



**PROPOSED CENTRE FOR VULNERABLE
LEARNERS (PUPIL REFERRAL UNIT)
PONTLLANFRAITH**

Ysgolion a Cholegau yr 21ain Ganrif
21st Century Schools and Colleges



Design & Access Statement

September 2022

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1.0 INTRODUCTION

This document outlines the proposed strategy for a new Centre for Vulnerable Learners (Pupil Referral Unit) at the former Pontllanfraith Comprehensive School site.

This scheme is part of the wider 21st Century Schools Programme across Wales, where Caerphilly County Borough Council has developed a Rationalisation Programme which aims to remove unwanted surplus places in the authority and improve the building stock in order that provision is enhanced.

The aims of the development and the 21st Century School programme are to provide:

- Raised standards and improve the quality of learning environment to create a fit-for-purpose 21st Century school
- Learning environment for children and young people in Wales that will enable the implementation of strategies for school improvement and better educational outcomes.
- Reduce inequalities in achievement between advantaged and disadvantaged areas, groups and individuals
- A sustainable education system through better use of resources to improve the efficiency and cost-effectiveness of the education estate which will enhance local public service provision
A 21st Century Schools Standard for all schools in Wales which reduces recurrent cost, energy consumption and carbon emissions.

The 21st Century Schools programme is a major long-term investment programme jointly funded by the Welsh Government and the Local Authority.

The first phase of the programme, Band A, ran from 2014 to March 2019. This was around a £56.5 million investment for educational and community use which included:

- Islwyn High School
- Ysgol Gwmraeg Cwm Rhymni Y Gwyndy Campus
- Idris Davies School 3-18
- Trinity Fields Schools improvements

The second part of the funding - Band B started in April 2019 with the priority areas being:

- Reduce the number of poor condition schools
- Ensure that we have the right size schools in the right location
- Provide enough places to deliver Welsh and English medium education
- Ensure the effective and efficient use of the educational estate

The proposals were prioritised based on a number of factors, including building condition, projected pupil numbers, local and national drivers. However, delivery of the curriculum remains at the core and it has been identified that the current school could not meet the requirements of the curriculum and the needs of Special Education Needs (SEN) pupils due to lack of classrooms, specialist intervention areas and outdoor play space.

Caerphilly Council submitted a Strategic Outline Programme (SOP) and have received Welsh Government approval in principle for £78 million subject to consultation and approval.

The proposal is to:

- **Create a Pupil Referral Unit for vulnerable pupils on the former Pontllanfraith Comprehensive site (NP12 2DA) with an anticipated completion date of September 2023.**
- The proposed centre of excellence will support vulnerable learners from across Caerphilly at Key Stage 3/4, sitting at the center of the Council's Education Other Than At School (EOTAS) Strategy and the [Cwmpawd hub and spoke model](#)
- The new facility will accommodate between 80 - 120 pupils and be equipped with high quality learning opportunities, indoor and outdoor sporting provision as well as access to first class support and will enable community use of the facilities outside of school hours

The proposal for consideration seeks to erect two small single storey extensions to the existing disused former grammar school building along with the construction of a new Sports Hall building and 3G multi-use games area on the lower plateau. Outdoor recreation spaces and additional parking facilities are also proposed with an anticipated completion date of September 2023. The extensions to and refurbishment of the existing building will provide ten teaching spaces, along with smaller group rooms, a meeting room, staff room, main hall, teaching kitchen and Café. The new Sports Hall building will provide a four-court sports hall with associated changing room facilities. The Sports Hall building and outdoor games area along with the main hall and café space will be made available for community use outside of school hours.

2.0 Policy

2.1 Pre-Application guidance was sought from Caerphilly County Borough Council's Planning Section on 19th January 2022. The response is appended in full, as part of the draft Planning Application, however a précis of the Council's planning policies for the site, including information on whether the scheme complies, or could comply, with the policies, is included here. Responses from the Council's Design team are added in blue where appropriate.

2.2 Strategy Policies

The proposed site is within the existing site boundary of the former Pontllanfraith Comprehensive School.

The site is located within the Northern Connection Corridor (NCC). **Policy SP2: Development Strategy – Development in the Northern Connection Corridor** requires development proposals to promote sustainable development. Specifically proposals in this area should: focus significant development on both brownfield and greenfield sites that have regard for the social and economic functions of the area; reduce car borne trips by promoting more sustainable modes of travel; make the most efficient use of existing infrastructure; and protect the natural heritage from inappropriate forms of development.

The planning guidance received states that, the proposed development is to be located within the former school grounds and therefore in policy terms would be considered as a brownfield site.

Furthermore, whilst the majority of pupils would travel by car or bus to the school, for staff, the site is in a sustainable location close to bus stops and within easy reach of Blackwood Bus Station. The proposal also accords with the aim of increasing the use of more sustainable transport modes with nearby access to the network of cycle routes linking Blackwood Town Centre to the local cycle network and National Cycle Network Route 47.

SP4: Settlement Strategy defines the settlement hierarchy for towns and villages across the county borough and identifies those areas where development would be supported and enhanced based on the specified role and function of a particular area. The Strategy seeks to concentrate new development to respond appropriately to the economic, social and environmental needs of individual settlements and thus settlement boundaries are identified accordingly to indicate the potential areas where development is likely to be permitted. Blackwood is designated as a Principal service, employment, retail and population centre.

The planning guidance received states that, the application site is within walking distance of Blackwood Principal town centre, a designated service, employment, retail and population centre. The proposed development in this location would therefore accord with this function together with serving the local and wider community

SP5: Settlement Boundaries promotes resource efficient settlements, indicating where growth will be permitted through the delineation of settlement boundaries. Settlement boundaries define the area within which development would, in principle, be allowed, taking account of all relevant planning policy and material planning considerations.

The planning guidance received states that, the site is within the settlement boundary and therefore the principle of development is deemed to be acceptable, subject to all other material considerations being met

SP6: Place Making requires development proposals to contribute to the creation of sustainable places by having full regard to the context of the local, natural, historic and built environment and its special features. The visual appearance of the proposed development, its scale and its relationship to its surroundings and context are material planning considerations.

The planning guidance received states that the visual impacts of the development have been discussed in the initial assessment above.

SP10: Conservation of Natural Heritage recognises the natural heritage as a positive asset that enriches people's quality of life. In this context Policy SP10 indicates that the Council will protect, conserve, enhance and manage this asset in the consideration of all development proposals. The application site is within close proximity of a SINC (Site of Importance for Nature Conservation), NH3.75 Penllwyn Woodlands, Pontllanfraith, which lies to the North West of the wider former Pontllanfraith Comprehensive School site.

The planning guidance received states that the application site is enclosed by natural stone boundary walls and a traditional stone finish is replicated in the former grammar school building. Any extensions that are physically attached to the former grammar school building should be sympathetic in terms of their design and external finishes. In the absence of any elevation details of the proposed extensions no further comments can be offered. Furthermore, the site is bounded by significant trees and scrub which may be impacted as a result of the development in addition to any associated ecology implications.

A preliminary ecological assessment has been carried out for the site and further bat activity surveys are scheduled to be carried out during July 2022. The proposed development has been designed to minimise the impact on the adjacent SINC and to enhance the biodiversity and habitat potential on the site by providing species rich planting, wildlife areas and bat and bird boxes.

SP18: Protection of Strategic Leisure Network states that the Council will protect important networks of public open space, natural green space and recreational facilities from inappropriate development to avoid their loss to more profitable developments such as housing.

The planning guidance received states that, based on the extent of this enquiry it is noted that no land or buildings are being lost for a higher value use, such as housing.

SP21: (Parking Standards) states that the 2008 CSS Parking Standards sets out the parking requirements for all development proposals within the County Borough. In a change from former standards operated by the Council, these standards are not only specific to land uses, but are also related to where the proposal is physically located. Consequently the respective zones need to be identified in order that the respective parking requirements can be applied. The Parking Zones have been identified in accordance with the zone types and parameters set out in the CSS Parking Guidelines

The planning guidance received states that A breakdown of existing and proposed parking levels for the wider site will need to be provided to ensure that the relevant parking provision can be secured for any existing and proposed uses.

Policy SP22 (Community, Leisure and Education Facilities) states that the Council has safeguarded suitable land for the development of community, leisure and education facilities in order to ensure that an adequate network of provision can be made at accessible locations across the County Borough to contribute to the health, social care and well-being.

The planning guidance received states that, whilst the proposed sports hall and MUGA are proposed for community use outside of school hours, this operating model will need to be explained. In addition clarification as to whether the existing leisure facilities and MUGA at Pontllanfraith Leisure Centre will remain available to the community or whether the new facilities are intended to replace existing facilities

The proposed new sports hall and MUGA are intended to cater for the needs of pupils attending the CVL and provide additional facilities for the community outside school hours, not as a replacement for the existing Leisure Centre.

2.3 Countrywide Policies:

Policy CW1 Sustainable Transport Accessibility and Social Inclusion requires development proposals that are likely to generate a significant number of trips to be designed to ensure that car borne trips are kept to a minimum. It is therefore important to ensure that provision is made within the development to actively encourage walking and cycling, and that appropriate infrastructure is included in the layout to facilitate short trips on foot.

In this instance the proposal is likely to generate additional trips for pupils. The proposed centre will cater for between 80 and 120 pupils and without the provision, some of these pupils may need to travel outside of the county borough. There are good existing pedestrian routes to the site and excellent cycle routes via the existing cycle network. A cycle storage area is provided as part of the proposals and there are showers, changing facilities and lockers available within the Sports Hall building..

The planning guidance received states that, the proposed development satisfies the requirements for sustainable transport, however it should be noted that it is not likely that additional learning needs students are likely to travel on foot, rely on the local bus service, travel unaccompanied to school or from the former school catchment area, consequently access to and from school for any students is likely to be different to the former students attending the school from the local catchment area. Whilst it is noted parking areas for mini-buses and shelters are proposed on the lower plateau, the Highways department may require a travel plan to accompany any application.

A Transport Statement has been prepared in support of this document.

