

PLANNING COMMITTEE	DATE: 26/09/2022
REPORT OF THE SENIOR PLANNING AND PUBLIC PROTECTION SERVICE MANAGER	

Number: 3

Application Number: C21/0718/41/LL

Date Registered: 29/07/2021

Application Type: Full

Community: Llanystumdwy

Ward: Llanystumdwy

Proposal: Construction of new school and associated works including external play and learning areas, on-site parking and new access to the highway

Location: Land opposite Bron Eifion Lodge, Cricieth, LL52 0RY

Summary of the Recommendation: TO APPROVE WITH CONDITIONS

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1. Description:

- 1.1 This application involves building a new school for 150 pupils to replace the existing building of Ysgol Trefferthyr, Cricieth.
- 1.2 The site is currently an agricultural field and is located west of the town of Cricieth near the A497. The site is outside the development boundary but is located directly adjacent to it. A support wall for the A497 abuts the site with the highway towards the north. To the east is a wooded area. To the south is the Cambrian Railway with agricultural fields towards the west. There are trees with a Tree Preservation Order located on the land.
- 1.3 The new school would be of a contemporary design. It is intended to finish the external walls with a mix of render, stone and cladding and the roof would have an insulated panel system. The building would mainly be a single-storey, however, there is a section that is two-storey. The building would comprise six classrooms, ALN classroom, cylch meithrin room, main hall, kitchen, library/resources/food science room together with a number of various teaching areas, staff and administrative areas, plant room, toilets etc. In addition, near the main building there will be a place to locate an electricity sub-station, pump room, bin storage and a storage room. The proposal would also include a sports field, hard surface play area and an area for various games.
- 1.4 As part of the application, it is proposed to create a new access to the site. It is proposed to create a vehicular access down to the school that would include a roundabout with surrounding parking spaces. There is a total of 37 parking spaces that include four accessible to the disabled with one parking space for commercial vehicles. It is also proposed to have a place to store bicycles on the site. There would also be a footpath from the A497 down to the school building and it is proposed to undertake improvements to the footpath situated near the A497. On the A497 it is proposed to have a road to enable turning to the right for traffic travelling from the west to the east. A 20 mile speed limit zone would be created near the site of the new access for approximately 100 metres either side of the entrance. It is also proposed to create a buffer zone with a speed limit of 30mph beyond the proposed 20mph area speed limit to the west. A speed limit of 30mph already exists when travelling through Cricieth towards the site. It is proposed to extend street lighting to include a speed limit zone of 20mph. An uncontrolled crossing will be created and it is proposed to widen the footpaths near the entrance. As part of the Transportation Report travelling to school was looked at and the possible use of Lôn Fêl Uchaf and Isaf. The Transportation Report recommends options in terms of improving safety on Lôn Fêl Uchaf and Isaf including signage and traffic calming measures.
- 1.5 The following documents were submitted to support the application:
- A Design and Access Statement
 - Landscape and Visual Appraisal
 - Language Impact Assessment Report on the relocation of Ysgol Trefferthyr
 - Flood Consequence Assessment
 - Statement on identifying a site for the new Cricieth School
 - Archaeological assessment
 - Report of the Pre-application Consultation
 - Trees Impact Assessment
 - Transport Statement
 - Ecological Survey
 - Addendum to the Ecological Survey
 - Bats Emergence Survey

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- Construction Period Plan (including environmental)
- School Acoustic Report
- Environmental Noise Assessment
- Drainage Strategy Report
- Geo-technical report, land permeability and contamination investigations
- Report on the compliance with Part L2A of the Building Regulations (use of renewable energy)

1.6 The application is submitted to Committee as it is a building that exceeds 1000 square metres.

2. Relevant Policies:

2.1 Section 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 and paragraph 2.1.2 of Planning Policy Wales emphasise that planning decisions should be made in accordance with the Development Plan, unless material considerations indicate otherwise. Planning considerations include National Planning Policy and the Local Development Plan.

2.2 The Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015 places a duty on the Council to take reasonable steps in exercising its functions to meet the seven well-being goals within the Act. This report has been prepared in consideration of the Council's duty and the 'sustainable development principle', as set out in the 2015 Act. In reaching the recommendation, the Council has sought to ensure that the needs of the present are met without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs.

2.3 Anglesey and Gwynedd Joint Local Development Plan 2011-2026, adopted 31 July 2017

PS 1 - The Welsh Language and Culture

ISA 2 - Community facilities

PS 4 - Sustainable transport, development and accessibility

TRA 2 – Parking standards

TRA 4 - Managing Transport Impacts

PS 6 – Mitigating the Effects of Climate Change and Adapting to Them

PCYFF 1 – Development Boundaries

PCYFF 2 - Development criteria

PCYFF 3 - Design and place shaping

PCYFF 4 - Design and landscaping

PS 19 - Conserving and where appropriate enhancing the natural environment

AMG 5 - Local biodiversity conservation

PS 20 - Conserving and where appropriate enhancing cultural assets

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AT 4 - Protection of non-designated archaeological sites and their setting

Supplementary Planning Guidance: Maintaining and Creating Distinctive and Sustainable Communities

2.4 National Policies:

Future Wales: The National Plan 2040.

