

Gypsy and Traveller Accommodation Project - Residential Site

Well-being Impact Assessment Report

This report summarises the likely impact of the proposal on the social, economic, environmental and cultural well-being of Denbighshire, Wales and the world.

Assessment Number:	618
Brief description:	This impact assessment considers the likely impact over the long term (including acknowledgement of areas where there will be interim or short term impacts) of the proposal to establish a residential site for gypsy and travellers in St Asaph.
Date Completed:	11/03/2019 14:28:55 Version: 3
Completed by:	Kim Waller
Responsible Service:	Facilities, Assets & Housing
Localities affected by the proposal:	Elwy,
Who will be affected by the proposal?	The future residents of the site will be affected by the proposal. A range of other stakeholders have been identified who may be affected or who perceive that they will be affected by the proposal. These include immediate neighbours to the site, the wider community living in St Asaph and the surrounding area, businesses and employees on the St Asaph business park and within St Asaph city, people who use the area for leisure activities.
Was this impact assessment completed as a group?	Yes

IMPACT ASSESSMENT SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION

Before we look in detail at the contribution and impact of the proposal, it is important to consider how the proposal is applying the sustainable development principle. This means that we must act "in a manner which seeks to ensure that the needs of the present are met without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs."

Score for the sustainability of the approach

★ ★ ★ ☆ (3 out of 4 stars) Actual score : 23 / 30.

Implications of the score

On-going engagement with the family. Need to further develop education and engagement with the local community.

Existing LDP criteria has been incorporated into thinking

Meets wider well-being objectives, promoting independence and resilience

Summary of impact

Well-being Goals

A prosperous Denbighshire

A resilient Denbighshire

A healthier Denbighshire

A more equal Denbighshire

A Denbighshire of cohesive communities

A Denbighshire of vibrant culture and thriving Welsh language

A globally responsible Denbighshire

Neutral

Neutral

Positive

Positive

Neutral

Neutral

Neutral



Main conclusions

Due to the size of the proposal the impact on many of the well-being goals will be neutral.

There appears to be a perception that existing businesses will be negatively affected by the development. These seem to be predominantly based on experiences around unauthorised encampments with some concerns appeared to be compounded by negative stereotypes. This proposal is not for an unauthorised encampment and there is research available that demonstrates that residential developments have a minimal impact on site neighbours rather than unauthorised encampments (Joseph Rowntree Foundation, Housing Research No 201, Neighbours views of official sites for travelling people, 1996).

This proposal is to provide cultural appropriate accommodation in Denbighshire for existing Denbighshire residents. No such provision is currently available in the County and it is not currently possible to meet their accommodation needs. The links between secure accommodation and improved health outcomes is well-known and has also been identified with having relevance with regards suitable accommodation for people with need within the Gypsy and Traveller community. As such this proposal will have a positive impact on the goal of providing a more equal Denbighshire and also on improving the health for the beneficiaries.

The proposal does need to undertake a further ecological survey and will need to consider the feedback from the recent consultation in relation to any other planning considerations.

This is a small residential site. Good management and appropriate design will ensure that the site runs well. It is not expected that there will be any long-term impact on community cohesion and the future residents are keen to integrate into the community as they have already done in other areas of Denbighshire. The local existing community have however expressed fears and concerns about the proposal. The issues raised are similar to issues and concerns raised in other areas where sites have been proposed. Negative stereotypes and the problems associated with unauthorised encampments are reflected in many of the concerns raised. Research by the Joseph Rowntree Foundation (as above) found that the impact of official residential sites did not reflect neighbours fears. We need to work with the local community to provide information around these concerns.

There is a risk that the proposed transit site would have a negative impact on the well-being of the families on the residential site and again the management of both needs to consider these concerns.

