

SECTION A – MATTERS FOR DECISION

Planning Applications Recommended For Approval

<u>APPLICATION NO:</u> P2019/5028	<u>DATE:</u> 05/06/2019
PROPOSAL:	Demolition of existing school and construction of a new comprehensive school with car parking, accesses, sports facilities, external lighting, CCTV, landscaping, drainage works, changes to ground levels plus associated works
LOCATION:	Cefn Saeson Comprehensive School, Afan Valley Road, Cimla
APPLICANT:	Neath Port Talbot County Borough Council
TYPE:	Full Plans
WARD:	Cimla

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

This planning application is being report to Planning Committee as a significant planning application submitted by the Council, and since it would represent a material departure from the adopted Neath Port Talbot Local Development Plan.

SITE AND CONTEXT

The application site is located at Cefn Saeson School, Afan Valley Road, Cimla.

The site measures approximately 6.1 hectares in area and is currently occupied Cefn Saeson Comprehensive School and the associated grounds. It comprises a number of school buildings, caretaker's house, playing fields and tarmac areas, and is accessed off Afan Valley Road, Cimla. It is bounded by residential dwellings to the north (off Brynsiriol) and west (off Greenwood Drive), Afan Valley Road (B4287) to the south, and agricultural land to the east.

The site is naturally split into three relatively level tiers. The first (lower) level comprises the existing flat-roofed school buildings (up to three-storeys high and split-levels) all-weather sports pitch, car parking and bus drop-off areas; the second level (middle level) comprises the existing rugby/football pitch; whilst the third (upper) level comprises the existing hockey pitch and banked area. There is an existing Site of Interest for Nature Conservation (SINC) watercourse running along the north-east and northern boundaries of the site.

The existing school buildings are located within the residential settlement boundary (shown on the aerial image below) but the remainder of the site lies within the countryside, as well as forming part of the Neath / Tonna / Cimla / Efail Fach 'Green Wedge' (Policy EN3/3 refers).



Figure 1: Aerial Photo (2017) identifying extent of residential settlement boundary

BACKGROUND TO NPTC 21ST CENTURY SCHOOLS PROGRAMME AND STRATEGIC OVERVIEW

The Council is responsible for promoting high educational standards and for delivering efficient primary and secondary education. Having the right schools in the right place and ensuring that they are fit for the 21st century learner is the challenge facing the Council. Achieving this will involve reviewing the number and type of schools the Council has in its area, and assessing whether or not best use is being made of resources and facilities.

Implementing the Strategic School Improvement Programme (SSIP) involves reviewing existing provision and determining the number and type of schools needed to deliver education effectively and efficiently across the County Borough. It will most likely lead to substantial change involving opening new schools, closing existing schools, merging or amalgamating schools, federating schools and promoting new initiatives that support collaborative working between schools.

The Council has decided to review its provision on the basis of:

- Educational standards;
- The need for places and the accessibility of schools;
- The quality and suitability of school accommodation;
- Effective financial management.

The new school will provide all the facilities expected in a modern 21st Century all-through school with a certain level of shared community facilities. In order to be fit for 21st century teaching and learning the council requires that the new buildings:

- Feature high quality design;
- Are highly functional and sustainable in all senses;

- Are fit for a modern curriculum by being adaptable to future needs;
- Promote a culture of lifelong learning within communities;
- Serve as a source of pride for present and future generations;
- Obtain a BREEAM Excellent rating, Secured by Design certification and have a sprinkler system installed to protect from fire, in line with Welsh Government's expectations and condition of grant.

It should be noted that the proposed scheme would meet the above requirements.

It was reported to the Authority's Cabinet meeting on 4th October 2017 that Cefn Saeson Comprehensive requires a new build English-medium school for 900 pupils (aged 11-16 years) to replace an existing secondary school assessed as building condition category D with c.£7.4m of backlog maintenance and accessibility costs. The Cabinet approved the Band B programme (which includes Cefn Saeson Comprehensive), and this programme of works was awarded Welsh Government funding in February 2019.

DESCRIPTION OF DEVELOPMENT

This is a full planning application for the demolition of the existing school and construction of a new comprehensive school with car parking area, accesses onto the B4287 (Afan Valley Road), sports facilities, external lighting, CCTV, landscaping, drainage works, changes to existing ground levels plus associated works.

The proposed development will provide a replacement Comprehensive School for the community of Cimla with approximately 9,200m² of floor-space.

Cefn Saeson Comprehensive School will remain operational while the new school is constructed, and will then be demolished to make way for the new sports facilities. The new school will have capacity for approximately 900 secondary pupils, which is identical to the capacity of the current school. The proposal includes the construction of three new access points off Afan Valley Road, staff parking and associated development - which will include sports provision comprised of a grass pitch, a 3G pitch, a sand dressed pitch, MUGA and hard play area. It is proposed that the school will open the sports facilities, and some internal teaching facilities, to the community outside of school core hours. It is intended to open the new School during September 2021.

In addition to the usual plans and documents, an array of supporting documents have also been provided including (but not limited to) a Construction Method Statement, Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment, Energy Assessment, Noise Assessment, Bat Survey, Tree Survey, Transport Assessment, Travel Plan and Geo-Environmental Reports.

Building Design and Scale:

The building is designed with a predominantly L-shaped footprint with a 90m width at the frontage along Afan Valley Road, extending to approximately 120m in overall length. It reaches a maximum height of 12m. The building is proposed to be located on the 'upper' level of the site where the existing hockey pitch and banked areas are currently.

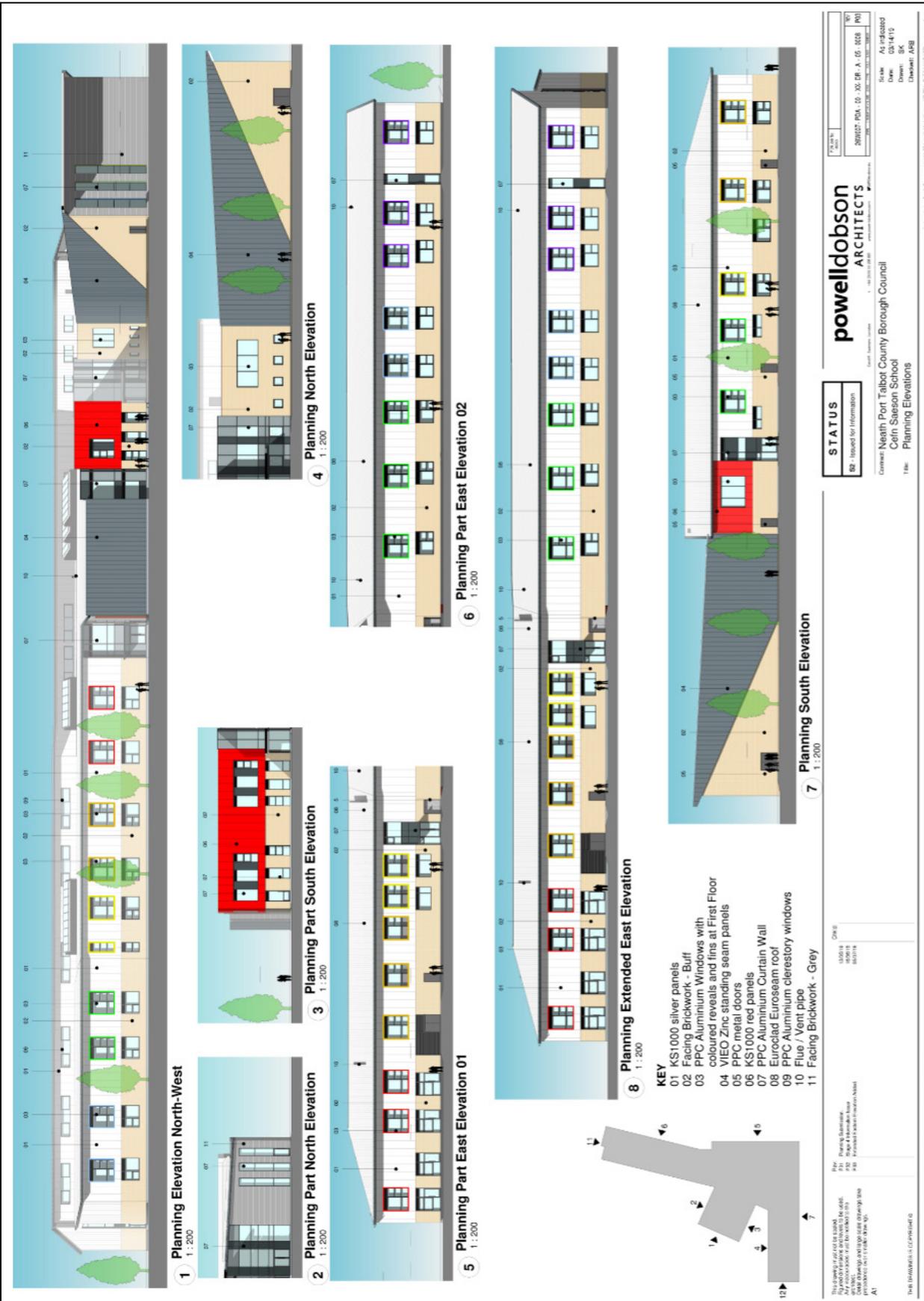


Figure 2: Elevation Plans

The building would be articulated in three masses and be consistently two-storeys in height, with limited roof top plant areas. The two larger masses accommodate the main staff and teaching accommodation, with the third mass accommodating the main hall, music/drama and art rooms. The character of the main entrance is derived from the interplay of solid and void, and is located on the western side facing into the school grounds, rather than directly onto Afan Valley Road. Glazed elements create regular and random patterns as the glazed fenestration change to reflect the function of the rooms in which they occur. The art department (at first floor) is expressed as a red cantilevered form, which is intended to break up this façade and expresses the specific functional and special requirements.

The south, east and western elevations of the two main teaching wings consist of facing brickwork at low level with either render or metal cladding above. The silver cladding at high level will be broken by splashes of colour within the window reveals. The very different nature of the sports hall and main halls, with their predominantly unglazed walls, are justifiably treated in a contrasting language and materials. Their high profile location on the main approach also reinforces the desire for a different and high quality treatment. Vertically banded zinc effect cladding is punctuated by limited vertical glazed slots. The form also affords bold signage opportunities, while an injection of colour in the window reveals combine to create a sophisticated architectural treatment far removed from the institutional school buildings of previous generations.

