



**YSGOL GWMRAEG CWM GWYDDON,  
CWMCARN, CAERPHILLY  
PROPOSED REPLACEMENT PRIMARY  
SCHOOL**

Ysgolion a Cholegau yr 21ain Ganrif  
21st Century Schools and Colleges



## **Design & Access Statement**

June 2021

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## 1.0 INTRODUCTION

This document outlines the proposed strategy for a new 420 place Primary School, plus Childcare and SEN accommodation, to be situated on part of the former Cwmcarn High School, Chapel Farm, Cwmcarn

The existing Ysgol Gwmraeg Cwm Gwyddon has been on the current site for 20 years and now has approximately 260 pupils to the original 80 planned. The school site is small and external space limited. The site is enclosed on all sides with the only vehicle access via a side street adjacent to local public houses. A summary of the problems with the existing site are as follows:

- The existing school is over-subscribed, and the teaching accommodation is not fit for purpose in several areas.
- There are ongoing maintenance issues in the older buildings and several temporary classrooms on site.
- Internally and externally there are many accessibility issues.
- There is insufficient play space on site and there are no playing fields within walking distance.
- Access and especially drop off, for a Welsh Medium Primary is very difficult and causes traffic and H&S issues on the main street through Abercarn.

There is no room to safely expand, or rebuild, on the existing site and this would not improve the access issues.

The proposal is to relocate Ysgol Gwmraeg Cwm Gwyddon, which currently occupies a small, restricted site in Abercarn, to a new purpose built Welsh Medium School to be situated on the former Cwmcarn High School site. The previous school was closed on 10<sup>th</sup> October 2018 and was demolished in 2019 except for the remaining relatively new, performing arts building, which was retained for possible future re-use.

The anticipated occupation date for the new school is September 2023.

This scheme is part of the wider 21<sup>st</sup> Century Schools Programme across Wales, where Caerphilly County Borough Council has developed a Rationalisation Programme which aims to remove unwanted surplus places in the authority and improve the building stock in order that provision is enhanced. Some schools are no longer in the right place and thus new schools are proposed.

The aims of the development and the 21<sup>st</sup> Century Schools Programme are to provide:

- Raised standards and improve the quality of learning environment to create a fit-for-purpose 21<sup>st</sup> Century school
- Learning environment for children and young people in Wales that will enable the implementation of strategies for school improvement and better educational outcomes.
- Reduce inequalities in achievement between advantaged and disadvantaged areas, groups and individuals
- A sustainable education system through better use of resources to improve the efficiency and cost-effectiveness of the education estate which will enhance local public service provision
- A 21<sup>st</sup> Century Schools Standard for all schools in Wales which reduces recurrent cost, energy consumption and carbon emissions.

The 21<sup>st</sup> Century Schools Programme is a major long-term investment programme jointly funded by the Welsh Government and the Local Authority.

The first part was the Band A schemes which ran from 2014 to March 2019. This was around a £56.5 million pound investment for educational and community use which included:

- Islwyn High School
- Ysgol Gwmraeg Cwm Rhymney Y Gwyndy Campus
- Idris Davies School 3-18
- Trinity Fields Schools improvements

The second part of the funding - Band B started in April 2019 and in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century Schools document the focus areas were to reduce the number of poor conditions in schools and to ensure the size of school is correct for the area and in the right location, that can also be utilised by the community. Its aim is to provide adequate places for both Welsh and English medium education and reduce surplus spaces. Phase 1 of Band B includes this investment together with a large extension at Trinity Fields School, Ystrad Mynach.

The proposals were prioritised based on a number of factors, including building condition, projected pupil numbers, local and national drivers. However, delivery of the curriculum remains at the core and it has been identified that the current school could not meet the requirements of the curriculum due to restricted external space and lack of classrooms.

The Council submitted an Outline Business Case for the scheme and have received Welsh Government approval in principle to proceed subject to consultation and approval.

