

CHILDREN & ADULTS OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

9 SEPTEMBER 2010

BARNSOLE SCHOOLS – DEVELOPMENT OF NEW SCHOOL BUILDINGS

Report from: Chris McKenzie – Head of School Organisation & Student Services

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Summary

The report describes the options that have been considered for the redevelopment of school buildings for the Barnsole Schools to support the amalgamation of the infant and junior schools. A presentation will be made to fully illustrate each option investigated.

1. Budget and Policy Framework

- 1.1 The proposals to redevelop the school buildings for the amalgamated Barnsole Schools is consistent with the provisions of the Primary Strategy for Change. Contract award for the build contractor at gateway 3 of the procurement process, is a matter for Cabinet due to the value of the contract.

2. Background

- 2.1 On 12 May 2009, Cabinet (decision 76/2009) agreed to consult on a proposal to amalgamate Barnsole Infant School with Barnsole Junior School.
- 2.2 On 15 December 2009 (decision: 208/2009) Cabinet “authorised the Director of Children and Adult Services, in consultation with the Portfolio Holder for Children's Services, to publish full proposals including statutory notices relating to the closure of Barnsole Junior School and the prescribed alterations to Barnsole Infant School.
- 2.3 In addition, (decision: 209/2009) the Cabinet agreed, “to delegate authority to the Director of Children and Adult Services, in consultation with the Portfolio Holder for Children's Services to determine whether to approve the proposals at the end of the statutory representation period, if no objections are received.”

- 2.4 Following publication of the statutory notice and full proposals on 25 January 2010, no objections or responses were received by the end of the statutory representation period on 7 March 2010.
- 2.5 In line with decision 209/2009, the Director of Children and Adult Services, in consultation with the Portfolio Holder for Children's Services approved the proposals to amalgamate Barnsole Infant and Junior School.
- 2.6 Following approval by the Director of Children and Adult Services, in consultation with the Portfolio Holder for Children's Services, architects were commissioned to carry out a feasibility study. The study was intended to investigate a number of options around the development of the buildings on the existing Barnsole Infant and Junior School sites. In addition the Cabinet agreed (decision 210/2009), subject to the outcome of the above decisions, and once initial feasibility work has been completed, to give consideration to the possibility of bringing forward building works, for completion before amalgamation. The outcomes of the feasibility study into the building project to be presented to the Children and Adult Services Overview and Scrutiny committee for consideration and comment.
- 2.7 Previous investigations had shown that it would not be possible to build a new two form of entry primary school on the detached Brasenose playing field, due to restrictive covenants on the land.

3. Options

A number of options have been investigated to assess how the location of the two buildings on opposite sides of Sturdee Avenue can be best dealt with. These options are set out in the following table. Drawings of each of the options plus the existing school layout are shown in appendix A.

Option	Summary
A	Relocation of the both schools entrances to Sturdee Avenue, with improved pedestrian access and traffic calming measures. A new nursery, staff room and refurbishment of around 50% of the infant building. A new hall in the junior building and refurbishment of 85% of the building.
B	A high level bridge crossing Sturdee Avenue accessible only from the school buildings plus all of option A works.
C	An underground tunnel linked the two buildings including an underground hall space plus all of option A works.
D	A new extension to the infant building to accommodation all pupils and demolition of the existing junior building. Landscape works to the junior site to provide sports pitches.
E	Re-routing of Sturdee Avenue to provide one site. New buildings and landscaping as per Option D.

