

## APPENDIX E

### Penicuik High School Expansion and Refurbishment Vision Statement

***Create a transformative educational facility that seamlessly blends heritage and innovation. Our aim is to honour the historical significance of the building while providing modern facilities that inspire and support the current and future generations of learners. We envisage a revitalised learning environment that fosters creativity, collaboration, and academic excellence, firmly rooted in local culture and values.***

Central to our vision is the enhancement of learning spaces and facilities that meet the evolving needs of our learners. We will prioritise the creation of versatile and modern classrooms, state-of-the-art laboratories, and dedicated areas for the arts and sports empowering our students to think critically, collaborate effectively, and explore their passions.

This refurbishment and extension will provide our learners with the tools they need to excel academically and develop the skills necessary for success in a rapidly evolving world.

We envisage this project to act as a hub of engagement and collaboration. We will open our doors to the wider community, creating spaces that invite lifelong learning, cultural exchange, and community events. By fostering strong partnerships and embracing inclusivity, we will promote an environment where everyone feels welcome and inspired. Our vision is to establish a legacy of excellence, where heritage and modern education unite to shape the leaders and innovators of tomorrow.

In summary, our vision is to create an inspiring, modern, and inclusive learning environment that honours the past while embracing the future. We are committed to preserving the building's heritage while introducing innovative design concepts and cutting-edge facilities. By doing so, we will provide our students with a transformative educational experience that equips them with the skills, knowledge, and confidence to become lifelong learners and leaders in their chosen paths. Together with our community, we will create a High School that stands as a symbol of educational excellence and community pride.

## Objectives:

### 1. Enhancing Learning Spaces and Facilities:

Central to our vision is the enhancement of learning spaces and facilities to meet the evolving needs of our students and teachers. We will reimagine the interior spaces, maximising natural light, and incorporating flexible layouts that encourage collaboration, innovation, and interdisciplinary learning. Our extension will provide additional classrooms, specialist laboratories, and dedicated spaces for creative and performing arts, empowering students to explore their passions and develop their talents.

### 2. Respecting Heritage, Embracing Modernity:

Our vision is to refurbish and extend our existing listed high school building in a way that respects its historical significance whilst embracing modernity. We will preserve the architectural integrity and character of the existing listed building, respecting the original design, materials, and features.

Simultaneously, we will introduce contemporary design elements and technologies to create a harmonious blend of old and new, creating a vibrant and inspiring environment that supports 21st-century learning.

### 3. Sustainability and Energy Efficiency:

*“Midlothian Council has pledged to work towards reducing the factors contributing to climate change. The Council aims to achieve Net Zero carbon and greenhouse gas emissions by 2030.”*

*Midlothian Council – Climate Change Strategy 2020*

[Learning for Sustainability](#) is an entitlement for all learners within Scotland’s curriculum. It weaves together global citizenship, sustainable development education, and outdoor learning to enable learners, educators, schools and their wider communities to build a socially-just, sustainable and equitable society. It supports the development of knowledge, skills and values at the heart of the curriculum’s four capacities, helping to nurture learners as responsible citizens and effective contributors. Scotland’s ambition is that all learners receive their entitlement to Learning for Sustainability. This requires all settings to develop an effective whole-school and community approach.

As an integral part of this project, we are committed to sustainable practices. We aim to implement sustainable practices and energy-efficient solutions throughout the building, reducing our carbon footprint and instilling in our students a sense of responsibility towards the environment.

### 4. Community Engagement:

Community engagement is key to any project and we aspire to create community spaces within the refurbished and extended building, inviting the local community to utilise the facilities for lifelong learning, cultural events, and collaborations. By fostering a sense of belonging and shared ownership, we aim to strengthen our relationship with the community and create a hub of learning and creativity for all.

## **5. Inclusion:**

*'In Midlothian we need to be ambitious and strive for inclusion to be at the root of our ethos. We need to ensure that the support for children and young people with additional support needs is flexible within our learning estate, with aligned decision making processes and resources. We need to ensure we have strong training pathways to upskill all of our staff within learning and practice development, which incorporates time for coaching, mentoring, reflection and embedding into practice.'*

The Scottish Government is committed to promoting an inclusive educational system focusing on overcoming barriers to learning and Getting it Right for Every Child (GIRFEC).

Scotland's inclusive approach to education enables all children and young people to be part of a community, boosting their emotional wellbeing and aiding the development of social skills.

Children and young people should learn in the environment which best suits their needs and inclusive practice is important whatever the setting.

Every school should be built to inclusive design principles and Midlothian is committed to ensuring that inclusion is at the root of our ethos and that our children and young people can reach their fullest potential.

## **6. Accessibility:**

To ensure inclusivity and equal opportunities for all students, teachers and users of the building regardless of their physical or cognitive abilities, it is crucial to ensure the building is accessible.

We are committed to creating an accessible educational facility that accommodates the needs of all students, staff, and visitors. Our refurbishment will prioritise universal design principles, ensuring that everyone can fully participate in the educational experience, regardless of their abilities. A fully accessible facility promotes equal access to education, encourages inclusivity, supports student success, fosters independence, and ensure statutory compliance.

## **7. Inspiring Creativity and Innovation:**

Our vision is to provide dedicated spaces that inspire creativity, innovation, and interdisciplinary learning. From art studios to science labs, performance spaces to maker spaces, we will create areas that empower students to explore their passions and unlock their full potential.

## **8. Future-Proofing:**

*"Our young people need to develop skills to be flexible and adaptable, with the capacity to continue to develop new skills that they will need for the rapidly changing challenges of learning, work and life."*

*The places where learning happens need to be flexible and adaptable to respond to the changing demands. Design needs to look forward and reflect places of work and study beyond the school years, as well as meeting the needs of all activities, not just the traditional cores.*

*Innovative design enables boundaries to be pushed to offer success. In the post-Covid-19 world, workplaces will look very different with remote and flexible working being more prevalent, and in preparing our young people for this, learning environments must also adapt.”*

*Midlothian Council - Learning Estate Strategy 2017-2047 (Update)*

Flexibility and adaptability are crucial considerations when designing any educational facility. Our schools need to be designed in a way that allows for the easy and effective adaptation to changing needs and circumstances. This can include changes in teaching methods, changes in student population, and changes in technology.

As we refurbish our listed high school building, we will integrate forward-thinking design principles to ensure its longevity. By incorporating flexible infrastructure and anticipating technological advancements, we will future-proof the building, allowing for seamless adaptation to evolving educational needs.