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Mr David Cross
Planning Department,
Merthyr Tydfil County Borough Council,
Unit 5,
Pentrebach,
CF48 4TQ

Ref: 3889CA.L001

Date: 03 July 2026

Dear David,

FULL PLANNING APPLICATION FOR THE INSTALLATION OF A DINING AREA CANOPY AT BISHOP HEDLEY HIGH SCHOOL, GWAUNFARREN ROAD, PENYDARREN, MERTHYR TYDFIL, CF47 9AN

On behalf of our client, Willmott Dixon Construction Ltd, please find enclosed completed application form and architectural drawings for the full planning application for the installation of dining area canopy ('the proposed development') at Bishop Hedley High School, Gwaunfarren Road, Penydarren, Merthyr Tydfil CF47 9AN ('the site').

Application Submission

In addition to this covering letter, the following documents have been submitted to support the submission of this application:

- Application Form
- Location Plan (drwg no. BCA-ATK-XX-XX-DR-LA-401001 Rev P01)
- Dining Area Canopy Detail (drwg no. BCA-ATK-XX-XX-DR-LA-404001 Rev P01)
- Landscape General Arrangement – North Site (drwg no. BCA-ATK-XX-XX-DR-LA-401002 Rev P01)
- General Arrangement Elevations 1 of 2 -Planning (drwg no. BCA-ATK-XX-XX-DR-LA-401092 Rev P1)

The Site

The application site covers the site of Bishop Hedley Campus of Blessed Carlo Acutis school and is located to the north of Merthyr Tydfil town centre, within the community of Penydarren.

Immediately to the north and northwest of the site is the Galon Uchaf Park and 'the Greenie', a large green open space. To the east is the Royal Crescent Allotment which is allocated in the LDP as an Open Space Site. Gwaunfarren Primary School is located directly to the southwest of the site.

On 20th October 2023, the planning application for the redevelopment of the school site, including the demolition of the existing school and the construction of a new school building, was approved under application ref: P/23/0131.

The Proposal

The proposed development is a 6m-tall canopy which will provide an outdoor covered dining area in the play area. The dimensions of the proposed canopy are 15077mm (L) x 9097mm (W) x 6010mm (H). The proposed canopy is to host 12no. timber picnic benches.

The proposed development is made from double conic steel framing and a tensile fabric canopy.

The proposed canopy is situated east of the main school building and north of the secondary hard play area. The proposed development will provide necessary outdoor seating capacity for students within the school.

Planning Policy Context

National Planning Policy

National Planning Policy is contained within the 12th edition of Planning Policy Wales (PPW), published by the Welsh Government in February 2024. The policies in PPW are supported by Technical Advice Notes (TANs).

The most relevant TAN to this application is TAN 12: Design (March 2016) advises that the Welsh Government is strongly committed to achieving the delivery of good design in the built and natural environment, which is fit for purpose and delivers environmental sustainability, economic development, and social inclusion at every scale throughout Wales.

Local Planning Policy

The Local Development Plan for the area comprises the Merthyr Tydfil Replacement Local Development Plan (LDP) 2016 - 2031 which was formally adopted by Council on 29th January 2020. The following local planning policies are the most relevant in this case:

- Policy SW4 - Settlement Boundaries
- Policy SW11 - Sustainable Design and Placemaking
- Policy SW13 - Protecting and Improving Local Community Facilities

Planning Assessment

The principle of the development is to provide necessary seating provision in the play area of the school which in turn would provide a space which creates the opportunity to develop community cohesion and integration between pupils within the school. The proposed canopy would add to the redevelopment of the school by providing a modern space which enhances the quality and character of the site.

It is considered that the proposed canopy dining area would enhance the amenity opportunities for the pupils of Bishop Hedley High School whilst adding to the quality and modernisation of the redevelopment of the wider school site. Therefore, the proposed development is compliant with policies SW4, SW11 and SW13 of the adopted local plan and the TAN 12 of the PPW and should be considered acceptable by the local planning authority.

Green Infrastructure

As stated within Paragraph 6.2.12 of the PPW, a green infrastructure statement should be submitted with all planning applications in proportion to the scale and nature of the development proposed, and in the case of minor development this will be a short description.

The proposed development does not include the incorporation of green infrastructure as the scale of the development is minor and is exclusively on existing hardstanding area. However, the wider main school redevelopment incorporated substantial proposed planting including:

- Sustainable Drainage (SuDS) features such as rain gardens
- Wildflower and grassland planting
- Dedicated pollinator-friendly orchard mixes
- Native woodland planting such as beech, cherry and oak
- Native hedgerow planting such as blackthorn and holly

- Shrub planting features such as a willow tunnel within memorial garden.

The ecological enhancements being provided as part of the wider school redevelopment are sufficient to satisfy the green infrastructure requirements set out in the PPW.

Conclusions

This planning application seeks to install a dining area canopy on existing hard play area at Bishop Hedley High School. The proposed canopy would provide an additional necessary covered seating area whilst being a very minor addition within the wider context of the redevelopment of the site. The provision of a canopy in this location is in conformity with national and local planning policies, and the proposal should, therefore, be supported by the Council and be approved without delay.

The application (including relevant form, this cover letter and accompanying documentation) has been submitted electronically via the Planning Portal. We look forward to receiving confirmation of the validation shortly.

Should any subsequent clarifications or information be required, please let us know as soon as possible so it can be provided in a timely manner.

Yours sincerely,

Frank Walsh

Planner

DPP

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