

WEPCo & Rhondda Cynon Taf  
County Borough Council

**MIMWEP - Penygawsi Primary  
School**

Planning Statement

RH0401-ARP-XX-XX-RP-T-00001

Final Draft for PAC | 21 October 2021

This report takes into account the particular instructions and requirements of our client.

It is not intended for and should not be relied upon by any third party and no responsibility is undertaken to any third party.

Job number 281143-00

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**ARUP**

# Contents

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	Page
<b>1 Introduction</b>	<b>1</b>
1.1 Overview	1
1.2 Summary of Proposed Development	1
1.3 The Applicant	2
1.4 Need for Development	2
<b>2 The Site</b>	<b>4</b>
2.1 Site Location	4
2.2 Site Context	5
2.3 Planning History	9
<b>3 Pre-application Consultation</b>	<b>10</b>
3.1 The Pre-application Process	10
<b>4 Proposed Development</b>	<b>13</b>
4.1 Full Planning Application	13
4.2 Development Proposals	14
4.3 List of Plans and Documents	25
<b>5 Planning Policy</b>	<b>27</b>
5.1 The Development Plan	27
5.2 Material Planning Considerations	32
<b>6 Planning Assessment</b>	<b>39</b>
6.1 Introduction	39
6.2 Principle of Development	39
6.3 Policy Considerations	40
<b>7 Conclusion</b>	<b>49</b>

# 1 Introduction

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## 1.1 Overview

This Planning Statement has been prepared by Ove Arup and Partners Ltd. (Arup) and accompanies a full planning application for the redevelopment of Penygawsi Primary School, Llantrisant, Pontyclun, CF72 8PZ, hereafter referred to as ‘the site’. The application is submitted to Rhondda Cynon Taf County Borough Council (RCT) as Local Planning Authority (LPA) on behalf of WEPCo Ltd. and RCT Education and Inclusion Services Directorate as joint Applicant.

The site comprises the grounds of Penygawsi Primary School, including a main school building, two temporary classrooms, hard standing, road access/egresses, one Multi Use Games Area (MUGA) with two-courts, ancillary grass playing fields and a section of mature woodland in the north west of the site boundary.

This Statement describes the need for development, the site context, details of the proposed development and assesses this against relevant planning policy and material considerations in order to justify the grant of planning permission.

This Statement is structured as follows:

- Chapter 1 provides the introduction and overview of the application;
- Chapter 2 describes the site location, relevant designations and site context;
- Chapter 3 details the pre-application process undertaken for the site;
- Chapter 4 provides a detailed description of the proposed development;
- Chapter 5 outlines the relevant planning policy context;
- Chapter 6 provides the planning assessment within the context of relevant planning policies and material planning considerations; and
- Chapter 7 summarises the Statement and justifies the grant of planning permission.

## 1.2 Summary of Proposed Development

The application seeks full planning permission for the redevelopment of the Penygawsi Primary School site to develop a new primary school (‘the proposed development’).

In summary, the planning application seeks consent for the following proposed works:

- Demolition of the existing school buildings;
- Retention and relocation of existing temporary construction structures;
- Provision of a Net Zero Carbon in operation school including nursery and primary provision;

- 1no. main school building – organised over two storeys, to include classrooms, “heartspaces”, administrative spaces, main hall and kitchen;
- External areas and facilities, to include landscaped areas, hard and soft playgrounds, amphitheatre space; trim trail and orchard;
- 1no. Multi Use Games Area (MUGA), comprising 2no. courts;
- 1no. grass football pitch;
- 1 no. car parking area with capacity for 26no. car parking spaces and 2no. disabled persons spaces and 10% electric vehicle charging provision;
- 22no. covered Sheffield cycle stands; and
- Refuse and waste collection facilities.

A proposed site layout for the development is shown on the Landscape Illustrative Masterplan, enclosed with this planning application.

### 1.3 The Applicant

WEPCo Ltd. and RCT Education and Inclusion Services Directorate are the joint Applicant for the planning application. RCT are the landowner and service provider; and WEPCo is a Joint Venture between Meridiam Investments II SAS and the Development Bank of Wales on behalf of the Welsh Ministers, tasked with delivering new schools and colleges on behalf of local authorities and Further Education institutions across Wales. Arup, together with Lead Designers Sheppard Robson Architects, has been appointed by the joint Applicant to lead a multi-disciplinary team to develop and submit proposals for the proposed redevelopment of Penygawsi Primary School.

### 1.4 Need for Development

Penygawsi Primary School is located on a large, elevated plot of land with extensive grassed areas to the side and rear of the school. The main single storey building was constructed in 1975, is of CLASP design and known to contain asbestos. There are also two demountable classrooms on site. It currently has a large tarmac playground, with car parking facilities close to the reception entrance.

The existing school is within an area of rapid housing development and requires investment in order to become fully accessible and brought up to a 21st Century Schools’ standard. As outlined above, the existing school has CLASP buildings on site, which have issues with access and have come to the end of their useful life.

It is proposed that new school would replace the existing buildings on-site. The new school would consist of one building thereby ensuring that children are provided with brand new 21st Century flexible learning environments under one roof.

The proposed development would deliver space for a total of 355 pupils, to include 310 pupils aged 5-11 and 45 nursery places for children over 3 years; and

would have a capacity of 28 teaching staff plus 20 non-teaching staff. This is an increase on the current number of pupils enrolled at the school (249 pupil places plus nursery).

The proposed development would also support improved opportunities for learning by:

- Improving sports facilities, the quality of external play spaces and providing purpose-built specialist educational areas for ICT;
- Ensuring that relevant education provision is delivered in such a way that it meets the broad well-being needs of young people, parents/carers and communities; and
- Making the learning environment fit for purpose.

It is the Applicant's ambition that the proposed development would be delivered in time for the target opening of September 2023.

## 2 The Site

### 2.1 Site Location

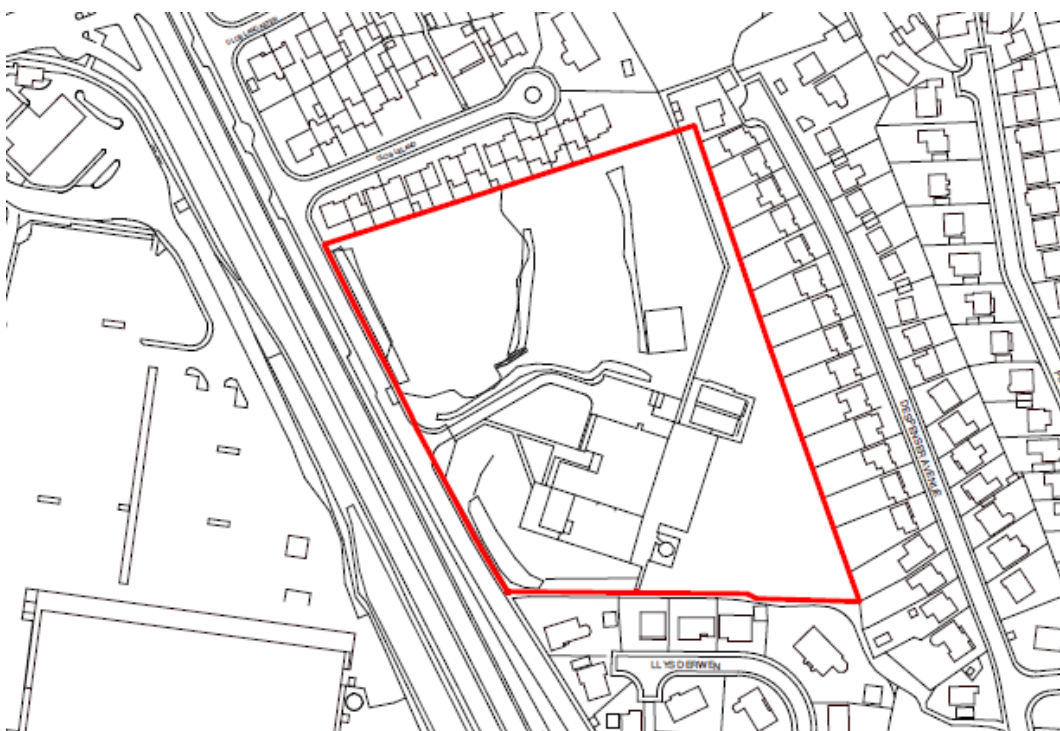
The application site for the proposed development comprises the grounds of Penygawsi Primary School, Llantrisant, Pontyclun, CF72 8PZ. The site is accessed via Chartist Road leading to a private narrow access road to the school. Chartist Road, which runs parallel to the A4119, is a no-through road and provides access to the school and surrounding residential properties.

The site location is shown on the Site Location Plan submitted in support of this planning application and in Figure 1 below. The application site equates to approximately 24,500sqm and is located within the settlement boundary of Llantrisant, a 'Principal Town' within the Southern Strategy Area of the Rhondda Cynon Taf Local Development Plan up to 2021 (LDP).

On its northern and eastern boundary, the site backs on to the rear gardens of Clos Leland and Despenser Avenue. To the south there is a public footpath between the school boundary and the houses on Llys Derwen. The western boundary is formed by Chartist Road. Chartist Road is separated by a line of trees and mature hedgerow from the busy A4119 which runs parallel to it.

The current land use is the Penygawsi Primary School and its grounds, including a main school building, two temporary classrooms, hard standing, road access/egresses, one MUGA with two-courts, ancillary grass playing fields and a section of mature woodland in the north west of the site boundary. The existing school was constructed in 1976.

Figure 1 Site location plan



## 2.2 Site Context

### 2.2.1 Access

Vehicular access to the site is gained via a private narrow access which connects to Chartist Road to the west. The main pedestrian access to the site is currently also provided via Chartist Road where a footway is provided along the eastern side of the highway. The footway is considered to be in good condition and is approximately two metres wide. It connects the residential properties to the north and wraps eastwards to the south of the site, connecting to Cardiff Road and to the wider residential areas.

A gated secondary access is also provided to the northeast corner of the site providing access to the wider residential area, including Clos Leland and Park View. A further gated access for pedestrians is provided towards the south of the site along an existing Public Right of Way (PRoW), connecting between Burgesse Crescent and Chartist Road.

The site is not situated near any National Cycle Network (NCN) routes. Those currently cycling to school (staff and pupils) are assumed to do so along the existing road network leading to the site. There is no cycle parking provision at the existing school, which limits the potential for pupils, parents and staff to travel to school by bike.

The nearest bus stop to the site is located on the B495 (Talbot Road) approximately 600 metres north of the site. Both bus stops comprise a flag and pole with timetable information. While the northern (eastbound) stop is situated off the carriageway, the southern (westbound) bus stop comprises road markings on the carriageway indicating a bus stop.

The stops are served by services 100 (Royal Glamorgan Hospital and Pontypridd), 124 (Maerdy and Cardiff) and 404 (Royal Glamorgan Hospital and Bridgend). The 100 service operates every 20 minutes Monday – Saturday and every two hours on a Sunday. The 124 service operates on an hourly basis Monday – Saturday with no services running on a Sunday. The 404 service operates every 30 minutes Monday – Saturday with no services running on a Sunday.

### 2.2.2 Designations

The site is not located within any statutory environmental or historic landscape designations. There are also no designated heritage assets within the site boundary.