Planning Policy Wales, Edition 11, February 2021.

Technical Advice Note 12: Design

Technical Advice Note 18 – Transport

3. Relevant Planning History:

3.1 The application has no relevant planning history.

4. Consultations:

Cricieth Town Council: Not received.

Llanystumdwy Community Council: No objection, but it has to be noted that there are concerns regarding the threat that comes as a result to nearby rural schools, and there is a risk that parents will consider moving their children there because of the new resources and the modern provision there.

There are also concerns about vehicles speeding between Llanystumdwy and Cricieth.

Transportation Unit: **Observations following the receipt of the amended Transportation Report**

A497

In considering the location of the development on the outskirts of Cricieth and the direction of the journeys the development will produce, we question if there is a need for a special provision for vehicles turning right into the new school. However, we recognise that the provision would assist to reduce congestion in the area should

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there be any change in future traffic movements.

The number of parking spaces provided within the site is much more than required for the day-to-day operational needs of the site. However, I wish to draw attention to special, but regular, events e.g. parents' evening or concerts, that may cause vehicles to park on the A497.

Planning Policy Wales, edition 11 states; the Welsh Government is committed to reducing reliance on the private car and supporting a modal shift to walking, cycling and public transport. The current school is situated in the centre of town with convenient links for many pupils to be able to walk and cycle to school. To this end we need to ensure that access, on foot and by bicycle, to the new School is convenient to all. To undertake this, the Transportation Statement has identified the need to present improvements on the A497 Lôn Fêl Isaf and Lôn Fêl Uchaf.

Lôn Fêl Isaf

As part of the application, safety measures are recommended on Lôn Fêl Isaf. A letter in-report 5279-CAU-XX-XXCO-9102.S3-P01, dated 30 March 2022 summarises, when considering the traffic data received, that implementing a system where pedestrians and drivers share the road that is available is not in accordance with the guidelines. The only other option identified to improve the link for pedestrians will be to close the road to vehicles. By identifying the significant restrictions that exist on the following site, we accept the proposed measures noted.

Lôn Fêl Uchaf

Following the observations of the service, regarding Lôn Fêl Uchaf, we are pleased to see that a feasibility study has been conducted to try and find a solution to the possible impacts of the new school on a number of pedestrians and vehicles on Lôn Fêl Uchaf. However, we are disappointed that there are no plans indicating these improvements.

Having considered the contents of the report, reference 5279-CAU-XX-XX-RP-0300.S3-P01, dated February 2022, the following statements can be established:

- The carriageway is 2.5-5.3m wide with an average width of approximately 3.7m.
- Driving along the section of the road "requires care to maintain clearance" and the boundaries are in the form of stone walls without grass verges.

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- There are no formal passing places and it is necessary to back-up significant distances and around bends without any visibility to provide sufficient width for a vehicle to pass.
- Based on the existing traffic conditions, pupils walking along the road should expect to encounter one or two vehicles on every journey. Due to its proximity to the Lôn Fêl Uchaf junction, I believe that the development has the potential to increase the levels of traffic along the road, that may increase the expected number of encounters between pedestrians and vehicles.
- The report has not established if lighting levels on the road would be sufficient for a footpath, or if they would allow traffic calming measures to be presented.
- Option D proposes implementing a traffic calming scheme along the path.

We will support the principle of Option D, and note that the other options are reliant on the Local Highways Authority presenting significant alterations on how the local network works by implementing Traffic Orders.

As no details have been provided, we would ask for the following conditions to be included.

Prior to the commencement of any work on the site, plans should be submitted and agreed to define the scope of the signage work and traffic calming on Lôn Fêl Isaf and Lôn Fêl Uchaf.

That the work on the highways detailed on the amended plans is completed prior to opening the site to be used as a school.

Observations Dated 13 October 2021

The proposed plans include a new junction from the main road to the site. The junction includes a road to turn right on the A496. This road would be useful to reduce the impact of traffic to the site for vehicles travelling from the direction of Pwllheli.

Visibility on the junction is acceptable, and parking arrangements, pick-up and drop-off within the site are acceptable.

The new school is located near a road with an existing speed limit of 60 mph, however, it is intended to change the speed limit to 20 mph in front of the school.

Walking and Cycling Provision

The Road Traffic Reduction Act 1997 (1997 Act) enforces local

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authorities to review the current traffic levels on local roads, forecast the growth anticipated in traffic levels and note any targets to reduce traffic levels on the roads or growth.

Planning authorities should ensure that their development plan strategy is in-keeping with the aim of reducing the need to travel and provide more choice of modes of travel other than the private car.

Planning Policy Wales, edition 11 also states "The Welsh Government is committed to reducing reliance on the private car and supporting a modal shift to walking, cycling and public transport.

