long term option just to avoid closure, it allows for a period of time to assess the situation and for councilors to consider the facts.</p>
<p>Stakeholder (former parent and grandparent) – spoke of son who was fully supported during his time at Carsphairn Primary, strongly felt that he may not have reached his full potential at a larger school, at Carsphairn he felt nurtured and benefited from a range of educational opportunities. Has gone on to be a Dr of Maths at Glasgow University.</p>

Daughter and Grandson have also attended Carsphairn and have benefited from the nurturing environment provided by the smaller school. All have done wonderfully well and that is thanks to Carsphairn Primary School which provided a solid educational foundation, a school any child would be lucky to attend.

Stakeholder (Parent of former pupils): Emphasised the difficulties with transportation and after school activities. If pupils within the Carsphairn catchment wish to attend after school clubs at Dalry then parents have to arrange for travel back to the village. You are then putting families who cannot do this at a disadvantage. Despite being a small school Carsphairn had a range of activities taking place including gardening, choir and basketball.

Stakeholder (CCC): Also emphasised that Carsphairn pupils were not socially or educationally deprived, they benefited from wide ranging opportunities for social interaction, leading to good manners and a confidence when talking to adults. There were a host of extra curricular opportunities, trips to Belfast, Culzean and Drumlanrig Castles, forestry school and Fais Rois.

Must also remember that the school provided five part time jobs within a rural village. Confident that there will still be people available to fill these roles.

Funding from windfarms must also be factored. Community funds are growing and these will increase investment in the village.

Stakeholder (Parent): a smaller school will particularly benefit more advanced children. Child has already finished books and level of math which current class are studying. In a single class there is the opportunity to work alongside pupils of all levels which can only encourage development. The opportunity for one to one teaching is to be relished.

Stakeholder: We have lost 2 ½ years due to COVID, the clock needs to be reset. COVID has completely changed education and also how people view the natural environment. The area attracts a large number of walkers from Ayrshire, these people express an interest in living in the area but without the infrastructure in the village people will not move. Reopening the school will attract more people which in term could bring people to run businesses such as the pub. Closing the school is robbing the village of any chance to grow.

Stakeholder (Parent non-catchment): lives just outside the catchment area but Carsphairn Primary is actually closer to home than Dalry. Important that families such as hers are included in numbers of potential pupils.

Stakeholder (Parent and former pupil): The school has been in existence for nearly 300 years, there has always been fluctuation in school roll from 5 – 25. Poet Thomas Murray campaigned to keep the school open in the 1800s, threat of closure is not a new thing.

Stakeholder (Parent): agreed with resetting of the clock.

Stakeholder (CCC/Former Parent): raised concerns that closure wouldn't stop at Carsphairn and would pupils eventually have to travel to Castle Douglas?

Officer: stated that we are not here to discuss the future of any other schools. Process of ongoing mapping and modelling work will look at all schools in the region.

Stakeholder (CCC): school roll increased significantly in the late 80s and an extension was built so that the school consisted of a classroom and a GP room. Room has since been used as a nursery space. Would like to see the nursery reinstated, important that parents do not have to travel to Dalry for preschool provision, there is little for them to do in Dalry and the rising cost of fuel makes the 40-mile round trip should they go home in between a costly option.

Officer: Nursery in its present condition would need considerable investment to meet the Care Inspectorate requirements. It would be a challenge to reestablish the nursery as pupils need to be a designated space not shared as the school general purpose room.

Stakeholder (Parent): has training in childcare provision and agrees that new legislation will mean changes but feels this shouldn't be a barrier to reopening, should at least try, potential that windfarm grants could be used.

Stakeholder (Resident): When the school was open it provided a great opportunity for the community to be involved in school life. He was personally able to provide learning opportunities on space. There are many community volunteers who are able to support the school.

Stakeholder (Former Parent): concerned that if school permanently closes then use of the only playground in the village will be lost.

Officer: reassured that should closure happen then this would be looked into with a view to alternative provision.

Stakeholder (Parent): Bairn Banter is a group which runs on a Saturday morning, is very popular and families travel from out with Carsphairn to attend. Demonstrates the village attracts people and they are happy to travel rather than it always being the other way round.

Stakeholder (CCC): expressed disappointment that no elected members were present at the meeting, yet they are the people making the decisions on the future of the school. Many other people present agreed with this statement.