Within the wider surroundings, the following features are considered of relevance:

- A Special Area of Conservation (SAC) is identified within 10km of the study area: Cardiff Beech Woods (circa 6.2km north-east of the site).
- Four national statutory designations are identified within 3km of the site: Llantrisant Common and Pastures Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) (c. 0.8km north of the site), Ely Valley SSSI (c. 2.1km south of the site), Brofiscin

Quarry Groes Faen SSSI (c. 2.5km southeast of the site) and Rhos Tonyrefail SSSI (c. 2.5km north-west of the site).

- The site is also located within approximately 500m north of a Regionally Important Geological Site (RIGS), Cefn Park Mine.

### 2.2.3 Surrounding Land Uses

As outlined in the Site Location Plan above, the site is surrounded by several land uses including residential development, the A4119 and retail development (A1 Use Class).

The site is located within the Llantrisant settlement boundary, a town located within the south of the borough of RCT. Llantrisant is predominantly residential however, the settlement also contains a large retail centre to the west of the A4119, and a leisure centre to the south of the B4595.

To the south of the site, beyond residential development off Burgesse Crescent, exists open agricultural land and woodland.

### 2.2.4 Ecology and Landscape

There are no statutory local, national or international landscape or ecology designations on or immediately adjacent to the site.

One international statutory designation was identified within 10km of the site Cardiff Beech Woods SAC and national statutory designations were identified within 3km of the site.

Four national statutory designations were identified within 3km of the Site; Llantrisant Common and Pastures SSSI (c. 0.8km north), Ely Valley SSSI (c. 2.1km south), Brofiscin Quarry Groes Faen SSSI (c. 2.5km southeast of the site), and Rhos Tonyrefail SSSI (c. 2.5km north-west).

The application site is characterised by existing school buildings, hardstanding (parking and playgrounds), mown amenity grassland used for sports and play, a block of mature woodland, other mature trees and lines of shrubs around the perimeter, new tree planting within a 'landscape bank' and boundary scrub and tall ruderal. A dominant landscape feature within the site is a pocket of mature broadleaved woodland located in the western corner.

### 2.2.5 Ground Conditions

The application site is located within a Coal Authority high-risk development area therefore a Coal Mining Risk Assessment (CMRA) has been conducted for the application site. The CMRA concludes that there is a risk posed by coal mining at the site, related to the potential risks posed by subsidence from recorded and unrecorded shallow mine workings and one mine entry (shaft) located in the north western part of the site.

The proposed mitigation strategy as part of the CMRA recommended ground investigation to determine the presence of voids/worked ground beneath the site.



A Phase I Geo-Environmental Desk Study was undertaken for the site in 2019, and Phase II Geo-Environmental Ground Investigations (GI) were completed for the site in September 2021. Key findings from the GI undertaken at the site are as follows:

- Made Ground is not indicated within the site boundary on the published geological mapping.
- Superficial deposits underlying the majority of the site are expected to comprise Diamicton Till. The north western corner of the site is expected to be underlain by Devensian Glaciofluvial Deposits.
- The site is underlain by bedrock geology of the South Wales Upper Coal Measures Formation comprising Mudstone, Siltstone and Sandstone.
- The superficial geology is designated as Secondary Undifferentiated (Diamicton Till) and Secondary A (Glaciofluvial Deposits). The South Wales Upper Coal Measures bedrock geology is designated as a Secondary A Aquifer.
- A mine entry is recorded to the north-western section of the site. According to records held by the Coal Authority the shaft was filled with colliery refuse and capped with a 4m square concrete cap at some time in the past.
- Three outcrops of coal have been recorded on site.

The Phase II Geo-Environmental Ground Investigations concluded that it is anticipated, following completion of treatment works, the development can proceed without undue ground risks.

### 2.2.6 Hydrology

The new Flood Maps for Planning shows that the majority of the application site is located within Flood Zone 1. However, the north west corner is located within both Surface Water and Small Watercourses Flood Zone 2 and Flood Zone 3.

Existing drainage features for the site are detailed in Appendix B of the Drainage Strategy, which is enclosed with the planning application.

A meeting with the RCT SAB Officer was held on 30 March 2021 where the existing drainage strategy was presented and discussed along with preliminary proposals for SUDs.

### 2.2.7 Foul Drainage

The existing school buildings are served by a private foul drainage network. The foul drainage outlets from the main building are collected in a foul pipe network that runs around the perimeter of the building and outfalls to the public Welsh Water 150mm diameter foul network in Chartis Drive.

As shown on Welsh Water's plans, a 525mm combined network (pipes and chambers) enter the site at the northern corner and then continues in a south easterly direction parallel to the site boundary. This then continues beyond the site and meets the foul sewer that runs along Chartist Road before continuing east.

## 2.2.8 Storm Water Drainage

A large proportion of the site is grassed playing fields, landscaping and woodland. There are impermeable surfaces including the school buildings and the associated asphalt areas and car parking. Rainwater falling on these impermeable surfaces is collected through roof gutter/downpipe or gullies and then conveyed to the site entrance through a piped network. The natural contours and the piped networks imply the site is split in to two catchments.

## 2.2.9 Utilities

Utility surveys have been conducted at the site and these indicate that it is served along the existing school access road from Chartist Drive, with the majority of the utilities contained in the south of the site around the existing school building. There is an existing low voltage electricity cable that runs from the school building to the southern eastern boundary of the site which then runs east outside of the boundary to the Penygawsi substation.

A 300mm surface water sewer enters the site in the northern corner, travels along the northern western boundary before running south through the woodland. The exact route through the woodland area is unknown. This is assumed to be a surface water pipe although is not identified on the Welsh Water paper records. It is proposed to retain this existing connection point.

In the existing grassed playing field, there are a number of shallow (less than typically 500mm-600mm depth) 100-150mm diameter storm drainage pipes as well as a 1-2m deep, 300mm diameter pipe that enters the site from the northern site boundary.

The Existing Utilities Plan submitted with the planning application, shows the existing utilities located within the site.

## 2.3 Planning History

The planning history for the site is set out in Table 1 below.

Table 1 Planning history for the application site

Ref. No	Status	Description of proposal	Application type	Decision issued date	Decision
03/0992/08	Decision Issued	Proposed modular volumetric double classroom accommodation.	Planning Application	28/07/2003	Approved
08/0885/08	Decision Issued	Siting of portable classroom.	Planning Application	28/07/2008	Approved
11/0495/10	Decision Issued	To erect an octagonal shelter.	Planning Application	17/06/2011	Approved
12/0710/10	Decision Issued	Replace existing 1m high front boundary fence with a 1.8m high 'Paladin' style fence.	Planning Application	03/09/2012	Approved
FP/08/1035	Decision Issued	Erection and siting of demountable classroom and relevant ramps, steps and groundworks.	Building Control Application	18/11/2008	Approved
CP/10/1210	Building works completed	NICEIC record for Kitchen, One or more new circuits, Replacement consumer unit	Building Control Application	28/07/2010	N/A

## 3 Pre-application Consultation

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### 3.1 The Pre-application Process

From the outset, a collaborative approach has been adopted for the pre-application process, engaging with both key stakeholders and the local community, as set out below.

#### 3.1.1 RCT and Technical Consultees

##### Planning

Early pre-application discussions with the RCT Planning Department were held to introduce the proposed developments, discuss the consenting strategy and agree the planning application validation lists for the planning application.

The Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) status of the proposed development has also been considered. In accordance with the Town and Country Planning (Environmental Impact Assessment) (Wales) Regulations 2017 (EIA Regulations), the development has been assessed against the Schedule 2 thresholds for Urban Development Projects (Category 10(b)). Due to the scale of the proposed development and its locations outside a sensitive area, it has been concluded that the proposals do not need to be formally screened by the LPA and would not constitute EIA development. Our assessment of the proposal against the EIA Regulations has also been presented and discussed with the Planning Department who has agreed that an EIA Screening Request is not required.

##### Highways

RCT provided email correspondence in relation to initial proposals on the 19 May 2021. This is provided in full detail within the Appendix A of the Transport Statement, and is summarised as follows:

- Submission of a Transport Statement is acceptable for proposals subject to consideration/inclusion of information quoted (user hierarchy audit; accident analysis; policy review; traffic assessment; guidance on parking provision requirements; safer routes to school audit).
- Confirmation of the requirement for a Framework Travel Plan and Parking Study.
- Support for development of a Framework Construction Traffic Management Plan.
- Comments that any transport statement / planning application should include consideration of the following:
  - Number of staff, pupils and ancillary staff for existing and proposed, times of operation, provision of pre-school/or afterschool activities e.g. breakfast club, afterschool club, afterschool activities etc., details of any community use.

- Assessment of routes to and from school in accordance with Safer Routes in Communities / Learner Travel Active Travel etc.
- Where issues are identified details of mitigation measures should be included within the report.
- Council Policy is not to provide home to school transport for primary school children, however, proposals should anticipate and include means of accommodating buses/ coaches to cater for school trips, swimming lessons, sports etc.
- Consideration must be given to school drop-off / pick-up by parents etc, in terms of parking demand surveys and consideration of any improvements/facilities that can be provided to accommodate and reduce the impact on the adjacent network.
- A significant amount of data can be gathered at little or no cost by means of class projects integrated within the curriculum e.g. surveys and graphs of how pupils travel to school.
- Parking within the school site to be in accordance with SPG Access Circulation and Parking (March 2011). As RCT Schemes the proposals should provide robust parking and cycle parking provision.
- Any secondary accesses for maintenance.
- Swept paths must be provided for catering and waste vehicles.

## SUDS Approving Body

A meeting with the RCT SUDS Approval Body (SAB) Officer was held on the 30 March 2021. The following matters were discussed/confirmed:

- Existing school buildings and hard paving drain into a sewer network located in Chartist Road. Existing playing fields west for the school access road are assumed to drain into the vegetated area on the south western corner of the site.
- Strategy of proposed drainage is to either A) Outfall to existing piped drainage network, B) Outfall to western area of dense vegetation or C) Outfall to soakaway system. A combination of A, B and C may be required.
- Drainage present in western playing fields and the steep bank towards to north of the site. Purpose is unknown and utility survey has shown some of these pipes to be blocked
- Any outfall into existing highways drain to be coordinated and confirmed with RCT transport department. A reduction in flow and 'betterment' would need to be demonstrated.
- The SAB officer implied that a soakaway solution may be possible. Soakaway tests will likely be required by the SAB to confirm or discount this.

The Drainage Strategy submitted with the planning application details in full the initial SAB Consultation and correspondence with Welsh Water at pre-application stage.

### 3.1.2 Pre-Application Consultation (PAC)

The scale of the proposed development also means that it must comply with the Pre-Application Consultation requirements of the Town and Country Planning (Development Management Procedure) (Wales) Order 2012. Consequently, and in accordance with the regulations, stakeholders and the public will be able to view and comment on the draft planning application documentation and plans in advance of formal submission.

The PAC period will run between 25 October and 24 November 2021 and the full planning application, including drawings and plans will be available for viewing online on the WEPCo Ltd website (<https://wepco.cymru/projects/penygawsi/>).

Full details of the pre-application consultation activities undertaken will be presented in the Pre-application Consultation Report which will be submitted in support of the planning application.

