



Northumberland
County Council

The Outline Business Case for the Investment in school buildings for James Calvert Spence College



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4D	Arboricultural Survey
4E	Topographical Survey
4F	Utilities Survey
4G	FF&E including technology audit
4H	IT Audit
4I	Schedule of spaces that remain undersized
4J	Letter of comfort from NCC Planners
6A	Project Risk Register

Glossary of Terms

Term	Definition
BB103	The document which sets out simple, non-statutory area guidelines for school buildings and sites
BCIS	Building Cost Information Service
BS8300	A code of practice that details the required design of buildings for meeting the needs of disabled people
CBR	California Bearing Ratio

CDM	Construction Design and Management
DDA	Disability Discrimination Act
DfE	Department for Education
EA	Environment Agency
EclA	Ecological Impact Assessment
ERIC NE	Environmental Records Information Centre Northeast
ESFA	Education and Skills Funding Agency
FACS	Family And Children's Services
FBC	Final Business Case
FFE	Furniture, Fixtures and Equipment
FTS	Find a Tender
ICT	Information and Communications Technology
ITT	Invitation to Tender
IRZ	Impact Risk Zone
ITPD	Invitation to Participate in Dialogue
ITT	Invitation to Tender
JCSC	James Calvert Spence College
LA	Local Authority
MUGA	Multi Use Games Area
NCC	Northumberland County Council
NPPF	National Planning Policy Framework
OBC	Outline Business Case
OJEU	Official Journal of the European Union
OS	Ordnance Survey
PCR	Public Contracts Regulations
PCSA	Pre-Construction Services Agreement
PQQ	Pre-Qualification Questionnaire

PROW	Public Right of Way
RIBA	Royal Institute of British Architects
RIBA stage	Denotes the design work stages that address the required phase of a construction project
SEN	Special Educational Needs
SoA	Schedule of Accommodation
SSSI	Site of Special Scientific Interest
SuDS	Sustainable Drainage System

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This document outlines the options appraisal, cost estimates, affordability assessment and procurement strategy carried out in relation to the proposal to provide Capital Investment in the school buildings for James Calvert Spence College with community facilities.

The outline business case explores a number of options for the redevelopment of the school including refurbishment and extension of the existing school buildings, providing new school buildings and doing the minimum to enable the school to become an 11-18 secondary school. Sufficient detail is included in this OBC to allow an informed decision as to how capital funding is to be best used and for approval to be sought from Cabinet for the implementation and delivery of the preferred scheme.

1 Overview and commitment

Section 1 and **Appendix 1** of this Outline Business Case describe the scheme and confirm the commitment of all parties to the project.

The preferred scheme supports the objectives set out in Northumberland County Council's vision for Northumberland's residents. While strong leadership and good governance are key components of successful schools, the provision of a suitable learning environment can have a positive impact on outcomes for children and young people. This scheme delivers a service that has positive outcomes for the community.

The need to improve the buildings of James Calvert Spence College (JCSC) had already been identified through the ongoing maintenance programme. Additional funding to improve the buildings of the school would be extremely beneficial to improve outcomes for the Northumberland children and young people who attend it. Subsequently, Northumberland County Council approved funding for officers to carry out works to enable the development of this Outline Business Case which sets out the work undertaken to establish the feasibility and affordability of this proposal. The high-level costs for this option are outlined in Section 5.

As well as improving the teaching and learning environment for current and future pupils in the schools, improvements to the on-site sporting and community facilities will benefit the wider Amble community.

Pupil place planning data for Coquet Partnership shows that reprovision of the current capacity for pupils at JCSC will be adequate for current and future needs.

The timeline for the delivery of the school aims for a handover date of 01/09/25.

2 Procurement strategy

Section 2 and **Appendix 2** of this Outline Business Case describe the Procurement

Strategy for the whole scheme.

Following a review of procurement options available for construction projects, it is recommended that the development is procured through a Design and Build strategy utilising a single stage tendering procedure tendered at the end of RIBA stage 4.

It is recommended that the project proceeds via a Public Contracts Regulations (PCR) compliant, non-Framework 'open' tender process.

The key objective for the delivery of the project is to open the new secondary school for operation from September 2025.

Key dates for the provision of a new build secondary school are as follows:

1. OBC approval 17 November 2022
2. RIBA stage 3 designs instructed 21 November 2022
3. Planning submitted 17 February 2023 and determined on 06 June 2023
4. RIBA stage 4 designs completed 07 July 2023
5. Tenders issued 24 July 2023
6. Tenders returned 29 September 2023 and contract awarded 27 October 2023
7. Construction commences on site 13 November 2023
8. New school opens 01 September 2025

3 Land

Section 3 of this Outline Business Case describes the site options appraisal undertaken that contributes to the design and construction works for the preferred option.

This section outlines the options available for the redevelopment. The Options Appraisal outlines the advantages and disadvantages of each option together with planning commentary. The outcome of the appraisal which has been independently assessed by a special surveyor has resulted in Option 5 being the preferred option. This option would see the development of a new school building for JCSC on the school land to the east of the recreation ground.

4 Design and Construction

Section 4 and **Appendix 4** of this Outline Business Case describe the design options and investigative survey works undertaken to demonstrate feasibility.

The studies that form the Outline Business Case (OBC) have considered the Education Brief, Planning, Highways, and Sport England requirements. In addition, all of the surveys referenced in this OBC have been taken into consideration as have all design guidance and standards that are relevant to this initial stage of design.

The whole sale refurbishment and upgrade of the existing estate is feasible but would be lengthy and disruptive and due to the constraints associated with the existing building would still, when complete have inherent issues in terms of space standards and circulation deficiencies.

The redevelopment of the existing site with new buildings has significant compromise, mostly due to the need to build away from the existing buildings to mitigate disruption and ensure continuity of curriculum delivery. Neither option uses the site to best effect, and will have long disruptive phased programmes. The construction access is complex.

The development of the recreation ground site would be a good option if it were not for the complexities/risks associated with ownership and covenants, which if not easily navigated put undue risk and cost onto the proposal along with the need to replace the recreation facilities

A new build option on the land east of the recreation ground is the most advantageous option. The site can be developed without any disruption to the continuity of education delivery and there are no legal complications in regard to site ownership.

5 Commercial appraisal

Section 5 of this Outline Business Case describes the commercial appraisal for the

options available for the scheme.

The Overall Project Outturn Cost for the recommended option (Option 5 - New Build on Land East of Recreation Ground) is £25,726,000.

This is exclusive of VAT however includes abnormals, professional fees, ICT, FF&E and the additional funding of £2,335,398 to support the further recommendation to achieve Net Zero Carbon in Operation.

6 Readiness to Deliver

Section 6 and **Appendix 6** of the Outline Business Case sets out NCC's project management structure and identifies the roles and responsibilities of each part of the structure.

Northumberland County Council has put in place resources for the duration of the project, including post contract, to monitor and maintain ongoing relations between Northumberland County Council and JCSC to ensure the effective delivery of the project, throughout its lifetime.

A Bidders' Day will be organised in the spring of 2023.

Several risk workshops have been held and a risk strategy developed. Risk will continue to be monitored and evaluated with any changes being reported to the project board on a monthly basis.

7 Moving Forward

Section 7 sets out the proposed recommended approach for the procurement should approval for the scheme be given by Northumberland County Council's Cabinet.

A critical path of scheduled delivery activities has been provided based on the proposed route to market, Design and Build Single Stage Procurement, and in line with the Public Contracts Regulations [PCR] 2015.

The RIBA Stage 3 design will need to proceed immediately on approval of the OBC for the key milestones to be achieved. The design process will progress on through to RIBA Stage 4 / tender issue level by July 2023.

1 OVERVIEW AND COMMITMENT

Section 1 and **Appendix 1** of this Outline Business Case describe the scheme and confirms the commitment of all parties to the project.

1.1 The Corporate Vision

Northumberland County Council (NCC) has set out its vision for the County in its Corporate Plan 2021-24. The principles of the vision are focused on ensuring we are: “A council that works for everyone”

Our Values

Residents first

- Respond to the needs of all of our residents
- Provide the right information at the right time
- Deliver services that have positive outcomes for the community

Excellence and Quality

- Respect the diverse communities that we serve
- Act on feedback to ensure the best customer journey
- Look for opportunities to improve customer experience

Respect

- Build strong and long-lasting relationships based on trust and mutual respect
- Involve communities and staff in decisions which affect them
- Support communities to embrace change and innovation

Keeping our communities safe and well

- Quality and Safety will be at the heart of everything we do
- Empower our residents to do as much for themselves as possible
- Set clear standards and report against them

1.2 Strategic Overview

1.2.1 Countywide Strategy

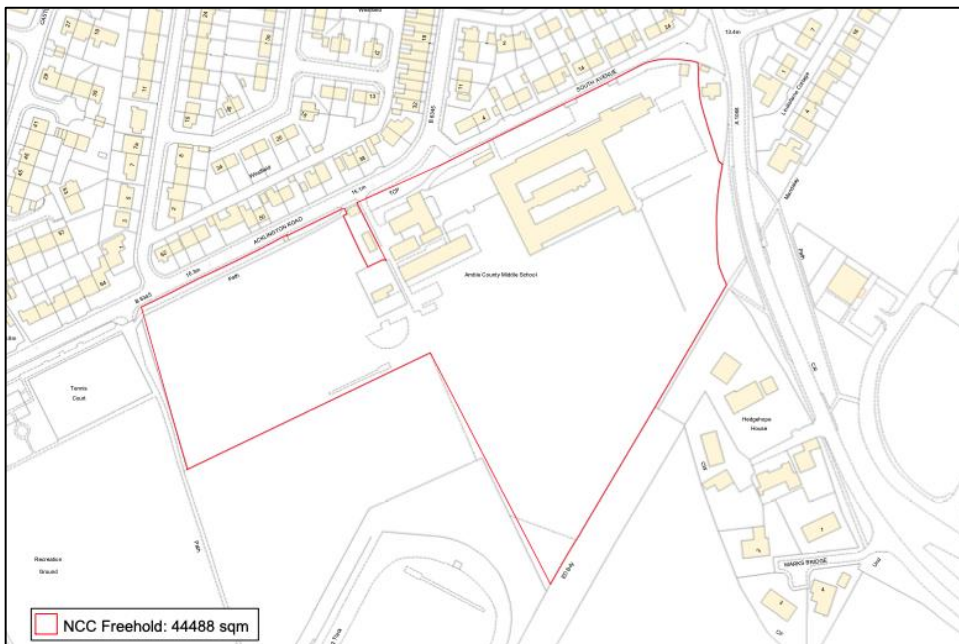
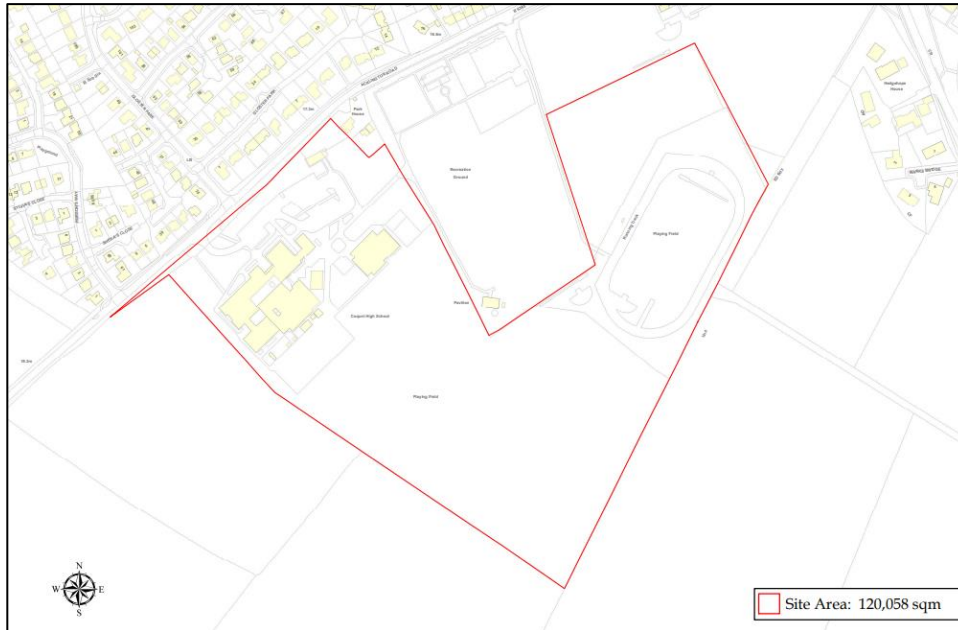
Improving the quality of education in Northumberland is a key priority for the local authority's (LA's) elected members. Both the Corporate Plan and the Joint Health and Wellbeing Strategy (JHWS) 2018 - 2028 place education at the heart of the work of the Council and its partners.

Elected members recognise how vital it is for the future prosperity of Northumberland that our children and young people achieve to the best of their abilities in schools, academies and colleges and that all our educational establishments are judged to be good or better by Ofsted.

It is accepted that while strong leadership and governance in schools together with good teaching is key to improving outcomes for pupils, studies have shown that poor quality surroundings can impact negatively on effective teaching and learning, both for staff and pupils. To address this issue, NCC is proposing to continue to invest significant capital resources in education.

1.2.2. Project Overview

James Calvert Spence College is currently an age 9-18 school. It was formed from the amalgamation of JCSC South Avenue (formerly named Amble Middle School) and JCSC Acklington Road, the school operates across a split site. A statutory consultation has recently closed and the proposal to reorganise the Coquet Partnership to become a two-tier model of primary and secondary schools will be decided upon by the Council Cabinet on 17th November 2022. If approved the changes would take place from September 2024 and JCSC will operate as an age 11-18 secondary school. The current site of high school is shown outlined in red below the second plan is of the site occupied by middle school age pupils:



1.2.3 Strategy and Objectives

The rationale for the initiation of this project has been founded on JCSC's desire to provide a financially and educationally secure future for its schools. They were also faced with the need for significant capital investment in the school estate.

The project would improve the teaching and learning environment for current and future pupils in the schools, including on-site sporting and community facilities that would also benefit the Amble community as a whole.

The objectives of this project are to:

- Ensure value for money for the Council by driving down all project costs whilst delivering the agreed scope of works to a high quality and to programme.

- Provide good quality, modern teaching and learning environments for the pupils attending JCSC thereby removing existing physical barriers that distract from the teaching and learning experience.
- Provide buildings that deliver a high level of environmental performance that is in step with the Council's Climate Emergency goals.
- Support the delivery a coherent transport and travel plan for the local community.
- Provide modern sporting facilities on-site to enhance the curriculum offer and to provide improved sporting and community facilities for the wider community in and around Amble that will increase participation and associated benefits.
- Support JCSC in providing a financially and educationally secure future for its school.

1.2.4 Stakeholder Consultations moving forward

Consultation Process

A six-week informal consultation was undertaken from 11th May 2022 until 29th June 2022. A consultation document, which set out the rationale, background and implications of the proposal, was circulated directly to stakeholders including parents, staff and governors. The Council, on behalf of the school, invited stakeholders to respond to the consultation.

Following analysis of the feedback and responses it was concluded that all of the schools and the majority of the stakeholders who responded (92%) supported the proposed reorganisation of the partnership to a 2-tier (primary/secondary) organisation.

Further engagement will be planned in order that the pupils of the school can get involved through pupil workshops to influence the final designs and finishes as will the staff of the school who will be involved in detailed design workshops. The workshops will ask pupils to look at the plans and highlight both positive and less favourable aspects of the build. Through staff and pupil involvement there could be further development of the designs.

There will also be an opportunity for the wider community to be involved in consultation events as the design for the new schools and site develop, with a pre-planning consultation event taking place.

1.2.5 Pupil Place Planning

Birth data for Coquet Partnership is relatively steady, although this masks some variation in capacity at the individual school level, e.g. at the first and primary phase, some schools are more popular and attract pupils from other catchments. Most pupils at first school phase attend schools in the Coquet catchment, while 66% of secondary age pupils attend James Calvert Spence College (JCSC), with other pupils attending neighbouring partnership schools, mainly The Duchess High School in Alnwick.

There is also very little inward flow of pupils into the Coquet partnership, with only 2% of pupils at first school and secondary phase residing in other partnerships. There is some housebuilding planned within the partnership locally over this forecast period which will impact on a small number of schools, but due to parental preference there is sufficient capacity for pupils within their own catchment schools for the foreseeable future. As a result of relatively high surplus places at JCSC, overall surplus places in the partnership are at 26%. It is envisaged that the reorganisation of the partnership to a 2-tier (primary/secondary) structure will assist in retaining more pupils within the partnership into the secondary phase.

Final Forecasts															NOR
Year Group	R	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	TOTALS
Actual Jan 2021	120	104	118	119	125	109	118	97	103	93	92	78	38	32	1346
2022	122	123	105	120	122	121	112	111	97	106	96	94	39	26	1395
2023	120	126	125	109	124	119	125	107	112	101	110	99	46	27	1450
2024	116	124	125	125	110	118	120	116	106	113	102	110	46	31	1463
2025	102	120	122	124	125	103	118	111	113	105	114	101	51	32	1442
2026	116	104	117	120	124	117	103	109	107	113	105	112	47	35	1429
2027	112	116	100	113	117	113	114	92	102	104	110	101	53	32	1378
2028	111	112	112	96	110	107	111	102	87	100	102	106	49	36	1341
2029	109	110	110	111	96	104	108	102	100	87	100	101	53	34	1326
PAN TOTALS	157	157	163	163	163	141	141	120	120	120	120	120	90	90	1865

1.3 Preferred Scheme

There is considerable support from the school for substantial investment in JCSC buildings. NCC and JCSC have been working together to develop the scope and options for the project delivery. As a result of these many months of work, the Executive Headteacher and staff support the vision of rebuilding the school on the existing site. Educational and financial security would be best addressed through this option.

