

DELEGATED REPORT

Application No:	P/25/0048
Site Address:	Ysgol Rhyd Y Grug Primary School Aberfan Crescent Aberfan Merthyr Tydfil CF48 4NT
Development:	Construction of a new teaching block comprising Meithrin, Nursery and Community Room, an external covered walkway linking the new block to the existing school and associated works
Case Officer:	Marlene Ferreira
Site Visit:	6th March 2025
Application Expiry Date:	21st April 2025
Consultation reply date expired:	19th March 2025

APPLICATION SITE

The application site relates to an existing school, Ysgol Rhyd y Grug Primary School, specifically the grassed area/playing field located to the north of the school building. The existing school, a single storey building, is located on a relatively flat site, almost centrally within the plot being served by grassed areas/playing fields to the north and east and a small car parking area to the west. It is accessed via a no-through road, off Walters Terrace, part of which is un-adopted and relatively narrow.

The existing school site sits in the vicinity of Ynysowen Nursery School, lies to the west of the River Taff and is the last building near the end of the no-through road. Its location is therefore relatively isolated, being surrounded by trees and mature vegetation and no other buildings. The wooded areas adjoining the school's eastern and southern boundaries are designated Special Landscape Areas (SLA). The land beyond, alongside the river is a designated Site of Interest for Nature Conservation (SINC).

PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT

This application seeks planning permission to construct a single storey detached building to provide a meithrin, nursery and community room with associated staff rooms, kitchen areas, WC's and circulation space, etc. All areas would be served by separate entrances with the nurse being accessed off the southern elevation, and the meithrin and community room being access off the western elevations.

The building would be located to the north, within the grassed area/playing field and sited approximately 3 metres (at its closest point) from the existing school building. It would

comprise a flat green roof with three 'pop' roof lanterns, all of which would contain an array of solar panels. It would measure approximately 25m wide, 24m deep and 3.5m (5.6m including roof lanterns) in height. The building, which would appear to be finished in brickwork, would comprise external canopies to the eastern, southern and western elevations.

An external walkway, which would provide a link between the new teaching unit and the existing school, is proposed to be constructed to the west of the proposed building and would tie into the west elevation of the existing school allowing direct access into the Infant school. The irregular shaped steel walkway with brickwork dwarf wall, would comprise a flat roof design measuring approximately 3.2m in height.

Other alterations include an increase to the car parking area serving the school site. An additional seven vehicular parking spaces would be provided to the west of the existing school. Four spaces would be provided alongside the western boundary of the site, adjoining existing parking spaces, and three spaces would be provided close to the Juniors entrance of the existing school. A total of 32 additional cycle bays/stands (Sheffield type - accommodating 2 bicycles) would also be provided to the east and west of the existing school site and to the west of the proposed new building.

The proposed development seeks to enhance and improve the current teaching facilities at Ysgol Rhyd Y Grug by means of constructing a new building and re-organisation of the existing school site, which would also allow for increased capacity of pupils and staff at the extended school site.

It is noted that this application also includes details of works to the existing school, namely internal works, alterations to doors/windows and the construction of an external canopy. However, these works would amount to permitted development and as such do not require planning permission. Thus, these works will not be considered under the assessment of this application.

PLANNING HISTORY

The Council's records indicate the following planning history in respect of the existing school site:

- P/13/0182 – Erection of a canopy – Approved: 24th July 2013
- P/12/0123 – Erection of Replica Dinosaur – Approved: 11th June 2012

CONSULTATION

The following consultations were undertaken:

Education Section	No response.
Head of Engineering and Highways	No objection, subject to conditions.
Estates Section	No response.
Planning Policy Officer	No objection.

The Council's Ecologist	No objection, subject to conditions.
Environmental Health	No response.
Rights of Way Officer	No objection. <i>'...The public right of way, near the school would need to be protected at all times...'</i>
Natural Resources Wales (NRW)	No objection. <i>'...We do not intend to offer bespoke guidance in respect of this application in relation to bats and refer you to the inhouse ecologist...'</i>
Welsh Water	No objection, subject to conditions.

PUBLICITY

In accordance with the Town and Country Planning (Development Management Procedure) (Wales) Order 2012, letters were sent to nearby properties and two site notices were displayed within the vicinity of the site. No letters of objection have been received in response to the publicity exercise undertaken in association with this application.

POLICY CONTEXT

National Development Framework

- Future Wales: the National Plan 2040 (February 2021)

This document sets out a strategy for addressing key national priorities through the planning system, including sustaining and developing a vibrant economy, achieving decarbonisation and climate-resilience, developing strong ecosystems and improving the health and well-being of our communities.