## 4 Proposed Development

### 4.1 Full Planning Application

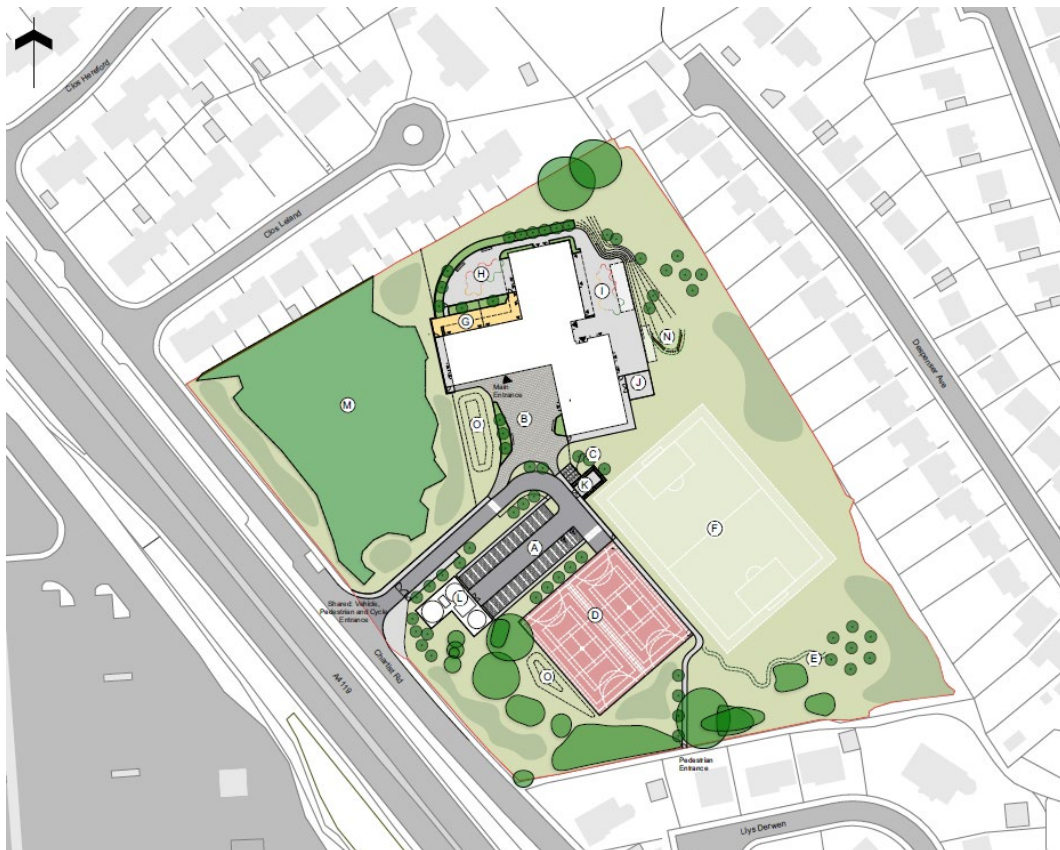
The planning application seeks full planning permission for the proposed redevelopment of the Penygawsi Primary School site to create a new Net Zero Carbon in operation educational facility.

The proposed development would accommodate a total of 355 pupils, to include 310 pupils aged 5-11 and 45 nursery places for children over 3 years; and would have a capacity of 36 teaching staff plus 10 non-teaching staff.

Development proposals are outlined below, further design details are also found within the Design and Access Statement submitted in support of the planning application.

The proposed layout for the development is shown on the landscape masterplan, enclosed with the planning application and in Figure 2 below.

Figure 2 Landscape Masterplan





## 4.2 Development Proposals

### 4.2.1 School Buildings

The school building would be two storeys in height and comprise a gross internal floor area of approximately 2139sqm. The new school building is proposed to be located to the north of the existing school building and east of the existing woodland on site which is considered the most appropriate location from the conclusions of the site analysis.

The school would be over two storeys organised with two nursery rooms, one reception classroom, three infant classrooms on the ground floor and six junior classrooms on the first floor. The building would also include a large main hall, kitchen servery, heart space and other supporting facilities and rooms across the two floors.

There would be a secure entrance zone, with admin and community spaces on the ‘public-facing’ side of the secure line. Direct, controlled parental access to nursery and reception classrooms close to the main entrance would be maintained.

The layout of the proposed development is as shown on the indicative general arrangement plans in Figure 3 and Figure 4. The scale and massing of the proposed development are illustrated within landscape visuals in Figure 5, Figure 6 and Figure 7.

A section of the proposed development “heartspace” is in Figure 7.

Further design detail for each element of the proposed building is articulated under the subsequent sub-headings and within the Design and Access Statement submitted with the planning application.



Figure 3 General Arrangement Ground Floor Plan

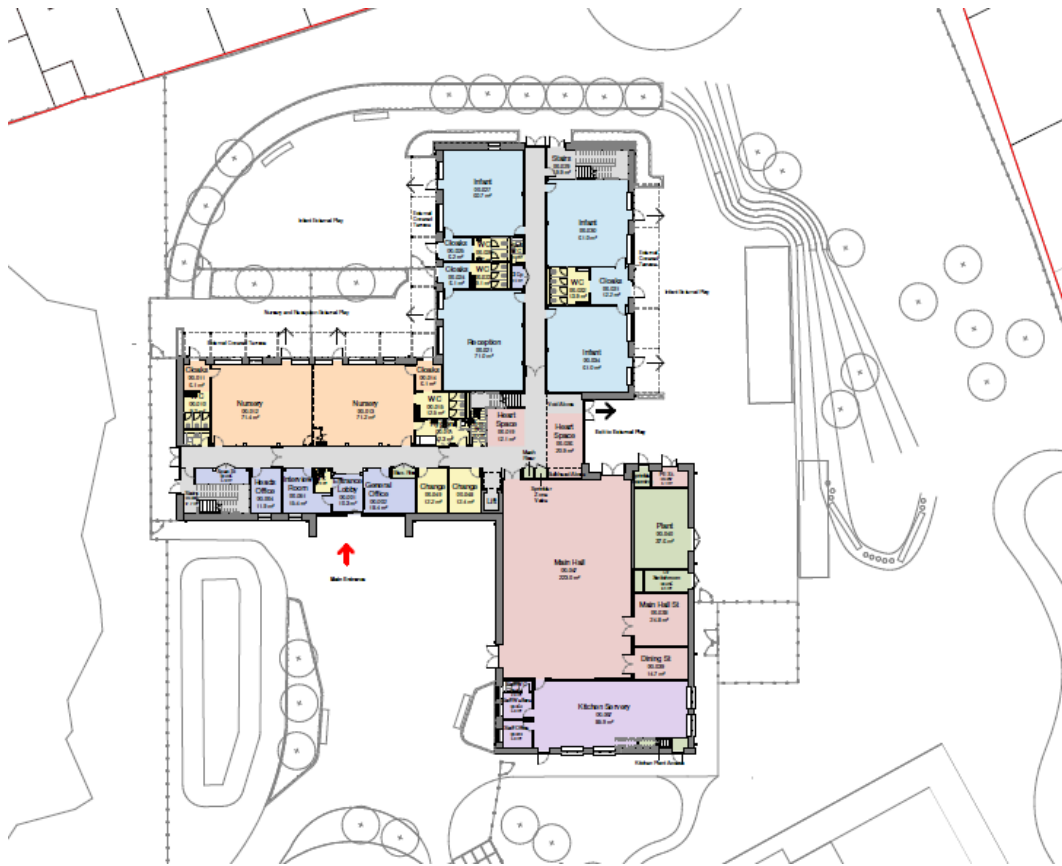


Figure 4 General Arrangement First Floor Plan



Figure 5 Proposed view of main school building from south east elevation



Figure 6 Proposed view of main school building entrance from south west elevation



Figure 7 Proposed view looking north east





Figure 8 Proposed “Heart Space” Section



## 4.2.2 Community Use

WEPCo recognises the importance of placemaking and is committed to strengthening the connection between people and the places they share. At the heart of the WEPCo investment programme, through which the proposed development would be delivered, is a commitment to responsible investment that delivers impact for now and for future generations.

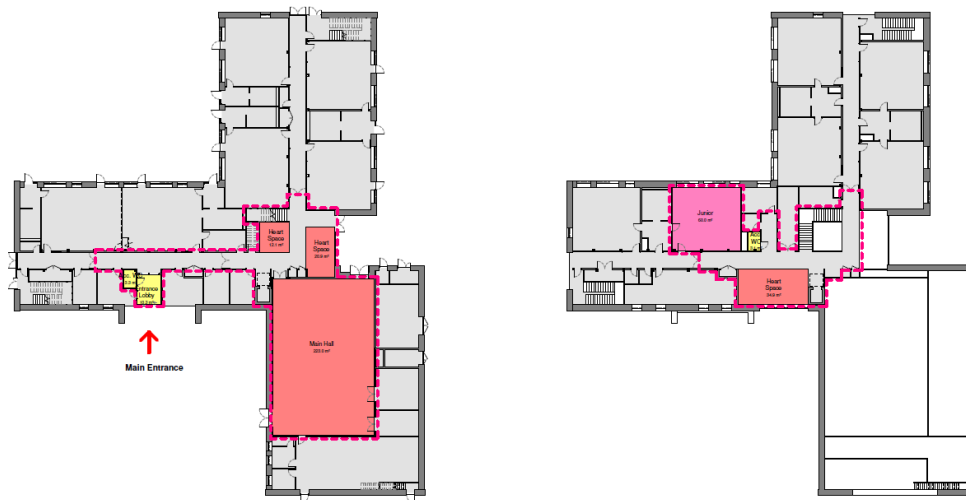
The Wellbeing for Future Generations Act and the UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) are central to the Applicant’s strategy and projects. WEPCo have ambitious plans for a Social Value programme that supports Wales and Rhondda Cynon Taf’s Social, Economic, Environmental & Cultural priorities.

Several areas would be zoned in terms of layout, security, services and access, such that they can be accessed externally and used by the community without compromising the security and operation of the rest of the building. Proposed hours of use for the development include: 08:00-20:00 Monday to Fridays; and 08:00-13:00 on Saturdays.

Areas that would be accessible are depicted on the Out of House Use Ground and First Floor Plan in Figure 10 below and submitted with the planning application.

On the ground floor, these areas would comprise the main hall, entrance lobby adjacent to the main entrance, an accessible toilet, and the two “heart space” areas. Within the first floor, these areas would comprise the “heart space”, an accessible toilet and one junior classroom.

Figure 9 Out of Hours Ground and First Floor Plans



### 4.2.3 Sports and Recreational Facilities

The sports and recreational facilities for the school are shown on the Landscape Illustrative Masterplan on Figure 2, which is also submitted in support of the planning application.

The proposed footprint and layout of the school building provides opportunity to create external spaces for each of the schools and key stages; and the building facade itself would form part of a natural secure line within the site to separate publicly accessible areas of the site, such as the car park from the external pupil sport and social spaces.

The school sports and recreational facility provision would be located to the west, and south the main school building and would comprise a two-court MUGA, grass football pitch, other informal hard play spaces and landscaped soft play spaces.

The provision has been designed in accordance with the relevant national Building Bulletin frameworks developed by Central Government<sup>1</sup>. BB103 (Area guidelines for mainstream schools) sets out that for primary schools, the minimum area of hard outdoor PE space is 400sqm, for soft informal and social areas 600sqm, and hard informal and social area 200sqm.

A net loss of approximately 31.73sqm of playing field area is proposed due to the siting of the new school building on existing playing fields within the north of the site. This is depicted in Figure 11 below. However, the proposals would compensate this loss through the provision of new and enhanced sports facilities.