The preferred scheme detailed in the OBC therefore is to rebuild the school on the school land to the east of the recreation ground. This conclusion has been made by drawing upon JCSC's Education Brief (which is contained at Appendix 4A) and the site option appraisal contained in section 3 of this report.

1.3.1 Timeline

Table 1A: Timeline

Event	Date
Final Business Case complete	10/04/23
Submit Outline Business Case and report	03/10/22 - 07/10/22
FACS	01/11/22
Cabinet	08/11/22
PIN Notice Period	08/11/22 - 10/04/23
RIBA Stage 3 Designs	14/11/22 - 17/02/23
Planning Submission	17/02/23
Planning Approval	06/06/23
Prepare ITT Documents	24/04/23 - 21/07/23
Tender Period	24/07/23 - 29/09/23
Appraisal / NCC Approvals / FBC	02/10/23 - 27/10/23
Award of contract	27/10/23
Construction	13/11/23
Handover	21/08/25

1.3.2 Accommodation

The Schedule of Accommodation can be found in Appendix 1C.

1.3.3. Local Authority Commitment

James Calvert Spence College are supportive of NCC's intention to invest in the school buildings.

1.4 Summary

The preferred scheme supports the objectives set out in Northumberland County Council's vision for Northumberland's residents. While strong leadership and good governance are key components of successful schools, the provision of a suitable learning environment can have a positive impact on outcomes for children and young people.

The need to improve the buildings for JCSC had already been identified. Subsequently,

Northumberland County Council approved funding for officers to carry out works to enable the development of this Outline Business Case of which sets out the work undertaken to establish the feasibility and affordability of this proposal. The high-level costs for this option are outlined in Section 5.

A site option appraisal of the potential sites for the development of the new school determined the existing site to be most suitable for the new build requirements, therefore redeveloping the existing site is the preferred option. The local authority, with support from JCSC are now working together to ensure the project is delivered within agreed timescales.

As well as improving the teaching and learning environment for current and future pupils in the schools, improvements to the on-site sporting and community facilities will benefit the wider Amble community. Pupil place planning data for Coquet Partnership determines that reprovision of the current capacity for pupils at JCSC will be adequate for current and future needs.

The design and development of the new school supports the Council's agreed Climate Change Action Plan 2021-23 and its aspiration to move Northumberland to a Net Zero carbon position by 2030.

The timeline for the delivery of the school aims for a handover date of 21st August 2026.

The following documents are attached at **Appendix 1:**

1A	Pupil/catchment data
1B	Letter of support from JCSC Governing Body
1C	Schedule of accommodation

2 PROCUREMENT STRATEGY

Section 2 and Appendix 2 of this OBC describe the Procurement Strategy for the whole scheme.

This section of the Outline Business Case outlines how the overall scheme will be procured given the information and time constraints available.

2.1 Procurement Options

A Procurement Report has been developed at Appendix 2C which considers the following four procurement options:

1. Traditional
2. Design and Build
3. Management Contracting
4. Construction Management

Northumberland County Council's key objectives for the delivery of the project are noted as follows:

1. School to be open and operate from September 2025
2. Lump Sum Contract
3. Risk reduced to manageable level

Management Contracting and Construction Management procurement routes involve the Client retaining a large portion of the scheme risk and in addition they do not provide a lump sum contract, therefore both options were discounted as they do not comply with the above parameters.

Traditional procurement, most risk is born by the Client through this route and on a scheme of this cost the level of risk retained would be excessive.

Design and Build procurement shares risk between the Contractor and Client on a more even basis, design can overlap with construction activities commencing and a lump sum contract is obtained prior to contract award.

2.2 Recommended Option

It is recommended that a Design and Build Procurement strategy is utilised to deliver the project; either via a single stage, two stage or competitive dialogue tendering process.

Soft market testing would be undertaken on issue of the PIN (Prior Information Notice) to establish the market's views to the tendering process and to consider the appetite for each of the processes listed above.

A single stage approach creates greater competition in pricing across all tendered works and allows the Authority greater control of the design by retaining the design team through the development and technical design stages.

A two-stage approach comes with a more significant proportion of risk associated with the negotiation of the second stage contract packages as has been demonstrated on several recent projects where negotiations were extremely difficult and protracted. Through observation of the volatile market in the North East, on a scheme of this size, the market's preference would be for a two-stage tender approach.

A variation to the two-stage approach, which introduces a greater element of competition during the second stage, would be to shortlist the suppliers down to two bidders. This could be done at the end of either RIBA stage 3 or 4. This allows a final cost submission to be sourced in competition, as one of two, and may be more attractive to the market. Another alternative of this approach is for the two bidders to be engaged throughout RIBA stage 4 technical to advise on buildability. Market appetite would need to be explored for this option.

A competitive dialogue approach is best utilised where the key driver is introducing design competition through the contractor's design teams to obtain an innovative and unique building design. This route however is labour intensive and extremely expensive for contractors to bid. There is a value threshold where the market will not consider this to be an appropriate method due to the costs incurred in bidding via this method. It is anticipated this scheme is below that value and doesn't have the design demands to warrant such a route to market.

Development of designs can be managed through these options to a varying degree of control. There is also the ability to take designs through to developed designs (RIBA stage 3) or to technical designs (RIBA stage 4). The design team will be novated across to the preferred bidder at the contract award stage to ensure their continued involvement.

The principal difference is around the level of control that the client wishes to maintain with the design development. Developing designs to RIBA Stage 3 requires the contractor to complete the design increasing the likelihood of design aspirations not being fully understood and implemented and design changes being proposed to make the project more profitable and to ease buildability for the contractor on site.

Taking designs through to RIBA stage 4, the client would have full control of the design process which would enable the design intent to fully reflect their objectives. This will be key if the scheme is to be designed to Net Zero Carbon in Operation as the design detailing is critical to hitting the necessary standards.

To reduce risk to a manageable level, to retain full control of the design objectives for the scheme and to ensure the requirements of Net Zero Carbon in Operation are achieved it is recommended to follow a single stage Design and Build procurement strategy tendered at the end of RIBA stage 4.

2.3 Route to Market

Advice has been obtained from the Procurement department within NCC to understand its obligations regarding the Public Contracts Regulations (PCR) 2015.

Whilst there are benefits to proceeding with an open tender or Framework procedure which will be discussed below, it is recommended that this project proceeds utilising a PCR compliant, non-Framework 'open' tender process.

The procurement programme highlights that there is time to tender through an Find a Tender (FTS) notice as this can be run in parallel with the development of stage 3 designs and the determination period of the planning application.

Using a PCR compliant, non-Framework 'restricted' option has been discounted as it will add both additional time and elongate the programme by three months and thus is not a deliverable option. This is due to the requirement of having to publish the ITT (Invitation to Tender) at the SQ stage which can only be done on completion of RIBA Stage 3 at the earliest.

There are several benefits of procuring from a Public Sector compliant framework; contractors have prequalified saving the cost of this exercise, have tendered their level of overheads and profit and have provided a benchmark on their preliminary costs. The downside however is that there is a potential levy charge for utilising frameworks which adds a further capital cost to the scheme. The benefit however is the saving in time gained by the prequalification, so framework options are essentially used when programme deadlines are at risk of being met.

There are several Public Sector compliant frameworks that Northumberland as either a member organisation or as a Public Sector Contracting Body in the UK can purchase from, both local and national. Framework options such as NEPO, YORBuild, CCS, SBS, Pagabo, Procure Partnerships. Another option for the Authority is to utilise one of the DfE's contracting frameworks. NCC procurement will look at all available frameworks to see which is best value for the authority.

The selection of which framework to use will be essential in obtaining the best tender list for the project to ensure the right level of competition is realised and that local suppliers are provided with an opportunity to bid. The quality of contractor is always important and

part of the frameworks vetting process but will be given additional scrutiny if Net Zero Carbon in Operation is to be set as a requirement.

Going through a framework tender process will reduce tendering costs and alleviate the pressure on internal resources. However, this needs to be balanced against the additional cost of the levy and whether the frameworks list of prequalified contractors is not too restrictive in respect to ensuring value for money and that local suppliers aren't precluded.

In Summary, an 'open' or framework tender process will offer value and a competitive price for NCC. Procuring from a framework will be potentially cheaper, subject to the levy charge, however a PCR compliant, non-Framework 'open' tender process may provide a more robust list of tenderers.

In consultation with NCC's procurement team, it is recommended that we proceed with the PCR compliant, non-Framework 'open' tender process.

2.4 Procurement Programme

Two programmes have been appended to this Outline Business Case at Appendix 2A and 2B to demonstrate the procurement of the project through a Design and Build approach using the single stage tendering strategy tendered at the end of RIBA stage 4.

The programme for procurement post planning submission, runs over a total duration of thirty-eight weeks. The programme allocates four weeks to scrutinise the bidders' proposals.

Key Dates are as follows for the two options:

2.4.1 Secondary School (New Build and Refurbishment / Extension)

Outline Business Case (to end of RIBA Stage 2)	11 May – 30 Sep 2022
Outline Business Case Approval	08 Nov 2022
PIN Notice Period	08 Nov – 10 Apr 2023
RIBA Stage 3 Designs	14 Nov – 17 Feb 2023
Planning Submission	17 Feb 2023
RIBA 4 Detailed Designs	20 Feb – 07 Jul
Planning Approval	06 Jun 2023
Prepare ITT Documents	24 Apr – 21 Jul 2023
Tender Period	24 Jul – 29 Sep 2023
Appraisal / NCC Approvals / FBC	02 Oct – 27 Oct 2023
Award contract	27 Oct 2023

2.5 Enabling Works Programme

To enable the school to operate as a secondary school from September 2024 and to support the works associated with the wider reorganisation of the Coquet Partnership 8 modular classrooms are required to be in use by the end of the May half term in 2023.

Three double mobiles currently sited on the Middle School site are to be relocated together with the purchase of one new double mobile. Direct negotiations on the relocation and provision of the new will commence immediately in the new year in 2023 with works scheduled for 7 weeks commencing on 17th April and completing by 2nd June 2023.

Direct Negotiations with Portakabin	2 Jan – 24 Mar 2023
Contractor Lead-in	27 Mar – 14 Apr 2023
Relocation of 6 and Provision of 2 new Mobile Classrooms	17 Apr – 2 Jun 2023

2.6 Construction Programme

It will be the responsibility of the successful contractor to provide a construction programme to support the delivery of the construction project.

Upon appointment of the Contractor, a set of contract documents will be issued for execution by both the Contractor and Client. This will include a set of updated designs for Contract which will further develop into Construction Issue Drawings which is what the Contractor will use to undertake the works on site.

2.6.1 Secondary School (New Build on Existing Site)

A period of 80 weeks for construction is anticipated inclusive of commissioning but exclusive of the 8 weeks mobilisation period. A period of 3 weeks is programmed for decanting the end user of the building which commences at handover. A 3-week contingency period has also been factored into the programme to account for any unforeseen delays and tie in with handover ready for the start of the new School year.

Contract finalisation (Standstill period)	30 Oct – 10 Nov 2023
Contractor lead-in	13 Nov – 05 Jan 2024
Construction commences on site	08 Jan 2024
Construction complete on site (Phase 1)	18 July 2025
Decanting complete	29 Aug 2025
School opens	01 Sep 2025
Demolition and External Pitch Works (Phase 2)	02 Sep – 16 Feb 2026

The above durations assume all New Build on the Existing Site. If the decision is to retain and refurbish the existing sports block, then this would add 3 to 4 months onto the programme on the assumption that this is undertaken once the new school is built. It would leave the school without the sports block for the duration noted above or add an additional layer of cost to provide temporary indoor sport facilities.

2.6.2 Secondary School (Refurbishment / Extension of existing building)

A period of 136 weeks for construction is anticipated split across 6 phases of work inclusive of the new build extension. To keep the school operational and to minimise the amount of temporary accommodation on site, a phased approach is required. This will require a series of decants, will be very disruptive to the learning environment, will be more expensive due to the piece meal nature of the work and if chosen will add a full year to the programme, from that of the New Build option, before the school can be operational.

Contract finalisation (Standstill period)	30 Oct – 10 Nov 2023
Contractor lead-in	13 Nov – 05 Jan 2024
Construction commences on site	08 Jan 2024
Phase 1 (decant, asbestos strip, construction)	08 Jan – 12 Jul 2024
Phase 2 (decant, asbestos strip, construction)	15 Jul – 17 Jan 2025
Phase 3 (decant, asbestos strip, construction)	20 Jan – 25 Jul 2025
Phase 4 (decant, asbestos strip, construction)	28 Jul – 30 Jan 2026
Phase 5 (decant, asbestos strip, construction)	02 Feb – 07 Aug 2026
Remove temporary accommodation and make good	10 Aug - 21 Aug 2026
School opens	01 Sep 2026

To support the phasing programme and to decant the children from the existing school to allow refurbishment to be undertaken there will be a requirement to provide a temporary village of modular classrooms. These classrooms will need to be in-situ for more than two years (135 weeks). They will need to be in place for works commencing on 8 January 2024 and it is recommended that the provision and hire of these temporary units is negotiated with Portakabin at the same time as the 8 modular classrooms referred in the Enabling Works Programme.

2.7 Summary

Following a review of procurement options available for construction projects, it is recommended that the development is procured through a Design and Build strategy utilising a single stage tendering procedure tendered at the end of RIBA stage 4.

It is recommended that the project proceeds via a PCR compliant, non-Framework 'open' tender process.

The key objective for the delivery of the project is to open the new secondary school for operation from September 2025.

The refurbishment and extension option misses the above target date by a full calendar year and is therefore not a deliverable option. It is therefore our recommendation that we proceed with the new build option.

Key dates for the provision of a new build Secondary School are as follows:

1. OBC approval 17 November 2022
2. RIBA stage 3 designs instructed 21 November 2022
3. Planning submitted 17 February 2023 and determined on 06 June 2023
4. RIBA stage 4 designs completed 07 July 2023
5. Tenders issued 24 July 2023
6. Tenders returned 29 September 2023 and contract awarded 27 October 2023
7. Construction commences on site 08 January 2024
8. New school opens 01 September 2025

The following documents are attached at **Appendix 2:**

2A	Programme - Refurbishment
2B	Programme – New Build
2C	Procurement Report

3 LAND

Section 3 of this Outline Business Case describes the site options appraisal undertaken which contributes to the design and construction works of a preferred option.

3.1 Introduction

The scheme outlined for James Calvert Spence College, which is currently split over two sites at South Avenue and Acklington Road, involves the potential refurbishment or construction of a new school at the Acklington Road site.

This section outlines the potential development options considered, including the Options Appraisal undertaken for the purpose of demonstrating that the scheme is deliverable.

The existing site is large enough to continue to meet DfE standard BB103 guidance for sports pitches.

The approximate sizes of the sites are;

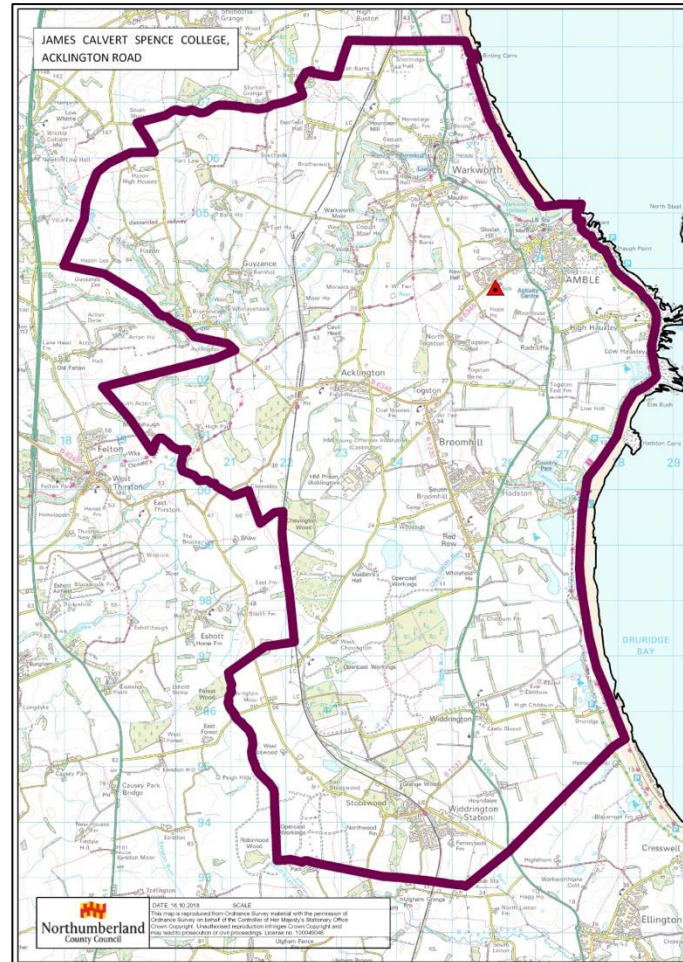
- South Avenue – 10.4 acres
- Acklington Road – 29.9 acres

3.2 Site Options

A site options appraisal was undertaken to identify any available sites. The following sites were discounted:

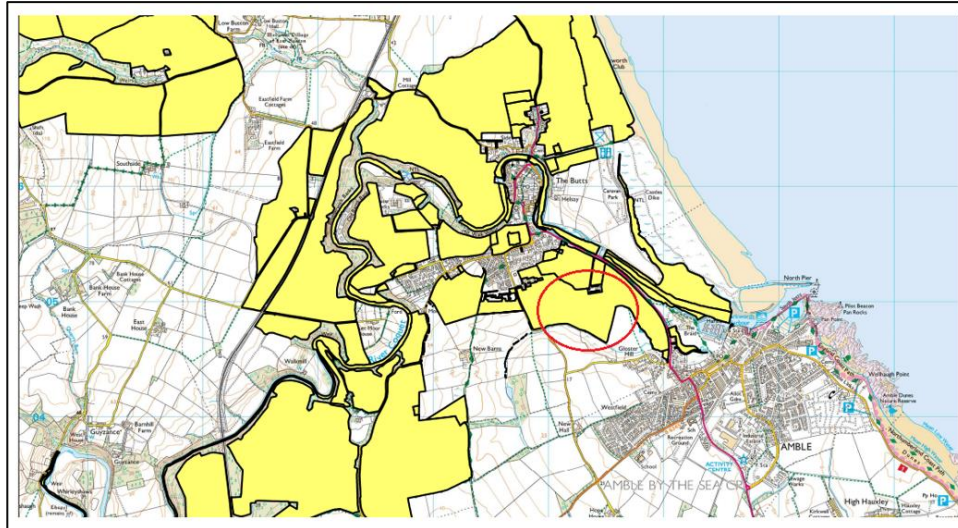
Search Parameters

- Within the James Calvert Spence catchment area
- Good adjacency to current Schools
- Accessible from major transport routes
- Good accessibility for travel on foot/bike
- Close to settlement boundary
- Not affected by physical features i.e. pylons, ponds, watercourses
- Min 45,000m² site area



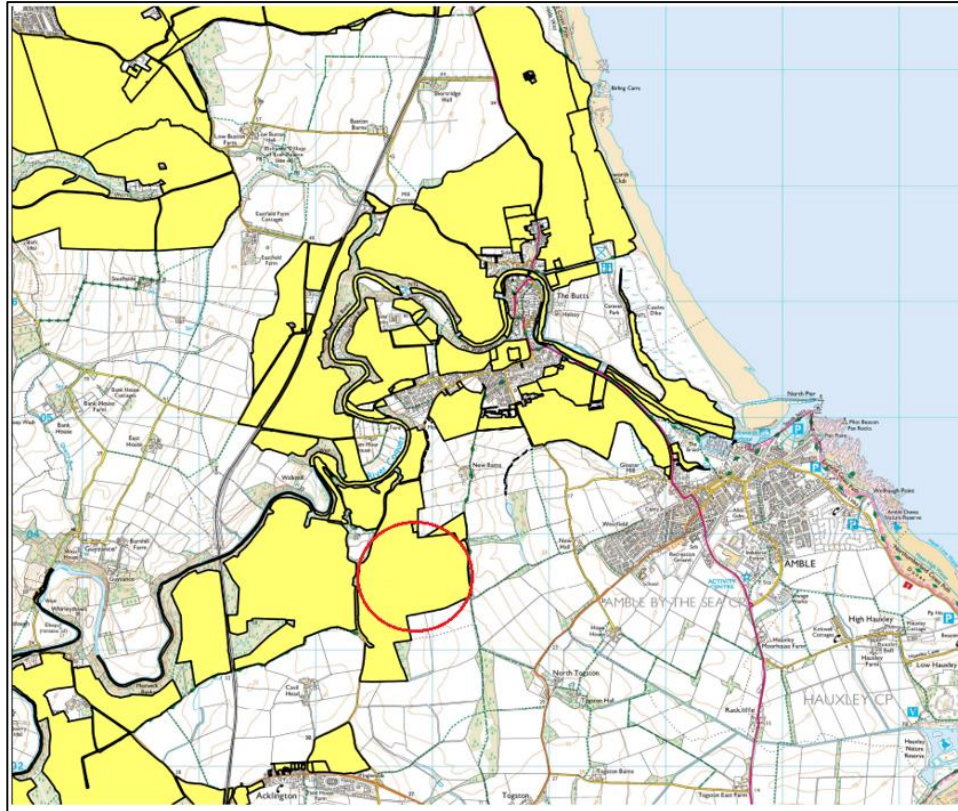
Land north of Gloster Hill

- Location is too far away from town centre
- Transport issues for getting pupils to school
- Limited sustainable travel
- Not suitable for walking or cycling to the site from the town centre
- Potential planning issues and change of use
- Potential agricultural tenancies to consider



Land north west of B6345

- Location is too far away from town centre
- Access issues to the site due to its rural location and poor road network
- Transport issues for getting pupils to school
- Limited sustainable travel options
- Not suitable for walking or cycling to the site from Amble town centre
- Potential planning issues and change of use
- Potential agricultural tenancies to consider



Land south of current school site

- Recently obtained planning permission for housing development
- Site is privately owned and not within Council ownership

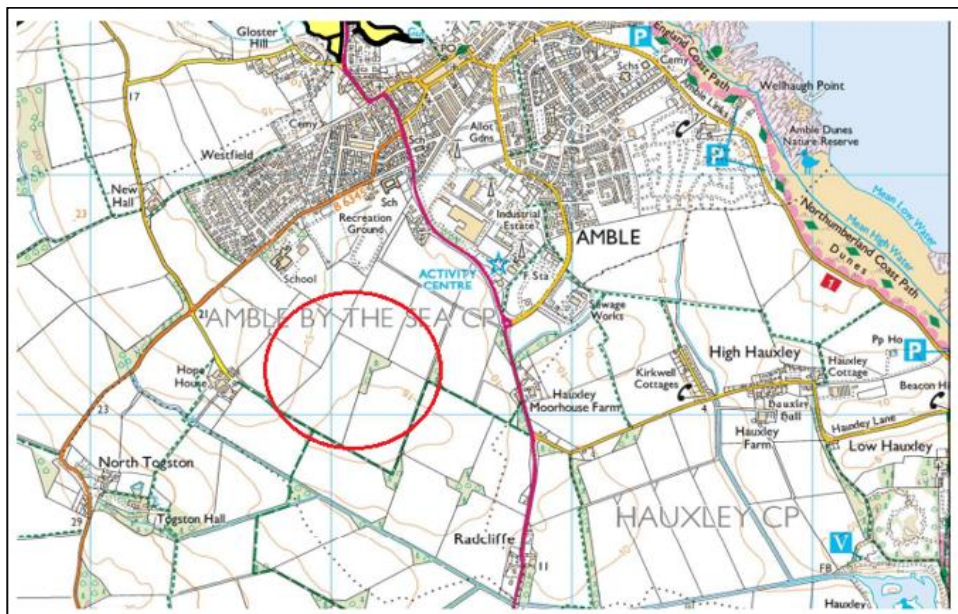


Table 3B states the following options have been considered:

Table 3B: Site Options

Option 1 - Do minimum required & address maintenance backlog issues
Option 2 – Refurbishment & extension of the existing premises
Option 3 – New build on a different location within the existing site & retain the existing sports hall
Option 4 - New build for the premises on a different location within the existing site & new sports hall adjoining the new school building
Option 5 – New build for the premises on the land east of the recreation ground including new sports hall
Option 6 - New build for the premises on the recreation ground that has been offered to NCC adjacent to the site & offer the recreation facilities elsewhere

3.2.1 Methodology

All sites with the potential to accommodate the schools were identified through an initial search using plans, followed by a physical search of the area. The sites were then appraised in a systematic manner by application of nine criteria to produce a score for each in order to grade any suitable options.

3.2.2 Appraisal Criteria

i) Ownership

Established where possible from existing County Council records and reference to title documentation.

ii) Site capacity

All the options described are capable of being located on the sites as mentioned.

iii) Planning

In consultation with County Council planning staff, a number of matters were considered in assessing the appropriate score. These included the following:

- Green belt issues
- Settlement boundary / open land issues
- Accessibility / transport
- Highways and parking
- Landscape impact
- Impact on nature conservation
- Impact on archaeology / historic heritage
- Adjacent land uses and potential impact on residential amenity
- Contaminated land issues
- Asbestos

iv) Access & Transport

County Council Highway Officers are to be consulted to discuss the road access, proximity of junctions and public transport services.

v) Timescale

Scores applied to reflect the estimated period required to acquire the site, without obtaining planning permission.

vi) Acquisition Cost

Involved consideration of existing use and planning consents, ownership and use allocation within the Local Plan.

vii) Title Investigation

Carried out wherever possible using a title report from Womble Bond Dickinson. Any title defects are reflected in the scores applied.

viii) Location

Accessibility for pupils.

ix) Support from Schools

Level of buy in from the schools involved.

3.2.3 Scoring criteria

- Scoring is on a scale of 1- 10.
- In relation to ownership, planning, access, timescale, acquisition cost and title investigation, a higher score is indicative of a positive contribution to scheme deliverability, with 10 representing no barriers to deliverability arising and 1 representing a significant level of added difficulty or risk to deliverability arising from that aspect.
- In relation to capacity and location, a higher score is indicative of greater levels of suitability in meeting the requirements of the scheme, with 10 representing the scheme needs being fully met and 1 representing the scheme needs being unmet.
- In relation to the support from schools' criteria, a higher score is indicative of a greater level of buy-in from the school, with 10 representing full support and 1 representing no support from the school. A negative number suggests not just a lack of support but active resistance.

Option 1 – Do minimum & back log issues		
Criteria	Comments	Score
Ownership	Current site in NCC ownership	10
Site Capacity	Current site is large enough to cater for the school, with sports fields and has scope for future expansion	10
Planning	Limited planning implications required for mobile classrooms	8
Access	Access is already in place to the site from Acklington Road, although the access causes issues around drop off /pick up times	5
Timescale	No implications as the site is already in NCC's ownership	10
Acquisition Cost	No acquisition costs	10
Title Investigation	No title implications	10
Location	The site is well positioned close to the town centre and residential premises within Amble	9
Support from schools	The school are supportive of utilising the existing site	10
Appraisal Score		82

Advantages	Disadvantages
No associated acquisition costs or other site-related implications	Only minor improvement to community facilities
Use of the current site continues undisturbed	
Use of current site within NCC ownership therefore works can commence at any time	
Prominent position of schools on the site	

Option 2 - Refurbishment & extension of the existing premises		
Criteria	Comments	Score
Ownership	No implications - site in NCC ownership	10

Site Capacity	Current site is large enough to cater for the school, with sports fields and has scope for future expansion	10
Planning	Proposed works to be discussed with planners, but not likely to cause an issue	8
Access	Access is already in place to the site from Acklington Road, although the access causes issues around drop off /pick up times	5
Timescale	No implications as the site is already in NCC's ownership	10
Acquisition Cost	No implications	10
Title Investigation	No implications	10
Location	The site is well positioned close to the town centre and residential premises within Amble	9
Support from schools	The school are supportive of utilising the existing site	10
Appraisal Score		82

Advantages	Disadvantages
No associated acquisition costs or other site-related implications	Fails to address access issues caused at drop-off and pick-up times.
Use of current site within NCC ownership therefore works can commence at any time	

Option 3 – New build for the premises on a different location within the existing site & retain the existing sports hall		
Criteria	Comments	Score
Ownership	No implications - site in NCC ownership	10
Site Capacity	Current site is large enough to cater both school sites, with sports fields and has scope for future expansion	10
Planning	Proposed works to be discussed with planners, but not likely to cause an issue	6

Access	Access is already in place to the site from Acklington Road, although the access causes issues around drop off /pick up times	5
Timescale	No implications as the site is already in NCC's ownership	10
Acquisition Cost	No implications	10
Title Investigation	No implications	10
Location	The site is well positioned close to the town centre and residential premises within Amble	9
Support from schools	The school are supportive of utilising the existing site	10
Appraisal Score		80

Advantages	Disadvantages
No associated acquisition costs or other site-related implications	Fails to address access issues caused at drop-off and pick-up times.
Likely to be successful in planning terms	
Use of current site within NCC ownership therefore works can commence at any time	
Site offers space to accommodate the optimal amount of sports pitches	

Option 4 – New build for the premises on a different location within the existing site & new sports hall adjoining the school building		
Criteria	Comments	Score
Ownership	No implications- site in NCC ownership	10
Site Capacity	Current site is large enough to cater for the school site, with sports fields and has scope for future expansion	10
Planning	Proposed works to be discussed with planners, but not likely to cause an issue	6
Access	Access is already in place to the site from Acklington Road, although the access causes issues around drop off /pick up times	5

Timescale	No implications as the site is already in NCC's ownership	10
Acquisition Cost	No implications	10
Title Investigation	No implications	10
Location	The site is well positioned close to the town centre and residential premises within Amble	9
Support from schools	The school are supportive of utilising the existing site	10
Appraisal Score		80

Advantages	Disadvantages
No associated acquisition costs or other site-related implications	Fails to address access issues caused at drop-off and pick-up times.
Likely to be successful in planning terms	
Use of current site within NCC ownership therefore works can commence at any time	
Site offers space to accommodate the optimal amount of sports pitches	

Option 5 – New build for the premises on the land to the east of the recreation ground including new sports hall		
Criteria	Comments	Score
Ownership	No implications - site in NCC ownership	10
Site Capacity	Current site is large enough to cater for the school, with sports fields and has scope for future expansion.	10
Planning	Proposed works to be discussed with planners, but not likely to cause an issue. Sport England to be consulted on the loss of the pitches but exception met if equal playing pitch provided elsewhere on site	5

Access	Access via Acklington Road with a new access needing to be created to the site. Park & stride option from the existing car park on the current school site through the recreation land to allow for sufficient parking, buses & drop off/pick ups	9
Timescale	No implications as the site is already in NCC's ownership	10
Acquisition Cost	No implications	10
Title Investigation	No implications	10
Location	The site is well positioned close to the town centre and residential premises within Amble	9
Support from schools	The school are supportive of utilising the existing site	10
Appraisal Score		83

Advantages	Disadvantages
Addresses the access issues caused at drop-off and pick-up times.	Potential Sport England objections to the loss of playing field land, although this can be provided elsewhere on the site
No associated acquisition costs or other site-related implications	New access will need to be created to the site and consultation with Highways team
Likely to be successful in planning terms	
Use of current site within NCC ownership therefore works can commence at any time	
Site offers space to accommodate the optimal amount of sports pitches	

Option 6 – New build for the premises on the recreation land that has been offered to NCC adjacent to the site & relocate the recreation facilities elsewhere		
Criteria	Comments	Score
Ownership	Part of the land in private ownership. Also, potential complications due to Lottery funding on the site and Charities Act for transfer of the land	3

Site Capacity	Site will have scope for future expansion while accommodating all facilities on one site, as well as the option to obtain a capital receipt by selling the brownfield land that wouldn't be required	10
Planning	Site will require development on open space recreation land and protection against the restrictive covenants that are placed on the land through indemnity insurance, which will require further investigation and expense to see if the insurance can be obtained which isn't a certainty	7
Access	An access is already in place from Acklington Road that can be redeveloped or redesigned to suit the scheme	9
Timescale	Potential delays due to agreeing terms with the Trust & the transfer of the land taking place. Also, investigations into the restrictive covenants on the site & whether indemnity insurance can be obtained, along with Charities Act & Lottery funding discussions which could cause obstacles & delay. The recreation facilities on the existing site will need to be re-provided elsewhere for the use by the general public and current sports teams	3
Acquisition Cost	The acquisition cost of this land is currently unknown at this stage.	5
Title Investigation	The title is subject to two restrictive covenants – the 1931 covenant states that the land is only to be used for recreation or pleasure ground and the 1953 covenant states that the land is to be preserved for the recreation and enjoyment of the public of Amble forever. As we are not able to locate the beneficiaries, the legal advice received is that Indemnity Insurance could be the best course of action to cover the Council should we develop this land, however further investigation is required to ascertain whether this could be obtained	3
Location	The site is well positioned close to the town centre and residential premises within Amble. With the new site being directly in between the two sites which would improve the accessibility	10
Support from schools	The school is keen to see the redevelopment of the site to create improved facilities and the benefits that the redevelopment will bring	10

Appraisal Score	60
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Advantages	Disadvantages
Site offers potential for further expansion if needed in the future	Potential uncertainty and sources of delay to timetable but possibility to minimise risk through indemnity insurance
Less disruption to the school operation whilst the works are taking place	External Trust involved with the transfer of the land so would be subject to their board approval & Charities Act approvals
Site offers space to accommodate the optimal amount of sports pitches	Loss of recreational facilities whilst the works take place to build the school
	The cost of purchasing the land is currently unknown, meaning the initial outlay of funds to purchase the site and additional time for valuations & negotiations to take place

Table 3C: Option Appraisal Results

Rank	Option	
1	Option 5 - New build for the premises on the land east of the recreation ground including new sports hall	83
2=	Option 1 – Do minimum	82
2=	Option 2 – Refurbishment & extension of the existing premises	82
4=	Option 3 - New build for the premises on a different location within the existing site & refurbish sports hall	80
4=	Option 4 - New build for the premises on a different location within the existing site & new sports hall adjoining the school building	80
6	Option 6 - New build for the premises on the recreation land that has been offered to NCC adjacent to the site & relocate the recreation facilities elsewhere	60

3.3.4 Preferred Option

Options 1-5 are all scored similarly due to the land implications all being the same with the site being within NCC's ownership and control. The decision on the preferred option will depend on the design preferences for the development, including working within an operational school, position of the buildings, location of services & demolition of existing buildings. Contractor's access & site compounds need to be considered along with safeguarding and the loss of any car parking whilst the works take place. On this basis, Option 5 is the preferred option.

There is uncertainty over Option 6, which has the potential to delay the scheme and obstacles to overcome to make it viable. There are potential issues with the restrictive covenants on the site.