Policy CW2 Amenity indicates that development proposals must ensure that the proposal would not result in over-development of the site and/or its surroundings. Furthermore, the policy indicates that the proposed use would need to be compatible with the surrounding land uses and not constrain the development of neighbouring sites for their allocated use.

The planning guidance received states that, In principle, the provision of the school extension would be compatible with adjoining uses. In terms of the proposed development on the lower plateau the sports hall and MUGA are considered to be acceptable in principle, but the proximity to the neighbouring gardens to the rear of Brynhyfryd Street may present issues that will need to be addressed in that its proximity does not comply with the Fields In Trust (FIT) Standards. Whilst it is not considered that the indicative layout results in overdevelopment of the site or its surroundings, car parking provision to serve the wider site needs to be fully considered and should not be left without adequate provision. In addition schemes for on-site refuse and recycling arrangements will also need to be indicated.

The proposed layout of the lower plateau has been adjusted following receipt of the planning guidance and the proximity of the MUGA to neighbouring gardens increased to comply with FIT Standards.

Policy CW3 Design Considerations – Highways states that development proposals must meet a number of highways requirements including car parking and access. The submitted details indicate enlargement and reconfiguration of the existing parking and a new drop off area for the proposed capacity.

The planning guidance received states that, the submitted details indicate that a new vehicular access would be created off Penllwyn Lane, it is acknowledged that there is a gated access there already but this has not been used for vehicular access for many years. Given the proximity to the roundabout below together with trees the existing stone boundary wall and highway infrastructure outside of the site, achieving the relevant visibility splay may likely to present some issues. Furthermore, there would also be a requirement to provide a linked pedestrian access from outside and within the site. Inevitably, any widening works is likely to result in the loss of a section of the stone boundary fronting Penllwyn Lane in addition to the loss of established mature trees, which conflict with policies SP6, SP10, CW2 and CW6. Advice in respect of the access configuration within the site and parking requirements across the site as a whole in accordance with SPG LDP 5: Car Parking Standards should be sought by the Transportation and Engineering Manager.

Advice has been sought from the Transportation & Engineering Manager.

Policy (CW5 Protection of the Water Environment) states that development proposals will only be permitted where they do not have an unacceptable adverse impact upon the water environment, and where they would not pose an unacceptable risk to the quality of controlled waters (including groundwater and surface water).

The planning guidance received states that, the Site Layout Plan indicates that sustainable drainage measures have been considered from the outset however you are advised that any Sustainable Drainage systems required has to meet the requirements of National Standards. Further information is available on the Council's website in this respect. However, it is recommended that any drainage proposals are discussed formally and to seek through pre-application advice from the outset to ensure that the requirements of the National Standards does not have any significant bearing on the proposed site layout.

A sustainable drainage scheme is proposed for the site and an application for sustainable drainage approval shall be submitted accordingly.

Policy CW6 (Trees, Woodland and Hedgerow Protection) states that development proposals on sites containing trees, woodlands and hedgerows, or which are bordered by one of more such trees or hedgerows, will only be permitted provided that:

A Where arboricultural surveys are required, they are submitted and approved, including any mitigation, compensation or management requirements, as part of the planning application.

B Root systems will be retained and adequately protected for the duration of all development activity on site.

C Development proposals have made all reasonable efforts to retain, protect and integrate trees, woodlands or hedgerows within the development site. D Where trees, woodlands or hedgerows are removed, suitable replacements are provided where appropriate.

The planning guidance received states that, the lower plateau is enclosed by established trees and vegetation and they provide a positive contribution to both the natural and built environment by enhancing the amenity value of the site in addition to providing vital habitat for biodiversity. The proposed development would result in the loss of trees and vegetation bordering the site and because of their potential size are likely to have a major influence on the planning layout and use of the site. The enquiry submission details do not appear to be accompanied by any arboricultural surveys to evaluate the potential impacts and therefore it is not possible to for any trees considered to be worthy of retention to be highlighted. Many trees within the site may also be considered as worthy of retention. Detailed assessments, including topographical surveys, tree surveys / categorisation, tree constraints plans and arboricultural implications assessments, provide important information on the quality and quantity of trees present and identify mitigation of the potential impacts of development, including the construction process, on trees and hedgerows and their root systems. In addition, any replacement trees would need to be of a similar size. Further advice should be sought from the Council's Tree Officers in that the current iteration is likely to present conflict between, siting, design, visual amenity and highway safety.

A Pre-Development BS5837 TREE SURVEY and Tree Constraints Plan has been prepared to accompany this document. The layout has been designed to minimise the loss of existing trees and hedgerows. Tree protection measures and mitigation will be agreed with the Councils Tree Officers.

CW8 Protection of Community and Leisure Facilities states that proposals that would result in the loss of a community and/or leisure facility will not be permitted except where:

- A. A comparable replacement facility can be provided by the developer either on or off site, and within easy and convenient access on foot or by bicycle, or
- B. It can be demonstrated that the facility is surplus to requirements

The planning guidance received states that, in respect of criterion A, a replacement facility is not included or referenced as part of this enquiry and therefore the proposed development is perceived as additional leisure facilities within walking distance of Pontllanfraith Leisure Centre.

In respect of criterion B if the proposed development intends to provide a replacement facility, any replacement facility will need to be of a comparable nature, the proposed MUGA appears to be significantly smaller than that of the MUGA associated with Pontllanfraith Leisure Centre. Furthermore, in order to demonstrate that it is comparable the Local Planning Authority will also require evidence to be submitted that demonstrates that any new facility will be available for use by existing users. This information will need to form an integral part of the application when submitted, if relevant

The proposal would result in the replacement of the existing disused tennis courts with a new multi-use games area (MUGA) with a 3G playing surface which will serve the school building as well as providing sporting facility for the local community outside school hours. As previously noted, the proposed Sports Hall and MUGA are additional facilities and are not intended to replace the existing Leisure Centre and 3G MUGA.

Policy CW15 (General Locational Constraints) states development proposals will not be permitted if they prejudice the implementation of wider comprehensive redevelopment or constrain the development of any adjacent site for its allocated land use

The planning guidance received states that, any phased development as part of the wider site should be well thought out as part of this enquiry to ensure that appropriate provision to serve any existing or proposed uses within the remainder of the site is secured in advance of submitting a formal planning application.

Analysis

The principle of development is considered to be acceptable, however to reiterate previous advice in order to ensure that the proposal can comply with the relevant policies referred to above there will be a requirement to ensure that the proposed developments can be provided without disadvantaging the local community. Implications in respect of highways, loss of trees and impact on current levels of residential amenity received (associated with MUGA) are likely to present conflict with local plan policies. Furthermore, the existing leisure centre and MUGA at Pontllanfraith Leisure Centre is a matter that will need to be clarified as to whether the longevity of these current uses will continue or whether the proposed facilities on the lower plateau of the site are intended to be replacement facilities and if so it would need to be fully justified that these are comparable facilities for community use. This information will need to form an integral part of the application when submitted

3.0 Consultation

Unlike other 21st Century Schools proposals which have been undertaken to date, the School Standards and Organisation (Wales) Act 2013 legislation does not apply to pupil referral units and as such the consultation process prescribed by the School Organisation Code 2018 does not apply in this instance

However, for the purposes of progressing this proposal and to enable transparent, balanced and open decision making, a consultation process was undertaken and reflected the principles of the Council's Consultation and Engagement Framework 2020-2025.

Utilising the "Spectrum of Engagement" approach, an appropriate level of engagement in informing and consulting stakeholders was undertaken, mirroring the equivalent processes outlined in Section 3 of the School Organisation Code 2018 only. The consultation period ran from 20th October 2021 to 1st December 2021

3.1 Benefits of the proposal:

The principal benefits of the scheme are as follows:

- Provides an 'in-house' facility with a minimum of 80 places to cater for the needs of disaffected pupils.
- Space maximisation through reconfiguration of site
- A stimulating environment to deliver learner outcomes specific to the needs of each individual pupil and support the delivery of the '4 purposes' that underpin the new Curriculum for Wales
- New outdoor activity facility to enhance curriculum need for pupils
- Centre of Excellence for professional development
- Facility that is central to the delivery of the CCBC EOTAS Strategy
- Innovative approach based on a hub and spoke model for the delivery of the 'Cwmpawd' programme
- Reutilisation of a former school site and grammar school building
- Community Use of the school facilities, after meeting the curriculum needs of pupils during school session times

Consultee List	
Pupils and Pupil Councils*	Welsh Ministers
Parents, prospective parents, guardians and carers*	Assembly Members and Members of Parliament representing the area served *
Headteacher, Staff and Governing bodies*	Local CCBC Members
Directors of Education for Neighbouring Authorities	Local Town and Community Councils
Teaching and Support Staff Associations	Estyn
Parent Network	Welsh Education Forum
Diocesan Directors / Boards of Education	South East Wales Transport Alliance (SEWTA)
Diocesan Directors / Boards of Education	South East Wales Consortium (EAS)
Early Years Development and Childcare Partnership	Mudiad Meithrin, Menter Iaith and voluntary nursery providers