<sup>1</sup> Area Guidelines for Mainstream Schools BB103

[https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/905692/BB103\\_Area\\_Guidelines\\_for\\_Mainstream\\_Schools.pdf](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/905692/BB103_Area_Guidelines_for_Mainstream_Schools.pdf)

In addition to the 2619.5sqm of playing field area proposed, the two court MUGA (18.5 x 37m each) would provide additional formal sports pitch area.

Figure 10 Playing field comparisons between existing site and the proposed development



## MUGA

The new MUGA would be a fenced two court macadam surface area (18.5 x 37m in dimension) located centrally on the footprint of the old school building. These have been designed to accommodate a variety of sports including football, basketball and tennis.

No external lighting for the MUGAs is proposed and as such, no Floodlight Assessment is provided with the planning application.

## Grass Football Pitch

The grass football pitch would be 2619.5sqm in area, located to the south of the main school building and adjacent to the MUGA. This would accommodate 7-a-side football.

## Other External Spaces

The external play areas would consist of a mixture of hard and soft areas located in the surrounds of the main school building.

The nursery and reception play area would be located in the external space adjacent to the nursery and reception classrooms. These play areas would be segregated with low fencing and screened with hedgerows and tree planting and would only be accessible from the nursery and reception classrooms.

For the infant pupils a Key Stage 1 play area would be located in the northwest of the site and with direct access from infant classrooms.

A large area of hard and soft play areas for Key Stage 2 pupils would be located to the east of the main building and comprise an outdoor canopy area alongside landscaped areas for informal recreation.

A potential trim trail is being considered for inclusion on the landscaped area comprising part of the junior outdoor play area, to the east of the main school building.

#### **4.2.4 Access and Movement**

The proposed access and circulation strategy for the development is as set out in the Access and Circulation Plan, submitted with the planning application. This plan details the proposed arrival and departure circulation, proposed access during the day and out of hours use by the community and visitors, alongside emergency access.

#### **Pedestrian and Cycle Access**

Primary pedestrian access would be provided via Chartist Road which runs along the western boundary of the site. Secondary pedestrian access to the school would be provided from the south via an existing pedestrian entrance, accessed via a Public Right of Way (PRoW) ANT/275/6 which runs along the southern boundary of the existing school.

#### **Vehicular Access**

Vehicles (including those for servicing) would continue to access the school off Chartist Road via a new school entrance. The internal carriageway runs west-east into the proposed site and would serve the proposed car park.

#### **Vehicular Parking**

A total of 28no. car parking spaces are proposed including 26no. standard spaces and two spaces reserved for Blue Badge holders, which aligns with the 2% requirement prescribed by RCT. Marked visitor bays would be provided within the quantum of the proposed parking provision. Electric vehicle charging would be provided at a rate of 10% active charging which accords with PPW11.

## Cycle Parking

In line with the access strategy and hierarchy of users and the RCT Cycle Parking Standards (SPG8), adequate parking provision for cyclists would be provided within the development.

According to RCT's Cycle Parking Standards, 31 no. cycle parking spaces would be required. To promote cycling as a transport mode for staff and pupils and cater for future demand, it is proposed to provide 22 no. covered Sheffield style stands as part of the development, providing storage for up to 44 no. cycles.

Cycle parking for the new development would be conveniently located directly south of the proposed school entrance, directly adjacent to the pedestrian footpath from the main pedestrian entrance. As mentioned above, this is segregated from vehicular traffic and therefore conflict between cyclists and motorised vehicles would be minimised to ensure safe access for pupils and staff.

Associated facilities would also be located within the school itself including changing rooms, whilst a shower would be provided within a hygiene room for use by staff if required.

## Servicing and Delivery

A bin store is proposed to be located to the north of the car park entrance and servicing of the site is proposed from this location.

### 4.2.5 Sustainability

A key design principle driving the proposed development includes efficiency and net zero carbon measures. The proposed development is anticipated to achieve, at a minimum, an 'Excellent' BREEAM rating. In addition, the proposed development has been designed to meet a strict operational net zero carbon target, whereby all operational energy consumed on site (both regulated and unregulated) shall be generated by an extensive roof mounted solar photovoltaic (PV) array.

Together, proposals would make a strong contribution towards Welsh Government commitments to achieving net zero by 2050. Further details of how the proposed development would exceed policy requirements and Welsh Government sustainability targets is set out in Section 6.3.2.

### 4.2.6 Security

The proposed development would maintain a secure building line and include strictly zoned areas to ensure controlled access for parents and appropriate levels of public access for the proposed development's community use outside of school operating hours.

In order to maintain appropriate levels of security at the site, perimeter security fencing (2.4m in height) would be erected along the site boundaries to meet Secured by Design (SBD) standards and specifications. Internal security fencing



(1.8m in height) would be erected around the site's external play spaces to separate the secure and non-secure area (main entrance and car parking).

External elevations of the school buildings, main entrances, public circulation areas, vehicle parking areas, bike and bin stores, and the pupil play areas would be protected by CCTV.

Further detail in relation to security matters is contained within the Fencing and Security Strategy and the Out of Hours Use Ground Floor and First Floor Plan, enclosed with the planning application.

#### **4.2.7 Landscape and Biodiversity**

The proposed design of the external spaces is indicated on the Landscape Illustrative Masterplan, submitted with the planning application (also included at Figure 2).

Circa 8no. trees and the area of mature woodland located within the northwest of the site would be retained. 7no. individual trees, and a small area (437.86 sqm) of the woodland feature are proposed to be removed. New tree planting is proposed, to the sum of 58no. trees.

Additional tree, hedge and shrub planting proposed around the main school building and other areas of the site would be in accordance with the Planting Strategy, and as appraised within the Arboricultural Impact Assessment, both of which are submitted with the planning application.

Bat roosting potential was noted within mature oak trees in the woodland area and a mature oak and ash tree on the southern boundary of the site, which are being retained within the scheme.

#### **4.2.8 Drainage**

The approach to underground drainage is addressed in conjunction with the approach to site-wide utilities, SUDs and earthworks as part of a coordinated civil engineering strategy.

The surface water drainage strategy has also been considered in accordance with the Welsh Government's Statutory Standards for Sustainable Drainage Systems and is set out in detail within the Drainage Strategy and the Proposed Drainage Layout, both of which are submitted in support of the planning application.

The Proposed Drainage Layout details the following proposals across the site:

- Approximately 60sqm of bioretention features around the proposed school building perimeter.
- Rain garden or appropriate system located to the east and south of the building perimeter to intercept flows.
- Existing surface water pipe diverted with route to be confirmed.

- Storm drainage network to connect to existing system and make use of existing pipework, where possible.
- Attenuation earthworks across the site.
- Existing connection to foul sewer to be reused for discharge of proposed foul flows where possible, to be confirmed by Welsh Water.

The proposed drainage strategy for foul drainage, stormwater drainage and water quality measures are provided in the Drainage Strategy submitted in support of the planning application.

#### **4.2.9 Construction**

It is intended that the delivery of the campus would be phased, with Penygawsi Primary School continuing to operate with minimal disruption during the construction of the new building. A demolition strategy would be developed by the Main Contractor, once appointed.

Full construction information would be provided once a contractor has been appointed.

### 4.3 List of Plans and Documents

The following plans and documents are submitted in support of the planning application and provide full details of the proposed development.

#### Plans

Table 2 Submission drawings

Drawing Number	Drawing Title
RH0401-SRA-00-00-DR-A-02000	Site Location Plan
RH0401-SRA-00-00-DR-A-02001	Existing Site Plan
RH0401-SRA-00-00-DR-A-02002	Proposed Site Plan
RH0401-ALA-00-XX-DR-L-00018	General Arrangement Plan 1 of 2
RH0401-ALA-00-XX-DR-L-00019	General Arrangement Plan 2 of 2
RH0401-SRA-01-00-DR-A-02100	Ground Floor Plan
RH0401-SRA-01-00-DR-A-02101	First Floor Plan
RH0401-SRA-01-RF-DR-A-02102	Roof Plan
RH0401-SRA-01-XX-DR-A-02200	Elevations
RH0401-ALA-00-XX-DR-L-00014	Outline Levels
RH0401-SRA-01-ZZ-DR-A-02400	Out of Hours Use Ground Floor and First Floor Plan
RH0401-ALA-00-XX-DR-L-00005	Landscape Illustrative Masterplan
RH0401-ALA-00-XX-DR-L-00020	Landscape Visualisations
RH0401-SRA-01-ZZ-IM-A-02800	Aerial View Looking North
RH0401-SRA-01-ZZ-IM-A-02851	Heartspace Section
RH0401-SRA-01-ZZ-IM-A-02850	Heartspace View
RH0401-SRA-01-ZZ-IM-A-02801	Ground Level View Entrance

RH0401-SRA-01-XX-DR-A-02300	Sections AA, BB, CC, DD
RH0401-SRA-01-ZZ-IM-A-02803	Typical Bay Studies
RH0401-ALA-00-XX-DR-L-00013	Planting Strategy
RH0401-ALA-00-XX-DR-L-00007	Fencing and Security Strategy
RH0401-ALA-00-XX-DR-L-00008	Access and Circulation
RH0401-ARP-ZZ-00-DR-C-00021	Existing Utilities Plan
RH0401-ARP-ZZ-00-DR-C-00041	Proposed Drainage
RH0401-ARP-ZZ-00-DR-C-00081	Proposed Utilities
RH0401-ARP-ZZ-00-DR-C-00031	External Finished Levels

## Documents

- Application Forms and Certificates
- Arboricultural Impact Assessment
- CIL Form
- Coal Mining Risk Assessment
- Design and Access Statement
- Drainage Strategy
- Ecological Impact Assessment
- Flood Consequences Assessment
- Noise Impact Assessment
- Ground Investigation Reports
- PAC Report
- Planning Statement (this document)
- Transport Statement including Travel Plan

## 5 Planning Policy

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### 5.1 The Development Plan

This Chapter sets out the national and local planning policy to be considered in the determination of the planning application.

Section 70(2) of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 requires that in dealing with an application for planning permission a local planning authority “*shall have regard to the provisions of the development plan, so far as material to the application*”.

Section 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 adds “*if regard is to be had to the development plan for the purpose of any determination to be made under the planning Acts the determination must be made in accordance with the plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise.*”

The Development Plan is defined by Section 38(3) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 (in Wales) as:

“(a) the National Development Framework for Wales,  
(b) the strategic development plan for any strategic planning area that includes all or part of that area, and  
(c) the local development plan for that area.”

The Development Plan for the application comprises the following:

- Future Wales – The National Plan 2040 – National Development Framework (2021).
- Rhondda Cynon Taf Local Development Plan up to 2021 – Written Statement (2011).
- Rhondda Cynon Taf Local Development Plan up to 2021 – Proposals Map (2011).
- Rhondda Cynon Taf Local Development Plan up to 2021 – Constraints Map (2011).

#### 5.1.1 Future Wales – The National Plan 2040 – National Development Framework (2021)

Future Wales – The National Plan 2040 (Future Wales) was published in February 2021 is the new National Development Framework for Wales, replacing the Wales Spatial Plan, setting the direction for development in Wales to 2040. It is a development plan document with a strategy for addressing key national priorities through the planning system, including sustaining and developing a vibrant economy, achieving decarbonisation and climate-resilience, developing strong ecosystems and improving the health and well-being of our communities.

It is a spatial plan, meaning it sets the direction for where Wales should be investing in infrastructure and development for the greater good of Wales and its people. It is the highest tier of the development plan and is focused on solutions to issues and challenges at a national scale. Strategic and Local Development Plans are required to be in conformity with Future Wales and must be kept up to date to ensure they and Future Wales work together effectively. Planning decisions at every level of the planning system in Wales must be taken in accordance with the development plan as a whole.

