

February 2021



Planning Policy Statement

Proposed Modular Nursery building

Ysgol Rhostyllen, School Street, Rhostyllen, Wrexham, LL14 4AN

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 a single storey modular building within the grounds of the existing school.
- 1.2 The proposed classroom will provide purpose built nursery / preschool classroom space with access to outdoor playspace.
- 1.3 The applicant for the proposed nursery building is Wrexham County Borough Council.

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 Ysgol Rhostyllen is located off School Street in Rhostyllen in the centre of the village.
- 1.9 The site is an established primary school with parking to the front (accessed from School Street), playground to the side (western boundary) and playing field to the rear. There is existing residential development to the east, south and west.
- 1.10 The site is not subject to any designations or allocations in the Local Plan (Wrexham UDP).
- 1.11 Further details of the site are set out in Section 2.

Planning History

- 1.12 There is no relevant planning history for the site.

The Proposed Development

- 1.13 The proposed development comprises a new single modular building located on an area of hardstanding in the south east corner of the school grounds fronting School Street.

- 1.14 The site is currently used in association with the Nursery currently operating within the school.
- 1.15 The proposed modular building will be single storey and provide a classroom / learning space together with welfare facilities, kitchen and office. Access will be taken from School Street whilst outdoor play space is provided to the rear. The playground and playing fields associated with the school are unaffected as is the existing car park.
- 1.16 The proposed modular building will be a simple, shallow pitch roof building clad in materials to reflect the appearance of the school and surrounding red brick houses.
- 1.17 Further details on the proposed development are set out in Section 3.

The Planning Application

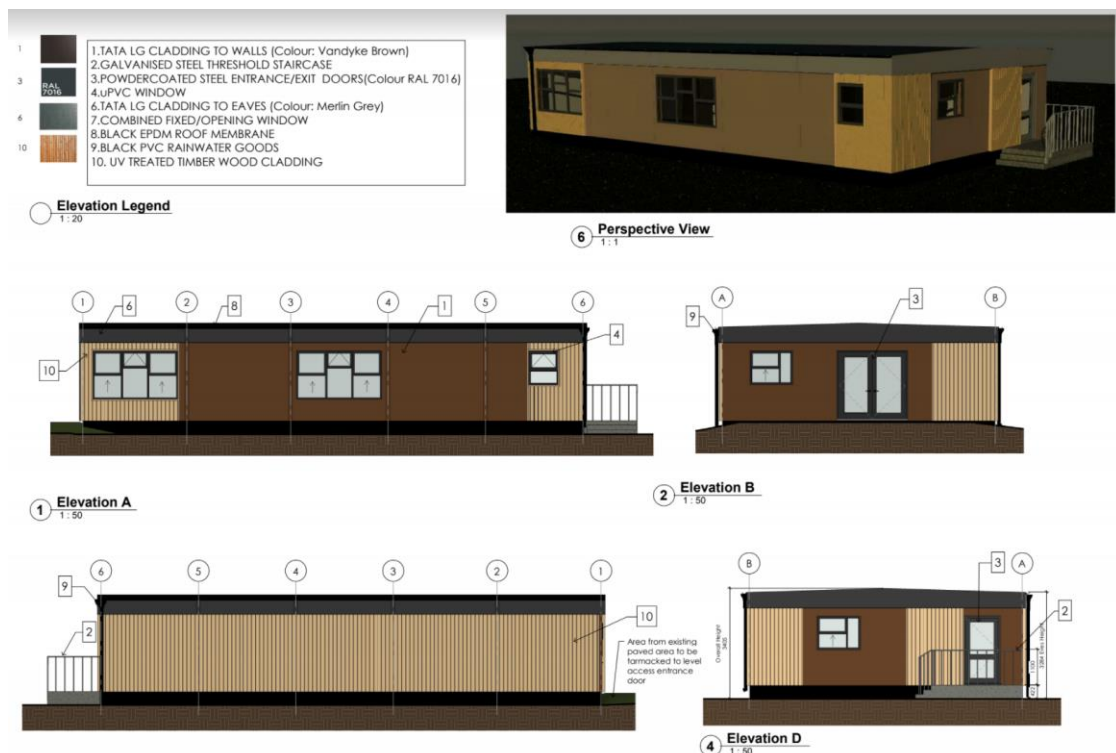
- 1.18 This statement describes the application site and nature of the proposal (Chapters 2 and 3) together with an assessment of planning policy issues (Chapters 4 & 5) of relevance to the application. Assessment of the planning application is set out in Chapter 5. Conclusions are set out in Chapter 6.
- 1.19 This statement will fully justify the proposal for the site and will advance justification for the proposed modular building.
- 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 Ysgol Rhostyllen sits on the north side of School Street in the centre of Rhostyllen. The primary school is accessed from School Street with main school building set back from the road.
- 2.2 The school building itself is predominantly single storey with a pitched roof. The building is constructed in brick with tile roof including solar panels on the south facing roofslope.
- 2.3 The school car park is located in front of the school together with main pedestrian access. To the side / west is the school playground with playing field to the rear. The proposal will not impact on the car park or existing playground / playing field. Boundary treatment comprises red brick wall with painted railings.
- 2.4 The area for the proposed modular building sits to the eastern boundary adjacent to number 18 School Street. The site sits within the school grounds and comprises hardstanding outdoor play space associated with the existing Nursery and Reception at the school. There are two coniferous trees to the site frontage which will be removed to make way for the proposed modular building whilst the existing play area to the north will be retained in association with the proposed nursery building. The play space will be shared with the existing Nursery and Reception at school.
- 2.5 Residential development sits to the east, south (opposite side of the road) and west of the site.
- 2.6 The site is an established school (community) use within the settlement limits of Rhostyllen and is not subject to any specific allocation or designation in the Wrexham UDP.
- 2.7 The site is not subject to any heritage, landscape or ecological designations and sits in Flood Zone 1.