In terms of foul drainage it is proposed to connect to the existing sewer on Afan Valley Road to reduce extensive off-site works. Surface water drainage proposals have been developed to mimic the existing drainage catchment as closely as possible, with betterment introduced where existing impermeable areas will be removed. As some of the outfalls from the development site will discharge either directly or indirectly to the Cefn Saeson Dingle, there has also been a focus on the treatment of surface water. This is to ensure that the quality of any surface water discharge does not compromise the SINC designated watercourse. The scheme will incorporate SuDs features including dry swales, detention basins, permeable paving throughout the sports pitches and car parks. The surface water will then discharge into three outfalls.

The building has also been designed to be have a minimum 25% reduction in energy consumption relative to current Building Regulations standards by adopting the following initiatives:

- Photovoltaic panels to generate electricity.
- Breathing Building passive ventilation to classrooms.
- 40% Increase in levels of insulation throughout the building.
- The facility is extensively naturally ventilated and day lit reducing need to artificially ventilate and light.
- The levels of glazing employed provide significant improvements in daylight penetration when compared with typical commercial offices.
- Natural light is complimented by automatically dimmable electric lights controlled by daylight sensors.
- Water consumption is reduced through the use of water efficient sanitary fittings.

Finally, it should be noted that engineering operations are required on site in terms of site levels to facilitate the construction of the school, parking and sports facilities. At present, there is an approximate 15m difference (140 vs. 155 spot levels) in ground levels from the most westerly section through to the most easterly section. A “cut and fill” exercise is therefore required with approximately 2m of excavation (cut) required in the easterly corner where the new school is proposed (to provide a level platform) with this earth being deposited (fill) at chainage 210-230 on the submitted sections.

In addition, between 1m and 3m of material is required to be excavated at chainage 60-110, and deposited (approximately 2m in depth) in the western section of the site to provide the necessary levels for the sports facilities. The overall results of the earthworks are that, similar to the existing situation, there will be three distinct levels. The lowest will be a flat section for the sports facilities in the western section (where the current school stands). There will be an approximate 6m bank up to the middle level of the additional new sports facilities, and then a 2m bank up to the level of the new school. Earthworks will also be required to the frontage of the site to achieve the necessary gradient for the school pedestrian entrance and parent drop-off facilities. Full engineering plans have been submitted in support of the application.

Access and Car Parking

Two new access points are proposed into the site via the southern boundary (Afan Valley Road), which includes a coach pick-up and drop-off point for up to 6 coaches, alongside staff and visitor parking. The access also provides a drop off point for parents with a separate access into the staff car park located to the south east of the site. The provision is broken down as follows:

- 108 number of staff parking spaces proposed, which includes 7 disabled spaces. The staff car park will have a barrier at the access.
- 21 visitor drop off spaces, which are located outside of the barrier-controlled area.
- The provision for 60 no. cycle spaces.
- 2 mini-bus parking spaces.
- 6 spaces for taxi drop off.

Sports and Play Facilities

The proposed re-development at Cefn Saeson includes a new 3G pitch, multi-use games area (MUGA), artificial sand dressed pitch, and a grass football pitch, which are detailed as follows:

- MUGA: (on middle level)
4 Netball Courts inc. painted Tennis Court lines.
Overall MUGA Black Macadam = 20 x 38m.
- 3G Football Pitch Artificial Grass = 100 x 64m. (located on middle level)
- Football Pitch (Grass) = 100 x 70m. (located on lower level)
- Artificial Sand dressed Pitch (Silica Sand) = 100 x 70m. (located on lower level)

The site (including the sports facilities) are proposed to be lit during the evening with external lighting within the school's boundary. This is to be designed and installed to provide adequate illumination of vehicular routes, pedestrian walkways permanent car parking areas and fire escape routes with minimal light spillage onto boundary hedges and adjacent neighbours.

Building mounted luminaires facing neighbours will be mounted at first floor window sill height to reduce direct glare towards neighbouring property and to avoid glare into first floor windows. Floodlighting to the sports pitches will be via 16m columns with high output Metal Halide sports flood lights mounted and angled to efficiently illuminate the pitches.

Timescales

The project, if approved, will have a very tight timescale for delivery. The developer has confirmed the following phases:

- **Early Phase 1 Works**

- Ecology- Fence off areas highlighted within the ecology Surveys including considerations for Bats as well as Tree and Hedgerow Protection;
- Erection of secure hoarding to the existing school to keep the new build works completely segregated at all times from the school's day-to-day functioning;
- Form new Site Access, access/egress road and (it is intended that this will eventually become the permanent entrance and access road to the school);
- Top soil site strip.

- **Phase 1 – New School Construction (September 2019 – March 2021):**

- Cut and fill operations and storage of approximately 5000m³;
- Install new drainage and attenuation tank;
- Formation of temporary site Car Park and Contractors' Compound;
- Construction of the new building and surrounding hard and soft landscaping;
- Construction of new entrance and staff car park;
- Construction of new external ancillary facilities.

- **Phase 1a – Coach Drop Off and Landscaping (April 2021):**

- Erect hoarding to Phase 1a area;
- Remove trees and vegetation / grub up roots;
- Break-up and cart away existing roadway, hard standings and car park;
- Revise levels to suit existing highway and install drainage;
- Form new coach drop-off area and highway exit;
- Landscape works and planting.

- **Phase 1b – MUGA (September 2021):**

- Remove Phase 1 Contractors' Compound;
- Re-grade ground levels, install drainage and lay sports surface;
- Erect fencing and lighting;
- Secure boundary to Phase 2 works.

- **Phase 2 – Demolition & Sports Facilities (March 2022):**

- Complete Asbestos strip and Demolition of the existing Cefn Saeson school;
- Re-grade the levels with Phase 1 surplus cut material;
- Install drainage;
- Completion of the sports pitches, external lighting and surrounding hard and soft landscaping;
- Complete coach drop-off area.

All plans / documents submitted in respect of this application can be viewed on the [Council's online register](#).

PRE-APPLICATION CONSULTATION / NEGOTIATIONS

In accordance with the Town and Country Planning (Development Management Procedure) (Wales) (Amendment) Order 2016 a Pre-Application Consultation (PAC) was carried out by the developer. The consultation exercise took place between 18/03/19 and 15/04/19, and involved notifying 107 local residents within the surrounding area by letter, displaying site notices, together with notifying Ward Members and specialist consultees, who were directed to the website where the details of the development were available.

As a result of the consultation 8 objections were received from local residents. The majority of the comments related to noise and light pollution, traffic and parking issues, residential amenity issues, devaluation of property, construction disturbance, concerns over loss of trees, concerns with flood lighting and informal use of the facility 'after hours'. These are addressed within the PAC report.

Following the PAC process and discussions with consultees, the scheme was also amended slightly to include a CEMP and Bat Survey, with the drainage scheme amended in line with SAB requirements, and additional information provided to address the Highway Authority's comments.

PLANNING HISTORY

The application site has the following relevant planning history: -

- P1978/0148 Single Mobile Classroom. Approved 25/05/76.
- P1976/0317 Transfer of Mobile Classroom unit from School. Approved 20/06/76.
- N1982/0680 New Changing Room Block. Approved 21/12/82.
- N1987/0391 Double-demountable Classroom. Approved 27/07/87.
- N1994/0262 Provision of demountable Classroom. Approved 24/05/94.
- P1999/0824 Attach/re-erect solar panels in front of science block. Approved 26/08/99.
- P2003/1051 Construction of Floodlighting. Approved 30/09/03.
- P2004/0355 Relocation of kitchen and formation of new dining room extension. Approved 27/04/04.
- P2019/0040 Request for Screening Opinion under the Town and Country Planning (Environmental Impact Assessment) (Wales) Regulations 2017 for the demolition of the existing school and construction of a new comprehensive school and associated works on land to the east of the existing school. EIA Not Required 01/02/19.

CONSULTATIONS

Neath Town Council: No objection.

Natural Resources Wales: No objection, subject to a condition.

Air Quality Section: No objection, subject to conditions.

Contaminated Land Section: No objection, subject to conditions.

Environmental Health Section: No objection, subject to conditions.

Arboricultural Officer: No objection, subject to conditions.

CADW: No reply, therefore no observations to make.

Glamorgan Gwent Archaeological Trust: No objection.

Police Crime Prevention: No objections.

Sports Wales: No objections.

Head of Engineering & Transport (Highways): No objection, subject to conditions.

Head of Engineering & Transport (Drainage): No comment.

Biodiversity Unit: No objection, subject to conditions.

Welsh Water: No objection, subject to conditions.

REPRESENTATIONS

The neighbouring properties were consulted on 05/06/19, with site notices displayed on 06/06/19.

The application was also advertised in the press on 08/06/19 as a major development which does not accord with the Development Plan.

In response, to date 4 no. representations have been received, with the issues raised summarised as follows: -

- Concerns with the proximity of the new sports facilities to existing residential properties along Greenwood Drive and potential for noise and disturbance, light pollution from floodlights and potential for balls landing in gardens and hitting properties. This will be increased with community use of such facilities.
- Consideration should be given to re-siting the facilities.
- Problems with anti-social behaviour from children during break and lunchtimes.
- Concerns with the size of the parent drop-off and collection areas, and visitor parking, and the potential for traffic issues.
- Road safety measures should be implemented due to a number of 'close calls'.
- Changes in ground levels have potential to cause flooding.
- Potential impacts of property values and saleability.
- Security and monitoring of the facilities will need careful consideration.
- Concerns regarding the potential loss of trees T883, T884 and T885.
- Clarification regarding the floodlighting footprint, whether baffles will be fitted and details of the exact specification.

REPORT

The Well-being of Future Generations Act (Wales) 2015 places a duty on the Council to take reasonable steps in exercising its functions to meet its sustainable development (or wellbeing) objectives. This report has been prepared in consideration of the Council's duty and the "sustainable development principle", as set out in the 2015 Act. In reaching the recommendation set out below, the Council has sought to ensure that the needs of the present are met without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs.

National Planning Policy:

[Planning Policy Wales](#) (Edition 10) was extensively revised and restructured at the end of 2018 to take into account the themes and approaches set out in the Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015, and to deliver the vision for Wales that is set out therein.