The building will provide approx. 3050 sq m of teaching accommodation, which includes a 16 place Special Resources Base (SRB), a 60 place Nursery and a Rising Threes provision. It will also have up to date ICT facilities, food technology space, external hard and soft play areas, including a tarmac MUGA and access to grassed pitch areas. The use of sporting facilities will also be considered for the community at suitable times and in keeping with the timetable. Additional funding was also sought, and received, for a 48 place Childcare facility as part of the school.

The project will also consider the desire for community use of the building, which forms part of the 21<sup>st</sup> Century Schools requirement of the grant funding. The building layout will seek to facilitate safe partial opening of the school, which would include the hall and a multi-functional classroom.

## 2.0 Policy

2.1 Pre-Application guidance was sought from Caerphilly County Borough Council's Planning Section on 6<sup>th</sup> October 2020. The response is appended in full, as part of the draft Planning Application, however a precis of the Council's planning policies for the site, including information on whether the scheme complies, or could comply, with the policies, are included here. Responses from the Design team are added in blue where appropriate.

### Strategy Policies

The site is located within the Southern Connections Corridor (SCC). Policy **SP3 Development Strategy – Development in the SCC** requires development proposals within the SCC to promote sustainable development. Specifically, proposals in this area should:

- be targeted to previously developed land within settlement boundaries in the first instance – *site has an established educational use on a previously developed site.*
- reduce car borne trips by promoting more sustainable modes of travel – *the site will provide adequate parking for both car and bus travel not currently available at the existing school site, and will keep traffic away from the residential areas in Cwmcarn and Abercarn*
- make the most efficient use of existing infrastructure – *The site has an established educational use on a previously developed site. No new infrastructure is proposed however the use of the highway's infrastructure accessing the school will be used in a safer way by separating staff and bus traffic from parent drop off.*
- have regard to the social and economic function of the area and protect the natural heritage from inappropriate forms of development – *development will take place entirely within the existing site*

**SP5 Settlement Boundaries** promotes resource efficient settlements, indicating where growth will be permitted through the delineation of settlement boundaries. Settlement boundaries define the area within which the principle of development would normally be allowed, subject to all relevant planning policy and material planning considerations. Part of the site is located outside of the settlement boundary of Abercarn. When the settlement boundary was drawn in this location it included the school buildings but excluded the playing fields and ancillary open space, in order to protect them from inappropriate development. Consequently, the site is a mixture of brownfield land within the defined settlement limits and greenfield land outside of the defined settlement limits.

*The Planning Guidance received states that, it is considered that the principle of development on the site is acceptable and the proposal complies with Policies SP3 and SP5 of the Local Development Plan. It should be noted that the former school, including the playing facilities and ancillary open space, form a single planning unit with an established educational use.*

**SP6 Place Making** requires development proposals to contribute to the creation of sustainable places by having full regard to the context of the local, natural, historic and built environment and its special features. The visual appearance of the proposed development, its scale and its relationship to its surroundings and context are material planning considerations. The proposal will therefore need to be assessed against national design guidance contained in TAN 12 Design and against **LDP 6: Building Better Places to Live** in order to ensure that the requirements of SP6 can be fully met.

**SP8 - Minerals Safeguarding** requires the safeguarding of known resources of coal, sand, gravel and hard rock whilst maintaining a minimum ten-year bank of permitted aggregate reserves in line with national guidance. Whilst part of the proposal area is located within a mineral safeguarding zone, the site already has an established educational use which is simply being continued.