National Planning Policies

- Planning Policy Wales (Edition 12, February 2024)

Paragraph 3.3 refers to good design and states that *'...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. To achieve sustainable development, design must go beyond aesthetics and include the social, economic, environmental, cultural aspects of the development, including how space is used, how buildings and the public realm support this use, as well as its construction, operation, management, and its relationship with the surroundings area...'*

Paragraph 3.9 refers to character and states that *'...the special characteristics of an area should be central to the design of a development. The layout, form, scale and visual appearance of a proposed development and its relationship to its surroundings are important planning considerations. A clear rationale behind the design decisions made, based on site and context analysis, a strong vision, performance requirements and design principles, should be sought throughout the development process and expressed, when appropriate, in a design and access statement...'*

Paragraph 3.14 refers to context appraisal and states that these *'...should be used to determine the appropriateness of a development proposal in responding to its surroundings. This process will ensure that a development is well integrated into the fabric of the existing built environment...'*

Paragraph 6.4.3 discusses biodiversity and states that *'...the planning system has a key role to play in helping to reverse the decline in biodiversity and increasing the resilience of ecosystems, at various scales, by ensuring appropriate mechanisms are in place to both protect against loss and to secure enhancement...'*

- TAN (Technical Advice Note)

TAN 5 – Nature and Conservation Planning (2009)

This TAN provides advice on development affecting designated sites and habitats, in addition to protected or priority habitats and species. Section 6.2.2 states that *'...It is essential that the presence or otherwise of protected species, and the extent that they may be affected by the proposed development, is established before the planning permission is granted, otherwise all relevant material considerations may not have been addressed in making the decision. It is considered best practice that such a survey is carried out before planning application is submitted. Planning permission should not be granted subject to a condition that protected species surveys are carried out and, in the event that protected species are found to be present, mitigation measures are submitted for approval. However, bearing in mind the delay and cost that may be involved, developers should not be required to undertake surveys for protected species unless there is a reasonable likelihood of them being present...'*

TAN 12 – Design (2016)

This TAN 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. Section 2.6 of TAN12 states that *'...Design which is inappropriate in its context, or which fails to grasp opportunities to enhance the character, quality or function of an area, should not be accepted, as these have detrimental effects on existing communities...'* Section 4.3 of TAN12 points out *'...Understanding the site and its immediate and wider context is the basis for a meaningful and sustainable design response, and is the responsibility of all those involved in the design process...'*

Local Planning Policies

- The Merthyr Tydfil Replacement LDP 2016-2031

Policy SW4 – Settlement Boundaries

Policy SW11 – Sustainable Design and Placemaking
Policy SW13 – Protecting Community Facilities
Policy EnW1 – Nature Conservation and Ecosystem Resilience
Policy EnW4 – Environmental Protection
Policy EnW5 – Landscape Protection
Policy EcW8 – Renewable Energy

- Supplementary Planning Guidance (SPG):

- SPG Note 4: Sustainable Design (July 2013)
- SPG Note 5: Nature and Development (May 2015)

PLANNING CONSIDERATIONS

The issues to consider when assessing this application relate to whether the proposed development is acceptable in principle in this location, and whether it would be an appropriate proposal in respect of its impact upon the character and appearance of the area, residential amenity, ecology, parking provision and highway safety.

Principle of Development

The application site lies within the 'settlement boundary – other growth area' and the proposed development would therefore be in accordance with LDP Policy SW4, which supports new development in this location provided it complies with other relevant policies. Whilst the application site lies approximately 50 metres from the River Taff (at its closest point), it lies on a relatively flat elevated plateau (above the River Taff) and therefore falls outside any defined flood risk area (rivers, sea, surface water and water sources). Thus, no further considerations are required in this respect. Indeed, NRW have not raised any comments or concerns in respect of any potential flooding. Thus, the proposal would accord with LDP Policy EnW4.

The proposal however would result in the loss of part of the existing playing field to make way for the construction of a new detached building. It should be noted however that the playing field is not a recognised open space area. Instead, this grassed area is only informally used by the school and is not a designated sports ground/facility used in support of school teachings. Thus, the school would continue to utilise off-site sports facilities as it currently does. Furthermore, it is also recognised that only a small portion of the playing field would be lost to accommodate the building, and the remainder of the playing field would remain undisturbed and could still be informally used by the school, should it be desired. The loss of part of the playing field would therefore not raise any significant concerns and would be acceptable in this instance.

