

APPENDIX G - Penicuik High School Decant Strategy – Options Appraisal

Option 1 – Do Nothing / Do Minimum			
Description	Keep pupils in place during refurbishment works.		
Expected Costs	This option has not been costed as it will not be possible to progress project without some level of pupil decant.		
Risks Specific to this Option	Risk	Description	Mitigation
	Health & Safety	Keeping all pupils on site will result in contractors having to undertake deep refurbishment works with pupils in situ. This will present risks to occupants of the building in relation to it being an active development site as well as other risks such as asbestos disturbance.	No mitigation available.
	Programme	Far greater complexity in terms of access to the areas of the building will slow the work programme, resulting in 2026 target deadline being missed.	No mitigation available.
	Financial	Far greater complexity in terms of access to the areas of the building will slow the work programme, resulting in 2026 target deadline being missed. This may result in funding being rescinded.	No mitigation available.
	Educational/Operational	The level of disturbance on site without decant to locations elsewhere within the building or off site will result in significant disruption to the learning environment.	No mitigation available. School curriculum wouldn't be able to be achieved.
Advantages & Disadvantages	Advantages Forgo requirement to relocate pupils while works are underway.		Disadvantages Failure to decant will result in a slower programme of refurbishment with higher risks to the building occupants and implications for cost and funding from the Scottish Government.
Viability	In order to meet the 2026 timescale for delivery, this is not a viable option due to implications on programme and on the quality of the learning environment for students at Penicuik HS.		

Option 2a – Partial Decant (S4-6) to Beeslack			
Description	<p>Under this option, S1-3 (approx. 400 pupils) stay at Penicuik High School, moving into the listed building for Phase 1 refurbishment (1960's block), then relocating for Phase 2 refurbishment (listed building).</p> <p>S4-6 (up to 200 pupils) relocate to modular accommodation delivered on the site of Beeslack High School. This would require the placement of three blocks (B, C, D) of temporary units within Beeslack High School site, but these will be adjacent to the existing school building. The proposed location offers some opportunities for co-ordinated use of dining and assembly functions which could reduce the overall modular requirement.</p> <p>However, the close proximity to Beeslack High School will present additional challenges during enabling works for, and installation of, the temporary units. This will require careful planning and management to ensure safe pedestrian segregation. The management of two schools on one single site, and the management of one school across two separate sites will also present significant challenges.</p>		
Expected Costs	Circa £9.480m		
Risks Specific to this Option	Risk	Description	Mitigation
	Delivery	Careful planning for the installation of the temporary units will be required due to their proximity to the existing Beeslack High School.	Careful planning and management, including safety, will be required.
	Operational	There will be loss of spaces within the existing car park.	Car park spaces to be reviewed to see if capacity can be created elsewhere.
	Delivery	There is a potential conflict with mature trees that would require to be felled.	Impact on trees to be minimised in design and replacement trees planted in suitable location.
	Operational	Difficulties managing existing staff across two sites with risk of requiring additional posts to ensure adequate cover.	Additional staff resources may be required to service two sites.
	Operational	Adjacency of temporary units B and D to access road will require additional safety measures.	Careful planning and management, including safety, will be required.

Advantages & Disadvantages	<p>Advantages</p> <p>Enabling works for infrastructure less onerous due to proximity to existing school building.</p> <p>Access strategy requirement minimal.</p>	<p>Disadvantages</p> <p>Splitting school staff between two sites will result in significant operational/staffing issues for school management for duration of project, with likely revenue implications.</p> <p>Potential conflict with mature trees that would require to be felled.</p> <p>Lead time for procurement of temporary units.</p> <p>Additional segregation and safety requirement</p>
Viability	<p>While technically feasible, there are operational issues associated with splitting a school across two sites that present significant management issues.</p>	

Option 2b – Full Decant to Beeslack (Green Field)			
Description	<p>This option entails the placement of a series of modular blocks within greenspace adjacent to Beeslack High School site. The proposed location offers the benefit of being in largely flat grounds, which will result in minimal groundworks required. However, the remote location will require greater enabling works in relation to infrastructure and extensive development of an access strategy for both emergency vehicles and pedestrians.</p> <p>This location also presents additional constraints as the temporary units will be location within protected areas under Planning Policy DEV8 (Open Spaces) and ENV8 (Protection of River Valleys). This will require consultation with the Local Authority in relation to planning to ensure the option is acceptable.</p>		
Expected Costs	£15.764m		
Risks Specific to this Option	Risk	Description	Mitigation
	Planning	The location of the temporary units is within the area protected Planning Policy DEV8 (Open Spaces) and ENV8 (protection of River Valleys), with consultation required with Local Authority Planning Department to ensure the proposal is acceptable.	Early engagement with Planning Authority to determine impact of this constraint.
	Health & Safety	The location of the temporary units will be atop of steeply raised ground might prove challenging for access for emergency vehicles and pedestrians,	Careful planning and management, including safety, will be required.
	Operational	Remote location from the existing Beeslack High School may be challenging if access and use to its facility is required.	Careful planning and management, including safety, will be required.
	Delivery	Extensive enabling works for services will be required due to the location of the temporary units.	Careful planning and management, including safety, will be required.

