
Clutha District Council

Item for DECISION

Report	Lovell's Flat Hall Options
Meeting Date	1 April 2026
Item Number	2
Prepared By	Delwyn Burrow – Team Leader Community Facilities
File Reference	1010002

REPORT SUMMARY

The purpose of this report is for Council to give direction on options for the Lovell's Flat Hall.

RECOMMENDATIONS

- 1 That Council receives the 'Lovell's Flat Hall Options' report**
- 2 That Council undertakes a consultation process to gather public feedback on a proposal to demolish the Lovell's Flat Hall, retain the pool, and develop the reserve as a picnic area.**

REPORT

1 Background

1.1 Environment setting

Lovell's Flat Hall is located at 151 Station Road, halfway between Milton and Balclutha (Figure 1). The building formed part of the Lovell's Flat School which closed in the 1970's, and as such is not designed expressly as a community hall. The hall is located on a gazetted Recreation Reserve, with an area of approximately 8,696 m² (Figure 2).

The reserve has a pleasant rural outlook with extensive grassed areas and large shade trees. A swimming pool is on site, and the reserve and pool are used by the local community during summer months.

The hall interior has suffered widespread damage due to water and borer. A condition assessment report by WSP in 2020 noted that if the structural timber is rotten, the building would be vulnerable in an earthquake. The hall is rarely, if ever used, with groups preferring to use the adjacent, smaller Bruce Memorial Hall.

The hall characteristics and financial information were summarised in a previous report to Council,¹ included as Attachment 1.

¹ GHC, 2020. *Review of Community Halls in the Clutha District*. Report prepared for Clutha District Council



Figure 1 Lovell's Flat Hall. Credit: Sue Wilkins Photography (2020)