It is acknowledged that the Ysgol Rhyd Y Grug is recognised as an existing community facility, serving the local community. In this respect LDP Policy SW13 is relevant and states that *'...The provision of new and enhanced community facilities will be supported subject to satisfying other relevant LDP policies. The Council will protect and support the enhancement of the County Borough's existing community facilities. Development proposals that would result in a loss of an existing community facility will only be permitted where: alternative provision of at least equivalent value to the local community can be provided nearby, or it can be demonstrated that existing provision is inappropriate or surplus to the needs of the community and is no longer required, or, it can be demonstrated there is no longer a viable community use for the facility...'* In this respect, it

is important to note that the proposal seeks to provide a new teaching block at the school, which would serve to better organise the existing school provision, as well as improve the existing facilities available at the school. This proposal would therefore undoubtedly serve to enhance the school's existing facilities and would therefore accord with LDP Policy SW13.

Character and Appearance

The proposed new teaching block and associated external walkway would be located within an existing playing field at the school grounds, as previously mentioned. Whilst it is acknowledged that the proposal would be located in close proximity to the existing school building and would lie at the end of a no-through road and within a relatively isolated location, its visual impact is still a primary consideration.

The proposed new teaching block would be a standalone building located in very close proximity to the existing school. It would be a low-lying structure, with a green flat roof comprising three pop up lanterns and simple clean elevations. It is acknowledged that the north elevation is the most prominent elevation, given that this is the most visible elevation on approach to the school, along the existing highway. Ideally, additional openings would be added to this (northern) elevation, however, due to the buildings' orientation, where its main entrance is located to the west, no further openings could be included, due to the internal layout of the new teaching facility. The proposed elevations however, including the northern facade (all of which appear to be finished in brickwork), would comprise windows and door openings. As such, the proposed fenestration arrangement would add interest to the building and prevent the provision of any blank 'lifeless' and monotonous elevations.

Although it is noted that the material finishes have not been fully detailed, a suitably worded condition could be added to any planning permission to ensure that the proposed finishes are sympathetic to the appearance of the building, the existing school site and the wider area. It is also noted that the proposed solar panels (which would be situated on the three lanterns), details of which have been submitted with the application, including its mounting system, have not been shown on the proposed elevations. As such, whilst the use of solar panels is encouraged and supported, it is unclear at what angle these would be installed and how these would sit/appear at roof level. However, this could also be controlled via suitably worded condition and as such, no significant concerns are raised in this respect.

It is also recognised that timber fencing, of various styles, and at varying heights of between 1.1m in and 2.1m, would be provided in different areas around the new building to provide designated enclosed spaces, i.e nursery play area, swale planting, etc. These material finishes are deemed visually appropriate. It is noted however that the solid 1.8m high timber fencing, at a lower height, would be preferable given its siting adjacent to the most prominent elevation of the new building. However, it is also acknowledged that this height has been dictated by the use of the area, i.e. a play area, which is required to be well enclosed to provide a safe external play space for the children. Thus, in this instance, given its intended purpose and the fact that it would only enclose part of the elevation of the new building, it would not appear unappealing or unsightly. In addition, the proposed planting alongside the fence and other proposed planting surrounding the new building would aid to soften the appearance of the proposed enclosures .

It is therefore considered that the proposed building, in terms of its overall height and design, would relate well to the existing school building, which is also a single storey flat

roof development. As such, this proposal, including the associated external walkway (a single storey steel structure with brick dwarf wall) and other associated works, would result in a sympathetic form of development which would be in context with its immediate setting. Thus, the proposed development would not be considered to have any significant adverse impact upon the character or appearance of the area, the adjoining SLA or the nearby SINC and would therefore accord with LDP Policies SW11, EnW5 and ECW8.

Residential Amenity

The proposed development, as previously discussed, lies in a relatively secluded location, however, the impact of the development upon nearby surrounding residents requires careful consideration.

In this instance, the school site lies in a segregated location, away from residential properties, and as such, the proposed works would not be considered to have any significant adverse impact on the privacy or amenities of these neighbouring occupiers.

In terms of the use itself, the new teaching block would continue to provide an educational facility for children. Thus, the use of the building would continue to be used in the same manner as the existing school site, however, it would cater for an additional number of students. Any additional noise or disturbance generated from the school site however, would not be deemed significantly greater to warrant the refusal of the application. Indeed, the proposed new teaching facility with associated external walkway, would therefore not be considered to result in any additional significant harm to the amenities of nearby occupiers, particularly since the nearest residential property is located over 120 metres away and at a significantly higher level to the school site. In this respect, it should be noted that no letters of objection have been received from surrounding residents.

The proposed development would therefore be considered acceptable in respect of its impact upon residential amenity and would accord with LDP SW11.

Ecology

Given the nature of the proposed works and the proposed location of the development, the application was supported by a Preliminary Ecological Appraisal, an Arboricultural Assessment Survey (2024), a Green Infrastructure Statement, a Planting Strategy, a Bat Survey, as well as associated plans.