Evidence to support the Well-being Impact Assessment

- We have consulted published research or guides that inform us about the likely impact of the proposal
- We have involved an expert / consulted a group who represent those who may affected by the proposal
- We have engaged with people who will be affected by the proposal

THE LIKELY IMPACT ON DENBIGHSHIRE, WALES AND THE WORLD

A prosperous Denbighshire

Overall Impact	Neutral
Justification for impact	<p>The site is too small to generate a significant positive or negative impact. The development itself will include some low carbon measures, and will be close to transport infrastructure. There are perceived negative impacts on nearby businesses which have been expressed by the local community. Based on discussion with Conwy and Newport there are no reported negative impacts associated with nearby residential sites for gypsy and traveller communities. Joseph Rowntree Foundation conducted research which followed-up on neighbour's experiences of three residential sites several years after they had been established. Many neighbours were largely in opposition to the site but the research, several years on, found that, the impact of the site was minimal and that earlier perceptions which were often linked to experiences of unauthorised encampments and negative stereotypes were not realised.</p> <p>There is no evidence that we are aware of that could result in negative impacts for businesses and the business park, or any future investments, but communications and engagement will need to be a core part of the project should the project be approved.</p>
Further actions required	It may not be straight forward or desirable to prescribe minimum standards on the caravans. We need to check the quality of mobile and broadband infrastructure; and childcare provision (although the need will be minimal). We need to support a relationship to develop between residents of the Gypsy and Traveller site and established residents and local businesses.

Positive impacts identified:

A low carbon society	The residential proposal buildings are small living area spaces with key amenities. They will be built to current performance standards and regulations, with the potential to use PV/maximise water saving opportunities etc, with an aim to also reduce fuel poverty.
Quality communications, infrastructure and transport	<p>Telephone lines will be installed. It is assumed the site has decent 4G although this needs to be confirmed.</p> <p>It is unlikely that the road will deteriorate any more than it would do anyway. There are recommendations to create passing places in the existing road.</p>
Economic development	<p>Minimal/neutral impact on economic development in the area.</p> <p>The tenant farmer will remain.</p>
Quality skills for the long term	Proximity to businesses, employers and education, including via A55 should improve opportunities for up-skilling.
Quality jobs for the long term	We believe there could be better access by the community living on the residential development to employment opportunities nearby.
Childcare	The benefit of the households being able to live together in a community will make it easier for them to organise childcare, should they so wish.

Negative impacts identified:

A low carbon society	The caravans themselves are beyond the scope of this project as they are the responsibility of the tenant.
Quality communications, infrastructure and transport	The site location means there could be a reliance on cars, although there is a nearby bus stop and cycle lane.
Economic development	<p>There appears to be a perception that existing businesses will be negatively affected by the development, due to negative stereotypes about the gypsy and traveller community. These seem to be predominantly based on experiences around unauthorised encampments. This proposal is not for an unauthorised encampment and there is research available that demonstrates that residential developments have a minimal impact on site neighbours rather than unauthorised encampments (Joseph Rowntree Foundation).</p> <p>There is a perception we could affect people's desire to enter farming but the site is less than 1 hectare and we believe there is no negative impact over the long term.</p>
Quality skills for the long term	There are some perceived concerns/fears that people would not want to work or locate a business nearby. These appear to be based on negative stereotypes and experiences related to unauthorised encampments. Research by the Joseph Rowntree Foundation found that the impact of residential sites was not as had been expected by neighbours/businesses and the police in those areas reported no increase in crime.
Quality jobs for the long term	There are some perceived concerns/fears that people would not want to work or locate a business nearby, but these are likely to be unfounded (and may reflect people's concerns about unauthorised encampment). See above.
Childcare	There may be a perceived lack of childcare more widely in the community.

A resilient Denbighshire

Overall Impact	Neutral
Justification for impact	The site is too small to generate a significant positive or negative impact. The proposal will involve the development of a small area which will include some hard standing areas and buildings. This will remove some areas of grass and planting in the immediate environment. The design of the buildings will use up to date techniques and materials in order to maximise energy efficiency. The future residents are keen to reduce energy use (and cost) and there is the opportunity to develop greater awareness and encourage the use of reusing and recycling.
Further actions required	We will do further ecology survey to ensure that appropriate steps are taken to minimise impact on local wildlife. We will introduce additional planting of local species around the site to provide additional/replacement habitat. We will follow best practice guidance on the design and use of materials for the buildings. We will work with the future residents to ensure that they make best use of recycling and reusing options.

