

February 2021



Planning Policy Statement

Two single storey Modular Nursery buildings

Cefn Mawr Primary School, Plas Kynaston Lane, Cefn Mawr, Wrexham, LL14 3PY

On behalf of Elite Systems (GB) Limited

Prepared by:



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1.0 Introduction

- 1.1 This Planning Policy Statement has been prepared on behalf of Elite Systems (GB) Limited to support a planning application for siting of two single storey modular buildings within the grounds of the existing school (Cefn Mawr Primary School).
- 1.2 The proposed modular buildings will provide purpose built nursery / preschool classroom space with access to outdoor playspace. One building will serve Cefn Mawr Primary School and the other will serve the Welsh speaking Ysgol Min-y-Ddol.
- 1.3 The applicant for the proposed nursery building is Wrexham County Borough Council (Wrexham CBC).

Background and Need.

- 1.4 The Welsh Government recognises that childcare is one of the biggest challenges facing working families in Wales. Supporting families with quality, flexible and affordable childcare supports economic regeneration, can reduce pressures on family income and help parents to participate in work, thus reducing a family's risk of poverty. It also supports the wellbeing of children through positive and rich childcare experiences. There are therefore clear social and economic benefits arising from the provision of this important nursery / pre-school provision.
- 1.5 Wrexham CBC are working with the school and their local communities to support this initiative and deliver new pre-school spaces for local children.
- 1.6 The proposed modular buildings are designed for pre-school children and will deliver an attractive indoor learning and play environment together with access to outdoor playspace. The buildings will also include necessary welfare (wc and cloaks) kitchen, store and office space for the effective operation of these childcare spaces.
- 1.7 Funding for this pre-school project is provided by the Welsh Government as part of its commitment to improving childcare in the wider community.

The Application Site

- 1.8 Cefn Mawr Primary School is located off Plas Kynaston Lane to the south of the town centre.
- 1.9 The site is an established primary school with parking and playground to the north of the main school building whilst playing fields wrap around the southern elevations of the school. To the north of the site is the Welsh speaking Ysgol Min y Ddol with its own playground and parking. Site access is taken from Plas Knaston Lane (to the north). There is existing residential development to the east, south and west of the school grounds.
- 1.10 The site is not subject to any designations or allocations in the Local Plan (Wrexham UDP). There are no trees on site.
- 1.11 Further details of the site are set out in Section 2.

Planning History

- 1.12 No relevant planning history has been identified from the Wrexham CBC website.

The Proposed Development

- 1.13 The proposed development comprises siting of two new single modular buildings located on part of the playing field adjacent to the south east elevation of the main school building.
- 1.14 The proposed modular buildings will be single storey and provide a classroom / learning space together with welfare facilities, kitchen and office. Each modular building will have access to its own outdoor play area. One of the buildings will serve the English speaking Cefn Mawr primary school and the other will serve the Welsh speak Ysgol Min-y-Ddol.
- 1.15 Access will through the school grounds (from Plas Kynaston Lane). The playground and car parks associated with the school are unaffected whilst the size of the existing playing field is such that this small loss does not harm its function for sports / play.
- 1.16 The proposed modular buildings will be simple, shallow pitch roof buildings clad in materials (plastic coated steel sheeting and timber wood cladding) to create an attractive development within the school grounds.
- 1.17 Further details on the proposed development are set out in Section 3.

The Planning Application

- 1.18 This statement describes the application site and nature of the proposal (Chapters 2 and 3) together with an assessment of planning policy issues (Chapters 4 & 5) of relevance to the application. Assessment of the planning application is set out in Chapter 5. Conclusions are set out in Chapter 6.
- 1.19 This statement will fully justify the proposal for the site and will advance justification for the proposed modular buildings.
- 1.20 On the basis of the information provided in this statement, the associated supporting documents and on the application drawings, a presumption in favour of development can be maintained in this particular instance, the application being in accordance with the advice set out in the Wrexham UDP.
- 1.21 The planning application is supported by the following:
- i. Completed application forms, with all certificates signed and dated;
 - ii. Site Location Plan prepared by Elite Systems;
 - iii. Site Layout Plan, Floorplans and elevations prepared by Elite Systems;
 - iv. Design and Access Statement prepared by Elite Systems;
 - v. Planning Statement prepared by Alistair Flatman Planning;
- 1.22 The submitted additional technical information is considered sufficient to enable the Local Planning Authority to determine the clear merits of the proposed development.