Strategic Policy PS4 - Sustainable Transport, Development and Accessibility notes:

Locating developments in places in order to reduce the need to travel. The councils will support improvements to transport that maximises accessibility through all transport modes, especially on foot, cycling and public transport.

This will be achieved by ensuring easy access via footways, cycling infrastructure and public transport where appropriate and therefore will encourage the use of these modes of travel for local journeys and reducing the need to travel by car.

I do not believe that sufficient information has been submitted to ensure that the applicant has addressed those aims noted in Strategic Policy PS4 and the Road Traffic Reduction Act 1997.

The transportation statement has identified the starting point for trips to school and has also noted which paths pupils are likely to use as safe routes to school.

According to research, it is likely that approximately 11 - 20 pupils will use Lôn Fêl south of the A497. The report notes that the following road is narrow without any footpaths for an extensive section.

Their response is to note that pupils and their parents should be informed that this is not a suitable path to school for pedestrians and also they note that safety improvements, such as better signage and road markings are being presented.

We believe that the following message is confusing and the applicant needs to look further into the options to improve safety for pedestrians and cyclists along this road.

The study has also identified that a number of pupils will use the existing road, namely the A497, to get access to the new school. However, not much information has been submitted to identify if the road is suitable and if there is an opportunity to present improvements

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to encourage more Active Travel to school.

Impact on the highway network as a result of the development

Information has been provided as a statement indicating the number of journeys to school from the Ty'n Rhos area of Cricieth (more than 41). According to the map, the shortest route between this area and the school is along Lôn Fêl, situated to the north of the A497. The said road has not been identified in the report as a path that may be used for journeys to school by any mode of travel. We strongly believe that an assessment should be undertaken to identify the impact of the proposed location of the school on the said road.

Natural Resources Wales:

We have no objections to the application but we do have the following observations:

European Protected Species

We note that the bats survey submitted to support the above application (Ysgol Treferyth: Bat Emergence Surveys of Selected Trees, Rod Gritten (20.5.21) has noted that bats are present on the application site. From the information submitted, we consider that the proposed development represents a lower risk for bats, as defined in our guidance document, 'Natural Resources Wales Approach to Bats and Planning' (2015). Bats and their breeding sites and resting places are protected under the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017.

However, as the development in this case represents a lower risk to bats, we consider that the development is unlikely to have a detrimental impact on the work of maintaining the population of the species in question and its protected status in its natural dispersion.

Additionally, we advise that the proposed development is not likely to harm or disrupt the bats or breeding area and the resting spots on this site as long as the mitigation measures described in the bat report are implemented.

The report must be included in the 'approved list of plans/documents' in the decision notice should permission be approved for the project.

Contact us again if any further information shows that this is no longer a lower risk case.

We note that no other European Protected Species use the site, however, we recommend that you consult your ecological advisors regarding other species in their care.

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Protected Sites

The site is within 350 metres of the Pen Llŷn a'r Sarnau Special Area of Conservation (SAC), and North Ceredigion Special Protection Area (SPA) and the Glanllynau and Glannau Penychain to Cricieth Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI).

NRW has noted the potential impact routes of pollution for the SAC features. The pollution route might not lead to a detrimental impact if the developer adheres to the following recommended pollution prevention guidelines.

No assessment of likely significant impact under Regulation 63 of the Habitats and Species Conservation Regulations 2017 has been undertaken by your authority, or it was not forwarded for consideration to NRW. If you come to the conclusion that the proposed development is likely to have a substantial impact on the European site, we look forward to being re-consulted. In the absence of this assessment, NRW cannot offer any certainty that the proposals would not have a detrimental impact on the SAC.

By providing the impact routes referred to above for the SAC and that these receive sufficient attention, NRW is of the opinion that the SSSI features would also be sufficiently protected.

Flooding Risk and Surface Water Drainage

The site is within Zone A of the Development Advice Maps (DAM), which have been included in Technical Advice Note 15, Development and Flooding Risk (July 2004).

TAN15 advises that the justification test is irrelevant for a development located in Zone A and that surface water requirements are relevant. The acceptability criteria is that no increased flooding will occur in other places as a result of the development. Given the location of the development in Zone A, we advise that surface water requirements should be assessed. We note that providing observations on the suitability of these proposals is a matter for the Authority's Land Drainage Department.

Also provided advice for the developer.

Welsh Water:

Welsh Water have been consulted during the pre-application period and it is noted that our observations have been acknowledged and included within the PAC report. The observations highlight that only foul water discharges can be disposed via the public sewer system and surface water discharges should be subject to an application to the Sustainable Drainage System Approving Body. As part of the application it appears that the submitted drainage plan indicates the

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intention to discharge foul water to manhole number SH49383003 and in principle we have no objection.

Also provided advice for the developer.

Public Protection Unit: Not received.

Biodiversity Unit: Trees Report

Trees Impact Report prepared by Luke O'Connor dated 18 May 2021.

The trees on the site are mainly broadleaved native trees. The trees are located as groups and individually. The trees on the site vary in terms of quality and age. The trees vary from over-mature and ancient species to young sapling trees. Trees on the site vary from being in a good condition to some that are in poor condition. The majority of the trees are south and east of the site.