*The Planning Guidance received states that, as such, there are no objections in respect of this policy.*

### Countywide Policies

**CW2 - Amenity** indicates that development proposals must ensure that the proposal would not result in over-development of the site and/or its surroundings. Furthermore, the policy indicates that the proposed use would need to be compatible with the surrounding land uses and not constrain the development of neighbouring sites for their allocated use. The proposed school is located on a site of a former school, albeit the building is relocated on the site. The school building is being relocated further away from residential properties and closer to an employment site and leisure facility. For comparison the former High School consisted of 6310 sq m gross internal floor area whilst the new school will consist of 3050 sq m gross internal floor area

*The Planning Guidance received states that, as such, the proposal satisfies this policy.*

**CW3 Design Considerations – Highways** requires that development proposals can be accessed appropriately without detriment to highway safety. The proposal can be accessed from two locations, both of which connect to the A467. The first access point to the north of the proposal area will be primarily used by parents as a drop off point, which can be accessed from the road adjacent to the Gerry Jones Industrial Unit and connects to the A467 via its junction with Darren Drive. In addition, the existing car park contains 61 parking spaces to be utilized for pupils who will need to travel to the site by car. The second access is to the south, utilizing the access to the existing car park. This car park will be used for staff parking and for school buses. This access point to the north of Priory Court connects to a junction with Chapel Farm Terrace, which connects to the A467 to the south east of the application site.

*The Design Team have liaised with CBC Highways regarding this proposal and have received a positive response on the access proposals. A Transport Statement for the project is also included as part of this Consultation.*

### **Area Specific Policies**

The north of the proposal area borders with the Prince of Wales Industrial Estate which is classified as a Secondary Employment Site Under Policy EM2 Employment Sites Protection. Prince of Wales has been allocated as EM2.27 under the adopted LDP. EM2 protects against unsuitable development within these areas, allowing only B1, B2 and B8 as permitted uses. The proposed school building is being located closer to this employment site and, as such, comments should be sought from environmental health in respect of noise impact.

*The Design team have commissioned an Acoustic Survey of the site to ensure that the new school building meets the statutory requirements of BB93: acoustic design of schools - performance standards. This is included as part of this Consultation and a summary is included as Section 8.3.*

*Continuous monitoring results (including audio recordings) measured at close to the employment site indicate very little industrial activity noise from the Gerry Jones Distribution complex impinging the development site. Elevated L<sub>Amax</sub> (and L<sub>A01</sub>) noise levels, measured were controlled by birdsong in proximity of the sound level meter microphone, therefore, no further assessment of industrial noise impinging the development site is deemed necessary.*

A small area in the south west of the proposal area crosses into a Site of Importance for Nature Conservation (SINC). The SINC designation is identified as NH3.12 (River Ebbw) in the adopted Local Development Plan. SINC's are important biodiversity resources which cover significant areas of priority habitats and species. Development will normally be permitted where it would not cause unnecessary harm to the designation. Where potential harm would be unavoidable it should be minimized by effective mitigation measures. Where this is not possible compensation measures designed to conserve, enhance and manage habitats should be provided. The proposed school is being located in the north western part of the site, away from the area designated as a SINC.

*As such, the proposal is not considered to have a detrimental impact on the SINC given the small area of overlap between the two boundaries. Please refer to the Ecology summary in section 6.2.*

The River Ebbw is located to the west of the application site. The south western corner of the site is located within a flood zone C2. Flood Zones are defined in Technical Advice Note 15, with flood zone C2 being an area liable to flooding that do not have any significant flood defences. Within Flood Zone C2 highly vulnerable developments should not be permitted. Education development is classed as highly vulnerable development under TAN 15. It should be noted, however, that the proposed new school building is located outside of flood zone C, which would be acceptable in terms of TAN 15. However, the existing access and parking area to the south of the site is located within the flood zone C2 area and as such the views of Natural Resources Wales should be sought in respect of flood risk.

*Natural Resources Wales have been consulted as part of this Consultation and a Flood Consequences Assessment is being produced for the site, see section 8.8. This will be included as part of this Consultation.*

### Analysis

Part of the application site, the area proposed for the new school building, is located outside of the settlement boundary of Abercarn. The settlement boundary at this location was drawn around the existing school buildings and excluded the playing pitches and ancillary open space to protect them from inappropriate development. The proposed redevelopment of the site is for a replacement school for the one that has been demolished. As such the proposed redevelopment is not an inappropriate form of development as it seeks to maintain the educational use of the site. The former school and its playing field and ancillary open space comprise a planning unit that has an established educational use on it. As such the principle of the redevelopment of the site for a replacement school is acceptable, even though the proposed location for the replacement school building is located outside of the existing settlement boundary.