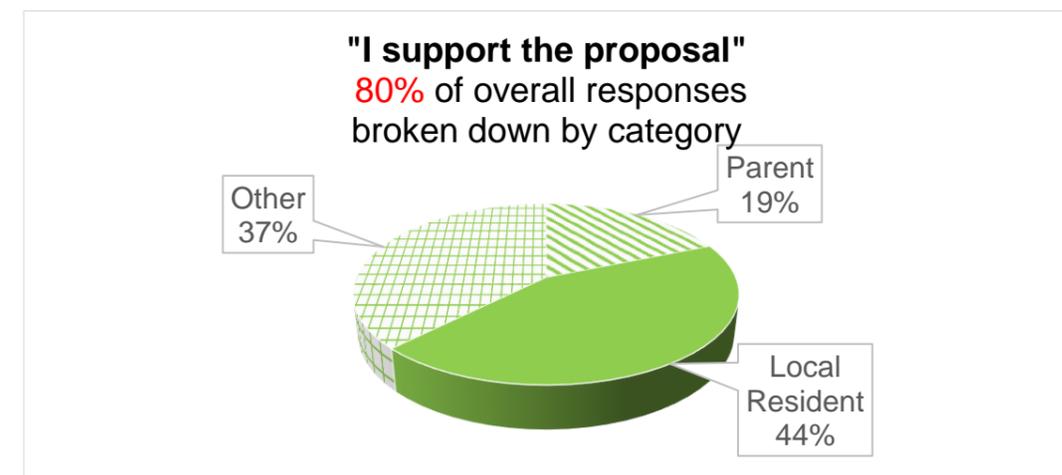
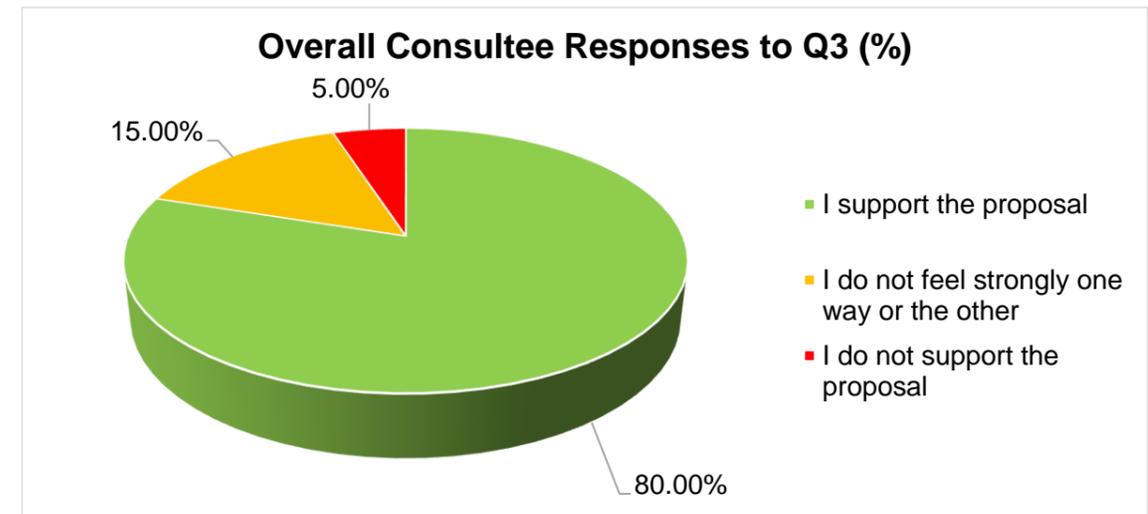
**of schools directly or likely to be affected by the proposal only*

3.3 Engagement Responses

The following summary of response themes was taken from the Engagement document.

Summary of Response Themes		
Theme	Overview	Number of Mentions
Advantages of specialist support in the Borough	Meets demand for increasing support for pupils in the borough	1
	Less reliance on outsourcing and satellite provision	2
	Additional resources will provide more accessible support and guidance for families	1
Impact on pupils and mainstream provision	Reduced pressure on Mainstream provision who are not equipped to support children with EOTAS needs.	3
	Children will have greater access to a dedicated centre supporting and nurturing their development and wellbeing	4
How this proposal interlinks with the existing Pupil Referral Unit at Glanynant	Why is money being invested into Glanynant? / Why isn't Glanynant incorporated into this proposal?	2
	Why is the proposal not including primary school aged children?	2
Traffic, parking and drop off arrangements	Parking concerns at the proposed Pontllanfraith site	1
	Increased traffic flow at proposed site	1
Construction process and potential impact	Impact on neighbouring residential properties	1
	Support for re-utilisation of an existing old-school building	1

Of the responses returned, 16 support the proposal, 1 did not support it, 3 didn't feel strongly either way or failed to select an option. That equates to 80% in support, 5% opposed with the remaining 15% either providing a neutral response or no comment.



3.4 Recommendations

It is the recommendation of the Community Engagement report that the proposal is progressed as outlined in the Document, namely

- **Create a Pupil Referral Unit for vulnerable pupils on the former Pontllanfraith Comprehensive site**

3.5 Planning Pre-application Consultation

As a result of the recommendation above, the project information has been brought up to Planning Stage and is presented here as part of the Pre-Planning Consultation process. The requirement to undertake pre-consultation applies to all planning applications for 'major' development (full or outline as defined in article 2 of the Town and County Planning Development Management Procedure (Wales) Order 2012). This consultation process represents an opportunity for people to learn about the proposal and make comments that will be recorded and summarised in a consultation report.

4.0 EXISTING SITE CONTEXT

- 4.1 The site is located to the South of Blackwood town centre and borders B4251 Blackwood Road to the North East and Penllwyn Lane to the South East, from which there are two existing vehicular entrances to the site.
- 4.2 To the North West of the former school site lies Pontllanfraith Leisure Centre with its artificial grass pitch and grass playing fields. Residential housing lies immediately to the North East and to the South of the site.
- 4.3 To the wider area residential housing lies to the South and West of the site. A site of importance for nature conservation (SINC) NH3.75 Penllwyn Woodlands is located to the North West, bordering the leisure centre site. To the East of the site is the former CCBC civic centre building, now demolished and the Sir Harold Finch Memorial Park.
- 4.3 The existing former Pontllanfraith Comprehensive school site is in the ownership of Caerphilly County Borough Council. The overall site area is 1.55 hectares. (refer to drawing 4741 P001 for the site boundary).
- 4.4 Site conditions are known to be favourable for development – a Site Investigation Report has been included as part of the Planning Application. The site of the development is sloping with the existing former grammar school building at a higher level to the South West of the site with a 3.4 metre high bank down to the lower plateau to the North East. An existing all weather tennis court area is located on the lower plateau where the ground is generally gently sloping with an approximate overall change in level of 2 metres South West to North East.
- 4.5 The site is characterised by the open hard paved former tennis court area bordered by mature trees to the North and East, with residential housing to the South and West.
- 4.6 The proposal includes the retention of two existing vehicular access roads onto the site from Penllwyn Lane.



Fig 1 Google Earth Image NTS

4.8 Site Analysis



Fig 2 Satellite view of the site and surrounding land courtesy of Google Maps. Application area shown outlined in red, site ownership outlined in blue

4.9 Site Opportunities and Constraints

Figure 2 The above diagram illustrates the context of the development site and the immediate surrounding areas.

Opportunities

- The site is part of a former school site and benefits from an existing building which will be refurbished and adapted to provide the main accommodation.
- The lower plateau provides an existing play surface which will partly be utilised to provide a new 3G multi-use games area.
- The site is the appropriate size and has open space to develop with few restrictions (minimal underground services)
- The existing vehicular access roads will be utilised to access the lower and upper parts of the site.
- Traffic flows will be accommodated within the site with designated mini-bus parking bays, staff and visitor parking.
- Good links to the main B4251
- Existing infrastructure
- Excellent views over the adjacent playing fields and park land
- Improved cycle route to the site and cycle storage encourages sustainable transport
- Local playing fields nearby may be utilised by the school

Constraints

- Sloping site with an overall change in level of approximately 3.4 metres between the upper and lower levels and 2 metres South West to North East across the lower plateau
- Proximity to the adjacent residential housing will require limits to be set on the use of the outdoor sports pitch outside school hours, careful design of external lighting to avoid light spillage into neighbouring properties and screening in the form of hedging for privacy.
- The ground floor of the existing former Grammar School building has a number of changes in level so lifts have been included in the proposed design adjacent to each internal set of steps to provide accessibility throughout the building.

4.10 Existing Site Photos:



1 Existing Vehicular Entrance to SE of site



2 Existing Vehicular Entrance to Lower Plateau



3 Mature trees and retaining wall to NE Boundary



4 View looking North towards site from B4251



5 Main Entrance to former Grammar School



6 View looking East onto Tennis Courts



7 Covered walkway link to existing Red Brick building



8 View South East towards 2 storey section of existing building



9 Existing Tennis Courts to lower plateau

5.0 CHARACTER

5.1 Site Layout (Refer to drawing 4741 P001)



Fig 3 Proposed Site Layout NTS

5.2 The development area is around 1.55 hectares. The existing former grammar school building will provide the main teaching accommodation with two small extensions, one providing storage and an entrance lobby to the main Assembly Hall and the other a new Plant Room. A new Sports Hall building will be constructed at the Northern corner of the lower plateau where it will be screened from the road by the existing mature trees.

5.3 The main car parking and drop off area will also be provided on the lower plateau. The drop off route will be one-way for safety and to keep traffic flow away from the main parking areas. Staff parking will also be provided in the smaller existing parking area accessed from Brynhyfryd Street. In total 46 car parking spaces will be provided, of which two spaces nearest the teaching building and two nearest the Sports Hall will be accessible in the main car park. One parking space nearest the building in the staff car park will also be accessible. A total of five electric vehicle charging points will be located within the main car park. Five motorcycle parking spaces will be provided in the Staff Car Park. From the parking and drop off area a new Equality Act compliant pedestrian path with a ramp and steps will provide access to the teaching block main entrance and a level access route will be provided to the sports hall building entrance. Pedestrian routes will also have Equality Act compliant street lighting.

5.4 Delivery vehicles will be directed away from the main car park entrance to the existing vehicular access to the South West of the site, where the Kitchen and Bin Store are located.

5.5 Outdoor recreation areas will be created on a new terrace to the South of the existing building and also to the North of the building. Sections of the new retaining walls surrounding the terrace will have areas of green wall, to soften the structure, provide habitat for insects and invertebrates and provide a sustainability teaching resource. Covered seating areas will provide spaces for relaxation and outdoor teaching. A garden area with raised planting beds will be located to the North East of the existing building allowing pupils the opportunity to grow fruit and vegetables. The existing bank between the two levels will be planted with a mix of flowering shrubs and perennials to provide teaching resource for the school along with ecological benefits.

