

MEMORANDUM

From: Chief Officer Environment & Technical **To:** Chief Officer Planning & Regulatory
Our Ref: ET/DC/P/2021/0870 **Your Ref:** SEH/P/2021/0870
Date: 13th October 2021

TOWN AND COUNTRY PLANNING ACT 1990

ESTYNIAD AR ADEILAD PRESENNOL YSGOL YR HAFOD A GWAITH AILWAMPIO NEWID DEFNYDD, CODI ESTYNIAD AC AILWAMPIO ANNEDD BRESWYL YN YR YSGOLDY – 4 BANGOR ROAD – O C3A (ANNEDD) I D1 (SEFYDLIADAU AMHRESWYL). GWAITH ALLANOL CYSYLLTIEDIG, TRIN FFINIAU A GWELLIANNAU PRIFYRDD / EXTENSION AND REFURBISHMENT OF EXISTING YSGOL YR HAFOD SCHOOL. CHANGE OF USE, EXTENSION AND REFURBISHMENT OF SCHOOL HOUSE RESIDENTIAL DWELLING - 4 BANGOR ROAD FROM C3A (DWELLING HOUSE) TO D1 (NON-RESIDENTIAL INSTITUTIONS). ASSOCIATED EXTERNAL WORKS, BOUNDARY TREATMENT AND HIGHWAYS IMPROVEMENTS JOHNSTOWN JUNIOR SCHOOL YSGOL YR HAFOD AND NO 4 BANGOR ROAD JOHNSTOWN

Grid Ref: E 330142.85 N 346068.84

I refer to your consultation dated 06/09/2021 in respect of the above and would advise you that we have the following comments;

Access

The proposal retains the existing vehicular access junction onto Bangor Road, a 20mph single carriageway road. Pedestrian access on Bangor Road will remain unchanged for the main school. There is also a pedestrian access linking the school to Heol Offa. Proposals include an additional pedestrian access on the B5605 with associated pedestrian guardrails, widening of the existing crossing to facilitate pedestrian movements. There are proposals to implement 'pedestrian guardrails' along B5056 Ruabon Road adjacent to the accesses and pedestrian crossings. The school house will also have a new pedestrian access which will be gated and set back from the footpath.

Ysgol Y Hafod main entrance has visibility splays of 2.4m x 10.0m (West) 2.4m x 19.4m (East) & (Manual for streets requires 2.4m x 25m in both directions to the nearside edge). The visibility is impeded to the west with the pedestrian guardrail which is not visi-guard (or similar) this provides staggered railings to enable visibility whilst providing protection to pedestrians. Visibility to the east is impeded by an existing lighting column and mature hedge. It is noted the existing junction of Noddfa Court is approximately 7.5m to the east and the access is within the splays measured from the main access.

The Highway Authority would not support an application which will increase traffic movements into an existing access that has substandard visibility splays, and would therefore require that

amendments are made to the planned pedestrian guardrail (in the West), and to consider relocation of lighting column (if feasible) and / or removal of hedgerow (in the East). This could be covered through an appropriate condition.

The existing School house has visibility splays of 2.4m x 7.0m in both directions (Manual for streets requires 2.4m x 25m in both directions to the nearside edge). These splays are impeded with the sandstone gate pillars. The Highway Authority would not support the use of this substandard vehicle access in light of the expected increase in traffic movements in this location, and would therefore request that the applicant review the school house requirements and close the vehicular access in perpetuity for the benefit of pedestrian safety and provide a pedestrian guardrail along the revised access. The kerb fronting this access to be reinstated to full height. This could be covered through an appropriate condition.

Parking

The proposals show approximately 10 additional parking spaces along a 58m length parking layby. The existing parking laybys adjacent to the School, situated on Bangor Road is to largely remain the same, with no indication of whether improvements or amendments will be made to include pedestrian facilities/footpaths along the length of Bangor Road to where the pedestrian crossing facility is for the school. We would request the applicant provides suitable layout plan indicating the potential desired movements of pedestrian users when dropping off in the morning, or picking up in the afternoon; and we would suggest that a revised layout plan indicating that pedestrian crossing provisions are identified. We request the applicant provides suitable designated facilities for pedestrians along the lengths of the laybys on Bangor Road. This could be addressed through an appropriate condition.