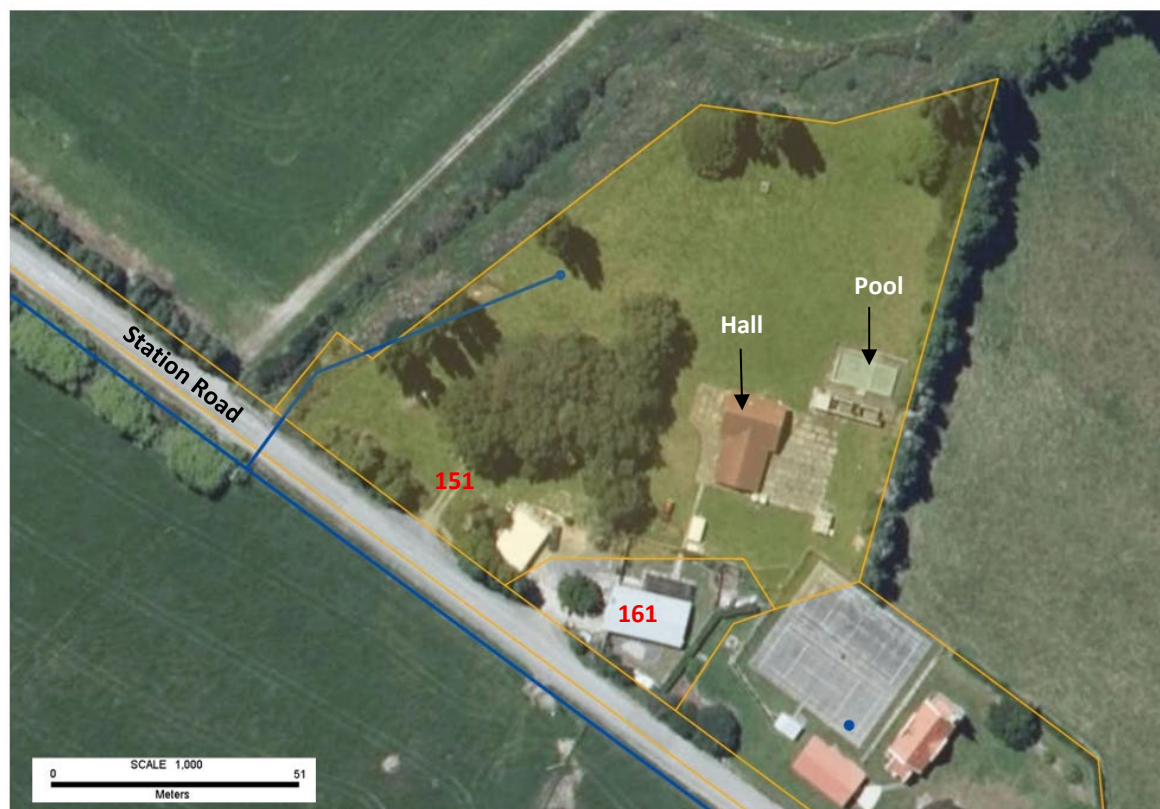


Figure 2 Lovell's Flat Recreation Reserve (shaded orange) with CDC water supply marked in blue. Source: LINZ.²

1.2 Community feedback

Staff attended a meeting of the hall committee on 2 March 2026 and provided information regarding potential future options. After considering the deteriorating hall condition, usage, and community characteristics, the committee expressed a desire to:

1. Retain the reserve and pool for public use
2. Demolish the hall

² Further investigation by CDC's GIS officer shows a more accurate boundary between the reserve and 161 Station Road and this is included as Attachment 8.4.

3. Develop a toilet facility on site for reserve and pool users, and
4. Upgrade the reserve as a picnic area.

The committee requested:

1. A consultation process with the local community to gather feedback on this proposal.
2. That Council make a decision based on feedback received and any other considerations.
3. That Council then implement that decision, in consultation with the committee.

2 Strategic Goals and Outcomes

2.1 Community Outcome

- Vibrant Rural Towns and Communities

2.2 Key Priority Area

- Healthy Safe Communities

3 Assessment of Options

There are two options for Council to consider:

1. *Potential hall demolition:* The benefit of this option is that there would be no need to complete work to bring the hall back to a serviceable condition. Any remaining Council funds can be put towards costs of demolition and other upgrades on the reserve. The reserve and pool would remain available for community use. The risks are that this would result in the permanent loss of the hall as a community facility, and that the cost of demolition may exceed available reserve funds (section 7)
2. *Status quo:* Council retains ownership and control of the hall and land in a holding position. The key risk associated with this option is that the building will continue to deteriorate, with limited maintenance work being undertaken. The hall is likely to remain basically unused. Council is unlikely to fund significant repairs if there is no guarantee the hall will be used regularly in future.

4 Consultation

If Council decides to investigate option 1 above, the following consultation process is proposed.³

1. With input from the hall committee, place a notice in the Clutha Leader and the Genesis summarising their proposal to retain the reserve and pool, demolish the hall, and upgrade the reserve.	9 April
2. Provide a two-week period for public feedback	23 April
3. Collate feedback, discuss with hall committee to confirm their direction	Early May
4. Present feedback report and Decision Item to Council	28 May
5. Council Decision	28 May
6. Staff to implement Council Decision, with involvement of hall committee	2026-27

³ Relevant guidance from Council's *Policy on Significance and Engagement* is included in Attachment 3.

No consultation would be required for option 2 (status quo).

5 Policy Considerations

Council's *Policy on Future Ownership of Community Centres and Town Halls* is that:

- i. where possible, control and/or ownership of community centres and halls should be transferred to independent community organisations, and
- ii. where a facility has been divested to a community organisation, Council will allocate annual grants from general rates in recognition of the public benefit component of the facilities.

The hall committee's request generally aligns with this policy, except that they do not wish to retain the hall and would rather see it demolished as it is no longer fit for purpose and may be unsafe for public use. The committee would like to retain management responsibility for the pool and reserve and would request a small annual operating grant from Council in recognition of the public benefit of the remaining facilities.