2.0 Site Description

- 2.1 Cefn Mawr Primary School sits centrally within the settlement to the south of the town centre. The site is accessed off Plas Kynaston Lane located to the north of the school. The primary school sits centrally in extensive grounds with parking and playground areas to the north of the main school building whilst playing fields wrap around the southern elevations of the school.
- 2.2 There is another school (Ysgol Min y Ddol) to the north of Cefn Mawr that is also accessed from Plas Kynaston Lane. Ysgol Min y Ddol is a Welsh speaking school with its own parking and playground areas. The proposed modular buildings will be accessible from both schools. The aerial image below shows the site and its relation with Ysgol Min y Ddol to the north and surrounding houses.



- 2.3 The school building at Cefn Mawr Primary itself is predominantly single storey with flat roof. The building is constructed in red brick.

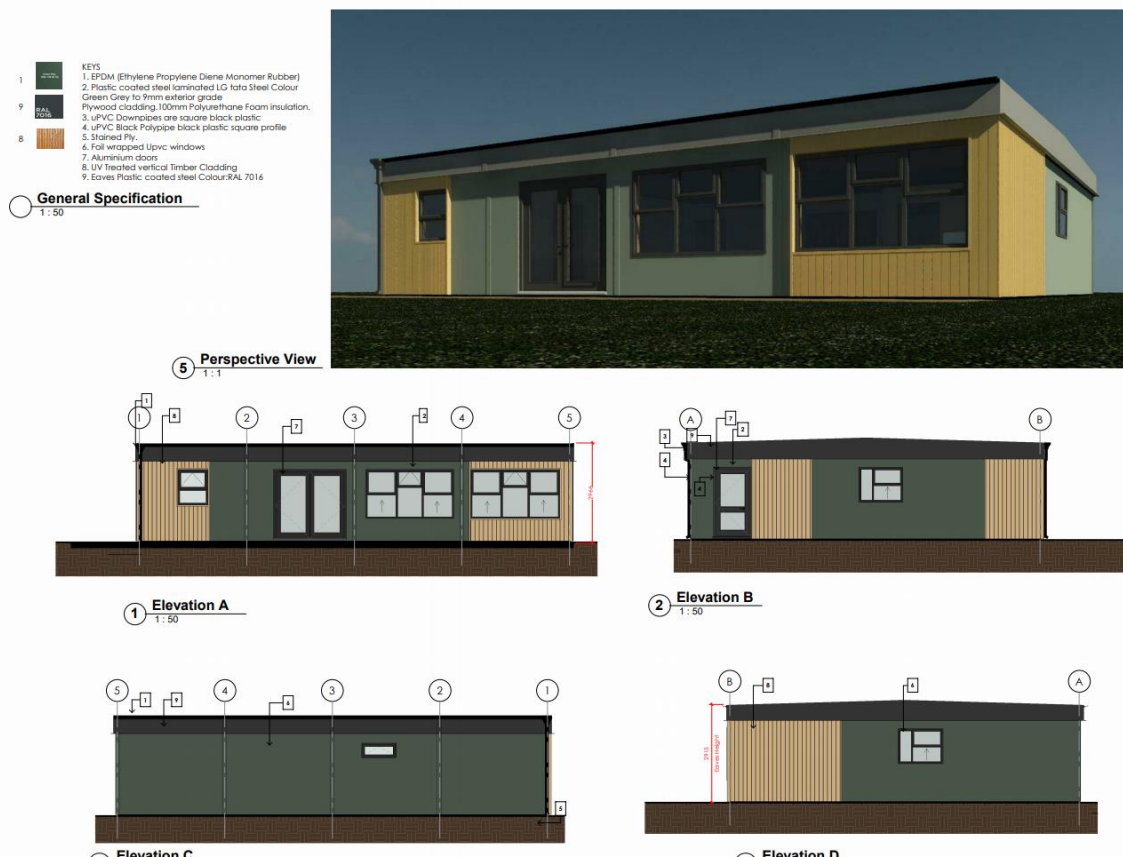
- 2.4 The school car park is located in north of the school together with main pedestrian access. The existing playgrounds are also to the north of the school buildings. The proposal will not impact on the car park or existing playgrounds. The school playing fields are extensive and run round the southern elevations of the school. The site has previously been marked out for running races but this provision can (and will) be set out elsewhere within the playing field. As such the proposal will not prejudice the provision of sports on the playing fields. Boundary treatment metal fencing.
- 2.5 The area for the proposed modular buildings sits to the south eastern elevation of the main school building adjacent to an existing canopied outdoor play area (unaffected by the proposal). The modular buildings will be sited on the grassed area within the school grounds adjacent to existing school buildings as shown in the photo below.