Option 5 represents the best opportunity to realise several improvements that will benefit the school and NCC. These are included below:

- The cost saving offered by a new-build, energy efficient school and newly refurbished school
- Scope to accommodate a growth in numbers or any future changes
- Creating an environmentally friendly school building that responds to the current climate emergency and the removal of an inefficient and wasteful building
- Improve access & parking within the site and flow of the schools
- Prominent position on the site

It is accepted that development on the recreation land and acquiring land from a third party brings additional risks & expense to the project in terms of potential impact on the timetable and deliverability. It is possible to mitigate the risks associated with the acquisition through early negotiation of the terms and indemnity insurance, subject to relevant matters such as obtaining satisfactory planning permission and satisfactory results of site investigation surveys, however these risks meant that Options 1- 5 were more viable options.

This can be achieved in parallel with ongoing design work, with the risk of abortive legal and project fees if the matter is not concluded in an acceptable timeframe, or if planning permission is not forthcoming. Unfortunately, the risk remains regarding planning. The opportunity to secure a site that offers the benefits highlighted above and that will serve the schools and wider community more appropriately both now and into the future, warrants a degree of speculation.

3.3 Land Ownership

Table 3A below shows a summary of the ownership status of the sites covered by the review:

Table 3A: Site ownership status

James Calvert Spence College Acklington Road site	NCC freehold
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James Calvert Spence College South Avenue site	NCC freehold
Recreation Land	Amble Development Trust

3.4 Potential Land Acquisition Costs

3.4.1 Market Values of Potentially Surplus Sites

Table 3E: Site Valuations

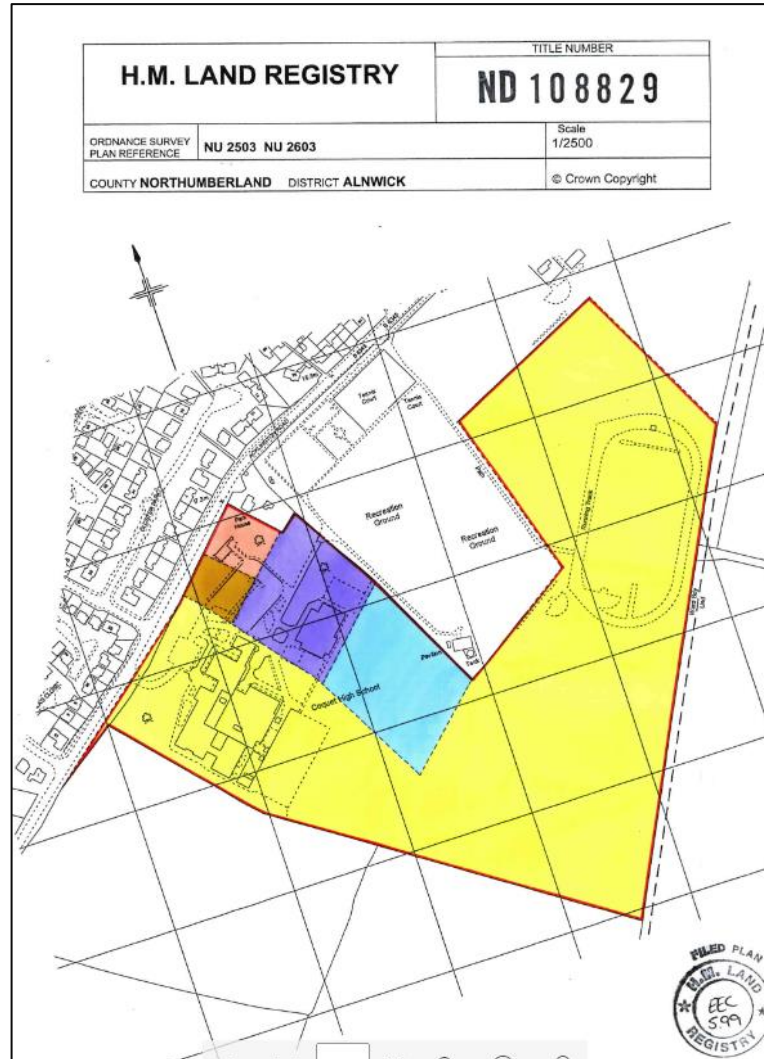
Property	Total Area (Hectares)	Valuation
Land south east of New Hall Farm, Amble	7.7	Between £410,547 and £586,832 per hectare
Land at Gloster Hill, Amble	1.1	Between £475,000 and £515,000 per hectare

3.4.2 Valuation Assumptions

- The value included above is a high-level figure for estimation purposes only and final value will ultimately depend on a range of factors
- Planning permission is granted in respect of redevelopment without any onerous conditions
- There are no adverse site investigation results
- Assumes Planning and other consents will only be achieved

3.5 Planning Commentary

3.5.1 Existing James Calvert Spence College Acklington Road Site



Constraints

- Works taking place on an operational school site & safeguarding considerations
- The position of a new building will be to the side of the existing school building so won't be in the preferred location
- Temporary access will need to be created for contractors & site compounds which could temporarily taking away part of the playing fields
- Additional parking may need to be provided for staff
- Mobile classroom village created on site which will take away a small part of the playing fields
- The works will have some impact on the residents as the works will be taking place towards the front of the site
- Position of the services & connections
- Sport England & DfE to be considered
- Highways considerations in relation to site access

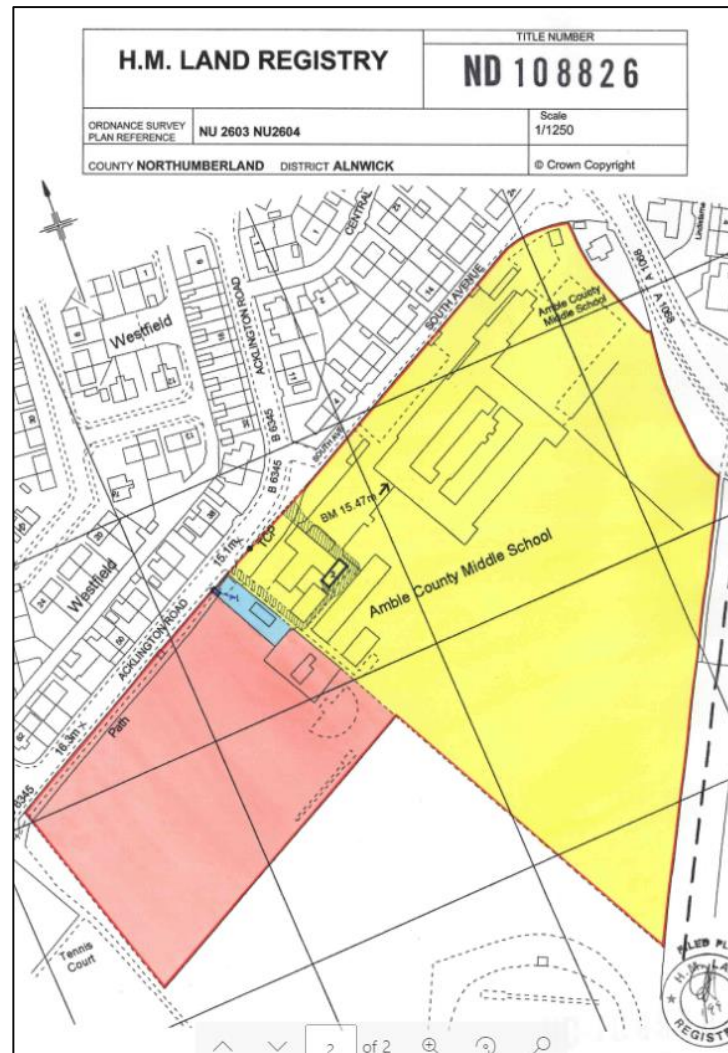
Key Issues

- The site is currently in the settlement boundary, so the principle of the development is acceptable here
- Currently used as a school so preferable in planning terms

Ecology Comments

- € Ecology colleagues to be consulted on the proposals
- € School buildings often have cladding and other features which can be used by roosting bats and nesting birds.
- € It is recommended that bat and bird surveys are undertaken at the site and updated regularly thereafter. This will begin with an ecological appraisal (daylight) survey followed by activity (dusk/dawn surveys).
- € If bat roosts are discovered a Natural England Protected Species Mitigation License will be required prior to demolition or works affecting the roosts.

3.5.2 Existing James Calvert Spence College South Avenue site



Constraints

- The use of the land east of the recreation ground for the new school building will mean the loss of playing field land which will require Sport England consent, however there is a large area of playing field land on the site meaning these pitches can be provided elsewhere
- The pupils from the South Avenue school will need to be decanted into the Acklington Road buildings and mobile classrooms whilst the refurbishment works take place to their buildings

Key Issues

- Currently used as a school so preferable in planning terms
- The refurbishment works could be time consuming and find additional issues to be rectified during the works

Ecology Comments

- Ecology colleagues to be consulted on the proposals
- Trees to South Avenue and existing hedgerows on the site should be retained as far as is possible in the design to avoid harm to features which could be used by protected species such as newts and bats.
- The cost of extensive surveys can be reduced if good design principles are used to avoid harm, so maintaining the tree lined boundary and minimising light spill onto that boundary automatically removes the risk to bats foraging routes and reduces the need for extensive survey.

3.5.3 Recreation land to be acquired



Constraints

- The land is to be acquired from Amble Development Trust, so is subject to their board approval



- The land has two restrictive covenants on the land which prevent development, however we have been unable to locate the beneficiaries and are obtaining legal advice on the best way to proceed including obtaining Indemnity Insurance to cover NCC should the site be developed
- Lottery grant & Charities Act to be considered and any obstacles this may bring up with transferring the land & whether any land has to be transferred back to the Development Trust or Market Value paid for the site
- The recreation land, play equipment, Multi Use Games Area (MUGA) and football pitches will need to be reprovided elsewhere on the school site, which may result in a temporary loss of facilities or issues with local residents who use this site
- Planning advice will need to be obtained to see whether planning permission would be granted to develop this land

Key Issues

- Planning advice will need to be obtained to see whether planning permission would be granted to develop this land & whether the land is designated as open space & if so whether it can be relocated elsewhere
- The works are taking place closer to some different residents' properties, so any noise & dust nuisances to be considered

Ecology Comments

- Ecology colleagues to be consulted on the proposals
- Trees to Acklington Road and existing hedgerows on the site should be retained as far as is possible in the design to avoid harm to features which could be used by protected species such as newts and bats.
- The cost of extensive surveys can be reduced if good design principles are used to avoid harm, so maintaining the tree lined boundary and minimising light spill onto that boundary automatically removes the risk to bats foraging routes and reduces the need for extensive survey.

3.5.4 East of the Recreation Ground Site



Constraints

- New access will be required to be installed from Acklington Road, so discussions with Highways required.
- The works are taking place closer to some resident's properties, so any noise & dust nuisances to be considered.

Key Issues

- Currently used as a school so preferable in planning terms.
- The use of the site will allow the existing site to remain operational and less disruption caused.
- The site will allow the contractor to gain access & have a site compound on site.

Ecology Comments

- Ecology colleagues to be consulted on the proposals
- Access will need to be created within the hedgerows on the site with the remaining hedgerows retained as far as is possible in the design to avoid harm to features which could be used by protected species such as newts and bats.
- The cost of extensive surveys can be reduced if good design principles are used to avoid harm, so maintaining the tree lined boundary and minimising light spill onto that boundary automatically removes the risk to bats foraging routes and reduces the need for extensive survey.

3.5 Planning

- Planning have been consulted and are comfortable with all the options proposed and don't see any potential issues



- Any ecological survey should be completed with reports and any mitigation proposed submitted with a planning application.
- Without adequate survey there may be delays to determination.

3.6 Biodiversity Net Gain

- The Environment Bill 2021 includes a mandatory requirement for Biodiversity Net Gain for planning applications. There is a two-year implementation period, but it does make sense to forward plan for the mandatory requirement, carry out a Biodiversity Net Gain Assessment (via the DEFRA metric) and plan for how biodiversity loss can be avoided, and gain can be maximised through design.
- If the development as proposed is impacting areas of arable field, buildings, amenity grassland and hard standing this would be reflected as a very low unit value calculated using the DEFRA metric. The addition of loss of natural habitats such as hedgerows and tree lines would increase the net loss value which would need to be compensated for.
- This not only includes avoiding loss and impacts on habitats (which as discussed above saves costs and reduces the need for licensing and site supervision and delays whilst waiting for licences) but reduces the need to find biodiversity net gains on the site or to offset on other land within the Council's control.
- It is essential that ecologists are involved in the early stages of the design process to reduce risks to the project and save costs and delays further along the project timetable.

3.7 Summary

Although options 1-5 are all scored the similarly for the land implications, Option 5 of developing the school on the land to the east of the recreation land is proposed as the best option as the land is already an operational school site within NCC's ownership, therefore will give more certainty around developing the site & planning permission. The new building can be located on the playing field land meaning less disruption to the operational school and more space for the contractors site compound and access whilst the works take place. Also close to the main road for access to the existing services and allows the building to be built in a prominent position on the site. This option also brings the two school sites closer together.

Option 5 is considered to be the best option to deliver a scheme that meets the needs of the school both now and in the future and allows for the creation of a modern, environmentally conscious building with enhanced facilities that benefit both the school and the local residents. With options 3 & 4 considered to be the best alternative options should any issues be raised by developing on the playing field land or access issues to the site. Option 1 wouldn't be supported & Option 2 would cause a lot of disruption and should only be considered as a last resort.

The surrounding housing will require sensitivity in the design but does not present a significant obstacle.

Option 6 of acquiring the recreation land was considered, as it would allow the building to be developed also with less disruption and would bring the sites closer together, however there was a lot of uncertainty to overcome, potential delays to the scheme & more risks involved due to the restrictive covenants on the land and land needing to be acquired for market value. Also, the temporary loss of the facilities whilst the development takes place which could cause issues with the residents who currently use the site and the local football clubs would need to be relocated onto the school pitches in the meantime and additional safeguarding would need to be implemented.

4 DESIGN AND CONSTRUCTION

Section 4 and **Appendix 4** of this Outline Business Case describe the design options and investigative survey work undertaken to demonstrate feasibility.

4.1 Introduction

Since the appointment of the design team in September 2019 we have worked closely with the Executive Headteacher of JCSC, the school leadership and Northumberland County Council's project team, to develop a space budget and explore design options to optimise the development opportunity.

NCC has committed to invest in the replacement and refurbishment of school buildings for the Coquet Partnership. Over the last few months, council officers have been talking to headteachers and school chairs of governors to gain their views on the current educational structure within Coquet. Whilst there were some varying responses, school leaders all agreed that it is now the right time for the views of everyone within Coquet, with an interest in education, to be captured.

The schools have asked the council to carry out a wider consultation with parents, staff, governors, pupils and the wider public. The consultation documents are available to all and set out the key issues faced by schools in the Partnership and asks for views on whether the current structure or the proposed primary / secondary school structure would deliver a good and sustainable school system in the Coquet area.

In anticipation of the outcome of the public consultation, the impact of the proposed new structure has been assessed. This report is the first of three reports. The second report focuses on repurposing the existing James Calvert Spence Middle School as a new Primary and special education needs and disabilities facility (SEND) the third a study on the impact of the primary / secondary model on the current first schools in the Partnership.

This report focuses on the impacts of the formation of JCSC for pupils aged 11-18.

4.1.1 Education Brief

The education brief has been developed in great detail and has been used as a template to explore the design options, test typologies and site strategies. Extracts from the brief follow with the full document in Appendix 4A.

In summary the existing and/or new building(s) are required to provide accommodation to support the following pupil and staff numbers:

Student:

- 11-16: 600

- Sixth Form 120
Total: 720

Staff:

- 46 FTE teaching staff and 49 FTE support staff.

The overall 'new build' target area is 6,359sqm, which is required to deliver the design brief included an enhanced provision in food technology to support T-level catering and the provision of a new four court sports hall in lieu of a three-court hall generated from the baseline standard schedule of area.

Vision, Ethos and Values

Values:

At James Calvert Spence College, the school values are the foundation of the school community on which they build every other aspect of their school. They expect all members of our community to:

- Aim High
- Work Hard
- Be Kind

Ethos:

We firmly believe in the potential of every single student and that each one is capable of achieving great things. We want our students to leave us confident, well-rounded and well qualified. We will prepare students to go out into the world and seize every opportunity.

Vision:

The vision for the new facilities is that the building(s):

- provides the best educational opportunities for our students.
- supports us as the school of choice for the area, with kerb appeal that inspires the community to embrace it
- enables students to have great experiences and achieve excellent outcomes
- develops the whole child – enrichment opportunities, pastoral support, SEN, sport
- environment that supports is innovative, promotes opportunities and excellence.
- supports high quality teaching and learning resulting in better student outcomes
- makes students want to learn here

- makes people want to work here, enhancing the recruitment and retention of high-quality staff
- retains and further enhances the characteristics that make James Calvert Spence College such a special place
- warm, friendly environment where all members of our community are known and feel valued

The school needs to:

- be an economical and environmentally friendly building where heat can be controlled by zones and have sufficient ventilation and natural light.
- be modern, welcoming and open – we want open spaces where people can be seen rather than long corridors where they can be lost. Wider, open corridors should create informal social areas.
- allow people to flow between areas without congestion or travel through unsupervised spaces.
- facilitate positive student behaviour via passive supervision throughout the building by the positioning of offices with glass walls for members of the leadership and pastoral teams, communal staff spaces and directorate workspaces
- support students to feel safe in changing rooms and WCs.
- have external spaces that shelter students on their arrival to school and during breaks and lunches, especially during inclement weather that's often experienced at the coast.
- have catering facilities that encourage students to eat with friends, promoting wellbeing and healthy eating.
- have modern facilities that allow the very best quality of teaching and learning through being spacious, with comfortable furniture, and ICT available in all learning spaces when appropriate.
- have enviable sixth form facilities that make our year 11 students want to stay and encourages students from other schools to join – both in terms of teaching spaces, social areas and study spaces.
- have a library at the heart of the school, easily accessible by all students from all teaching spaces.
- have staircases that are clearly visible from nearby classrooms and staff spaces and with no spaces for students to hide.
- have specialist facilities that enable us to provide courses that meet the needs of our students' aspirations and fit the profile of the local labour market – particularly catering, engineering and ICT.
- have specialist facilities that enable us to continue providing courses that are our strengths – particularly art, design & fashion, and sports.
- provide leisure facilities for our community to access outside of school hours including a MUGA, tennis courts, sports hall and for the existing running track to be retained and upgraded.

