



North East Wales Joint Archive Project: 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: 703

Brief description: The North East Wales Joint Archive Project will provide a sustainable, efficient and improved archive service for Denbighshire and Flintshire and will be delivered in the following phases: - Phase I – Single Shared Service: the creation of a single shared service operating across Flintshire and Denbighshire - Phase II – New Building: A new purpose built Archive building with passivhaus storage. - Phase III - Activity Plan: An activity plan to widen and diversify the audience service and deliver a sustainable service.

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Responsible Service: Housing and Communities Service

Localities affected by the proposal: Whole County,

Who will be affected by the proposal? At the workshop the following people were identified: - Local people who use the archive - People using the proposed new site - Archive staff (business case assumes no FTE change but they will need to learn new skills) - Schools - Vacated building x 2 (opportunities for Ruthin Gaol heritage attraction to expand) - Better physical access for users - Health partners - New target audiences which will be developed by the project - Disability (mental health, Dementia, dyslexia); Young people (toddlers, schoolchildren 5 – 18, students 18 – 22, young people 14 – 21, young carers); LGBT+; Low income groups; Prisoners - Library users and staff -

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Archive Volunteers - Archive Depositors (existing and potential) - Members and other politicians -
Theatr Clwyd (the organisation and its users) - Businesses in Ruthin

Was this impact assessment completed as a group? Yes

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 : 31 / 36.

Summary for each Sustainable Development principle

Long term

The proposed purpose built archive centre will be built to passivhaus standards in the storage area and net carbon zero in all other areas. This will help to reduce energy consumption and energy costs substantially. The plans are for Denbighshire's Heritage Service to use the vacated space at the Gaol to expand their visitor attraction. Ruthin Gaols should have reduced energy consumption and costs associated to it (with no archives being stored).

Prevention

The planned activity programme will improve the well-being and health of individuals. This should reduce reliance on other public services. The environmentally friendly new archive centre has been designed to minimise carbon emissions. The grounds and natural landscape will be developed.

Integration

The project links to the majority of well-being goals and the corporate priorities of both FCC & DCC and other public sector organisations.

Collaboration

The North East Wales Archives is a collaboration between Denbighshire County Council and Flintshire County Council. There are a lot of collaboration with other groups / organisations e.g.

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Theatr Clwyd, HMP Berwyn, schools, libraries, care homes, voluntary organisations and this collaboration will continue once the building is open to the public.

Involvement

Engagement has been a fundamental aspect of this project. Current service users and non-users have all been consulted with. Partners, local MAG and other stakeholders have all been consulted with.

Summary of impact

Well-being Goals	Overall Impact
A prosperous Denbighshire	Positive
A resilient Denbighshire	Neutral
A healthier Denbighshire	Positive
A more equal Denbighshire	Positive
A Denbighshire of cohesive communities	Positive
A Denbighshire of vibrant culture and thriving Welsh language	Positive
A globally responsible Denbighshire	Neutral

Main conclusions

Some of the details surrounding the proposed new archive centre are still to be determined but the fundamental principle of combining the resources of NEWA into one building, enables the service to deliver a 'hub and spoke' delivery model. This will see NEWA having an increased presence out in local communities. Taking archives out to local communities and using them to inform, educate and

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entertain will deliver positive outcomes for all involved. Local communities will have better access to the service, be better informed about their history, heritage and culture, leading to greater awareness, improved well-being and lead to changes in behaviour.

The project's contribution to skills and volunteering also supports many of these wellbeing goals.

The vacated space at Ruthin Gaol will be used to expand the heritage attraction on this site. This will increase footfall and boost the local economy in Ruthin and surrounding areas.

The passivahus / net carbon zero design for the new building will help ensure NEWA is operating from a building that is contributing towards improved environmental standards.

On the whole this project will contribute greatly to the Council's duty under the Future Generations Act and meet its obligation in the Council Plan.

