

Campus 2025 : Parking and Access Arrangements : Plas Coch Campus

This note summaries the position regarding access and parking for the three planning applications at the Plas Coch Campus. Whilst the three applications are separate, the overall highways position across the three sites is linked, hence this note addresses all three. The applications are:

Plas Coch Academic (P/2018/0666)	Demolition of student union, refectory and other redundant buildings, and redevelopment of academic campus to provide new Learning Gateway Building, Engineering Building, new Sports Hall Extension, redevelopment of Multi-Use Games Area, refurbishment of Social, Learning and Academic Tuition Space, together with new car parking, infrastructure, landscaping and public realm works
Wrexham Student Village (P/2018/0672)	Outline application for student accommodation facility of up to 197 bed spaces, with parking and landscaping.
North West of Plas Coch (P/2018/0671)	Demolition of redundant student halls and construction of up to 410 apartments with access from B5101, together with car parking, site landscaping and associated infrastructure on surplus land within the overall Plas Coch academic Campus

Existing Position

There are currently three points of access into the Main Plas Coch Campus:

- 1) Access to the west from Plas Coch roundabout
- 2) Access to the south from Mold Road (currently via a separate entrance and exit)
- 3) Access to the east from Crispin Lane

Parking surveys have been undertaken which conclude that the overall Plas Coch campus currently has a daily peak demand of 620 spaces of the overall 947 spaces which are currently available.

Proposed Access/ Parking Arrangements

In terms of improvements/amendments to these points of access, the following considerations are key:

- The original planning applications documents (submitted August 2018) proposed that the access to the west from Plas Coch roundabout be restricted to (a) the 410 apartments proposed – whereby cars use the existing access road and turn left (north) up to the new apartment complex and (b) service vehicles only for Glyndwr University – so staff and students would no longer be able to use this point of access. The key driver for Glyndwr was to reconfigure and improve the campus, so that traffic and cars are effectively removed from the central portion of the Campus, adjacent to the new engineering and learning gateway buildings. This would deliver a significant improvement to the current campus, as the current arrangements have simply evolved over time to be far too focused on car parking. Glyndwr wish to refocus the campus to create high quality new pedestrian spaces within the Campus, which are free from cars and traffic.
- In assessing the proposals, Wrexham CBC Highways expressed a reluctance to see any additional vehicle trips onto Crispin Lane, therefore requested that the Plas Coch roundabout access to the west remain open to staff and students. Therefore, within the revised highway proposals, staff and student access is retained via Plas Coch Roundabout, together with access off Mold Road and Crispin Lane.
- Glyndwr's highway engineers have tested this revised arrangement and it is acceptable from a capacity point of view with the 410 apartments included. Glyndwr remain keen to put in place a barrier system, which would ensure that the Academic Campus is not used as a cut-through to Mold Road/Crispin Lane by any new residents of the 410 apartments. This barrier would utilise number plate recognition used instead

of key fobs. This would mean that the barriers would open much quicker than may otherwise be assumed. Such systems can deliver an entrance rate of 5 seconds per vehicle to get through the barrier, giving a capacity of 720 vehicles an hour. The surveys undertaken at Plas Coch highlight a demand of approximately 300 vehicles entering from the west via Plas Coch Roundabout access in the AM peak hour, so this arrangement operates well within capacity and will not result in any traffic backing onto the Plas Coch roundabout / wider highway network.

- The planning application for Plas Coch Academic also proposes a significantly improved new access onto Mold Road. The current arrangements are far from ideal. The proposed new arrangement seeks to close the existing “gap in the hedge” entrance to Mold Road and create a more conventional new both-ways junction, linking with a new internal road running to the west of the Racecourse Ground. This internal road then takes traffic into the new parking areas within the campus. This is detailed on the landscape masterplan 3060 103D, which accompanies this note.
- After the Campus 2015 applications were submitted, Glyndwr University completed the purchase of Wrexham Student Village and the adjoining land which is to the rear of the Kop stand at the Racecourse Ground. As Glyndwr now own this land, they have the land required to deliver an improvement scheme to Mold Road / Crispin Lane junction. Drawing 2627-107 Rev B (which accompanies this note) shows details of the scheme to realign the junction to the west, improving the visibility, particularly when looking east over the railway bridge. An offer was made from Glyndwr to Wrexham CBC Highways to impose a condition on either the Plas Coch Academic or Wrexham Student Village applications to see this junction improvement scheme delivered.
- The Crispin Lane / Mold Road improvement scheme was originally pursued on the basis that the access to the west from Plas Coch roundabout would be closed to staff and students and therefore potentially more trips would be taken via Crispin Lane. As this is no longer proposed, then the justification for an improvement scheme to the Mold Road / Crispin Lane junction reduces.
- In terms of overall car parking capacity, the improvements and reconfiguration of the Plas Coch Campus (as outlined on the landscape masterplan 3060 103D which accompanies this note) will result in the overall number of parking spaces on the Plas Coch Campus reducing from 947 to 882. This still results in a provision which is significantly above the existing surveyed peak demand of 620 spaces. The future management of the campus (with barriers on the main entrance to Plas Coch Roundabout) will also remove any informal parking by members of the public/commuters who are currently using the Plas Coch Campus and then walking to the town centre/train station.
- Scope also exists in the future to look at including decked parking arrangements, particularly within the significant new parking area which is currently the location of the former all-weather sports pitch. A decked car park is not within the scope of the applications submitted for Campus 2025, as demand does not yet exist for this facility. Masterplanning the overall Campus does however enable elements of future proofing to be considered, so there is scope to accommodate significantly more car parking if student numbers grow significantly in future years.