The following Strategic and Spatial Choices policies are considered to be of relevance to the proposed development:

**Policy 2 – Shaping Urban Growth and Regeneration – Strategic**

**Placemaking:** *“The growth and regeneration of towns and cities should positively contribute towards building sustainable places that support active and healthy lives, with urban neighbourhoods that are compact and walkable, organised around mixed use centres and public transport, and integrated with green infrastructure.”*

**Policy 6 – Town Centre First:** *“Significant new commercial, retail, education, health, leisure and public service facilities must be located within town and city centres. They should have good access by public transport to and from the whole town or city and, where appropriate, the wider region.”*

**Policy 9 – Resilient Ecological Networks and Green Infrastructure:** *“To ensure the enhancement of biodiversity, the resilience of ecosystems and the provision of green infrastructure, the Welsh Government will work with key partners to:*

- *identify areas which should be safeguarded and created as ecological networks for their importance for adaptation to climate change, for habitat protection, restoration or creation, to protect species, or which provide key ecosystems services, to ensure they are not unduly compromised by future development; and*
- *identify opportunities where existing and potential green infrastructure could be maximised as part of placemaking, requiring the use of nature based solutions as a key mechanism for securing sustainable growth, ecological connectivity, social equality and well being.*

*In all cases, action towards securing the maintenance and enhancement of biodiversity (to provide a net benefit) the resilience of ecosystems and green infrastructure assets must be demonstrated as part of development proposals through innovative, nature based approaches to site planning and the design of the built environment.”*

**Policy 12 – Regional Connectivity** – *“Active travel must be an essential and integral component of all new developments, large and small. Planning authorities must integrate site allocations, new development and infrastructure with active travel networks and, where appropriate, ensure new development contributes towards their expansion and improvement. Planning authorities must act to reduce levels of car parking in urban areas, including supporting car free*

*developments in accessible locations and developments with car parking spaces that allow them to be converted to other uses over time. Where car parking is provided for new non-residential development, planning authorities should seek a minimum of 10% of car parking spaces to have electric vehicle charging points.”*

The application site is located within the Cardiff, Newport and the Valleys National Growth Area. **Policy 33 – National Growth Area – Cardiff, Newport and the Valleys** outlines that *“Cardiff, Newport and the Valleys will be the main focus for growth and investment in the South East region. Strategic and Local Development Plans should recognise the National Growth Area as the focus for strategic economic and housing growth; essential services and facilities; advanced manufacturing; transport and digital infrastructure...The Welsh Government supports co-ordinated regeneration and investment in the Valleys area to improve well-being, increase prosperity and address social inequalities.”*

### 5.1.2 RCT Development Plan

The RCT LDP was adopted in 2011 and has a plan period of 2006-2021. It comprises a Written Statement, Proposals Map and Constraints Map.

The aim of the LDP is to provide a framework for making rational and consistent decisions on planning applications and to guide development to appropriate locations. It contains a number of strategic, general and topic specific policies which will be taken into consideration in the formation of the proposed development and planning application. The policies of most relevance to the proposed development are set out below.

### The Proposals Map

The Proposals Map from the adopted LDP indicates the following for the site:

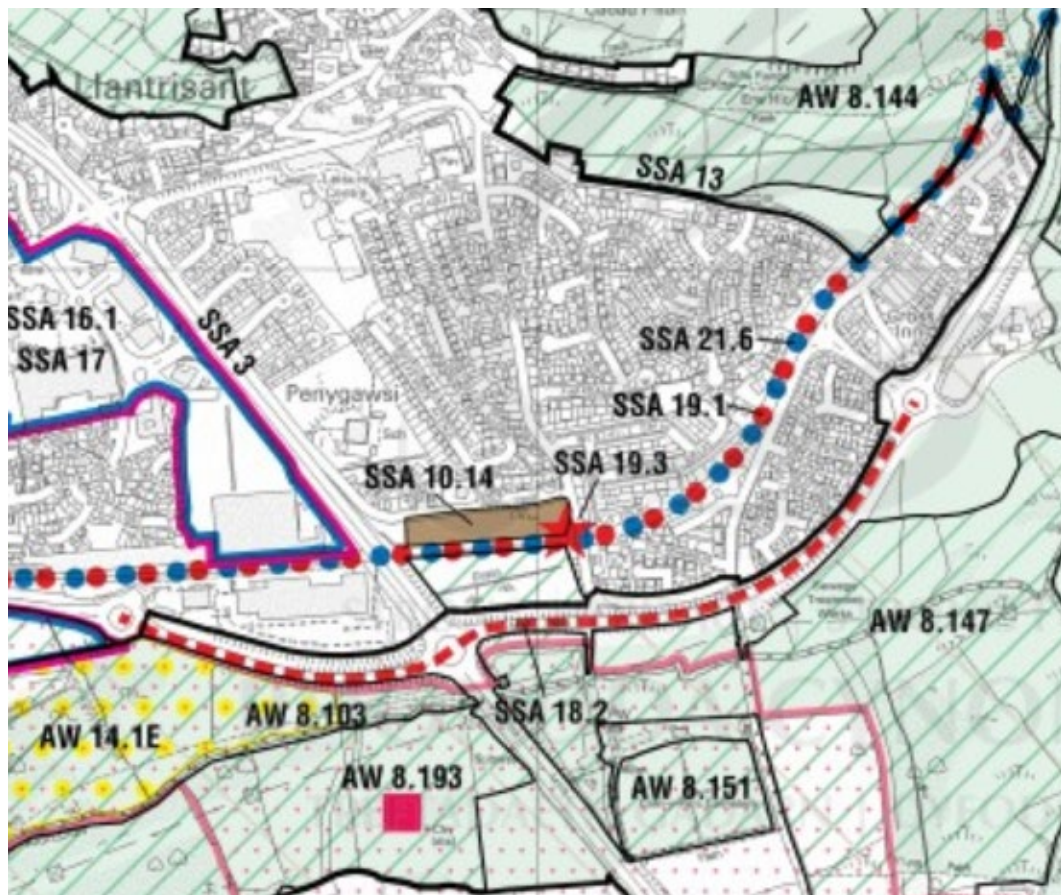
- The application site is located within the Llantrisant settlement boundary within Southern Strategy Area (**Policy CS 2**), and is surrounded by residential development to the north, east and south and road infrastructure and commercial development to the west.
- Llantrisant is identified as a Principal Town under **Policy SSA 3**.
- A housing allocation for 40 dwellings is located to the south of the site (**Policy SSA 10.14** – Penygawsi, Llantrisant).
- Llantrisant Retail Centre is identified as a Principal Town Centre within **Policy SSA 16.1** – The Retail Hierarchy.
- **Policy SSA 19.3** safeguards land to the south of the site for rail network improvements and a station along Cardiff Road, Llantrisant. **Policy SSA 19.1** also safeguards the former rail freight line between Pontyclun and Beddau along the same route.
- The A473 has also been safeguarded to the south of the site under **Policy SSA 18.2** – Major Roads for the A473 Talbot Green Bypass Dualling.



- **Policy SSA 21.6** identifies cycleway improvements between Pontypridd and Tonyrefail through Llantrisant to the south of the site.
- The site is also situated within proximity to various Sites of Important Nature Conservation (SINCs) including Y Graig (**Policy AW 8.104**), Caeau'r-llan Slopes (**Policy AW 8.144**), Afon Clun Valley and Rhiwsaeson Hill (**Policy AW 8.147**), Cefn Parc Cemetery (**Policy AW 8.151**), Pant Marsh (**Policy AW 8.103**).
- It is also located within proximity of a Regionally Important Geological Site, Cefn Park Mine (**Policy AW 8.193**).

The site has no other land use or planning designations but is surrounded by residential development to the north, east and south and transport infrastructure and retail development to the west. The relevant extract from the Proposals Map is in Figure 11.

Figure 11 Proposals Map extract

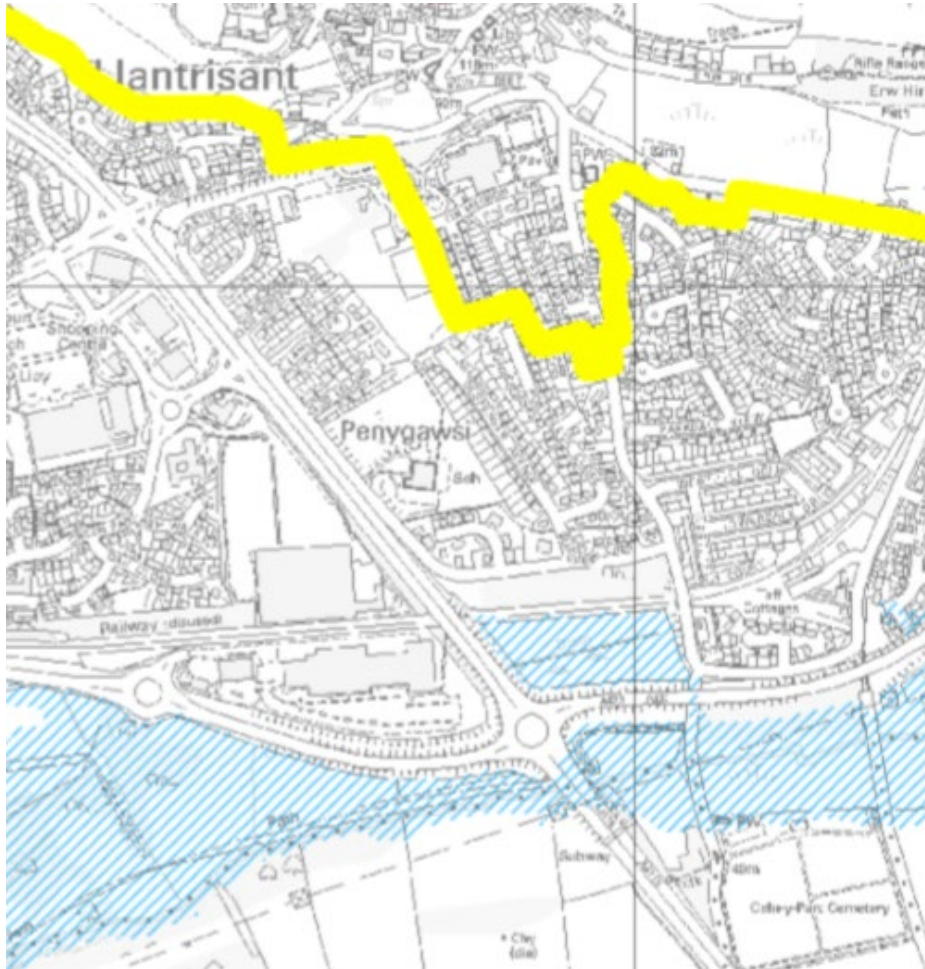


## Constraints Map

The Constraints Map identifies the Llantrisant Conservation Area to the north and a flood zone to the south although the areas within the Flood Zone have recently been updated in line with the updated TAN 15. No constraints are identified at the site. The relevant extract from the Proposals Map is in Figure 12.



Figure 12 Constraints Map extract



## Written Statement

The Written Statement of the LDP contains a number of strategic, general and topic specific policies of relevance to the proposed development as outlined below.