*The Planning Guidance received states that, given this, there are no policy objections in respect of Policy SP5.*

No details are provided with regard to the scale and design of the building and in that regard, it is not possible to comment on such matters. Notwithstanding the comments of the Landscape Architect, given the scale and design of the previous buildings on the site and the footprint of the proposed building indicated by the submitted site layout plan it is considered that the proposal is likely to be in keeping with the character of the area. However, as part of the site is outside of the defined settlement limits every effort should be made to ensure that there is not a significant reduction in the green space within the site in order to maintain its relatively open appearance.

*The Planning Guidance received states that the proposals should also not lead to the loss of any public amenity areas or playing facilities and the proposal to make the proposed play facilities available for public use is welcomed.*

IN PRINCIPLE THERE WAS NO OBJECTION TO THE DEVELOPMENT OR SITING OF THE BUILDING. A COPY OF THESE RESPONSES ARE INCLUDED WITH THIS APPLICATION.

### **3.0 Education Consultation**

A formal public consultation on the Educational proposals, following the Welsh Government guidelines as set out in the School Organization Code 2018, commenced on 14th September and ran until 26<sup>th</sup> October 2020. 95% of the Consultee responses were in support of the development proposals.

The following groups were consulted as part of this process:

- Parents, Guardians and carers of all pupils of schools directly affected by the proposal
- Headteacher, staff and governors of schools directly affected by the proposal
- Pupils/Pupil Councils of schools directly affected by the proposal
- Catholic Diocesan Board of Education
- Church in Wales Diocesan Board
- Local Standing Advisory Council on Religious Education (SACRE)
- Governing Bodies of other schools which the proposer considers are likely to be affected by the proposal
- Local CCBC Members
- Welsh Ministers
- All CCBC Town and Community Councils
- All Assembly Members, including regional AMs
- All Members of Parliament representing the area served by the local schools directly affected by the proposals
- Directors of Education of all bordering LAs – Blaenau Gwent, Cardiff, Merthyr Tydfil, Newport, Powys, RCT, Torfaen
- Teaching Associations
- Support Staff Associations
- South East Wales Transport Alliance (SEWTA)
- ESTYN
- Mudiad Meithrin and voluntary nursery providers
- South East Wales Consortium (EAS)
- Menterlaith
- Early Years Development and Childcare Partnership
- Parent Network
- South East Wales Transport Alliance (SEWTA)
- Gwent South Wales Police and Crime Commissioner
- Welsh Education Forum
- Welsh Language Commissioner

3.2 In providing a campus to cater for pre-school to age 11, a number of advantages were anticipated:

- Provides conditions that will enable a broader and more diverse curriculum to be developed, to better meet the needs of the school's young people and in ways that will be viable and sustainable over the longer term.
- Promotes transition between key stages.
- Provides a more appropriate education in relation to pupils' ability levels, as staff can contribute to policies and practices in every area across the age range, especially in encouraging able and talented pupils, and supporting those who need additional help.
- Create a school of a sustainable size for its catchment areas by removing surplus capacity, providing greater educational and financial stability.
- Broadens the range of extra-curricular and out-of-school activities and develop them in ways that are sustainable over the longer term.
- Gives the community the opportunity to make use of the resources and facilities.
- Draws from a wider range of expertise and experiences across the sectors, to develop pupil's learning experiences.
- Offers more opportunities for continuing professional development.
- Pre-school facilities can be enhanced, by the provision of a Childcare facility which is integrated into the main school.

### 3.3 Consultation Responses

These concerns and responses were taken from the Consultation document.

**Use and size of site:** The site is larger than the previous primary and as identified the current site has reached its full potential and this will not cater for future demand for Welsh medium primary and is lacking in some area. The new site allows for expansion, plus additional nursery and childcare. It also has the potential for secondary Welsh medium education.