Positive impacts identified:

Biodiversity and the natural environment	The proposal includes landscaping around the site which would provide privacy but also would provide additional planting around the site to support biodiversity. Ecology studies will provide more comprehensive data on the extent of wildlife in the area in order to ensure that appropriate measures can be taken to preserve biodiversity in the area.
Biodiversity in the built environment	Consultation has taken place with future residents on site design and areas of planting around the site have been included to both act as a sound barrier, protect privacy and retain an environment for local wildlife.
Reducing waste, reusing and recycling	Consultation with future residents has indicated that there are no additional refuse/recycling requirements above other local authority housing provision. Consultation has taken place about the most effective ways to store bins and recycling containers and provide access for collection. Rain water harvesting is being considered by future residents.
Reduced energy/fuel consumption	The design of the amenity blocks follows up to date guidance on design and use of materials to maximise energy efficiency and reduce fuel consumption.
People's awareness of the environment and biodiversity	The development of a tenant / landlord relationship will provide an opportunity to increase awareness with residents.
Flood risk management	Surface water run off has been considered during the design phase of the proposal.

Negative impacts identified:

Biodiversity and the natural environment	This proposal would result in the loss of a small agricultural area (around 0.5 hectare), however, the designs include some areas of natural habitat within the design and an additional amount of planting around the perimeter of the site. There would be a need to remove some existing planting around the proposed entrance to the residential site in order to allow a clear view of the road when leaving the site. Additional planting of local species will be included around the site which will offset this loss. There would be temporary disruption around the site during the build period. However this is a small site and this would be managed to minimise disruption as far as possible.
Biodiversity in the built environment	The proposal will involve the development of new structures, however, these are small in size and therefore the impact will be minimal.
Reducing waste, reusing and recycling	Consideration needed about the potential storage and recycling of gas canisters for use with caravans.
Reduced energy/fuel consumption	Caravans will retain the heat less efficiently than permanent buildings. However, consultation on the design of the amenity blocks will encourage use by householders during the day.
People's awareness of the environment and biodiversity	No known negative impacts.
Flood risk management	The proposal includes amenity buildings and hard standing areas which will reduce the porous area of the site currently. However, a flood risk analysis has been undertaken and measures to mitigate any risks have been included within the design.

A healthier Denbighshire

Overall Impact	Positive
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<p>Justification for impact</p>	<p>In terms of the intended beneficiaries of the project, the overall impact is considered to be positive, and we believe there will be a positive impact for people living on the residential development. In providing appropriate accommodation we will be enabling people to feel safe and secure in their homes which in turn is linked to better health, education and employment outcomes.</p> <p>There are some perceived negative impacts for other stakeholders, although the likely long term impact is not considered to be negative.</p> <p>The development is based on current need and the need for the next 5 years. Need will be reviewed every five years.</p> <p>We don't currently have local sites in Denbighshire, but there is evidence from neighbouring counties whereby we can demonstrate that residential sites can be run effectively.</p> <p>The health and well-being of the residential site residents could be negatively affected by the location of a transit site in such close proximity. It is not good practice to locate the sites so close together.</p>
<p>Further actions required</p>	<p>Should both proposals (the residential site and the transit site) be approved with planning permission, the residential site would be occupied 12 months in advance of the transit site becoming operational. The family wishing to move to the residential site would like to establish roots and allay perceived concerns from neighbouring residents/businesses. Management arrangements will need to consider the management of vacant plots in the future and any future tensions. The project team should clarify how allocations and management arrangements will work. We should consider explaining management arrangements to stakeholders. Lesson learned: the twin-tracking of the project could have heightened some people's concerns.</p>

Positive impacts identified:

<p>A social and physical environment that encourage and support health and well-being</p>	<p>A small green space is a feature of the design of the residential site. This will improve the physical and mental health of the family. It is safe because a site access road is proposed (there is no through road).</p> <p>The site will also bring an extended family together which will improve their health and well-being.</p> <p>The design allows privacy and space between the plots and that is important for the extended family and any other gypsy and traveller family that will move onto the site in the future.</p> <p>The residential site of six households in a private compound will not affect people's opportunity to walk through nearby lanes.</p>
<p>Access to good quality, healthy food</p>	<p>The site design includes purpose built kitchen amenities which would provide better storage, fridge facilities than would be available to families living on unauthorised encampments.</p>
<p>People's emotional and mental well-being</p>	<p>As above, the residential site aims to improve the well-being of Gypsy and Traveller communities and enable them to live in a culturally appropriate way.</p>

Access to healthcare	We could see improved relationships between residents of the site and health providers, eg will there be one health visitor? Good, trusting relationships could lead to better health. A national Inclusion Health Board (NIHB) report in January 2016 highlights the impact of insecure and poor quality living accommodation on health. Culturally appropriate, secure accommodation will provide a good environment for residents to both support good health and encourage early access to health services where required.
Participation in leisure opportunities	A small green space will be available, and without worries about inappropriate accommodation residents will be able to participate in leisure opportunities and other hobbies.