- 2.6 Residential development sits beyond the playing field to the east, south and west. The nearest dwellings are to the east with the rear gardens abutting a footpath which runs between the school grounds and their rear boundary fences.
- 2.7 The site is an established school (community) use within the settlement limits of Cefn Mawr and is not subject to any specific allocation or designation in the Wrexham UDP.
- 2.8 The site is not subject to any heritage, landscape or ecological designations and sits in Flood Zone 1. There are no trees affected by the proposal.

3.0 The Proposed Development

- 3.1 The proposal comprises siting of two new modular buildings to provide nursery / preschool play area / learning space, one for Cefn Mawr and the other for Ysgol Min y Ddol. The buildings are to be located within the school grounds to the south east of the main school building. This location can be easily accessed through the school grounds (both Cefn Mawr Primary and Ysgol Min y Ddor) from Plas Kynaston Lane and footpath to the east.
- 3.2 The proposal consists of two 12.8m x 10.42m footprint modular buildings with shallow pitch roof including play / learning space, wc, kitchen, store, office and lobby. The buildings are located next to each other and both provide their own enclosed outdoor play space. The design intention is to create a building of interest within the site which reflects its use – the proposed materials will be plastic coated steel sheeting (colour green grey) with timber cladding whilst the roof will be a black EDPM membrane. Eaves, windows and doors will be dark grey.
- 3.3 The choice of materials reflect the use of the building and its location within the grassed areas adjacent to the main school building to create a building that is visually interesting.
- 3.4 The modular buildings are a simple shallow pitch structure with height of 3.06m falling to 2.92m at eaves.
- 3.5 The extract below shows the proposed elevations and materials.



- 3.6 The design and appearance of the building seeks to deliver an attractive development that sits comfortably within the grounds of the school.
- 3.7 Access to the building will be through the school grounds. To the south western elevation of the proposed buildings, doors open out onto enclosed playspace. The proposed site layout is shown in the extract below:



- 3.8 The proposed new modular building is of mainly timber construction which is renewable resource. A large effort has been made in the design stage of the building to ensure that the building has a low carbon impact as possible (in line with current regulations set out in AD part L2). Examples of this include LED lighting specified throughout, PIR controlled lighting to main areas with daytime dimming and a highly efficient heat pump system has been specified to provide the heating throughout the building. The building is sufficiently insulated with glass fibre quilt insulation, and polyurethane foam board to achieve significantly improve upon the elemental u-value standards as set out in the building regulations.
- 3.9 Level access is provided to the buildings is on the north western side from a new hardstanding area.
- 3.10 The internal layout of the buildings will deliver the following:
- 72sqm play area / learning space
 - 9 sqm kitchen
 - 15 sqm wc including fully accessible wc
 - 10 sqm office
 - 7 sqm store
 - 10 sqm lobby / cloaks
 - 120 sqm outdoor play space
- 3.11 Further details are set out in the submitted Design & Access Statement