**Secondary Provision English Medium:** The council confirmed in their report that there is no requirement for additional English medium secondary school in the area. Both English medium schools nearby have adequate provision for their catchment pupils.

**Investment in Schools both in primary and English Medium:** The council is dedicated to providing all learners with quality learning opportunities. The council is continually improving the quality of schools through its Capital Investment Programme and any works identified via the Health and Safety teams.

**Traffic Management:** Concerns around increased traffic flow to site, how pupils are transported, access and parking issues. The previous secondary school at its peak accommodated around 900-1000 pupils, the proposals is for half of that. The council recognises the importance of Learner Travel. The relocation is less than 1 mile from the existing school and the catchment area will remain unchanged. Safe routes will be established. Traffic flow has been addressed by having separate access points North and South of the site, separating parent drop off from the bus drop off point.

**The condition and suitability of the existing site:** As addressed above the existing school is at maximum capacity and has been developed to its maximum potential. Although the standard of teaching remains high, the standard of facilities is not up to current required levels. The current site is on a split level and cannot offer full accessible access to all areas. Parking facilities are almost non-existent and parent drop off and pick up is chaotic and is often perilous with a very restricted access off the very busy main A467.

**Need for additional facilities:** The council recognise that outdoor facilities are lacking which in turn does not help with health and wellbeing of the pupils. Opportunities for community use are limited in the existing school. The responses indicate that consultees recognise that the new proposals could benefit the pupils and the wider community. This meets one of the aims of 21<sup>st</sup> Century Schools Band B programme. The safe 'zoning' of parts of the new building will help facilitate community use, whilst safeguarding the pupils.

**Growing demand for Welsh Medium Provision:** Welsh medium demand is increasing in the area, due to parental choice and the opportunity for children to be bilingual, which could enhance future prospects.

**Alternative Options for site:** Consultees recognise that the existing Cwm Gwyddon site is no longer suitable and requires investment. Consultees suggested Ty Sign. This however would mean that the existing English medium primary school would be disrupted and would impact on that school's standards of current education. The Ty Sign site also serves a greater capacity of pupils than required at Cwm Gwyddon, therefore there would be surplus spaces, something the council is trying to avoid. The site location would also mean the school is not in the heart of the community and is outside the catchment area. This would impact on transportation and potential reconfiguration of other schools. Displacement of Ty Sign pupils would mean a larger cohort requiring location in a larger school, at a greater cost than the current proposals. Therefore, the council recommendation is that this is not a suitable option.



**Build an English Medium School on Cwmcarn High:** The council stated there is no evidence to support an English medium school on this site, due to a number of factors including surplus spaces, travel and community use.

**Build a co-located Welsh and English Medium school:** The council recognise that this option has been proposed in other authorities, but it was felt that due to the English medium infrastructure in the area and not reflecting current Welsh medium demand. A co-location of English and Welsh would result in disruption to a wider cohort of pupils and travel arrangements.

### 3.4 Recommendations

Following the Consultation period and responses received it was recommended that the relocation of Ysgol Gymraeg Cwm Gwyddon to a new purpose-built Welsh-medium school be situated on the vacant site of the former Cwmcarn High School, including Childcare and Special Resource Base provision.

### 3.5 Planning Pre-Application Consultation

As a result of the recommendation above, the project information has been brought up to Planning Stage and is presented here as part of the Pre-Planning Consultation process. The requirement to undertake pre-consultation applies to all planning applications for 'major' development (full or outline as defined in article 2 of the Town and County Planning Development Management Procedure (Wales) Order 2012). This consultation process represents an opportunity for people to learn about the proposal and make comments that will be recorded and summarised in a consultation report.