59 trees were reviewed and about 9 will be felled.

Ecology reports

- Ecology Survey by Gritten Ecology dated 20 May 2021 (Habitat, protected species)
- Addendum to the ecology survey prepared by Gritten Ecology dated 17 March 2021 (assessment of trees as a bats roost)
- Bats Emergence Survey by Gritten Ecology dated 20 May 2021.

The ecology report notes that the woodland is grazed and dominated by mature sycamore (*Acer pseudoplatanus*) with Scots Pine (*Pinus sylvestris*) with one recently cut down. Other species seen in the woodland are Holly (*Ilex aquifolium*), Ash (*fraxinus excelsior*) and Hawthorn (*crataegus monogyna*). The ground flora is grassy with cock's foot, common bent and Yorkshire fog. The grassland appears to be semi-improved and is scarce in terms of species.

No data has been included from Cofnod records.

Protected species - Bats

Seven trees were surveyed for bat activity and one was found to be a bat roost T55/094 (two soprano pipistrelle bats appeared) which is an ancient oak. This tree is outside the development boundary and will be retained.

When cutting trees (with a medium to high potential of bats)

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measures have to be followed to reduce the possible impact on roosts such as the time and seasonal temperature, cutting and lopping sections, avoiding cutting holes and cracks.

Hedgehog

I have checked the Cofnod records and there is a record of a hedgehog 220 metres to the east. The development is unlikely to affect hedgehogs.

Protected Species - Badger

The ecological survey found badger tracks on the site and this suggests that badgers forage within the site. The development is unlikely to harm badgers but I suggest that a fence is erected that includes gaps at the bottom to enable badgers to travel through the site.

Reptiles

Unfortunately, the ecology survey did not undertake a full reptile survey using artificial refugia. The survey did not find reptiles. However, it is very likely that reptiles are found along the margins of the site, especially near the railway, as this is a habitat that is often used by reptiles. I have checked the Cofnod records and there is a record of a slow-worm on the railway a little less than 500 metres to the east. It is unlikely that the desk-top study undertaken by the ecology report by Gritten has looked so extensively.

Therefore, I recommend that the construction work follows reasonable measures to safeguard reptiles.

Non-native species

Skunk cabbage

Landscaping Plan

The plan is acceptable. It includes suitable tree species (alder, oak, hornbeam, small-leaved lime, scots pine, wild cherry). The grassland area includes amenity grassland and a wildflower meadow.

Protected Sites

The site is within 350 metres of the Pen Llŷn a'r Sarnau Special Area of Conservation, and North Ceredigion Special Protection Area and the Glanllynau and Glannau Penychain to Cricieth Site of Special Scientific Interest.

The only path that may have a possible impact from the development site on this Special Area of Conservation is a small ditch near the railway that passes through fields and reaches the sea in around 1km.

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The development is unlikely to have a significant impact on the Special Area of Conservation as the developer will ensure that measures to prevent pollution are followed. In assessing this development under Regulation 63 of the Habitats and Species Conservation Regulations, 2017 it is unlikely to have a significant impact on the Pen Llŷn a'r Sarnau Special Area of Conservation.

Wildlife Site

The margins of the woodland of the site are within the Cefn Castell 714 candidate wildlife site. I do not have any concerns about the wildlife site as it is likely that the woodland would be improved by ending the grazing.

Recommendation

Conditions to protect and improve wildlife and nature:-

- No trees, hedgerows, vegetation to be removed during the bird nesting season (1 April to 31 August) unless it can be proven in writing that the work would not harm nesting birds.
- Prior to the commencement of any work a plan to protect reptiles needs to be submitted and agreed during the construction period.
- Prior to commencement of the building work a plan should be submitted to ensure that the movements of badgers will not be restricted.
- Prior to commencing any work a pollution prevention plan needs to be submitted.
- To submit and agree on a tree felling plan to reduce the impact on bats.

I have no objection to the proposal to build a new school as long as the above conditions are followed.

Trees Unit:

In regard to the Tree Impact Assessment Report, dated 18/05/21, by Luke O'Connor, the following applies:

1. Trees T4 (alder) and T36 (sycamore) are to be removed to facilitate development. However, they are also classified as Category U under BS 5837-2012 and therefore removal is appropriate.
2. 18 additional trees have also been classified as Category U and are recommended for removal. The majority of these are sycamore. Non-sycamore species to be removed are ash (1) Corsica pine (2), hornbeam (1), Norway maple (4) and holly (2).
3. The report recommends replacement planting of 3 trees for

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every one removed. Recommended species: sycamore, Scots pine, hornbeam, sessile oak and holly. Specifics are listed in the reports Tree Schedule and should be followed.

4. The broad area designated for this mitigation planning is shown on the included Landscape Plan produced by Lingard Farrow. Additional amenity/enhancement planting incorporating a range of native species is also shown on the Landscape Plan.
5. The proposed additional planting will enhance the biodiversity of the site and improve the diversity of species structure. It follows BS 5837-2012, will provide suitable mitigation/enhancement under current planning policy and will also allow the planning authority to fulfil its obligations under the Environment (Wales) Act.
6. A plan showing the final planting positions of the replacement trees should be provided prior to works starting.