4.0 Planning Policy Review

Planning Policy Wales – Edition 10 (Dec 2018)

- 4.1 Planning Policy Wales (PPW) sets out the land use planning policies of the Welsh Government.
- 4.2 Paragraph 1.2 of PPW sets out its primary objective, namely to ensure that the planning system contributes towards the delivery of sustainable development and improves the social, economic, environmental and cultural well-being of Wales, as required by the Planning (Wales) Act 2015, the Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015 and other key legislation. A well-functioning planning system is fundamental for sustainable development and achieving sustainable places.
- 4.3 Figure 3 in PPW sets out the Key Planning Principles to achieve the right development in the right places. Of these principles, the following is most relevant:

Creating & sustaining communities

The planning system must work in an integrated way to maximise its contribution to well-being. It can achieve this by creating well-designed places and cohesive rural and urban communities which can be sustained by ensuring the appropriate balance of uses and density, making places where people want to be and interact with others. Our communities need the right mix of good quality/well designed homes, jobs, services, infrastructure and facilities so that people feel content with their everyday lives.

- 4.4 The PPW also sets out guidance on Community Facilities. Paragraphs 4.4.1 and 4.4.2 advise:

4.4.1 Community facilities perform various functions which cover a broad range of activities and services that can be delivered by the public, private and third sectors. Community facilities contribute to a sense of place which is important to the health, well-being and amenity of local communities and their existence is often a key element in creating viable and sustainable places. They can include schools, cultural facilities, health services, libraries, allotments and places of worship.

4.4.2 Planning authorities should develop a strategic and long-term approach to the provision of community facilities when preparing development plans based on evidence. When considering development proposals planning authorities should consider the needs of the communities and ensure that community facilities continue to address the requirements of residents in the area.

Development Plan – Wrexham UDP

- 4.5 The site falls within Wrexham County Borough Council and as such the Development Plan for the site comprises the adopted Unitary Development Plan (Feb 2005). Whilst it is noted there is a draft Local Development Plan, it has yet to be adopted and so it has been afforded limited weight in assessing the proposal.

- 4.6 The UDP proposals map identifies the site as sitting within the settlement limits of Cefn Mawr and is not subject to any allocations or designations.
- 4.7 The key issues are considered to relate to principle, community uses and design.
- 4.8 The relevant UDP policies are identified below;
- Policy GDP1 – Development Objectives – criteria based policy setting out key principles for assessment of planning applications
 - Strategic Policy PS1 - New development for housing, employment, and community services will be directed to within defined settlement limits/employment areas.
 - Strategic Policy PS2 - Development must not materially detrimentally affect countryside, landscape/townscape character, open space, or the quality of the natural environment.
 - Strategic Policy PS3 - Development should use previously developed brownfield land comprising vacant, derelict or underused land in preference to the use of greenfield land, wherever possible, particularly so where greenfield land is of ecological, landscape or amenity value, or comprises agricultural land of grades 1, 2 or 3a quality.
 - Policy T8 - Parking
 - Policy EC4 – Hedgerows, Trees and Woodland
- 4.9 The relevant policies are assessed in Chapter 5