#### 4.0 EXISTING SITE CONTEXT

- 4.1 The proposed school site is located in the Ebbw Valley, just off the main A467 from Newbridge to Crosskeys, East of Cwmcarn. The overall site ownership area is 5.87 hectares. The site is owned by Caerphilly County Borough Council and was formally occupied by Cwmcarn High School until 2018. The majority of the High School buildings were demolished in 2019. The site is linked to the nearby towns of Abercarn and Cross Keys by the A467 and is easily accessible via the existing highway network and by public transport.
- 4.2 To the North of the site lies a public car park which, is used by the adjacent Bowls Club, a CCBC Parks Depot and a large recreation field. Also to the North lies the Prince of Wales Industrial Estate. To the South of the site is a small residential area, to the East the A467 and to the West a playing field leased to Abercarn Football Club and beyond this the River Ebbw. Part of the South and South West Boundaries abut a Site of Importance for Nature Conservation as previously referenced 4.3 The site lies low in the valley and close to the Ebbw River. According to the current NRW Flood Development Map, the proposed site for the building does not suffer from flooding but a small area of the existing car park does. For this reason, a Flood Consequences assessment has been prepared.
- 4.4 The site is characterised by green open space with a boundary perimeter mainly of trees, directly to the South East is a residential area. To the North West is an industrial area/transport service. There are no hard standings remaining on site, no culverts and the existing open fields will be utilised for a land drainage scheme for the surface water.
- 4.5 One building remains on the site from the High School; this was the Performing Arts building. This was retained as it was relatively new at the time of the school's closure and may be included in future Education development on the site.
- 4.6 Site conditions are known to be favourable – a Site Investigation Report has been included as part of the consultation.
- 4.7 There are two possible vehicle access points to the site. The south access was used by the High School from its inception for all traffic. While this was adequate there were also safety issues from staff, bus and parent vehicles mixing. There is also the opportunity for an access from the North boundary of the site off an occasionally used Public Car park which feeds the A467 through the Prince of Wales Industrial Estate. This access is also used by the adjacent playing fields and bowls club.



Fig 1.0 Google Earth image: NTS

4.2 Site Analysis



Figure 1.1 Satellite view of the site and surrounding land courtesy Google maps. Application area shown outlined in red, site ownership in blue.

### 4.3 Site Opportunities and Constraints

The above Figure 1.1 illustrates the context of the Cwmcarn site and the immediate surrounding areas.

#### Opportunities

- The site is large and has open space to develop with few restrictions (no underground services, no buildings left to demolish)
- The existing vehicular access can be utilised and an establish route to the school is in place
- Traffic flows can be reduced by creating a new North vehicular entrance
- The existing South lower car park and North adjacent public car park can be utilised
- Good links to the main A467
- There is already and subway below the A467 from Cwmcarn and safe route to school
- The orientation of the building will maximise daylight and passive energy
- The depth of the valley will allow the building to be designed with classrooms facing East and West as the valley side will shield the façade from low winter sun
- Local playing nearby which can be utilised by the school
- Excellent views to the nearby fields, woods and mountains

#### Constraints

- The site is narrower at the North end therefore soft play is restricted
- The retained building to the South limits development in that area as does the need to consider possible future development on the site
- The lower car park is not directly outside the school
- No direct cycle routes

Fig. 1.2 Satellite View 2 of the site courtesy Google maps.

**Existing Site Photos:**



View 1: View East to existing Vehicular Entrance



View 2: View North Existing Block C retained



View 3: View South to Priory Court



View 4: North West to Abercarn football pitch



View 5: Existing Lower Car Park



View 6: Existing Lower Car Park



View 7: South East to Performing Arts - Block C



View 8: South East to Performing Arts - Block C



View 9: North East boundary fence



View 10: View outside the site to football changing room



View 11: Views outside the site to Public Car Park



View 12: Views Public Car Park and access road



View 13: View to the North Boundary from Public car Park



Views North outside the site to Public Car Park

## 5.0 CHARACTER

### 5.1 Site Layout (Refer to drawing 4661 P103)



5.2 The development area is around 2.95 hectares and the school building will be located to the North West of the site on an existing grassed area. This will allow the existing public car park, just outside the site, to be utilised for parent drop off. This will reduce traffic coming through the South of the site through the residential area and will separate the parent drop off from the bus drop off area thus improving safety and traffic flow. A new access road will be created from the existing North car park to the boundary and the entrance to the new school site. Leading off this new entrance, there will also be 17 staff spaces, of which 4 spaces will be accessible, plus 4 motorcycle spaces within the site boundary. In the existing South parking are 54 spaces will be marked out. In total there will be 71 car parking spaces provided.

