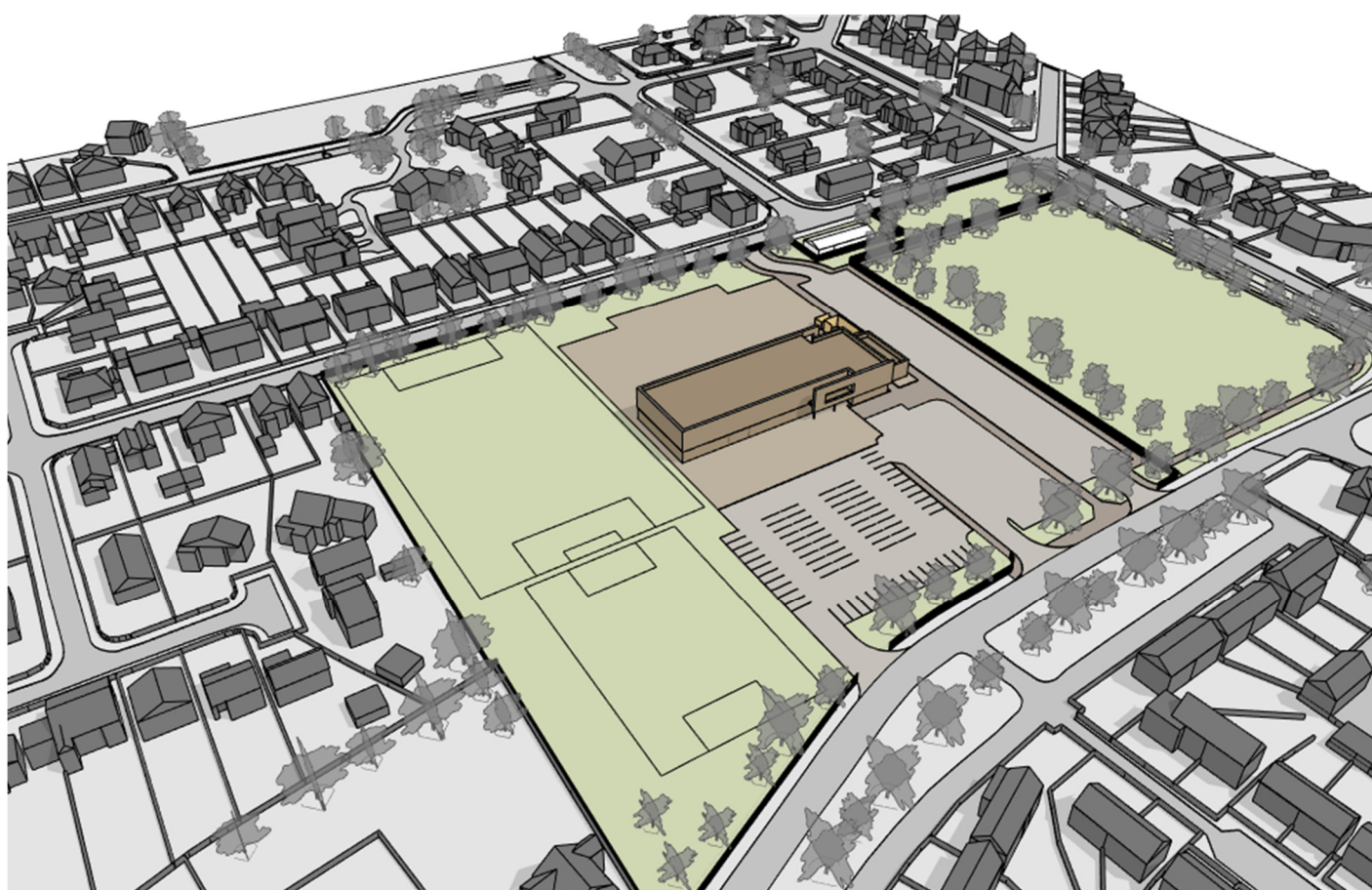


# Design Access Statement - Appendix A

for

Nine Acres Field,  
Wrexham



Ref: 19226

## 1.0 PROJECT DIRECTORY

### 1.1 APPLICANT

Wrexham County Borough Council  
The Guildhall  
Wrexham  
LL11 1AY

### 1.2 ARCHITECT

Lawray Architects  
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## 2.0 INTRODUCTION