Stakeholder (Parent): Formally requested that officers come back to him with a number which would make reopening feasible.

Officer: drew meeting to a close, reiterated that any further representations could be made until the 4th November and thanked everyone for their attendance.

Meeting ended at 8 pm

A final representation was made by a P4 pupil who asked for it to be noted that " I want to go to Carsphairn School".

Appendix D

(Please complete any sections that are relevant to the age/stage of your child(ren) assuming the Primary School and Nursery were to reopen).

Pre-Nursery

Would you enrol your child(ren) at Carsphairn Nursery? Yes No

If no, which nursery are you considering for your child(ren)?

Would you enrol your child(ren) at Carsphairn Primary School? Yes No

If no, which school are you considering for your child(ren)?

Nursery

Does your child(ren) currently attend nursery? Yes No

If yes, which nursery is your child(ren) enrolled at?

Would you enrol your child(ren) at Carsphairn Nursery? Yes No

If no, which nursery are you considering for your child(ren)?

Would you enrol your child(ren) at Carsphairn Primary School? Yes No

If no, which school are you considering for your child(ren)?

Primary

Which school does your child(ren) currently attend? *Forced into Dalry Primary*

Would you enrol your child(ren) at Carsphairn Primary School? Yes No

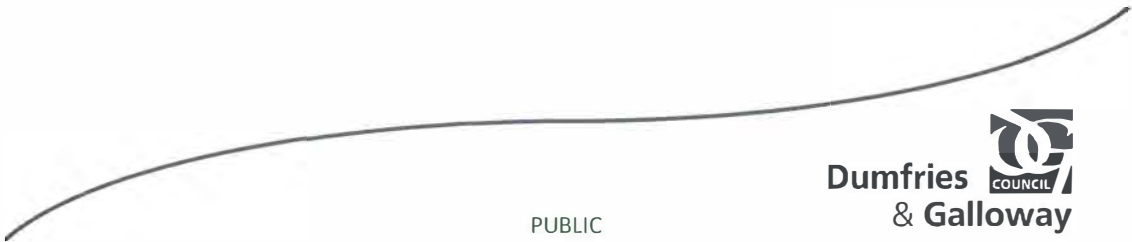
Pre-nursery/Nursery/Primary

If education at Carsphairn P.S and Nursery were discontinued, and the catchment area realigned with Dalry Primary School –

Would you enrol your child(ren) at Dalry Primary School? Yes No *wouldnt have a choise*

If yes, would your child(ren) use free primary school transport? Yes No

(Eligibility for primary age children - Under 8 years old and live 2 miles away from their catchment school, over 8 years old and live 3 miles away from their catchment school)



(Please complete any sections that are relevant to the age/stage of your child(ren) assuming the Primary School and Nursery were to reopen).

Pre-Nursery

Would you enrol your child(ren) at Carsphairn Nursery? Yes No

If no, which nursery are you considering for your child(ren)?

Would you enrol your child(ren) at Carsphairn Primary School? Yes No

If no, which school are you considering for your child(ren)?

Nursery

Does your child(ren) currently attend nursery? Yes No

If yes, which nursery is your child(ren) enrolled at?

Would you enrol your child(ren) at Carsphairn Nursery? Yes No

If no, which nursery are you considering for your child(ren)?

Would you enrol your child(ren) at Carsphairn Primary School? Yes No

If no, which school are you considering for your child(ren)?

Primary

Which school does your child(ren) currently attend? *Dalry Primary School*

Would you enrol your child(ren) at Carsphairn Primary School? Yes No

Pre-nursery/Nursery/Primary

If education at Carsphairn P.S and Nursery were discontinued, and the catchment area realigned with Dalry Primary School –

Would you enrol your child(ren) at Dalry Primary School? Yes No

If yes, would your child(ren) use free primary school transport? Yes No

I believe free transport is not currently available (to use public transport)

(Eligibility for primary age children - Under 8 years old and live 2 miles away from their catchment school, over 8 years old and live 3 miles away from their catchment school)

(Please complete any sections that are relevant to the age/stage of your child(ren) assuming the Primary School and Nursery were to reopen).

Pre-Nursery

Would you enrol your child(ren) at Carsphairn Nursery? Yes No

If no, which nursery are you considering for your child(ren)?

