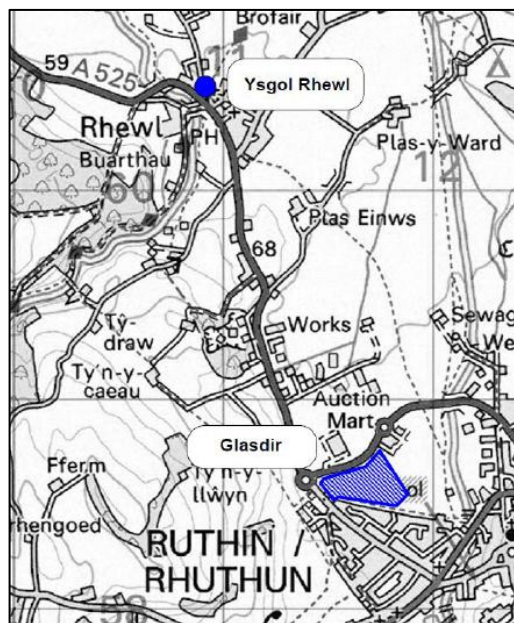


Response to concerns relating to the new site at Glasdir

1.0 Introduction

1.1 The formal consultation document identified that the alternative provision of Ysgol Pen Barras and Rhos Street School were being relocated to a new site in the Glasdir area of Ruthin. Section 13.14 illustrated the location of the site and its proximity to Ysgol Rhewl:



2.0 Comments raised

The response to the comments raised at the Performance Scrutiny meeting on the 11th of June 2015 regarding safety of the road and the feasibility of the Glasdir development follow in 2.1 and 2.2.

2.1 Parents' concerns for the children's safety had been emphasised due to pupils from Rhewl having to walk to the new schools on the Glasdir site along an extremely busy road with a number of industrial units and the livestock market along one side of it, with another site on the route already earmarked for industrial development. Despite the industrial nature of this route it was currently classed as a 'non-hazardous' route.

Response to comments

A Road Safety Assessment has been undertaken by Denbighshire County Council's Road Safety Officer on the 14/08/2015 (School Holiday) and the 15/09/2015 (School term). Both days coincided with the nearby Livestock market being open (Weekly sales are held Tuesday, Thursday and Friday). The road was assessed between 8 and 9 am and at 3.15pm.

The purpose of the surveys was to determine whether the route from Rhewl is hazardous for pupils walking to Glasdir, Ruthin.

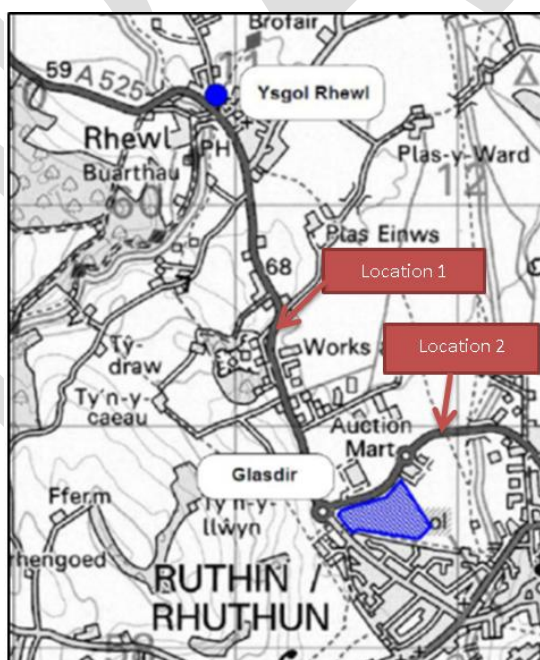
The surveys were conducted in line with Welsh Government – Learner Travel, Statutory Provision and Operational Guidance – June 2014 and Road Safety GB – Guidelines on Assessment of Walked Routes to School by Denbighshire County Council Road Safety Officer.

Outcome of the assessment

a) A525 - Vehicle Type, Speed and Flow

- The road is used by all types of vehicles including public transport, commuters, haulage and agricultural vehicles.
- The speed limit of the A525 through Rhewl is 40mph and the speed limit along much of the route is 60 mph. Traffic data obtained from the site (Labelled as Location 1 in the plan below) show a vehicle 85th Percentile of 47.15 mph.
- The speed limit is 30 mph in the immediate vicinity of the proposed school site at Glasdir. Traffic speeds are above the 30mph limit (41.2 mph) along the North Link road section of the A525 (Labelled as Location 2 in the plan below). Speeds are likely to be significantly lower at the pedestrian crossing point. A traffic survey has been commissioned to establish actual speeds at this point.
- Traffic flows:
 - A525 North Link road past Glasdir = 305 vehicles per hour (classed as low traffic volumes)
 - A525, Ruthin to Rhewl = 430 vehicle per hour (classed as medium traffic volumes)
- Approaching speeds on access roads

Vehicles approaching the junction from access roads are judged to be approaching at a low speed due to the need to stop and give way, prior to entering the A525 carriageway.



b) Footway

The road between Rhewl and Glasdir is the A525. It has a wide footway that forms part of the Vale of Clwyd active travel route. This route is designed to accommodate pedestrians and bicycles travelling between Ruthin and Rhewl. It was upgraded in 2013, as a result of Denbighshire County securing grant funding from Welsh Government.