PPW10 takes the seven *Well-being Goals* and the five *Ways of Working* as overarching themes and embodies a placemaking approach throughout, with the aim of delivering *Active and Social Places*, *Productive and Enterprising Places* and *Distinctive and Natural Places*. It also identifies the planning system as one of the main tools to create sustainable places, and that placemaking principles are a tool to achieving this through both plan making and the decision making process.

The following guidance is of particular relevance in the assessment of this planning application:

Under Section 2 – "*People and Places: Achieving Well Being Through Placemaking*", 5 Key Planning Principles are highlighted, under the general heading of "*Achieving the Right Development in the Right Place*" which are:

- "*Growing our economy in a sustainable manner;*
- *Making best use of resources;*
- *Facilitating Accessible and Healthy Environments;*
- *Creating and Sustaining Communities;*
- *Maximising environmental protection and limiting environmental impact*".

In Section 3 – "Strategic and Spatial Choices" it states that "*effective strategic placemaking requires early collective consideration of placemaking issues at the outset, in the formulation of a development plan, or when developing specific proposals.*"

In Paragraph 3.3 it emphasises that "*good design is fundamental to creating sustainable places where people want to live, work and socialise. Design is not just about the architecture of a building but the relationship between all elements of the natural and built environment and between people and places*".

In Section 3.8 relates to how "*good design can help to ensure high environmental quality. Landscape and green infrastructure considerations are an integral part of the design process. Integrating green infrastructure is not limited to focusing on landscape and ecology, rather, consideration should be given to all features of the natural environment and how these function together to contribute toward the quality of places*".

In Section 3.64 and 3.65 it states that green wedges which “are local designations which essentially have the same purpose as Green Belts. They may be used to provide a buffer between the settlement edge and statutory designations and safeguard important views into and out of the area. Green wedges should be proposed and be subject to review as part of the LDP process”. There is a general presumption *“against development which is inappropriate in relation to the purposes of the designation”*.

Section 3.68 states:

“When considering Green Belt designations a sufficient range of development land which is suitably located in relation to the existing urban edge should be made available, having regard to the longer term need for development land, the effects of development pressures in areas beyond the Green Belt and the need to minimise demand for travel. This may require land to be safeguarded, and boundaries of proposed Green Belts must be carefully defined to achieve this.”

In paragraph 3.71 it states *“The construction of new buildings in a Green Belt or green wedge is inappropriate development, unless it is for the following purposes:*

- *justified rural enterprise needs;*
- *essential facilities for outdoor sport and outdoor recreation, cemeteries, and other uses of land which maintain the openness of the Green Belt or green wedge and which do not conflict with the purpose of including land within it;*
- *limited extension, alteration or replacement of existing dwellings; or small scale diversification within farm complexes where this is run as part of the farm business”.*

In Section 3.69 it states *“Substantial weight should be attached to any harmful impact which a development would have on the purposes of Green Belt or green wedge designation”*.

In Section 4 – *“Active and Social Places”* it defines those places which promote our social, economic, environmental and cultural well-being by providing well-connected cohesive communities. Places which are active and social contribute to the seven goals of the Well-being of Future Generations Act. The key issues in this theme include:

- *assisting in the delivery of cohesive communities which will meet the needs and are accessible to all members of society, including older people;*
- *tackling inequalities between communities, delivering services and jobs closer to where people live and acknowledging the importance of inclusive communities and the wider environment for good health and well-being;*
- *improve sustainable access to services, cultural opportunities and recreation facilities to support people to adopt healthy, culturally fulfilled lifestyles.*

Paragraph 4.19 states that *the “planning system has a key role to play in reducing the need to travel and supporting sustainable transport, by facilitating developments which:*

- *are sited in the right locations, where they can be easily accessed by sustainable modes of travel and without the need for a car;*

- *are designed in a way which integrates them with existing land uses and neighbourhoods; and*
- *make it possible for all short journeys within and beyond the development to be easily made by walking and cycling”.*

Finally, in Section 6 – “*Distinctive and Natural Places*” it requires that development plan strategies, policies and development proposals should be formulated to look to the long term protection and enhancement of the special characteristics and intrinsic qualities of places, be these of natural, historic or built environments, ensuring their longevity in the face of change. This means both protecting and enhancing landscapes, habitats, biodiversity, geodiversity and the historic environment in their own right as well as other components of the natural world, such as water resources or air quality.

PPW is supported by a series of more detailed [Technical Advice Notes](#) (TANs), of which the following are of relevance: -

- Technical Advice Note 12: Design (2016).
- Technical Advice Note 18: Transport (2007).

Local Planning Policies

The Development Plan for the area comprises the [Neath Port Talbot Local Development Plan](#) which was adopted in January 2016, and within which the following policies are of relevance:

Strategic Policies:

- Policy SP1 Climate Change
- Policy SP2 Health
- Policy SP3 Sustainable communities
- Policy SP4 Infrastructure
- Policy SP5 Development in the Coastal Corridor Strategy Area
- Policy SP10 Open Space
- Policy SP14 The Countryside and the Undeveloped Coast
- Policy SP15 Biodiversity and Geodiversity
- Policy SP16 Environmental Protection
- Policy SP20 Transport Network
- Policy SP21 Built Environment and Historic Heritage

Topic Based Policies:

- Policy SC1 Settlement limits
- Policy SC2 Protection of Existing Community Facilities
- Policy I1 Infrastructure Requirements
- Policy OS1 Open Space Provision
- Policy OS2 Protection of Existing Open Space
- Policy EN3 Green Wedges
- Policy EN6 Important Biodiversity and Geodiversity Sites
- Policy EN7 Important Natural Features
- Policy EN8 Pollution and Land Stability
- Policy RE2 Renewable and Low Carbon Energy in New Development

- Policy W3 Waste Management in New Development
- Policy TR2 Design and Access of New Development
- Policy BE1 Design

Supplementary Planning Guidance:

The following SPG is of relevance to this application: -

- [Parking Standards](#) (October 2016)
- [Open Space & Greenspace](#) (July 2017)
- [Design](#) (July 2017)
- [Biodiversity and Geodiversity](#) (May 2018)

EIA and AA Screening

The application site exceeds the Schedule 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 ([P2019/0040](#)) were that the scale and nature of the potential impacts 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 also not located within a zone of influence for any SAC, CSAC or Ramsar sites and as such, it is considered that an Appropriate Assessment, as set down within the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2010, is not required.

Issues

Having regard to the above, and notably the location of the new building outside of the settlement boundary and in an identified green wedge, the main issue for consideration with regard to this application relates to the principle of development at this location, including whether any departure from the policies within the adopted Local Development Plan is justified. Other significant issues concern the impacts upon: the character and appearance of the surrounding area; residential amenity of the occupiers of the adjacent properties; and highway and pedestrian safety, together with the effect on biodiversity, drainage, flooding, contaminated land and other issues raised by consultees.

Principle of Development

Development in the Countryside

Settlement limits are an important tool for managing the shape and extent of the urban area. They define the areas within which development which accords with the role and function of the settlement will be permitted in principle; they allow for development which would contribute towards the creation and maintenance of sustainable communities in accordance with the LDP strategy; they prevent the coalescence of settlements, ribbon development and fragmented development; and

also prevent inappropriate development in the countryside. In this respect, LDP Policy SC1 (settlement limits) states as follows:

“Development within settlement limits that is proportionate in scale and form to the role and function of the settlement as set out in the Settlement Hierarchy will be acceptable in principle. Outside settlement limits, development will only be permitted under the following circumstances:

- 1. It constitutes a sustainable small scale employment use adjacent to a settlement limit; or*
- 2. It constitutes live-work unit(s) immediately adjacent to a settlement limit in the Valleys Strategy Area only; or*
- 3. It constitutes the small-scale expansion of an existing business or the suitable conversion of an existing building; or*
- 4. It constitutes the appropriate replacement of an existing dwelling; or*
- 5. It is an affordable housing exception site; or*
- 6. It is an appropriate rural enterprise dwelling; or*
- 7. It is an appropriate ‘One Planet Development’; or*
- 8. It is a sustainable tourism or farm diversification proposal that is suitable in a countryside location; or*
- 9. It is associated with the provision of public utilities, infrastructure and waste management facilities that cannot reasonably be located elsewhere; or*
- 10. It is associated with either agriculture, forestry, minerals or energy generation; or*
- 11. It relates to the appropriate provision of accommodation for Gypsies / Travellers; or*
- 12. It constitutes the provision of open space and small scale ancillary facilities adjoining the settlement limit.*

Where development is permitted outside settlement limits, any new buildings must be located adjacent to existing buildings or settlements wherever possible and be of an appropriate scale and form”.

The supporting text emphasises that developments *“Whether specific development proposals are appropriate or suitable outside settlement limits will be assessed with reference to the relevant topic policies within this Plan and national policy”.*

As detailed and shown in the aerial image earlier in the report (Figure 1), while the existing school buildings are located within the settlement, the settlement boundary in the LDP has been drawn very tightly to exclude the remainder of the school site and playing fields. As a consequence, the proposed new school building would be located outside of the settlement boundary.

Criterion 9 of Policy SC1 allows an exception where development is (inter alia) *“associated with the provision of ... infrastructure ... that cannot reasonably be located elsewhere”.*

Policy I1 (infrastructure requirements) sets out the general principle that any proposal for new development will be expected to meet the infrastructure needs that it generates. It lists the broad range of matters that need to be addressed, which includes ‘education and training’, ‘open space and recreation facilities’ and ‘community facilities including community hubs’, all of which are reasonably considered to fall within the general function and purpose of this proposal. Accordingly, the proposed new school building/ development is considered to amount to education / community / open space infrastructure which would accord

with criterion 9 of Policy SC1 provided it is accepted that it “cannot reasonably be located elsewhere”.

In respect of location, it is noted elsewhere in the report that there are clear benefits associated with the provision of the new school on an existing site which best serves the existing local community and is in accordance with the sustainability principles embodied in PPW10. Accordingly, it is concluded that the proposal accords with Policy SC1 of the LDP.

Development in an identified Green Wedge

Planning Policy Wales 10 (PPW10) advises that when considering applications for planning permission in Green Belts or green wedges, a presumption against *inappropriate development* will apply, and that “substantial weight should be attached to any harmful impact which a development would have on the purposes of Green Belt or green wedge designation”.