Would you enrol your child(ren) at Carsphairn Primary School? Yes No

If no, which school are you considering for your child(ren)? *Dalry Primary*

Nursery

Sorry do use this one!

Does your child(ren) currently attend nursery? Yes No

If yes, which nursery is your child(ren) enrolled at?

Would you enrol your child(ren) at Carsphairn Nursery? Yes No

If no, which nursery are you considering for your child(ren)?

Would you enrol your child(ren) at Carsphairn Primary School? Yes No

If no, which school are you considering for your child(ren)? *Dalry Primary*

Primary

Which school does your child(ren) currently attend? *Dalry*

Would you enrol your child(ren) at Carsphairn Primary School? Yes No

Pre-nursery/Nursery/Primary

If education at Carsphairn P.S and Nursery were discontinued, and the catchment area realigned with Dalry Primary School –

Would you enrol your child(ren) at Dalry Primary School? Yes No

If yes, would your child(ren) use free primary school transport? Yes No

(Eligibility for primary age children - Under 8 years old and live 2 miles away from their catchment school, over 8 years old and live 3 miles away from their catchment school)

(Please complete any sections that are relevant to the age/stage of your child(ren) assuming the Primary School and Nursery were to reopen).

Pre-Nursery

Would you enrol your child(ren) at Carsphairn Nursery? Yes No

If no, which nursery are you considering for your child(ren)? *Dalry / Castle Douglas*

Would you enrol your child(ren) at Carsphairn Primary School? Yes No

If no, which school are you considering for your child(ren)? *Castle Douglas*

Nursery

Does your child(ren) currently attend nursery? Yes No

If yes, which nursery is your child(ren) enrolled at?

Would you enrol your child(ren) at Carsphairn Nursery? Yes No

If no, which nursery are you considering for your child(ren)? *Dalry / Castle Douglas*

Would you enrol your child(ren) at Carsphairn Primary School? Yes No

If no, which school are you considering for your child(ren)? *Dalry / Castle Douglas*

Primary

Which school does your child(ren) currently attend? *N/A*

Would you enrol your child(ren) at Carsphairn Primary School? Yes No

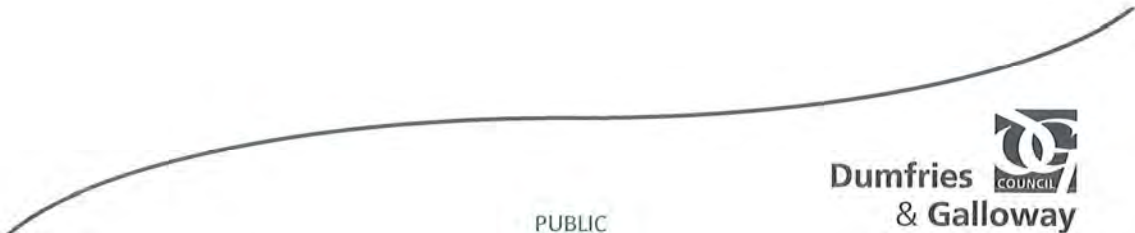
Pre-nursery/Nursery/Primary

If education at Carsphairn P.S and Nursery were discontinued, and the catchment area realigned with Dalry Primary School –

Would you enrol your child(ren) at Dalry Primary School? Yes No *Preference*

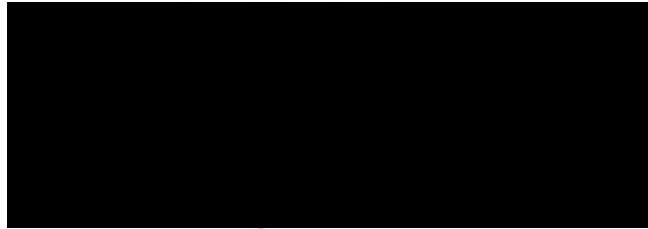
If yes, would your child(ren) use free primary school transport? Yes No *Castle Douglas*

(Eligibility for primary age children - Under 8 years old and live 2 miles away from their catchment school, over 8 years old and live 3 miles away from their catchment school)



* Please note, whilst we fully understand that Carsphairn primary school is no longer viable. As parents, our first choice of nursery school would be Castle Douglas.