The likely impact on Denbighshire, Wales and the world.

A prosperous Denbighshire

Overall Impact

Positive

Justification for impact

Positive as the new environmentally friendly archive centre will contribute positively to low carbon society and facilitate increases in visitors to the region.

The planned 'hub and spoke' operating model for NEWA should have a positive impact in Denbighshire communities.

Bringing NEWA's resources together under one roof will help to provide greater opportunities for upskilling team members, volunteers and apprentices.

The planned heritage expansion plans for Ruthin Gaol will increase footfall and improve the local economy in the local area. The expanded heritage attraction is likely to attract a far greater number of visitors compared to that of the archive service.

The project will deliver upskilling in staff and users and within target audiences.

Further actions required

We need to continue working on the heritage expansion plans for Ruthin Gaol and ensuring that an enhanced visitor attraction is developed.

Should consider more the positive impact this project can have on tourism across the region.

Bus services do stop at the site but this is not frequently. As demand is known pressure could be applied to consider improved transport links. Also consider electric vehicle availability for staff use which would be a mitigating factor.

There are extensive plans for the Ruthin Gaol site which will build on the offer that Ruthin has for its residents and visitors. This will benefit the local economy.

Positive impacts identified:

A low carbon society

The new building will be built to Passivhaus standards in the storage area and net carbon zero in all other areas. Reducing energy and carbon substantially.

There will be solar panels on the new building.

Reduced carbon emissions at Ruthin Gaol with archive's environmental management system not needing to be operated.

Quality communications, infrastructure and transport

We are removing the flood risk associated with remaining at Ruthin Gaol.

We are proposing to increase archives infrastructure and resilience by creating outreach services in easy to reach buildings and areas e.g. libraries, community centres, schools etc.

There is good mobile infrastructure.

Theatr Clwyd refurbishment plans may include changes to the bus services.

Economic development

The Heritage service's plans for an expanded attraction at Ruthin Gaol using the vacated space, will have a positive economic impact in Ruthin with increased footfall, community space, café, local engagement. This will attract footfall to Clwyd Street and improve the economy in this part of town.

Quality skills for the long term

Opportunities for archives to support schools with the new curriculum e.g. sense of place (Cynefin).

Increased engagement with groups e.g. libraries, schools, HMP Berwyn, Glyndwr University, helping to increase skills, literacy, numeracy and knowledge of local history.

The project will allow us to offer an much larger volunteers programme by having all staff in one location.

Opportunities for a more exciting and wider work programme for volunteers.

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Also opportunities for staff to develop new skills for the long term.

The project will also allow us to take on more work experience and apprentices.

Succession options for conservator functions can be considered.

Quality jobs for the long term

Improved opportunities for up-skilling the workforce and for working with a wider range of users.

Skills transfer opportunities, working with partners and short terms contractors.

The improved access facilities will allow us to employ a more diverse workforce.

Easier for recruitment for NEWA by being in a new and modern archive centre.

Childcare

Having all of the NEWA team together and running one search-room an operating one building, will create enhanced opportunities for working from home.

Negative impacts identified:

A low carbon society

Staff and users potentially travelling longer distances by private car, although there will be a lot of outreach work in libraries and schools which could be closer to their home. There is potential of having an electric vehicle available for staff to use too.

The Gaol will still need to be maintained and heated, continuing to contribute to DCC's carbon emissions (albeit at a lower consumption rate).

Quality communications, infrastructure and transport

Access to the proposed site via public transport is challenging. This is a challenge across both Counties in existing state- not necessarily any worse in new state but should be noted.

There is a safe walking route from the town to the site although the distance may be daunting to walkers.

Economic development

There is a risk that Heritage Service may not secure all of the necessary funding to develop all parts of the Gaol and this may limit the expanded heritage attraction and reduce the economic impact.

Quality skills for the long term

Sustainability of skills sets is reliant on training budgets, which have been reduced in recent times.

