

# Finance and Resources Committee

10.00am, Thursday, 25 January 2024

## Reinforced Autoclaved Aerated Concrete Update

Executive/routine  
Wards

Executive

### 1. Recommendations

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- 1.1 That Finance and Resources Committee notes:
  - 1.1.1 The estimated funding required for works in buildings where Reinforced Autoclaved Aerated Concrete (RAAC) has been identified and that these costs will be included in the Capital Strategy as part of the forthcoming budget setting process;
  - 1.1.2 The costs incurred in current financial year in addressing RAAC in the short term and that these costs are principally revenue in nature; and
  - 1.1.3 The longer-term implications for certain buildings, particularly Fox Covert/StAndrew's RC Primary Schools and Blackhall Library, and that further reports will be brought forward when options appraisals are completed.

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## Reinforced Autoclaved Aerated Concrete Update

### 2. Executive Summary

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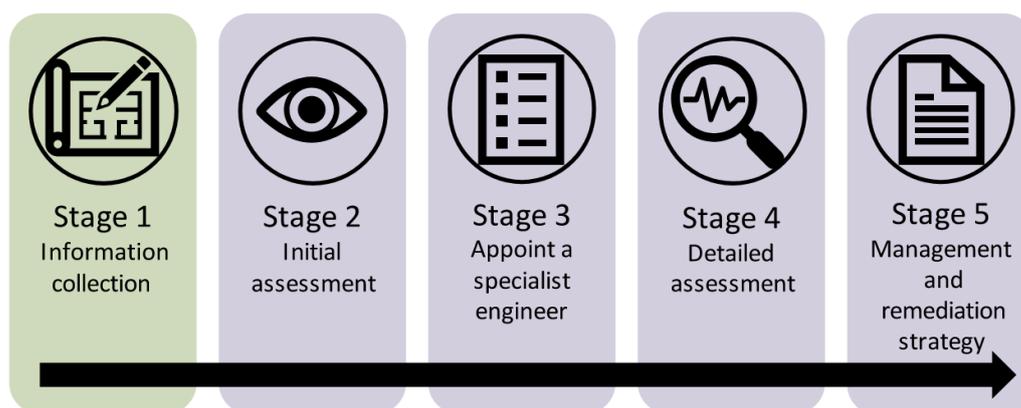
- 2.1 This report provides an update on the presence of Reinforced Autoclaved Aerated Concrete (RAAC) within the Council's operational estate.
- 2.2 The costs for surveys and works have been estimated to the extent possible and it is recommended these are included in the forthcoming budget setting process.
- 2.3 For certain buildings, longer term options require to be considered and further reports will be presented to Committee as necessary outlining the best overall value option in each case.

### 3. Background

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- 3.1 RAAC is a form of lightweight concrete plank commonly used in roofs, walls, cladding, floors and eaves from the 1960s to 1980s with local authorities using them in a variety of buildings including many schools.
- 3.2 The Council has followed a prioritisation process for surveying the operational estate which initially focused on the learning estate and then progressed to all operational properties including libraries, community centres, leisure centres and swimming pools (Edinburgh Leisure), care homes, offices, depots, young people's centres etc.
- 3.3 The process for each building surveyed follows the advice shown in the diagram below which is taken from the Department of Education 'Reinforced Autoclaved

Aerated Concrete (RAAC) Estates Guidance' published in December 2022.



- 3.4 On 28 September 2023, Council approved a motion by Councillor Day:
- 3.4.1 Agreeing to a report back to Finance and Resources Committee in 2 cycles on the timescale for any remedial work, and in the interim to provide any updates in the Business Bulletin and/or Member's Briefing where appropriate.
  - 3.4.2 Agreeing that it is important to maintain the continuity of service delivery wherever possible, and
  - 3.4.3 That relevant executive committees and ward members should be kept informed as to how this is being achieved in cases where the use of existing buildings is restricted. The report to Committee should detail:
    - (a) Each building that has a RAAC problem;
    - (b) The scope of the problem for that building;
    - (c) The estimated costs to resolve the RAAC issue for that building; and
    - (d) The timescales for each building to be made safe.
- 3.5 This report provides an update of the current position in every building where RAAC has been identified on the terms of the above motion.