Thanks



(Please complete any sections that are relevant to the age/stage of your child(ren) assuming the Primary School and Nursery were to reopen).

Pre-Nursery

Would you enrol your child(ren) at Carsphairn Nursery? Yes No

If no, which nursery are you considering for your child(ren)? *N/A*

Would you enrol your child(ren) at Carsphairn Primary School? Yes No

If no, which school are you considering for your child(ren)? *My [redacted] are at [redacted] primary, I moved here last August & Carsphairn school was closed so I enrolled them at [redacted] primary and NOT going to move them again. They are settled.*

Nursery

Does your child(ren) currently attend nursery? Yes No

If yes, which nursery is your child(ren) enrolled at?

Would you enrol your child(ren) at Carsphairn Nursery? Yes No *N/A*

If no, which nursery are you considering for your child(ren)?

Would you enrol your child(ren) at Carsphairn Primary School? Yes No

If no, which school are you considering for your child(ren)?

Primary

Which school does your child(ren) currently attend? .. *[redacted] Primary*

Would you enrol your child(ren) at Carsphairn Primary School? Yes No

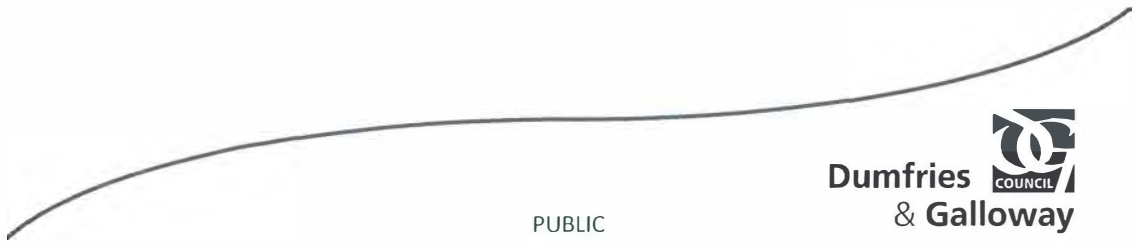
They are settled at their school as we moved up here & not willing to move their school again. If carsphairn were open last year they Pre-nursery/Nursery/Primary yes they would have attend carsphairn school.

If education at Carsphairn P.S and Nursery were discontinued, and the catchment area realigned with Dalry Primary School –

Would you enrol your child(ren) at Dalry Primary School? Yes No

If yes, would your child(ren) use free primary school transport? Yes No

(Eligibility for primary age children - Under 8 years old and live 2 miles away from their catchment school, over 8 years old and live 3 miles away from their catchment school)



(Please complete any sections that are relevant to the age/stage of your child(ren) assuming the Primary School and Nursery were to reopen).

Pre-Nursery

Would you enrol your child(ren) at Carsphairn Nursery? Yes No

If no, which nursery are you considering for your child(ren)?

Would you enrol your child(ren) at Carsphairn Primary School? Yes No

If no, which school are you considering for your child(ren)?

Nursery

Does your child(ren) currently attend nursery? Yes No

If yes, which nursery is your child(ren) enrolled at?

Would you enrol your child(ren) at Carsphairn Nursery? Yes No

If no, which nursery are you considering for your child(ren)?

Would you enrol your child(ren) at Carsphairn Primary School? Yes No

If no, which school are you considering for your child(ren)?

Primary

Which school does your child(ren) currently attend? Dalry

Would you enrol your child(ren) at Carsphairn Primary School? Yes No

Pre-nursery/Nursery/Primary

If education at Carsphairn P.S and Nursery were discontinued, and the catchment area realigned with Dalry Primary School -

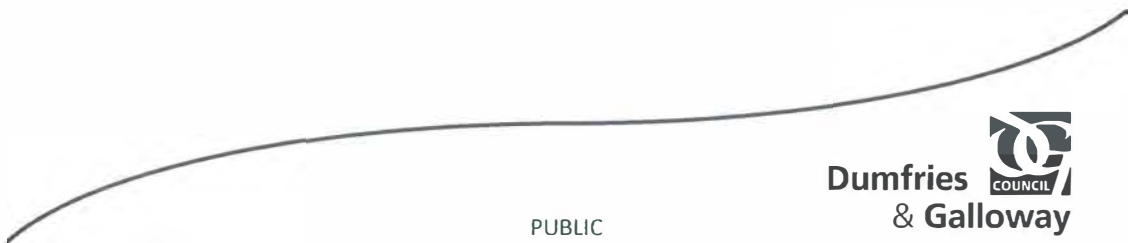
This is irrelevant as Carsphairn is currently not possible to attend. Also, it is impossible to place a placing request for Carsphairn

Would you enrol your child(ren) at Dalry Primary School? Yes No

If yes, would your child(ren) use free primary school transport? Yes No

- I have tried!