5.0 Planning Assessment

Principle of Development

- 5.1 Planning Policy Wales (PPW) acknowledges the importance of community facilities and the contribution they make to a sense of place. Such facilities, such as schools and pre-school / nurseries are important to the health, well-being and amenity of local communities and their existence is often a key element in creating viable and sustainable places.
- 5.2 The Welsh Government recognises that childcare is one of the biggest challenges facing working families in Wales. Supporting families with quality, flexible and affordable childcare supports economic regeneration, can reduce pressures on family income and help parents to participate in work, thus reducing a family's risk of poverty. It also supports the wellbeing of children through positive and rich childcare experiences. There are therefore clear social and economic benefits arising from the provision of this important nursery / pre-school provision.
- 5.3 The proposed nursery buildings are located within the grounds of an existing school within the settlement limits and will enhance the community offer within the village. Furthermore, the site is not subject to any designations or allocations in the UDP that would preclude development.
- 5.4 The location of the nursery buildings within the school grounds makes locational sense in terms of accessibility and providing best possible transition for children from pre-school into reception.
- 5.5 The buildings are well designed for their purpose with indoor and outdoor playspace together with welfare and kitchen facilities to ensure a high quality childcare facility can be offered for families.
- 5.6 The associated social and economic benefits arising from the proposed childcare facility are clear and the proposal will enhance community facilities in the village. The proposal is therefore consistent with guidance set out in the PPW in respect of community facilities and the aspirations of the Welsh Government in terms of providing quality childcare together with Strategic Policies PS1, PS2 and PS3 of the Wrexham UDP
- 5.7 The principle of the proposal in this location is therefore considered acceptable.

Design

- 5.8 Wrexham UDP Policy GDP1 sets out development objectives listing a number of criteria against which proposals should be assessed. This includes matters of design and layout.
- 5.9 The submitted plans and Design and Access Statement which accompanies this application, provides details of the design of the scheme and demonstrates how development could be accommodated on the site and how this would fit within the grounds of the school and wider context.
- 5.10 The proposal comprises two detached, single storey modular buildings finished in timber cladding and green grey coloured wall panels to deliver an

attractive building that sits comfortably on site and its surrounds. Its design reflects its purpose whilst the siting and layout delivers safe playspace internally and to the side of the buildings.

5.11 The proposed buildings are located in the area currently set to grass as part of the extensive playing fields to the south of the school buildings. Whilst this area of grass has previously been laid out for running in the past, there is plenty of other retained playing field suitable for this use. As such the development of the buildings in this location does not prejudice delivery of athletics or sports uses on the playing fields. Furthermore, this location ensures there is no loss of car parking or playground. As such, the school's playtime and sports activities will be maintained.

5.12 Taking the above into account it is considered the siting and design of the proposed modular buildings are consistent with Policy GDP1 in that:

- The scale, design and layout of the proposal, together with its use of materials, accords with the character of this school site and its surrounds and will make a positive contribution to the appearance of the nearby locality (criteria a of GDP1);
- takes account of personal and community safety in the design and layout of development (criteria b of GDP1);
- makes the best use of design techniques, siting and orientation in order to conserve energy and water resources (criteria c of GDP1);
- ensures safe and convenient pedestrian and vehicular access to and from the site as well as convenient access to existing bus stops on Plas Kynaston Lane, Coronation Street and Cae Gwilym Lane (criteria d & e of GDP1);
- the development does not result in, or subject to, flooding or contamination (criteria i of GDP1), and
- secures the development of sustainable communities, through the promotion of the economic, social and environmental well-being of the area (criteria k of GDP1).

5.13 The scale, design and height of the proposed nursery buildings has therefore been appropriately considered in relation to the site and its surrounds and as such complies with requirements of UDP Policy GDP1.

Amenity

5.14 The siting of the nursery buildings ensures it is not close to any existing dwellings. Openings on the south eastern elevations of the modular buildings are limited to a single opening.

5.15 As such the design, siting and operation of the proposed nursery buildings ensures there will be no significant impact on living conditions of nearby residents.

Highways

- 5.16 The proposed nursery is to be located within existing school grounds and will provide a new facility for the community. The nursery businesses will be operated independently of the school although there is a clear synergy between the two. 6FT and 3PT staff are expected for the proposed nursery buildings. This is not considered to generate any significant extra traffic movements.
- 5.17 The proposal will not result in any loss of onsite parking and it is expected that there will be a high percentage of linked trips as parents / carers drop off children to school and the nursery. The site is in a sustainable and accessible location providing options to travel other than the private car.
- 5.18 In light of the above, it is considered the proposed development will not give rise to any issues of highway safety and will not have a detrimental impact on the local highway network whilst adequate parking is provided on site.