	Description	Advantages	Disadvantages	Funding
	<p>Option A is the school's preferred scheme, which brings the two building entrances closer together, relocating the entrance of the junior building to Sturdee Avenue. This option will provide a new hall and with use of canopies, this will give a welcoming visual connection with the infant building. A raised pedestrian crossing and adjacent traffic calming measures will be developed to provide easier access between the two sites and lead to a new infant entrance with similar canopy design. A new primary staff room will be built above the entrance to the same design as the juniors to enhance and add uniformity to both buildings and improve connectivity.</p> <p>A new nursery with external play area will provide a fully integrated foundation stage for the first time. Refurbishment of around 50% of the infants building will improve the teaching and learning accommodation, and allow year 3 pupils to be housed within this part of the school. This will then allow a smoother transition between key</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Entrances to both sites now face each other • New raised staff area on key stage 1 site is on the same level and is closer to key stage 2 site and creates a united primary staff room • New hall and staff rooms help the visual connection between the sites and provide a welcoming entrance gateway • Potential for an improved car park area • Limited amount of disruption to the school during construction • Enhances the existing buildings rather than starting again • A new nursery with external play area • New soft landscaping and internal/external connections in the key stage 2 building • Enables greater flexibility and future proofing particularly in the key stage 2 building • Proposed raised crossing would provide easier access between the two existing sites • Scheme gives flexibility for larger year groups currently in the school to continue to be accommodated in suitable accommodation. • The majority of investment will be 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Key stage 1 and key stage 2 pupils are on different sites and movements are required between the sites • No car parking on the key stage 2 site • Remote playing field • Temporary loss of play space during construction 	<p>The total estimated cost for the complete school scheme provided by the architect is £3,174,540, and includes costings for professional fees and contingencies.</p> <p>Funding of £3,275,000 for the project has been included in the capital programme.</p> <p>Costing of the feasibility scheme has been developed to RIBA (Royal Institute of British Architects) Stage B and at this stage detailed surveys are not undertaken. This is not, therefore, a confirmed final cost and is subject to change following more detailed design and survey commissions.</p>

	Description	Advantages	Disadvantages	Funding
	<p>stages 1 & 2.</p> <p>The junior building will be more fully refurbished with a new hall and significant remodeling to the existing hall area, including a new double height area. This will significantly improve the natural light levels to this and adjacent internal spaces. The ground floor classrooms will be given direct access to external learning spaces and walls will be removed to make larger flexible, more exciting environments for learning. Re-use of some external buildings will provide a new internal and external dining courtyard.</p> <p>External landscaping to provide exciting and inspiring outside learning and social spaces will be included over the joint site</p>	<p>used to remodel existing accommodation, which will directly benefit pupils, staff and families, ensuring a high return on investment.</p>		

	Description	Advantages	Disadvantages	Funding
	<p>Option B considered a bridge crossing Sturdee Avenue accessible only from the school buildings. Due to differences in levels between the sites, the bridge height would be disproportionately high and would therefore be unlikely to be accepted by planners. There would also be disruption to local highways and transport during construction. It was felt by the school that this far outweighed any advantages for access it would bring and would not add value to teaching and learning.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • New raised staff area on the early years/key stage 1 site on same level and closer to key stage 2 school and shared between both sites to create a united primary staff room • Bridge creates direct protected link between the sites • New raised crossing to provide easier access between the early years/key stage 1 and key stage 2 sites • New hall and staff rooms help visually connect the two sites and create improved and welcoming entrance gateway with opportunity for public realm and community use • Existing internal play and learning area provision unaffected with creation of covered area below new staff block • Potential for improved car parking area • Servicing access to kitchens etc is away from the main entrance on key stage 2 site • Entrance to both sites now face each other – improves connectivity • Limited amount of disruption to school during construction • Enhances existing buildings rather than rebuilding 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • School still on split sites requiring movement between and associated site management • No car parking on key stage 2 site • Remote playing field • Temporary loss of play space during construction • Due to difference in levels between two sites the bridge height will be disproportionately high and unlikely to achieve planning consent • Disruption to local highways and transport during construction of the bridge 	<p>The total estimated cost for this option, has been provided by the architect is £3,357,665, and includes costings for professional fees and contingencies. This figure includes an estimated provisional sum for the bridge of £250,000, however further feasibility and investigative works would be required to confirm the viability of this option and the exact cost of this is currently unknown.</p>

	Description	Advantages	Disadvantages	Funding
		<ul style="list-style-type: none">• New nursery with external play area• New soft landscaping and internal/external connections on key stage 2 site• Enables greater flexibility and future-proofing particular to the key stage 2 building		