(Eligibility for primary age children - Under 8 years old and live 2 miles away from their catchment school, over 8 years old and live 3 miles away from their catchment school)



(Please complete any sections that are relevant to the age/stage of your child(ren) assuming the Primary School and Nursery were to reopen).

Pre-Nursery

Would you enrol your child(ren) at Carsphairn Nursery? Yes No

If no, which nursery are you considering for your child(ren)?

Would you enrol your child(ren) at Carsphairn Primary School? Yes No

If no, which school are you considering for your child(ren)?

Nursery

Does your child(ren) currently attend nursery? Yes No

If yes, which nursery is your child(ren) enrolled at?

Would you enrol your child(ren) at Carsphairn Nursery? Yes No

If no, which nursery are you considering for your child(ren)?

Would you enrol your child(ren) at Carsphairn Primary School? Yes No

If no, which school are you considering for your child(ren)?

Primary

Which school does your child(ren) currently attend?

Would you enrol your child(ren) at Carsphairn Primary School? Yes No

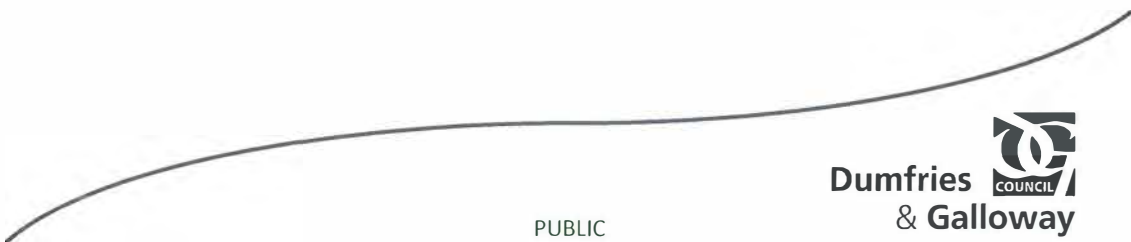
Pre-nursery/Nursery/Primary

If education at Carsphairn P.S and Nursery were discontinued, and the catchment area realigned with Dalry Primary School –

Would you enrol your child(ren) at Dalry Primary School? Yes No

If yes, would your child(ren) use free primary school transport? Yes No

(Eligibility for primary age children - Under 8 years old and live 2 miles away from their catchment school, over 8 years old and live 3 miles away from their catchment school)



Appendix E

Pupil Meetings

Date: Wednesday 2nd November

Location: Dalry Primary School

Attendance – Group 1

David Maxwell Education Officer

7 Pupils

Attendance – Group 2

David Maxwell Education Officer

7 Pupils

The pupil meetings took the form of a brief introduction regarding the consultation process for Carsphairn Primary School and Nursery, most pupils were aware of the process, some mentioned conversations taking place at home and others mentioned that there had been meetings at Dalry and Carsphairn.

After the introduction, conversation focused on what ‘consultation’ meant and what is happening at the present time, each of the questions were asked/discussed in turn. The children were all very happy to engage in conversation.

Each session lasted around 30 minutes.

Staff Meeting

David Maxwell Education Officer, was in attendance at Dalry Primary School on Wednesday 2nd November and reiterated the consultation process to staff. Staff were made aware that they could speak/discuss the proposals with David or make representation. No members of staff made a representation or discussed the proposal with David.

Pupil Group 1

Consisting of 2 x Primary 3 and 5 x Primary 4 Pupils

Question 1 What do you think might be an advantage of a larger school?

Much more and much better playground facilities. Dalry Primary School has a climbing wall, football pitch, trim trail, monkey bars, MUGA, and a garden (which we use on Tuesdays).

Lots of facilities to use within the school. Computers, proper library, PE hall, dining hall (which serves good food).