Negative impacts identified:

A social and physical environment that encourage and support health and well-being	<p>If a plot became vacant, and there was a need for another family to move, there could be differences. This would need to be managed, and given this is a small site, this is not a major concern or risk at this stage.</p> <p>Some residents are concerned about their health and safety should they wish to use the nearby lane. Research from Scotland by the JRF demonstrates that anticipated negative impacts did not materialise.</p>
Access to good quality, healthy food	No known negative impacts
People's emotional and mental well-being	<p>Should the transit site be located as planned, there could be concerns among the tenants on the residential site, and any issues that might emerge between communities.</p> <p>There are also concerns among some members of the local community who are fearful. A Joseph Rowntree research study found that most of the concerns raised by neighbours did not materialise.</p> <p>Some nearby neighbours have highlighted concerns about the proximity of site located so close, and there could be concerns and fears about large vehicles, noise, light pollution, smells and pets. Some of these concerns could be associated more with the proposal for a transit site. These are being considered through the pre-planning consultation process.</p>
Access to healthcare	No known negative impacts. The family looking to live on the residential site are residents already living in Denbighshire, and will access services as required.
Participation in leisure opportunities	During the construction phase on a narrow lane this could impact on other users of the lane. This is a short term impact only.

A more equal Denbighshire

Overall Impact	Positive
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<p>Justification for impact</p>	<p>This proposal would provide culturally appropriate accommodation for Gypsies and Travellers in Denbighshire. The impact of providing culturally suitable accommodation is considered to have a positive impact.</p> <p>Gypsies and Travellers are recognised as amongst the most excluded groups in Britain and many families live in poverty. The provision of secure, affordable and culturally appropriate accommodation is cited in a report by the Equalities and Human Rights Commission (Research report 12: Inequalities experienced by Gypsies and Travellers) as fundamental to enabling people to avail themselves of the health, education and other public services.</p> <p>Furthermore, suitable accommodation provides the mechanism to allow communities to continue to function and adapt to wider upheavals created through globalisation, changing employment markets, financial insecurities etc.</p>
<p>Further actions required</p>	<p>We need to provide accurate information which address the negative stereotypes that exist around the Gypsy and Traveller community. We need to ensure that communities understand that we have a statutory duty to fulfil the Equality Act (2010).</p>

Positive impacts identified:

<p>Improving the well-being of people with protected characteristics. The nine protected characteristics are: age; disability; gender reassignment; marriage or civil partnership; pregnancy and maternity; race; religion or belief; sex; and sexual orientation</p>	<p>Romany Gypsies and Irish Travellers are a protected characteristic in law and we have a housing duty to meet their housing needs and public services duties under the Equality Act. The designs have been developed through extensive engagement with the family looking to move onto the site. The project aims to eliminate discrimination by providing culturally appropriate accommodation (that is currently unavailable in Denbighshire). We hope safe and secure housing will improve the health and well-being of site residents so that they can have better opportunities to live, work and learn. We have held a pre-planning consultation event which allows early engagement with stakeholders to understand and input into the plans. We have produced a myth buster document to provide information around the common myths and stereotypes that exist around the Gypsy and Traveller community.</p> <p>The design of the site has considered the needs of future residents who may be older or disabled.</p> <p>The accommodation will be available to any householder regardless of their gender or sexual orientation.</p>
<p>People who suffer discrimination or disadvantage</p>	<p>Gypsies and Travellers can face significant discrimination and disadvantage. This project aims to meet the accommodation needs of Gypsies and Travellers currently living in Denbighshire. Elsewhere in this impact assessment we have referred to the positive health, well-being and economic impacts for the residents of the residential site. This is explained in detail in the research report produced by the Equalities and Human Rights Commission reviewing Inequalities experienced by Gypsy and Traveller communities: A review (2009) produced in conjunction with Bath University.</p>
<p>Areas with poor economic, health or educational outcomes</p>	<p>This proposal will a neutral impact on areas with poor outcomes. The Joseph Rowntree Research found that in the area of their study that local schools had managed the influx of new pupils successfully and that the children had integrated well socially. The National Inclusion Health Board (NIHB) research report (2016) links secure accommodation for Gypsies and Travellers with improved health outcomes.</p>

