

<u>ITEM 2.3</u>	
<u>APPLICATION NO:</u> P2014/0501	<u>DATE:</u> 04/06/2014
PROPOSAL: Demolition of existing buildings and construction of a building to accommodate a new primary and a secondary school with associated outbuildings, means of access, sports facilities and playing fields, car parking, external lighting, boundary treatment and hard and soft landscaping.	
LOCATION: Western Avenue Playing Fields, Adjacent To Seaway Parade, Sandfields, Port Talbot	
APPLICANT: Neath Port Talbot County Borough Council	
TYPE: Full Plans	
WARD: Baglan	

Background Information

The application is reported to Committee due to its strategic importance.

Cllr Paddison requested the application be determined at Committee due to the following issues:

1. The new school may cause future traffic problems within the locality. The area is already suffering increased traffic volume due to the M4 junction's experimental closure.
2. I have received representations from residents regarding pollution on their fear that it may increase due to slow moving traffic and increased volume of traffic.
3. Residents are concerned that trees and vegetation will be removed and that they will not be replaced
4. The safety of residents by placing insufficient or incorrectly placed parking and drop off spaces.
5. The possible ill effects on the road surface due to increased traffic on Seaway Parade.
6. The reduction in accessibility of the playing fields as a local amenity.
7. Because this development is to be carried out by the Council and to allow the public access to the debate.

Planning History:

T1983/4462 – Change of use from changing room and showers to boys club: Approved – 23/08/2014

Publicity and Responses if applicable:

National Resources Wales: Original response agrees with findings of FCA but requested additional flood modelling was undertaken in advance of determination. The comments of NRW on the updated FCA are awaited and will be reported to Members as part of an amendment sheet.

Crime Prevention Design Officer: No objections (recommendations made in respect of Secure by Design)

Coal Authority: No objections

Welsh Water: No objections

Contaminated Land: No objections

Head of Engineering and Transport (Highways): No objections

Head of Engineering and Transport (Drainage): No objections

Biodiversity Unit: No objections

Noise Pollution: No objections

Play Development: No reply received

Air Pollution: No objections

The application was advertised through the display of a number of Site Notices in the vicinity, with a number of nearby residential properties also notified. The application was also advertised in the press as a major development.

In response, 8 letters of representation have been received to date, one of which was accompanied by a petition signed by the residents of 51 of the dwellings in Afandale (in excess of 70 signatures).

The objections to the development are summarised as follows: -

- Seaway Parade is a bus route with currently 3 bus shelters. Buses being stopped at bus-stops will cause queues of traffic to form during the busy school-run periods each days.
- School-run drivers associated with the expected 1500 students will use Afandale to drop off and pick up their children. This is so that they do not have to complete a full loop and a half of the proposed pit-stop parking bay and exit from the school and 2 roundabouts.
- Drivers doing the school-run will attempt to find quicker routes rather than using the roundabouts. The proposed layout will cause driver frustration which will lead to annoyance, anger and dangerous driving
- In the afternoon, 30 minutes before the school day ends, cars will start to park in Afandale.
- In the colder months, parked cars will have their engines running, increasing the local pollution levels. This is also the case in the hotter months, as engines will still be running because the air-conditioning will be on.
- Unless 'h bars' are painted across them, driveways will be blocked by school run cars.
- Afandale is a cul-de-sac, all these cars will have to turn around, and will often use resident's driveways to do this.
- Vehicles associated with the emergency services will be hampered by the moving, stationary and parked school-run cars in both Afandale and sea way parade.
- The increased traffic will cause many hazards for pedestrians wanting to cross the road to get to the opposite side of the road from Afandale.
- There does not appear to be any safe crossing for older school children wishing to cross seaway parade.
- The proposed pit lane drop off area on the school premises alongside seaway parade, at the very least need to start at the smaller roundabout and continue along the full length of the school property to the second larger roundabout and not have its exit half way along Seaway Parade.
- Still object to the pit-stops regardless
- An alternative drop off point could be 265m across the proposed football fields next to the old industrial estate on the other side of the school, still parallel to Seaway Parade.
- Inconsiderate parking by residents causes a great deal of stress to residents
- No consideration of the safety of residents is taken by the School-

run parents

- Waste of resources when residents have to contact police to complain.
- Changing Seaway Parade will have an extremely negative effect on the traffic on the estate.
- Increased traffic flow, queuing and congestion caused by the children travelling from the Briton Ferry area.
- I will have to travel much further to visit relatives on the estate.
- Traffic accidents for those trying to pull out of Afandale
- Create a third lane on Seaway Parade to facilitate safer and easier access at the pupil drop off area.
- A solution may be to extend the area allocated to staff parking to encompass drop-off area for pupils.
- The removal of a considerable amount of mature trees along the southern boundary of Seaway Parade. Trees provide a physical/noise barrier to the playing fields and their removal will remove the oxygenating effect to our world.
- Upset that not all 62 homes on Afandale were consulted
- Increased traffic on Seaway Parade will cause health and safety issues for residents of Afandale as they have only one access and egress point.
- Plans do not take into account parents parking as they wait for their children
- Stationary cars with their engines running emit large amounts of carbon monoxide.
- The removal of the existing playing fields, children's play area and community centre will have an effect on the local environment as these are the only provisions for leisure activities for children in this area.
- The entrance at the site should be at the position of the industrial estate. This would allow the playing facilities to remain.
- Enquired as to who owns the land
- Increased traffic on Seaway Parade would produce a choke point
- Why is the School being built on contaminated land
- Negative Impact of pulling down a well established tree line on Seaway Parade.

A letter has also been received from Cllr J. Evans requesting that the application be deferred until a full assessment is undertaken of the surface condition of the roads around the application site, given that they will be further affected by increased traffic.

Description of Site and its Surroundings:

The site covers an area of approximately 15.4ha and comprises of playing fields, a running track, changing rooms and educational centre (Sandfields) and a children's playground adjacent to Seaway Parade. It is mainly flat, although some of the football pitches in the south of the site are slightly raised relative to the rest of the site by approximately 1m. There are also two floodlights in the centre of the site serving the sports pitches. With reference to the sports pitches, these are used by the existing Sandfields Comprehensive School, adjacent to the site and the local community.