## 4. Main report

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- 4.1 Surveys and initial remediation work have been completed across the operational estate. The estimated cost of this work to date is £1.912m. This includes asbestos surveys, structural engineer fees and the cost of any other works to allow the full surveys to be completed (e.g. removal of ceilings, scaffolding provision etc.). The estimate includes allowance for ongoing inspections, continuation of scaffolding hire where necessary, any temporary remedial measures such as propping of RAAC panels and further survey work which will be carried out in line with structural engineering guidance.
- 4.2 The extent of surveying across the estate has been significant and carried out at pace. Surveys were prioritised based on known RAAC risk factors such as building

age and roof type. During the initial assessment (stage 2) over 200 buildings were identified as requiring surveys. These surveys were completed in October 2023. A subsequent assurance exercise has been undertaken to cross check information gathered during surveys and identify any further evidence required for record keeping. This exercise included a review of any areas that were inaccessible during the initial survey with the assurance exercise now largely complete.

- 4.3 For those properties where RAAC has been identified, the solutions in terms of works required and cost, both in the short and longer term, are different. For example, there are mitigation measures that can be taken in the short term but these are unsustainable in the longer term. The following information provides an update on the RAAC in each property.

### **Updates on Buildings with RAAC**

#### Trinity Primary School

- 4.4 The area impacted by RAAC is shown in Appendix 1. The area has been closed and temporary accommodation (four classrooms) installed on site. The school will require a roof replacement on the entire area impacted by RAAC. This work has been split into two stages with the priority being the classrooms roof due to the ongoing cost of the decant accommodation and the technical complexities of the second stage. Work on phase one is scheduled to start on site in early 2024 and be completed by early Autumn 2024 with an estimated cost of £2.537m (inclusive of temporary classroom hire costs).
- 4.5 The second phase will require the replacement of the kitchen roof. It is estimated that this work will cost an additional £1.18m and is scheduled to be completed by the end of 2024.

#### Cramond Primary School

- 4.6 The area impacted by RAAC is shown in Appendix 2. Again, these areas have been closed off from use and temporary accommodation (four classrooms) provided on site. The area covered by RAAC will require a roof replacement with works due to commence in early 2024 and completed in early Autumn 2024. The estimated cost is £2.992m (inclusive of temporary classroom hire costs).

#### Lorne Primary School

- 4.7 The entire roof area of the main building at Lorne has RAAC as shown in Appendix 3. The inspections revealed that it was in good condition, and in the short term, significant mitigation works commenced over the October break 2023 to reinforce the upper floor ceiling. This has allowed the reoccupation of the upper floor, which has brought the school back to operational capacity.
- 4.8 The cost of the work undertaken to date is included in the overall survey and initial remedial works costs provided in paragraph 4.1.
- 4.9 In the medium to longer-term, leaving the RAAC in situ is not a sustainable option and therefore options to replace the roof will require to be considered. This will be

programmed, and the medium-term financial implications are estimated to be at £3m.

#### Trinity Academy Swimming Pool

- 4.10 The swimming pool was already unused and will be demolished as part of the planned replacement of the wider school facility. Costs will be covered as part of the Trinity Academy Phase 2 budget as demolition of this building has always been within scope for that project.