The footway / cycle way crosses a roadway at three points between Rhewl and Ruthin:

- Unclassified road towards Plas y Ward
- Entrance to Precast Concrete Works.
- Entrance to Brickfield Lane, Ruthin

All crossing points are clearly marked indicating that the pedestrian / cyclist should give way to vehicles. Each crossing point is different in its layout therefore comments are provided for each point:

Junction with the road towards Plas y ward:

This junction is across a narrow lane which has very low level of traffic use. Vehicle approach speeds are low due to the need to give way when entering the A525. Visibility is good for both pedestrians and vehicle users with clear lines of sight for pedestrians to see approaching vehicles and drivers to see footway users.

Entrance to precast concrete works:



This crossing point is the widest along the route. Vehicle approach speeds and volumes are low due to the need to give way when entering the A525. Visibility is good for both pedestrians and vehicle users with clear lines of sight for pedestrians to see approaching vehicles and drivers to see footway users. The entrance is used throughout the day.

Entrance to Brickfield Lane, Ruthin:



This crossing point, crosses an entrance to Brickfield lane which is an entrance to an industrial zone. Visibility is good for footway users travelling towards Ruthin but is compromised when travelling towards Rhewl as an overgrown hedge limits visibility. This can be mitigated by undertaking remedial works in the form of cutting the hedge. Vehicle approach speeds are low due to the need to give way when entering the A525.

Crossing the A525 in Ruthin

Pedestrians and cyclists travelling into Ruthin have to cross the A525 near to the junction with Denbigh road. The image below shows that the crossing already has a refuge in place which means that only one lane of traffic has to be crossed at one time. This crossing is within a 30mph zone. There is good visibility at this crossing point.



During the monitoring period it was noted that there were numerous gaps in traffic flow of more than 6 seconds and therefore it was not required to formally record the number of gaps in each 5

minute period to show that pedestrians wishing to cross would need to wait for less than 1 minute.

c) Accident data

Pedestrian Accidents: There have been no pedestrian accidents on this route in the last 3 years.

Vehicle Accidents: There have been 6 slight injury accidents on this route in the past 3 years.

d) Conclusion

- It is the view of the Road Safety Engineer that this is a safe walking route. On that basis, the authority would be unable to offer free transport for pupils.
- It should be noted that the assessment comments on the suitability of the current route and does not take into account any development that may take place along the route in the future.
- If a development is planned along the route that impacts on the footway such as an additional access road, the route will be reassessed.

2.2 The feasibility of the Glasdir site to be developed to accommodate the number of pupils that were proposed. We consider that it will be difficult to develop the site to the capacity that is proposed because of the level of traffic that this would generate. The issue of the amount of traffic had been raised in the feasibility study by the county highways authority, and this may well restrict the sizes of the new schools and so we asked for confirmation that the schools would be of sufficient size to accommodate pupils from the three schools that are involved together with any others who may want to attend the schools.

Response to comments

The Glasdir site is being designed to accommodate approximate 450 full time pupils within two schools. As of January 2015 there were 422 full time pupils attending all three schools. The proposed capacity will allow both schools to have sufficient capacity for growth whilst avoiding the creation of significant surplus places.

The feasibility study commissioned by the Authority, identified the need to work with highways engineers and stakeholders to develop a suitable traffic management plan for the site to respond to their concerns. This approach has ensured that issues identified during the feasibility stage are being addressed at the design stage. It is proposed that the new site will incorporate onsite traffic management which includes parent drop off / pick up area, a staff and visitor car park and more than one pedestrian entrance.

As part of the detailed design and planning process, Denbighshire County Council will develop a travel plan, to assess the routes to school. Should proposals be implemented, pupils and parents from Ysgol Rhewl will be able to contribute towards the plan. The travel plan will consider the following:

- Use of Breakfast and After School clubs
- Staggered start / finish times for the schools
- Location of pedestrian access points
- Deployment of crossing patrols

- Travel issues identified by pupils and staff
- Link to home to school transport
- Active travel walking and cycling including the option of developing walking buses
- Bus Travel including links to public and home to school transport
- Driving on to the site including opportunities for journey sharing
- Promotion of the plan

As part of the process of developing and implementing the plan, the authority will be committed to responding to issues raised and mitigating when required. This will mean that all main routes to Glasdir, including from Rhewl to Glasdir, will be reassessed as the plan evolves.

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