- enable our community to access limited teaching spaces so that evening classes could be delivered in traditional classroom-based subjects, cooking, ICT and art.

Community Use:

The sporting facilities are used extensively by the local community and, with the expected surge in housing in our catchment area, it is expected the demand will grow further. The sports hall is fully booked every evening and the football pitches are also well used. There is a 400m running track on site, however, it is in a state of disrepair and unsafe to be used by students or the community. There have been several approaches from members of the community and local running clubs asking for access to this facility, and the school are keen to be able to provide this following a significant investment.

There is a desire to expand sporting facilities further to support the community in terms of health and wellbeing, and to introduce more members of the catchment to the school who may not otherwise visit and appreciate what is on offer. Amble is a growing town with limited sports facilities and recreation areas. JCSC has a sports hall and football pitches, Amble Development Trust has a field that can be used by the community and hosts a small play park and skate park. Beyond this, there is little else and this is not acceptable for a town the size of Amble and residents have to travel to neighbouring towns to access facilities, with the nearest leisure centres in Alnwick [9.6 miles] or Ashington [13.1 miles]. This is a detriment to the community, particularly children, if they face barriers to access due to no transport, for example. Over 37% of students in Y7 and above are eligible for pupil premium and in the 21st century with the cost of living surging, investment should be made into the facilities for the community of Amble and surrounding areas that are accessible to all.

State of the art facilities would be welcomed by the whole community and generate a source of income for the school ongoing. The school will continue to make letting fees competitive and work with community groups to secure grants or other funding opportunities to enable more people to utilise the facilities. It is envisaged that a new build or redevelopment will provide the following facilities for students and potential community use:

- MUGA with flood lighting
- 3G pitches with flood lighting
- Resurfaced running / athletics track
- Football pitches
- Rugby pitch
- Tennis courts
- A fitness suite with gym equipment

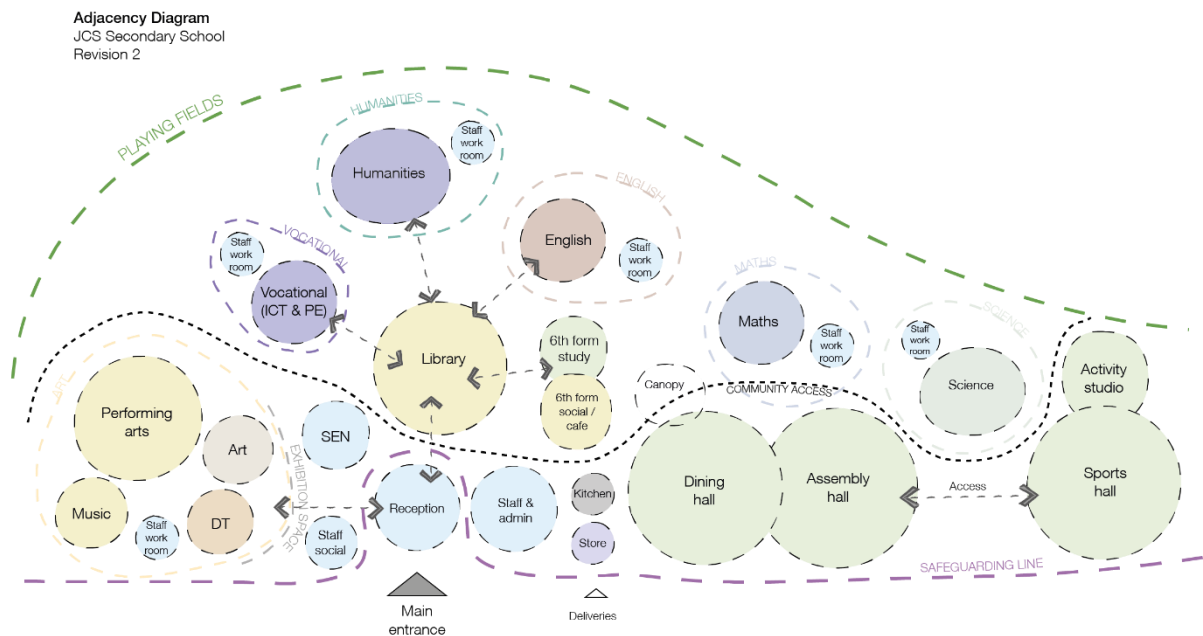
There is a desire to offer evening classes to the community in classroom-based subjects (such as English and maths) and to use the practical resources to offer adult education in subjects such as art and ICT. The current building does not allow this to happen easily or securely due to the layout and access points.

Curriculum Provision:

The new secondary school is arranged in six directorates.

- English
- Maths
- Science
- Humanities
- Vocational including ICT and PE
- Arts including Design and Food Technology Music and Performing Arts

There are specific interrelationships between directorates which are reflected in our adjacency diagram, used to support the development of the school vision and visualise spatially.



Flexibility:

Flexibility and future proofing are important considerations. The school will need to be able to respond to ever changing curriculum demands, teaching styles and demographic changes. As such the new or refurbished building(s) need to be easily reconfigured and if required extended in the future without disrupting the education provision.

Relationship with the external environment:

The relationship with the external environment is important. The school building(s) need to be arranged to encourage students to move around the site freely and be confident to engage with different landscape settings whether for formal play, recreation or for quiet contemplation.

4.2 Surveys and Investigations

This is the section of the OBC details the results of these surveys which have been undertaken as part of the feasibility exercise and summarises the outcomes of these. Copies of these reports can be found in Appendix 4.

The project team, together with the LA identified a list of surveys and investigations, which have been instructed and undertaken:

- Site Investigation Desktop Study
- Preliminary Ecological Appraisal and Bat Survey
- Arboricultural survey
- Topographical survey
- Utilities survey
- FF&E including technology audit
- ICT Audit

The summary of findings and recommendations of each of the above is identified below.

4.2.1 Survey Summaries

Survey	Comments / Risks
Site Investigation Desktop Study	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Relatively flat site. Level changes north of the existing running track towards the main road. • Potential coal seams below the site which will need further investigation • The site is not within a zone of flooding • Phase 2 investigation to be undertaken to determine contamination and ground make up
Preliminary Ecological Appraisal and Bat Survey	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Bats – Possible bat roosts. Further surveys required along with transect surveys and remote monitoring. • Birds – potentially located in flat roof sections of the building. • Botanical – further surveys to review the grasslands
Arboricultural Survey	Refer to appendix 4D
Topographical Survey	Refer to appendix 4E
Utilities Survey	Refer to appendix 4F

FF&E including technology audit	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 86% of the loose furniture can be re-purposed in the next 5 years • 64% of the existing DT equipment to be re-purposed • 66% of the catering equipment to be re-purposed
ICT audit	Refer to appendix 4H

4.3 Design Journey

During the design journey we explored the opportunities to redevelop the existing site and an adjacent site assessing the advantages and disadvantages of

- minimum option tackling the backlog maintenance issues
- refurbishing and remodelling the current estate and upgrading the external environment.
- building a new teaching block building on the existing site, retaining and upgrading the existing sports hall, and upgraded external environment.
- build a new teaching block with a new integrated sports hall provision and upgraded external environment.
- Develop new building(s) and external environment on the site east of the recreation ground.
- Develop new building(s) and external environment on the recreation ground.

4.3.1 Design Drivers

To inform the OBC we have looked at each option in the context of

- Education drivers and ethos
- Site capacity and compliance with BB103
- Impact of the development on neighbouring properties
- Buildability
- Phasing
- Disruption
- Programme
- Cost
- Sport England support
- Planning support
- Highway's impact

4.3.2 Issues Log

The issues log is based upon feedback from the school and our observations when we have walked the site and observed the school during the working day along with information provided by the local authority.

Physical Arrangement issues:

- Arrival experience is underwhelming
- Bus turning circle anecdotally is poor
- Secure lines are difficult to supervise
- Circuitous and confusing internal circulation routes.
- Narrow corridors
- Poor passive supervision
- Directorate teaching spaces spread across the school which impact working patterns and directorate unity
- Shortage of staff work rooms for each directorate
- Too many isolated areas making it difficult to manage and supervise.
- Inadequate poorly distributed WC provision
- Under provision of staff WC's and all of poor quality
- Very difficult to be on duty at toilets and actually see what is going on.
- Noise pollution from the quadrangles into teaching spaces
- Under provision of teaching spaces
- Reliance on mobile provision
- Multiple entrances / exits from social areas – so students can hide from staff
- No dedicated assembly space

Environment:

- Limited natural light in many teaching spaces
- Poorly proportioned and undersized teaching spaces
- There is excessive overheating in the summer and heat loss in the winter
- Glare issues
- Lighting controls inadequate
- Evidence of roof leaks
- Exposed site.

Legislative Issues:

- Some first-floor areas are only accessed by a single staircase and not as such compliant with current fire and building regulations. There are rooms within rooms
- There is poor acoustic separation between spaces
- Poor ventilation, anecdotally CO2 levels within classrooms being at an unacceptable level
- Electric load is anecdotally under capacity.
- Access for all issues

Infrastructure:

- Drainage infrastructure is crumbling
- Lack of ability to communicate within school in emergency situations.

- External fabric is at the end of its useful life
- Not enough power and data outlets
- IT infrastructure inadequate

External Environment:

- There are a large number of internal courtyards, and the social spaces are very close to teaching spaces. Lunch and break time supervision is difficult and there are a lot of opportunities for antisocial behaviour to take place out of general view
- All weather running track and other similar facilities (long jump / high jump areas) have not been maintained and as such is unusable
- Tennis courts are in need of refurbishment or replacement
- Site location and orientation of buildings means that playground areas can be exposed to cold winds, which impacts useability
- Inefficient use of space in external environment, with large areas of mown grass (not playing field) not well-located for use as teaching or social spaces
- The condition of some surfaces and areas is poor
- Fencing is extensive and hard to maintain

4.4 Options

Existing Site Arrangement

The school sits on the edge of Amble, a coastal town in north Northumberland. The site that the school occupies is ostensibly flat and the boundary is defined by Acklington Road to the north, beyond which are residential properties. There are open fields to the south and west. The eastern boundary is defined by a public recreation ground and in part, by the boundary of a medium size family home.

The school building is set back from the road providing enough space for the access road to sweep into the site. The car parking and coach drop off is quite extensive and sits between the road and school and sports hall. Beyond the school building are the playing fields which are extensive. An assessment has been carried out in regard to the current infrastructure particularly the site access, staff, pupil and visitor arrival parking numbers bus drop off and safeguarding.

The school is a mixture of two and single storey volumes that are arranged around courtyards or semi enclosed spaces, with a standalone sports building. The basis of the current plan is a design of clusters of accommodation around WC pods or open plan spaces, akin to a school within a school model. The plan is over complex and difficult to navigate when compared with many school designs.

The footprint is large for its total area and the external envelope steps in and out creating a disproportionately large external envelope and the roof scape is complex.

Access

Pupil access is facilitated by two pedestrian access points off Acklington Road either side of the vehicular bell mouth. The route to the west leading down the edge of the site to hard standing areas and student entry points. The route from the west cuts across the access road toward the main entrance. Pupils arriving by coach alight on the pavement side leading to a series of pathways that lead to hard standing areas and more pupil entrances. These access points avoid pupil/vehicular traffic crossover beyond the site edge but do rely on a cross over on the access road within the site for the car parking for staff and coach parking that run across the site frontage.

External Provision

The site is generous and can support the following provision to meet or exceed BB103. The site area is just over 12 hectares, of which just over 7 hectares (70,779m²) is currently used as playing fields. There is a playground area between the tennis courts and sports hall which is the main space for informal outdoor use. Whilst meeting the BB103 guideline area for 'hard informal and social space' it is reportedly subject to crowding particularly when weather conditions make the playing field less accessible. Between the tennis courts and school building is a 'growing and habitat area' with greenhouse, small wildlife pond etc. somewhat underused and overgrown.

The current external sporting provision is as follows.

Grass pitch provision, marked out in different permutations of pitch numbers and alignment depending on time of year etc. As an example, there is sufficient space for at least

- 4 full-size football pitches
- 2 reduced-size football pitches
- 1 cricket field

Other field sports could be supported including rugby.

Other green space to support Athletics including

- Rounders (juniors)
- Space for training grids

All weather provision

- 400m all-weather running track with additional facilities including javelin, 2nr high jump, long jump and triple jump (all in poor condition)
- The grassed area inside the all-weather pitch could also accommodate a full-size football pitch (included above)
- Multi-use games area (MUGA) with 4nr tennis courts

Social provision

- Informal hard and soft play areas

Vehicular movement

- Coach drop-off and pickup (space for 5nr coaches), staff and student parking including accessible parking (65nr spaces including 2nr accessible bays)

4.4.1 Option 1 Retained estate and back log maintenance

The move from a three tier to a two-tier system means that there is not an option to do nothing. By the very nature of the change more accommodation is required on the site to facilitate the aspirations of the Coquet Partnership.

Retaining the estate would fall short of the accommodation required to create a new secondary school on the JCSC site. Additional mobile classrooms would be required during the transition period. The existing estate would be weather tight when the back log maintenance was complete but would still suffer from the inherent issues listed above. The thermal performance is under modern standards and due to the age of the estate the maintenance burden will continue to escalate in relation to the service life of the heating and lighting and the expectation that the roof and windows will need replacing in the near future. This is compounded by the fact that the current estate is a woefully inefficient design, putting ever increasing demands on energy consumption. This option would not tackle the functionality issues that are associated with current building and site layout.

4.4.2 Option 2 Refurbish and Remodel the Retained Estate

The proposal looks to maximise the opportunities within the existing building and the site. We reviewed the accommodation and the internal arrangements comparing the physical arrangement to the organisational adjacencies. The philosophy being that wherever possible existing spaces would be reassigned with limited interventions to improve functionality and create more cohesive directorates. This achieves a good general arrangement of spaces but leads to some spaces falling short of the space standards when compared with a new build solution.

For this proposal to fit with the organisation ambitions of the school it has been necessary to add a proportion of new build accommodation and where feasible propose some interventions within the footprint to improve the sizes of some spaces to comply with current space standards, increase the functionality, and improve the number of WCs for staff and students throughout the building.

However, it has not been feasible for all spaces to be increased to comply with current space standards. To achieve this more fundamental interventions and additions would be required which would not be sustainable within the funding envelope. A full schedule of spaces that remain undersized is included as Appendix 4I.

At this stage it is assumed that to bring the building stock up to current environmental performance standards the retained estate would require the following works: -

- New plant, heating and lighting throughout
- New fire alarm system
- New sprinkler system
- New windows, curtain walling and external doors with improved thermal performance
- New roofs throughout with uplifted thermal performance
- Over cladding of every masonry façade to improve thermal performance and weathering performance
- New ceilings throughout
- New floor coverings throughout
- New internal doors throughout
- Full redecoration
- Improved acoustic separation between spaces assuming over boarding walls in between each teaching space
- Fire strategy enhancements including additional stairs in some locations
- Strip the sports hall back to its structure and fully overclad, plus adding accommodation lacking in the current building.
- New FF&E throughout.

Further studies and surveys

If this option was pursued

- A full review of fire strategies to ensure compliance
- An acoustic review and upgrade strategy
- Intrusive Asbestos survey
- A thermal imaging survey
- Masonry pull tests if over cladding is pursued
- Structural Survey



To provide an appropriate level of sports provision, the proposal includes an artificial Grass Pitch located on the existing field, together with reworking of the existing car park to increase capacity and increased playground area. Other existing sports facilities would be refurbished, principally the all-weather running track (including high-jump and long-jump areas) and tennis courts as necessary.

The existing Playing Field Area as defined by Sport England is 70,799m², therefore the site is well-provided (compared to a BB103 guideline figure of 31,200m²). If there is an overall loss of playing field area, it should be possible to meet one of the Sport England exceptions.

Conclusion

To execute the works the construction would need to be phased over several years relying upon a large number of temporary classrooms to support decanting strategies. On completion the development would be significantly improved and meet current building

standards. It would however still have some of the inherent issues that cannot be fully resolved unless more intrusive interventions were pursued, for example corridor widths would be below recommendations and several teaching spaces would remain undersized. To meet space standards in all circumstances, a much greater proportion of new building and demolition would be required defeating the object of this option.

4.4.3 Option 3 Existing site, New Teaching block and Retained upgraded Sports Hall

This option looks to re-provide all the teaching accommodation in a new teaching block, retain and remodel the sports hall and create a new arrival plaza, new staff and pupil parking and coach drop off would be provided, accessed from the existing site entrance and potential a separate parental drop-off and pick up area out with the secure line. This proposal would look to upgrade the all-weather running track and reconfigure and upgrade the external grass sport provision and create a variety of hard and soft landscape spaces for pupils to play, socialise and explore.

The works need to be carried out while the school remains in operation. To achieve this, we have explored some building typologies that are described below.