In this respect it advises that *inappropriate development* within the green wedge should only be granted planning permission ‘in very exceptional circumstances’ where other considerations clearly outweigh the harm which such development will do to the green wedge. Any application for inappropriate development would not be in accord with the plan, and these very exceptional cases are therefore be treated as departures from the plan.

National Policy is enforced locally through Policy EN3 which states as follows:

“In order to prevent the coalescence of settlements and to protect the setting of urban areas, Green Wedges have been designated in the following locations:

...

EN3/3 *Neath / Tonna / Cimla / Efail Fach*

...

Within these areas there is a presumption against inappropriate development.”

It is noted that the remainder of the site outside of the settlement boundary comprises part of the *Neath / Tonna / Cimla / Efail Fach* Green Wedge (EN3/3), which seeks to ‘prevent coalescence’ and ‘protect the setting’ of Cimla.

PPW10 states (para 3.71) that “*the construction of new buildings in a Green Belt or green wedge is inappropriate development unless it is for the following purposes:*

- *Justified rural enterprise needs;*
- *Essential facilities for outdoor sport and outdoor recreation, cemeteries, and other uses of land which maintain the openness of the Green Belt or green wedge and which do not conflict with the purpose of including land within it;*
- *Limited extension, alteration or replacement of existing dwellings; or*
- *Small scale diversification within farm complexes where this is run as part of the farm business”.*

As a matter of fact, therefore, the proposed new buildings in the green wedge (as opposed to the improved sports facilities) would not meet any of the above criteria and therefore would amount to inappropriate development in the green wedge, contrary to Policy EN3 of the LDP. Accordingly, the proposal does not accord with

the provisions of the Development Plan such that it requires there to be 'very exceptional circumstances' to justify such development.

Are there very exceptional circumstances?

Although the building would be located within the green wedge, the situation is slightly unusual insofar as the school site has been artificially divided for planning policy purposes by an arbitrary line drawn to the east of the existing school buildings. Therefore, although the new school building is in the green wedge, it remains wholly within the boundary of the current school site and, accordingly, would not result in any loss of 'open countryside'. Nevertheless, there remains a need to demonstrate that very exceptional circumstances exist to justify a departure from the development Plan in this instance.

In this respect, the following matters have been taken into account: -

1. The existing school is very old, not in compliance with modern standards and requires circa £7.4m of maintenance. As such, a decision has been made, supported by Welsh Government funding, to build a replacement 21st Century School which would provide the community with a modern fit-for-purpose school with enhanced facilities for pupils, community use after school hours and vastly improved infrastructure in terms of parking and drop-off for parents.
2. Relocation of the school to an alternative site is not possible nor feasible, nor would it accord with the general sustainability principles embodied within the Wellbeing of Future generations Act and Planning Policy Wales 10.
3. The existing school caters for up to 900 pupils, and due to its size it is not considered appropriate or feasible to re-locate them to another school.
4. As the existing school needs to remain operational throughout the construction period (as was the case for Ysgol Cwm Brombil in Margam), given the school's size it is not considered feasible or cost effective to provide temporary accommodation in demountable buildings. The only option therefore is to construct a new replacement school on the existing sports facilities/grounds, and then once completed, demolish the existing school to provide replacement facilities for those lost through the new build. While it is acknowledged that in an ideal world a new school would be constructed on the site of the existing, for the above reasons this would be impracticable to achieve.

In addition to the above, as identified in Policy EN3 the purpose of the green wedge in this location is to prevent the coalescence of settlements and to protect the setting of urban area. In this respect regard has also been had to the following: -

1. The proposed school would be located within the existing school boundaries;
2. Whilst the buildings technically encroach outside the settlement limits and into the green wedge, there is no further encroachment;
3. The proposal will ensure efficient use of existing school land and result in controlled expansion which will maintain a defensible boundary to the settlement;

4. The nearest settlement east of the development site is Efail-fach which currently lies approximately 1.54km from the current nearest built form. The development would not extend beyond the existing school site limits and would reduce the 'gap' to 1.39km, representing only a small level of encroachment and as a result will not result in any significant coalescence of settlements;
5. An LVIA has been submitted in support of the application which seeks to demonstrate that there would be no unacceptable impacts upon the visual amenity of the area and open countryside (addressed below under visual impact) despite being located on the highest part of the application site.

In conclusion on matters of principle, it is acknowledged that the proposal would be a material departure from the LDP as it would amount to *inappropriate development* within a Green Wedge (Policy EN3). Having regard to all of the above matters, however, and the minor degree to which the development would impact upon the green wedge in this location as a consequence, while acknowledging that the development would introduce new built development into the green wedge, it is considered that the above amount to the very exceptional circumstances necessary to justify such new development in the green wedge.

Impact on Visual Amenity

A Landscape Visual Impact Assessment (LVIA) has been submitted in support of the planning application. This states as follows: -

"The design proposal is phased with the new school and associated circulation/parking zones to be constructed in the area of the highest plateau to the south eastern corner of the site together with outdoor facilities to be situated in the area of the middle plateau. Phased construction includes demolition of the existing school on the lowest plateau and the construction of remaining outdoor activity areas.

The proposed development will be enclosed by the edge of the existing urban settlement to the northwest and partially along the B4287 to the southwest. The remains of the southwest boundary is defined by an open rural view towards open pasture land enclosed by well clipped hedgerows. To the southwest and northeast this form of rural boundary continues. Existing tree lines are contained to the north eastern boundary.

Overall views of the site can be assessed into three broad categories:

- *In general the more distant views (over 2 kilometres) from the north are restricted by terrain from the east are open but heavily restricted in number by terrain and wooded areas. To the south the more distant views are again restricted by terrain while to the west the site is obscured by urban settlements.*
- *Mid views (over 1.5 kilometres) are more open but limited by extensive hedgerows and wooded areas.*
- *Immediate views looking towards the adjacent external boundary are open across well clipped low hedgerows from the north, east and south. To the west and some extent southwest the site is obscured by urban settlements.*

A landscape strategy has been developed which where possible retains and reinforces boundary planting and introduces new areas of planting within the development. The site will retain a strong green edge as seen from the surrounding land. With regard to landscape character the development is introducing a built form into the Green Wedge and effectively extending the settlement boundary. The mitigation listed above is to provide a green boundary to all sides of the site to mitigate this intrusion on the character of the wider landscape and on views towards the site from the majority of publicly accessible locations. Private views from surrounding established dwellings will be addressed by detailed design to ensure that where possible appropriate planting will reinforce the separation and provide a degree of screening. Overall the context of the site is respected and complemented in terms of its setting, scale, density, layout, access arrangements, design, materials and landscaping for biodiversity and landscape enhancement.

The report concludes that any landscape and visual effects identified are considered to be relatively limited to the site locality and to be well contained around the site's immediate environs. Depending on the final design and its external form initial view assessment would suggest that the roof scape will provide the dominant view”.

The new school building is to be located on the upper level of the existing site. In this regard, while there will be a degree of 'cut' on the upper level so that it does not sit at the highest part of the site, nevertheless the finished floor level of the new school (152.8) coupled with its more 'open' location will inevitably mean that the new school building will be more prominent in the local landscape than that which it replaces.

In views from the main highway approach from Efail Fach, as you approach Cimla the new building will be more prominent than the existing school (which is closer to existing built development and at a lower level). In addition, the new school entrance and parking will change the character of the site at the entrance to the village. Nevertheless, due to the retention of the existing hedgerows, the cut into the slope and the design of the building, it is considered that the building would not be unacceptably prominent in such local views, and in time would simply become the 'new' edge to the settlement, at the existing edge of the school site.

Wider views of the development would be limited, and although the new school building would be more visible from certain properties (e.g. at the top of Ridgewood Gardens or from Cefn Saeson Fawr Farm) and the general area than the existing school buildings, and there would be views of built development somewhat 'divorced' from the edge to the settlement, it is considered that the extent of such views would be limited and the degree of landscape change / harm would be limited and mitigated by the landscape strategy adopted for the site, and outweighed in any event by the community and socio-economic benefits of the proposal.

It is further considered that the proposed school building and wider change to the site would be a significant improvement over the existing old school buildings which are considered to have little architectural or other merit, and could be considered to detract from local character.

In terms of the design of the school itself, the proposed development would ultimately replace the existing old school buildings with a fresh and modern 21st Century comprehensive school. The main school building has been developed as an L-shaped two-storey block, to minimise the overall footprint and height. It has an attractive design with the mix of materials (silver metal panels, buff facing brick, grey facing brick, zinc panels and red metal panels), with various types of roof

(mono-pitched, hipped and flat). The window reveals also have varying colour to add visual interest, whilst the use high-level clerestory windows let natural light down in to the central spaces of the school.

The facing brick plinth at ground floor provides a robust finish to the part of the external fabric, whilst the lighter composite metal panels to the upper storeys provide visual interest, especially with the use of contrasting colours.

In respect of the car parking, bus and drop-off areas specifically, it should be noted that these would be sited to the frontage of the site accessed off two new access/egress points onto Afan Valley Road (B4287). In order to form the new parking area (and platform for the new school), the existing levels will need to be “cut and filled”, with some areas of the site being reduced to be used as fill where the levels need to be increased. Full cross and longitudinal sectional plans, together with spot levels, have been provided in support of the application. However, as this would be partly screened by an existing hedge (to be retained), it is considered that this would not have detrimental impact upon the character and appearance of the surrounding area, open countryside and green wedge.

With regards to the new sports facilities, as these would replace existing ones within the site, it is considered that these would provide an acceptable addition within the street-scene, given the existing educational context of the site. It is also noted that they would be located on the lower section(s) of the site. However, it is noted that the boundaries between the site and Greenwood Drive and Brynsiriol are quite open, and with the slight increase in site levels, it is noted that they would be more visible to these residents. However, given the existing context of the school, it is considered that this would not be visually unacceptable.

Turning to the proposed servicing area and bin/sprinkler, it is noted that they are located to the south-east of the new school building. However, given they would be appropriately screened, it is considered that these would not detract from overall character and appearance of the surrounding area.

The proposal will also be designed to be compliant with secure by design (SBD) principles and as such the safety of the users has been carefully considered. The proposal also includes secure boundary treatments and gateways at boundaries alongside ensuring a high level of natural surveillance with well-lit areas.

It is therefore considered that in terms of visual amenity and the character of the area that the overall proposed development would provide an appropriate addition to this area, and therefore accords with Policy BE1 of the Local Development Plan.