	Description	Advantages	Disadvantages	Funding
	<p>Option C considered an underground tunnel between the two schools, and discussed the possibility of the new hall space being incorporated into this. This option has considerable DDA (Disability Discrimination Act) implications, it was felt would not offer an attractive space, having no natural light and ventilation. The risk of escalating costs was also a consideration and road closures would be needed in order to achieve the scheme.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • New raised staff area on the early years/key stage 1 site on same level and closer to key stage 2 school and shared between both sites to create a united primary staff room • Tunnel creates a direct protected link between the sites • New raised crossing to provide easier access between the early years/key stage 1 and key stage 2 sites • New hall and staff rooms help visually connect the two sites and create improved and welcoming entrance gateway with opportunity for public realm and community use • Existing internal play and learning area provision unaffected with creation of covered area below new staff block • Potential for improved car parking area • Servicing access to kitchens etc is away from the main entrance on key stage 2 site • Entrance to both sites now face each other – improves connectivity • Limited amount of disruption to school during construction • Enhances existing buildings rather than rebuilding 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Hall cannot be accessed by ramp (1:20) due to limited travel distance. Access would be via a lift and stairs so not DDA compliant • Excavation works are extremely costly in terms of technology required and land fill – likely to require temporary road closures for the construction period • Likely programme and cost overruns • School still on split sites requiring movement between and associated site management • No car parking on key stage 2 site • Remote playing field 	<p>The total estimated cost for this option has been provided by the architect, is £5,649,628, and includes costings for professional fees and contingencies. This figure includes an estimated provisional sum for the underground tunnel and hall space of £1,500,000, however further feasibility and investigative works would be required to confirm the viability of this option and the exact cost of this is currently unknown.</p>

	Description	Advantages	Disadvantages	Funding
		<ul style="list-style-type: none">• New nursery with external play area• New soft landscaping and internal/external connections on key stage 2 site• Enables greater flexibility and future-proofing particular to the key stage 2 building		

	Description	Advantages	Disadvantages	Funding
	<p>Option D considered bringing all the school accommodation on to the infant site, with demolition of the junior building and the land being made over to playing fields. Due to the size of the infant site, space would be very limited and this scheme would severely compromise external play space on this site. There would be insufficient space to allow the accommodation to be flexible for the future and considerable costs would be incurred for the demolition and landscaping of the junior site. A new two-storey building close to the residential houses could also be contentious for planners.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • School is united on one site • New nursery with external; play area • New raised crossing to connect school to games field • Improved parking 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Games area is remote on opposite site away from school buildings • Limited and severely compromised external play/learning spaces on school site • Large amount of school disruption during construction and landfill • No flexibility or future-proofing • School accommodation will only meet minimum BB99 requirements • New two-storey extension close to residential area – likely to be contentious at planning application stage • Significant proportion of available budget will be spent on demolition and landscaping rather than on improving teaching and learning space. Return on investment will not therefore be as high as option A. • There will be no flexibility to accommodate larger year groups currently attending the school, meaning that works will need to be phased over a longer time frame or temporary accommodation provided at additional cost. • Despite all the accommodation 	<p>The total estimated cost for this option has been provided by the architect, is £3,920,314, and includes costings for professional fees and contingencies.</p>

	Description	Advantages	Disadvantages	Funding
			<p>being contained on a single site, children will still need to cross the road to access play space; which will result in greater pupil movement across the road.</p>	
	<p>Option E considered re-rerouting Sturdee Avenue to link the two sites together. This has been discussed with planners and their initial concerns are that a simple road is being replaced with a more complicated route.</p> <p>It was felt by the school that this would cause delays to the overall programme and the costs involved outweighed the benefits.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • School on one site • New nursery with external play area • Direct access to play and sports areas • Improved parking 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Limited and severely compromised external play/learning spaces on school site • Large amount of school disruption during construction and landfill • No flexibility or future-proofing • School accommodation will only meet minimum BB99 requirements • New two-storey extension close to residential area – likely to be contentious at planning application stage • Large area of landscaping will be costly • Traffic redirected around site via new road infrastructure • Planning delay and risk of delaying overall programme with associated inflationary costs 	<p>The total estimated cost for this option has been provided by the architect, is £4,920,314, and includes costings for professional fees and contingencies.</p>