To the immediate north and west of the site is the former BP Chemical Works, which occupies an area of at least 200. The majority of the buildings have been demolished and the site has been identified for regeneration to include residential and new employment uses.

To the north-east of the site is the Seaway Parade Industrial Estate which comprises of a number of Industrial units. To the south and west are residential properties.

Brief description of proposal:

This application is submitted by the Council as part of Neath Port Talbot's Strategic School Improvement Programme, which aims to improve education provision through opening, amalgamating, merging and closing schools.

The application seeks full planning permission for the construction (following demolition of existing buildings) of a new primary and secondary school with associated outbuildings, means of access, sports facilities and playing fields, car parking, external lighting, boundary treatment and hard and soft landscaping.

The development will provide an "all through school" facility as follows:

- A 11,796 sq.m. three storey secondary school for 1100 secondary pupils and 100 additional learning needs (ALN) pupils;
- A 1,915m² single storey primary school for 300 primary pupils.

The new school will amalgamate the following four existing schools onto

one site: -

- Traethemelyn Primary School;
- Cwrt Sart Comprehensive School;
- Glanafan Comprehensive School; and
- Sandfields Comprehensive School, including existing Learning Support Centre and Pupil Inclusion Centre.

It is anticipated that the school would employ 157 staff.

Demolition Works

The demolition works include the existing buildings along with children's play area facing Seaway Parade as well as the changing facilities and Sandfields Community Education Centre.

Building Design and Size

The Primary and Secondary School building will measure 13,711 square metres in floor area. The building has three floors and will have maximum height of approximately 16.4m when measured from ground level. The building shape has been designed to rise from a single storey primary school to the three storey portion at the central hub area of the school.

The submitted DAS notes that the building is designed based on a courtyard plan with a split layout, with the primary school having its own single storey wing to provide its own identity, scale and entrance. It also notes that the overall scale of the building responds to the need to provide a landmark building and reduce the extent to which sports facilities will be affected.

Key components of the developed Master Plan are the need for:

- An architectural solution that links the school to the community so it becomes a focus for the community.
- A single facility approach, creating flexible options, resource sharing and community zoning.
- A sense of arrival to each of the new schools with direct links to the central hub.
- Clear vehicular and pedestrian separation principles offering good visual connectivity and legibility.

- Increased learning opportunities with different ‘zoning’ options responding to school year activities and Additional Learning Needs (ALN) and special educational needs (SEN) requirements.
- Hard and soft landscape integrated with a hierarchy of external space for different uses - all linked to the internal spaces.
- Provide a coordinated traffic management scheme with the Council’s Highways Engineers.

With regard to external materials, the roof will be a stucco embossed aluminium standing seam system over the teaching accommodation, with the flat roof area and canopies utilising a light grey single membrane roofing system. Staffordshire Blue Brindle engineering brickwork is proposed in the walls at ground level, whilst in the upper level walls there will be coloured insulated render with some feature coloured panels between the windows. The feature walls plan to utilise coloured metal cladding panels for the large central spaces and early years primary school classrooms. The Sports Hall will have a perforated cladding panel system known as a Transpired solar Collector. The entrance area and leadership suite will be clad in rainscreen panels. All window reveal panels within the rainscreen system will be brightly coloured pressed metal to close off the cavity around the windows. In terms of doors, they will be Louvre and Metal faced doors to the halls.

Access and Car Parking

The application has been supported by a Transport Assessment, with the plans and the assessment detailing measures on and off site to mitigate the impacts of the development.

The submitted plans indicate two new vehicular access points, one from the south-west (Seaway Parade) to provide access for day time visitors and pupils arriving by taxi or minibus, the other from the north-east (via Sirius Drive and Baglan Energy Park), to provide access to the main staff car park and servicing area. These will be supported by new 3m wide cycle and pedestrian paths.

The scheme also proposes the construction of a new on-site staff car park (117 spaces), 17 visitor spaces and 11 disabled spaces, and cycle parking plus new drop-off parking areas along the Seaway Parade boundary and to the south-western boundary there is proposed a new pedestrian access.

To assist access to the school, a series of works are to be carried out as part of the “Safe Routes to Schools” initiative. Full details are included in the Transport Assessment, and are addressed later in the report.

Children’s Play / Sports Facilities

Sports facilities include a 3G Artificial Grass Pitch with floodlighting as well as associated landscaping, including boundary treatments and drainage/ servicing works that include a sprinkler tank enclosed under a grass sculpted mound, and small incoming services enclosures at the boundaries.

A replacement children’s play area will be provided at the south western corner of the site.

Community Use:

The new School will also be available for community use out of school hours, with internal planning of the building allowing for a sequential shut down of the teaching wings, permitting community access to the central hub spaces during normal school hours, with entry to be controlled by staff at the main reception areas for each school.

Changing facilities are proposed to be located as close to the sports areas as possible. All changing areas will include shower areas and they will each have a separate lockable entry door. There are toilet facilities located within the entrance areas for informal use without gaining access to the locked changing area.

EIA and AA Screening:

The application site exceeds the Schedule 2, column 2 threshold for development of this type as outlined within the Environmental Impact Assessment Regulations. As such the application has been screened in accordance with the requirements of Schedule 3 of the Regulations. The findings of the screening report were that the scale and nature of the potential impact associated with the development both alone and in combination with other developments within the area would not be of a type that would require the carrying out of an Environmental Impact Assessment or the subsequent submission of an Environmental Statement in support of the application.

The proposed development is not located within a zone of influence for any SAC, CSAC or Ramsar sites. As such it is considered that an Appropriate Assessment as set down within the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2010 is not required.

Material Considerations:

The main issues to be considered in the determination of the application are the principle of the proposed development, the impact upon the character and appearance of the surrounding area, the impact upon the residential amenity of the occupiers of the adjacent dwellings. The impact upon highway safety, the impact upon the existing landscaping and Ecology of the application site and the impact upon Contaminated Land.