## Core Policies

The Core Policies within the plan are the key guiding policies deemed essential for delivery of the strategy. The policies provide a framework for determining where existing and future residents of RCT live, work, shop, recreate and how they travel in between.

The relevant LDP Core Policies are as follows:

- Policy CS 2 Development in the South

## Area Wide Policies

In addition to the Core Policies, the detailed Area Wide Policies are the basis for the determination of planning applications for the development and use of land and buildings.

The relevant LDP Area Wide Policies are as follows:

- AW 2 Sustainable Locations
- AW 4 Community Infrastructure & Planning Obligations
- AW 5 New Development
- AW 6 Design and Placemaking
- AW 7 Protection and Enhancement of the Built Environment
- AW 8 Protection and Enhancement of the Natural Environment
- AW 10 Environmental Protection and Public Health
- AW 12 Renewable & Non-Renewable Energy

## Strategy Area Policies

Finally, in addition to the Core and Area Wide Policies, the adopted LDP sets out policies specific to the two Strategy Areas, namely the Northern and Southern Strategy Areas. These policies are intended to ensure that development accords with the spatial objectives of the Plan.

The relevant LDP Strategy Area Policies are as follows:

- SSA 3 Development in the Principal Town of Llantrisant / Talbot Green

## 5.2 Material Planning Considerations

As required by Section 70(2) of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 and Section 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 applications are to be determined in accordance with the Development Plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise.

The other policy and guidance documents that form material considerations in the determination of this planning application are:

- Emerging RCT Local Development Plan 2020-2030
- RCT's adopted Supplementary Planning Guidance (SPG):
  - SPG 1 Design and Placemaking;
  - SPG 3 Design in Town Centres;
  - SPG 6 Nature Conservation;
  - SPG 8 Access Circulation and Parking;
- Planning Policy Wales, Edition 11 (2021);
- Building Better Places (2020);

- Technical Advice Notes (TAN):
  - TAN 5: Nature Conservation and Planning;
  - TAN 11: Noise;
  - TAN 12: Design;
  - TAN 15: Development and Flood Risk;
  - TAN 16: Sport, Recreation and Open Space;
  - TAN 18: Transport;
  - TAN 20: Planning and the Welsh Language; and
  - TAN 21: Waste.

### 5.2.1 Emerging RCT Local Development Plan 2020-2030

RCT are currently in the process of preparing their new Development Plan which will cover the period 2015-2030. The emerging LDP is at a very early stage with the Preferred Strategy (Pre-Deposit) Consultation anticipated to commence in November / December 2021.

Due to the early stages of preparation, the existing RCT LDP (2011) remains the development plan for consideration when determining the planning application and the emerging plan is likely to be given minimal weight as a material planning consideration.

### 5.2.2 Planning Policy Wales – Edition 11 (2021)

Published in February 2021, the eleventh edition of Planning Policy Wales (PPW11) sets out the land use planning policies of the Welsh Government. PPW11 has been prepared in the light of the Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015 (WFGA), the objectives of which represent the central thread running through the document and has recently been updated to reflect the publication of Future Wales.

The central thread of the WFGA remains within the PPW11, which also focuses on the multi-faceted concept of Placemaking. This relates to the delivery of Sustainable Places to support the well-being of people and communities across Wales. The interlinkages between key planning principles (such as growing the economy in a sustainable manner, making the best use of resources, facilitating healthy and accessible environments, creating and sustaining environments, and maximising environmental protection) and the “five ways of working” (prevention, long term, collaboration, integration and involvement) should be integrated within the plan-making and development management processes. It is stated that this approach will contribute both to Placemaking and well-being.

PPW11 reaffirms the presumption in favour of sustainable development and requires an improvement in the delivery of all four aspects of well-being: social, economic, environmental and cultural, as set out within the WFGA.

PPW11 highlights the importance of proposals taking a placemaking approach, specifically, guiding proposals to take a holistic approach when planning and designing development and spaces, focusing on positive outcomes. The concept of placemaking should be considered at all levels including at a global scale through

paying key consideration to climate change; and also, at a more local scale, considering the amenity impact on neighbouring properties and people.

In line with the principles of the Well-being Act, PPW11 is organised around four key themes; ‘Strategic and Spatial Choices’, ‘Active and Social Places’, ‘Productive and Enterprising Places’ and ‘Distinctive and Natural Places’.

**Chapter 3 ‘Strategic and Spatial Choices’** focuses on placemaking and strategic development. Paragraphs 3.3 - 3.13 of the PPW11 set out five key objectives to achieving good design: *“access and inclusivity; environmental sustainability; character; community safety; movement”*.

Paragraph 3.7 sets out that *“developments should seek to maximise energy efficiency and the efficient use of other resources (including land), maximise sustainable movement, minimise the use of non-renewable resources, encourage decarbonisation and prevent the generation of waste and pollution.”*

Paragraph 3.9 sets out that *“the special characteristics of an area should be central to the design of a development. The layout, form, scale and visual appearance of a proposed development and its relationship to its surroundings are important planning considerations.”*

Paragraph 3.30 sets out the Sustainable Management of Natural Resources (SMNR) framework as outlined within The Environment (Wales) Act 2016. PPW11 states that, *“amongst other considerations, the planning system can contribute to the SMNR approach through ensuring resilient locational choice for infrastructure and built development, taking actions to move towards a circular economy and facilitate the transition towards economic decarbonisation”*.

Paragraph 3.55 sets out that *“Previously developed (also referred to as brownfield) land...should, wherever possible, be used in preference to greenfield sites where it is suitable for development.”*

In terms of the provision of new infrastructure, Paragraph 3.62 states that, *“planning authorities should, in conjunction with key providers, take a strategic and long-term approach towards the provision of infrastructure as part of plan making. This may involve collaboration between planning authorities and key infrastructure providers to ensure infrastructure provision is sustainable”*.

Paragraph 3.61 refers to the need for adequate and efficient infrastructure, such as *“education facilities, as crucial for economic, social and environmental sustainability”*. It states how infrastructure which is poorly designed or badly located can exacerbate problems rather than solving them.

**Chapter 4 ‘Active and Social Places’** outlines components of placemaking required to create well connected and cohesive communities covering the following:

- Transport;
- Housing;
- Retail & commercial development;

- Community facilities; and
- Recreational spaces.

With regards to transport, paragraph 4.1.1 states that people should have access to jobs and services through more efficient and sustainable journeys, by walking, cycling and public transport. PPW11 further states that *“new development should prevent problems from occurring or getting worse such as...the reliance on the private car and the generation of carbon emissions.”*

It is a priority of Welsh Government to reduce reliance on the private car and support a modal shift to walking, cycling and public transport. PPW11 states that *“Delivering this objective will make an important contribution to decarbonisation, improving air quality, increasing physical activity, improving the health of the nation and realising the goals of the Well-being of Future Generations Act”* (paragraph 4.1.9). The Sustainable Transport Hierarchy for Planning illustrates how development proposals must seek to prioritise walking, cycling and public transport ahead of the private motor vehicles. The Sustainable Transport Hierarchy for Planning, as presented within PPW11, is illustrated within Figure 9.

Within paragraph 4.1.38, the role of public transport in the sustainability of places is underlined, stating that *“it enables people to undertake medium and long journeys without being dependent on having access to a car.”* In addition to this, paragraph 4.1.37 states that *“Planning authorities must ensure the layout, density and mix of uses of new development support the use of public transport and maximises accessibility potential.”*

PPW11 also encourages the use of Ultra Low Emission Vehicles (ULEVs) and the provision of ULEV charging points as part of new development. Whilst referencing Future Wales for the specific requirements, paragraph 4.1.41 states that *“The provision of electric vehicle charging points should be planned as part of the overall design of a development. Charging points must not cause an obstruction to walking or cycling, should be resistant to vandalism, and located where there is good lighting and natural surveillance.”*

In relation to community facilities, paragraph 4.4.1 states that they *“contribute to a sense of place which is important to the health, well-being and amenity of local communities and their existence is often a key element in creating viable and sustainable places.”* Community facilities are noted to include schools.

With regards to recreational spaces, paragraph 4.5.4 states *“All playing fields whether owned by public, private or voluntary organisations, should be protected from development except where:*

- *facilities can best be retained and enhanced through the redevelopment of a small part of the site;*
- *alternative provision of equivalent community benefit is made available locally, avoiding any temporary loss of provision; or*
- *there is an excess of such provision in the area.”*

**Chapter 5 Productive and Enterprising Places** deals with the economic components of placemaking. These places are designed and sites to promote healthy lifestyles and tackle the climate emergency. This is done by making them: easy to walk and cycle to and around; accessible by public transport; minimising the use of non-renewable resources; and using renewable and low carbon energy sources.

Paragraphs 5.8.1 and 5.8.2 states that *“The planning system should support new development that has very high energy performance, supports decarbonisation, tackles the causes of the climate emergency, and adapts to the current and future effects of climate change through the incorporation of effective mitigation and adaptation measures. The Welsh Government’s policy is to secure zero carbon buildings while continuing to promote a range of low and zero carbon technologies as a means to achieve this.”*

**Chapter 6 Distinctive and Natural Places** covers environmental and cultural components of placemaking. PPW11 sets out how development must protect the special characteristics of the natural and built environment including the historic environment, green infrastructure, landscape biodiversity and ecological networks.

Green infrastructure is considered core to the creation and management of distinctive and natural places. PPW11 states that green infrastructure assets and networks should be protected owing to their multi-functional roles such as providing benefits for the health and well-being of communities as well as the environment (paragraph 6.2.4).

Paragraph 6.4.3 gives focus to biodiversity and ecological networks and sets out a number of considerations for development proposals to consider. This includes that development proposals must consider the need to *“support the conservation of biodiversity, in particular the conservation of wildlife and habitats”* (paragraph 6.4.3).

Paragraph deals with biodiversity and ecological networks and states *“The Environment (Wales) Act 2016 introduced an enhanced biodiversity<sup>119</sup> and resilience of ecosystems<sup>120</sup> duty (Section 6 Duty). This duty applies to public authorities in the exercise of their functions in relation to Wales and will help maximise contributions to achieving the well-being goals.”*

The Section 6 Duty requires *“Planning authorities to maintain and enhance biodiversity in the exercise of their functions. This means development should not cause any significant loss of habitats or populations of species, locally or nationally and must provide a net benefit for biodiversity.”*

The contribution of good air quality to the quality of places and health and well-being is underlined in paragraph 6.7.19. PPW11 states how it can be inappropriate to locate sensitive uses such as schools adjacent to busy roads where no connectivity benefits can be gained and where health and amenity impacts will be unacceptable.

### 5.2.3 Building Better Places (2020)

In July 2020 Welsh Government published its policy position on how the planning system can assist in the COVID-19 recovery period. 'Building Better Places' is intended to sit alongside PPW11 and is a key consideration in both plan preparation and development management. 'Building Better Places' expands on the letter issued to Chief Planning Officers from Julie James (Minister for Housing and Local Government) in July 2020 which acknowledges that the economic consequences of the COVID-19 pandemic are predicted to be severe and felt across all sectors, including those in construction and the built environment. 'Building Better Places' emphasises both the primacy of the plan led system in Wales but also the need to have places and place-making at the heart of the recovery process. The policy agenda seeking to deliver better places and placemaking develops the principles already enshrined in PPW11. The pandemic has highlighted the importance of the need for good quality places for people to live, work and relax. 'Building Better Places' seeks to ensure that the economic hardship owing to the pandemic does not outweigh the above principles and policies.