4. Advice and analysis

- 4.1 Following the completion of the feasibility study, the preferred option is option A. This option can be delivered within the available budget and is able to deliver the priorities outlined by the governors, headteacher and stakeholders of the school. It will enable the school to organise the delivery of the curriculum to its best advantage to benefit the teaching and learning, thereby improving the outcomes for the children who attend the school. The school have indicated a clear preference for this option.
- 4.2 Option A will ensure that the majority of investment is used to directly benefit pupils, staff, parents and other stakeholders. All other options would require significant investment which will not directly benefit these stakeholders, for example significant demolition costs or the costs of building a bridge.
- 4.3 Whilst option A will mean that buildings are located on either side of Sturdee Avenue, this scheme will seek to minimise the impact of this, by;
- relocating the entrance of the current junior school building so that it is immediately opposite the infant school buildings,
 - improving the visual connection between the sites and provide a welcoming entrance gateway,
 - seeking to develop improved traffic calming measures.
- 4.4 The new buildings will be energy efficient and we will aim to achieve BREEAM very good, which is the council target. We will also work to national indicator 185 – to improve the energy efficiency of the buildings.
- 4.5 Following the project the school will be fully DDA (Disability Discrimination Act) compliant, ensuring improved provision for disabled pupils. No children will be disadvantaged or displaced as a result of the project

5. Risk Management

- 5.1 The following risks have been identified:

Risk	Description	Action to avoid or mitigate risk
Risk of uncertainty around the cost of the project	The cost estimate is based on the feasibility, which has been developed to RIBA stage B and at this stage detailed surveys are not undertaken. Costings are therefore subject to change following more detailed design and survey commissions.	All costs will be monitored on an on-going basis to reduce this risk and keep the scheme within the budget. Initial estimates indicate that the amount included in the capital programme is appropriate for the works required for option A. All other options would require additional funding to be identified.
Risk of disruption to education of the existing pupils due to the building project	Building work noise adversely affects the standard of delivery of teaching and leads to a disruption in the learning of the pupils.	The preferred option A will minimise the disruption to the pupils, with remodelling works programmed for school holiday period.
Reduction of spaces for existing pupils during the construction period.	Due to decanting of pupils from the areas where works will take place.	Careful programming of works to minimise this risk will be undertaken.

6. Consultation

- 6.1 The feasibility study has been carried out in consultation with the headteacher, governors and the senior management team at the school to consider the options. During the feasibility, the staff have consulted with the pupils through workshops to gather their ideas and desires and ensure are taken into consideration within the designs. The key priorities are for the buildings to offer flexible accommodation, which can be easily adapted to meet their needs in the future. They would like to bring a modern feel to their buildings, whilst still maintaining their heritage.

7. Implications for looked after children

- 7.1 The preferred option would provide enhanced facilities for all children including looked after children.

8. Financial and legal implications

- 8.1 Financial implications - Funding for the building costs will need to be met from the Primary Capital Funding allocated by the DfE. No new land will be required for the new buildings and so there will be no related costs for land acquisition.

8.2 Legal implications – the Council owns the site of the existing infant school and junior school and can undertake works to develop the schools on these sites. The games fields are owned by the Council and shared between Barnsole Schools and Napier School. The option of developing this area has been looked at in detail and there are a number of restrictive covenants in place that preclude any building being done on this site.

9. Recommendations

9.1 The committee is asked to recommend option A for further design development and subsequent presentation to Cabinet for approval at gateway 3 contract award.

Lead officer contact

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Background papers

Feasibility Reports completed by Scott Brownrigg Architects and Hawkins Brown Architects

Determination report for the Director of Children and Adult Services, in consultation with the Portfolio Holder for Children's Services to approve the amalgamation – 30 March 2010