Policy Context:

Neath Port Talbot Unitary Development Plan

The relevant policies that must be considered in the determination of the application are:

- GC1 New buildings/structures and changes of use
- H3 Infill and windfall development
- EC3 Creation or expansion of business within settlement limits
- BB1 Regeneration Initiative
- ENV16 Contaminated land
- ENV17 Design
- ENV29 Environmental quality and amenity
- T1 Location, layout and accessibility of new proposals
- R01 protection of recreation, sport facilities and open space
- R02 New sport and recreation facilities

Principle of Proposed Development

The application site is located within the identified settlement as set down within the Neath Port Talbot Unitary Development Plan, where the principle of development is considered to be acceptable subject to the development complying with the requirements of the other policies within the development plan. In addition to key areas relating to highway safety and local amenity, a further issue relates to the impact on playing fields/ open space provision.

In this respect, Planning Policy Wales states that all playing fields 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; or there is an excess of such provision in the area. This guidance is essentially reflected in the criteria within UDP Policy RO1 - Protection of Recreation, Sport Facilities And Open Spaces - which seeks to resist the loss of playing fields, formal and informal open space, children's playgrounds, allotments and indoor facilities for development

The application site is currently occupied by playing fields, running track and community centre and the proposal does include the temporary loss of playing field facilities during the schools construction. This however would soon be rectified as the development would represent an enhancement of the current facilities that are on site with new and replacement facilities, which will be open to the community.

The table below details the existing and proposed recreational facilities:

Existing	Proposed
5 number grass pitches	1 number 3G Grass Pitch (AGP) (Floodlit) 4 number full size grass football pitches 1 number junior football pitch
2 number grass rugby pitches	1 number grass rugby pitches
1 number cricket pitch	1 number cricket pitch
	1 astro turf pitch
	2 netball courts
2 number long jump pits	Replacement long jump facilities
Cinder athletics race track (400m)	100m running track 740m running track
Changing facilities and WC block	Re-located within School building
Children's play area	Replacement facility on site

In addition to the above facilities, the proposal involves the loss of approximately 3.12ha of open space to facilitate the school development. This equates to a 27% reduction across the whole site. There is however an enhancement in the overall recreational value of the land providing greater community benefit, as well as the wider educational benefits which will be delivered by the new development. Therefore it is considered that the proposal is in accordance with UDP Policy R01

which promotes the following:

“Where an existing facility which serves the area well can best be retained and enhanced by virtue of development of a small part of the site”.

It is therefore considered that the principle of the proposed development would be acceptable and the proposed development would comply with Policies R01 and R02.

Visual Amenity:

The proposed development would replace the existing community buildings with a new purpose built structure. The applicants have stated in their accompanying documents that; “The approach to the form of the building has been heavily influenced by the desire to create a landmark building and also one that reflects the character of the surrounding landscape”. With regard to the landscape, there are significant hills surrounding the site to the east and north, which is in contrast to the flat topography of the site itself and the surrounding area. The applicant considers the building design is such that it provides a visual replication of the surrounding landscape where the building mass and sculpted landscape combine to replicate the soft landforms of the Mynydd Dinas beyond.

The proposed design, size and massing of the development would make it a visual landmark within the immediate area, while the use and facilities proposed within the site would help to create an activity focus for the community within which it is located and will serve.

As such it is considered that the proposed development would result in the formation of a visually pleasing development which would act as an attractive landmark building and would have no detrimental impact upon the character or appearance of the surrounding area.

Sustainable Building Design

Although TAN22 (Sustainable Buildings) has now been cancelled by the Welsh Government, the Council nevertheless seeks to encourage developers to develop high quality, sustainable buildings. Furthermore it is a requirement of the funding arrangements of this project that a BREEAM Excellent rating is obtained and a BREEAM pre-assessment forms part of the application.

To achieve this rating the new school will embrace innovative and forward thinking energy efficiency and low/zero carbon principles and technologies delivering a state of the art school for future generations, and include sustainable features including:

- Broad use of natural daylight for both learning environments and distribution spaces. This will have a direct effect by reducing the reliance on artificial light and will enhance the visual quality of the classrooms.
- Natural ventilation
- A Façade design which responds to the orientation of the building with shading devices and g-values for glass that will limit solar gains during school operation.
- Use of renewable energy systems, such as photovoltaic cells on the roof and the transpired solar collector on the Sports Hall wall, which will provide preheated air to the Sports Hall and Activity Studio areas.
- Water attenuation in the landscape proposals: SUDS etc. with rainwater harvesting from the roofs for flushing toilets.

All of the above design features will ensure that the development will embrace Welsh Government sustainability objectives.

Residential Amenity:

The proposed development is located within an area of land where the nearest residential properties are located at Glan Afan and Handel Avenue, which are located at a distance of 90 and 295m away from the nearest elevation of the proposed development respectively. These residential estates are separated from the site perimeter by highway roads serving Seaway Parade and access to the Industrial Estate. As such, there would be no unacceptable overlooking or overbearing impacts upon these residential properties.

Noise

It is clear that there will be an increase in noise with the activities associated with an educational environment as opposed to it just serving as a community recreational area. Such impacts will be notable especially during drop-off and pick-up times, during ‘play times’ and

when the facility is in use by the community. Nevertheless, given its location within the settlement boundary, and also adjacent to a main highway network which also separates it from existing residential areas opposite, the increase in noise from the new use is not considered to have any unacceptable impacts on the nearby residents.

Proposed Lighting

A lighting plan has been submitted which indicates the provision of 38no. 6metre high columns for parking and drop-off areas. In addition, the sports pitches (hockey pitch and Multi use Games Area (MUGA)) in the northern part of the site will be illuminated by 18 no. 12metre high columns.

The submission indicates that it is intended that the all-weather pitches will be used from 8am-10pm Monday to Friday, with external lighting controlled via various contactor, multi-channel time-switch and photocell arrangements, all set to limit “hours of use”.

The lighting scheme indicates satisfactorily that there would be no unacceptable impact from the lighting of the public areas or sports pitches, in relation to nearby residential properties. As a responsible authority, the adoption of the controls on hours of use will further ensure that there would be no unacceptable impact from out of hours use of such facilities.

Highway Safety

In accordance with guidance in TAN18 Transport (2007), the application for the new school has been accompanied by a Transport Assessment, including data regarding the accessibility of the site by all modes and the impacts on likely movement patterns.