5.6 A ramped path and steps will provide access to the lower level of the site. Here a 3G MUGA (multi-use games area) will be provided, adjacent to the new sports hall building, which will provide a four-court sports hall, changing facilities and storage. The existing WW2 relic will be retained within the wider site area, where sustainable drainage features will also be located. The proposed site layout is shown in more detail on the Indicative Landscape proposal drawing included in Appendix A

5.7 A covered cycle store will be located adjacent to the sports hall building, encouraging sustainable transport. It will also allow pupils and staff to access the local network of cycle routes linked to the National Cycle Network Route 47. Showers, changing facilities and lockers will be provided within the Sports Hall building for use by those cycling to the site.

5.8 Emergency vehicle access will be provided to at least a minimum of 15% of the perimeter of the building, to comply with current Building Regulations.

5.9 Layout & Scale

This section should be read in conjunction with the drawings and documents submitted as part of the application.

During the design process, a range of considerations were made before arriving at the submitted scheme. Figure 4 below shows how the design proposals developed in consultation with the local authority's Education department and in response to the Arboricultural Survey and Ecological Impact Assessment.

Main considerations:

- To provide a range of teaching facilities within the existing grammar school building.
- To provide a new sports hall and 3G MUGA to serve the school and provide community facilities outside school hours
- To locate shared community facilities so they may be accessed without entering the wider school building
- To provide new recreation spaces adjacent to the existing building
- To provide drop-off and mini-bus parking bays to serve both the teaching block and sports hall building.
- To provide on-site parking for staff and visitors.
- To separate access for deliveries from the main parking area.
- To provide sustainable drainage features (for details refer to section 8.6)

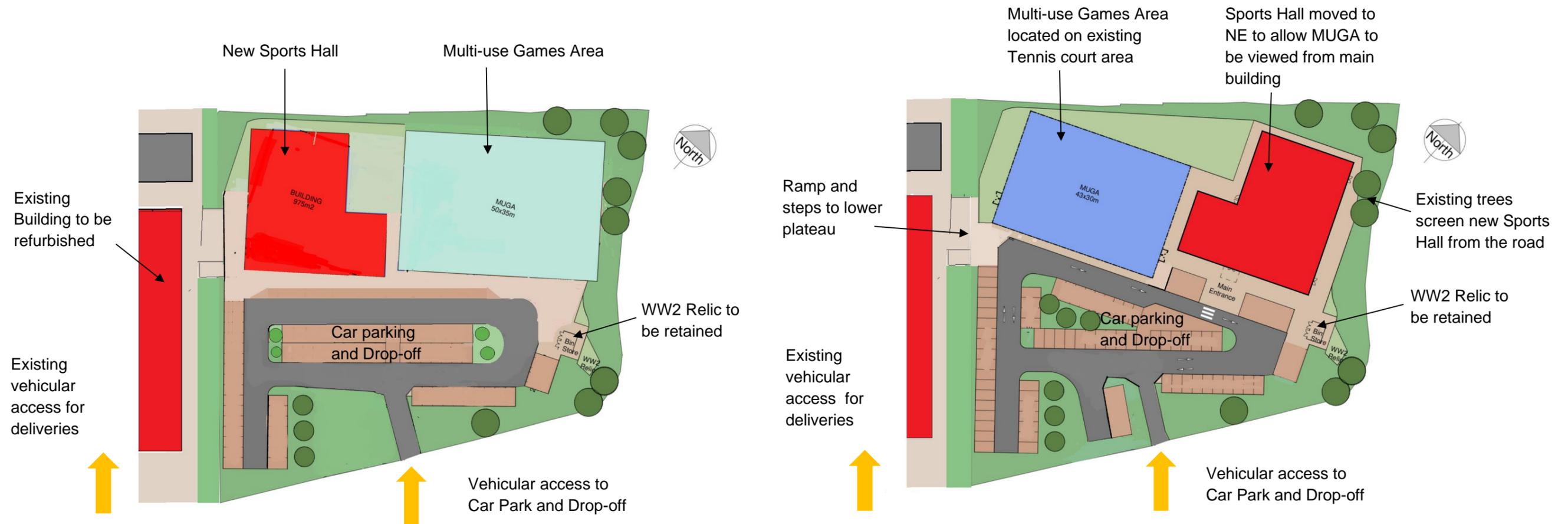


Fig 4 Design Development NTS

The primary elements of these design proposals are as follows:

1. Design, layout and materials for the buildings
2. Design and layout of external works and landscaping.

5.10 The design philosophy for the extensions and new sports hall is to provide the building with an identity as a 21st Century learning facility whilst being sympathetic to the existing architecture of the former grammar school building. The decisions regarding the site layout are set out previously. The decision to place the new Sports Hall building to the North Western corner of the site is:

- To provide views of the new multi-use games area (MUGA) from both buildings.
- To allow the existing trees to the perimeter of the site to screen the sports hall building to minimise its visual impact.
- To enable mini-bus parking bays to be located adjacent to the steps and ramp to aid access to the teaching building
- To utilise the level tennis court area of the site for the new 3G MUGA

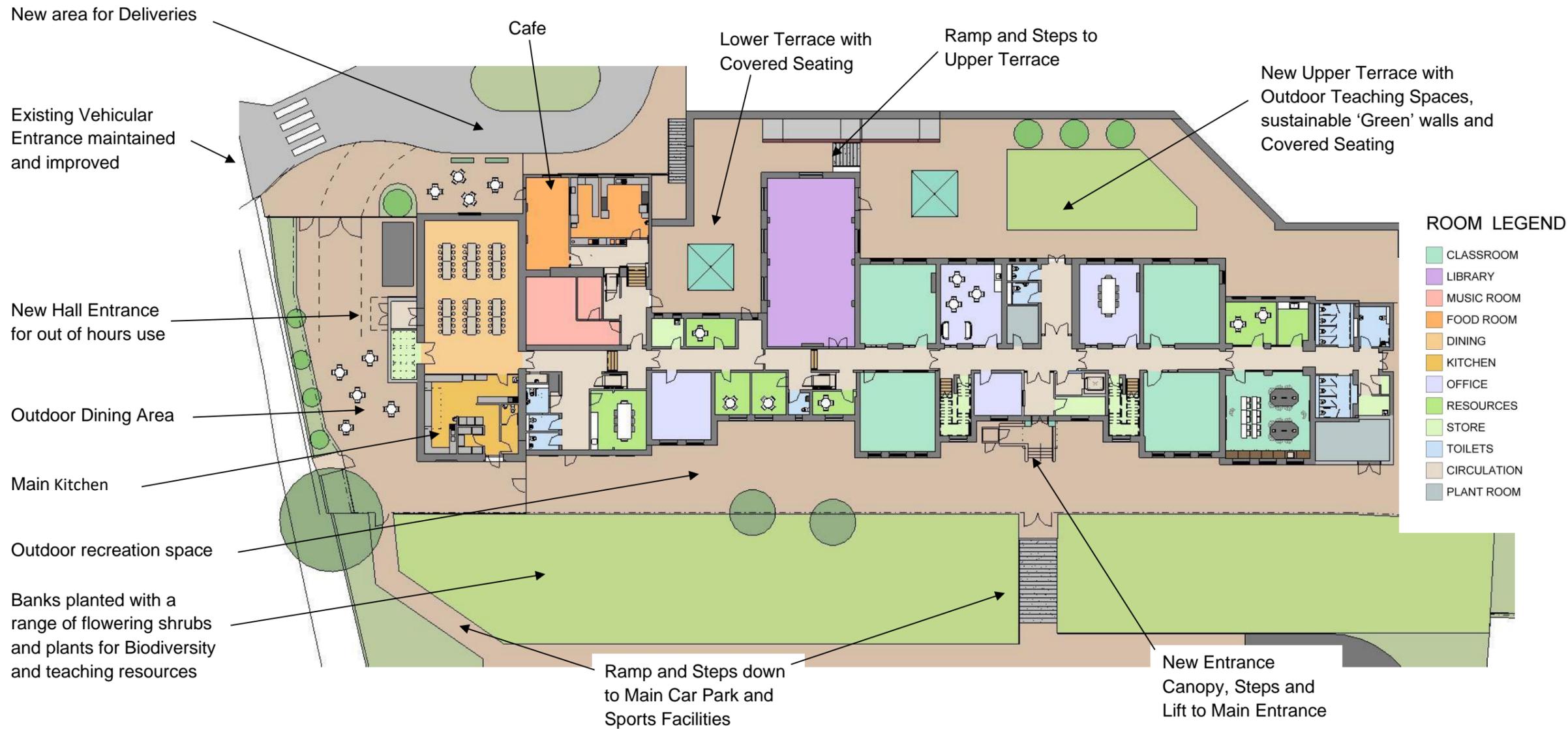


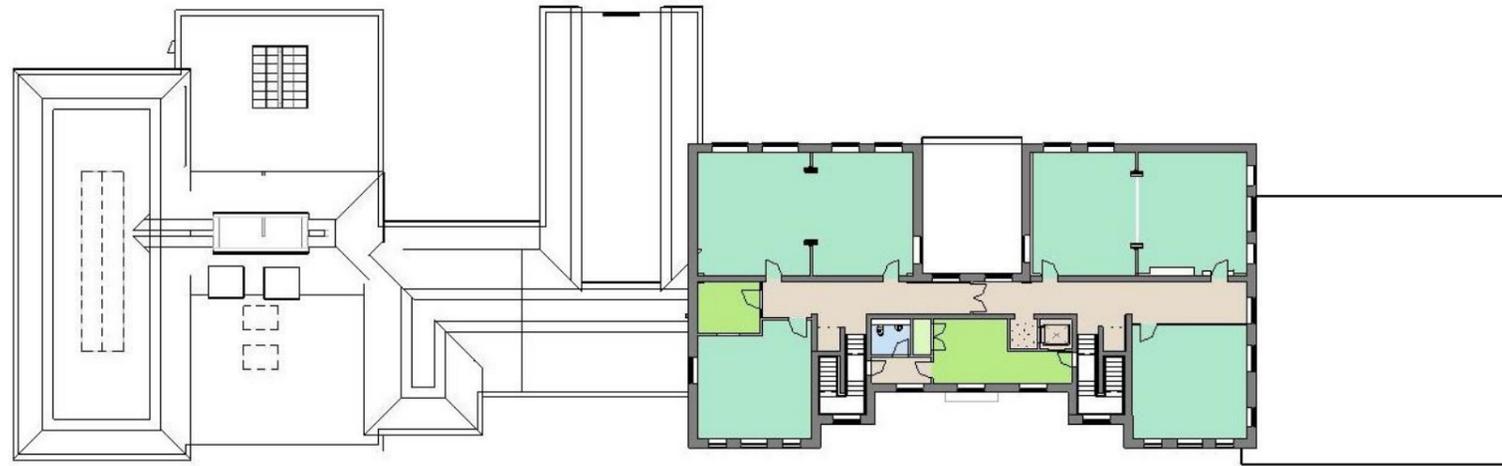
Fig 4 Proposed Ground Floor Plan in Context