Trees and Landscaping

- 5.19 The proposed nursery building will not result in the loss of any trees.

6.0 Conclusions

- 6.1 This Planning Policy Statement has been prepared on behalf of Elite Systems (GB) Limited to support a planning application for siting of two single storey modular buildings within the grounds of the existing school (Cefn Mawr Primary School). The proposed modular buildings will provide purpose built nursery / preschool classroom space with access to outdoor playspace. One building will be used by Cefn Mawr Primary and the other by the Welsh speaking Ysgol Min y Ddol.

Background and Need

- 6.2 The Welsh Government recognises that childcare is one of the biggest challenges facing working families. Supporting families with quality, flexible and affordable childcare supports economic regeneration, can reduce pressures on family income and help parents to participate in work, thus reducing a family's risk of poverty. It also supports the wellbeing of children through positive and rich childcare experiences. There are therefore clear social and economic benefits arising from the provision of this important nursery / pre-school provision.
- 6.3 Wrexham CBC are working with the school and their local communities to support this initiative and deliver new pre-school spaces for local children.
- 6.4 The proposed modular buildings are designed for pre-school children and will deliver an attractive indoor learning and play environment together with access to outdoor playspace.

The Application Site

- 6.5 Cefn Mawr Primary School is located off Plas Kynaston Lane to the south of the town centre. The site is an established primary school with parking and playground to the north of the main school building whilst playing fields wrap around the southern elevations of the school. To the north of the site is the Welsh speaking Ysgol Min y Ddol. Site access is taken from Plas Knaston Lane (to the north). There is existing residential development to the east, south and west of the school grounds. The site is not subject to any designations or allocations in the Local Plan (Wrexham UDP). There are no trees on site

The Proposed Development

- 6.6 The proposed development comprises siting of two new single modular buildings located on part of the playing field adjacent to the south east elevation of the main school building.
- 6.7 The proposed modular buildings will be single storey measuring 10.42m x 12.8m each and provide a classroom / learning space together with welfare facilities, kitchen and office. Each modular building will have access to its own outdoor play area. One building will be used in connection with Cefn Mawr Primary School and the other with Ysgol Min y Ddol.
- 6.8 Access will through the school grounds (from Plas Kynaston Lane). The playground and car parks associated with the school are unaffected whilst the size of the existing playing field is such that this small loss does not harm its function for sports / play.

Planning Assessment

- 6.9 The proposed modular buildings are required to deliver clear aspirations of the Welsh Government to improve childcare facilities for families and the communities in which they live. The proposed nursery buildings sit on a small part of the extensive playing fields serving the school. The proposal will not result in loss of any parking or playground whilst the extensive playing field serving the school ensures its delivery for sports use is not prejudiced by the proposal. The principle of such development is therefore appropriate on this site.
- 6.10 The location of the modular buildings within the school grounds makes locational sense in terms of accessibility and providing best possible transition for children from pre-school into reception. The buildings are well designed for their purpose with indoor and outdoor playspace together with welfare and kitchen facilities to ensure a high quality childcare facility can be offered for families.
- 6.11 The proposed modular buildings are simple shallow pitch-roof buildings located side by side adjacent to the south east elevation of the main school building. The building provides internal playspace and welfare / kitchen / office space together with access to safe outdoor playspace. Materials comprise timber cladding and green grey wall cladding panels to create an attractive building that sits comfortably on site and with its surrounds. As such the design is appropriate to the function of the building and its wider surrounds whilst its location ensures there is no significant harm to residential amenity.
- 6.12 As such it is considered the proposed modular buildings are appropriately designed with submitted drawings and supporting reports demonstrating how the proposal can be accommodated on the site and that there are no technical reasons preventing the proposal being developed.
- 6.13 In view of the above, it is considered the scheme satisfies national and local policy and represents a suitable and sustainable development proposal for the site that addresses all the relevant and material considerations. In this context, the proposal satisfies Section 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 and it is considered that planning permission should be granted.