All staff look after us very well – they are very caring. We have a Breakfast room where we can have toast & cereal.

Large number of staff are kind, helpful and respectful.

Older children help to look after the younger children.

Teachers have time to help us if we are stuck.

Loads of children to play with in the larger school. That means more friends.

More of people to work with, to help you out and to learn with. Get to make new friends.

Lots of PE.

We make posters to put around the community. We planned and organised a 'soup social' for older people in the community to come into school.

Question 2 What do you think might be some disadvantages of a larger school?

More people, some people can be mean to you.

Lots of children so you might be ignored by other children and/or by staff.

A larger school could be noisy & busy.

Question 3 What do you think might be an advantage of a smaller school?

Carsphairn has a basketball court in playground.

A smaller school might be less noisy.

In a smaller school there might not be many people to bully you.

You might get more time with the teachers.

New people might settle quicker into a smaller school.

Less people might be an advantage for some children (but not for all of us).

Easier for staff in a smaller school, less children to look after and work with.

Question 4 What do you think might be some disadvantages of a smaller school?

Less people to be friends with.

Less space to do things, and less resources and equipment.

Maybe less opportunities to do things.

There wouldn't be as many adults about to help look after us.

Question 5 What do you think about Carsphairn Primary School possibly closing?

I would want to close the school. There aren't many children living there, I can only think of three or four. The village is mostly older people.

The school could be turned into something else, like a community shop.

I would keep it open in case people would move to the area.

I would go to Carsphairn Primary, but my Mum says I was to go here because it is bigger.

I don't think there are many children who live in Carsphairn. The numbers will be very small – it wouldn't be good and I wouldn't want to go to a school like that.

Question 6 How do you feel about children from other catchment areas/school attending Dalry Primary School?

It's a good thing – we already have people from lots of different places coming to our school.

It's very mean to not let other people come to our school – some people want to come to a bigger school

School should be for everyone – we've welcomed some Ukrainian families.

Lots of people are coming to our school – that's a good thing.

Question 7 Is there anything you think the Council should consider before making its final decision?

We would need to get the school ready to re-open.

If the school was to re-open we would need to update the building and find a teacher.

The school has been empty for a long time. It will need some work before it could be re-opened

What happens if they build more houses in Carsphairn? Where will these people go?

What happens if people change their mind and now want to go to Carsphairn?

We need to think about how many people might go to the school in the future. What happens if more people decide to go there?

Pupil Group 2

Consisting of 2 x Primary 5, 1 x Primary 6 and 4 x Primary 7 Pupils

Question 1 What do you think might be an advantage of a larger school?

More chances of making friends and more of a social life in a larger school. There are more opportunities to find people with interest like you. That's helpful and better for moving to high school.

More funding in a larger school. There will be more supplies and equipment. More group activities can take place in the classroom and around the school. There are lots of different people to work with.

Because there are more people in Dalry Primary, we get to meet people with different personalities.

There are more children so we can take part in team games etc

We took part in a school play before Covid. You need lots of children to do this.

Bigger community support. FODs (Friends of Dalry School) help organise & fund activities like mini fair, splash party etc.

More community events can take place in a bigger school. We've had bake sales, soup social, Christmas Fair. We invite elderly people to these things like pancake day.

You could get more help at a bigger school – more teacher helpers.

Question 2 What do you think might be some disadvantages of a larger school?

More pupils in school therefore teachers would have less time to work with each pupil.

Might be overwhelming to come to a big school if you had been used to Carsphairn Primary.

Maybe less access to resources if these have to be shared between more children. It could be noisier and louder in a big school.

Question 3 What do you think might be an advantage of a smaller school?

More equipment, which might mean you don't need to share.

It would be peaceful and quiet. It would be easier to focus on work

Pupil/Teacher ratio.

Question 4 What do you think might be some disadvantages of a smaller school?

Smaller space in school and in the playground.

Less resources and equipment to use.

Friendship groups/peer groups are small. This could make it difficult to find people like you.

Transport arrangements – it is going to cost more for trips and other activities.

Question 5 What do you think about Carsphairn Primary School possibly closing?

It is an opportunity to change the school into something else to benefit the community.

Most of us come from Dalry Primary already so it doesn't make much of a difference to us.

Children from Carsphairn already come here and it works well.