It is clear that an immediate supply of development land is essential if we are to build the better places envisaged by Welsh Government and lead the recovery that is desperately required. New development delivering positive social and economic outcomes as well as addressing climate change concerns needs to be happening on the ground in the short term and cannot simply await the completion of the LDP review process in five years' time.

Welsh Government has recognised this issue and in respect of development management, 'Building Better Places' states *"PPW and the NDF can be used directly in the decision making process. The WG will support decisions taken in this context, particularly in the short-term until an LDP is adopted"*. This is a very important concession and allows for new development in the short term that truly embrace the principles and policies of delivering better places and placemaking.

The guidance includes a Welsh Government commitment to follow through on infrastructure obligations which will go a long way in ensuring that the developments envisioned are delivered and the wider public benefits are maximised.

It also emphasises that development management decisions should focus on creating healthy, thriving active places with a focus on a positive, sustainable future for our communities. The planning system has an important role in supporting healthier lifestyles and reducing inequalities.

### 5.2.4 Technical Advice Notes

The following TANs are of relevance to the proposed development:

- TAN 5: Nature Conservation and Planning;
- TAN 11: Noise;

- TAN 12: Design;
- TAN 15: Development and Flood Risk;
- TAN 16: Sport, Recreation and Open Space;
- TAN 18: Transport;
- TAN 20: Planning and the Welsh Language; and
- TAN 21: Waste.



## 6 Planning Assessment

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### 6.1 Introduction

This Chapter sets out the key planning considerations that should be taken into account in the determination of the planning application for the redevelopment of Penygawsi Primary School.

Key policy considerations are summarised below into key themes and presented with an explanation of how the proposed development aligns with local and national adopted planning policy.

The proposals are considered to be in overall accordance with the LDP, Future Wales and Development Plan as a whole. They are further considered to accord with the relevant policies from PPW11 which forms a material planning consideration. Given that PPW11 has been prepared in accordance with the WFGA and embodies its central themes, it is further considered that conformity with PPW11 demonstrates alignment with the WFGA.

### 6.2 Principle of Development

#### Established use on the Application Site

The application site is located within the settlement boundary of Llantrisant which is identified as a 'Principal Town' within the Southern Strategy Area of the LDP. **Policy CS 2** of the LDP promotes development within settlement boundaries and on previously developed land which are both characteristics of the development site given its existing use as a school. The site has no other planning or land use designations and is not allocated for development according to the LDP and therefore the principle of redevelopment as a school is already established.

In addition, **Policy AW 2** of the LDP sets out that development on non-allocated sites is only supported in sustainable locations, located within the defined settlement boundary and with access to a range of services and facilities. The site is within the settlement boundary, located within proximity to a number of public bus stops and is an approximately 10-minute cycle from Pontyclun train station. The site is therefore considered to be in a sustainable location and the proposal would support the role and function of the Principal Town and would not conflict with surrounding or existing land uses.

**PPW11** reaffirms the presumption in favour of sustainable development and requires an improvement in the delivery of all four aspects of well-being: social, economic, environmental and cultural, as set out within the Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015. **Policy 1** of Future Wales outlines that the Welsh Government supports sustainable growth in all parts of Wales. In the three national growth areas including Cardiff, Newport and the Valleys there will be growth in employment and housing opportunities and investment in infrastructure.

Furthermore, given the proposed development comprises the redevelopment of existing education facilities and primarily serves the settlement of Llantrisant, it is

not considered that the development would be defined as significant education development in accordance with **Policy 6** of Future Wales and its location within Pontyclun is therefore considered to be acceptable.

## Sports and Recreational Use

Whilst the proposed development would result in the loss of circa 31sqm of playing fields at the north of the site, it is considered that proposals would compensate this loss through the provision of new dedicated and enhanced sports facilities. The proposed new playing field and formal recreational sports areas (MUGAs) would result in an enhancement to the existing quality of provision at the site, as the current playing field is considered to be in overall poor quality. Each of these elements have been designed with full consideration of relevant sections of BB98, BB99 and BB103, which set out the building framework guidance for schools, including for external sports facilities. Full details of the proposed sports provision are set out within Section 4.2.2.

It is therefore considered that the small loss of the playing fields would be offset by the proposed enhancements to the quality of the new playing field and formal recreational sports areas, which would result in the provision of approximately 2,620sqm of fit for purpose sports facilities at the site. As such, the proposed development would be compliant with the policy requirements of **Policy AW 6** and **Policy 3** of the LDP.

## 6.3 Policy Considerations

### 6.3.1 Design

In accordance with RCT's planning application validation requirements, a Design and Access Statement and detailed drawings including floor plans, sections and elevations are submitted in support of the planning application to articulate the details of the proposed development in relation to materials and design.

The site layout has been designed with careful consideration for the site constraints, as well as capitalising on the opportunities of the site. The proposed main building would be located to the north of the application site and is considered to respond well to site context and reduce impact on surrounding residential areas, buffering classrooms away from the main road and allowing the new building to be constructed whilst the existing building remains in operation and through provision of a car parking area at the main school entrance.

The design layout would also respect a substantial separation distance to surrounding residential properties. Facades with higher potential for noisier activities would also be positioned away from dwellings.

The school building itself has been designed to benefit from good natural environmental conditions through maximising natural ventilation and natural lighting of spaces whilst minimising summer overheating.

The design approach for main school building has been explored and tested through optioneering and design stages based on consultation with the Applicant

and technical structural and services requirements. This is detailed in full within the Design and Access Statement submitted with the planning application.

Public art proposals will be detailed within the future planning application.

Proposed materials are as set out within the Design and Access Statement and on the Typical Bay Studies drawings, these include:

- Brick façade (grey multistock) at the ground floor and gable ends of the school building wings;
- Aluminium standing seam roof that would continue down the face of the first floor level;
- Use of colour within window openings;
- Ventilation chimney with standing seam cladding (dark grey) & PPC louvres with a feature colour to be confirmed;
- External metal canopy with glazed roof and perimeter gutter;
- Photovoltaic roof panels.

The materials listed above have been selected as they are considered sympathetic to the character and context of the site and would create an attractive and high-quality design that is considered to enhance the site and sense of place, in line with **Policy AW 5** and **Policy AW 6**.

Crime prevention is a material planning consideration and RCT have influenced the South Wales Police Crime Plan 2021- 2025. Crime prevention measures have been incorporated into the proposals in accordance with **Policy AW 5**, including the layout of the proposed development and physical security features such as CCTV to prevent instances of crime within the site.

Additional crime and anti-social behaviour prevention measures within the proposed design include: a secure building line and zoned areas to ensure controlled access for parents and appropriate levels of public access for the proposed development's community use outside of school operating hours; perimeter fencing around school buildings and MUGA, which would meet Secured by Design (SBD) standards and specifications (being at least 2.4 metres high, weld mesh, expanded metal or similar, and be of a design that is difficult to climb over). MUGA sports fencing would be 3m in height.

External elevations of the school buildings, main entrances, public circulation areas, vehicle parking areas, bike and bin stores, and the pupil play areas would be protected by CCTV. New and existing trees would be placed or maintained in areas that would not interfere with CCTV and lighting.

A Fencing and Security Strategy Plan provides details in relation to the siting, materials and dimensions of proposed site-wide fencing and is enclosed with the planning application.

Overall, the design has been developed to a degree appropriate to the sensitivity of the proposed end use as an educational facility and has been informed by early

correspondence with a Designing Out Crime Officer for South Wales Police, who provided an initial security strategy appraisal.

### 6.3.2 Sustainability and Climate Change

A key design principle driving the proposed development includes efficiency and net zero carbon measures. The proposed design would be net zero carbon in operation.

As discussed in Section 4.2.5, the development has been designed to meet a strict operational net zero carbon target, whereby an equivalent amount of operational energy consumed on site (both regulated and unregulated) would be generated where feasible by an extensive roof mounted solar photovoltaic array. This array would enable the proposed development to offset 100% of the carbon emissions annually for the energy usage of the building, therefore being 'net zero carbon' in operation in line with the UK Green Building Council framework definition.

As such, it is considered that the proposed development would excel the policy requirements set by **Policy AW 12**, and contribute towards Welsh Government commitments to achieving net zero by 2050, as set out in **PPW11**.

In addition, the considered selection of materials and methods of construction, approach to efficient and lean design, and designing for construction and re-use would achieve a more sustainable design and reduce embodied and whole life carbon. A BREEAM 'Excellent' rating under the 2018 Education assessment would be sought through the proposed development.

A Building Management System (BMS) would control and monitor the school's ventilation, heating, cooling and electrical systems. An automated Energy Metering System (EMS) would be utilised to collect and manage energy usage data from the proposed school building. The system would interface with the BMS system to collect incoming utilities data, sub-metered data (including heating, lighting and cooling energy); and other feedback data including internal room temperatures and CO2 levels.

Passive design of daylighting has been prioritised initially to reduce the requirement for artificial lighting and reduce energy consumption. This has been a result of climate-based daylight modelling (CBDM), using the Useful Daylight Index (UDI) metric.

The proposed new building structures would also be designed for safe deconstruction at the end of design life, with layer independence (i.e. non-structural elements may be replaced without impacting the principal structural frame, or overall structural integrity). The design considers future adaptability and potential expansion, alongside resource efficiency, thereby excelling policy requirements set by **Policy AW 12** of the LDP.

### 6.3.3 Transport and Access

A Transport Statement is submitted as part of the planning application demonstrating compliance with **SPG8** and The Sustainable Transport Hierarchy for Planning.

As detailed within the Transport Statement, it is not considered that the new school would have a material impact on the local highway network; and that a minor change in mode shift attributed to improved facilities and routes for active travel could result in lower overall trip generation.

Pedestrians and cyclists would be encouraged to access the school from the south via an existing pedestrian entrance, accessed via the PRow which runs along the southern boundary of the existing school from Cardiff Road and along the unnamed road that provides access to the site.

A total of 28 no. car parking spaces including 2no. accessible parking bays would be provided as part of proposals. Visitor parking would be accommodated within the total number of parking spaces. Although this slightly below the requirements set out in the RCT Access Parking and Circulation SPG (which set out that two spaces per classroom and three visitor spaces are required, and one commercial vehicle space is required), the level of car parking provision is considered appropriate based on the proposed use as an educational establishment and the projected future staff numbers. This is justified further within the Transport Statement and the measures outlined in the Framework Travel Plan.

The proposed layout as depicted on the Site Layout Plan would keep the existing main vehicular access from the Chartist Road which runs along the western boundary of the site. By using the existing access, the proposed development would not compromise safe, effective and efficient use of the highway network and would not have an adverse impact on highway safety, in line with **Policy AW 2**.

EV charging points (to the minimum standard of 10%) are also included in the proposals. This would align with **SPG 8** (Access, Circulation and Parking Requirements) and **Policy 12** of Future Wales.

The Transport Statement and Framework Travel Plan detail additional elements of the scheme including integration with public transport links, deliveries and refuse collection, traffic management and emergency service areas. Both of these technical documents focus on positively influencing sustainable and active travel including through the reduction of single car occupancy trips to comply with **Policy AW 2** of the LDP. This demonstrates how the development aligns with The Sustainable Transport Hierarchy for Planning set out in **PPW11**.

Moreover, the Transport Statement and Framework Travel Plan outline potential mitigation measures that could be put in place to control movements in and around the school, to reduce the number of trips made to the new school by car and to manage car parking operations during pick-up and drop-off periods. The Framework Travel Plan mitigation proposals include amongst others:

- A 'walking bus' scheme;
- Bicycle training courses;
- Local bike shop discounts;
- Car sharing; and

- Negotiating season ticket discounts with the bus operator for staff, or exploring free bus travel.