5.10 The existing former grammar school building will be extended, re-modelled and refurbished to provide a range of teaching accommodation including:

- The existing Main Entrance into the building will be remodelled to provide a larger entrance Lobby and secure Reception space with an adjacent Main Office.
- The existing rooms within the building will be utilised to provide up to 10 general teaching spaces over two floors.
- A small single storey extension to the South Eastern end of the building will provide an entrance lobby to the existing Assembly Hall for school use as well as providing an out of hours entrance for community use. The extension will also provide a chair store to accommodate dining furniture when not in use.
- A new main kitchen will be formed in the Eastern corner of the building to serve the main Hall, with its own access door for catering staff and deliveries. The kitchen area will contain staff changing and toilet facilities along with a store room.
- A Café will be located near the South Western end of the building, accessible without entering the secure school site. Pupils will have the opportunity to gain experience working in the adjacent teaching kitchen serving the Café, which will have both indoor and outdoor seating areas.
- Four general teaching spaces, a Science Classroom and Science Prep Room and a number of smaller multi-use rooms will be located on the ground floor along with a Meeting Room, Staff Room and Office for the Head Teacher.
- The existing Library, also located on the ground floor, will be refurbished to provide a large multi-function Library space with areas for group working, IT facilities and library shelving.
- The existing ground floor Music Room, located adjacent to the Café, will be remodelled to provide one large teaching space and a Music Practice room. These spaces are set away from the main teaching areas to avoid noise distracting pupils from their quiet studies.
- Toilet facilities will be provided throughout the ground floor, with Male, Female and Accessible WC's adjacent to the Hall, Staff, Unisex and Accessible toilets near the centre of the building and Male and Female toilet blocks at the North Western end of the building along with a Hygiene room.
- A total of six general teaching spaces will be provided on the first floor, two larger existing rooms being divided with acoustic folding partitions to give flexibility and allow the spaces to be used as pairs of smaller teaching spaces or opened up into larger work spaces.
- A PPA Room and Therapy/Group Room will also be provided on the first floor along with a staff toilet.

5.11 The Hall and Cafe block with its new separate entrance has been designed to operate independently of the wider school outside school hours to provide facilities for the local community. Secure screen doors across the main corridor allow the teaching areas to be secured to prevent public access.

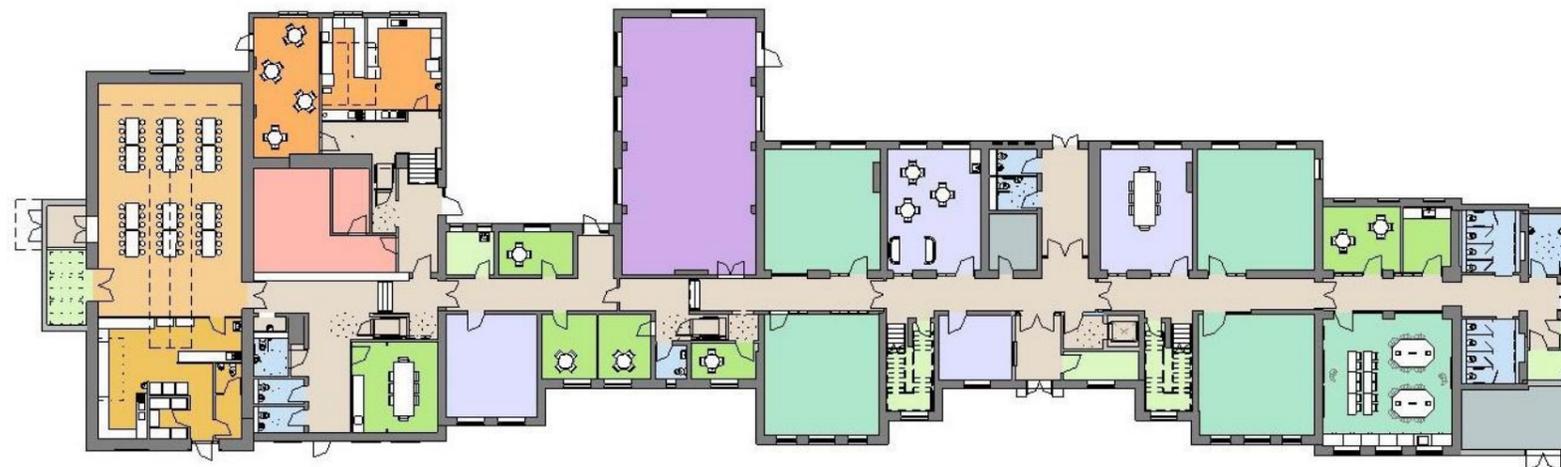
5.12 The new Sports Hall building will provide a four court sports hall with Male, Female and Accessible Changing Room facilities, toilets, storage and a staff office at the main entrance.



Proposed First Floor Layout

ROOM LEGEND

- CLASSROOM
- LIBRARY
- MUSIC ROOM
- FOOD ROOM
- DINING
- KITCHEN
- OFFICE
- RESOURCES
- STORE
- TOILETS
- CIRCULATION
- PLANT ROOM

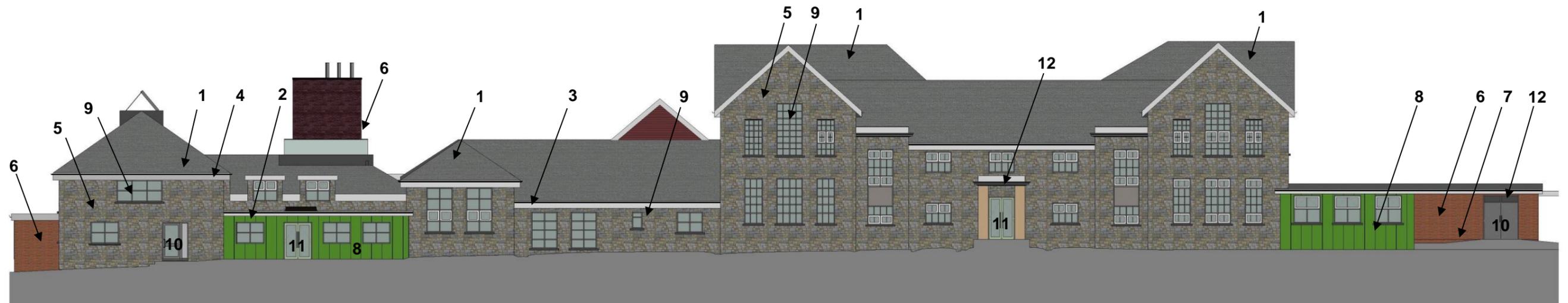


Proposed Ground Floor Layout



Fig 7 Proposed Sports Hall Floor Layout

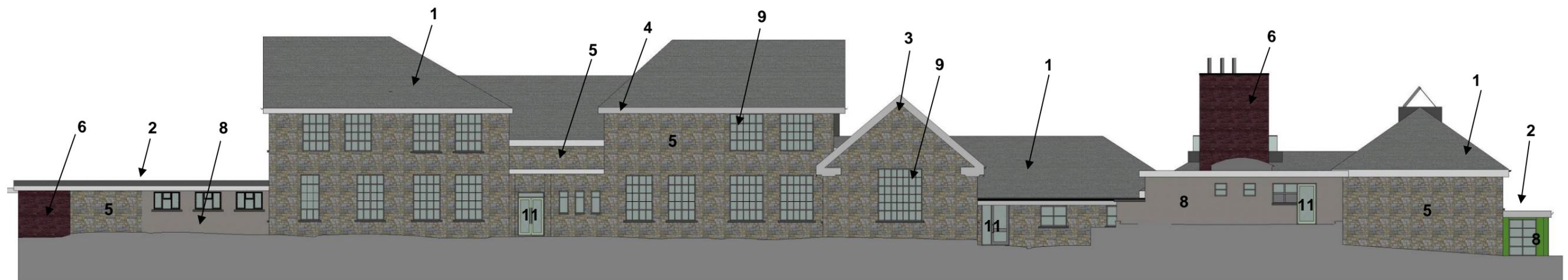
5.16 Proposed Elevations



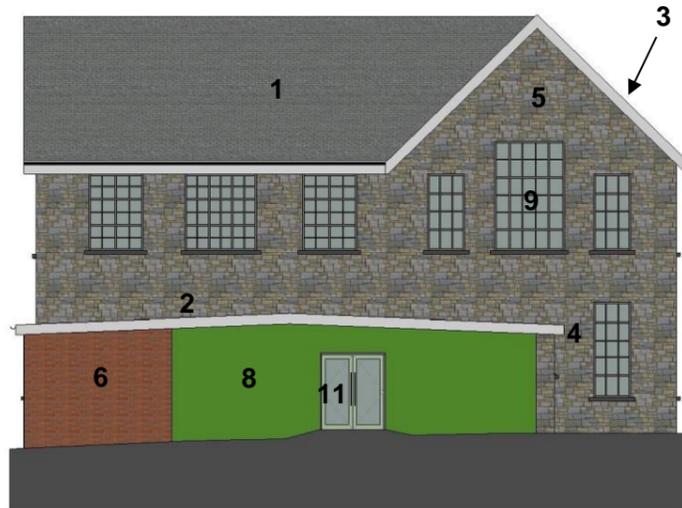
Proposed North East Elevation

Legend:

- 1 Slate roof tiles
- 2 Flat roof covering
- 3 Metal fascia/soffit
- 4 Aluminium rainwater goods
- 5 Dressed Stone, colour: Grey
- 6 Facing Brickwork, colour: Red Multi
- 7 Facing Brickwork, colour: Blue
- 8 Rockpanel wall cladding, colour: Green
- 9 Aluminium windows, colour: White
- 10 Aluminium Doors, colour: Grey
- 11 Aluminium Doors, colour: Green
- 12 Steel louvres, colour: Grey
- 13 Glazed Entrance Canopy



Proposed South West Elevation



Proposed North West Elevation

Legend:

- 1 Slate roof tiles
- 2 Flat roof covering
- 3 Metal fascia/soffit
- 4 Aluminium rainwater goods
- 5 Dressed Stone, colour: Grey
- 6 Facing Brickwork, colour: Red Multi
- 7 Facing Brickwork, colour: Blue
- 8 Rockpanel wall cladding, colour: Green
- 9 Aluminium windows, colour: White
- 10 Aluminium Doors, colour: Grey
- 11 Aluminium Doors, colour: Green
- 12 Steel louvres, colour: Grey
- 13 Glazed Entrance Canopy



Proposed South East Elevation



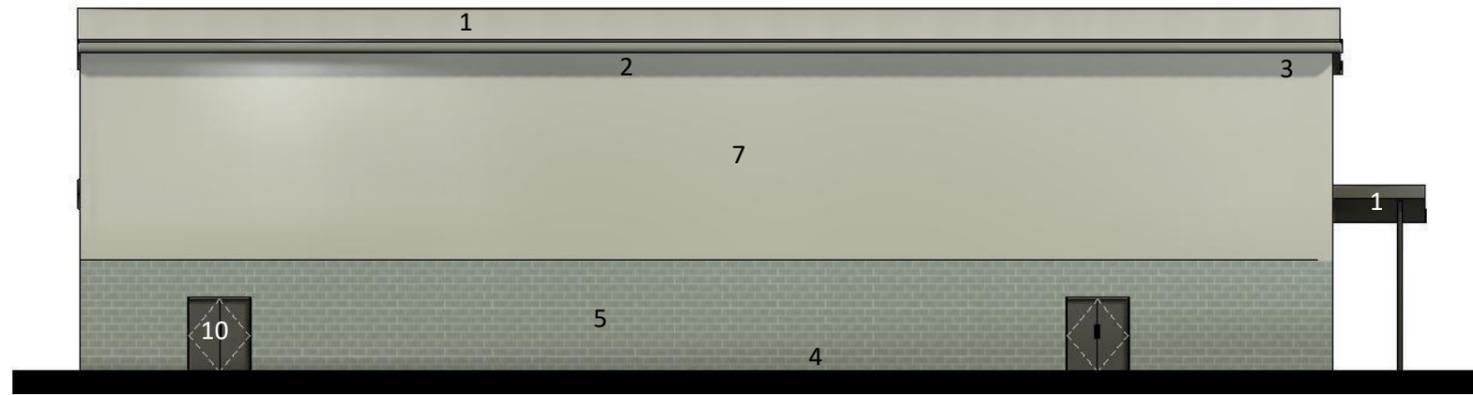
Proposed South West Sports Hall Elevation

Legend:

- 1 Metal standing seam roof covering
- 2 Metal fascia/soffit
- 3 Aluminium rainwater goods
- 4 Facing brickwork, colour: Blue
- 5 Facing blockwork, colour: Grey
- 6 Rockpanel wall cladding, mix of wood effect & green colours
- 7 Profiled metal cladding, colour: Green
- 8 Aluminium windows, colour: Grey
- 9 Aluminium doors, colour: Green
- 10 Steel security doors, colour: Grey
- 11 Steel roller shutters, colour: Grey



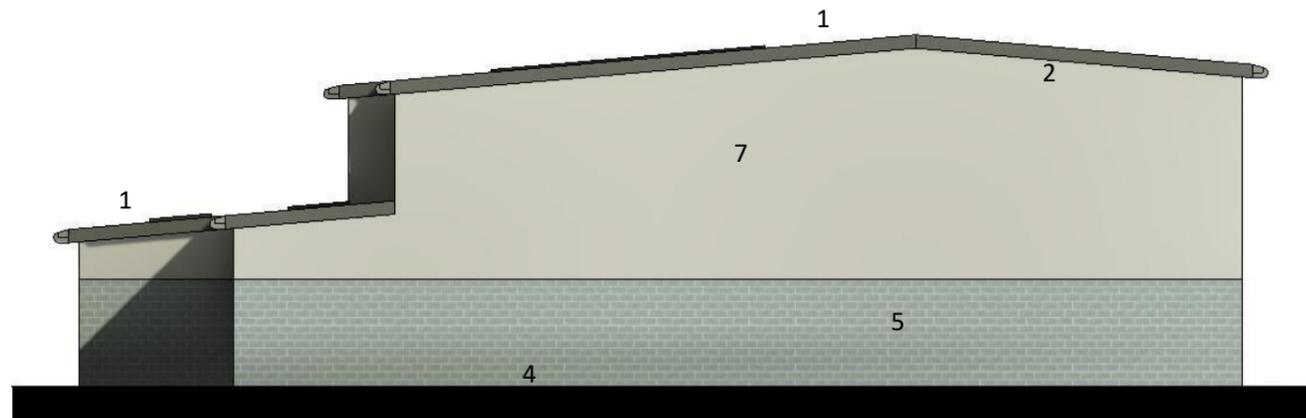
Proposed South East Sports Hall Elevation



Proposed North West Sports Hall Elevation

Legend:

- 1 Metal standing seam roof covering
- 2 Metal fascia/soffit
- 3 Aluminium rainwater goods
- 4 Facing brickwork, colour: Blue
- 5 Facing blockwork, colour: Grey
- 6 Rockpanel wall cladding, mix of wood effect & green colours
- 7 Profiled metal cladding, colour: Green
- 8 Aluminium windows, colour: Grey
- 9 Aluminium doors, colour: Green
- 10 Steel security doors, colour: Grey
- 11 Steel roller shutters, colour: Grey



Proposed North East Sports Hall Elevation

5.15 Appearance

Aesthetically, the building utilises a combination of traditional and modern materials to create an inviting and attractive facility for both pupils and the wider community.

The existing building is constructed mainly in grey dressed stone with later extensions in a mix of brickwork and rendered finishes. The new extensions will be finished in Rockpanel cladding and this material will also be applied to the existing extensions for consistency and to provide a more contemporary look, which will both contrast with and compliment the stonework. The existing windows, currently a mix of timber and UPVC, will be replaced with new aluminium windows finished in white powder coating. Existing doors will be replaced with new aluminium doors with a powder coated finish, main entrance doors will be highlighted in a contrasting colour for visual impact and contrast. For the new sports hall building, materials have been chosen to reference and complement the existing building whilst also giving the new building a modern appearance. Grey facing blockwork will reference the stonework of the existing building, complemented by a mix of cladding panels in wood effect and green tones at the main entrance which will give a modern appearance whilst still allowing the building to sit harmoniously into its wider green setting. The main body of the sports hall will be clad in profiled metal cladding in a soft green powder coated finish to blend in when viewed against the existing mix of evergreen and deciduous trees. The roof of the sports hall will receive a metal standing seam roof covering with a natural patina finish to avoid glare. The new covered entrance canopy will highlight the main entrance. Where possible, sustainable and natural materials will be utilised. This will complement the natural environment and beauty of the area whilst still giving the new buildings a contemporary feel and help to define the development as a 21st century learning facility.

The design of the new extensions and the alterations to the existing layout will provide an attractive and fit-for-purpose building that will use sustainable sources of materials and preserve the best traditions of architecture and local building, which are efficient in energy and resources.

The elevations have been designed to preserve the character of the existing building complemented by modern materials used on the extensions to give a contemporary appearance. The new extension proposed to the Hall will provide a focal point and highlight the entrance to the building proposed for community use out of school hours. The new ramps and entrance canopy will provide accessible access to the main school entrance.

Existing internal glazed screens to the teaching spaces and other larger rooms will be replaced to provide borrowed light into the central corridor spaces. Roof lights to the existing flat roofed areas will be replaced with new roof glazing to flood the areas below with natural light.

Existing Slate roof covering

Rockpanel cladding to existing extensions, colour: Green

Mixed species planting to bank for biodiversity and visual amenity



Existing dressed stone to external walls

New Aluminium Windows, colour: White

View looking West from New Car Parking Area



View looking North towards New Spots Hall



View looking North East showing New Hall Entrance

Rockpanel cladding in a mix of Wood effect and Green tones

Profiled metal cladding to Sports Hall, colour: Soft Green

Canopy to Main Entrance

Ball catch fencing to MUGA



Anti-glare Standing Seam Roof Covering with array of Photovoltaic Panels

Mid-grey facing blockwork to reference the stonework on the existing building

Existing mature trees to be retained

Cycle Storage to support sustainable transport

View towards new Sports Hall

Mini-bus Parking Bays

New Car Parking

New MUGA (multi-use games area) with 3G playing surface

New Car Parking



Anti-glare Standing Seam Roof Covering with array of Photovoltaic Panels

New Sports Hall Building

Cycle Workshop

Improved vehicular entrance from Penllwyn Lane

View showing new Car Parking, MUGA and Sports Hall

6.0 **Ecology, Landscaping & Arboricultural Survey**

6.1 An Ecology and Biodiversity survey has been carried out by Acer Ecology and an Ecological Impact Assessment has also been produced. A copy of the report is included as part of the PAC information. All information here is taken directly from the Preliminary Ecological Assessment Report Ref: P1985, revision 1 January 2022

6.2 **Summary**

Purpose	Acer Ecology Ltd. were commissioned by Caerphilly County Borough Council to conduct a preliminary ecological appraisal and reptile surveys of land at the former Pontllanfraith Comprehensive School, Pontllanfraith, NP12 2DA (Ordnance Survey Grid Reference: ST 1766 9582).
Methodology	Survey work was undertaken following JNCC Phase 1 Survey Guidelines and CIEEM Guidelines for Preliminary Ecological Appraisal (2013).
Recommendations	Further Bat Survey Work: Current best practice guidelines (Collins, 2016) state that the buildings B2, B3, B4, B5, B6, B7, B9 and B12 with low roost suitability should be subject to one dusk emergence or dawn re-entry survey. Additionally, Building B1 has a confirmed roost and high roost suitability so should be subject to three separate dusk emergence and dawn re-entry surveys. Comprising at least one dusk emergence and a separate dawn re-entry survey. The third visit could be either a dusk emergence or a dawn re-entry survey. To ensure that all potential bat access/roosting features are covered, Surveys should be timed to sample as much of the survey period as possible 2, undertaken at intervals of at least two weeks apart, or preferably more (Collins, 2016). This increases the possibility of encountering bats that may only use the building for short periods throughout the summer.
Licensing	It has not been possible to determine whether a NRW Protected Species mitigation licence with respect to bats will be required. This will be determined after the further targeted surveys detailed in Section 3.4 have been completed.
Conclusions	The full extent of ecological impacts and potential constraints of the proposed development cannot be fully determined, based on the results of the current ecological survey. Further bats surveys are required before such assessments can be comprehensively made.