Water and Environment Unit
YGC:

Since 7 January 2019, sustainable drainage systems (SuDS) are required to control surface water for every new development of more than one dwelling or where the building surface area has drainage implications of 100m² or more. Drainage systems must be designed and constructed in accordance with the minimum standards for sustainable drainage as published by Welsh Ministers.

These systems must be approved by Gwynedd Council in its role as SuDS Approval Body (SAB) prior to commencement of the construction work.

Due to the size and nature of the development, it is possible that an application will need to be provided to the SuDS Approval Body for approval before construction work commences. It appears that the developer intends to drain the site in a suitable sustainable manner; however, until an application is made to the SAB, there is no certainty that the site plan would enable compliance with the full suite of national SuDS standards. Early consultation with the SAB is recommended.

Language Unit:

Not received.

Gwynedd Archeological
Planning Service:

Having reviewed the area of proposed works with reference to the regional Historic Environment Record (HER), I have determined that there is potential for archaeological impact and would like to draw

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your attention to the comments below.

The proposed development is for the creation of a new school on land opposite Bron Eifion Lodge, on the western side of Cricieth along the southern side of the A497. The land is undeveloped pastureland with a history of being as such throughout historic map regression. The plot lies less than 600m west of Cricieth Castle – a scheduled monument (ref. CN015) also recorded on the national (NPRN:95281) and regional (PRN:1328) databases.

As a result of previous GAPS response to this application (our ref. 0825tf01/D3385), a programme of archaeological evaluation was conducted on the site including both Geophysical Survey and Trial Trenching. The evaluation works have identified a number of archaeological features throughout the development area including likely post medieval tracks and boundaries, as well as a possible cist burial with associated cairn material. The latter here is of high sensitivity and could be indicative of further burials in the area.

The proposed development requires ground-disturbing works on undeveloped land in a landscape with good potential for settlement. Any newly encountered archaeological remains would enhance the wider understanding of the area, especially in relation to earlier occupation of Cricieth and its environs. Ensuring any yet undiscovered archaeological material is not unduly destroyed or lost, contributes to the preservation of heritage, and also has the potential to improve our wider understanding. As such, it is considered appropriate that a programme of mitigation be implemented during the development, in the event of planning consent being granted. This mitigation will allow for any archaeological material to be properly and appropriately assessed, recorded and if necessary, removed.

- a) No development (including topsoil strip or other groundworks) shall take place until a specification for a programme of archaeological work has been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The development shall be carried out and all archaeological work completed in strict accordance with the approved details.
- b) A detailed report on the archaeological work, as required by condition (a) shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority within six months of the completion of the archaeological fieldwork.

The archaeological mitigation should entail a formal programme of archaeological work known as an Archaeological Excavation, to be undertaken in advance of the commencement of development-led works. The work

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should be supported by sufficient desk-based research to aid interpretation of any archaeological evidence encountered.

Cadw: Not received.

Network Rail: No objection to the proposal in principle but offer guidance for the developer in terms of development near the railway.

Public Consultation: A notice was posted on the site and nearby residents were notified. The notification period has expired and one correspondence was received that on the whole was supportive of the proposal and considered that careful consideration had been given to the visual impact of the proposal, that it would provide a range of educational requirements and that consideration to the transportation matters had been included in the Traffic Report. However, there was some concern in terms of the context of re-developing schools within the county with smaller schools being closed causing harm to local communities and asking if consideration had been given to the future of Ysgol Llanystumdwy as part of the development. Also questioned what would happen with the school's current site.

5. Assessment of the material planning considerations:

The principle of the development

5.1 It is mandatory for planning applications to be determined in accordance with the adopted development plan, unless other material planning considerations state otherwise. The Anglesey and Gwynedd Joint Local Development Plan (LDP) is the adopted 'Development Plan' in this case.

5.2 The main planning policy that relates to this application is policy ISA 2 of the LDP. This policy supports the provision of new community facilities provided they meet with five criteria. The assessment is assessed in the context of the following criteria:

1. The first criterion requires that a site is located within or adjacent to development boundaries and given that this site is within the Cricieth development boundary the proposal satisfies this criterion.

2. Secondly, proposals should first look at making dual use of existing facilities or converting existing buildings. Given that the purpose of this application is to provide better facilities than what can be provided in the existing building, and when looking at the condition, nature and limitations of the existing school, it is believed that it is reasonable to seek to construct a new building that has been specifically designed for modern environmental and educational requirements.