People in poverty	<p>Gypsy and Travellers are amongst the most excluded groups in British Society and many families are living in poverty. The residential site will give families stable, culturally appropriate and affordable homes from which to live, work and learn.</p> <p>The amenity blocks will be energy efficient. We also want to ensure site residents can access and negotiate the best possible utility offers. This will help to address issues around fuel poverty.</p>
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Negative impacts identified:

<p>Improving the well-being of people with protected characteristics. The nine protected characteristics are: age; disability; gender reassignment; marriage or civil partnership; pregnancy and maternity; race; religion or belief; sex; and sexual orientation</p>	<p>The project has been met with opposition from some stakeholders and this has produced some cohesion issues locally in St Asaph.</p>
<p>People who suffer discrimination or disadvantage</p>	<p>There have been concerns expressed through the pre-planning consultation which are based on negative experiences of unauthorised encampments or that reflect common myths and stereotypes about the Gypsy and Traveller community. It is important to consider actions to manage these concerns to avoid discrimination towards the families who would be living on the site.</p>
<p>Areas with poor economic, health or educational outcomes</p>	<p>This proposal will a neutral impact on areas with poor outcomes.</p>
<p>People in poverty</p>	<p>No known negative impact</p>

A Denbighshire of cohesive communities

Overall Impact	Neutral
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<p>Justification for impact</p>	<p>The likely long term impact of a residential site on community cohesion is likely to be neutral, as evidenced by research (Housing Research No 201, Neighbours views of official sites for travelling people, 1996).</p> <p>However, in the short term, during the engagement and consultation phases the impact has been negative, with some stakeholders opposed to the project. Many issues raised have not been material planning considerations but are consistent with issues raised by communities in other areas where such sites have been proposed. A number of concerns raised reflect the negative stereotypes which exist around the Gypsy and Traveller community and some are based on negative experiences of unauthorised encampments. Research has shown that the impact of official residential sites is not as feared by communities. A local example of the residential site in Conwy also demonstrates that a small site of this nature can integrate into a community and positive relationships can develop with neighbours.</p> <p>The current community tensions and fears has created a negative reaction and research has found that this is often the case initially. The development itself is unlikely to lead to community cohesion issues over the long term.</p> <p>The development itself, over the long term, would not have any negative cohesion issues. Community tensions have developed in the course of developing and consulting on the proposals. Resistance from local communities is common with many reports identifying this as a key barrier to meeting the accommodation needs of Gypsies and Travellers (EHRC Research report 2009) and the issues raised during the pre-planning consultation reflect concerns raised in response to similar proposals in other areas in the UK. The Rowntree Foundation research into impact demonstrates that the expected impact of residential sites did not materialise However, whatever decision is made, there could be stakeholders who perceive there to be a negative impact. There is a need to build more positive relations as we move forward.</p> <p>If the residential site can be developed and residents allowed a period to settle, we anticipate perceived fears amongst the existing community will be allayed. However, the close proximity of the transit site could negatively affect the residents of the residential site leading to cohesion issues.</p> <p>In terms of the development, the long term impact on the attractiveness of the environment is likely to be neutral. The rationale for this is based on the design of the site and the amenities and the screening.</p> <p>Again, we are aware that the co-location/twin-tracking of the proposals is not good practice.</p>
<p>Further actions required</p>	<p>The contractor will be required to keep the lane clean. The construction phase will be managed to limit negative impacts on nearby residents. We need to dispel myths and share information on good practice. There will be more resources for community cohesion more generally in the area (WG-funded) and we will need to support the communities through the change, to ensure community relations are good. There is regular contact with the extended family from DCC to offer support. The WIA should be reviewed regularly.</p>