The Transport Assessment (TA) concludes that the site is highly accessible by sustainable means of travel and is centrally located within the revised catchment for secondary school pupils. The levels of car parking are broadly in line with the adopted CSS Standards taking into account the nature of the proposals, which will amalgamate 4 existing schools, the resulting scale of the development proposals and the number of pupils proposed within the new school. Adequate provision has also been made for drop-off and pick-up provision by cars and buses associated with the school. Furthermore the TA did not highlight any conflict between emergency vehicles and traffic using the School facility

on either Seaway Parade or Western Avenue.

Whilst the submitted plans proposed a drop off point on Western Avenue, further discussions have considered the traffic coming from a northern direction and utilising an additional drop off point off Sirius Drive. This area of the site is currently used as the access to a staff car parking area, however there is also sufficient land available to accommodate a drop off and turning area. Whilst this has not been incorporated into the development, it can be secured by a condition and will result in a potential decrease in traffic accessing the site via Western Avenue.

The Head of Engineering and Transport (Highways) has assessed the scheme along with the accompanying supporting information, while as part of the submission the applicant has undertaken a Stage 1 Road Safety Audit which concluded that no significant matters have been raised.

The “Safer Routes to Schools” initiative aims to enable more young people to walk and cycle to school, and in this context it is necessary to ensure that infrastructure is available to encourage pupils and other members of the public to walk and cycle to the site.

The submission indicates that approximately two thirds of the pupils will be travelling to school from the communities north of the site (and the M4). In this respect, in addition to pedestrian and cycle access points alongside the vehicular entrances, additional works are proposed outside of the site boundary, including from Briton Ferry to the north of the site via Central Avenue and Sirius Drive to ensure that the infrastructure is provided to make the development sustainable and accessible to the local community. These new highways works (listed below from the TA, and required by condition) will need to be in place before first beneficial use of the school.

	Potential intervention	Recommendation	Supporting Information
1	Improved pedestrian crossing provision on Seaway Parade arm off Rutherglen roundabout	Strongly advised	Consideration should be given to upgrading the existing dropped kerb provision to a zebra, using the same alignment as the existing facility
2	Provision of guard railings to separate the footway from the carriageway on Seaway Parade (on dualled section	Could be advised	The level difference between the westbound and eastbound carriageways inhibits

subject to 50mph speed limit).		pedestrian crossing. However, traffic speeds could be intimidating to pedestrians and guard railings may make child pedestrians and their parents feel more confident in using this route.
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The works described in the table above will be secured by a condition prior to the first beneficial use of the School should this application be successful.

Other off site improvement works recommended by the TA (for example a ghost island crossing on Brunel way (linking southern and northern carriageways); Provision of a continuous footway past the Briton Ferry Industrial Estate HWRC to link Brunel Way to Church Street; traffic calming or speed enforcement on Brunel Way to reduce vehicle speeds and maintenance of vegetation at the Seaway Parade roundabout to ensure adequate visibilities for pedestrians wishing to cross the western arm of Seaway Parade) are to be delivered by the Council outside the terms of this consent, and are not conditioned since they are not considered strictly necessary for this development having regard to an existing safer route to the school. Once delivered, however, they will allow an alternative route which will also have wider community benefits.

Once the school becomes fully operational it is important to assess whether there has been any impact on traffic as a result of the scheme. This will be secured by a condition that will re-assess the signal controlled junction of Neath Road/Ynysmaerdy Road/Shelone Road during term time. If an increase of more than 2% of traffic travelling in a southerly direction associated with the proposed school has developed over the figures present in the TA then mitigation measures will have to be implemented.

The TA will also need further analysis before the school is ready to open to take into account the slip road closure of the M4 Motorway at Port Talbot. If any necessary mitigation measures are identified then these will have to be completed on site prior to the first beneficial use of the school.

Local objections

A number of highway related objections and concerns have been raised by the local residents. These will be addressed in the following paragraphs.

Seaway Parade currently serves 3 bus shelters. The public is concerned that during the busy school-run periods queues of traffic will accumulate impacting on highway safety. ***This is not considered to have a negative impact on highway safety because the width of the road should be able to accommodate the passing of a regular sized car. Furthermore as a rule, the average stopping time for a parked Bus is around 20 seconds.***

School-run drivers associated with the expected 1500 students will use Afandale to drop off and pick up their children. This is so that they do not have to complete a full loop and a half of the proposed pit-stop parking bay and exit from the school and 2 roundabouts. ***In the event that this potential scenario occurs and causes unacceptable problems for the residents of Afandale, Traffic Regulation Orders could be enacted to prohibit vehicles, except for access to residents of the housing estate.***

Drivers doing the school-run will attempt to find quicker routes rather than using the roundabouts. The proposed layout will cause driver frustration which will lead to annoyance, anger and dangerous driving. ***The road layout will be designed as such so that it is clear what route drivers should be using.***

In the afternoon, 30 minutes before the school day ends, cars will start to park in Afandale. ***This has been addressed in the earlier paragraphs with the potential for Traffic Regulation Orders.***

The increased traffic will cause many hazards for pedestrians wanting to cross the road to get to the opposite side of the road from Afandale. ***A scheme is required to be submitted by means of condition to provide controlled crossing points.***

The proposed pit lane drop off area on the school premises alongside seaway parade, at the very least needs to start at the smaller roundabout and continue along the full length of the school property to the second larger roundabout and not have its exit half way along Seaway Parade. ***This area has been deemed to be acceptable to accommodate the intended traffic generation along the stretch of highway.***

Inconsiderate parking by residents causes a great deal of stress to residents. ***While this fear is acknowledged, it is not something that can be controlled by the Local Authority.***

No consideration of the safety of residents is taken by the School-run parents. ***This is acknowledged, but the statement is not based on any factual evidence, nor is it a matter which affects the conclusions reached above on the impacts of the development.***

Changing Seaway Parade will have an extremely negative effect on the traffic on the estate. ***The Head of Engineering and Transport is satisfied with the submitted TA which does not indicate any major negative effects on the surrounding area.***

There will be increased traffic flow, queuing and congestion caused by the children travelling from the Briton Ferry area. ***The submitted Transport Assessment does not indicate there being a capacity issue due to the increased traffic flow to and from the site in any direction***

Traffic accidents for those trying to pull out of Afandale. ***The proposal has had a Road Safety Audit stage 1 undertaken which has not highlighted any issues.***

Create a third lane on Seaway Parade to facilitate safer and easier access at the pupil drop off area. A solution may be to extend the area allocated to staff parking to encompass drop-off area for pupils.