Quality jobs for the long term

Potential restructure over the longer term could affect staff.

Childcare

Not yet known

A resilient Denbighshire

Overall Impact

Neutral

Justification for impact

Passivhaus design of proposed new archive centre will contribute positively to energy and fuel consumption.. Ruthin Gaol energy use should also reduce with the archives environmental management system not needing to be used.

By working together and achieving the same aim of a positive outcome. The landscaping plans for the new site will enhance the natural area and connect to the surrounding landscape.

Further actions required

Loss of trees would be off set by re-landscaping the area

Electric vehicle for staff use.

Need to consider waste and recycling.

Positive impacts identified:

Biodiversity and the natural environment

No protected species currently on the site or at either existing site.

Biodiversity in the built environment

No protected species currently. Formalised garden and landscape area, particularly focussed on being dementia friendly.

We propose to take a re-wilding approach that is sympathetic to the preservation of archive materials (e.g. no increase in paper-eating insects).

Reducing waste, reusing and recycling

Construction will consider using sustainable recycled materials and there will be an emphasis on the contractor to reduce waste on site (as part of the waste management plan). There will be a cultural change in the new building on how we recycle and reuse.

When moving out of a building, consideration needs to be made with the furniture, fixtures and fittings left behind and whether these can potentially be gifted to schools or that CAD recycling can repurpose them. Archive racking in the Gaol could potentially be recycled by being used by Denbighshire Heritage service.

Reduced energy/fuel consumption

The passivhaus and carbon net zero building plans do include solar PV but may be substituted with link to solar farm when that comes online.

The planned heritage expansion plans at Ruthin Gaol are likely to require less energy consumption.

People's awareness of the environment and biodiversity

Proposed to have interpretation boards within the landscaped area along walk ways.

Spaces created for people to stop and sit and be with nature.

Iconic building will attract lots of people to the building as well as the archives service.

Flood risk management

Landscaping will factor in water attenuation and include sustainable drainage system.

Negative impacts identified:

Biodiversity and the natural environment

Loss of some trees that are of limited ecological value. Landscaping will make up the removal of this.

Biodiversity in the built environment

Not yet known

Reducing waste, reusing and recycling

No known impacts - to be considered

Reduced energy/fuel consumption

Possible increase in some staff travel

People's awareness of the environment and biodiversity

Not yet known

Flood risk management

Not yet known

A healthier Denbighshire

Overall Impact

Positive

Justification for impact

Positive impact on mental health and wellbeing is a core aim of the this project, particularly the broad and exciting activity plan.

Need to manage carefully the change in location and approach of the archive service delivery for existing users so any detrimental impacts are lessened/avoided.

Further actions required

People with invisible disabilities who would like to participate but the environment might not be suitable - this needs to be considered.

Supporting change process amongst staff and users required

Positive impacts identified:

A social and physical environment that encourage and support health and well-being

The 'hub and spoke' delivery model aims to use archives to improve the health and well-being of individuals.

NEWA will be designed to be more accessible to Denbighshire residents.

Dedicated space for learning. The well-being goals are being embedded in curriculum and there are opportunities to promote the facility to schools.

Physical space will be a safe place for all and more accessible to more people, with different needs.

Access to good quality, healthy food

Theatr Clwyd cafe and restaurant plans - using local food. Refreshments also available at another site within walking distance.

People's emotional and mental well-being

The outreach programme will take the archives out to local communities - educating and improving health and well-being of individuals

The 'hub and spoke' delivery model provides greater opportunities to deliver an outreach programme that will improve the health and well-being of the communities in Denbighshire.

Opportunities to bring people together to combat loneliness.

Opportunities to use primary archive material in dementia- visiting places of interest as well as archive material.

Helping people with loss - remembering loved ones, how and when and where they live.

Opportunities to learn and to volunteer which increase wellbeing.

Access to healthcare

Opportunities to link in with social prescribing to treat conditions.