In respect of the Bat Survey, this concluded that the ‘...roof structure of the building had low potential for roosting bats and that no evidence recent or historic was recorded and it is assessed not to be a bat roost. The survey of the building exterior found the building to have moderate potential within the concrete panels and roof jointing with lead flashing. However, on close inspection the concrete panels showed no evidence of roosting bats and this potential was further decreased due to the high lux levels on site. The roof jointing with lead flashing confirmed one roost, a day roosts for a peak count of x 2 soprano pipistrelle bats on the south side. One bat dropping was recorded stuck to the wall close to the roost. This area had lower lux levels which may have increased the potential of the area for bats. The area with the confirmed roost will not be directly or indirectly impacted by the proposed works which are due to take place on the north-west part of the site.

The general area had a low biomass of bats during the survey likely as a result of the high lux levels on site, but situations can change quickly with mobile species such as bats, if

opportunities arise particularly as the site is close to good quality habitat and the River Taff. Therefore measures should be employed to prevent ingress by bats into the property during any work to prevent conflict between scheduled works and roosting bats or breeding birds if the work is undertaken during the active season for bats April to October when they fly and forage and can utilise opportunistic roosts which have become available or breeding season for birds March to September.

Therefore provided that work is undertaken according to the recommendations below and under ecological guidance if required the likely significant effects can be minimised and risk reduced to be proportionate with the likelihood of the presence of bats in the area of the proposed works which is assessed to be low according to the latest building inspection and emergence survey results...'

The Bat Survey, as noted above, also sets out the following recommendations:

'...Bats are a protected species and a material consideration in the planning process. If a bat roost is impacted by a proposed scheme and will be damaged, destroyed, modified or the bats disturbed, suitable and proportionate mitigation and or compensations will be required to maintain the favourable conservation status of bats in their natural range or not impact their ability to attain favourable conservation status in the future; The main building Rhyd Y Grug School- Aberfan Merthyr Tydfil is a legally protected bat roost and remains legally protected whether bats are present or not according to British law; Any works to the building may require a derogation licence issued by Natural Resources Wales but only after planning permission is secured and if the work is extended to impact the area of the confirmed roost; If the roost cannot be retained then a compensation roost per species will be required. Due to the low numbers encountered bat boxes may be considered suitable and proportionate by Natural Resources Wales but the new roosts would need to be available for bats returning to the area in early spring of the following season after planning consent; Artificial bat boxes, if used on the site, should be erected at 2/3m in height south or west facing suitable for serotine and common pipistrelle bats; Maintain building integrity up and until the point of works to avoid occupation by bats or birds particularly as a high species composition has been locally recorded during the surveys; If any bats are encountered on site works will immediately stop and the ecologist will be called for advice. The bat expert will attempt to rescue bats if in immediate danger and hold them in accordance with the Bat Workers Manual and in a suitable handling box for release in the evening or continued roosting; Builders and contractors are explicitly forbidden from handling bats or disturbing breeding birds; All nesting birds are protected while breeding or making a breeding attempt. Should breeding birds be discovered advice must be sought from a qualified ecologist...'

Having noted that the Bat Survey identified that the building is a day roost for Soprano Pipisterelles, NRW were consulted, however, since the proposed works would not impact on the confirmed roost, NRW did not have any further bespoke advice in respect of bats and advised that the Council's Ecologist be consulted. The Council's Ecologist reviewed the Bat Survey and did not dispute the findings of the report, however, he requested that a Bat Method Statement be submitted in support of the application to ensure that there is no disturbance to the roost during the works. It was also requested that the proposed enhancements be fully stipulated in order to fully understand the actual proposed enhancement measures which would be undertaken. The Bat Method Statement was received on 22nd January 2026. The Bat Method Statement included recommendations such as *'...a pre-commencement bat survey not more than 24 hours prior to works starting and re-inspection of the building, prior to work operations; care to be taken when stripping areas around windows, doors and porches; while work continues on site maintain*

coverings on buildings to prevent free access for bat species; if bats are encountered works will immediately stop, etc...' The Council's Ecologist reviewed the information contained therein and has not raised any concerns or objections.

Specifically in respect of lighting, the Bat Survey contains details of the amount of lighting around the existing school site, and the Council's Ecologist has raised concerns over the ambient lux levels around the buildings at the existing school site. Indeed, he has noted that the ambient lux levels are relatively high and the lights also appear to have a relatively high colour temperature, appearing white in nature. Thus, in order to ensure that adequate bat friendly lighting is installed on the proposed teaching unit and to ensure the provision of dark commuting routes for bats in and around the school site, the Council's Ecologist has requested a lighting scheme for the entire school site, including the proposed new building, be submitted in support of the application (which must conform to the relevant guidance documents, namely, Guidance Note 8, Bats and Artificial Lighting, and, Dark Skies Guidance). Whilst the comments of the Council's Ecologist have been considered, it should be noted that the existing school buildings do not form part of this application and no works are proposed in respect of lighting to the existing school buildings. Whilst it is acknowledged that the lux levels and colour temperature is higher than desired when considering the bat population in the area, this cannot be controlled under this application. However, further discussions with the agent have revealed that as an enhancement measure, the colour temperature of the two luminaires near the bat roost on the existing school's southern elevation, could be reduced in colour temperature (2700K) and this alteration, which would be welcomed and supported, could be controlled via a suitably worded condition.