The above suggestions are noted, and have been addressed in terms of safety and deliverability. The first suggestion has been dismissed for both highway safety and land ownership reasons. However the provision of a drop off point via Sirius Drive has been assessed and can be delivered within the site without unacceptable impact. This additional drop off point can be secured via the imposition of a condition.

Increased traffic on Seaway Parade will cause health and safety issues for residents of Afandale as they have only one access and egress point. ***The Road Safety Audit Stage 1 undertaken has not highlighted such issues***

Plans do not take into account parents parking as they wait for their children. ***The proposals have included a dropping off and picking up areas for parents.***

The entrance at the site should be via the industrial estate, allowing the playing facilities to remain. *Noted, but it is necessary to consider the impacts of the development as proposed within the application, which are considered acceptable as detailed above.*

Increased traffic on Seaway Parade would produce a choke point *The submitted Transport Assessment has indicated that there is sufficient capacity within the surrounding highway network to accommodate both existing and proposed traffic generation.*

The application should be deferred to allow an assessment to be undertaken in relation to the fitness of the road surface around the application site, as this will deteriorate further with additional traffic using the network. *It has been confirmed that the roads around the site will be re-surfaced following construction of the school. This can be secured by condition.*

Public Transport

The site is in an accessible and sustainable location, well served by existing bus stops (served by 4 existing bus services including the 224 and 227 which serve the Sandfields, Aberavon and Port Talbot residential areas) along Seaway Parade/Western Avenue to the south of the site, with Baglan Railway Station less than a kilometre walk from the main entrance of the site. To enhance such access, however, the plans indicate provision of a new bus bay for the school adjacent to the site entrance.

In addition to these conditioned works, a Transport Implementation Strategy has been submitted which, in accordance with TAN 18, seeks to limit the potential impact on local and strategic junctions on the highway network to enable the delivery of these development proposals.

The main tool which will be used for managing travel demand for the proposed development will be a School Travel Plan (STP), which will comprise a package of measures that discourage car-use and promote walking, cycling and the use of public transport for the journey to school. This is conditioned accordingly.

Having regard to the above, the Head of Engineering and Transport is satisfied that the proposal offers no adverse impact on highway safety provided suitable conditions are imposed relating to the above highway improvements, plus parking restrictions on Seaway Parade, creation of controlled pedestrian crossing facilities and new Bus lay-bys. It is thus

concluded that the proposed development, subject to the additional highway works and Travel Plan measures, will have no unacceptable impact on the local highway network.

Land Contamination:

The Councils Contaminated Land section were involved at the pre-planning stage and were subsequently consulted on the Geotechnical and Geoenvironmental interpretive Report along with other reports which included the Groundwater Risk Assessment and the Carbon Disulphide Vapour Assessment. The Contaminated unit offered no negative observations in relation to the proposal.

The only outstanding issue on the site is relating to shallow contamination in the area of BH4 on the northeast boundary. The original proposal indicated that the school buildings would be located above this area and as such a barrier would cap the contamination. However the position of the school has been amended and the BH4 is now in an area of proposed landscaping and recreation use. As a result this area will need further consideration at the detailed design stage to mitigate any risks to the end user and a remediation strategy will be required prior to any work on site. This level of work can be secured through the imposition of suitable land contamination conditions and is not something that would warrant the refusal of the application on land contamination grounds.

Flooding:

Technical Advice Note 15 Development and Flood Risk (TAN15, July 2004) identifies schools as ‘highly vulnerable development’, which are not appropriate in Zone C2. Only less vulnerable developments should usually be allowed in Zone C2, subject to the application of the justification test, including acceptability of consequences. Less vulnerable developments include access roads and car parks.

UDP Policy ENV11 states that “proposals located in areas identified as being at high risk from flooding and other areas where the Authority is satisfied there is a significant risk from flooding will not be permitted unless a flood risk assessment demonstrates that:

- The development could be justified in the location;
- The proposal would not result in the intensification of existing

development which may itself be at risk or would increase the potential adverse impacts of flooding;

- The proposal can be properly protected by engineering works and /or other flood protection measures, which are committed expenditure or would be provided as part of the proposal, and could be expected to be effective for the lifetime of the development”.

A small part of the north eastern boundary of the site is located within Development Advice Map Zone C2 (Areas of the floodplain without significant flood defence infrastructure), with the access road from the north proposed in this area. As a result the application was accompanied by a Flood Consequences Assessment (FCA).

Natural Resources Wales (NRW) advises that they agree with the findings of the FCA that the application site is not considered to be at risk of fluvial flooding in the 1% or 0.1% fluvial flood. They noted, however, that the FCA had not considered the 1% fluvial flooding including allowance for climate change. Although they consider this scenario would not affect the development, they required it to be addressed for completeness, as should the tidal flood risk for 0.5% (including allowance for climate change over the lifetime of the development) and the 0.1% tidal.

NRW therefore requested that the application was not determined until such time as the FCA had been amended to incorporate climate change.

The FCA has since been updated and submitted to Natural Resources Wales for comment. At the time of writing this report, the amended FCA has been forwarded to NRW but their observations have not yet been received. Assurances have however been given that the comments will be received before the determination of the application. These comments will therefore be made available to Members as part of the amendment sheet along with any additional conditions which may be required as a result of such response.

NRW welcome the recommended site specific flood management plan, noting that while the actual development is not considered to be at risk, the surrounding area is and a large number of children located in close proximity to a flood plain should be carefully managed as proposed within the management plan.

Subject to receipt of a satisfactory response from NRW on the updated FCA, the proposals are considered to be acceptable in terms of managing the risk of flooding, and as such it accords with the objectives of Policy ENV11.

Drainage

The Drainage section have reviewed the submissions and raise no objections to the development subject to a condition requiring that surface drainage works are undertaken in accordance with agreed details, and that these should utilise Sustainable Drainage System (SuDS) if possible.

Welsh Water:

Welsh Water offers no objections subject to the imposition of certain conditions which are specifically related to a water main which is in the ownership of Welsh Water. However following scrutiny of the plans it appears that there is no development proposed within 4m of the water main other than landscaping and planting work. These conditions are therefore not considered to be relevant.