Impact on Residential Amenity

With regards to potential impacts from the school building itself, it is noted that the building would be a maximum of two-storeys in height, which is a reduction over the existing three-storey building, and is located on the eastern section of the site away from dwellings. The school is sited a minimum of 33m from the nearest residential dwellings (Numbers 23-25 Ridgewood Gardens). Although windows are proposed on all elevations of the building, due to the siting of the main school building relative to the surrounding neighbouring properties, and the separation distances involved, it is considered that the overall proposal would not create any unacceptable overbearing or privacy impacts on surrounding residential properties.

Turning to the proposed car parking and drop-off bays specifically, although these would be located towards to frontage of the site, again, due to the separation distances involved, it is also considered that the overall proposal would not create any unacceptable overbearing or privacy impacts on surrounding residential properties.

In respect of the proposed sand hockey pitch, it is noted that this would be located a minimum distance of approximately 24m from the nearest residential dwellings along Greenwood Drive, whilst the grass football pitch would be located a distance of approximately 23m from the nearest dwelling also along Greenwood Drive and also a distance of 14-15m between the football pitch and the side of Number 8 Brynsiriol. Ground levels in this area would need to be raised by an additional 2m to provide a level playing surface. Whilst it is acknowledged that the sports facilities would be at a higher level than the dwellings to the west and north, given the separation distances between the properties and the fact that this area is currently occupied by the school buildings and/or existing grassed or yard areas, it is considered that the proposal would not create any significant overlooking issues over and above that currently experienced and to such a degree that they would be deemed unacceptable. It should also be noted that suitable ball-stop fencing is proposed around the pitches to a height of 4.5m around the hockey pitch and 8m high ball stop fence on the grass football pitch to limit the potential for balls landing in gardens and hitting properties.

Turning to potential noise and disturbance from the proposal, including the proposed sports pitches, it is noted that the nearest residential properties potentially affected would be along Greenwood Drive and Brynsiriol. The Environmental Health Officer has assessed the submitted Construction Noise Management Plan and Noise Impact Assessment and offers no objection to both the construction phase and completed development, including sports pitches (which are intended to be used during evenings), subject to conditions. He notes that:

“In support of this application, a Baseline Noise Survey Report has been submitted to consider the existing noise levels at the proposed development and the potential noise impacts associated with the development. Background noise readings were undertaken in December 2018, with background measurements of 45dB LA90, 15 mins being obtained at the boundary of the site closest to residential properties on Greenwood Drive. Plant noise sources at the new school buildings have not been assessed as the type and location of plant is not confirmed at this time, however the applicant proposes the noise rating level associated with fixed plant and machinery at the school development be 5dB lower than the background noise level at the nearby residential receptors. Environmental Health welcomes this proposal as it in effect means that local residents will enjoy lower noise levels from fixed plant in the new school than they experience from the current school. This proposal will need to be enforced by means of condition.

The Baseline Noise Survey Report notes that the noise impacts of this development will be largely similar to that of the existing school in terms of traffic and operational noise. Environmental Health acknowledges this approach but also notes that the movement of the sports pitches closer to residential receptors, together with the proposed evening use, does change the local soundscape compared to the existing use. Due to the similarities between the existing and proposed soundscapes, a detailed assessment of noise from playing fields is not considered necessary at this time, however I would recommend a condition requiring noise complaint procedures be put in place, together with a noise mitigation plan for the evening use of playing

fields. A similar condition was imposed on the Ysgol Bro Dur development in Sandfields, and has proven to be successful”.

In respect of the noise rating level associated with fixed plant and machinery, the intention to operate at a level 5db below existing background noise level is welcomed, although because background level would also be acceptable, the condition will refer to such level being achieved.

Provided conditions are imposed on the application to address such matters, it is considered that the development would be acceptable in terms of potential noise and disturbance of neighbouring residential properties within the local area.

Turning to potential noise and disturbance from construction and demolition phase the Environmental Health Officer notes that *“the most significant noise and nuisance impacts associated with the proposed development are likely to occur during the construction and demolition phase, and therefore the Applicant has submitted a Construction Method Statement prepared by the principal contractor”*. The submitted Construction Method Statement (version 2) details environmental protection measures, including hours of operation. In respect of demolition specifically, the Environmental Health Officer notes that *“that the nearest residential properties are 70 metres from the main construction activities. During the demolition of the existing school facilities, however, residential properties are less than 20 metres away. Section 5 of the method statement acknowledges that a separate Demolition Method Statement is required, including a demolition noise and vibration assessment, and this shall be produced prior to the commencement of demolition. I would therefore recommend a condition that requires the submission of separate construction and demolition method statements in this case”*.

Provided that a suitably worded condition is imposed requiring the submission of a Demolition Method Statement, it is therefore considered that the construction and demolition phases would be acceptable in terms of residential amenity.

In addition to potential noise and disturbance detailed above, it is noted that the flood lighting of the site, and especially sports pitches, have the potential to impact on neighbouring properties, especially during evenings. Lighting plans have been submitted in support of the application, which illustrate that the 3G pitch on the middle level and sand hockey pitch are intended to be floodlight. The lighting contours illustrate that there is potential light spillage in the garden areas of the dwellings along Greenwood Drive. The Environmental Health Officer has made a detailed assessment of the submitted scheme and notes:

“The development involves moving the playing fields from their current position at the top of the site to the bottom of the site, placing sports floodlighting much closer to surrounding residential properties, and increasing the potential for light nuisance. The Design and Access Statement states that the external lighting strategy will be designed with in compliance with the ILE Guidance Notes for the Reduction of Obstructive Light, and it is noted that the Sports Floodlighting plan that shows contour lines of light overspill from the sports pitches determines that light trespass into surrounding residential windows is within the Guidance Note limits.

Sports floodlighting was an issue of local concern at the Ysgol Bro Dur development in Sandfields, which is similarly surrounded by houses, and consequently a suite of conditions was imposed to address potential artificial lighting issues. These conditions have proven to be successful in that no public complaints have been

received concerning the sports floodlighting at this school, and I would therefore recommend that a similar approach be taken at this development”.

Because of the change in levels and relationship with the nearby properties, a condition is imposed which seeks to restrict the use of the pitches at the site to 21:15 hours on any night. Such a restriction, in addition to the complaints procedure referred to above, is considered necessary to minimise the extent to which residents might be affected by the use of the facilities.

It should be noted that the developer has confirmed that the lighting to be installed at Cefn Saeson would be the same as those at Ysgol Bro Dur at Sandfields. Provided that a suitably worded condition in respect of the lighting scheme design and specification is imposed on the application (for example to include precise details of cowls/hoods etc. to limit light spill), together with post-operation monitoring in the event of complaints being received, it is therefore considered acceptable in terms of impacts on amenity relating to external lighting of the site.

As such it is considered that the overall proposals accord with the principles set within Policy BE1 of the Local Development Plan.

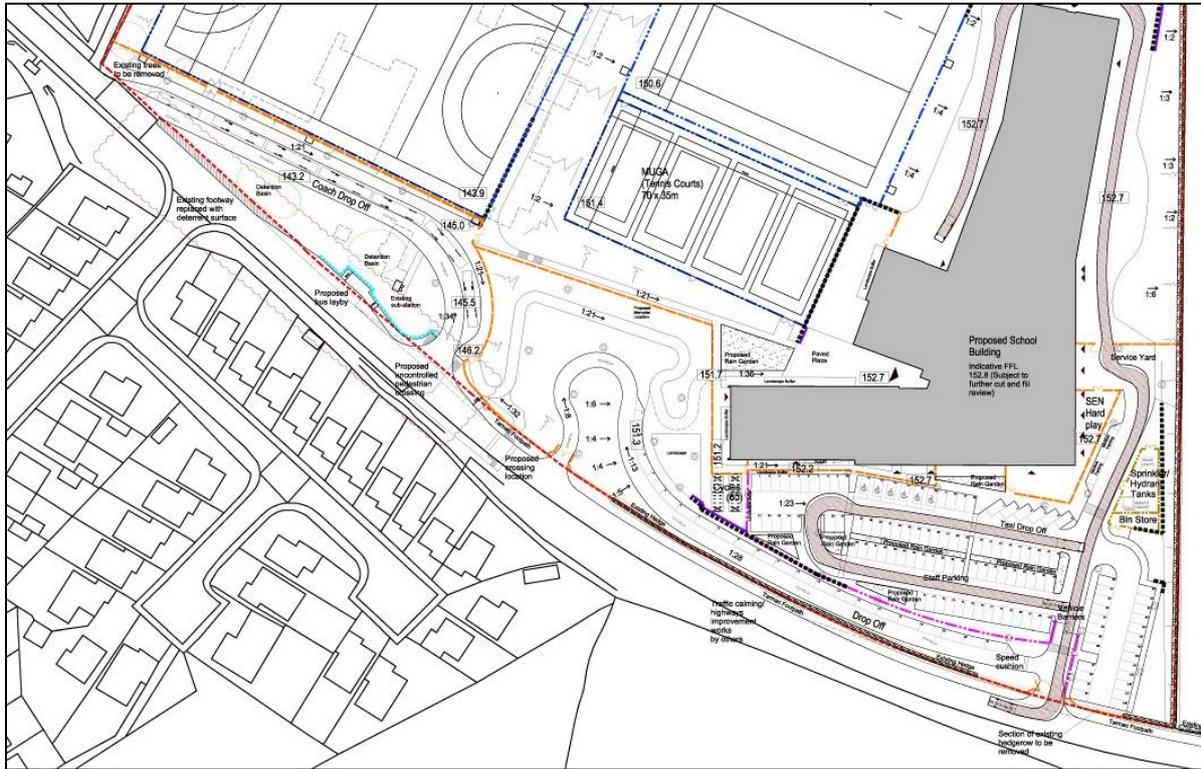
Parking and Access Requirements and Impact on Highway Safety

Parking Provision

As previously stated the proposal involves the creation of a new parking/drop-off area for parents and buses and staff parking with barrier control access. This is broken down as follows:

- 108 staff parking spaces proposed, which includes 7 disabled spaces. The staff car park will have a barrier at the access.
- 21 visitor drop off spaces, which are located outside of the barrier-controlled area.
- The provision for 60 no. cycle spaces.
- 2 mini-bus parking spaces.
- 6 spaces for taxi drop off.
- 6 coach spaces.