In terms of the lighting proposed for the new building and associated walkway link, it is noted that numerous lighting plans have been received, however, there appears to be information missing or requirement for alterations in respect of the type of luminaires proposed, their light spillage details, colour temperature details, etc. Thus, in the interest of progressing the application, details in respect of external lighting can also be controlled by a suitably worded condition, which could form part of any planning permission granted.

In respect of the Preliminary Ecological Appraisal, it is noted that this document puts forward potential enhancement works for the site, which include planting areas, bat roosting features, hedgehog homes, nesting opportunities for birds, etc however these have not been detailed in relation to this scheme. It was also noted that the Preliminary Ecological Appraisal was out of date. As such, the Council's Ecologist requested that an up to date PEA and details of the enhancements must be fully described. This document also recommended the submission of a Construction Environmental Management Plan and the Council's Ecologist has therefore also requested that this information is submitted in support of the application. The updated PEA was received on 12th November 2025. It included detailed enhancement measures, which include bird boxes, bat boxes and hedgehog houses. The updated report was considered by the Council's Ecologist and no concerns were raised. A Construction Environmental Management Plan was also received on 21st May 2026 and the Council's Ecologist has agreed with the comments, conclusions and recommendations reached.

With regards to the Green Infrastructure Statement (GIS), this document concluded that the proposed green infrastructure in association with the development would include a planted swale to the east (to the rear of the new teaching building); areas of new and ornamental planting to the west of the new extension and existing school; planting of x3 multi stemmed Silver Birch trees to the west (adjacent to the entrance of the new teaching

building); rain garden swale features to the northeast and northwest; installation of three hedgehog houses within the wildflower area, etc. The Council's Ecologist reviewed the GIS and did not raise concerns, however further information was requested in the form of a long-term habitat management, maintenance and monitoring plan. However, this could be included in the long-term landscaping strategy, which has been referred to below.

In terms of the Arboricultural Assessment Survey, the Council's Ecologist noted the information contained therein in respect of the two trees earmarked for remedial works and other trees to be monitored, and requested that prior to any tree work is undertaken, a Ground Level Tree Assessment must be undertaken by a suitably experienced and licensed bat ecologist to inform of, for example, any further bat survey work, avoidance, mitigation, compensation or enhancement measures that may be necessary. A Ground Level Tree Assessment was received on 8th January 2026. This assessment concluded that *'...only one tree from the three groups (G1, G2, G3) had any potential for roosting bats. The tree was located in group G1 a London Plane with PRF-I rot hole and ivy covering. The tree was inspected with an endoscope and torch and was found to not be a roost and had no signs of bats recent or historic. The tree is located in G1 shown in plates 6, 7 and 8. The tree is also located in an area regularly recorded at over 20 lux which will further reduce the risk of bats using the tree as a roost...No other trees in the assessment had features that could be used by bats and all trees will be retained as part of the proposed scheme. The general area had a low biomass of bats during the 2024 emergence surveys likely as a result of the high lux levels on site, but situations can change quickly with mobile species such as bats, if opportunities arise particularly as the site is close to good quality habitat and the River Taff. The site also contains trees with a low associated insect composition such as Sycamore, London Plane and Leyland cypress which reduces the feeding opportunities on site for bats. Bat are active around the school and one roost has been recorded on the school building in the south so encounters with bats may happen on site. The trees on site will not be directly or indirectly impacted by the proposed scheme and will be retained on site. The trees are not a bat roost at the time of survey and therefore bats are not a constraint to this proposed development...'* The Council's Ecologist considered the submitted assessment and did not raise any concerns or objections.

Turning to the Planting Strategy, the Council's Ecologist requested further information in respect of the list of suitable species, since this was not specified in the information submitted. As such, it has been requested that a full planting plan detailing the actual species, numbers of specimens, seed mixes etc is submitted as part of the application, which could also be included as part of the long-term landscaping strategy (as referred to earlier).