Existing School Layout

1.0 Existing Layout



Section A-A

443.0

445

45.0

46.0

Hawkins\ Brown

Option A

2.0 Option 01 A
Refurbish, Remodel
+ Extend



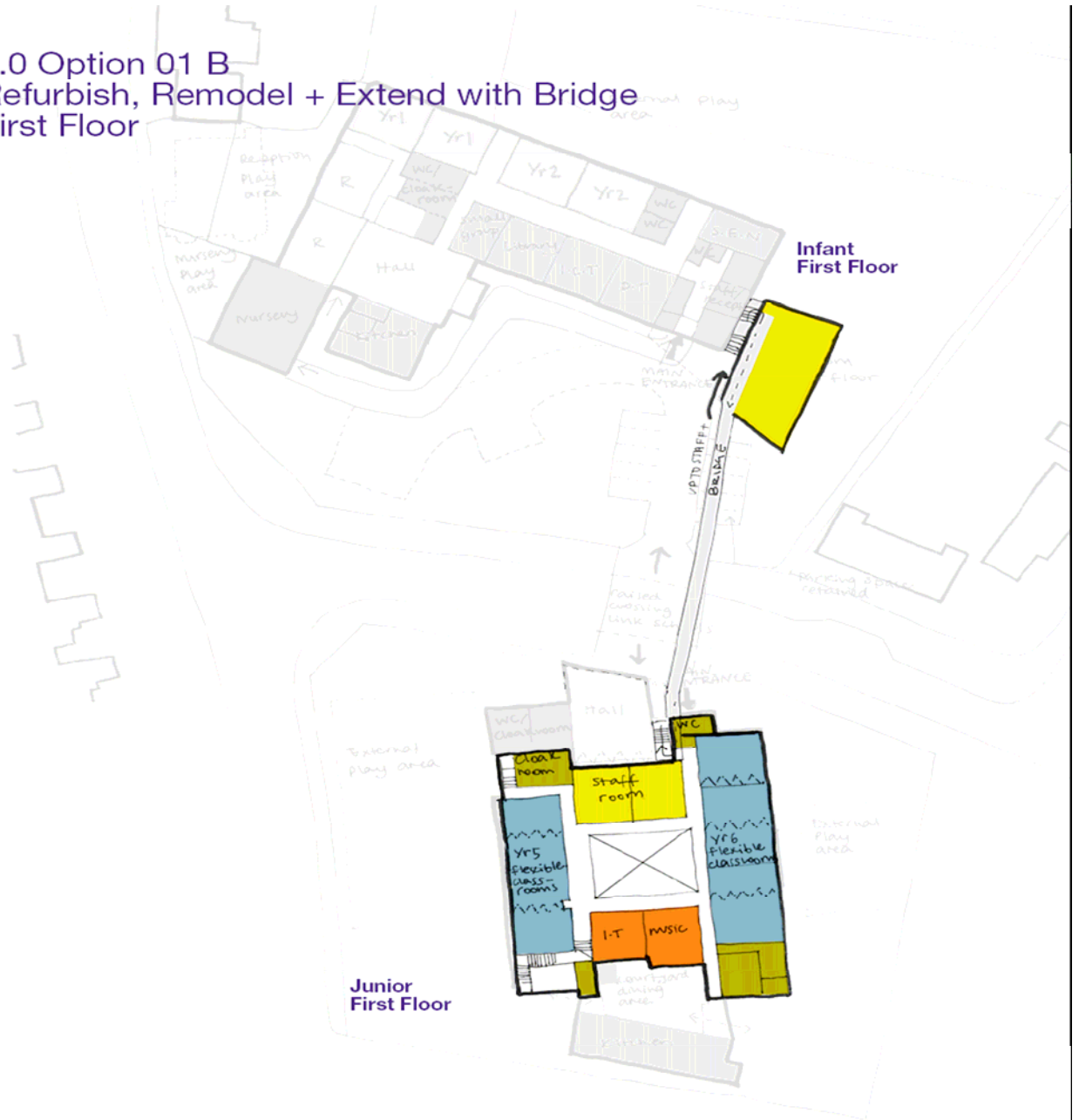
Option B – Ground Floor

3.0 Option 01 B
Refurbish, Remodel + Extend
with Bridge



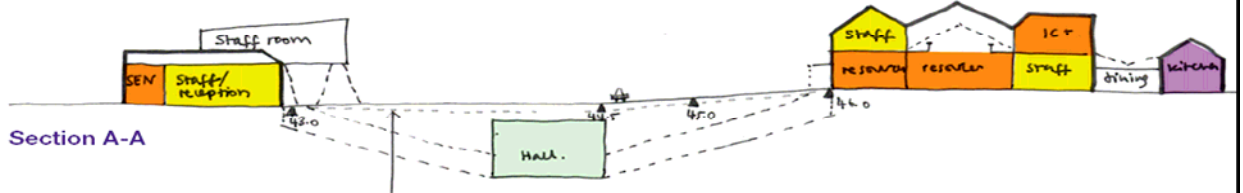
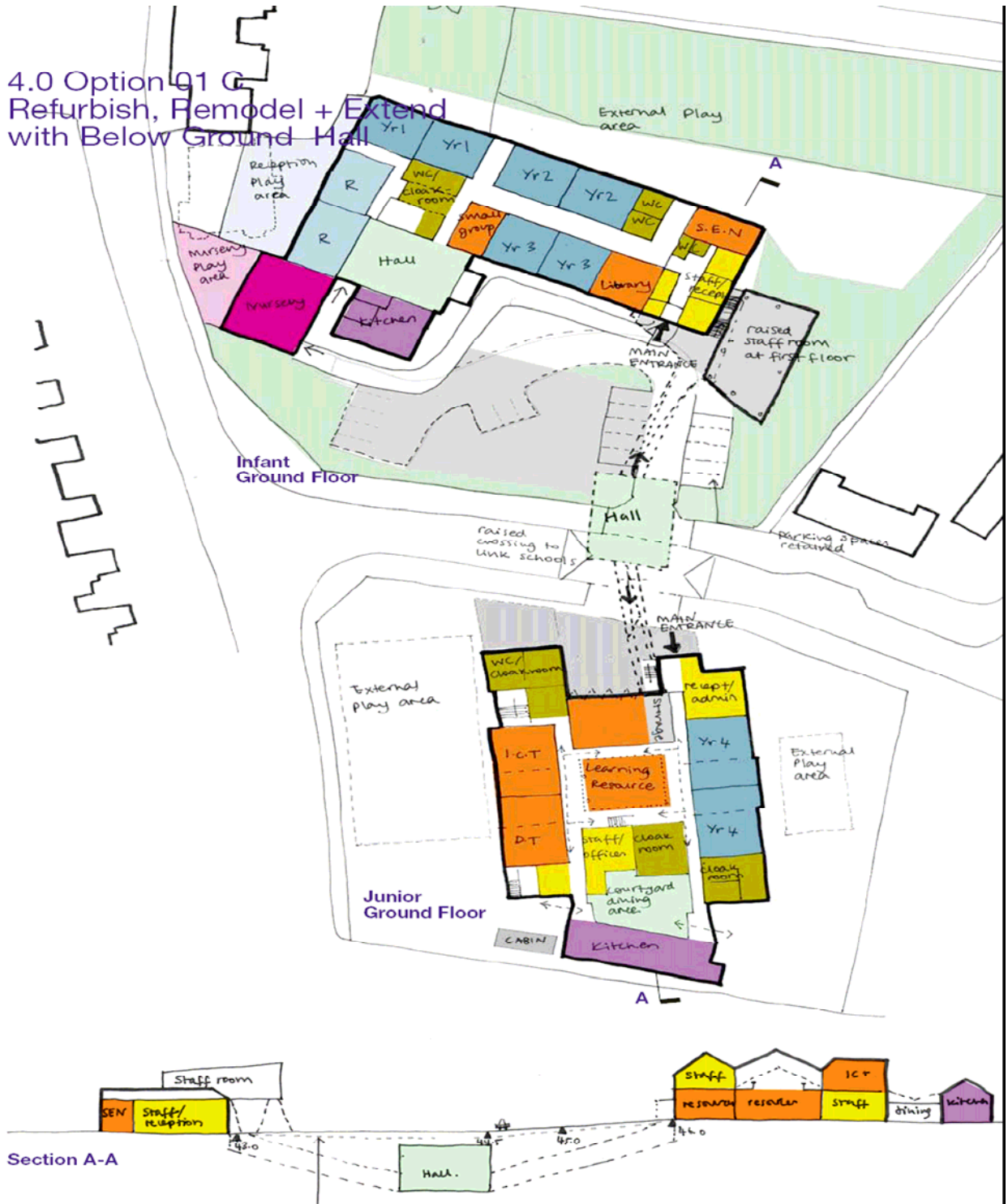
Option B – first floor

3.0 Option 01 B
Refurbish, Remodel + Extend with Bridge
First Floor



Option C

4.0 Option Q1 C
 Refurbish, Remodel + Extend
 with Below Ground Hall



Hawkins\ Brown

Option D

Hawkins\ Brown

5.0 Option 02
New 2FE KS2 Block



Section A-A

430

445

450

460

NEW SPORTS AREA

Option E

6.0 Option 03
New 2FE KS2 Block
Road closed off