It is proposed that the coach parking will enter the bay in the existing location off Afan Valley Road, and exit slightly higher up (to the east) Afan Valley Road than existing. Approximately 37m to the east a new ‘in’ entrance is proposed for the parent drop-off, which then leads to new ‘in and out’ serving the exit for the drop-off and entrance/exit for the staff, taxi-drop-off and mini-bus spaces. A small section of existing hedge is required to be removed to facilitate the creation of this access.



As previously stated the school would cater for approximately 900 pupils with requirement for 90 full time members of staff proposed and 18 part-time.

The approved parking Standards SPG states that, for new schools, 1 space should be provided per 5 children (maximum standards). Based on the capacity of up to 900 pupils, as a starting point for assessment, that would require 180 spaces to serve the new school. Bus parking is also required.

The proposed scheme provides 108 staff parking spaces (including 7 disabled staff/visitors spaces); 21 parent drop-off spaces within the school grounds. This would total 129 spaces. 6 full-size bus bays are also included within the site, together with 2 mini-bus spaces and 6 taxi drop-off spaces. Finally, it should be noted that 60 cycle parking spaces are to be provided.

It should be noted that the current school has a capacity of up to 900 pupils, but currently only has a role of 750 pupils and 89 staff. It current has 48 formal parking spaces split between two car parks. However Officer's noted during site visits that there was significant 'double parking' of staff vehicles within the existing school grounds.

In addition to setting maximum (not minimum) standards, the approved SPG also includes a sustainability tool which makes it possible to reduce the level of parking required by a development. The criteria measures the sustainability of a development in terms of walking distance to local facilities, public transport and cycle routes and frequency of local public transport. The SPG also refers to developments where Travel Plans should be required by condition, such a plan allowing for the relaxation of parking requirements.

Whilst the car parking provision is below the recommended maximum, it is considered that it is sufficient to accommodate the needs of the proposed development, having particular regard to the existing low level of parking provision

within the school grounds (i.e. this would be a significant betterment). The distribution of staff driving to/from the site is expected to be 80% of staff, in line with the areas 2011 Census Travel to Work data. This would be equal to 80 staff once the school is at full capacity. This can be accommodated in the 108 spaces provided. In a worst-case scenario, where 100% of staff travel to/from the site by private car, 100 spaces would be required. Therefore, the proposed car parking is considered sufficient to accommodate this worst-case scenario as well.

Having regard to the relatively sustainable nature of the site, the fact that the school is a replacement for the existing school on the site, it is considered that the extent of parking, drop-off cycle and bus provision broadly accords with the Parking Standards SPG (October 2016), and represents an acceptable amount of parking to serve the development.

Off-site Works

It should be noted that in addition to the car parking, drop-off, footway/cycleway and cycle provision on site, the following additional works are required:

1. Implementation of 20MPH speed limit.
2. Provision of a new PCaTS (Pedestrian Countdown at Traffic Signals) signal controlled crossing.
3. Provision of a bus stop layby for service buses along Afan Valley Road.

It should be noted that the submitted scheme and supporting Transport Assessment and Travel Plan have been fully assessed by the Head of Engineering and Transport (Highways Section) who offers no objection to the proposed development, subject to conditions. These relate to construction/delivery restrictions, Traffic Regulation Orders, coach management, etc. It has also been highlighted by the Head of Engineering and Transport (Highways Section) that work would need to be undertaken on the existing bus/coach whilst the school is operational. It is anticipated that this would last for approximately 8 weeks in total, the majority of which would be over the summer holidays but also the last two weeks of term. However, it is considered that a suitably worded condition can adequately address any potential short-term issues.

Provided the requested conditions are imposed on the application, it is therefore considered that the overall scheme, as proposed, would not create any unacceptable highway or pedestrian safety issues and would be in compliance with Policy TR2 of the LDP.

Biodiversity / Ecology

A bat survey was submitted in support of the application, which found no evidence of bat use. This has been assessed by the Biodiversity Unit and NRW who both offer no objections in terms of protected species.

With regards to small sections of hedge that are required to be removed, it should be noted that the hedgerows have been assessed in the submitted Ecology Report as “*species-poor and do not qualify as Important under the Hedgerows Regulations (1997)*”. As such, the removal of the small sections of hedge would not be unacceptable in biodiversity terms.

In respect of trees, it is noted that a number of existing trees (11 out of 19) are required to be felled under the current proposal, including T883, T884 and T885. These include 5 category B (moderate), 5 category C (low) and one category U (poor).

The Authority's Arboricultural Officer has assessed the application and notes the following:

"The tree report supplied by ArbTS dated the 29th May 2019 is an accurate and detailed survey of all the trees within the site and within the zone of influence of its boundaries. If the development proceeds in its current format the five B category, five C category and one U category trees listed in the above report will require removal. The remaining trees will require adequate root zone protection as specified in the report and BS5837:2012 Trees in relation to design, demolition and construction. I would recommend that all the recommendations in the report and above BS are followed during all phases of the demolition and construction works".

It should be noted that a detailed landscaping scheme has been submitted in support of the application. This details the new landscaping of the site plus mitigation for the loss of the existing trees. It is considered that the loss of the category C and U trees would not be considered a constraint to developing the site in terms of visual and biodiversity value, whilst the loss of the 5 moderate quality trees can be adequately mitigated through compensatory tree planting and practical woodland management to ensure that the proposal does not have a detrimental impact in terms of biodiversity and visual amenity.

Flood Risk / Drainage

It should be noted that foul drainage is proposed to connect into the existing mains system, with surface water connecting into a new SuDS system with a mixture of swales, rain gardens etc. A separate SAB application has been submitted to the Drainage Authority. As the Head of Engineering and Transport (Drainage Section) and Welsh Water both offer no objection, subject to conditions, it is considered that the submitted scheme would be acceptable in terms of drainage.

In respect of the objections relating to the fact that changes in ground levels have potential to cause flooding, it should be noted that a detailed drainage scheme has been submitted in support of the application. The Head of Engineering and Transport (Drainage Section) also requires the implementation of a suitably worded condition in respect of temporary drainage measures during construction (in addition to any requirements under the separate SAB consent). Such matters are addressed within the amended Construction Management Scheme and Pollution Prevention Plan.

Contaminated Land

It should be noted that the site has been identified as potentially contaminated land. However, as the Contaminated Land Unit offers no objection to the proposal, subject to conditions, it is considered that existing and future users of the site would not be adversely affected by ground contamination in terms of exposure to pollution.

Impact on Mineral Resource

It is noted that the site is located within a Mineral Safeguarding Area under Policy M1 of the adopted LDP. Policy M1 looks to safeguard mineral resources as they are finite and any development will need to meet criteria which ensure they are not sterilised or their extraction hindered.

Notwithstanding the above, it is considered that the proposed development will not have a significant impact on the working of the mineral. Moreover, given the site's location in a green wedge close to residential properties, it is very unlikely that any mineral extraction would be acceptable in this location. Accordingly, there is no objection to the principle of development on mineral safeguarding / Policy M1 grounds.

Energy Assessment

With regards to Policy RE2, and as previously stated in the report, this proposal aims to provide a highly energy efficient building with the use of solar PVs, passive ventilation, increase insulation etc. An Energy Assessment was submitted in support of the application detailing the above. This has been assessed in detail and it is therefore considered that the proposal would comply with the requirements of this Policy.

Waste Management

Finally, in respect of Policy W3 a detailed Construction Method Statement, including waste management, has been submitted in support of the development, which would ensure the construction of the development complies with the requirements of this policy. Furthermore, details of the bin storage areas have been provided to ensure that the finished school also complies with site waste management.

Other Matters

As identified earlier in this report, a number of objections were received in response following the publicity exercise. In response to the main issues raised which have not been addressed elsewhere in this report, the following comments are made:

- With regards to the comments that consideration should be given to re-siting the sports facilities, as explained earlier, due to the physical constraints of the site in terms of levels and size, plus the requirement for the existing school to remain operational during construction of the new school, it is not possible to re-site the sports facilities.
- In respect of potential problems with anti-social behaviour from children during break and lunchtimes, this would be a school management issue for the Head Teacher and Education Department.
- In respect of the comment that road safety measures should be implemented on due to a number of 'close calls', it should be noted that the speed limit is proposed to be reduced to 20MPH and a new PCaTS crossing proposed. The submitted Transport Assessment and Travel Plan have been submitted in support of the application and assessed by the Head of Engineering and Transport (Highways Section) who offers no objection to the overall proposal on highway safety grounds.
- With regards to the potential impacts of property values and saleability, it should be noted that these are not material planning considerations.

- In respect of the comments relating to security and monitoring of the facilities, it should be noted that there will be security fencing around the perimeter, CCTV cameras etc., and the scheme will be “Secured by Design”.
- Finally, in respect of the concerns relating to the floodlighting these have been detailed above. The intention is to utilise the same equipment as Ysgol Bro Dur in Sandfields, but the exact detail will be the subject a detailed condition.

CONCLUSION

The decision to recommend 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 Development Plan comprises the Neath Port Talbot Local Development Plan (2011–2026) adopted January 2016.

While the development would amount to an acceptable infrastructure development outside of defined settlement boundary under Policy SC1, the proposal would nevertheless amount to inappropriate development in the green wedge, contrary to Policy EN3. Notwithstanding this, it is considered that there are very exceptional circumstances which justify approving this development as a material departure from the Local Development Plan, notably the socio-economic benefits to the wider community from the creation of a brand new 21st Century school with enhanced parking and drop-off facilities and enhanced sports facilities with community use after hours. Moreover, these benefits would outweigh the limited landscape and visual harm identified, and the development would, subject to conditions, have no unacceptable impacts on residential amenity or highway safety. Accordingly, while the proposal is acceptable as a departure from Policy EN3, the development complies with Policies SC1, SC2, I1, OS1, OS2, EN6, EN7, EN8, RE2, W3, TR2 and BE1 of the Neath Port Talbot Local Development Plan.

It is further considered that the decision complies with the Council’s well-being objectives and the sustainable development principle in accordance with the requirements of the Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015.

RECOMMENDATION: Approve with conditions

Time Limit Conditions

- 1 The development shall begin no later than five years from the date of this decision.