In addition to the planting strategy, additional information including plans and reports were received in support of the application, which included a Planting Plan, Soil Detail Plan, Soft Works Plan, New Build GA Roof Plan, and, Landscape Details and Planting Schedule. However, these documents, including the Planting Strategy did not appear to include species details which are native and of local (if not Welsh or Uk) provenance. Amendments in respect of these documents have therefore been requested. Whilst this matter was discussed with the agent in more detail and attempts were made to amend the species details, further discussions were required with the school to ascertain what species would be safe to plant within the school grounds, which also serve to satisfy the ecological requirements. Since this matter requires further consideration, it would be considered reasonable in this instance to add a suitably worded condition in respect of a

long term landscaping strategy, as part of any planning permission granted, in order to secure this information.

Having considered the information submitted in support of the application and provided the development is carried out in accordance with the above reports/plans and appropriately worded conditions are added to secure the remaining information, the proposed development would be acceptable and accord with LDP Policy EnW1.

Parking Provision and Highway Safety

The proposed new teaching building at the school site, which would be accessed, in part, via a narrow and unadopted lane, would increase student and staff numbers at the overall school. Thus, a transport statement was submitted in support of the application which detailed the means of access to and from the site and the increase in staff and pupil numbers in respect of this proposal and described how this would be managed/addressed. The Head of Highways and Engineering has considered the proposal and recognises that there is currently an under provision of vehicular parking at the existing school site. However, it is also noted that, as stipulated in the transport statement and indicated on the submitted plans, that an additional 7 spaces would be provided in association with the proposed new building. The provision of an additional 7 spaces in association with the new building, would be in accordance with the relevant parking guidelines. Indeed, the additional spaces, combined with the use of the external car park located to the northwest and within a very short distance of the school, would be deemed appropriate in this instance. Thus, provided a Construction Traffic Management Plan is submitted to show how the means of access into the site, construction traffic, site operatives, visitors, as well as pedestrian traffic, etc, would be managed, no further concerns have been raised in this respect. As such, a suitably worded condition would be included as part of any planning permission granted.

Furthermore, in order to help alleviate the pressure of vehicles travelling to and from the school, and in the interest of encouraging sustainable modes of transport, additional cycle bays (a total of 32) would be installed within the school site, as requested by the Head of Engineering and Highways. Thus, provided full details of the proposed cycle bays are submitted (which shall include a solid base and a roof cover and could be controlled by a suitably worded condition), there are no further concerns in this respect.

The proposed development is therefore acceptable and would not be considered to give rise to any significant adverse highway or pedestrian safety concerns, which would warrant the refusal of the application. As such, the Head of Engineering and Highways has not raised any objections and the proposal, which would therefore accord with LDP Policy SW11.

CONCLUSION

The proposed development for the reasons discussed above is therefore considered acceptable and would accord with the relevant LDP policies.

Finally, the duty to improve the economic, social, environmental and cultural well-being of Wales, in accordance with the sustainable development principle, under section 3 of the Well-Being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015 ("the WBFG Act") has been taken into consideration when determining this application. In reaching the following

recommendation, the ways of working set out at section 5 of the WBFG Act have been considered and thus the proposal is in accordance with the sustainable development principle through its contribution towards one or more of the Welsh Ministers well-being objectives set out as required by section 8 of the WBFG Act.

Accordingly, the following recommendation is made:

RECOMMENDATION: BE APPROVED subject to the following **CONDITIONS:**

1. The development shall begin not later than five years from the date of this decision.

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

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

- Arboricultural Assessment Survey 2024, received: 24th February 2025;
- Green Infrastructure Statement, received: 24th February 2025;
- Bat Survey and Assessment, received: 24th February 2025;
- Solar Panel Datasheet (Vertex S, Dual Glass, Mono Crystalline Module), received: 24th February 2025;
- Solar Panel Mounting System Datasheet (ValkPro), received: 24th February 2026;
- Drainage Strategy Report (Project Ref: CC2594), received: 24th February 2026;
- New Build - General Arrangement Ground Floor Plan Drawing No. RYG-ATR-02-00-D-A-011001 Rev P02, received: 24th February 2025;
- New Build - Gia Plan and SOA Drawing No. RYG-ATR-02-00-D-A-011002 Rev P02, received: 24th February 2025;
- New Build - General Arrangement Roof Plan Drawing No. RYG-ATR-02-00-D-A-15001 Rev P02, received: 24th February 2025;
- New Build - General Arrangement Elevations Drawing No. RYG-ATR-02-00-D-A-12001 Rev P02, received: 24th February 2025;
- New Build - General Arrangement Sections Drawing No. RYG-ATR-02-XX-D-A-13001 Rev P02, received: 24th February 2025;
- New Build - Link Walkway Drawing No. RYG-ATR-02-00-D-A-284001 Rev P02, received: 24th February 2025;
- Landscape General Arrangement, Drawing No. RYG-ATR-XX-XX-D-L-400001 Rev P01, received: 24th February 2025;
- Colour Plan Drawing No. RYG-ATR-XX-XX-I-L-400001 Rev P01, received: 24th February 2025;
- Drainage Construction Details (Sheet 1 of 2) Drawing No. CC2594 CAM-ZZ-00-DR-C-1105 Rev P03, received: 24th February 2025;
- Drainage Construction Details (Sheet 2 of 2) Drawing No. CC2594 CAM-ZZ-00-DR-C-1106 Rev P03, received: 24th February 2025;
- Proposed External Works Drawing No. CAM-ZZ-XX-DR-C-0010 Rev P02, received: 24th February 2025;
- Proposed External Works Standard Details Drawing No. CAM-ZZ-XX-DR-C-0011 Rev P03, received: 24th February 2025;
- Proposed Drainage Layout (Sheet 1) Drawing No. CAM-ZZ-XX-DR-C-1101 Rev P03, received: 24th February 2025;
- Proposed Drainage Layout (Sheet 2) Drawing No. CAM-ZZ-XX-DR-C-1102 Rev P02, received: 24th February 2025;
- Proposed Drainage Layout (Sheet 3) Drawing No. CAM-ZZ-XX-DR-C-1103 Rev P03,