#### Fox Covert/St Andrew's RC Primary School

- 4.11 The circulation/office areas with RAAC remain operational following the completion of mitigation works over the summer holidays. The gym hall and dining hall remain closed but are expected to re-open early in 2024 following the completion of further mitigation works. The kitchen will be closed in the longer term until safe mitigations are designed. In the meantime, hot meals are currently being delivered to the school. The full extent of the area covered with RAAC is shown in Appendix 4.
- 4.12 The cost of the work undertaken to date is included in the overall survey and initial remedial works costs included in the figure in paragraph 4.1.
- 4.13 The options to replace the RAAC in longer term are more complex than the other impacted buildings. This is due to the extent of work required, the potential costs and the wider condition of the schools. There are also other strategic factors to be taken into account including future demand for places in the wider catchment areas (particularly for St Andrews RC Primary School), linked to the new housing emerging as a result of Local Plan allocations. Options will therefore require further detailed appraisal and analysis and will range from roof replacement to whole school replacement. This work will be carried out in 2024 and presented to a future Committee for consideration. Estimates of longer-term financial implications are included in section 6 below.

#### Colinton Primary School

- 4.14 The RAAC impacted areas are shown in Appendix 5. The initial mitigation measures required were minimal and implemented quickly so there was no impact on school operation. In the longer term, plans are being developed to replace RAAC roofs with a phased approach. The estimated cost is £2m.

#### Pentland Primary School

- 4.15 The RAAC impacted areas are shown in Appendix 6. Unfortunately, the kitchen and a section of corridor are not capable of use due to the RAAC being in poor condition. This includes the loss of some of the school office/meeting space. However, as access to additional classrooms space is available and school meals are being delivered, there is currently no significant impact on school operation. Plans are being developed to replace the RAAC roofs with a phased approach. The estimated cost of the roof replacement works is £3.102m (inclusive of potential decant costs).

### Currie High School

- 4.16 RAAC was identified in the old gym block, the assembly hall and an art classroom as shown in Appendix 7. All are currently closed. The old gym hall and the art classroom will not re-open as the cost of the work required is prohibitive when benchmarked against the period they would be in use before the new school is available. Works to enable detailed inspections in the assembly hall are in progress to establish if there are short term measures that could allow the safe use of the hall.
- 4.17 The school remains operational without the use of these spaces and can do so until the replacement school, currently being constructed, opens in the first quarter of 2025. At that time the old school will be handed over to the contractor for demolition however mitigations and scaffolding will remain in place to ensure the integrity of the structures which contain RAAC.
- 4.18 The cost of the work undertaken to date is included in the overall survey and initial remedial works costs provided in paragraph 4.1.

### Former Annex at Darroch

- 4.19 RAAC was identified in a small extension which was being used on an ad-hoc basis for storage by a neighbouring lease holder. The extension is not required for operational purposes. The main school building does not contain RAAC and remains fully operational.
- 4.20 It is likely that this building will have to be demolished at an estimated cost of between £0.25m to £0.5m.

### Peffermill Depot

- 4.21 A small area of RAAC has been identified which has been isolated without any operational impact. Longer term the depot is due to be demolished as part of a wider regeneration programme.

### Blackhall Library

- 4.22 Investigations to date have confirmed that the roof structure of the whole building contains RAAC. While the detailed assessment of the condition of each RAAC plank is ongoing, many of the panels already assessed are in poor condition. In a large section of the building the ceilings and services require to be removed in order that the detailed assessment of each plank can be completed.
- 4.23 The poor condition of the RAAC inspected to date, and the level of propping which has been required to be put in place, means that the building will not be able to reopen until the RAAC, which is in poor condition, has been replaced. The options to replace the RAAC in longer term are complex due to the extent of work required, the potent costs and the wider condition of the building. Options will require further detailed appraisal and analysis and will range from roof replacement to whole building replacement. This work will be carried out in 2024 and presented to a future

Committee for consideration. Estimates of longer-term financial implications are included in section 6 below.

#### Jane Kane Leisure Centre

- 4.24 Edinburgh Leisure have identified a very small area that has been isolated without any operational impact.

## 5. Next Steps

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- 5.1 Works will continue to be progressed to fully remove RAAC from the operational estate. For some of the buildings where RAAC has been identified options appraisals require to be carried out to determine the best overall approach. Where necessary further reports will be prepared for consideration by Committee.