Reason:

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

List of Approved Plans

- 2 The development shall be carried out in accordance with the following approved plans and documents:

Plans:-

Site Location Plan 26W007-PDA-V2-00-DR-A-05-0003.

Proposed Site Plan (including boundary treatments)
 26W007-PDA-V2-00-DR-A-05-0004.
 Proposed Site Plan 26W007-PDA-V2-00-DR-A-05-0017 Rev P02.
 Proposed Ground Floor Plan 26W007-PDA-00-00-DR-A-05-0005 Rev P01.
 Proposed First Floor Plan 26W007-PDA-00-01-DR-A-05-0006 Rev P01.
 Proposed Roof Plan 26W007-PDA-00-01-DR-A-05-0007 Rev P01.
 Proposed Elevations 26W007-PDA-00-XX-DR-A-05-0008 Rev P03.
 Proposed Sections (Building) 26W007-PDA-00-XX-DR-A-05-0010 Rev P01.
 Bin Storage Plans/ Elevations and Sprinkler/ Water Tank Specification and
 Enclosure Details 26W007-PDA-V2-ZZ-DR-A-05-0013.
 Parking Allocation Plan 1 of 2 26W007-PDA-V2-00-DR-A-05-00014.
 Parking Allocation Plan 2 of 2 26W007-PDA-V2-00-DR-A-05-00015.
 Planning Isometric Views 26W007-PDA-V2-00-DR-A-05-0016 Rev P01.
 Bird and Bat Box Locations 26W007-PDA-V2-00-DR-A-05-00018 Rev P04.
 Existing Sections 1 26W007-PDA-00-XX-DR-A-05-0019 Rev P01.
 Existing Sections 2 26W007-PDA-00-XX-DR-A-05-0020 Rev P01.
 Proposed Site Sections 1 26W007-PDA-00-XX-DR-A-05-0022 Rev P02.
 Proposed Site Sections 2 26W007-PDA-00-XX-DR-A-05-0023 Rev P02.
 CCTV Location Plan (Prepared by WSP) 26W007-WSP-XX-XXDR-E-680200
 Rev P03.
 CCTV Coverage Plan (Prepared by WSP) 26W007-WSP-XX-XXDR-E-680201
 Rev P03.
 External Lighting Plan - General Amenity (Prepared by WSP)
 26W007-WSP-XX-XXDR-E-630201 Rev P05.
 External Lighting Sports Flood Lighting Plan (Prepared by WSP)
 26W007-WSP-XX-XXDR-E-630200 Rev P06.
 Existing Landscaping Plan (Prepared by Corscadden Associates)
 26W007-CAA-XX-XX-DR-L-0001-P03 Rev P03.
 Landscape Overlay (Prepared by Corscadden Associates)
 26W007-CAA-XX-XX-DR-L-0003-P04 Rev P04.
 Earthworks Volume Analysis 26W007-WSP-00-XX-DR-C-0100 Rev. P03.
 Earthworks Site Sections 26W007-WSP-00-XX-DR-C-0111 Rev. P01.
 External Contours and Levels 26W007-WSP-00-XX-DR-C-0121 Rev. P01.
 Junction Visibility Splay 26W007-WSP-00-XX-DR-C-0101 Rev. P03.
 Junction Tracking 26W007-WSP-00-XX-DR-C-0102 Rev. P02.
 Swept Path Analysis 26W007-WSP-00-XX-DR-C-0103 Rev. P01.
 Junction Tracking Sheet 2 26W007-WSP-00-XX-DR-C-0104 Rev. P01.

Documents:-

Design and Access Statement.
 Planning Statement.
 Construction Method Statement (Rev. 2).
 Pre-Application Consultation (PAC Report).
 Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment and Appendix (June 2019).
 Ground Investigation May 2019.
 Phase 1 Geo-Environmental Assessment Desk Top Study.
 Drainage Strategy (March 2019).
 Noise Impact Assessment Rev A (March 2019).
 Phase 1 Extended Habitat Ecology Survey.
 Bat Survey (Whole Campus).
 Arboricultural Report including Tree Survey & Tree Constraints Plan,
 Arboricultural Impact Assessment, Tree Protection Plan and Arboricultural
 Method Statement (May 2019).

Transport Assessment and Travel Plan - May 2019.
Transport Management Plan.
Energy Assessment and Low and Zero Carbon (LZC Report).
Construction Ecological and Biodiversity Management Plan Rev 01.
Nuisance Guidance by Morgan Sindall.
Pollution Prevention Plan (Rev 1).
Site Waste Management Plan - June 2019.

Reason:
In the interests of clarity.

Pre-Commencement Conditions

- 3 Before beginning any development at the site, you must do the following: -
- a) Notify the Local Planning Authority in writing that you intend to commence development by submitting a Formal Notice under Article 24B of the Town and Country Planning (Development Management Procedure) (Wales) Order 2012 (DMPWO) in the form set out in Schedule 5A (a newly inserted Schedule) of the DMPWO (or in a form substantially to the like effect); and
 - b) Display a Site Notice (as required by Section 71ZB of the 1990 Act) in the form set out in Schedule 5B (a newly inserted Schedule) of the DMPWO (or in a form substantially to the like effect), such Notice to be firmly affixed and displayed in a prominent place, be legible and easily visible, and be printed on durable material. Such Notice must thereafter be displayed at all times when development is being carried out.

Reason:
To comply with procedural requirements in accordance with Article 24B of the Town and Country Planning (Development Management Procedure) (Wales) Order 2012 (DMPWO) and Section 71ZB of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990.

NOTE: Templates of the required Notice and Site Notice are available to download at www.npt.gov.uk/planning

- 4 With the exception of the Early Phase 1 Works identified in the Construction Method Statement (CMS), and notwithstanding the submitted details, no development shall commence on site until a Dust Management Plan has been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority detailing measures to control the emission of dust and dirt during the construction and demolition phases. All development on site shall be undertaken strictly in accordance with the approved Dust Management Plan.

Reason:
In the interest of adequate dust management, in the interest of residential amenity, and to accord with Policies BE1 and EN8 of the adopted Neath Port Talbot Local Development Plan.

Action Conditions

- 5 Prior to their use in the development hereby approved, details and samples of the materials to be used in the construction of the external surfaces (including windows / doors) of the building hereby permitted shall be 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 and to ensure the development complies with Policy BE1 of the Neath Port Talbot Local Development Plan.

- 6 Prior to the installation of any temporary construction lights on site, the location of all external lights, the specification and intensity of illumination, shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. Development shall be undertaken in accordance with the approved scheme only.

Reason:

In the interest of residential amenity and to prevent any unacceptable light spillage, and in the interest of biodiversity and protected species, and to accord with Policy SP15 of the adopted Neath Port Talbot Local Development Plan.

- 7 Notwithstanding the submitted details no demolition of existing buildings on site shall take place until a Demolition Method Statement has been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The Demolition Method Statement shall be made in accordance with the requirements of British Standard BS5228-1:2009 - "Code of practice for noise and vibration control on construction and open sites". The approved Statement shall be adhered to throughout the demolition works. The Statement shall provide for the following:

-

- 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 and facilities for public viewing, where appropriate;
- v. wheel washing facilities to prevent deposition of material onto any hard surface road;
- vi. measures to control the emission of dust and dirt during demolition;
- vii. Identification of the significant demolition noise sources, detailing the physical and operational management controls necessary to mitigate emissions from these noise sources, as well as noise complaint investigation procedures;
- viii. Hours of working on site, and specified hours for deliveries and any elements of the demolition that could lead to amenity issues from noise and disturbance to adjoining properties.

Reason:

In the interest of highway and pedestrian safety, the environment, and the amenity of residents, and to ensure accordance with Policies BE1, EN8 and TR2 of the adopted Neath Port Talbot Local Development Plan.

- 8 With the exception of the Early Phase 1 works, as identified in the Construction Method Statement, no development shall commence on Phase 1 until additional rounds of ground gas and groundwater sampling are undertaken on site, and the results of the sampling have been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority as part of an updated ground investigation report. Furthermore, a remediation scheme to bring the site to a condition suitable for the intended use by removing any unacceptable risks to human health, buildings, other property and the natural and historic 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 information provided for the assessment of the risks from land contamination to the future users of the land, neighbouring land, controlled waters, property and ecological systems is sufficient to enable a proper assessment, and to ensure compliance with Policies SP16 and EN8 of the Neath Port Talbot Local Development Plan.

- 9 No development shall commence on Phase 2 of the approved development, as identified in the Construction Method Statement, until an assessment of the nature and extent of contamination affecting the application site area has been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. This assessment must be carried out by or under the direction of a suitably qualified competent person in accordance with BS10175 (2011) 'Investigation of Potentially Contaminated Sites Code of Practice' and shall assess any contamination on the site, whether or not it originates on the site. The report of the findings shall include:

(i) a desk top study to identify all previous uses at the site and potential contaminants associated with those uses and the impacts from those contaminants on land and controlled waters. The desk study shall establish a 'conceptual site model' (CSM) which identifies and assesses all identified potential source, pathway, and receptor linkages;

(ii) an intrusive investigation to assess the extent, scale and nature of contamination which may be present, if identified as required by the desk top study;

(iii) an assessment of the potential risks to:

- human health,
- groundwater and surface waters
- adjoining land,
- property (existing or proposed) including buildings, crops, livestock, pets, woodland and service lines and pipes,- ecological systems,
- archaeological sites and ancient monuments; and
- any other receptors identified at (i)

(iv) an appraisal of remedial options, and justification for the preferred remedial option(s).

Reason:

To ensure that information provided for the assessment of the risks from land contamination to the future users of the land, neighbouring land, controlled waters, property and ecological systems is sufficient to enable a proper

assessment, and to ensure compliance with Policies SP16 and EN8 of the Neath Port Talbot Local Development Plan.

- 10 No development shall commence on Phase 2 of the approved development, as identified in the Construction Method Statement, until a remediation scheme to bring the site to a condition suitable for the intended use by removing any unacceptable risks to human health, buildings, other property and the natural and historic 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, and to ensure compliance with Policies SP16 and EN8 of the Neath Port Talbot Local Development Plan.

- 11 Prior to the first beneficial use of the new school or use of associated areas identified under Phases 1, 1a and 1b of the Construction Method Statement, a verification report which demonstrates the effectiveness of the agreed remediation works carried out in accordance with Condition 8 shall have been submitted to and agreed in writing by 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 and to ensure compliance with Policies SP16 and EN8 of the Neath Port Talbot Local Development Plan.