- received: 24th February 2025;
- Proposed Drainage Layout (Sheet 4) Drawing No. CAM-ZZ-XX-DR-C-1104 Rev P03, received: 24th February 2025;
 - Drainage Manhole Schedule Drawing No. CAM-ZZ-XX-DR-C-1107 Rev P02, received: 24th February 2025;
 - Preliminary Ecological Appraisal, received: 12th November 2025;
 - Transport Statement Rev A, received: 12th November 2025;
 - Tree Pit Details RYG-RL-XX-ZZ-DR-L 08401 Rev P01, received: 12th November 2025;
 - Proposed Parking Arrangement RYG-RL-ZZ-ZZ-DR-A 08303 Rev P02, received: 12th November 2025;
 - New Build Proposed GA Roof Plan RYG-RL-02-RF-DR-A 02102 Rev C02, received: 8th January 2026;
 - Green Roof Edge Detail RYG-RL-02-RF-DR-A 04203 Rev C02, received: 8th January 2026;
 - Elemental Build Ups RYG-RL-02-ZZ-DR-A 20301 Rev C02, received: 8th January 2026;
 - Ground Level Tree Assessment, received: 8th January 2026;
 - Proposed Site Plan RYG-RL-ZZ-ZZ-DR-A 02001 Rev P04, received: 19th January 2026;
 - Bat Method Statement, received: 22nd January 2026;
 - Technical Note: Landscaping, received: 29th January 2026;
 - Construction and Environmental Management Plan (CEMP - Version 2), received: 21st May 2026;

Reason -To ensure compliance with the approved plans and clearly define the scope of the permission.

3. **Prior to the construction of the building and associated external walkway** hereby approved, details/samples of the materials to be used in the construction of the external surfaces of the building and associated walkway 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 - To ensure that the external appearance of the proposed development will be in keeping with the character of the area and adjoining buildings in the interests of visual amenity and to accord with Policy SW11 of the Merthyr Tydfil County Borough Council Replacement Local Development Plan.

4. **Prior to the occupation/beneficial use of the building**, hereby approved, the car parking spaces and cycle bays shall be completed (and available for use) in accordance with the approved Proposed Site Plan, RYG RL ZZ ZZ DR A, number 02001 Rev 04, received 19th January 2026. The car parking spaces and cycle bays shall be retained for their intended purpose thereafter.

Reason - To ensure the parking requirements of the development are adequately met at all times, in the interest of highway and pedestrian safety and to ensure compliance with Policy SW11 of the Merthyr Tydfil County Borough Council Replacement Local Development Plan.

5. **Prior to the occupation/beneficial use of the building**, elevation plans to scale, to include section details, of the proposed solar panels and their positioning, dimensions and design, as erected on the building, shall be submitted to and approved by the local planning authority. The solar panels shall be completed in accordance with the approved details prior to the occupation/beneficial use of the building.

Reason - To protect the character and appearance of the area and ensure that the new development will be visually attractive in accordance with Policies SW11 of the Merthyr Tydfil County Replacement Local Development Plan.

6. **Prior to the occupation/beneficial use of the building** hereby approved, a long-term landscaping strategy shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. This will include, but not be limited to:

- A detailed planting strategy;
- A soil detail plan;
- A soft works plan;
- A green roof plan and details;
- A landscape management plan.

The development shall be carried out on-site in accordance with the approved details prior to the occupation/beneficial use of the building.