6 Legal Considerations

6.1 Reserve Management Plan

Council is currently in the process of creating a Reserve Management Plan (RMP) for Council-administered reserves in the Rural Bruce area, which includes Lovell's Flat. RMP's are a requirement of the Reserves Act 1977.

The first round of consultation closed on 13 February, and this feedback will help to inform a Draft Reserve Management Plan which will then be put out for a second round of consultation.

No specific feedback relating to the Lovell's Flat reserve was received through the first round of consultation, although Heritage New Zealand provided the following statement, relating to all reserves:

Heritage NZ feedback on proposed Rural Bruce RMP:

Enhancing community awareness of the history of a reserve should be included as a strategic outcome of the RMP. The retention, maintenance and enhancement of any heritage structures, the setting and archaeology within the reserve should be included in the management objectives and policies. An effective management plan will ensure the heritage values of the reserve remain a key community asset, both now and into the future.

6.2 Reserve Boundary with 161 Station Road

Attachment 8.4 illustrates that there is some uncertainty about the boundary between the reserve and 161 Station Road, and this may need to be resolved. However, the position of the boundary does not significantly impact a decision to demolish the hall and upgrade the reserve area.

7 Financial Impact

The latest Revenue & Expenditure Statement is shown in Attachment 8.5. This shows budgeted annual income of \$7,714 (including \$7,414 of rates income), and a budgeted

annual expenditure of \$7,529. Hall insurance and repairs are two of the larger expenses.

As at 30 June 2025, there was \$26,424 in reserve funds.

Immediate costs associated with the proposal are estimated as follows:

1. Hall demolition, estimated to be at least \$20,000, although it may be possible to complete this work at a reduced cost.
2. Plumbing costs, estimated to be \$2,000 to \$3,000. This includes costs to cap water and sewage to the hall and assumes the septic tank would be kept to service a new toilet in the future.
3. It is assumed electrical work would not be required, as electricity to the hall is already disconnected and a supply has already been provided to the pool pump shed.

Other items of work which might be undertaken subsequently, with additional costs, include:

1. Reserve improvements (e.g. landscaping, earthworks, pathways, plantings, picnic table)
2. Replacement toilet.

Any work undertaken by Council on the reserve would need to be within the available funding, and as noted in Attachment 8.5, reserve funds require approval from council elected members before they can be used for capital projects.

As noted above, the committee may request an operating grant from Council to help maintain the remaining facilities.

8 Attachments

8.1 Attachment 1: Lovell's Flat Hall characteristics

Hall characteristics and financial information	
Year of construction and building type	1940's. Timber framed, weatherboard, concrete tile roof.
Distance / driving time to closest major town:	13.3 km / 12 minutes (Milton) 16.2 km / 18 minutes (Balclutha)
Replacement Value (May 2020)	\$700,000
Market Value (May 2020)	\$200,000
Available funding ⁴	
Depreciation reserves (February 2026)	\$26,000
Summary of WSP Building Condition Report	
Level of service star rating (out of 5)	1.8 (Low)
Major items of risk	• External: Roof and eaves repair; replace rotten weatherboards and repair downpipes. • Internal: Borer and rodent control; replace lining; extensive electrical upgrade.
Replacement work cost	Not assessed by WSP. An estimate of at least \$30,000 per year may be realistic. The estimated cost for an electrical upgrade was at least \$35,200.
Community characteristics	
Current hall funding and management arrangements:	Funded by CDC, local community involved in day-to-day management.
2018 local population (change since 2013)	174 (+3)
2018 Bruce Ward population (change since 2013)	2,250 (+207)

⁴ The Committee can spend approved budgets in consultation with Council staff. Loan funding and depreciation reserve funds require a request from the hall committee to Council staff and then approval from Council elected members before they can be utilised for capital projects.