This document is intended to accompany the Design Access Statement to provide additional information and justification regarding the choice of site at Nine Acres for the proposed Primary School development. It will cover the reasons why the existing site of St Mary's School is unsuitable, and demonstrate why Nine Acres field has been selected as the development location and not other available Council owned sites in the area.

## 3.0 EXISTING SITE

St Mary's Catholic Primary School is currently located at Lea Road, Wrexham, LL13 7NA.

Site Area: **7917m<sup>2</sup>**

Capacity: **287**

Current roll: **324 FT, 35 PT**

### Site Capacity

The site measures 7917m<sup>2</sup>, and has capacity for 287 children. A number of mobiles have been built on the site to accommodate increase in demand, and the current number of pupils enrolled is 324 full-time and 35 part-time pupils. They currently exceed their full capacity by 37 pupils (12.89%). It is one of two Catholic primary schools in Wrexham, each accepting pupils within their associated Parish boundaries. The replacement school must be situated within the Parish boundary, (Nine Acres Field is within St Mary's Parish).

### Lack of green space

The aerial image below (Fig. 1) demonstrates the lack of green space or playing fields at the school. Bellevue public park can be used on occasion by the school, however, this has associated safeguarding, health and safety and security issues. The ground is checked for syringes and drugs before the pupils can enter.

### Insufficient parking

There is limited staff parking on site, and there are no parent drop off points. Access to the site is difficult, and the roads are busy routes into the town. Bus drop off is street-side. The lack of on-site parking is a safety risk for both school children and motorists.



Figure 1—Aerial map of St Mary's Primary School and locality, Google Maps.



## 4.0 ALTERNATIVE SITES

St Mary's Primary School's current site is no longer fit for purpose, and the school and children would benefit greatly from relocating. When selecting a new site, the following criteria applied:

- The site must be within the Parish boundary of St Mary's
- The site must include green space for sports and recreation
- The site must be big enough to accommodate the schools current roll numbers (324)

Two sites were identified as suitable and already in ownership of the Local Authority Education Department. In addition to Nine Acres, the only other sites that satisfied the above criteria were:

- The Groves, 6 Powell Road, Wrexham, LL12 7AE

### The Groves

As the site was previously a school building, initially this was the favoured site for St Marys School. However, a feasibility study was carried out by TACP Architects which deemed the site unsuitable for use as a primary school and inappropriate for St Mary's needs. The report will be included for private viewing in a separate document. The Groves site was found unsuitable for the following principal reasons;

- The existing building requires significant renovation work, as well as internal alterations to function as a modern primary school. Renovations to the building alone has been cost estimated at £12million. It would not be possible to achieve 21st Century School Design standards for a primary school in the existing building, as there would be many compromises around access, flexible space, and safety and fire standards.
- The Groves' grounds are used by sports clubs, these would need to be shared by the school—likely to be an inconvenience for both parties
- Adjacent land and areas of the site will be subject to future developments. The uncertainty and lack of control over what these developments may be puts the children's safety at risk and is deemed unacceptable by the education department.
- The Groves site measures 48,280m<sup>2</sup>, the existing building alone measures 5,075m<sup>2</sup>. This is surplus to the requirements of St Mary's Primary School for only 324 primary school children. The existing Groves site accommodates teaching space for at least 500 young adults easily, according to a Design Access Statement prepared by Ainsley Gommon Architects in 2014 (available to view online). The site is deemed more appropriate for high school or college students, where modern design standards can be more easily achieved.