The existing site and School House have limited parking provision and are under pressure particularly during dropping off and picking up times. The previous parking assessment noted that there are 17 existing spaces for the main school and the 'School House' has the provision for 3 cars. Appropriate parking provision has increased capacity allowing for in total 40 car park spaces.

'School House' has the provision for 3 cars based on LPGN16E the proposal for D1 usage will require the development to have 2 spaces and an additional 3 spaces based on the 1 car per 25sqm (75sqm gross area). We request the applicant provides additional information or a revised layout detailing the parking provisions associated with the School House, as it has not been identified if the proposed parking layout include the school house. This can be addressed through an appropriate condition. We also note the conflict between pedestrians and motorised users in this location and as previously stated a pedestrian guardrail should be positioned in front of the 'School House'. The parking provision of 40 spaces (based on LPGN16E) for the main school is below the maximum standard. Details of how parking demand can be managed within the school site should be addressed in an appropriate condition.

Bangor Road is subject to significant pre-existing on-street parking problems particularly at school dropping off / picking up times along the adjoining side streets and within the parking laybys associated with Bangor Road. The addition of merging schools will exacerbate the existing parking problems at the site, as the general school catchment area will be larger there would be a high natural usage of motorised vehicles delivering pupils to the new school. There remains some concern about a potential scenario where drop-off spaces are unavailable during drop off/pick up times due to the parking capacity being exceeded.

In order to further mitigate the parking issue, Cwm Glas/Park Street has been identified for additional parking mitigation and pedestrian usage to the new access on Ruabon Road. The proposal for parking at Cwm Glas is supported from The Highway Authority's perspective. The information provided in the TA demonstrates the availability of up to 44 parking spaces at Cwm Glas, and a further 33 spaces available on Park street. The provision of widening the pedestrian crossing and the addition of the guardrails on the B5605 is supported, a new footway link is proposed across the highway verge on Ruabon Road. The improvements include widening, tactile paving, this is the only access which is to current design standards.

It is welcomed that additional parking provision is proposed (i.e. layby on Bangor Road, Cwm Glas and Park Street), in order to mitigate the congestion concerns around the school site. However the success of these measures will rely on people's personal choices and habits, and therefore it will be important for the school to work with families to ensure that the additional parking capacity is being utilised effectively.

Traffic Generation

Bangor Road is particularly busy during school dropping off / picking up times and would not benefit from any significant increase in vehicle movements. Of significant concern is the potential for a significant number of vehicles arriving at the school each morning and evening. The car parks and roads in the vicinity of the site are already under pressure, especially Bangor Road. The TA assumes that there could be 46 additional vehicles at peak times based on the co-location proposals, the mitigation measure associated include: minor staggering of start finish times resulting in a lower impact at any one time during school drop-off and pick-up; additional parking at Bangor Road; and utilising Cwm Glas. These arrangements will help to mitigate the concerns and potentially reduce the impact on the local streets, and we would recommend that a condition around reviewing school start and finish times be considered, at least in the early years of operation, to be reviewed.

Waste

The applicant needs to demonstrate that a waste collection vehicle, servicing the bin store, would be able to turn within this area whilst a vehicles are parked, we request updated drawings for further clarification of whether this is achievable. Coaches (15m length) are common in education facilities, WCBC require further information whether turning movements can be accommodated within the site layout. We would recommend a car park management Plan to be implemented, if the layout cannot support the movement of coaches. This should be addressed through an appropriate condition.

Pedestrian / Cycle Facilities and Active Travel

The Local Planning Guidance Notes which are most pertinent to transport are Note 15: Cycling and Note 16 : Parking Standards. The cycle parking standards are for four cycle parking spaces per classroom for a primary school. It is noted in the 'Design Access statement' 10 cycle parking facilities are proposed for the entire school, and the 'Transport Assessment' has reviewed the movements and indicates 12 cycle users. We would suggest a review and update to the layout to future proof the proposals in line with Active travel aspirations.

It is concerning that no significant improvements or additional pedestrian/cycle facilities have been suggested, especially with the pre-existing congestion and the on-street parking issues on Bangor Road, and the required commitment to Active travel. With targets discussed in the Travel Plan the Highways authority would expect to find recommendations for improved infrastructure to encourage a shift to sustainable travel modes. Consideration should be made of whether there are any opportunities to improve active travel infrastructure in the vicinity of the school, and we would suggest that the applicant is required to submit a detailed 'active travel' improvement plan for the site and its operation.