Positive impacts identified:

Safe communities and individuals	There will be an improved feeling of safety for the family because they will be living together as a family unit. The site is also close-by to public transport and near to neighbours.
Community participation and resilience	The approach to engagement and consultation has enabled stakeholders to have a voice and put forward their ideas or concerns.
The attractiveness of the area	In terms of the development, the long term impact on the attractiveness of the environment is likely to be neutral. The rationale for this is based on the design of the site and the amenities and the screening. Planting will reduce noise pollution for neighbours.
Connected communities	There is an assumption that the site will have acceptable broadband and mobile infrastructure and this will be tested. Near to cycle routes, bus routes and the A55.
Rural resilience	The site is located near to the A55 and facilitates employment and self-employment opportunities.

Negative impacts identified:

Safe communities and individuals	There will be concerns among residential site residents about the transit site. Effective management strategies will be key to this. The consultation has highlighted significant concerns and fears among the existing local community. The proposed close proximity of the transit site to the residential site could lead to community cohesion issues within the Gypsy and Traveller community.
Community participation and resilience	There have been instances of cohesion issues and incidents of hate crime. There could be a community resilience issue in the St Asaph area; whereby some people have been concerned about the impact of the proposals. Research undertaken by the Joseph Rowntree foundation found that the impact of permanent residential sites was not as imagined by local communities (Housing Research 201, Neighbours views of official sites for travelling people). A further research report undertaken by De Montfort University and the Joseph Rowntree Foundation in 2016 found that effective site management is key to the provision of well functioning sites (Managing Gypsy and Traveller Sites: Negotiating Conflict).
The attractiveness of the area	During the construction phase on a narrow lane this could impact on other users of the lane. This is a short term impact only. There will be short term impacts associated with the construction phase.
Connected communities	No known negative impacts.
Rural resilience	No known negative impacts.

A Denbighshire of vibrant culture and thriving Welsh language

Overall Impact	Neutral
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Justification for impact	The site is too small to generate a significant positive or negative impact. However, providing a culturally appropriate Gypsy and Traveller site in Denbighshire would be a significant step for protecting the traditional lifestyle for Gypsy and Traveller families. A well-managed site would also demonstrate that both communities can co-exist successfully which would help to challenge the negative stereotypes which exist around the Gypsy and Traveller culture.
Further actions required	A well-managed site would also demonstrate that both communities can co-exist successfully which would help to challenge the negative stereotypes which exist around the Gypsy and Traveller culture.

Positive impacts identified:

People using Welsh	There are likely to be Welsh speakers living on the residential site. All materials and signage will be bilingual and residents would be able to access service provision through the medium of Welsh.
Promoting the Welsh language	As above - information provided to residents and signage will be bilingual.
Culture and heritage	This proposal provides culturally appropriate accommodation for existing residents of Denbighshire. The introduction of a well managed residential Gypsy and Traveller site in Denbighshire would provide a positive example of the Gypsy and Traveller culture to share with the wider community.

Negative impacts identified:

People using Welsh	No known negative impact.
Promoting the Welsh language	No known negative impact.
Culture and heritage	No known negative impact.

A globally responsible Denbighshire

Overall Impact	Neutral
Justification for impact	This is a small proposal and will have a neutral impact on producing a globally responsible Denbighshire. However, the proposal will have a significant positive impact on protecting the Human Rights of a marginalised community. Providing secure and culturally appropriate accommodation will enable residents to focus on their wider health and well-being requirements and provide a base from which to receive information about services relevant to them.
Further actions required	The management structure for the site can ensure that residents are aware of advice and services relevant to their needs and where appropriate be supported to access those.

Positive impacts identified:

Local, national, international supply chains	Consideration can be made to locally sourced products through the procurement process. Any planting on site will use local species.
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Human rights	The provision of culturally appropriate accommodation helps to protect the rights of Gypsies and Travellers.
Broader service provision in the local area or the region	Health and education outcomes for Gypsies and Travellers is often lower than the wider population. By providing appropriate and authorised accommodation this will provide a safe and secure home for families to access services and to live, work and learn.

Negative impacts identified:

Local, national, international supply chains	No known negative impacts
Human rights	No known negative impacts
Broader service provision in the local area or the region	No known negative impacts