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3. The third criterion requires, if the proposal is for relocating a facility, that it can be shown that the original site is no longer suitable for this use. It is understood that the existing school is in a very poor condition and is now beyond the position where it can be maintained and several issues have been identified that means there are a number of significant defects in the building work. In addition, the recent suitability survey has identified that the current school is in a very poor condition and that the buildings significantly impair the staff's ability to deliver the curriculum. Also, the site is unsuitable for traffic levels and there is a lack of parking and provision to receive goods. Due to the scale of the new school building, it is considered that it is entirely reasonable to change the location of the building to a site that is sufficient to meet with the anticipated educational needs.
4. The fourth criterion means that the scale and the type of the proposal is appropriate to the settlement in question. The application has been submitted by the Education Department to provide for the local educational need in the Cricieth area and it is believed that the scale of this development is entirely appropriate for its location.
5. The last criterion requires that the proposal is accessible to alternative modes of travel and given its location directly near the Cricieth development boundary it is considered that the site is very convenient for parents who wish to walk, cycle or use public transport to reach the school.
- 5.3 Given the above discussion it is believed that this proposal meets with all the criteria of Policy ISA 2 of the LDP.
- 5.4 Policy PCYFF 1 requires development to be situated within development boundaries and outside the development boundaries, developments will be resisted unless it is in accordance with specific policies in the LDP or national planning policies or that the proposal demonstrates that its location in the countryside is essential. As noted above, policy ISA 2 supports the provision of new community facilities near the development boundary and the proposal in question complies with Policy ISA 2. As a result it is therefore considered that the proposal is also acceptable in terms of Policy PCYFF 1 of the LDP.

General and residential amenities

- 5.5 Generally, policies PCYFF 2 and PCYFF 3 of the Joint Local Development Plan encourage the approval of proposals for new development provided they do not have a detrimental impact on the health, safety or the amenities of the residents of local properties or on the area in general.
- 5.6 The proposal would add a built form to the existing agricultural field and therefore the proposal in question would certainly change the character of the existing site. However, the field in question is located lower than the adjacent road and the ground floor level of the school would be approximately 5 metres lower than the nearby road. The new building has been planned to mainly be single-storey, with some two-storey sections, and where the roofs are low-pitched. The variety in terms of single and two storey sections together with the variety of materials, break-up the uniformity of the elevations. The external elevations will include a mix of render, stone and cladding panels and the roof will be an insulated panel system and will also include solar panels. It is understood that elements of the design have been influenced by local agricultural buildings to try and be in-keeping with the rural location.
- 5.7 The building has been located to run with the site's contours in an attempt to reduce the excavation work required for the school and also to try and reduce its visual impact. The school will also gain from a planting scheme to create a planting buffer between the school and the

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nearby road. This would be of assistance to reduce noise pollution from the site and also the proposal's visual impact. The building will use some more contemporary elements such as a great deal of glazing and light cladding, however, these will be used jointly with more traditional materials such as white rendered walls, stone walls and corrugated steel. The landscape scheme would also be developed to support what is currently on the site by planting new trees and enhancing the ecology by increasing the numbers and variety of species on the site. It is proposed to use this soft landscape as an educational resource for the school's pupils together with assisting to screen the development from the roads around the school. In addition to the soft planting a security fence would be erected around the site. Although we realise that the proposal would be visible in the landscape from some places due to the low level of the building, the presence of a support wall near the A497 and trees and hedges together with the proposal to plant more extensively it is not considered that the proposal will have a detrimental impact on the area's visual amenities.

- 5.8 As part of the application a Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment was submitted to assess the proposal in terms of its impact on elements of the landscape and its character together with an assessment of visual receptors e.g. users of adjacent road, public footpath users, occupiers of nearby dwellings. In terms of the landscape impact the assessment comes to the outcome that there would be no significant effect on any of the landscape character elements or assessed landscape designations. In terms of the visual impact the assessment comes to the outcome that there would be no significant impact on any of the assessed visual receptors. The assessment concludes that there is no significant landscape or visual impact identified and the proposal is considered acceptable in terms of its landscape and visual impact.
- 5.9 The proposal would inevitably intensify activity on the site that is currently used as an agricultural field. Having said this, the school will only be open for limited hours and the children will be inside the building most of this time. As part of the application an Environmental Noise Assessment was submitted. The assessment refers to noise from machinery (heating, ventilation and air-conditioning), use of the sports area and other external places together with activities in the car park especially at the start and end of the school day. The report has identified the nearest residential units to the site which are located at Lôn Fêl and all in all the Environmental Noise Assessment comes to the conclusion that there would only be a low noise impact deriving from the proposal. Therefore, it is not believed that the school's day-to-day activities will cause significant harm to local residents' amenities.
- 5.10 Generally, it is not believed that this development would cause significant detrimental harm to the amenities of the local area or its residents in the long-term, although, inevitably there will be some noise and disturbance during the construction period. It is believed, by setting appropriate conditions, it can be ensured that the amenity impact of the construction work could be reduced as much as practically possible so that the potential harmful impacts are on a level that is acceptable over a short-term period. By implementing the above, it is believed that the development would be acceptable under policies PCYFF 2 and PCYFF 3 of the LDP.

