

11.0 Preferred Option Recommendation

Appendix 6

Having assessed each site on their respective merits and disadvantages, it is the recommendation of this feasibility study to support the progression of Site A.

This is due to four main factors present on Site B:

- Increased planning risk
- Additional site abnormalities
- Higher costs leading to increased funding requirement
- Loss of external area/playing fields for Denbigh High School

Planning Risk

Green Barrier:

Site B is allocated Green Barrier land, Site A is not. There is a general presumption against development except where very exceptional circumstances can be demonstrated. When set against the option to develop Site A, it is unlikely such circumstances could be demonstrated successfully at planning.

Denbigh High Rugby Field Space:

At the request of the client team, we have considered the opportunity to provide an area of Site B as playing field space for Denbigh High to mitigate the loss of the existing pitches.

In our assessment, it will not be possible to accommodate any playing field space within the site without impacting on the proposed layout and how it currently responds to the school's brief, particularly in terms of parking, circulation and use of the external space.

As such mitigation measures to re-provide four pitches in close proximity to Denbigh High School would need to be considered and will likely prove highly contentious, as well as costly to deliver. In summary, using the entirety of Site B for the build would mean that Denbigh High would have a deficit of external area for the size of their. Whilst they would still have the Ystrad road playing field and the all weather pitch, the combined space would still not be big enough for the size of their school.

Sport Wales:

Whilst both Site A and Site B must consider the approach to mitigating the loss of playing field space, the anticipated loss on Site B (four football pitches) is of a higher quantity and will attract a greater cost to replace than Site A (400m running track and two pitches) assuming a suitable area can be identified.

Restrictive Covenant:

The site specific Report on Title (included at Appendix B) has identified a restrictive covenant on the land forming Denbigh High Rugby Fields / Site B. The terms of the restrictive covenant preclude any development of the land other than to build a private detached or semi-detached house.

The proposed development of the land for a school would therefore be in breach of the restrictive covenant. Whilst the covenant dates to 1930 and there may be options to manage the issue, it nevertheless presents a higher risk and conflict with title than at Site A.

Local Highway Network and Access:

Site B is not accessible from the existing adopted highway and would require construction of a new road. This route would be via Park Street, a residential area where residents routinely park on both sides of the highway effectively reducing the road to a single lane. This will be a highly sensitive issue and can be expected to incur strong objections at planning.

Whilst public consultation on Site A has raised similar concerns regarding the impact on the junction of Ystrad Road/Ruthin Road, modelling has demonstrated there will not be a significant worsening of the current situation or detrimental impact on the Highways Network.

On Site B further assessment will be required regarding the operation of the Park Street/Ruthin Road priority junction which has not been considered at this stage and will likely be intensified as a result of the development. Site Abnormals.

Levels:

On Site B there is a 6m level change from the West to South East. Site A is broadly level, with a 1m change in its entirety. Site B will therefore involve a more works to civilise the site (cut and fill, drainage etc) than Site A, that will attract greater costs and take longer to deliver.

Flooding:

Although the two site options are adjacent, due to their

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respective levels and relative position to the existing culvert, a greater proportion of Site B is identified as being at high risk of flooding. Whilst this would not preclude development, it would likely entail greater mitigation measures being required than on Site A.

Access:

Site A lies adjacent to Ystrad Road which is part of the adopted highway. The proposed entrance would require a new access formed through an existing hedge into site and a minor diversion of the existing Active Travel Route. Access into Site B would require the construction of a new adoptable highway approximately 100m long and diversion of the Active Travel Route, adding approximately 12 weeks to programme compared to Site A.

It should also be noted that whilst the existing road off Park Street is owned by Denbighshire Council, it is not adopted and there is a risk it would attract significant S.278 works to bring it to an adoptable standard, adding both cost and time to the project.

Utilities:

The likely points of connection on Site B (power, foul and surface water drainage) are further from the existing utilities infrastructure than at Site A. In addition, due to the topography surrounding Site B, foul drainage will need to be pumped, whereas on Site A, the expectation is that a gravity fall is achievable. Site B will therefore attract higher costs and programme requirements to resolve.

Project Budget

Our assessment of Site B indicates a required project budget of £28.5m against an updated Site A position of £26.4m (reflecting latest BCIS Inflation Indices).

Site B would therefore require additional funding in the region £2m.

This does not include any allowance for additional Client Technical Advisor fees or an assessment of the costs related to the items identified in the risk register

Site A (RIBA 3 Programme)



Site B (Feasibility Programme)



NOTE:

Site B requires 29-week PCSA period to from start of RIBA 2 to the end of RIBA 3. This creates a 13-week difference that increases the overall PCSA and Contract duration and associated preliminary costs.