Reason - In the interest of ecology and biodiversity, to accord with Policy EnW1 of the Merthyr Tydfil Replacement Local Development Plan.

7. All planting, seeding or turfing comprised in the approved details of landscaping shall be carried out in the first planting and seeding seasons following the occupation of the buildings or the completion of the development, whichever is the sooner; and any trees or plants which within a period of 5 years from the completion of the development die, are removed or become seriously damaged or diseased shall be replaced in the next planting season with others of similar size and species.

Reason - To ensure that the new development will be visually attractive in the interests of amenity and to accord with Policy SW11 of the Merthyr Tydfil County Borough Council Replacement Local Development Plan.

8. **No external lighting shall be installed on the building** hereby approved, until a detailed lighting scheme has first been submitted to and approved in writing by the local planning authority. The lighting scheme shall demonstrate dark zones at the boundaries and across the site (including the reduction in colour temperature (2700K) of the two existing luminaires near the bat roost on the existing school's southern elevation), and dark corridors for bat foraging/commuting with access points to bat boxes to remain unilluminated. The lighting scheme must conform to the latest guidance for wildlife-friendly lighting. Guidance Note GN08/23 Bats and Artificial Lighting At Night. Bat Conservation Trust and The Institute of Lighting Professionals 2023 - <https://theilp.org.uk/publication/guidance-note-8-bats-and-artificial-lighting>. The lighting scheme shall be carried out in accordance with the approved details.

Reason - To protect the natural environment and important habitat in accordance with Policy EnW1 of the Merthyr Tydfil Cuntly Borough Council Replacement Local Development Plan.

9. **Prior to the occupation/beneficial use of the building** hereby approved, the enhancement measures proposed, as stipulated in the conclusions and recommendations of supporting documents, shall be implemented and shall be retained thereafter in perpetuity.

Reason - To protect the natural environment and important habitat in accordance with Policy EnW1 of the Merthyr Tydfil County Borough Council Replacement Local Development Plan.

10. **Prior to the commencement of construction works on the building** hereby approved, until a Construction Traffic Management Plan has been submitted and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority, which shall include details of the following:

- The means of access into the site for all construction traffic;
- The parking of vehicles of site operatives and visitors;
- The management of vehicular and pedestrian traffic;
- Loading and unloading of plant and materials;
- Storage of plant and materials used in constructing the development;
- Wheel cleansing facilities;
- The sheeting of lorries leaving the site.

The development shall be undertaken as set out within the Construction Traffic Management Plan for the duration of the development, until fully completed.

Reason - In the interests of the safety and free flow of traffic to accord with Policy SW11 of the Merthyr Tydfil County Borough Council Replacement Local Development Plan.

11. **Prior to the occupation/beneficial use of the building** hereby approved, a plan indicating the positions, height, design, materials and type of cycle parking bays to be erected, shall be submitted to and approved by the local planning authority. The cycle bays shall be completed in accordance with the approved details, before the occupation/beneficial use of the building.

Reason - In the interest of visual amenity, highway and pedestrian safety and in support of sustainable travel methods, to accord with Policy SW11 of the Merthyr Tydfil County Borough Council Replacement Local Development Plan.

INFORMATIVES

1. This planning permission does not provide consent to undertake works that require a European Protected Species (EPS) licence.
All bats and their roosts are protected under UK and European legislation. It is an offence to deliberately kill, injure, capture or disturb a bat or to recklessly damage or destroy their breeding sites or resting places.

If works are planned on a building/tree in which bats are found to be roosting, Natural Resources Wales (NRW) must be contacted. on 0300 065 3000 or at <https://naturalresources.wales/permits-and-permissions/species-licensing/apply-for-a-protected-species-licence/bat-licences/?lang=en>.

If work has already commenced and bats are found, or if any evidence that bats are using the site as a roost is found, work should cease and NRW should be contacted immediately.

Under these circumstances, an EPS licence is likely to be required to undertake the works within the law.

2. All birds, their nests and eggs are protected by law under the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended) while they are breeding.

If works to any trees, hedgerows and/or other nesting bird habitat (including buildings with suitable features) are to be undertaken, they will take place outside of the bird nesting season. If the works must be undertaken during the nesting season (generally from 1st March until 31st August, although birds are known to nest outside of these dates in suitable conditions), a breeding bird survey will be required and must be carried out by a suitably qualified ecologist. Any active nests identified will be protected until the young have fledged.

Where a Schedule 1 species (as defined in the Wildlife and Countryside Act - <https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/1981/69/schedule/1>) is involved, compensation for impacts, e.g., loss of nesting sites, will be devised and implemented.

RECOMMENDATION ENDORSED



Director of Neighbourhood Services

DATE: 30.06.2026