Trees and Landscaping

- 5.11 A Trees Report was submitted with the application identifying the need to fell two trees to enable the development to proceed, however, there were 18 other trees that are recommended to be felled due to their condition and / or defects in the trees. The report recommends planting three trees for every one tree to be removed and the details of the species proposed to be used e.g. sycamore, alder, oak, holly, hornbeam, small-leaved lime, Scots pine, wild cherry are noted in the trees

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report and the landscaping plan. The landscaping plan also shows the approximate area for this mitigation planting. The Trees Unit consider that this additional planting would improve biodiversity and the variety of species on the site. It is also considered that the trees that are to be retained on the site together with the landscaping plan proposed are a means of softening the impact on the landscape. It will be necessary to impose a condition in accordance with the trees report and the landscaping plan and the Trees Unit also recommend a condition to present a plan to indicate the final planting places for the trees proposed to be planted to compensate for those that will be removed. Therefore, by imposing conditions it is considered that the development is acceptable under policy PCYFF 4 of the LDP.

Biodiversity

- 5.12 As part of the application an Ecology Survey, an addendum report to the ecology survey and a bats emergence survey were submitted. It was found that one oak tree was a roost for bats, however, this tree will not be removed. This is noted in the bats report and there will be a requirement for this report together with the two ecology surveys to be noted as reports to comply with should be application be approved.
- 5.13 The site is within 350 metres of the Pen Llŷn a'r Sarnau Special Area of Conservation, and North Ceredigion Special Protection Area and the Glanllynau and Glannau Penychain to Cricieth Site of Special Scientific Interest. Observations were received from the Biodiversity Unit that note that the only path that may have a possible impact from the development site on this Special Area of Conservation is a small ditch near the railway that passes through fields and reaches the sea in around 1km. The development is unlikely to have a significant impact on the Special Area of Conservation as the developer will ensure that measures to prevent pollution are followed. The Biodiversity Unit when assessing this development under Regulation 63 of the Habitats and Species Conservation Regulations, 2017 state that it is unlikely to have a significant impact on the Pen Llŷn a'r Sarnau Special Area of Conservation. In the same manner it is not considered that the proposal would have a detrimental impact on the Site of Special Scientific Interest or the Special Area of Conservation.
- 5.14 The woodland margins of the site are within the Cefn Castell 714 candidate wildlife site, however, the Biodiversity Unit had no concerns about the wildlife site as it is likely that the woodland would be improved by terminating the grazing.
- 5.15 The Biodiversity Unit recommend a number of conditions in order to protect and improve wildlife and nature as follows:-
- No trees, hedgerows, vegetation to be removed during the bird nesting season (1 April to 31 August) unless it can be proven in writing that the work would not harm nesting birds.
 - Prior to the commencement of any work a plan to protect reptiles during the construction period needs to be submitted and agreed.
 - Prior to commencement of the building work a plan needs to be submitted to ensure that the movements of badgers will not be restricted.
 - Prior to commencing any work a pollution prevention plan needs to be submitted.
 - To submit and agree on a tree felling plan to reduce the impact on bats.

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- 5.16 By ensuring that the above appropriate conditions are imposed on the development it is believed that this development will meet the requirements of Policies PS19 and AMG 5 of the LDP which encourage proposals to protect, and where appropriate, to enhance the area's biodiversity.

Transport and access matters

- 5.17 As part of the proposal it is proposed to create a new access to the site from the A497. The access would go down from the A497 to the school building and where some form of roundabout would be created with surrounding parking spaces. There is a total of 37 parking spaces that include four accessible to the disabled and there would be one parking space for commercial vehicles. It is also proposed to have a place to store bicycles on the site. There would also be a footpath from A497 down to the school building and it is proposed to undertake improvements to the footpath that is situated near the A497. On the A497 it is proposed to have a road to enable turning to the right for traffic travelling from the west to the east. A 20 mile speed limit zone would be created near the site of the new access for approximately 100 metres either side of the entrance. It is also proposed to create a buffer zone with a speed limit of 30mph beyond the proposed 20mph area speed limit to the west. A speed limit of 30mph already exists when travelling through Cricieth towards the site. It is proposed to extend street lighting to include a speed limit zone of 20mph. An uncontrolled crossing needs to be created and it is proposed to widen the footpaths near the entrance. As part of the Transportation Report travelling to school was looked at and the possible use of Lôn Fêl Uchaf and Isaf. The Transportation Report recommends options in terms of safety on Lôn Fêl Uchaf and Isaf including signage and traffic calming measures.
- 5.18 From the original observations of the Transportation Unit it can be seen that they are satisfied with the visibility from the junction and the parking arrangements, pick-up and drop-off within the site are acceptable. The most recent observations refer to the possibility that activities e.g. parents' evening may lead to parking on the A497. In addition to the formal parking spaces noted within the application, there may be some times when people will park on the access road down to the school. This would allow more parking spaces within the site for specific events.
- 5.19 However, initial observations from the Transportation Unit recommend having more information about the possible use of Lôn Fêl as a possible route to travel to school. A further Transportation Report was received from the developer that gave consideration to the use of Lôn Fêl Uchaf and Isaf and recommend options in terms of improving safety on Lôn Fêl Uchaf and Isaf including signage and traffic calming measures. As full details have not been provided for the exact signage and the proposed traffic calming measures for Lôn Fêl Uchaf and Isaf the Transportation Unit is keen to include a condition to agree on the exact signage and traffic calming work on Lôn Fêl Isaf and Uchaf and that the measures approved are operational and completed before the school is used. It is considered that it would be appropriate to include a condition of this type.
- 5.20 It is considered that the site in question is accessible to various modes of travel with purposeful footpaths and also the possibility of reaching the school by cycling or using public transport.
- 5.21 By acting in accordance with the Transportation Unit's recommendations it is believed that the plan complies with the requirements of policies PS 4, TRA 2 and TRA 4 which aim to ensuring provision for sustainable transport that is safe for all users.