8.2 Policy on Future Ownership of Community Centres and Town Halls

CLUTHA DISTRICT COUNCIL POLICY		
Policy Number	05 – 04 – 001	Future Ownership of Community Centres & Town Halls
Prepared by	Manager Corporate Services	
Authorised by	Council	
Date Issued	17 September 1998	Page 1
Date to be reviewed	17 September 2010	No. Pages 1
 Policy on Future Ownership of Community Centres and Town Halls 		
Purpose		
To set out Council's approach to the future ownership and involvement in the provision of Town Halls and Community Centres.		
Policy		
Council promotes the proposed long term strategy that, where possible, control and/or ownership of community centres and halls are transferred to independent Community organisations.		
Where a facility is divested to a Community organisation Council will allocate annual grants from general rates in recognition of the public benefit component of the facilities.		
Procedures		
N/A		
Definitions		
N/A		
Relevant Legislation		
N/A		
Legal Compliance		
N/A		
Related Policy and Documents		
CDC General Grant Allocation Policy		
Key Words		
Community Centres, Halls, Future Ownership, General Grants		

8.3 Policy on Significance and Engagement

The *Policy on Significance and Engagement* states that a decision to consult should have regard to a range of criteria prior to decisions being made, and that Council should be guided by the following:

- The potential level of financial consequence, in particular rates impact.
- The degree of impact on or change to levels of service, positive or negative.
- How many residents and ratepayers might be affected by the proposal or decision.
- The likely degree of community interest in the proposal or decision.
- The extent to which the consequences of the decision might be controversial.
- The degree to which the decision or proposal deviates from community outcomes or Long Term Plan, Annual Plan or policy.
- The potential impact on current and future well-being of the community.
- Whether there is a legal requirement to engage with the community.
- The degree of impact on a strategic asset, particularly if it involves transferring ownership or control.

Based on these factors and the level of significance, it is recommended that the level of engagement for this matter is 'to collaborate'. The guidance in the policy for this option is as follows:

What it involves	Work together to develop understanding of all issues and interests to work out alternatives and identify preferred solutions.
When the community can expect to be involved	Council to involve the community at the start to scope the issue, again after information has been collected, and when options are being considered.
Council's commitment to the community	Council would look to the community for direct advice and involvement in formulating solutions.

8.4 Reserve boundary with 161 Station Road

The following map shows the parcel boundary for 161 Station Road and adjacent reserve. This was produced by CDC GIS staff, using a professional survey plan from 1981 and differs from the data provided to CDC by LINZ, as shown in Figure 2.



8.5 Revenue and Expenditure Statement – Lovells Flat Hall

Clutha District Council Lovells Flat Recreation Reserve Board

REVENUE & EXPENDITURE STATEMENT

1st July 2025 - 31st December 2025

	Actual YTD	Budget Full Year
Opening Balance	\$3,735	\$0
Revenue		
Rates	\$3,712	\$7,424
Income - Hire	\$145	\$291
Total Income	\$3,857	\$7,714
Operational Expenditure		
General Expense	\$0	\$145
Insurance	\$2,312	\$1,513
Interest	\$0	\$301
Building repairs	\$0	\$2,360
Electricity	\$581	\$1,405
Share of Overheads	\$857	\$1,714
Depreciation	\$46	\$91
Total Operational Expenditure	\$3,795	\$7,529
Capital Expenditure		
Renewals	\$0	\$0
Total Capital Expenditure	\$0	\$0
Loans		
Loan Principal Received	\$0	\$0
Less Loan Principal Paid	\$0	(\$186)
	\$0	(\$186)
Balance as at 31st December 2025	\$3,797	\$0
Special Funds 30th June 2025	\$26,424	

Note: Committees can spend approved budgets such as Opening Balances and Building Repairs and Renewals (green) in consultation with Council Staff. Reserve funds (orange) and loan funding (blue) require a request from the hall committee to council staff and then approval from council elected members before they can be utilised for capital projects. It is suggested that committees do this during the annual plan/long term plan process. It is also suggested that committees fund their capital work through reserves first and loans second. Council would like to reinforce that your budgets can be changed and if additional capital work is needed, the funding can be applied for.