Ecology (including trees & protected species):

The application has been assessed by the Local Authority's Biodiversity Unit, who offered no adverse observations. They were satisfied that the information submitted was sufficient subject to the imposition of a number of conditions concerned with biodiversity enhancements, reptile and habitat mitigation, hedgerow management and treatment of invasive Non-native species. These have been incorporated into recommended conditions.

Coal Mining:

The application site falls within the defined Development High Risk Area; therefore within the application site and surrounding area there are coal mining features and hazards which factor in the determination of the application. The Coal Authority's records indicate that the site is located in an area of surface coal resources.

The applicant has obtained appropriate and up-to date coal mining information for the proposed development site and has used this information to inform the Geotechnical and Geoenvironmental Interpretive Report (August 2013), which accompanies this planning

application. The report concludes that the site is at a low risk from shallow mine workings and the boreholes logs submitted indicate that no coal was encountered in the fifteen boreholes drilled within the site. Accordingly, no specific remedial measures are recommended to address the coal mining legacy.

The Coal Authority considers that the content and conclusions of the Reports are sufficient in demonstrating that the application site is, or can be made safe and stable for the proposed development. As a result the Coal Authority offers no objection to the proposed planning application. Following this conclusion made by the Coal Authority, the Planning Authority is also satisfied that there is no danger to the public and the environment within this coal mining area.

Others (including objections):

A number of letters have been received which oppose the development. Whilst some of the comments were highlighted and addressed within the highway safety part of this report, the remainder are as follows;

- In the colder months, parked cars will have their engines running, increasing the local pollution levels. This is also the case in the hotter months, as engines will still be running because the air-conditioning will be on. *The Councils Pollution Control section has not offered any negative feedback with regard pollution generation from engines running. Nevertheless a landscaping scheme will be implemented within and around the perimeter of the site which can accommodate species of plants which absorb pollution*
- Unless ‘h bars’ are painted across them, driveways will be blocked by school run cars. *This has been addressed in the highway section of the appraisal.*
- Still object to the pit-stops regardless. *Noted and addressed previously.*
- An alternative could be 265m across the proposed football fields next to the old industrial estate on the other side of the school, still parallel to Seaway Parade. *Noted and addressed previously.*
- Waste of resources when residents have to contact police to complain. *Note, but not a material planning consideration.*

- I will have to travel much further to visit relatives on the estate. ***It is not clear what the complainant is trying to convey here.***
- The removal of a considerable amount of mature trees along the south end boundary of Seaway Parade. Trees provide a physical/noise barrier to the playing fields and their removal will remove the oxygenating effect to our world. ***This issue has been addressed earlier.***
- Upset that not all 62 homes on Afandale were consulted. ***Statutory obligations with regard to consultations were carried out both on site, in the Press and in letter format to the properties that qualified for notification by post.***
- Stationary cars with their engines running emit large amounts of carbon monoxide. ***Addressed previously in this report.***
- The removal of the existing playing fields, children's play area and community centre will have an effect on the local environment as these are the only provisions for leisure activities for children in this area. ***The playing fields, children play area and community facility will be provided within the new development and will be an improvement on the current facilities.***
- Enquired as to who owns the land. ***Land ownership is not a material planning consideration.***
- Why is the School being built on contaminated land? ***The issues of land contamination have been addressed earlier on in the appraisal.***
- Negative Impact of pulling down a well established tree line on Seaway Parade. ***The issue of visual amenity has been addressed earlier in the appraisal and the application has provided a comprehensive landscape scheme which will ensure that the development is well landscaped and softened by planting both within the site and around its perimeter.***

Conclusion:

The principle of the proposed development at this location is considered to be acceptable, and the proposal would have no detrimental impact upon the character or appearance of the surrounding area or upon the residential amenity of the occupiers of the adjacent dwellings. In addition to this the proposed development would not adversely impact upon the highway safety of the existing road networks, the landscaping, ecology, flood risk, contaminated land or drainage environment of the application site or the wider area. The development therefore complies with Policies GC1, H3, EC3, BB1, ENV16, ENV17, ENV29, T1, RO1 and RO2 of the Neath Port Talbot Unitary Development Plan.

RECOMMENDATION: Approval with Conditions

CONDITIONS

(1)The development hereby permitted shall be begun before the expiration of five years from the date of this permission.

Reason

To comply with the requirements of Section 91 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990.

(2)No development on the superstructure shall take place until samples of the materials to be used in the construction of the external surfaces of the development hereby permitted have been submitted to and approved in writing by the local planning authority. Development shall be carried out in accordance with the approved details.

Reason

In the interest of the visual amenity of the area.

(3)Prior to the commencement of work on site details of the existing and proposed ground levels and finished floor levels of the school buildings and associated outbuildings shall be submitted to, and approved in writing by, the local planning authority. The development shall be completed in accordance with the approved levels.

Reason

In the interest of the amenities of the area and visual amenity

(4) Prior to the first beneficial use of the school a scheme at a scale of 1:500 detailing the lay-bys to the west of the site, the central medians on Seaway Parade, the bus lay-bys on Seaway Parade, the entrance to the drop off area and entrance to the school, the drop off parking area, anti-skid surfacing on Seaway Parade, the barrier and drop off area for the SEN and visitor car park, and all associated signing and lining shall be submitted to, and approved in writing by, the local planning authority. The approved details shall be constructed on site prior to the first beneficial use of the building or playing fields.

Reason

In the interest of highway safety

(5) Prior to the first beneficial use of the school, a scheme detailing the required alterations to the existing cycleway/footway on Seaway parade, together with alterations to the street lighting, highway drainage and pedestrian access points including any signing and lining shall be submitted to, and approved in writing by, the local planning authority. The approved details shall be constructed on site prior to the first beneficial use of the building or playing fields.

Reason

In the interest of highway safety

(6) Prior to the first beneficial use of the school, a scheme at a scale of 1:500 regarding improvements to Sirius Drive to extend the existing carriageway, improve the street lighting, highway drainage, extension of the cycleway footway from Central Avenue in Baglan into the site, including any signing and lining shall be submitted to, and approved in writing by, the local planning authority. The approved details shall be constructed on site prior to the first beneficial use of the building or playing fields.