- 12 Prior to the first beneficial use of any sports facilities or landscaped areas, as identified under Phase 2 of the Construction Method Statement, a verification report which demonstrates the effectiveness of the agreed remediation works carried out in accordance with Condition 10 shall have been submitted to and agreed in writing by 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 and to ensure compliance with Policies SP16 and EN8 of the Neath Port Talbot Local Development Plan.

- 13 Prior to the first beneficial use of the school hereby approved, details of both hard and soft landscape works (including phasing of landscaping works) shall have been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. These details shall include:

- a) pedestrian access and circulation areas;
- b) hard surfacing materials;
- c) minor artefacts and structures (e.g. furniture, play equipment, refuse or other storage units, signs, etc.), and
- d) water features.

Soft landscape works shall include: planting plans; written specifications (including cultivation and other operations associated with plant and grass establishment); schedules of plants noting species, plant supply sizes and proposed numbers/densities where appropriate; an implementation and management programme. The landscaping works shall be carried out in accordance with the approved phasing details and the completed scheme shall thereafter be maintained in accordance with the approved scheme of maintenance.

Reason:

In the interests of maintaining a suitable scheme of landscaping to protect the visual amenity of the area, to maintain the special qualities of the landscape and habitats through the protection, creation and enhancement of links between sites and their protection for amenity, landscape and biodiversity value, and to ensure the development complies with Policies SP15 and BE1 of the Neath Port Talbot Local Development Plan.

- 14 Notwithstanding the submitted details and prior to the installation of any permanent external lighting on the site, a detailed lighting scheme for the site shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority detailing the location of all external lights, the specification, intensity of illumination, predicted lighting contours (lux plots), together with proposed hours of operation and any mitigation measures required (including measures to reduce as far as practicable the light spillage in the north-east corner of the site on biodiversity grounds) . The approved lighting shall be implemented on site in accordance with the approved scheme only, and retained as such thereafter.

Reason:

In the interest of residential amenity and to prevent any unacceptable light spillage, and to ensure compliance with Policies SP16, EN6, EN8 and BE1 of the Neath Port Talbot Local Development Plan.

- 15 Prior to the first evening use (17:00pm - 21:15pm) of the sports pitches detailed on the Plan ref. (26W007-PDA-V2-00-DR-A-05-0017_P02 - Amended Site Plan), a scheme shall have been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority detailing complaint investigation procedures for noise arising from the sports pitches during these hours, and identifying the potential noise mitigation measures that shall be used to reduce noise impacts and the timescales for implementation of any noise mitigation and/or control measures identified as necessary following such investigation of a complaint, with such measures thereafter retained.

Reason:

To protect the amenity of the locality, especially for people living and/or working nearby, and to ensure compliance with Policies SP16, EN8 and BE1 of the Neath Port Talbot Local Development Plan.

- 16 The new school hereby approved shall not be brought into beneficial use until such time as speed reduction measures, including Traffic Regulation Orders along the B4284 (Afan Valley Road), have been implemented in accordance with a scheme which shall first have been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority.

Reason:

In the interest of highway and pedestrian safety and to ensure the development complies with Policy TR2 of the Neath Port Talbot Local Development Plan.

- 17 All highway works, including the proposed access and egress points and speed reduction measures on the B4284 (Afan Valley Road), shall be subject to Stages 2 to 4 Road Safety Audit in accordance with HD19/03, which shall be submitted to, and approved in writing by, the Local Planning Authority at each stage of the audit. Any mitigation identified as part of each stage of the Road Safety Audit shall be implemented on site within 3 months of that stage of the RSA being approved by the Local Planning Authority, and retained as such thereafter.

Reason:

In the interest of highway and pedestrian safety and to ensure the development complies with Policy TR2 of the Neath Port Talbot Local Development Plan.

- 18 The new school hereby approved shall not be brought into beneficial use until such time as a PCaTS signalised pedestrian crossing has been provided and is fully installed and operational in the location identified on Dwg. No 26W007-PDA-V2-00-DR-A-05-0017_P02 - Amended Site Plan, with such crossing retained as approved thereafter.

Reason:

In the interest of highway and pedestrian safety and to ensure the development complies with Policy TR2 of the Neath Port Talbot Local Development Plan.

- 19 Prior to work commencing on Phase 1a, as detailed in the Construction Method Statement, a scheme shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority detailing temporary measures for bus drop-off arrangements, to include the existing public bus stop. These measures, as approved, shall be fully implemented on site prior to work commencing on Phase 1a, and retained until the permanent coach drop off / bus stops are operational.

Reason:

In the interest of highway and pedestrian safety and ensure continuity of bus facilities during constructions works, and to ensure the development complies with Policy TR2 of the Neath Port Talbot Local Development Plan.

- 20 Prior to works commencing on Phase 1a, as identified in the Construction Method Statement, full details of the permanent school bus/coach drop-off area, including the extension of the existing highway, shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority, including the following:

- a. Longitudinal and vertical carriageway alignment;
- b. Cross sections every 20 metres;
- c. Street lighting proposals;

d. Details of required new and/or amended Traffic Regulation Orders.

The approved scheme shall be fully implemented on site prior to the completion of Phase 2, and retained as such thereafter.

Reason:

In the interest of highway and pedestrian safety and to ensure the development complies with Policy TR2 of the Neath Port Talbot Local Development Plan

- 21 With the exception of the Early Phase 1 works, as identified in the Construction Method Statement, the temporary site access shall not be used by construction traffic until such time as temporary Traffic Regulation Orders have been put into place to reduce the speed along Afan Valley Road to 20mph (to accommodate the visibility splay for the 85th percentile speed). The temporary construction access and temporary Traffic Regulation Orders, as approved, shall be retained throughout the construction works, or until such time as the new school is fully operational.

Reason: In the interest of highway and pedestrian safety during constructions works, and to ensure the development complies with Policy TR2 of the Neath Port Talbot Local Development Plan.

- 22 Prior to first beneficial use of the new school all parking areas shall be provided and marked out on site in accordance with Dwg. No 26W007-PDA-V2-00-DR-A-05-0017_P02 - Amended Site Plan. These parking spaces, as approved, shall be retained for parking use thereafter.

Reason:

In the interest of highway and pedestrian safety and to ensure the development complies with Policy TR2 of the Neath Port Talbot Local Development Plan.

Regulatory Conditions

- 23 All development on site shall be undertaken strictly in accordance with the Construction Method Statement (Rev. 2), Pollution Prevention Plan (Rev 1) and Construction Ecological and Biodiversity Management Plan (Rev 01), with the exemption of dust management, which is controlled by Conditions 4 and 32.

Reason:

In the interest of clarity, residential amenity and protection of the environment and to accord with Policies BE1 and EN8 of the adopted Neath Port Talbot Local Development Plan.

- 24 The sports pitches hereby approved shall only be used for community use when the car parking areas approved as part of this development are open and made available for parking of vehicles utilising the facilities.

Reason:

In the interest of highway and pedestrian safety and to ensure adequate off-street car parking provision, and to comply with Policy TR2 of the Neath Port Talbot Local Development Plan.

- 25 Any gated access for construction traffic shall be set back from the edge of carriageway a minimum length of 20 metres, and any temporary hoarding erected on site shall be set behind the visibility splay for the site access.

Reason:

In the interest of highway and pedestrian safety and to ensure there is sufficient area for the vehicles to pull-off the public highway and communicate with the site management and to comply with Policy TR2 of the Neath Port Talbot Local Development Plan.

- 26 All works on site during the demolition and construction phases, including works to the trees shall be undertaken strictly in accordance with the approved Tree Report and in accordance with BS5837:2012 Trees in relation to design, demolition and construction, including root zone protection.

Reason:

In the interest of visual amenity and biodiversity and to accord with Policy SP15 of the adopted Neath Port Talbot Local Development Plan.

- 27 No surface water and/or land drainage shall be allowed to connect directly or indirectly with the public sewerage network.

Reason:

To prevent hydraulic overloading of the public sewerage system, to protect the health and safety of existing residents and ensure no pollution of or detriment to the environment, and to and ensure the development complies with Policy SP16 and BE1 of the Neath Port Talbot Local Development Plan.

- 28 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, and to ensure compliance with Policies SP16 and EN8 of the Neath Port Talbot Local Development Plan.

- 29 The noise rating level emitted from external plant serving the approved use shall not be greater than the existing background noise level. The noise levels shall be determined at the nearest noise-sensitive premises or at another location that is deemed suitable by the Local Planning Authority. Measurements and assessments shall be made in accordance with 'BS 4142:2014 Method for rating and assessing industrial and commercial sound.

Reason:

In the interests of local amenity, and to ensure compliance with Policies SP16, EN8 and BE1 of the Neath Port Talbot Local Development Plan.

- 30 Should the Local Planning Authority make such a request in writing following receipt of complaints regarding the floodlighting at the site, a post-operation survey shall be undertaken and the results submitted to the Local Planning Authority within one month of such request being made to demonstrate that the light spill beyond the site boundaries does not exceed the approved specifications, and, if so, any remedial actions necessary. The remedial measures shall be fully implemented on site within one month of the completion of the post-operation survey, and retained as such thereafter.

Reason:

In order to safeguard the amenities of adjoining occupiers, and ensure that the impact on nearby residential properties is in accordance with the approved technical specification, and to ensure compliance with Policies SP16, EN8 and BE1 of the Neath Port Talbot Local Development Plan.

- 31 The sports pitches hereby approved (detailed on plan ref. (26W007-PDA-V2-00-DR-A-05-0017_P02 - Amended Site Plan) shall only be used for sports / activities between the hours of 09:00 and 21:15.

Reason:

In the interests of residential amenity of adjoining occupiers, and to ensure compliance with Policies SP16, EN8 and BE1 of the Neath Port Talbot Local Development Plan.

- 32 For the duration of the Early Phase 1 Works identified in the Construction Method Statement (CMS), a Notice shall be displayed on site providing the name and contact information of the relevant person in the event of a dust complaint, and daily visual checks around the site for potential dust issues shall be undertaken, with any identified issues mitigated where necessary.

Reason:

In the interest of adequate dust management, in the interest of residential amenity, and to accord with Policies BE1 and EN8 of the adopted Neath Port Talbot Local Development Plan.