## 6. Financial impact

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### Revenue

- 5.1 The costs identified in paragraph 4.1 of £1.912m are the estimated costs of addressing RAAC this financial year and are mainly revenue expenditure. It is however assumed that approximately £0.912m can be recharged to capital leaving a £1m pressure that will require to be addressed in year as part of the revenue monitoring process.
- 5.2 The only other revenue impact will be the demolition costs at Darroch (£0.25m - £0.5m) and provision will be made for this in future revenue budget setting.

### Capital

- 5.3 The capital costs are estimates but have been informed by the stage one tender returns for both Trinity and Cramond Primary Schools.
- 5.4 A summary of the capital financial implications of works required to address the discovery of RAAC in the estate are as follows.

### 5.5 Table 1 – Initial remedial costs and roof replacement

Project	Estimated Cost (£m)
Initial surveys and remedial works	0.912
Trinity	3.800
Cramond	2.992
Pentland	3.102

Lorne	3.000
Colinton	2.000
Currie	0.024
Fox Covert & St Andrews	0.008
<b>Total</b>	<b>15.838</b>

## 5.6 Table 2 – Long Term Financial Estimates

Project	Cost Range Estimate (£m)
Fox Covert & St Andrews	20 – 30
Blackhall	3.5 – 6
<b>Total</b>	<b>23.5 – 36</b>

5.7 Profiling the initial remedial and roof replacement expenditure into the Capital strategy would be as follows:

FY 2023/24	£0.912m
FY 2024/25	£6m
FY 2025/26	£5.926m
FY 2026/27	£3m

5.8 It is not intended to profile the longer-term costs into the programme until the option appraisals have been considered and decisions made. This would be included with the individual reports when presented to Committee.

5.9 There are ongoing revenue costs associated with the management of RAAC across the operational estate. This will include regular inspection by Council surveyors and periodic survey by structural engineers. This is included in the figures presented in this report. The figures do not include for any significant costs that may arise if there is a material change in the condition of RAAC panels prior to replacement, that may result in temporary decant facility being required.

## 7. Equality and Poverty Impact

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- 7.1 There are no specific equality or poverty implications associated with the replacement of RAAC in the buildings where it has been identified. Every effort has been made to ensure disruption to service delivery is minimised.

## 8. Climate and Nature Emergency Implications

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- 8.1 As a public body, the Council has statutory duties relating to climate emissions and biodiversity. The Council

*“must, in exercising its functions, act in the way best calculated to contribute to the delivery of emissions reduction targets”*

(Climate Change (Emissions Reductions Targets) (Scotland) Act 2019), and

*“in exercising any functions, to further the conservation of biodiversity so far as it is consistent with the proper exercise of those functions”*

(Nature Conservation (Scotland) Act 2004)

- 8.2 The City of Edinburgh Council declared a Climate Emergency in 2019 and committed to work towards a target of net zero emissions by 2030 for both city and corporate emissions, and embedded this as a core priority of the Council Business Plan 2023-27. The Council also declared a Nature Emergency in 2023.

### **Environmental Impacts**

- 8.3 The works carried out as part of the RAAC replacement programme will be delivered in line with all the energy requirements of current building standards legislation.

## 9. Risk, policy, compliance, governance and community impact

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- 9.1 An officer programme board has been established to oversee the response to identification of RAAC in the operational estate. There are weekly operational meetings and project meetings with the services affected are arranged as necessary. All risk, policy and compliance issues are considered through these governance arrangements.
- 9.2 Stakeholders and service users are kept up to date with direct communications or website updates.

## 10. Background reading/external references

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- 9.1 None

## 11. Appendices [to follow]

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Appendix 1 – Plan of Trinity Primary School

Appendix 2 – Plan of Cramond Primary School

Appendix 3 – Plan of Lorne Primary School

Appendix 4 – Plan of Fox Covert/St Andrew's Primary Schools

Appendix 5 – Plan of Colinton Primary School

Appendix 6 – Plan of Pentland Primary School

Appendix 7 – Plan of Currie High School