6.3 Protected Habitats and Species

Recommendations regarding protected species are shown in the Table below:

Species	
Great Crested Newts	The HSI assessments of the one suitable water body within 0.5km of the site is displayed in Table 13: Pond 1 HSI Scores. The location of the water body is shown in Plan 6. The results of the Habitat Suitability Index indicate the water body has 'Poor' potential to support breeding Great Crested Newts. The likelihood of GCN being present on site is considered to be negligible and no adverse impacts are subsequently anticipated. They are therefore not mentioned further in this report.
Dormice	The likelihood of dormice being present on site is considered to be negligible due to the isolated nature of the limited suitable habitat on site and no adverse impacts are subsequently anticipated. Additionally, the mixed woodland on site is proposed to be retained on site. They are therefore not mentioned further in this report.
Bats	Building B1 has been assessed as having a confirmed roost and having high bat roost potential, as droppings were found in void one. Further survey will be required before the extent of such impacts can be assessed, as detailed in Section 4. Trees T7-T16 have been assessed as having moderate to low bat roost potential. Protective barriers will therefore be installed prior to any site work, to ensure that no such inadvertent impacts occur (see Section 4). If an adequate barrier cannot be established around T7, T8, T10, T13, and T14, as these trees have been assessed as being moderate potential for bats, these trees will require further surveys, as detailed in Section 4. Clearance of the dense scrub will result in fragmentation of ecological connectivity for commuting bats from the woodland to west of the site; and Due to the change of use of the site, increases in artificial lighting levels will be significant, both during the construction phase and the operational phase of the development. If this lighting envelops the retained trees on site, it could adversely affect foraging and commuting bats. Measures to avoid such impacts are set out in Section 4.
Hedgehogs	Hedgehogs are considered likely to forage within the site and could potentially nest and hibernate within the dense scrub habitat. The dense scrub are considered to provide highly optimal refugia for day resting for hedgehogs and hibernacula during the winter months. These habitats will be cleared to facilitate the development which could lead to negative impact on this species if present. The mixed woodland within the site are proposed to be retained. Any clearance of scrub habitat or damage to the mixed woodland during the development, may result in accidental killing or injury of hedgehogs and other mammals. Mitigation to avoid such impacts are provided in Section 4.
Badger	The likelihood of badger's sett building on site is considered to be negligible and no adverse impacts are subsequently anticipated. Likewise, there is considered to be a very low risk of badgers foraging or commuting across the site. Precautionary measures are set out in section 4.
Birds	The mixed woodland, scrub and mature tree habitat provide nesting and foraging opportunities for a range of tree and scrub nesting birds including house martins and house sparrows. In additions the mature trees could provide nesting opportunities for a range of bird species. As a whole, the site is considered to be local value to birds.
Reptiles	Reptiles are likely to be absent from the site and as such any impact on reptiles is unlikely. As the survey was undertaken slightly out of season there is a chance that reptiles could have been present on site but undetected. Clearance of the vegetation may therefore result in the accidental killing or injury of reptiles. Precautionary measures to avoid such an occurrence are set out in Section 4.
Water Vole	No water voles, or signs of water vole were recorded along the short section of watercourse within the site. The stream itself is heavily polluted and is isolated from the wider landscape. There is considered to be negligible potential for water vole to be present on site. This species is not discussed further in this report.

6.4 Overall Conclusions

The full extent of ecological impacts and potential constraints of the proposed development cannot be fully determined, based on the current survey results alone. Further survey work will be required before such assessments can be comprehensively made, as detailed in Section 4.1 of the Report and summarised above. The surveys will be undertaken and submitted as part of the formal planning application.

At this stage, the site's ecological value is not considered to represent a fundamental in-principal constraint to the proposed development.

6.5 Landscaping

The outline design for hard and soft landscaping is included on drawing 4741 P002 which is included as part of the PAC information in Appendix A.

Detailed soft landscape proposals have been prepared by Haire Landscape Consultants. Please refer to drawing 687/01 Sketch Landscape Proposals

Within the proposals, hard and soft landscaping areas are clearly marked. The existing trees to the perimeter of the site will be retained and existing trees within the site which will need to be removed will be replaced with trees of equal or greater ecological value.

The landscape proposals will provide an attractive setting for the proposed recreation areas for the centre as well as providing ecological benefits.

Existing trees and hedgerows requiring removal to facilitate the development are to be undertaken in Autumn/Winter outside of the bird nesting season which runs between 1st March to 31st August inclusive.

Mitigation Tree Planting is to include Semi Mature Trees at 18 to 20cm girth and minimum 450cm height, species and numbers to be agreed with CCBC Arboricultural Officer. Species rich grass mixes are proposed in relation to the SAB swales with native hedgerow and shrub planting. Planting to the sloped bank areas will include a species rich mix of shrubs and plants with a long flowering period to provide food sources for pollinators as well as habitat for hibernating insects and invertebrates during the winter.

7.0 Community Safety

7.1 The safety of pupils, staff, visitors to the site and the surrounding community is a fundamental consideration for the LEA in the design, layout, and operation of education facilities.

Early consultation has been undertaken with the Gwent Police Designing Out Crimes Officer (DOCOC) and initial recommendations received will be implemented in the design. It is also intended that the building will be designed in accordance with the principals of Secured by Design (SBD) in Schools guidance. This aims to reduce crime in the built environment and improve safety standards.

The DOCOC has provided recommendations in respect of some of the areas below. These will be refined and added to as the design detail is developed.

- Site enclosure height
- Out of hours vehicular control
- Defensive planting and Landscaping considerations
- Safe route, drop off and collection points
- Signage
- Community access
- Motorcycling & bicycle parking
- Troublesome meeting places

Within the design the following considerations have been made:

- 7.2 New fencing will be installed along the new site boundary line and within the site to separate the school grounds from the lower car parking area and Sports Hall. Rebound and Ball catch fencing will be installed around the new Multi-use Games Area (MUGA).
- 7.3 Defensive planting is included within the landscaping layout.
- 7.4 The new drop-off area is separated from the main parking areas with a number of mini-bus parking bays, to minimise congestion during busy periods.
- 7.5 Deliveries will be routed via the existing access route to the Kitchen and Bin Store to the South West of the site, away from the drop-off area.
- 7.6 Motor cycle parking will be accommodated within the existing staff car parking area near the main entrance to the building for passive supervision.
- 7.7 Additional signage noting site rules and speed limits (5mph) will be used throughout the site.
- 7.8 Staff parking to the North West of the site will be locked outside school hours
- 7.9 Signage: the building and outside facilities will be clearly signposted.
- 7.10 Community Access: the Hall and other community facilities within the main building will be accessible from the Hall Entrance Foyer without opening the main building. The main entrance lobby is secure from the rest of the building with access control on the inner doors.
- 7.11 Troublesome meeting spaces have been designed out where possible. The lower car parking area is visible from the road and the adjacent houses for passive supervision and the gates will be locked when the buildings are not in use.

In addition to this the following will be included:

7.12 Windows and doors will be to Secured by Design standards.

7.13 A centrally monitored CCTV and intruder alarm system will be installed.

7.14 A category L2 fire alarm system will be installed. The system will include a main fire alarm panel, smoke detectors, sounders and beacons in all rooms and integral emergency lighting as part of the overall lighting design.

7.15 The external lighting strategy will be designed in compliance with Table 1 (and its accompanying notes) of the ILE Guidance notes for the reduction of obtrusive light, 2005.

8.0 Environmental Sustainability

8.1 Sustainability

Caerphilly CBC has a commitment to sustainability and the environment. The following measures are proposed to be incorporated into the design of the scheme:

- The refurbishment of the existing building will achieve current Building Regulations for energy conservation, plus 10% improvement above the target emissions rate for the extensions
- The scheme for the Sports Hall shall achieve a BREEAM 'Very Good' rating with an 'Excellent' rating for Energy Conservation.
- The scheme shall achieve an EPC rating of A.
- Site surface water drainage will be limited to site run-off rates agreed with CCBC Drainage Section.
- PV panel array applied to Sports Hall roof
- Natural ventilation.
- A or A+ rated materials in accordance with BRE Green Guide to Specification.

8.2 Waste

Caerphilly CBC will provide collection for waste and recycling collection from the site. A store area with separate recycled and non-recycling waste stores will be provided in a separate enclosure located away from the side of the kitchen, sized appropriately to serve the school.

8.3 Noise

An acoustic survey is being prepared to ascertain the site acoustic levels. A further report shall be prepared for the proposals in line with BB93 Acoustics for School requirements.

8.4 Light

With regards to light pollution, proposals will be submitted to the Local Planning Authority for consideration. The external lighting strategy will be designed in compliance with Table 1 (and its accompanying notes) of the ILE Guidance notes for the reduction of obtrusive light, 2005.