We already live in different villages – Balmaclennan, New Galloway, Dalry, Parton, Mossdale, and from rural farms.

There aren't many children there anyway – no point in keeping the school open.

It is not far to drive to Dalry and it is a much bigger and better school.

Question 6 How do you feel about children from other catchment areas/school attending Dalry P.S?

We are used to this already.

Some children who attend Dalry Primary should be in other catchment schools (usually Kells Primary) but choose to come here.

Having more children is good for the school. It helps me because I have a bigger friendship group.

People start at Dalry Primary because we have a nursery here. Then most of us come to school here and our siblings come here too.

Question 7 Is there anything you think the Council should consider before making its final decision?

How many children would be attending Carsphairn Primary if was to open?

There were only two children there before. That isn't enough children for a school.

Someone would need to think about transport arrangements.

How will they use the space at Carsphairn if the school closes? I'd like to see it turned into something else.

Appendix F

Schools (Consultation) (Scotland) Act 2010

Report by Education Scotland addressing educational aspects of the proposal by Dumfries and Galloway Council to discontinue education provision at Carsphairn Primary School and Nursery, re-assigning its catchment area to Dalry Primary School.

December 2022

1. Introduction

1.1 This report from Education Scotland has been prepared by His Majesty's Inspectors of Education (HM Inspectors) in accordance with the terms of the [Schools \(Consultation\) \(Scotland\) Act 2010](#) (the 2010 Act). The purpose of the report is to provide an independent and impartial consideration of Dumfries and Galloway Council's proposal to discontinue education provision at Carsphairn Primary School and Nursery, re-assigning its catchment area to Dalry Primary School. Section 2 of the report sets out brief details of the consultation process. Section 3 of the report sets out HM Inspectors' consideration of the educational aspects of the proposal, including significant views expressed by consultees. Section 4 summarises HM Inspectors' overall view of the proposal. Upon receipt of this report, the Act requires the council to consider it and then prepare its final consultation report. The council's final consultation report should include this report and must contain an explanation of how, in finalising the proposal, it has reviewed the initial proposal, including a summary of points raised during the consultation process and the council's response to them. The council has to publish its final consultation report three weeks before it takes its final decision. Where a council is proposing to close a school, it needs to follow all statutory obligations set out in the 2010 Act, including notifying Ministers within six working days of making its final decision and explaining to consultees the opportunity they have to make representations to Ministers. In addition, special provisions apply to proposals to close a rural school.

1.2 HM Inspectors considered:

- the educational benefits the council believes will result from implementation of the proposal, and the council's reasons for coming to these beliefs;
- the likely effects of the proposal for children and young people of the settings; any other users; children likely to become pupils within two years of the date of publication of the proposal paper; and other children and young people in the council area;
- any other likely effects of the proposal; and
- how the council intends to minimise or avoid any adverse effects that may arise from the proposal.

1.3 In preparing this report, HM Inspectors undertook the following activities:

- consideration of all relevant documentation provided by the council in relation to the proposal, specifically the educational benefits statement and related consultation documents, written and oral submissions from parents and others;
- consideration of further representations made directly to Education Scotland on relevant educational aspects of the proposal;
- consideration of further information on all schools affected; and
- visits to the site of Carsphairn Primary School and Nursery and Dalry Primary School, including discussion with relevant consultees.

1.4 As the proposal would lead to the closure of a rural school, HM Inspectors also took account of the council's consideration of any reasonable alternatives to closure of Carsphairn Primary School and Nursery and re-assigning its catchment area to Dalry Primary School, the likely effect on the local community and the likely effect of any different travelling arrangements of the proposed closure.

2. Consultation process

2.1 Dumfries and Galloway Council undertook the consultation on its proposal(s) with reference to the [Schools \(Consultation\) \(Scotland\) Act 2010](#).

2.2 The main proposal within the consultation is to discontinue education provision at Carsphairn Primary School and Nursery, re-assigning its catchment area to Dalry Primary School. The proposed school for closure has been mothballed since 2018-19. The formal consultation ran from 5 September 2022 until 14 October 2022. The council communicated the proposed statutory consultation using a range of methods, including emails to potential consultees, articles in the local newspaper and copies of the proposal were made available electronically on the council website and in paper format via central locations.