4.4.3.1 Superblock

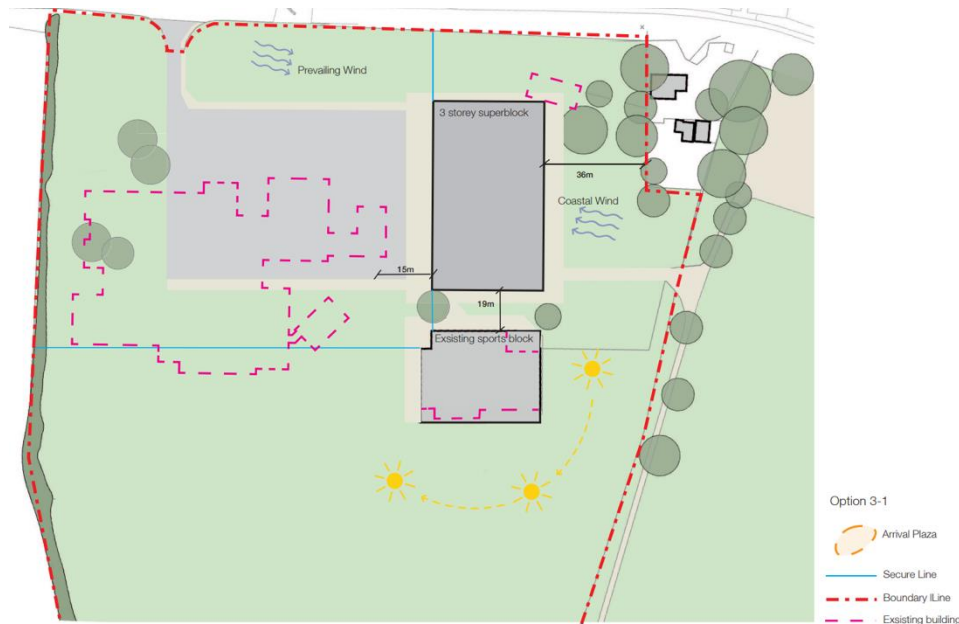
This typology is often the most efficient with the large central shared resources such as halls, LRCs and dining areas to be placed inboard while teaching spaces sit at the perimeter. This approach relies upon borrowed natural light and more of the spaces being mechanically ventilated solutions. As such the construction of internal roofs and light wells bring complexities not associated, with more traditional typologies.

This model is most efficient when arranged over three floors.

All teaching facilities are under one roof with the indoor sports facilities provided within the existing standalone sports block or if proven to be more cost effective a new standalone block

The wall to floor ratio is good and circulation tends to be efficient. The relationship with the external landscape is not as positive as the other typologies. Creating separate directorate identities and associated external spaces is not as easy.

If well planned with good distribution, WC's and stair cores can support efficient internal flow and efficient ingress and egress at breaks. and at the beginning and end of the academic day. As this model clusters vertical circulation there tends to be fewer stair cores overall.



This option can support Net Zero in use from the outset or if budgets are prohibitive enable future additions of photovoltaic panels and other mitigation strategies.

Overall passive supervision can be more complex to achieve. The building is less capable of creating shade and shelter and external neighbourhoods and is relatively difficult to extend should the need dictate.

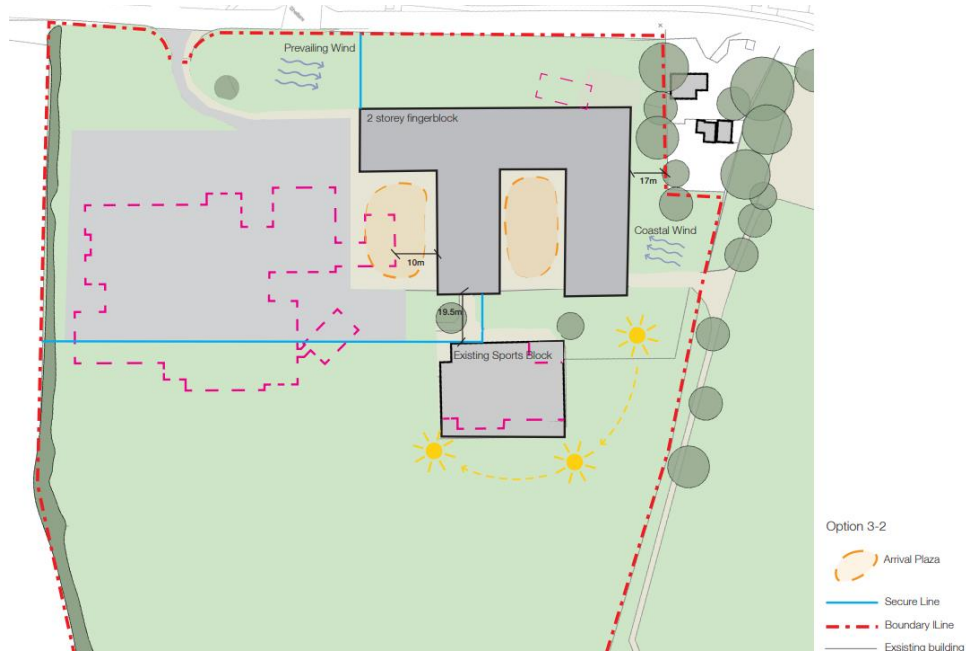
4.4.3.2 Finger/Courtyard model

This typology is effective and enables the majority of spaces to be naturally ventilated and achieve the daylight requirements. The approach enables directorates to generally be located in self-contained clusters adjacent to their staff resource areas. All directorates will be in relatively close proximity to the shared facilities of hall, dining, library etc. aligned to the curriculum offer. All facilities are under one roof other than the standalone sports hall, which could if preferred be integrated into the building envelop.

This typology tends to have a relatively high wall to floor ratio and can put demands on circulation required to connect spaces and by its nature is less compact, but does create good connections to outdoor spaces, enhancing supervision and general surveillance. Spaces between the fingers / wings help to create neighbourhoods which can be used for different year groups and create entrances, congregation points shelter from the elements and ownership. If well planned with WC's and stair cores at the ends of the fingers, good efficient internal flow and effective ingress and egress can be achieved at breaks and at the beginning and end of the academic day.

This typology can meet all the daylight and air quality criteria without relying on complex cross and stack ventilation solutions which lead to numerous roof penetrations and complex steel frames.

This option can support Net Zero in use from the outset or if budgets are prohibitive enable future additions of photovoltaic panels and other mitigation strategies.



This typology is easy to reconfigure without impacting facades and easy to extend if required in the future if the site allows.

This approach has been tested over two and three storeys.

4.4.3.3 Site Arrangement

We have developed a proposal that can be built in the general area occupied by the car park and the bus drop-off. This exploits the virtues of the site and fits the required accommodation into a two-storey building aligning to the advice provided by the planning department. This will enable the school to remain in operation during construction. There will need to be a period in the programme when the sports hall is decommissioned so that it can be stripped back to the frame and reclad.

The construction will then lead to a third phase when the existing school is vacated and demolished to enable the creation of a new landscaped plaza on site parking for staff students and visitors.

The developed solution is a variant of a two-storey courtyard design that provides appropriate frontage to Acklington Road. The principle block runs east west with two

wings running north south that create a sheltered space for pupils to safely arrive and congregate prior to entering the building at the beginning of the school day.

The courtyard space would be south facing, creating the opportunity to have external dining as well as social spaces and sheltered outdoor learning to be enjoyed throughout the day. As the school role is not large this space will act efficiently and be easy to supervise, a situation not enjoyed in the current facilities.

With vertical circulation cores at the ends of the wings and along the southern face of the northern block, pupils will be provided with unambiguous access and egress between lessons, breaks and at the beginning and end of the school day.

The northern block houses all the large format spaces, including, sixth form social, kitchen, dining hall, performance, music LRC, T Level Catering and incoming plant with science above. The western most wing houses Food and Design Technology with Art, ICT and Vocational Studies on the first floor. The wing to the west houses, English, Humanities and Maths

To achieve this part of the new building will be built relatively close to the existing buildings.

The hierarchy of space from site entrance to the school building, private recreational areas, access to all weather surfaces and the grass fields beyond is logical and manageable. The external landscape will integrate the new building and refurbished sports hall into the wider school environment.



4.4.3.4 External provision

As stated previously, the overall site is 120,566m² which exceeds BB103 which specifies a minimum guideline site area of 45,000m² based on a pupil number-on-roll of 720.

The existing Playing Field Area as defined by Sport England is 70,799m², therefore the site is well-provided (compared to a BB103 guideline figure of 31,200m²). If there is an overall loss of playing field area, it should be possible to meet one of the Sport England exceptions.

This option proposes:

Sports Provision

The area to the south will remain and be divided between all-weather and natural sports pitch provision which could accommodate, as an example:

Grass pitch provision

- 3 no full-size football pitches
- 2 no reduced-size football pitches
- 1 no cricket fields

Other field sports could be supported including rugby. Different permutations and combinations of pitch sizes and quantities are possible depending on seasonal change and curriculum requirements.

Other green space to support Athletics including

- Long and triple jump
- Rounders (juniors)
- Potential to mark out a 400m grass running track in the summer

All weather provision

- New full-size artificial turf pitch
- New or refurbished four-tennis court MUGA
- 400m all-weather running track and associated facilities refurbished

Vehicular movement

- A new car park, coach and drop off using the existing vehicular access

Social Provision

- Extended and better organised informal hard and soft play areas and external dining.
- Habitat areas will be integrated into the proposals by enhancing existing boundary planting and other areas not used for sport or informal play.

4.4.4 Option 4 Existing site, New Teaching Block and Sports Hall

This option develops a single building option with an integrated sports hall, built to the south of the existing school on the space currently occupied by the existing tennis courts enabling on completion the integration of the car park and the bus drop off area for staff and student parking complemented by the provision of new visitor parking and coach drop off. This exploits the virtues of the site and fits the required accommodation into a two-storey C shaped building aligning to the advice provided by the planning department. This will enable the school to remain in operation during construction. There will need to be a period in the programme for the demolition of the existing school and sports hall and site remodelled.

4.4.4.1 Site Arrangement

The developed solution sits quite far back in the site and will have very little presence to Acklington Road. The principle block runs east west with two wings running north south that create a sheltered space for pupils to safely arrive and congregate prior to entering the building at the beginning of the school day.

The courtyard space would be south facing, creating the opportunity to have external dining as well as social spaces and sheltered outdoor learning to be enjoyed throughout the day. As the school role is not large this space will act efficiently and be easy to supervise, a situation not enjoyed in the current facilities.

With vertical circulation cores at the ends of the wings pupils will be provided with unambiguous access and egress between lessons, breaks and at the beginning and end of the school day.

The northern block houses all the large format spaces, including, sixth form social, kitchen, dining hall, performance, music LRC, T Level Catering and incoming plant with science above. The western most wing houses Food and Design Technology with Art, ICT and Vocational Studies on the first floor. The wing to the west houses, English, Humanities and Maths

The Sports block sits at the end of the eastern wing with easy access to the sports provision beyond.

The hierarchy of space from site entrance to the school building, private recreational areas, access to all weather surfaces and the grass fields beyond is logical and manageable. The external landscape will integrate the new building into the wider school environment.



4.4.4.2 External Provision

As stated previously, the overall site is 120,566m² which exceeds BB103 which specifies a minimum guideline site area of 45,000m² based on a pupil number-on-roll of 720.

The existing Playing Field Area as defined by Sport England is 70,799m², therefore the site is well-provided (compared to a BB103 guideline figure of 31,200m²). If there is an overall loss of playing field area, it may not be possible to meet one of the Sport England exceptions as the new building would occupy land which is currently playing field, and this is unlikely to be able to be replaced with an equivalent level of provision elsewhere on the site. This could lead to a Sport England objection.

This option proposes:

Sports Provision

The area to the south will remain and be divided between all-weather and natural sports pitch provision which could accommodate, as an example:

Grass pitch provision

- 3 no full-size football pitches
- 2 no reduced-size football pitches
- 1 no cricket fields

Other field sports could be supported including rugby. Different permutations and combinations of pitch sizes and quantities are possible depending on seasonal change and curriculum requirements.

Other green space to support Athletics including

- Long and triple jump
- Rounders (juniors)
- Potential to mark out a 400m grass running track in the summer

All weather provision

- New full-size artificial turf pitch
- New four-tennis court MUGA
- 400m all-weather running track and associated facilities refurbished

Vehicular movement

- A new visitor car park, coach and drop off using the existing vehicular access
- The retention and remodelling of the existing coach drop off and car park provision

Social Provision

- Extended and better organised informal hard and soft play areas and external dining.

Habitat areas will be integrated into the proposals by enhancing existing boundary planting and other areas not used for sport or informal play.

4.4.5 Option 5 New Build on Land to the East of the Recreation Ground

The new site is referred to as land to the east of the recreation ground for the purpose of this report. The option developed follows a similar model as deployed for Option 4. The site is capable of meeting the BB103 requirements when integrated with the green open space of the existing site.

This option enables the building and sports hall and all external sports provision to be delivered in one phase, leaving the existing school fully operational on its existing site during the construction works.

4.4.5.1 Site Arrangement

The proposal develops a site masterplan that best serves the requirements for curriculum delivery and provides a well organised, effective design response.



The proposed new site is a school field that sits between the current JCSC middle school and recreation ground on Acklington Road. It would be integrated with a proportion of the existing site to create a new provision. This site has very similar characteristics to the existing site.

There are less space pressures when compared with the redevelopment of the existing site. We have demonstrated that a three superbloc and courtyard typology would fit on the site comfortably. These options would however be subject to more scrutiny by the planning authority in regard to their impact. A two-storey design sits more comfortably with the scale of surrounding domestic developments to the north of Acklington Road.

The optimal solution would be a two-storey courtyard design that provides appropriate frontage to Acklington Road running east west, two wings run north south that create a sheltered space for pupils, creating a safe arrival and congregation space prior to entering the building at the beginning of the school day. The courtyard space would be south facing creating the opportunity to have external dining as well as social spaces and sheltered outdoor learning to be enjoyed throughout the day. As the school role is not large, this space will act efficiently and be easy to supervise, a situation not enjoyed in the current facilities.

With vertical circulation cores at the ends of the wings and along the southern face of the northern block, pupils will be provided with unambiguous access and egress between lessons, breaks and at the beginning and end of the school day.

This option requires the provision of a new vehicular junction off Acklington Road for visitor and accessible parking. The existing school parking area will be retained and reconfigured as necessary, providing all the staff and coach drop off requirements. There are very good safe foot path links across the top of the recreation ground that would link the parking provision to the new site. This route would need to be properly lit for staff and pupil safety.

The building orientation locates the large format spaces facing Acklington Road which by virtue will function as a noise buffer between this block and the oasis/courtyard sitting to the south. The building form wraps around hard play and landscaped areas.

The northern block houses all the large format spaces, including, sixth form social, kitchen, dining hall, performance, music LRC, T Level Catering and incoming plant with Science above. The western most wing houses Food and Design Technology with Art, ICT and Vocational Studies on the first floor. The wing to the west houses, English, Humanities and Maths

The indoor sports facilities and associated changing are linked to the western most wing in close proximity to all weather and grass sports provision, supporting curriculum delivery.

The secure line is easy to achieve enabling the site to be secured out of hours, supporting community access without compromising school security.

The site is large enough to support future expansion.

The hierarchy of space from site entrance to the school building, private recreational areas, access to all weather surfaces and the grass fields beyond is logical and manageable.



4.4.5.2 External Provision

As stated previously, the overall site is approximately 133,000m² which exceeds BB103 which specifies a minimum guideline site area of 45,000m² based on a pupil number-on-roll of 720.

The existing Playing Field Area as defined by Sport England is 82,324m², therefore the site is well-provided (compared to a BB103 guideline figure of 31,200m²). It should be



possible to provide an equivalent area of playing field (compared to that lost on the site east of the recreation ground) once the existing building are demolished.

This option proposes:

Sports Provision

The existing playing field area to the south will remain and be divided between all-weather and natural sports pitch provision which could accommodate, as an example:

New all-weather provision

- Full-size artificial turf pitch
- A four-tennis court MUGA

Grass pitch provision

- 1 no full-size football pitch (inside the existing all-weather athletics track)
- 4 no full-size football pitches
- 2 no reduced-size football pitch

Other green space to support Athletics including

- Long and triple jump
- Rounders (juniors)

Vehicular movement

- New vehicular access, and on-site visitor and accessible car park provision
- Upgraded staff and coach and drop off on the existing site using the existing vehicular access

Social Provision

- Informal hard and soft play areas and external dining.
- Habitat areas will be integrated into the proposals by enhancing existing boundary planting and identifying other areas not required for sport or play provision.

4.4.6 Option 6 New Build on the Recreation Ground

The new site is referred to as the recreation ground for the purpose of this report. The option developed follows a similar model as deployed for the existing site. The site is capable of meeting the BB103 requirements.

This option enables the building and sports hall and all external sports provision to be delivered in one phase, leaving the existing school fully operational on its existing site during the construction works.

4.4.6.1 Site Arrangement

The proposal develops a site masterplan that best serves the requirements for curriculum delivery and provides a well organised, effective design response.

The proposed new site is a recreation ground that sits between the current JCSC high school and middle school on Acklington Road. It would be integrated with a proportion of the existing site to create the new provision. This site has very similar characteristics to the existing site. It is part occupied by all-weather recreation and play areas, including a skate park which would all need re-providing if this proposal were adopted.

There are less space pressures on this site when compared with the redevelopment of the existing site. We have demonstrated that a superblock and three storey courtyard typology would fit on the site comfortably. These options would be subject to more scrutiny by the planning authority in regard to their impact. A two-storey design sits more comfortably with the scale of surrounding domestic developments to the north of Acklington Road and the stand-alone adjacent property to the west.

The optimal solution would be a two-storey courtyard design that provides appropriate frontage to Acklington Road running east west, two wings run north south that create a sheltered space for pupils, creating a safe arrival and congregation space prior to entering the building at the beginning of the school day. The courtyard space would be south facing creating the opportunity to have external dining as well as social spaces and sheltered outdoor learning to be enjoyed throughout the day. As the school role is not large, this space will act efficiently and be easy to supervise, a situation not enjoyed in the current facilities.