Longer opening hours.

Planned engagement activities may relieve some pressure on care providers.

Participation in leisure opportunities

Activity programme out in communities.

Both increasing opportunities for participation. Also these activities will be designed to target groups that don't normally participate.

Negative impacts identified:

A social and physical environment that encourage and support health and well-being

Reliance on cars to get to the NEW Archives Service location potentially reducing active travel

options.

Access to good quality, healthy food

None

People's emotional and mental well-being

Impact on regular users about this change- location of archive - need to be managed carefully

Access to healthcare

Not yet known

Participation in leisure opportunities

none

A more equal Denbighshire

Overall Impact

Positive

Justification for impact

The target audiences that this project will develop include those with protected characteristics.

To ensure this remains positive the project will need to manage the potential contention of increasing and opening access at same time as needing to deliver a resilient service.

Further actions required

Project will benefit from clear branding for activity programme and careful scheduling of activities at the site to ensure a welcoming and appropriate environment for all users.

Activity plan will have an increased focus on those from such groups

The building environment will ensure that its accessible and comfortable for all .

Positive impacts identified:

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

Target audiences include - living with dementia, mental health, families, LGBTQ+, those with protected characteristics and for those to be involved in a service where they may not have had an opportunity to do so before.

People who suffer discrimination or disadvantage

Activity plan target audiences include: Prisoners, LGBTQ+, Dementia. The programme will include active engagement with such groups.

Ways archive operate and collections held may change by this engagement.

Creating vibrant environment.

Encourage a safe place for all.

People affected by socio-economic disadvantage and unequal outcomes

Basic archive function will remain free at point of access.

Some targeted groups will receive free activities

Areas affected by socio-economic disadvantage

Often those with other protected characteristics above also lower economic background too so increasing provision and outcomes for these groups will also be positive in this category.

Negative impacts identified:

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

none

People who suffer discrimination or disadvantage

Need to ensure that those on lower incomes are not excluded due to travel to new hub or any fees and charges regime

People affected by socio-economic disadvantage and unequal outcomes

Fees and charges may be a barrier.

Areas affected by socio-economic disadvantage

Facilitating people to come to site who may not be able to afford transport- may miss out

A Denbighshire of cohesive communities

Overall Impact

Positive

Justification for impact

The benefits of the project will bring to community participation, belonging, identity and reliance makes this impact positive.

Further actions required

The Activity Plan will involve working with many organisations across the 2 authorities and also include outreach work - taking the NEW Archives Service into all parts of the counties.

Scope to work with library services in the 2 counties and that a lot of community groups either meet at these locations or have close links with them.

The approaching area will be landscaped enabling visitors to enjoy the outdoors during their visit.

An archive presence will remain at Ruthin gaol.

Positive impacts identified:

Safe communities and individuals

Skills building in partnership with HMP Berwyn reducing the likelihood of reoffending and increasing skills. Positive engagement with prison staff on how the project will work once opened.

Helping to create a feeling of sense and understanding of history and area for local communities.

Community participation and resilience

Activity Plan with under-represented parts of our community will help in collecting and preserving their stories and widen our collections.

The project aims to engage with a broader range of stakeholders.

Connection with the Theatre could lead to greater interaction with our shared heritage and history.

Opportunities for volunteering and apprenticeships will increase.

The attractiveness of the area

Local projects to improve the area- connecting people to deliver e.g. memorials- in villages etc.

An enhanced heritage visitor attraction at Ruthin Gaol will make this location more desirable.

Connected communities

A lot of the activity plan will involve work out in communities and therefore taking the offer out to them. There would also be online resources and digital availability was deemed high on a recent survey with users.

Using heritage to generate feeling of belonging.

Increased reason to visit local libraries and other community locations

Activity Plan will include student placements, and volunteering opportunities.

Rural resilience

Potential to increase visitors into Ruthin if ambitions around Ruthin Gaol are realised.