Reason

In the interest of highway safety

(7) Prior to the first beneficial use of the school, a scheme at a scale of 1:500 detailing Traffic Regulation Orders to prohibit traffic from parking or unloading at any time along Seaway Parade and the roundabout on Western Avenue, including any signing and lining shall be submitted to, and approved in writing by, the local planning authority. The approved details shall be implemented on site prior to the first beneficial use of the building or playing fields.

Reason

In the interest of highway safety

(8) Prior to the first beneficial use of the school, a scheme at a scale of 1:200 detailing the access road and pedestrian link from Sirius Drive into the school, including any signing, lining, street lighting and highway drainage shall be submitted to, and approved in writing by, the local planning authority. The approved layout shall be constructed as such prior to the first beneficial use of the school or playing fields.

Reason

In the interest of highway safety

(9) Notwithstanding the submitted plans, a scheme detailing the provision of a drop off area and turning facility off Sirius Drive shall be submitted to, and approved in writing by, the local planning authority. The approved scheme shall be constructed on site prior to the first beneficial use of the building or playing fields and shall thereafter be retained and available for such purposes.

Reason

In the interest of highway safety

(10) Prior to the first beneficial use of the school, further analysis shall be undertaken of the transport assessment dated May 2014 to include the impact of the slip road closure of the M4 Motorway at Port Talbot. The results of this amended transport assessment shall be submitted to, and approved in writing by, the local planning authority. Any necessary mitigation improvements identified to any junction as a result of Ysgol Bae Baglan traffic generation as part of the re-analysis shall be detailed in the submitted Transport Assessment undertaken, including any associated signing and lining and shall be completed on site prior to the first beneficial use of the school.

Reason

In the interest of highway safety

(11) Within the first 12 months of the first beneficial use of the school the signals controlled junction of Neath Road/Ynysmaerdy Road/Shelone Road shall be re-assessed during term time to determine if there has been any impact from traffic due to the school. If an increase of more than 2% of traffic travelling in a southerly direction has developed above the AM figures detailed in the Transport Assessment May 2014 for the AM opening year 2016 with developments, then a Microprocessor Optimised Vehicle Actuation (MOVA)

system shall be introduced within 12 months of the report being approved by the Local Planning Authority.

Reason

In the interest of highway safety

(12)Prior to the first beneficial use of the school a scheme at a scale of 1:500 detailing mitigation measures indicated in items 1 to 2 on pages 100 to 101 of the transport assessment dated May 2014, including all associated signing and lining shall be submitted to, and approved in writing by, the local planning authority, prior to work commencing on site. The schemes as approved shall be constructed on site to the approval of the Local Planning Authority prior to the first use of the school.

Reason

In the interest of highway safety

(13)Prior to the first beneficial use of the school a scheme at a scale of 1:200 detailing a controlled pedestrian crossing on Seaway Parade with all associated signing and lining and associated streetfurniture near the proposed bus stops shall be submitted to, and approved in writing by, the local planning authority, prior to work commencing on site. The scheme as approved shall be constructed on site to the approval of the Local Planning Authority prior to the first use of the school.

Reason

In the interest of highway safety

(14)Prior to the first beneficial use of the school, a scheme at a scale of 1:200 detailing a controlled pedestrian crossing on Seaway Parade with all associated street furniture, signing and lining, near the roundabout junction of Western Avenue/St Helier Drive/Seaway Parade shall be submitted to, and approved in writing by, the local planning authority, prior to work commencing on site. The scheme as approved shall be constructed on site to the approval of the Local Planning Authority prior to the first use of the school.

Reason

In the interest of highway safety

(15)Within 3 months of the first beneficial use of the school a travel plan shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority and shall include reduction targets of vehicles accessing the site and a monitoring

regime. Full monitoring shall take place in the 1st, 3rd and 5th year with an interim report in the 2nd and 4th year and submitted for the written approval by the Local Planning Authority. After five years of operating the first travel plan, a further travel plan shall be submitted for approval in writing by the Local Planning Authority to view the effectiveness of the plan and if the agreed targets set out in the first travel plan have been met. The assessment of these travel plans shall continue every five years and a new plan submitted every time to be approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority.

Reason

In the interest of highway safety

(16)All highway scheme works requiring alteration of the highway network in relation to Ysgol Bae Baglan shall be subject to Stages 2 to 4 Road Safety Audit in accordance with HD19/03, and shall be submitted to, and approved in writing by, the local planning authority. at each stage of the audit. Any mitigation requirements identified as part of the Road safety Audit shall be undertaken and completed on site before the first beneficial use of the school.

Reason

In the interest of highway safety

(17)Prior to commencement of any work on site a Construction Method Statement shall be submitted to, and approved in writing by, the local planning authority. The approved Statement shall be adhered to throughout the construction period. The Statement shall provide for:

- i)The parking of vehicles of site operatives and visitors.
- ii)loading and unloading of plant and materials
- iii)storage of plant and materials used in constructing the development
- iv)the erection and maintenance of security hoarding including decorative displays where appropriate
- v)wheel washing facilities
- vi)measures to control the emission of dust and dirt during construction
- vii)a scheme for recycling/disposing of waste resulting from construction works
- viii)Restriction in times for deliveries to and vehicles leaving the site during school start and finish times.

Reason

In the interest of highway safety

(18) Foul water and surface water discharges shall be drained separately from the site.

Reason

To protect the integrity of the public sewerage system.

(19) No surface water shall be allowed to connect, either directly or indirectly, to the public sewerage system.

Reason

To prevent hydraulic overloading of the public sewerage system, to protect the health and safety of existing residents and ensure no detriment to the environment

(20) Land drainage run-off shall not be permitted to discharge, either directly or indirectly, into the public sewerage system.

Reason

To prevent hydraulic overload of the public sewerage system and pollution of the environment

(21) The developer shall provide a suitable grease trap to prevent entry into the public sewerage system of matter likely to interfere with the free flow of the sewer contents, or which would prejudicially affect the treatment and disposal of such contents.

Reason

To protect the integrity of the public sewerage system, and sustain an essential and effect service to existing residents.

(22) The development site is crossed by a public sewer. No development (including the raising or lowering of ground levels) will be permitted within 3metres of either side of the centreline of the public sewer.

Reason

To protect the integrity of the public sewer and avoid damage thereto.