Archaeological Matters

- 5.22 Observations were received from the Gwynedd Archaeological Planning Service on the proposal. Following the initial observations of the Gwynedd Archaeological Planning Service on the

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application a programme of archaeological evaluation was undertaken on the site. This evaluation identified a number of archaeological features in the development site including tracks and boundaries from the post-medieval period together with a cist burial and associated cairn material. The last of these has a high sensitivity and can be a sign of more burials in the area. The Gwynedd Archaeological Planning Service note that the development would entail land disturbance on undeveloped land and in a landscape where there is potential for a settlement. Any archaeological remains would improve the wider understanding of the area especially in relation to the early occupancy of Cricieth and the environs. The Gwynedd Archaeological Planning Service therefore recommend imposing a condition regarding a programme of archaeological work for the entire development. It is considered by imposing an appropriate condition to carry out archaeological work that the proposal is acceptable in terms of Policy AT 4 of the LDP.

Drainage Matters

- 5.23 In accordance with the expectations of Policy PS 6, which requires assurance there is appropriate evidence that full consideration has been given to the potential impacts of climate change, a Drainage Strategy was submitted as part of the application. Observations were received from the YGC Water and Environment Unit noting that it appears that the developer intends to drain the site in a more sustainable way and an application will need to be submitted to SuDS Approval Body.
- 5.24 Welsh Water confirm there is sufficient capacity within the sewerage system to cope with the flow of foul water from the school.

Sustainability matters

- 5.25 As part of the application a report was submitted regarding how the proposal would use renewable energy by using air source heating pumps for heating and hot water together with photovoltaic panels installed on the roof to further reduce the building's use of energy. The photovoltaic panels would generate electricity on the site that would be of assistance in terms of reducing the reliance on electricity from the national grid. The external envelope of the school would also be made as airtight as possible to retain a great deal of heating within the building with the Design and Access statement noting that the U values offered are much better than the existing Building Regulations values. Additionally, a natural ventilation system would attract fresh air by retaining the CO₂ levels in classes to a minimum. It is considered that the proposal is acceptable in relation to Policy PCYFF 5 and Policy PS 6 of the LDP.

Language Matters

- 5.26 As part of the application a Language Impact Assessment Report was received on the relocation of Ysgol Treforthyr. The report comes to conclusion that building a new school at Cricieth has a positive impact on the Welsh language, mainly, as there would be more opportunities for Cricieth children to use the Welsh language socially and educationally as the new school will offer better resources to hold more activities outside school hours. This is a proposal to erect a new school for Cricieth where the language of learning will be through the medium of Welsh and it is considered that the situation in terms of the Welsh language would be similar. It would be possible to use the new school to hold more educational activities and also activities outside school hours that may contribute positively to the Welsh language. It is considered that the proposal is acceptable in terms of Policy PS 1 of the LDP.

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6. Conclusions:

- 6.1 Given the relevant planning matters in this case, the proposed development meets with many objectives in the Anglesey and Gwynedd Joint Local Development Plan and proposes a development of high-quality, modern and suitable design, that will make significant contributions to meeting the need for local educational places.

7. Recommendation:

To approve – conditions

1. Time (five years)
2. In accordance with the plans.
3. Agree on final materials and colours
4. Transport conditions
5. Archaeological conditions
6. Landscape work to be undertaken in accordance with the trees report and the landscaping plan.
7. Submit and agree upon a detailed plan to show the location of the trees proposed to be planted on the site.
8. In accordance with the ecology reports and the bats report.
9. No trees, hedgerows, vegetation to be removed during the bird nesting season (1 April to 31 August) unless it can be proven in writing that the work would not harm nesting birds.
10. Prior to the commencement of any work a plan to protect reptiles during the construction period needs to be submitted and agreed.
11. Prior to commencement of the building work, submit and agree on a plan to ensure that the movement of badgers will not be restricted.
12. Prior to commencing any work a pollution prevention plan needs to be submitted and agreed.
13. To submit and agree on a tree felling plan to reduce the impact on bats.
14. Limit working hours during the construction period.
15. A Welsh name for the school.
16. Standard condition for major developments to inform about the commencement of the work.

Notes 1. Welsh Water

2. Natural Resources Wales

3. Highways

4. Network Rail

5. SUDS