The bus drop off area will be located at the South of the site, again utilising the existing access road. The lower car park will be marked out for staff parking. From this lower parking area, a new Safe Route will be utilised as a direct access to the new school via a new Equality Act compliant, pedestrian path/ramp. This will be lit.

5.3 Delivery vehicles will be allowed to come through the new North entrance and will park directly outside the North East side of the building, where the kitchen is located.

5.4 Outdoor sports and playing facilities are available to pupils. Outdoor pitches will be available for school use a short walk away at the Abercarn football pitch. Temporarily, the smaller football pitch on site can be utilised until the rest of the site is developed. A new MUGA games court will be provided on the school grounds.

The land immediately around the school will be utilised for hard and soft play areas, with play equipment, sheltered area, seating and an amphitheatre for outdoor teaching and events. This is shown in more detail on the Indicative Landscape Proposals included with the Planning Application and in section 6.5

5.6 Cyclists will utilise the existing pathways to the new school site and Cycle shelters, located at the North and South of the building will provide 44 spaces in total.

5.7 The remaining site and the retained building, will be retained in the ownership of CCBC and the intention is that this will be utilised for a future education development.

Figure 2.0 Proposed Site Layout NTS

## 5.8 Layout & Scale

*This section should be read in conjunction with the drawings and documents submitted as part of the application.*

During the design process, a wide range of build options and form were considered before arriving at the submitted scheme.

The primary elements of these design proposals are as follows:

1. Design, layout and materials for the new school.
2. Design and layout of external works and landscaping.

5.8 The design philosophy for the new teaching block is to provide the building with an identity as a 21<sup>st</sup> Century learning facility. The decisions regarding the site layout are set out previously. The decision to place the school building to the North part of the site are as follows:

- To utilise the existing public car park for parent drop off
- To **separate** the parent parking from the bus route
- To avoid excess traffic going through a residential area
- The North area of the site was an open green area with no building feature, no hard surfaces, or existing services



### Key Design Aspects:

To retain the existing access, making improvements where possible including safe pedestrian routes

Create a new vehicle and pedestrian access at the North of the site closer to the building

Create a safe accessible access to the site from both sides

Orientation: Even though the main access is predominately North -South, the valley is deep so won't get low sun into the classrooms. Canopies provide some shading.

Group infant and younger classes together sharing the same external outdoor spaces

Figure 3.0 Proposed Ground Floor Plan in Context :NTS



5.9 The School will follow the format used for a previous new 21<sup>st</sup> Century primary school at Idris Davies School, Rhymney. It will be a single storey development with three building elements:

- A double height volume to the North East containing the main hall and kitchen.
- A single storey teaching block running North to the South, with the accommodation arranged around a centralised 'street space'. The street space will contain flexible teaching zones for IT, Library area and food technology along with flexible group rooms which can be utilised for specialist teaching or pupil support. A recent comment from Welsh government has supported this type of design, as it provides additional informal learning spaces within the street area that have been proved useful during the current pandemic.
- A single storey Childcare Unit connected to the North of the teaching block.

The building plan form creates a natural line of separation between public and private spaces internally.

5.10 The main entrance gives access, from both North and South, to a generous secure reception area. A set of screen doors from the foyer provide a further line of security between school and community domains

The plan form allows for the doors to the main classroom wing to be secured, allowing community access to the hall and toilet facilities for use of the building outside of school hours.

5.11 A timber enclosure containing the sprinkler tanks are located to the South of the building (outside the plant room) and a timber enclosure for refuge collection located in the North car park.