With vertical circulation cores at the ends of the wings and along the southern face of the northern block, pupils will be provided with unambiguous access and egress between lessons, breaks and at the beginning and end of the school day.

This option takes advantage of the established vehicular bell mouth at the eastern corner of the site which will lead to onsite visitor and accessible parking provision. The existing school parking area will be retained and reconfigured as necessary providing all the staff and coach drop off requirements. There is a very good safe foot path link to this site from the existing school. This route would need to be properly lit for staff and pupil safety.

The building orientation locates the large format spaces facing Acklington Road which by virtue will function as a noise buffer between this block and the oasis/courtyard sitting to the south. The building form wraps around hard play and landscaped areas.

The northern block houses all the large format spaces, including, sixth form social, kitchen, dining hall, performance, music LRC, T Level Catering and incoming plant with science above. The western most wing houses Food and Design Technology with Art, ICT and Vocational Studies on the first floor. The wing to the west houses, English, Humanities and Maths

The indoor sports facilities and associated changing are linked to the western most wing, in close proximity to all weather and grass sports provision, supporting curriculum delivery

The secure line is easy to achieve enabling the site to be secured out of hours supporting community access without compromising school security.

The site is large enough to support future expansion.

The hierarchy of space from site entrance to the school building, private recreational areas, access to all weather surfaces and the grass fields beyond is logical and manageable.

4.4.6.2 External Provision

As stated previously, the overall site is 76,826m² which exceeds BB103 which specifies a minimum guideline site area of 45,000m² based on a pupil number-on-roll of 720.

The existing Playing Field Area as defined by Sport England is 43,841m².

This option proposes:

Sports Provision

The area to the south will remain and be divided between all-weather and natural sports pitch provision which could accommodate, as an example:

New all-weather provision

- Full-size artificial turf pitch
- A four-tennis court MUGA

Grass pitch provision

- 1 no full-size football pitch (inside the existing all-weather athletics track)
- 1 no reduced-size football pitch

Other green space to support Athletics including

- Long and triple jump
- Rounders (juniors)

Vehicular movement

- New vehicular access, and on-site visitor and accessible car park provision,
- Upgraded staff and coach drop off on the existing site using the existing vehicular access

Social Provision

- Informal hard and soft play areas and external dining.
- Habitat areas will be integrated into the proposals by enhancing existing boundary planting and identifying other areas not required for sport or play provision.

4.5 Massing and Identity

We have been advised by the planning department that all proposals should if feasible be limited to two storeys to respect the scale of the neighbouring sites. This does cause

some proximity issues on the redevelopment of the existing site which may need to have some three storey elements.

4.6 SEN Accessibility

The new development will provide full accessibility and as such can be Equality Act compliant, compliant with BS8300 and the relevant building regulations. This scheme does not present any onerous design challenges as both sites are flat and can be remodelled, without much, if any, material being taken off site in consequence.

The feasibility study proposes the allowance of two new lifts within the school buildings and a lift within the sports hall area to ensure compliance particularly out of hours. External level access will be achievable to all sports facilities and full accessibility to the visitors' entrance is achievable for both options via an accessible visitors parking area.

The teaching facilities are enhanced by the inclusion of a dedicated SEN facility

4.7 Towards Carbon Neutral

NCC's approach to carbon reduction is set out in its draft Climate Commitment Action Plan 2021. The target date of net zero emissions for the county is 2030. The target date to halve operational emissions has been brought forward from 2030 to 2025 and an updated action plan with a road map to achieving net zero emissions by 2030 will be published by 2024. To support this ambition, we have reviewed the impact of these considerations for this project.

The adopted approach is to achieve net zero carbon in use which will be achieved by a balance of improvement in the overall thermal performance of the building envelope, reducing energy demands and the provision of energy from renewable sources on site (or off site from responsible sources) and develop offset strategies such as planting coppices on the site all with the aim of creating a Net Zero Carbon proposal. We have provided a summary of the potential cost impacts of these options and tabulated them below. The initial investment is substantial however the long-term benefits for running costs are significant and it enables Northumberland County Council to lead the way.

The impact of these considerations is still at a high level and will be developed in more detail during the design development and will be reported against at every stage. This approach will, we believe, assist in the planning approval processes for either site.

If budgetary pressures persist as anticipated aspects of delivering this strategy may be deferred, this will not impact the design but enable technologies to be added at later date to achieve the desired outcomes.

4.8 Third party Use

Currently the local first and middle schools and the community enjoy access to the sports hall during the school day as well as at the evening and weekends.

Consultation with all third-party users has taken place and will continue throughout the design and construction phases of the project should this OBC be approved.

4.9 Health and Safety

The design requires consideration to the potential implications of the Workplace (Health, Safety and Welfare) Regulations 1992, the Construction Design and Management (CDM) Regulations 2015 and all other construction related health and safety legislation. At this stage, the considerations have been at a very high level and will be developed once the designs are developed further.

The phasing of the works is critical to the safety of the existing school users and public visiting the site. This needs to consider how the design and temporary work impacts the existing school and the additional control measures required throughout the construction period to minimise conflict between the school and the construction activities.

The current strategy is to build the new building, vacate the existing estate, demolish the existing estate, and complete the external sports provision. To achieve this, it is recognised that the school sports curriculum will need to be temporarily delivered off site. Temporary car parking arrangements on the adjacent site might need to be provided, after decanting into the new building.

The existing estate varies in age and as such will need to be carefully managed during the demolition phase and the following will need to be considered and comprehensive mitigation strategies developed: -

- There is asbestos present in several of the structures
- There are likely to be some structural issues due to the age of the building
- Effective vehicle and pedestrian segregation will need to be fully planned and evaluated
- There will be some tree removal and tree protection required for the development of the existing site.
- Ecological issues
- Impacts from traffic (buses / drop offs) congestion at peak times

The proposed demolitions will expose the construction workforce, third parties and the public to other foreseeable hazards including: -

- Dust
- Noise

- Vibration
- Lead
- Utility Services
- The Workplace (Health, Safety and Welfare) Regulations 1992 will apply (but will not apply during the construction phase, for which CDM 2015 contains provisions).

In relation to the proposed new building the impact of the design must consider: -

- Priority to permanent, collective edge protection
- Access/equipment/activities associated with cleaning and maintaining the Structures
- Information pertaining to any proprietary system to access roofs/voids
- Anti-social behaviour/crime prevention
- Lighting
- Climbing hazards
- Flooding / drainage
- Biological hazards - including Leptospirosis/Weil's Disease, Lyme disease etc.

The extent of works required to develop the preferred design will require the appointment of CDM duty holders with sufficient skills, knowledge, experience, and training to fulfil their respective roles.

The appointed Principal Designer must ensure the general principles of prevention are applied to the design and hazards are reduced to an acceptable level. Information relating to residual hazards must be passed to the Principal Contractor for inclusion into the Construction Phase Plan and Health and Safety file.

4.10 Material Choices

In response to the Grenfell Tower fire, HM Government have issued amendments to Approved Document B: Fire Safety Volume 2 – Buildings Other Than Dwelling Houses, 2006 edition incorporating 2007, 2010 and 2013 amendments. These amendments took effect on 21 December 2018 for use in England for all applications made after this date.

We are bound by these amendments to façade design which, along with the guidance laid out in Approved Document B, provide rules on fire egress for all new building types, building heights, firefighting requirements and when sprinklers are / not required.

During the course of the design process, we will bring to your attention the strategies and the material choices available to you to achieve compliance with Approved Document B. Some material choices may comply with building regulations but may be uninsurable on the basis of fire safety. NCC need to consider these implications and may wish to improve on the legislative standards to comply with your own governance and insurance requirements.

Our recommendation at this stage is to elect for the inclusion of non-combustible materials for all wall build-ups. This will require all insulants to be mineral wool. This does impact on material costs. We will ensure all other options are explored and the financial implications explained, and the risks associated with decisions we collectively make.

We recommend the appointment of a fire engineer on most projects. The criteria for when an engineer is employed depends on project complexity and where a standard response to Approved Document B does not apply. Multi occupancy residential developments, schools, hospitals, and offices will warrant the involvement of a fire engineer to ensure there is a comprehensive fire risk assessment and that the façade design satisfies BR135.

4.11 Planning Statement

Planning Application

It is proposed that a full planning application will be submitted for the construction of the new school building and sports facilities with associated access, parking and landscaping for the preferred development option on Acklington Road

The planning application is categorised as a major planning application. Major planning applications typically have a 13-week determination period however changes to the determination period for ‘public service infrastructure’ projects, which includes schools were introduced in 2021 in The Town and Country Planning (Development Management Procedure and Section 62A Applications) (England) (Amendment) Order 2021. The changes reduced the current 21-day statutory consultation period to 18 days and the determination period has been reduced from 13 weeks to 10 weeks.

Given the nature of project, the application would be required to be determined at the Council’s Strategic Planning Committee.

The planning application will need to be supported by a suite of plans and documents to demonstrate that the application is policy compliant. This is discussed in more detail in the below sections.

Planning Context

The key planning policies relevant to the scheme are set out in the statutory development plan which, in this case, comprises of the Northumberland Local Plan 2016 and the National Planning Policy Framework (‘NPPF’).

Northumberland Local Plan 2016

The Development Plan for the Site is the Northumberland Local Plan (the ‘NLP’) 2016 to 2023 was formally adopted by Northumberland Council on 31 March 2022. The Northumberland Local Plan now forms part of the development plan for Northumberland

alongside the 'made' Neighbourhood Plans. It replaces the Development Plan Documents prepared by the former districts, boroughs and county councils prior to Local Government Review in 2009.

The following policies are relevant to the proposed development:

- Policy STP1 – Spatial strategy
- Policy STP2 – Presumption in favour of sustainable development
- Policy STP3 – Principles of sustainable development
- Policy STP4 – Climate change mitigation and adaptation
- Policy STP5 – Health and wellbeing
- Policy STP7 – Strategic approach to the Green Belt
- Policy STP8 – Development in the Green Belt
- Policy HOU4 – Housing development site allocations
- Policy QOP1 – Design principles
- Policy QOP2 – Good design and amenity
- Policy QOP4 – Landscaping and trees
- Policy QOP5 – Sustainable design and construction
- Policy TRA1 – Promoting sustainable connection
- Policy TRA2 – The effects of development on the transport network
- Policy TRA4 – Parking provision in new development
- Policy ENV1 – Approaches to assessing the impact of development on the natural, historical and built environment
- Policy ENV2 – Biodiversity and geodiversity
- Policy ENV3 – Landscape
- Policy ENV7 – Historic environment and heritage assets
- Policy ENV9 – Conservation areas
- Policy WAT2 – Water supply and sewerage
- Policy WAT3 – Flooding
- Policy INF2 – Community services and facilities
- Policy INF5 – Open space and facilities for sport and recreation
- Policy POL1 – Unstable and contaminated land
- Policy MIN4 – Safeguarding mineral resources

National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF)

The National Planning Policy Framework (the 'NPPF') was published in July 2021 and sets out the government's requirements and objectives for the planning system in England, in order to ensure that decision making is positive, sustainable and provides for necessary development in the right areas.

The following sections of the NPPF are relevant to the proposed development:

- Section 2 – Achieving sustainable development
- Section 4 – Decision-making
- Section 8 – Promoting healthy and safe communities
- Section 9 – Promoting sustainable transport
- Section 11 – Making effective use of land

- Section 12 – Achieving well designed places
- Section 14 – Meeting the challenge of climate change, flooding and coastal change
- Section 15 – Conserving and enhancing the natural environment
- Section 16 – Conserving and enhancing the historical environment

Planning Matters

Discussions have taken place with the LPA and statutory consultees in relation to the proposed development and key planning matters. Based on the proposed development options and relevant planning policy, we have an understanding of the policy position and the key planning matters. Those we believe relevant to the determination of the application are set out below which will be addressed as part of the planning application.

Need for the development

The need for new schools is vital and is evident in planning policy at all levels seeking to provide replacement or new educational facilities to meet the needs of an expanding population.

The need to provide enhanced educational facilities, whether this is done via replacement or new educational facilities to meet the needs of the local community, is recognised and promoted in paragraph 95 of the NPPF. This is reiterated within the policy statement regarding Planning for Schools Development (2001), stating that the planning system should operate in a positive manner when dealing with proposals for the creation of state-funded schools.

At a local level, educational facilities are supported by Core Strategy Policy C1, Saved Policy C10 and Emerging Policy STP5 and INF2.

Based on the above, it is considered that the principle, of a new school development, is supported in policy terms at both a national and local level.

Other Matters

As part of the planning application, we will submit technical reports to address matters relating to:

- Archaeology
- Ecology
- Flood Risk and Drainage
- Land Contamination
- Lighting
- Noise
- Transport

The reports mentioned above will need to demonstrate that there will be no adverse impacts because of the proposed development, or that any impacts can be satisfactorily

mitigated in order to justify that the proposed development is acceptable and policy compliant.

Validation Requirements

It is considered that the following information would be required for validation of a planning application however, this list will be agreed with the LPA in advance of submission

- Application forms and ownership certificates
- Application fee
- Plans pack to include: Location plan, Site plan, Proposed Elevations, Proposed Floorplans, Proposed Roof Plans, Proposed Site Sections and Levels
- Design and Access Statement
- Desk-Based Archaeological Assessment
- Ecological Surveys and Assessments
- Flood Risk, Surface Water and Drainage Assessment
- Heritage Impact Assessment
- Land Contamination Assessment and Minerals Safeguarding Assessment
- Landscaping Details
- Landscape Visual Impact Assessment
- Lighting Assessment
- Noise Assessment
- Open Space Assessment
- Planning Statement
- Statement of Community Involvement
- Transport Assessment, Travel Plan and Road Safety Audit
- Tree Survey/Arboriculture Impact Assessment

A letter of comfort from NCC planners has been received confirming they would look to support the application. Reference has been made to identify the key planning considerations, which are all matters we would seek to address as part of the planning application. A copy can be found in Appendix 4J.

4.12 Summary

The studies that form the Outline Business Case (OBC) have considered the educational brief, planning, highways, and Sport England requirements. In addition, all of the surveys referenced in this OBC have been taken into consideration as have all design guidance and standards that are relevant to this initial stage of design.

The whole sale refurbishment and upgrade of the existing estate is feasible but would be lengthy and disruptive and due to the constraints associated with the existing

building would still, when complete have inherent issues in terms of space standards and circulation deficiencies.

The redevelopment of the existing site with new buildings has significant compromise, mostly due to the need to build away from the existing buildings to mitigate disruption and ensure continuity of curriculum delivery. Neither option uses the site to best effect, and will have long disruptive phased programmes. The construction access is complex.

The development of the recreation ground site would be a good option if it were not for the complexities/risks associated with ownership and covenants, which if not easily navigated put undue risk onto the proposal along with the need to replace the recreation facilities

A new build option on land to the east of the recreation ground is the most advantageous option. The site can be developed without any disruption to the continuity of education delivery and there are no legal complications in regard to site ownership.

The following documents are attached at Appendix 4:	
4A	Education Brief
4B	Site Investigation - Desktop Study
4C	Ecology Appraisal and Bat Survey
4D	Arboricultural Survey
4E	Topographical Survey
4F	Utilities Survey
4G	FF&E including technology audit report
4H	IT Audit
4I	Schedule of spaces that remain undersized
4J	Letter of Comfort from NCC Planners

5 COMMERCIAL APPRAISAL

Section 5 of this OBC describes the commercial appraisal for the options available for the scheme.

5.1 Introduction

This section for the Outline Business Case examines and sets out the current position with regards to the commercial viability of the scheme.

Northumberland County Council (“NCC”) along with its Technical Advisor has undertaken a feasibility cost assessment of the scheme, based on the options outlined earlier in section 3.3 of this report.

5.2 Funding

The scheme is to be fully funded by NCC.

There is potential for Sport England and/or Football Foundation funding or funding via other national governing bodies of sport, but this has not been included in any figures reported herein.

Other grants or funding streams may be available, but at the time of writing these have not been pursued. The reason for this is that NCC wishes to remain in full control of the scheme design and requirements by reducing the input of external factors which would otherwise have an impact on the scheme and programme.

5.3 Project Assumptions

Assumptions have been used in calculating the scheme costs and are identified as follows:

- New school to operate from September 2025 (assuming New Build)
- Gross Internal Floor Area for the New Build is based on 6,359m².
- Design & build procurement route.
- Works to be carried out during normal working hours.
- Works to be completed in two phases for the new build options on the existing site with further multiple phases for the refurbishment and extension options.
- Complete segregation between construction works and a live operational school site.
- Temporary accommodation will be required for the refurbishment and extension option and phasing will add a further year to the delivery programme.

The following exclusions also apply:

- VAT
- Capital allowances
- Third party grant or funding, other than those mentioned above
- Land acquisition costs

- Maintenance costs
- Finance and legal costs

The Schedule of Accommodation areas and pupil numbers are the key driver for the funding for construction costs. These have in turn assisted with the generation of the design options on which the cost information has been prepared. The following figures have been used for projected pupil numbers:

Table 5a: Projected Pupil Numbers

School Site	Total Proposed Numbers
James Calvert Spence	720

5.4 Overall Project Outturn Costs

NCC and its Technical Advisor have developed costs for each of the options to demonstrate the scheme's affordability. Build cost rates used have been taken from the Building Cost Information Service (BCIS), in-house cost data and by benchmarking against other recently completed schemes of a similar size and nature.