Conclusion

There is a concern regarding the additional traffic movements and on Bangor Road and the local road networks due to the proposed merge of the schools; and therefore we would recommend a condition which requires some staggering of start and finish times, and an improved plan for Active Travel to reduce car journeys to the site.

The additional parking mitigation measures within the local vicinity provide additional options at the peak drop off/pick up times. The residential areas surrounding the foundation school will see a reduction in trafficked movements, and therefore present an acceptable compromise.

There is also concern about additional traffic generation into the school utilising a sub-standard existing access and therefore we recommend conditions to address these concerns.

We recommend approval with the following conditions:

NONSTD
026R

PEDESTRIAN FACILITIES ON BANGOR ROAD

Prior to first use of the development hereby approved, a plan detailing the pedestrian facilities and crossing points on Bangor Road shall be submitted to, and approved in writing by, the Local Planning Authority. The plan as is approved shall be fully implemented prior to first use of the development, and shall thereafter be permanently retained.

NONSTD
026R

SERVICE DELIVERY MANAGEMENT PLAN

No part of the development shall commence until a Service and Delivery Management Plan (SDMP) to include, but not be limited to, the details of frequency of deliveries, type of delivery vehicles to be used, management of car parking to facilitate delivery vehicles, has been submitted to, and approved in writing by, the Local Planning Authority. The plan as is approved shall be fully implemented for the life of the development.

NONSTD
026R

IMPROVED VISIBILITY SPLAYS

Prior to first use of the development hereby approved, details of a scheme of improvements to visibility at the access to the school, including improvements to the pedestrian guard rails (to the West of the main access) and existing obstructions (to the East), shall be submitted and approved, in writing, by the Local Planning Authority. The scheme as is approved shall be fully implemented prior to first use of the development, and shall thereafter be permanently retained.

ZJ01
026R
E03N

EXISTING ACCESS TO BE CLOSED

The existing School House vehicular access shall be permanently closed up prior to first use of any part of the development in accordance with a specification of works which has been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority.

ZJ45
026R

CONSTRUCTION TRAFFIC MANAGEMENT PLAN

No part of the development shall commence until a Construction Traffic Management Plan including provisions for contractor parking has been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The plan as is approved shall be fully implemented for the life of the development.

ON SITE PARKING DEMAND

The applicant shall provide details of the proposed arrangements planned to mitigate and manage the additional on-site parking demands particularly in relation to the use of School House.

ZJ14
026R
E03N

FOOTWAY REINSTATEMENT

Prior to first use of the development, the highway fronting the existing vehicular access to Old School House be closed as part of this application shall be re-instated to full height footway in accordance with construction details which have been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority.

REVIEW OF SCHOOL START AND FINISH TIMES

No part of the development shall be occupied until details of a review of staggered start and finish times for the school day has been submitted to, and approved in writing by, the Local Planning Authority. The start and finish times contained within the approved review shall be fully implemented for the life of the development.

Reason

To ensure the reduction in the number of vehicles attending the site at any one time, in the interests of highway safety, in accordance with Policy GDP1 of the Wrexham Unitary Development Plan.

ACTIVE TRAVEL

No part of the development shall be occupied until a plan showing improved active travel infrastructure, and modal shift, has been submitted to, and approved in writing by, the Local Planning Authority. The plan as is approved shall be fully implemented for the life of the development.

Reason

In the interests of highway safety, in accordance with Policy GDP1 of the Wrexham Unitary Development Plan.

Notes to Applicant

A licence should be obtained (as required by section 184 of the Highways Act 1980) from the Highway Authority in order to lower the kerbline and cross the footpath at the new access position. Further guidance can be obtained from the Highways Department of Wrexham County Borough Council on telephone 01978 729670.

Any proposed access / footway works should be constructed to a standard suitable for adoption by the Council for future maintenance at the public expense and the developer will need to enter into an agreement with the Council under s.38 / 278 of the Highways Act 1980. You are advised that the Highway Authority will require such works to be completed to their satisfaction before they will formally adopt the relevant Highway works for public use and to be maintained at public expense. This will include the provision of a bond to cover the estimated value of such works. The appropriate fees will become due to the Council when the Highways Authority approve the proposed works to be carried out.

Supplementary Notes

The applicant's attention should be drawn to item nos. 1, 3, 4 & 5 of the supplementary notes.

Chief Officer Environment & Technical