Advantages & Disadvantages	Advantages Minimal Ground Works Required. No alteration required for the existing car park. School and staff body of Penicuik High School is kept together Programme benefits for delivery of refurbishment of Penicuik HS due to full decant.	Disadvantages Potential planning constraints / impact on open space. Access strategy for emergency vehicles and pedestrians will be required. Enabling works will be required for temporary units. Lead time for procurement of temporary units. Significant cost of modular units. Not established if this is outweighed by programme benefits. Significant disruption to school due to relocation. Additional transport costs Relocation potential barrier to learning with possible impact on attendance/attainment.
Viability	Most expensive option regarding decant with additional disbenefits of relocation/transport.	

Option 3a – Partial Decant to land at Montgomery Park			
Description	Modular Units to be located on playing fields adjacent to Penicuik High School for 2 year period of construction programme on land in ownership of Midlothian Council.		
Expected Costs	Circa £8.944m		
Risks Specific to this Option	Risk	Description	Mitigation
	Delivery	Planning - loss of designated open space	Temporary use for 2 years will result in land being restored to original use and condition.
	Delivery	Restrictions on Title (Montgomery Park)	Obtain relevant consent for use of Park as temporary site for educational purposes. Initial engagement has been positive.
	Reputational	Community objections to temporary loss of open space	Implement community engagement strategy. Restoration / improvement of green space once project complete.
	Delivery	No site investigation work carried out to understand ground conditions / services/ utilities	Works to be instructed at soonest opportunity, tied into overall condition survey works for school.
Advantages & Disadvantages	Advantages No requirement to split staff across two sites. This mitigates impact on pupils and staff. Proximity to school retained minimising disruption and positive outcomes regarding level of additional accommodation required. No transport costs required.		Disadvantages Planning and title constraint require further assessment and strategy to address, however initial engagement has been positive and barriers to use not anticipated. Community engagement strategy will be required for school/decant project, with need for family/school community engagement.
Viability	Proposal has significant advantage of retaining single operational site for school, subject to further clarity regarding constraints re restriction on title planning policy.		

Option 3b – Full Decant to land at Montgomery Park			
Description	Modular Units to be located on playing fields adjacent to Penicuik High School for 2 year period of construction programme on land in ownership of Midlothian Council.		
Expected Costs	Circa £15.784m		
Risks Specific to this Option	Risk	Description	Mitigation
	Delivery	Planning - loss of designated open space	Temporary use for 2 years will result in land being restored to original use and condition. Mitigation for loss of playing field for duration of works to be addressed.
	Delivery	Restrictions on Title (Montgomery Park)	Establish parameters within which restriction may not affect temporary use and seek to demonstrate project stays within these. Initial engagement has been positive.
	Reputational	Community objections to temporary loss of open space	Implement community engagement strategy. Restoration / improvement of green space once project complete.
	Delivery	No site investigation work carried out to understand ground conditions / services/ utilities	Works to be instructed at soonest opportunity, tied into overall condition survey works for school.
Advantages & Disadvantages	Advantages No requirement to split staff across two sites. This mitigates impact on pupils and staff. Proximity to school retained minimising disruption and positive outcomes regarding level of additional accommodation required. No transport costs required.		Disadvantages Planning and title constraint require further assessment and strategy to address. Initial engagement has been positive and barrier to use not anticipated. Community engagement strategy and engagement with school community will be required for school/decant project.
Viability	Proposal has significant advantage of retaining single operational site for school, subject to further clarity regarding constraints re restriction on title planning policy.		

Scoring of Options Against Objectives

Objectives	Options Scoring Against Objectives				
	2a Partial Beeslack	2b Full Beeslack	3a Partial MP	3b Full MP	Comments
Place based, designed around end user needs and their spatial context	1	2	3	3	End user needs strongest reflected in Option 3a/b (Park) where existing school and staffing environment most closely replicated, giving greater consistency.
Evidence based, based on clearly defined set of objectives and performance metrics	2	2	3	3	Both options respond to identified need for decant, however potential to avoid disruption of learning / minimise impact on education inequality greater with decant to Park.
Joined up, delivered with stakeholders and partners	3	3	3	3	All options reflect working with internal and external stakeholders and partners.
Strategically aligned, ensuring projects respond to the requirements of key strategy documents such as National Planning Framework 4 and the Single Midlothian Plan.	1	2	3	3	Option 2a/b have potential to have negative impact on education inequality with requirement for transport to another school campus representing a potential barrier to school attendance, contrary to Single Midlothian Plan.
Environmentally sustainable	2	1	3	3	Option 2b will generate more additional carbon due to greater requirement to transport children to second location. Temporary, reusable modular units a sustainable choice.
Socially beneficial	2	2	3	3	Option 2 a/b has potential to have negative impact on education inequality and on learning experience with requirement for transport to second school for senior phase, a potential barrier to school attendance.
Affordable	2	2	3	2	Costs are very high level. Full decants more expensive with additional transport costs for 2b. However, there may be more savings for 2b and

					3b given scope to deliver refurbishment to shorter programme. Extent of opportunity yet to be established.
Total	13	14	21	20	
Ranking	4	3	2	1	

Scoring

Fully Delivers = 3

Mostly Delivers = 2

Delivers to a Limited Extent = 1

Does not Deliver = 0

Will have a negative impact on objective = -1

Recommendation

It is recommended that the option to decant to Montgomery Park is taken forward as a preferred option, subject to resolution of any potential issues regarding title constraints on the site of the land, however initial engagement has been positive regarding this. The extent of the decant is to be subject to further design work to establish extent of modular units required for partial decant and possible programme benefits of implementing full decant.