In conclusion, the Transport Statement indicates that there are no transport or highways reasons to refuse the application. It is considered that overall, the proposed development satisfies the policy requirements of Future Wales and LDP with respect to issues of transport and accessibility.

### 6.3.4 Residential Amenity

The application site is surrounded by residential properties to the north (off Clos Leland), east (off Despenser Avenue) and south (off Llys Derwen). Given the size of the site, likely separation distances between existing and proposed development and trees and vegetation in some locations, the impacts of overlooking, overshadowing and overbearing from the school buildings should be minimal.

The orientation of the proposed school building is such that it is set back from the gardens and rear of properties to the north (off Clos Leland), east (off Despenser Avenue) and south (off Llys Derwen).

The scale and massing of the proposed development in terms of footprint and height are considered appropriate for the site and surrounding context, whereby surrounding residential properties comprise detached and semi-detached two storey houses. The proposed school building would also be two storeys in height, and been designed to ensure that the scale, massing and siting would not cause any issues of concern in relation to overlooking, overshadowing or overbearing of neighbouring uses.

Proposed windows would be directly facing those of residential dwellings located off Clos Leland and Llys Derwen streets. However, openings would be limited and at ground floor level only. The main building external elevations on the end of each wing would contain doors on the ground floor only to ensure that there would be no overlooking issues for the rear gardens of neighbouring residential dwellings and vice versa. The separation distance between the northernmost wing and residential gardens off Clos Leland is approximately 15m; and from the eastern elevation and rear gardens the separation distance is approximately 37m. As such, proposals are compliant with **Policy AW 5** of the LDP.

The proposed development would also benefit from natural screening from retained mature woodland in the northwest of the site, retained mature trees in the northeast and south of the site, alongside the substantial level of additional planting proposed within the site. This would serve a dual purpose of protecting residential amenity and limiting views into the site's external areas.

The proposed school building would also be available for some community use, although this would largely be limited to internal spaces. There may be some out of hours use of the MUGA for the school, however, this would not so late into the evening as to require floodlighting. It is therefore considered that the noise and light pollution impacts of the proposed development would be minimal and not dissimilar to the existing conditions at the site, in alignment with the policy requirements of **Policy AW 10** of the LDP.

In addition, the principle of proposed development would not cause issues with regards to residential amenity as the site is in use as a primary school and the site already includes existing sports facilities. Overall, it is considered that the impact upon residential amenity would be negligible given the existing and proposed land use.

### 6.3.1 Noise

A site-specific noise survey has been completed at Penygawsi Primary School to establish existing baseline noise levels. The following conclusions were made for the site:

- Site noise is dominated by road traffic on the A4119 and this is considered representative of the existing noise environment at the nearest noise sensitive receptors on Llys Derwen, Despenser Ave and Clos Leland.
- Building services noise emission limits have been set according to RCT Council requirements that the BS4142 rating level does not exceed 5dB below the existing background sound level.

The Noise Impact Assessment suggested building services noise emissions be incorporated into the conditions for the development, such as the following:

- An acoustic louver around the air source heat pumps.
- Ducted attenuators on the intake and exhaust connection of the Mechanical Ventilation with Heat Recovery (MVHR) units.

Full details of the assessment proposed development relating to noise are contained within the Noise Impact Assessment, submitted with the planning application.

### 6.3.2 Biodiversity and Nature Conservation

The application site is not located within any statutory environmental designations. A Preliminary Environmental Assessment (PEA) was undertaken for the site in 2019 and Phase 2 Ecological Surveys in April 2021, and these concluded that botanical species diversity is generally limited on-site and no notable species were identified.

On 6 April 2021, an ecological walkover and commencement of initial Phase 2 surveys for bats, badgers and great crested newts were carried out. Initial survey results found that the woodland and boundary habitats could likely support hedgehogs if present in the local area. Preliminary roost assessments identified that building B1 was considered of 'moderate' potential for roosting bats and two further surveys were recommended.

Bat surveys were undertaken at the site (building B1) in June 2021. The surveys did not identify any roosting activity within building B1. While it is noted that infrequent roosting behaviour can be difficult to identify, given the low level of wider activity, it is considered unlikely that the building is used for roosting purposes. Full survey results are documented within the Ecological Impact Assessment, submitted with the planning application.

As there was no evidence to show that building B1 on the Penygawsi Primary School site was being used by roosting bats no mitigation is anticipated. However, any works affecting these structures should be considerate of the roosting potential and should evidence of roosting bats be found those undertaking any such works should contact an ecologist with an NRW bat survey licence for advice.

The following opportunities have been identified for ecological enhancement within the proposals:

- Enhance woodland edge buffer with long grassland under lower maintenance regime to create a graded edge.
- Incorporation of native plants and those of wildlife importance into landscaping scheme to provide foraging opportunities for birds, invertebrates and bats
- Introduce a more varied sward and encourage self-naturalisation and colonisation of local spaces through relaxing mowing regimes within perimeter grassland areas, to encourage floral and invertebrate diversity.
- Improve structure of retained grassland through relaxation of grassland management along site margins, particularly along the south-west facing banks, and over-seeding to improve species diversity.
- Support/replace existing provision of ‘insect hotels’ with creation of four new ‘insect’ hotels in selected locations around the site.
- Improve potential for permeability of hedgehogs through the site through provision of hedgehog access gaps around the perimeter of the site and installation of one hedgehog box in the eastern corner of the site within longer grassland habitat.
- A range of bird and bat boxes will be provided at the site to provide new nesting and roosting opportunities, to comprise:
  - o Six bird boxes on existing retained trees and woodland
  - o Four bat boxes on retained trees and woodland
  - o 16no. swift bricks on northern and southern elevations built into gable ends
  - o Eight house martin nest cups on the eastern elevation
  - o Four bat boxes on northern, western and southern elevations

Each of these mitigations and enhancements are included in the final proposed design and are set out within the Landscape Illustrative Masterplan enclosed with the planning application.

Based on the successful implementation of avoidance, mitigation and enhancement measures set out within the Ecological Impact Assessment, the scheme is considered to accord with all relevant nature conservation legislation, as well as with the provisions of RCT Local Development Plan policies and the Environment (Wales) Act 2016.



Furthermore, the change in ecological value of the site pre and post works has been estimated, where calculations confirm that the proposed development would minimise the biodiversity loss in terms of overall area, whilst the mitigation measures outlined above would significantly increase the biodiversity value of the site over and above that currently existing. Development would therefore provide enhancements for biodiversity and nature conservation in accordance with **Policy 9** of Future Wales, **PPW11** and **Policy AW 8** of the LDP.

### 6.3.3 Landscape and Trees

Details of the proposed planting schedule is contained within the Planting Strategy, submitted with the planning application.

As shown on the Planting Strategy Plan submitted with the planning application, a total of 7no. trees are proposed for removal, alongside a small section (437.86 sq. m) at the east of the woodland area. The woodland located in the northwest and mature trees located within the north east and southern areas of the site are proposed for retention.

58no. additional trees of native species would be planted within site. Overall, the number of trees replaced would exceed those lost through construction in line with adopted **Policy AW 8** and **SPG6**.

The Arboricultural Report concludes that the proposed development is acceptable from an arboricultural perspective; and includes recommendations for an Arboricultural Method Statement such as tree protection barriers and temporary ground protection.

The landscape enhancements that would be delivered as part of the proposed development are also outlined in the Design and Access Statement, Landscape General Arrangement and Landscape Illustrative Plan submitted with the planning application. The impacts of the proposed development on landscape and trees are presented in the Arboricultural Impact Assessment submitted with the planning application.

### 6.3.4 Flood, Drainage and Hydrology

The new Flood Maps for Planning shows that the majority of the application site is located within Flood Zone 1. However, the north west corner is located within both Surface Water and Small Watercourses Flood Zone 2 and Flood Zone 3 and as such a Flood Consequences Assessment (FCA) has been submitted in support of the planning application.

The FCA was undertaken in accordance with the guidelines provided in TAN15 Development and Flood Risk 2021. The FCA concluded that the risk of flooding for the proposed development is acceptable in accordance with TAN15 Development and Flood Risk.

SUDs will be required at the site and the discharge rates would need to be agreed to inform the level of attenuation required on the site. A meeting with the RCT SAB Officer was held on 30 March 2021 where the existing drainage strategy was presented and discussed along with preliminary proposals.

The storm water strategy would account for the water quality of the discharge into the watercourse in accordance with guidance<sup>2</sup>. Pollution control would be achieved through prevention mechanisms, interception and treatments implementing SUDs to manage and treat surface water runoff.

In accordance with **Policy AW 10**, SUDs are also included as part of the development proposals including bioretention features within external areas adjacent to the building, and additional attenuation areas. A SUDs Application to the SABs Authority has also been submitted alongside the planning application to ensure compliance with relevant legislation.

### 6.3.5 Ground Conditions and Contaminated Land

As the site is located within a Coal Authority High Risk Development Area, a Coal Mining Risk Assessment (CMRA) has been conducted for the application site and is submitted as part of the planning application.

The CMRA concluded that there is a risk posed by coal mining at the site, related to the potential risks posed by subsidence from recorded and unrecorded shallow mine workings and one mine entry (shaft) located in the north western part of the site. The proposed mitigation strategy as part of the CMRA recommended ground investigation to determine the presence of voids/worked ground beneath the site.

A Phase I Geo-Environmental Desk Study Report was conducted for the site in 2019 and further Phase II Geo-Environmental Ground Investigations undertaken for the site in September 2021. The Phase II GI concluded that it is anticipated that following the completion of treatment works, the development could proceed with no undue ground risks.

The Land Contamination Reports (Phase I and II Geo-Environmental Desk Study Reports) are submitted in support of the planning application. Overall, it is considered that in relation to ground conditions the proposed development fully accords with **Policy AW 10** of the LDP.

### 6.3.6 Utilities and Waste

Deliveries and refuse collection at the proposed development would occur on-site, where a dedicated turning area would be provided for deliveries, servicing and refuse collection.

The Landscape Illustrative Masterplan, enclosed with the planning application, details how the proposed development has been designed to mitigate the visual and aural impact of the site on the surrounding area.

Further details of waste management are provided in the Design and Access Statement and Transport Statement, enclosed with the planning application.

The Utilities Plan submitted with the planning application demonstrates the service requirements for the school are in line with **Policy AW 2** of the LDP.

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<sup>2</sup> Statutory standards for sustainable drainage systems – designing, constructing, operating and maintaining surface water drainage systems (2018).

## 7 Conclusion

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An application for full planning permission has been submitted to RCT for the proposed redevelopment of Penygawsi Primary School, including the demolition of all existing buildings, the erection of a new Net Zero Carbon in operation school building, school sports provision, vehicular, pedestrian and cycle accesses, car and cycle parking, landscaping, SUDs and associated infrastructure.

With reference to the planning assessment in Chapter 6, it is considered that the proposed development accords with the relevant policies of Future Wales and the adopted LDP.

Moreover, it is considered that the proposed development accords with the relevant policies of **PPW11** which forms a material planning consideration.

For these reasons it is considered that the many positives of the development outweigh the limited harm identified and the application accords with the Development Plan as a whole. As such, the Applicant respectfully requests that planning permission be granted accordingly.