3.0 The Proposed Development

- 3.1 The proposal comprises a new modular building to provide nursery / preschool play area / learning space at the school. The building is to be located within the school grounds in the south east corner fronting School Street. This location enables easy access from Station Road for pupils / parents / carers and avoids any loss of car parking, playground or playing field space within the school grounds. Two existing conifer trees on the site frontage are to be removed to locate the proposed modular building.
- 3.2 The proposal consists of an 15.4m x 8.4m footprint modular building with shallow pitch roof including play / learning space, wc, kitchen, store, office and lobby. The design intention is to match the aesthetics of the main school building in terms of materials and colour (timber cladding and dark brown wall cladding together with dark grey roof). The timber cladding also reflects the render on nearby dwellings.
- 3.3 In order to prevent overlooking and minimise noise disturbance, there are no openings on the east elevation facing the neighbouring dwelling.
- 3.4 The modular building is a simple shallow pitch structure with height of 3.4m falling to 3.28m 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 building within the grounds of the school that will sit comfortably in the streetscene.

- 3.7 Access to the building is taken at the southern end with direct access from School Street. To the rear of the building, doors open out onto the retained outdoor play space for nursery children. 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 building at the rear with steps to the front to access the lobby area.
- 3.10 The internal layout of the building will deliver the following:
- 74sqm play area / learning space
 - 9 sqm kitchen
 - 16 sqm wc including fully accessible wc
 - 8 sqm office
 - 5 sqm store
 - 6 sqm lobby / cloaks
- 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 Rhostyllen 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 building is 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 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 building is well designed for its 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 proposed nursery is a detached, single storey modular building finished in timber cladding and dark brown coloured wall panels to deliver an attractive

building that sits comfortably on site and in the wider streetscene. Its design reflects its purpose whilst ensuring it is accessible from School Street and delivers safe playspace internally and to the rear.

5.11 The proposed building is located in the area currently used for Nursery and Reception outdoor play. This area is adjacent to current childcare facilities and will provide a secure area for safeguarding children. This location also ensures there is no loss of car parking, play ground or playing fields and so school playtime and sports activities can be maintained. The proposed outdoor playspace will be shared with the existing Nursery and Reception children.

5.12 Taking the above into account it is considered the proposed nursery building is 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 residential 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 public transport (criteria d & e of GDP1);
- the development does not result in, or is 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 building 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 design of the nursery building has been carefully considered given its location close to existing dwellings. In particular there are no openings proposed along the eastern elevation where it is adjacent to the gable of number 18 School Street. Furthermore, the hours of use will reflect those of the school.

5.15 The entrance door will be positioned nearest School Street and the large windows for the classroom area facing into the school rather than overlooking the neighbouring property

5.16 As such the design, siting and operation of the proposed nursery building ensures there will be no significant impact on living conditions of residents living along School Street.

Highways

- 5.17 The proposed nursery is to be located within existing school grounds and will provide a new facility for the existing nursery / preschool facility located within the school building. The nursery business will be operated independently of the school although there is a clear synergy between the two. Two additional staff are expected for the proposed nursery. This is not considered to generate any significant extra traffic movements.
- 5.18 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. Furthermore, the proposal seeks to address a need in the community and as such it is expected most trips will be made on foot from within the village.
- 5.19 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

- 5.20 The proposed nursery will result in the removal of two conifer trees from the site. These trees are not considered to be of any significant amenity or landscape value. If necessary, replacement planting can be conditioned elsewhere on the site.

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 a modular building within the grounds of the existing school. The proposed modular building will provide purpose built nursery / preschool play and learning space with access to outdoor playspace.

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 building is 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 Ysgol Rhostyllen is located off School Street in Rhostyllen in the centre of the village. The site is an established primary school with parking to the front (accessed from School Street), playground to the side (western boundary) and playing field to the rear. There is existing residential development to the east, south and west. The proposed nursery building will be located in the school grounds and will not result in the loss of any parking or playground / playing field. The site is not subject to any designations or allocations in the Local Plan (Wrexham UDP).

The Proposed Development

- 6.6 The proposed development comprises a new single modular building located on an area of hardstanding in the south east corner of the school grounds fronting School Street.
- 6.7 The site is currently used in association with the Nursery and Reception currently operating within the school.
- 6.8 The proposed modular building will be single storey measuring 15.4m x 8.4m to provide a classroom / learning space together with welfare facilities, kitchen and office. Access will be taken from School Street whilst outdoor play space is provided to the rear (to be shared with existing Nursery and Reception children). The playground and playing fields associated with the school are unaffected as is the existing car park.

Planning Assessment

- 6.9 The proposed modular building is 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 building sits within the existing school grounds and will not result in loss of any parking, playground or playing field. The principle of such development is therefore established on site.

- 6.10 The location of the modular building within the school grounds makes locational sense in terms of accessibility and providing best possible transition for children from pre-school into reception. The building is well designed for its 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 building is a simple mono pitch building located within the school grounds to the front / side of the main school building with access off School Street. The building provides internal playspace and welfare / kitchen / office space together with access to safe outdoor playspace. Materials comprise timber cladding and dark brown wall cladding panels to create an attractive building that sits comfortably on site and within the streetscene. There are no openings on the eastern elevation so as to minimise any effects on the adjacent dwelling. As such the design is appropriate to the function of the building and its wider surrounds whilst also ensuring there is no significant harm to residential amenity.
- 6.12 As such it is considered the proposed modular building is 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.