8.5 Air Quality

Other than for general heating and ventilation requirements, no fumes will be generated by any processes within the building.

8.6 Drainage

Below is a pre application statement from the Civil Engineers, Curtins Consulting Ltd

8.6.1 Pre-application Drainage Statement

Curtins Consulting Ltd have been commissioned to undertake the design of the drainage scheme and their pre-application drainage statement is included below:

Pre-App Drainage Statement

Existing Drainage

Public Sewers

Dwr Cymru, Welsh Water (DCWW) Asset Records show that there are no public sewers within the proposed development boundary. However, the plans identify that there is a 150mm diameter combined sewer which runs north east and joins a 225mm diameter combined sewer within the highway of Blackwood Road.

There are also two culverted watercourses in the vicinity: one which runs along the north west boundary of the development site, starting the northwest corner and running towards Blackwood road, and other running north east along Penllywn Lane. Additional investigations are necessary to confirm the route, size and condition of these culverts.

The DCWW sewers are located at sufficient distance from the proposed works that any easements required will not interfere with the proposals.

Private Drainage

The proposed works are located within the former Pontllanfraith Comprehensive School site and records identify that there is both foul and surface water drainage that served the retained buildings.

A CCTV survey has been undertaken on the private drainage and confirms that there are separate surface and foul water networks.

The foul drain runs toward the south east corner of the site and is assumed to discharge into the combined sewer in Penllwyn Lane, however further investigations are required to confirm this.

Surveys and records suggest that the surface water drainage from the retained buildings is split into two systems serving different catchments on site and discharge separately to the existing culverted watercourses, subject to further confirmation.

Current investigations of the site of the proposed building / external works has not identified any existing foul or surface water drains.

Flood Zones

The development lies 350-400m away from the Sirhowy River, Natural Resource Wales' online DAM mapping and Flood Risk Assessment Wales Map shows the proposed site development boundary to be located within Flood Zone A / 1.

Proposed Surface Water Drainage

Current best practice and the Regulatory requirements direct that new surface water drainage should discharge in accordance with the drainage hierarchy of:

1. Infiltration to the ground
2. Discharge to a water course
3. Discharge into a surface water sewer
4. Discharge into a combined sewer.

Infiltration.

Soakaway testing at the site was undertaken as part of the Phase 1 and 2 (2018 and 2022) ground Investigation by Earth Science Partnership dated May 2022. These reports identified, variable ground conditions across the site and inconsistent infiltration test results. Based on these results it is considered that utilising infiltration as the primary means of disposal will not be feasible.

Discharge to Watercourse.

The nearest open watercourse is located circa 350mm from site, therefore direct discharge into this watercourse is considered not feasible.

Investigations are being undertaken to identify location of the existing culverted watercourse and the feasibility of discharging directly into it. The CCTV survey of the drainage serving the existing school buildings, indicates that there is potentially an existing connection from the surface water drainage into the culverted watercourse which we would be looking at maintaining / utilising for the new development.

Discharge into surface water sewer

DCWW record plans identify no surface water sewers in the vicinity of the site.

Discharge into Combined Sewers.

As previously outlined the DCWW records identify combined sewers in both Penllwyn Lane and Blackwood Road. The CCTV survey indicates that some of the site potentially discharges into the combined sewer in Penllwyn Lane, however this needs to be confirmed.

It is proposed to retain this existing connection for mainly the runoff from the retained buildings at a reduced discharge rate.

Sustainable Drainage Systems

To comply with Planning and SAB requirements, surface water discharge from the sport hall on site will need to be restricted to greenfield runoff, to mitigate any offsite flood risk.

As such, the surface water will be attenuated on site for the 1 in 100 + 30% climate change event plus 10% urban creep.

A drainage strategy has been drawn up for the site and identifies that the surface water run off will be captured at source into a series of SuDS features, including swales and permeable paving to comply with the SAB requirements.

The permeable paving within the north west car park is proposed to the culverted watercourse along the north west boundary of the site drain via a flow control manhole, restricted to greenfield rates.

It is proposed that the 3G MUGA is to be self attenuating, with additional storage as required. The car parking bays around the site are to be constructed from permeable paving with the access roads to be an impermeable construction. This proposal will provide attenuation for both car parking and access roads

The bus drop off is to be constructed with an impermeable surface with granular attenuation sub-base to provide attenuation. The island located within the centre of the bus drop off areas is proposed as a raingarden which will take runoff from the road.

These will drain to a flow control manhole located in the South via either a piped system or a swale. It is proposed to discharge at a greenfield rate of runoff into the culverted watercourse running along the Southern boundary of the site.

The existing building and associated drainage is to remain largely unchanged, however a small area of proposed constructed will need to discharge into the same outfall in Penllwyn Road. It is proposed to reduce the discharge from the existing area up to 50%.

The SAB process require a number of factors to be considered within the development, these include:

- Green / Blue Roof
- Water Quality
- Rainwater re-use
- Biodiversity and Amenity

Green/Blue Roof:

The roof structure of the proposed building will be a dual pitched and is suited to being of lightweight construction. Adoption of a green/blue roof would thus be unsuitable as the increase in dead loading would significantly increase the tonnage of steel required.

Water Quality:

Water quality benefits will be achieved through the use of the SuDS Management Train.

Rainwater Re-Use:

The end use of the existing school building with existing water supply and proposed sports hall and outdoor areas does not suit the use of rainwater recycling on a large scale, particularly within the building itself. Thus rainwater re-use will be limited to that associated with landscaping maintenance.

Permeable Paving Systems:

These will be utilised across large areas of the proposed hardstandings, in particular the external car parking areas.

Biodiversity / Amenity

The proposed drainage strategy includes SuDS features that will add to the biodiversity and amenity of the site. These along with the inclusion of the wildflower planting in the embankment between the existing school building and proposed MUGA means that the development is in compliance with the SAB guidance.

Discharge Rate & Volume Control:

Equivalent greenfield values will be achieved through the use of the SuDS Management Train.

Attenuation and Flow Control:

Attenuation will be achieved across a series of SuDS features including permeable paving and swales and with flow control being achieved using a formal flow control device prior to outfall.

Foul Drainage

The new building will include toilet blocks, sinks and shower blocks which will be discharged into the combined sewer located in Penllwyn Lane.

8.7 Ground Conditions

A ground investigation report has been commissioned and produced by Earth Science Partnership and has been submitted in support of this application.

A summary of the report is as follows:

Geotechnical

- In summary, the available information indicates that there are likely to be abandoned mine workings within the Mynyddislwyn seam at between 5m and 12.5m beneath the site and further consideration of this aspect will be required.
- We consider that the potential for shrinkable/swelling soils at the site should be advanced from that reported in the environmental data report (Table 3, Very Low) to Moderate.
- We consider that the potential for compressible ground at the site should be advanced from that reported in the environmental data report (Table 3, No Hazard) to Moderate.
- We consider that the potential for sulphate/pyrite attack on buried concrete would be Moderate.
- Given the currently available information, the risk from radon is considered Low and the Preliminary Risk Assessment has indicated that no radon protection is required.

Ground Contamination

At this desk study stage, no potential contaminants of concern have been identified. No evidence has been identified from the desk study to suggest that radioactive substances may be present on the site.

Recommendations

- Additional works recommended for detailed design. See Section 9.0 of the Ground Investigation Report which can be found in Appendix C.
- On the basis of the available investigation information, we consider that mass concrete spread foundations could be used at the site, We recommend that the minimum foundation depth should be 1.5m below ground level.
Due to the presence of Made Ground and fine Glacial Deposits in some areas of the site, the use of cast in-situ ground bearing floor slabs is not considered suitable and slabs should be suspended.

8.9 Construction Waste

As part of the project requirements the Contractor will be required to construct the building to ensure that a minimum of 15% of total material used in construction, by value, derives from reused and recycled content. The Contractor will use the WRAP Net Waste Tool (www.wrap.org.uk/nwtool) to quantify this, in accordance with Welsh Assembly Government funding requirements, and submit a final report verifying the final achieved recycled percentage.

9.0 **Movement to, from and within the development**

9.1 A Traffic Statement (TS) has been commissioned and produced by RPS Consulting and is included as part of the PAC information. The statement is summarised below:

Traffic Impact Summary

The majority of students are anticipated to commute initially to/ from school with taxis. However, over time, the school is planning to develop a mini-bus service that will collect students around the borough. All vehicular student trips will be easily accommodated within the proposed school masterplan area during both morning and afternoon peaks without any adverse impact on the local highway network.

Similarly, the majority of staff will commute to/ from school by private car, however they are expected to arrive at school prior to students' arrival and leave after the students' departure; hence the staff and student trips will not be coinciding. The car parking areas within the proposed CVL will have capacity to accommodate the staff parking demand.

Also, it is expected that the anticipated trips to/ from the CVL site for community use to be minimal and to be easily accommodated within the site's car parking areas without any adverse impact to the surrounding highway network.

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10.0 Accessibility

- 10.1 A fundamental requirement of the C21st School programme is that facilities are made fully accessible for all users. External areas are required to conform to accessibility standards in terms of ramps, paths, lighting and changes in level. Internal areas similarly must meet building control regulations in this respect. The proposed development will ensure equality of access regardless of physical or mental impairment.
- 10.2 Consultation will be undertaken with the Authority's Access Group. As part of the Authority's Access protocol, meetings with the Access Group will continue throughout the duration of the project to ensure matters are appropriately addressed.

Appendix A

Drawings:

Drawings submitted are:

4741 P001 Site Location/Existing Site Layout
4741 P002 Proposed Site Layout
4741 P003 Existing Floor Layouts
4741 P004 Proposed Floor Layouts
4741 P005 Proposed Sports Hall Layout
4741 P006 Existing Elevations
4741 P007 Proposed Elevations
4741 P008 Proposed Sports Hall Elevations
4741 P009 3D Visualisations

080357-CUR-XX-XX-DR-C-92003-P04 Proposed Drainage Layout

687/01 Sketch Landscape Proposals