The table below provides a cost comparison of the overall Scheme Options to achieve Northumberland County Council's Facility Output Specification (FOS) together with a minimum EPC A rating:

Table 5b: Overall Scheme Options

Overall Scheme Options Cost		
Ref	Option	Total
1	Do Minimum	£18,361,881
2	Refurbishment and Extension (Existing Site)	£25,895,271
3	New Build on Existing Site (Retain and Refurbish Sports Block)	£24,803,745
4	New Build on Existing Site	£23,523,198
5	New Build on Land East of Recreation Ground	£23,390,602

5.4.1 Construction Cost including inflation

Over the last few years, inflation has soared to abnormally high levels putting tremendous strain on construction costs.

During 2020, BCIS was rather stagnant and reflected the market up until the 4th Quarter, showing a modest rise in inflation and in some cases, deflation. At which point, some Contractors began to see a major shift in the market, moving circa 5-10% since Feb 2021 to the end of September 2021. This remained constant throughout the rest of 2021 and has extended into 2022 rising even further.

Contractors have seen a lot of volatility in the market, certainly over the last 6 months, with surging inflation making it very difficult to pitch where they tender. As a result, Contractors have been reviewing the tenders, prior to submitting to clients, on a package-by-package basis, with steel packages being particularly problematic. Tenders are typically held as fixed price for 90 days, but packages such as steel are staying fixed for only 24 hours in some cases.

Some examples of material price increases over the past 6-12 months, include 13% increases for plasterboard, raw materials up as much as 80% and bricks and blocks by up to 10%. These are just a few examples but there are many more which have been affected.

Fuelled by the buoyant economy in 2021 and with the continuing escalation in materials and energy costs, Contractors and suppliers have been unable to absorb cost increases and the marketplace has allowed for the transferring of costs on, affecting tender prices.

Whilst inflationary allowances have been included, the construction industry is seeing unprecedented fragmented global supply chains as a result of Brexit, COVID-19 and most recently, due to the crisis in Ukraine. As a result of this, it can be identified that the current market conditions are listed as Overheating. Therefore, it would be beneficial to undertake early Contractor engagement to discuss current market conditions and tender appetite as soon as practicably possible. Costs are still very volatile in the market at present and whilst best endeavours have been made to account for rising inflation, this will need to be carefully monitored during the next stage.

Note that inflation has been included in the figures above within Table 5b.

5.4.2 Abnormal Costs

During the development of the options, surveys and investigations have been undertaken and their results considered. The resultant abnormal costs identified have been estimated and are summarised in table 5d.

Table 5d: Abnormal Cost

Category	Option 1 (‘000)	Option 2 (‘000)	Option 3 (‘000)	Option 4 (‘000)	Option 5 (‘000)
Total	5,619	8,589	7,375	6,784	6,684

The abnormal costs have been collated, in part, from the preliminary results of the various surveys which have been carried out as part of the OBC process and include allowances for:

- Further detailed ecological surveys to be carried out during the next stage.

- Off-site highways works that will be required to adapt the highway to cater for the new/existing vehicular and pedestrian access routes and junctions depending on which option is chosen.
- Enhancing foundation solutions for unforeseen or unfavourable ground conditions.
- Any arboricultural works and measures required to protect existing trees.
- Drainage solutions such as sustainable urban drainage systems (SUDS), attenuation tanks, ponds, soakaways and the like.
- New gas, electricity and water supplies to the sites, together with the removal of any existing redundant services.
- Temporary accommodation for existing students for options where work is being undertaken to the existing school. This will include a phased approach to ensure the school remains operational.
- Potential diversions and grouting to coal seams - further detailed investigations will be required at the next stage to confirm adequacy of the allowances.
- Provision of a temporary haul road for construction access during the works.

5.4.3 ICT and FF&E

An allowance for end-user ICT equipment and loose FF&E have been included based on the proposed pupil numbers for the new school, although the strategy would be to use existing items with the funding allowance used where it isn't economically viable to relocate items to a new building.

5.4.4 Fees

Design team fees have been included in the costs above. There will be fees paid for by the Council up to the point of novation, after which the remainder of the design team fees will be paid for by the Contractor. This only applies to the new build options.

5.5 Sustainability

5.5.1 Net Zero Carbon in Operation Approach

Net Zero Carbon in Operation is achieved when the amount of carbon emissions, associated with a building's operational energy on an annual basis, is zero or negative. This type of building is highly efficient and powered from on site and / or off-site renewable energy sources, with any remaining carbon balance offset.

Examples of how this could be achieved on this development include, but not limited to:

- Maximise building orientation particularly the noise source from the main road.
- Prioritise passive measures, natural ventilation, daylight and beneficial solar glare in winter months
- Minimise the requirement for power usage in long term maintenance.

Based on the available cost data, which is limited due to the lack of completed similar buildings, designing and building to this standard will increase the costs, included in Table 5b, by a further 18%. Market research was undertaken with experienced industry professionals who confirmed the required uplift as being adequate for this type of work. This also mirrors cost data from recent schemes currently being carried out in the North East which are also aiming to achieve Net Zero Carbon in Operation through the DfE delivery approach.

As a result, this would likely **increase the capital budget by between £2.3m and £7.8m**, depending on which option is chosen, over and above the costs required to achieve an NCC FOS (EPC A) rated building.

5.5.2 Other Sustainability Options

Other sustainability options were explored such as Passivhaus and Net Zero Carbon in Construction and in Operation (Embodied Carbon). The reasons for not proceeding with these other options are as follows:

Passivhaus adopts a whole-building approach with clear, measured targets, focused on high-quality construction, certified through an exacting quality assurance process. The prescriptive nature of the build can cause limitations on school operations and flexibility meaning there could be some potential restrictions on room type and adjacency requirements. It is also restrictive in relation to future expansion plans.

Passivhaus standard is a route towards Net Zero Carbon however further works would be required to achieve the Zero Carbon aspiration of the Council. The Department for Education have also decided to move away from Passivhaus designs now in favour of Net Zero Carbon in Operation in their latest 'Spec 21' technical annex'.

Net Zero Carbon in Construction and in Operation includes any CO₂ created during the manufacturing of building materials (material extraction, transport to manufacturer, manufacturing), the transport of those materials to the job site, and the construction practices used. Put simply, embodied carbon is the carbon footprint of a building or infrastructure project before it becomes operational. Most of the embodied carbon for a construction product is CO₂ emitted from the use of fossil fuels in extraction and manufacturing of construction materials and because of process emissions from manufacturing. To address embodied carbon, several organizations including Architecture 2030, Structural Engineers 2050 Challenge (SE2050), the Carbon Leadership Forum, and the World Green Building Council have jointly taken on a mission to eliminate embodied carbon from buildings by the year 2050.

How we tackle embodied carbon is going to change the whole method of materials are produced in manufacture and at source. This step change is yet to be fully implemented across all different processes of manufacturing and construction. We therefore do not believe that this approach or the cost of implementing such is yet fully understood or available within the construction sector at this time which is supported by soft market testing undertaken with several principal contractors.

5.5.3 Overall Project Outturn Costs

If the Council opted to proceed with any of the options identified previously, including the requirement to achieve Net Zero Carbon in Operation, the summarised costings for each option would be as follows:

Option	FOS (EPC A)	Net Zero Carbon in Operation	Total
1	£18,361,881	n/a	£18,361,881
2	£25,895,271	£7,791,997	£33,687,268
3	£24,803,745	£2,400,036	£27,203,781
4	£23,523,198	£2,335,398	£25,858,596
5	£23,390,602	£2,335,398	£25,726,000

5.6 Summary

The Overall Project Outturn Cost for the recommended option (Option 5 - New Build on Land East of Recreation Ground) is £25,726,000.

This is exclusive of VAT however includes abnormals, professional fees, ICT, FF&E and the additional funding of £2,335,398 to support the further recommendation to achieve Net Zero Carbon in Operation.

6 READINESS TO DELIVER

6.1 Project Governance

The NCC process for project structure and governance has been established to oversee and manage the relevant stages of this initiative. A Project Board, Project Steering Group and Project Team have been established, although membership of either group may be subject to variation according to the requirements of the project should it move forwards to implementation. Membership of the Project Board is shown in Table 6A: and is an existing group that oversees the delivery and development of major education projects.

Table 6A: Project Board Membership

Major Capital Project Board Membership		
Name	Post	Role
Audrey Kingham	Executive Director of Adults and Children Services.	Chair
Rob Murfin	Executive Director Planning and Economy	Member
Rick O'Farell	Chief Executive	Member
Sue Aviston	Head of School Organisation and Resources	Member
Alison Elsdon	Service Director Finance	Member
David Laux	Head of Technical Services	Member
Mike Turner	Head of Property Services	Member
Lawrence Inkster	Director, Faithful & Gould (Technical Advisors for the project)	Member
Mike Robbins	Strategic Estates Manager	Member
Alistair Bennet	Senior Accountant	Member
Pam Hindhaugh	Procurement	Member
Phil Soderquest	Health and Safety	Member

Table 6B: Project Steering Group

Steering Group Membership		
Name	Post	Role
Cllr Guy Renner Thompson	Cabinet Members for Children's Services	Chair
Cllr Jeffrey Watson	Councillor for Amble West with Warkworth ED, representing Conservative	Member
Cllr Terry Clark	Councillor for Amble ED, representing Labour	Member
Cllr Trevor Thorne	Councillor for Shilbottle ED (Split) Alnwick/Morpeth, representing Conservative	Member
Cllr Scott Dickinson	Councillor for Druridge Bay ED (Split) Ashington, representing Labour	Member
Audrey Kingham	Senior Service Director of Education and Skills	Member
Sue Aviston	Head of School Organisation and Resources	Member
Mark Elliott	Education Capital Programme Manager	Member
Neil Rodgers	Headteacher for James Calvert Spence College	Member

Lawrence Inkster	Director, Faithful & Gould (Technical Advisors for the project)	Member
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The Project Steering Group, outlined in Table 6B, is a consultative group between the school and the LA. The group will represent the local area and will ensure the local views are taken into account through the development and delivery of the project.

6.1.1 Project Management

A project team has been assembled to produce this OBC for review and decision by NCC's Cabinet. If the scheme is approved to move forward, the suitability of the current project team would be reviewed, and relevant adjustments made to personnel where required to ensure successful delivery.

From consultation to implementation, the project team (outlined in Table 6C) has a breadth of knowledge and experience of successfully delivering significant school capital projects, in Northumberland.

As it is proposed for the project to be procured through a design and build process it is recommended that the current team are retained to develop detailed designs in order to tender the project on the open market to ensure best value and control the quality of the design.

Table 6C: Project Team

Project Team		
Role on Project	Position	Name
Project Sponsor	Executive Director of Adults & Children's Social Care and Education	Audrey Kingham
Project Director	Head of School Organisation and Resources.	Sue Aviston
Project Manager	Capital Programme Manager	Mark Elliott
Project Assistance	Project Support Officer	Ross Downey
Project Assistance	Degree Apprentice Project Support Officer	Robyn Marley
James Calvert Spence College Representative	Headteacher	Neil Rodgers
Communications	Media Communications Officer	Liz Walker
Land issues and investigations	Strategic Estates Manager	Mike Robbins
Legal Adviser	Legal Adviser	Womble Bond Dickinson
Technical Adviser	Cost management, design and technical services.	Faithful+Gould

Resources have been commissioned to undertake the site options appraisal, to determine affordability and feasibility and to collate the OBC. These appointments were made via NCC's framework contract with Faithful+Gould.

6.2 Consultation and Statutory Approvals

All of the applicable statutory requirements to consult on the proposal to reduce the age range of JCSC were complied with in accordance with Section 19 (1)) of the Education and Inspections Act 2006 during a pre-publication consultation period that took place during the following dates:

- 11 May to 29 June 2022

Consultees recommended in the relevant statutory guidance were consulted via a Consultation Document that was made widely available on the Council's website.

Consultees included parents, staff, pupils, Governors of the impacted schools in the Coquet Partnership, local parish councils, the Church of England and Roman Catholic dioceses, early-years providers, the local MP, staff representatives (unions), and relevant neighbouring schools in other Northumberland Partnerships. A public consultation event was also held in Amble Masonic Hall on 11 June 2022. Individual meetings with staff and the Governing Bodies of schools that were proposed for change also took place during the consultation period, and a meeting was also held with the Governing Body of NCEA Warkworth Primary Academy, which forms part of the Coquet Partnership.

The meetings organised during the consultation event allowed consultees attending the opportunity to make known their views on the proposals and to suggest alternatives, which were noted and considered within the analysis of feedback. During the consultation exercise, it was made clear that the outcome of the process would not be determined by the equivalent to a simple referendum but would involve a detailed analysis of evidence put forward. A total of 125 responses were received from consultees during the informal consultation process, including alternative proposals.

Details of the persons and parties consulted, the notes of the Governing Body and staff consultation meetings, and all views and responses received are summarised in the Joint Interim Director of Children's Services Report: Outcomes of Consultation on Proposals for the Coquet Partnership, which is available on the Council's website at [Report to Cabinet 13 September 2022](#)

At their meeting on 13 September 2022, the Council's Cabinet approved the publication of the statutory proposal setting out its intention to reorganise the schools in the Coquet Partnership to a 2-tier(primary/secondary) structure, including the reduction in the age-range of JCSC from an age 9-18 to an age 11-18 school in a phase way beginning in September 2024 and concluding in September 2025.

6.2.1 Statutory Implications for James Calvert Spence College

The Council's Cabinet will meet on 17 November 2022 to decide whether or not to approve the reduction in the age range of schools in the Coquet Partnership, including the proposal to reduce the age range of JCSC, as set out in para. 6.2. Should the Council's Cabinet not approve the statutory proposal to reduce the age range of JCSC, the Council's Cabinet would need to review its capital investment in schools in the Coquet Partnership with the potential for the Options appraisal process to be repeated should JCSC remain as an age 9-18 school with the consequent resubmission of the OBC for approval.

6.2.2 Other Consultations

Current and future planning consultations

Relevant bodies have been informally consulted to develop the proposals in order to incorporate their views within the various site option appraisals. Implementation is subject to NCC approval at Cabinet on 17 November 2022.

As the preferred option for JCSC has been identified as the rebuild of JCSC on the land east of the recreation ground. These proposals would now form the basis of the planning submission.

Planning policies would be fully adhered to, appropriate sporting provision is being made to meet Sport England requirements, rights of way would be adjusted where necessary and ongoing discussions are progressing with Highways to ensure all appropriate needs and standards are met.

6.3 Risk

Several risk workshops, facilitated by NCC's Risk Manager, have been undertaken throughout the early phases of the project. These have included representatives from the Risk and Project Teams. A Risk Register has been developed and mitigation measures put in place in order for this project to proceed. The Risk Register will be constantly monitored throughout the project with key risks and issues being reported at every Project Board meeting. The Risk Register is managed by the Project Director with specific input from the Project Team.

The Risk Register contained in Appendix 6A details:

- the key risks identified during the process leading to preparation of this OBC;
- who is responsible for the mitigation; and
- the measures being taken to mitigate each risk.

6.4 Summary

Northumberland County Council has put in place resources for the duration of the project, including post contract, to monitor and maintain ongoing relations between the Northumberland County Council and JCSC to ensure the effective delivery of the project, throughout its lifetime.

A risk workshop has been held and a risk strategy developed. Risk will continue to be monitored and evaluated with any changes being reported to the Project Board on a monthly basis.

Public consultation -

Pre-statutory consultation has taken place between 11 May and 29 June 2022 on proposals to reorganise schools in the Coquet Partnership to a 2-tier(primary/secondary) structure, including the reduction of the age range of JCSC from an age 9-18 school to an age 11-18 secondary school.

Statutory Consultation on proposals for the relevant schools took place between 22 September and 20 October 2022. The Council's Cabinet will consider whether or not to approve the implementation of the statutory proposals on 17 November 2022.



The following documents are attached at Appendix 6 :	
6A	Project Risk Register

7 MOVING FORWARD

7.1 Programme Delivery

To achieve the key programme objective, identified in Section 2.1, principally handover of the building to allow occupation for September 2025 several critical path activities must be achieved, namely:

- RIBA Stage 4 Designs to be completed by the beginning of July 2023.
- Submit to planning mid-February 2023.
- Contract to be awarded end of October 2023.
- Construction to commence early January 2024.

To award contract at the end of October 2023, the tender documents must be issued no later than the end of July 2023 to allow the contractors sufficient time to price and submit their proposed tenders as well a time period for reviewing and assessing the tender submissions prior to a recommendation for acceptance.

To achieve these timescales, RIBA stage 4 designs will need to commence by the end of February 2023. This requires the design team to commence with RIBA Stage 3 immediately on approval of the OBC.

This stage would also include liaison with various stakeholders and finalisation of the site surveys and investigations to help reduce unknowns and minimise risk. The client and end user will have a review period at the end of each RIBA stage and it is essential that these timescales are followed so as not deviate from the critical path and to ensure the school can open in September 2025.

The project team can help assist with guidance and advice around tendering options and other potential platforms/routes that may be used for appointing a contractor. This will involve liaison with NCC procurement and framework providers and their local supply partners to gauge interest and a further review of market trends to ensure the best route is chosen.

Upon receiving the tender submissions, there is a 4-week evaluation and approvals period to review the documents and to prepare the final business case for submission to NCC's full cabinet (if required).

An 80 week build programme for the New Build option is anticipated however the Contractors will be afforded the opportunity to submit an alternative tender which may realise programme benefits. Completion, ready for school occupation in September 2025, will be written into the documents as an Employer's requirement.

7.2 Summary

A critical path of scheduled delivery activities has been provided based on the proposed route to market, Design and Build Single Stage Procurement, and in line with the Public Contracts Regulations [PCR] 2015.

The RIBA Stage 3 design will need to proceed immediately on approval of the OBC for the key milestones to be achieved. The design process will progress on through to RIBA Stage 4 / tender issue level by late July 2023.