Activity programme- more outreach going to rural isolated areas.

Negative impacts identified:

Safe communities and individuals

none

Community participation and resilience

Need to manage any sense of loss of service in Ruthin community. This will be mitigated via increased activities out in local communities.

An archive presence will remain at Ruthin Gaol with an Archivist onsite one day each week.

The attractiveness of the area

none

Connected communities

Longer travelling times for some, maybe a barrier. This will be mitigated through increased work out in communities. Many communities will have greater access to archives through the community engagement programme.

An archive presence will also remain at Ruthin Gaol.

Rural resilience

Feeling of loss of a key public service in Ruthin (although will be replaced with enhanced heritage attraction).

An archive presence will also remain at Ruthin Gaol.

A Denbighshire of vibrant culture and thriving Welsh language

Overall Impact

Positive

Justification for impact

This project will increase the exposure to Denbighshire's rich culture and heritage and increase the access to it.

The collections have a lot of Welsh relevant aspects to them and the project will mean these are better cared for and interpreted and shared.

Individuals will have a greater understanding our our history, culture and heritage.

Further actions required

There are plans to build on the current offer of Ruthin Gaol once the archives service has vacated, this is part of a long term plan. The heritage service has plans to use the vacated space to create an enhanced heritage attraction. Some funds have been made available for this and other external sources of funding are being explored.

Positive impacts identified:

People using Welsh

All NEWA activities will be bilingual.

More opportunities for the wider NEWA team to learn Welsh.

Welsh language collections taken out to local communities.

Bilingual team

Promoting the Welsh language

Better utilisation of NEWA's Welsh language collections and using them to inform and educate

communities in Denbighshire of their rich cultural heritage.

Global draw.

Showcasing Welsh culture.

Bringing together Welsh language collections.

Bilingual team

Culture and heritage

Located near the Theatre will lead to the creation of a cultural/heritage campus.

Opportunity for expansion of existing heritage attraction at Ruthin Gaol (items of interest, education room etc).

The planned outreach work will help to promote and education on Denbighshire's culture and heritage.

The new curriculum in Wales promotes a sense of place (Cynefin), which can be supported via archives.

Facilities around culture and heritage in localities (libraries and temporary community programme)- more spread than just the 2 locations currently.

Negative impacts identified:

People using Welsh

No negative impacts

Promoting the Welsh language

n/a

Culture and heritage

n/a

A globally responsible Denbighshire

Overall Impact

Neutral

Justification for impact

On the whole the project is assessed as positive on global responsibility.

Reduced emissions.

An archive service that is available across the region (rather than just having to travel to Ruthin)

Increased digital access

Further actions required

Opportunities around procurement/supply chain to facilitate good outcomes in this area should be taken at the appropriate time, especially with the construction contract.

Electric vehicle for staff

Positive impacts identified:

Local, national, international supply chains

The net carbon zero/passivhaus design reduces reliance on fuel which is a finite commodity and imported from abroad. Some materials may need to be sourced from further afield and there will be pressure on the contractor to purchase locally.

Human rights

Target audience include those with dementia which tend to be those who are older.

Potential partnership with Alzheimers society and contribute to being a Dementia Friendly organisation.

Broader service provision in the local area or the region

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Archives activities will be spread more broadly across Denbighshire, rather than the current situation with a focus on Ruthin.

There are great opportunities to engage with partners on the Activity Plan and to get them engaged once the funding is approved. This will help partners to achieve their objectives.

Reducing climate change

Net Carbon Zero/Passivhaus building.

Digital resources will reduce the need for people to travel.

Reduced omissions from new archive centre and Ruthin Gaol.

Taking the archive service out to local communities, should reduce the need to travel for some.

Negative impacts identified:

Local, national, international supply chains

Materials used for the build potentially originated from further afield

Human rights

none

Broader service provision in the local area or the region

none

Reducing climate change

Possible increased staff travel.