(23) Notwithstanding the bird and bat boxes on trees, prior to the first beneficial use of the building the development will be fitted with artificial nesting/roosting opportunities for birds and bats. This is to include:

- A cluster of Swift nest boxes/bricks to be placed under or close to roofs at least 5m from the ground.
- A house sparrow terrace on each elevation
- Bat bricks/boxes incorporated unto the roof/eaves on each elevation

Reason

In the interest of biodiversity.

(24) No site clearance/demolition to take place between 1st March to 31st July inclusive.

Reason

In the interest of biodiversity

(25) If during the commencement of works on the development Japanese Knotweed is encountered on site, work must cease and it must be eradicated immediately.

Reason

In the interest of biodiversity.

(26) Prior to the start of any works on site, the reptile mitigation area (area 17 on 70152_LP(90)100 E Landscape Masterplan) shall be fully prepared as outlined in the Reptile Mitigation Strategy & Phase 1 Survey (Rob Colley Associates 2014) 6.2.2.

Reason

In the interest of biodiversity

(27) Throughout the construction of the development hereby approved the working method for reptiles as outlined in the Reptile Mitigation Strategy & Phase 1 Survey (Rob Colley Associates 2014) 6.2.1 are to be implemented.

Reason

In the interest of biodiversity

(28) Following the first beneficial use of the school the maintenance of the reptile mitigation area (area 17 on 70152_LP(90)100 E Landscape Masterplan) will be undertaken annually in line with the recommendations in the Reptile Mitigation Strategy & Phase 1 Survey (Rob Colley Associates 2014) 6.2.3.

Reason

In the interest of biodiversity

(29)The Sharp rush on site shall be retained in accordance with the methods in the supporting document entitled; Ecology: Summary dated July 2014.

Reason

In the interest of biodiversity

(30) All hedgerows retained on site shall be managed as outlined in the document entitled; Ecology: Summary document dated July 2014.

Reason

In the interest of biodiversity.

(31)The secondary/coastal sand dune floral assemblage on site shall be retained and the management of area 15 on 70152_LP(90)100 E Landscape Masterplan shall be undertaken annually in line with the recommendations in the Reptile Mitigation Strategy & Phase 1 Survey (Rob Colley Associates 2014) 6.3.

Reason

In the interest of biodiversity

(32) Prior to the occupation of the school full details of the surface water drainage scheme shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The submitted scheme shall include details of the findings of an assessment into the potential disposal of surface water by means of a sustainable drainage system in accordance with the principles set out in TAN15. If a sustainable drainage scheme is proposed the following information shall also be provided:

i information about the designed storm period and intensity, the method employed to delay and control the discharge flow of water to greenfield run-off greenfiled run-off (unless otherwise agreed in writing by the Local Planning Authority) and an indication of emergency overland flow routes and measures to prevent the pollution of receiving ground water and/or surface water;

ii a timetable for its implementation;

iii details of the management and maintenance plan for the lifetime of the development which shall include the arrangements for adoption by the any public authority or statutorily undertaker.

The scheme shall be implemented in accordance with the approved details and shall be retained as such thereafter.

Reason

To ensure satisfactory drainage in accordance with TAN 15 Development and Flood Risk.

(33) Prior to the commencement of work on site a remediation scheme to bring the footprints of the buildings and the area of the site hatched green on the approved plan PA 01 to a condition suitable for the intended use by removing any unacceptable risks to human health, buildings, other property and the natural and historical environment shall be prepared and submitted to and agreed in writing with the Local Planning Authority. The scheme shall include all works to be undertaken, proposed remediation objectives, remediation criteria and site management procedures. The measures proposed within the remediation scheme shall be implemented in accordance with an agreed programme of works.

Reason : To ensure that risks from land contamination to the future users of the land and neighbouring land are minimised, together with those to controlled waters, property and ecological systems, and to ensure that the development can be carried out safely without unacceptable risks to workers, neighbours and other offsite receptors.

(34) Prior to beneficial use of the proposed development commencing, a verification report which demonstrates the effectiveness of the agreed remediation works carried out in accordance with condition (Please insert the condition number requiring remediation to be carried out) shall be submitted to and agreed in writing with the Local Planning Authority.

Reason:

To ensure that risks from land contamination to the future users of the land and neighbouring land are minimised, together with those to controlled waters, property and ecological systems, and to ensure that the development can be carried out safely without unacceptable risks to workers, neighbours and other offsite receptors.

(35) In the event that contamination is found at any time when carrying out the approved development that was not previously identified, work on site shall cease immediately and shall be reported in writing to the Local Planning Authority. A Desk Study, Site Investigation, Risk Assessment and where necessary a Remediation Strategy must be undertaken in accordance with the following document:- Land Contamination: A Guide for Developers (WLGA, WAG & EAW, July 2006). This document shall be submitted to and agreed in writing with the Local Planning Authority. Prior to occupation of the development, a verification report which demonstrates the effectiveness of the agreed remediation, shall be submitted to and agreed in writing with the Local Planning Authority.

Reason:

To ensure that risks from land contamination to the future users of the land and neighbouring land are minimised, together with those to controlled waters, property and ecological systems, and to ensure that the development can be carried out safely without unacceptable risks to workers, neighbours and other off site receptors.

(36) Prior to the first occupation of the school, a condition survey of the road network immediately surrounding the application site shall be undertaken and any necessary re-surfacing of that road network shall be completed to address deficiencies identified in the condition survey.

Reason:

In the interest of highways safety

REASON FOR GRANTING PLANNING PERMISSION

The decision to grant planning permission has been taken in accordance with Section 38 of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004, which requires that, in determining a planning application the determination must be in accordance with the Development Plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise.

The principle of the proposed development is considered to be acceptable, and the proposal would have no detrimental impact upon the character or appearance of the surrounding area or upon the residential amenity of the occupiers of the adjacent dwellings. In addition to this the proposed development would not adversely impact upon the existing highway safety of the road networks, the landscaping, ecology, flood risk, contaminated land or

drainage environment of the application site or the wider area. The development therefore complies with Policies GC1, H3, EC3, BB1, ENV16, ENV17, ENV29, T1, RO1 and RO2 of the Neath Port Talbot Unitary Development Plan.