2.3 Dumfries and Galloway Council staff met with 14 pupils as part of two focus groups to discuss proposals. Almost all pupils recognised that there are social and educational benefits of attending either a small school like Carsphairn Primary School and Nursery or a larger school like Dalry Primary School.

2.4 The council issued questionnaires to the ten Carsphairn households, which it identified as having children who may choose to attend the Carsphairn Primary School and Nursery. Seven questionnaires were returned, four respondents indicated that they would choose to enrol their children at Carsphairn School and Nursery and three indicated that they would not.

2.5 Two public meetings took place on 29 September 2022, one in Dalry Primary School and the other in Lagwyne Hall, Carsphairn. The public meeting in Dalry Primary School had four attendees and the public meeting in Lagwyne Hall had 33 attendees. Almost all attendees at the public meetings raised concerns about the proposal. These included why families did not have the option to enrol their children at Carsphairn Primary School and Nursery since mothballing, the accuracy of the predicted falling roll at Dalry Primary School and the estimated travel times provided in the proposal. There were also some differing views on the potential educational benefit of larger class sizes and on the most appropriate type of Early Learning and Childcare within a rural community.

2.6 Of the 34 representations sent to the council as part of the consultation process, almost all were in opposition to the proposal. The reasons for opposition were similar to the concerns raised at the public meetings. Representations from the members of the Community Council outlined concerns that closing the school permanently did not align with their plans for the regeneration of the village.

3. Educational aspects of proposal

3.1 The Carsphairn Primary School and Nursery building has been mothballed since 2018-19. Half of the children from the school's catchment area currently attend Dalry Primary School. No children have attended the nursery since the end of academic session 2011-12. In its proposal document, the council sets out its rationale for the proposed closure. Over the next five years, the council expects the school's maximum roll to be around 11 school aged children and three nursery aged children. Currently, there are ten children in the Carsphairn Primary School catchment area, five of these children attend Dalry Primary School. The council believes that if the nursery were to reopen, the building would be unlikely to meet Care Inspectorate re-registration standards. The council previously rated the Carsphairn Primary School building as C for suitability and B for condition. The building has not been reassessed since 2014. Dalry Primary School building was previously rated B for suitability and B for condition.

3.2 The council has provided its rationale and an educational benefits statement outlining how it believes its proposal to close Carsphairn Primary School will benefit children. This includes a statement that the size of the school provides significant impediments to the successful implementation of Curriculum for Excellence. HM Inspectors do not support this view and do not find that the council's proposal demonstrates clearly enough how children will benefit from the closure of the school.

3.3 Almost all stakeholders who met with HM Inspectors have concerns about the proposal. These include aspects of the educational benefits as well some financial data contained in the council's statement. Almost all disputed the estimated time for children travelling to and from Dalry Primary School from the Carsphairn catchment area. A few of those that met with HM Inspectors do not believe it is reasonable for younger children to travel the proposed distance to and from Dalry Primary School each day. A few adults who had previously worked in, and a few young people at secondary school who had attended Carsphairn Primary School and Nursery, disputed the educational benefits highlighted in the report.

3.4 As the proposal will lead to the closure of a rural school, HM Inspectors also took account of the council's consideration of the factors to which it should have special regard.

3.5 The council has assessed the effects of its proposal on children, young people and the community. It has not identified any significant impacts resulting from closure. HM Inspectors believe that the council should provide clearer evidence to support this view. For example, the Carsphairn Community Council believes that closing the school will negatively impact on its plans for the regeneration of the village. In taking forward the proposal, the council needs to consider further the potential negative impact on the community.

4. Summary

Overall, HM Inspectors do not believe that the council has set out sufficiently balanced educational benefits. In taking forward this proposal, the council needs to expand on the educational benefits that the proposed closure of the school will deliver for the children who live in the school's catchment area. It should engage more thoroughly with parents and members of the community, particularly around alternatives to the proposal. Working closely with the local community, the council should revisit factors which may impact on the children and the local community should the proposal proceed. This includes the potential negative impact of travel on the children, families and the environment. Some consultees also believe there are inaccuracies in the proposal document. These may affect their ability to fully understand the benefits which the council states the closure of Carsphairn Primary School and Nursery will deliver. In its final consultation report, the council will need to set out the actions it has taken to address these concerns.

**HM Inspectors
December 2022**