5.12 The orientation and design of the building maximises natural daylight, as far as the site allows, with a South East and a South West orientation and the use of lantern lights over the central street. The central street provides natural lighting through the corridors which also allows light into the back of the classrooms through glazed screens.

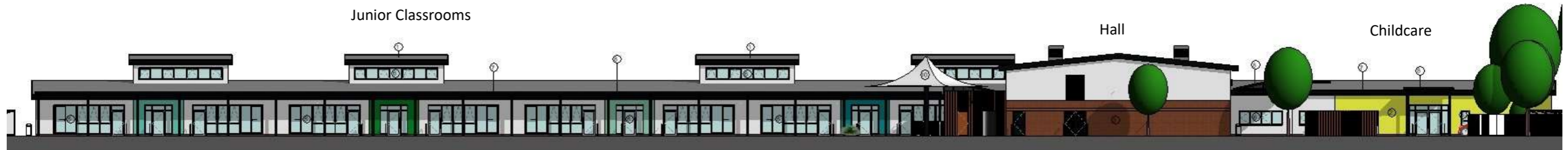
5.13 The classrooms are arranged off the central street in pairs with access to cloakrooms and toilets between. *See Figure 3.0 above.* Each classroom also has direct access to an external teaching area and the hard/soft play areas. The classrooms will be designed to be naturally ventilated and will maximise the use of natural daylight.

5.14 The Childcare accommodation has been designed to operate independently of the school but is also linked by via a corridor close to the nursery and admin areas. It has its own secure access onto hard and soft play area. A shared meeting room which can be utilised by the school or childcare staff has been located off the central foyer, close to the main entrances.



Figure 4.0: Proposed Ground Floor Layout :NTS

## 5. 15 Proposed Elevations



North East Elevation

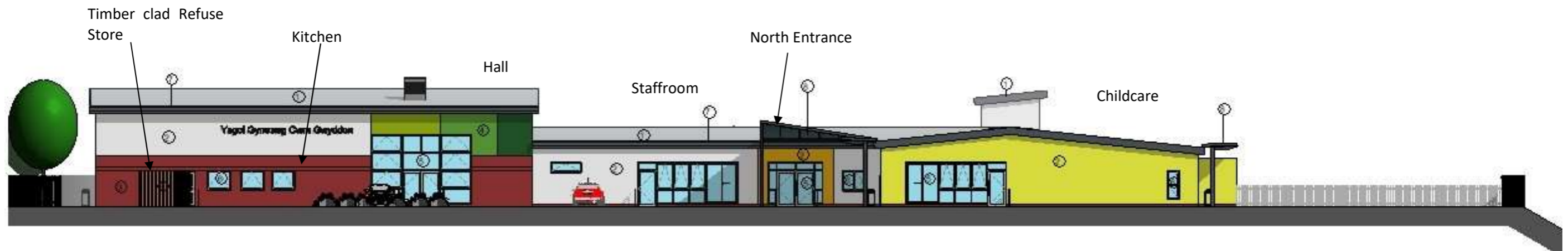
- 1 Standing Seam Roof – Anti-glare
- 2 Roof lanterns
- 3 Through Colour render
- 4 Powder Coated Aluminium curtain walling – Dark Grey
- 5 Powder Coated Aluminium doors, windows and louvres – Dark Grey
- 6 Multi Red Facing brickwork
- 7 Aluminium Powder Coated Glazed Canopies – Dark Grey
- 8 Powder coated aluminium rainwater goods
- 9 Canvas Canopy on steel column



South West Elevation



South East Elevation



North West Elevation

*Refer to dwg 4661 P106 for full elevation details and materials.*

## 5.16 Appearance

Aesthetically, the building utilises a combination of traditional and modern materials to create a vibrant and attractive facility for both pupils and the wider community.

Although the school won't be read against the nearby residential areas, the materials chosen will complement the local vernacular using a mix of traditional materials, such as brickwork and render, alongside modern materials, such as the standing seam roof, coloured cladding panels and glazed canopies. Where possible, sustainable and natural materials will be utilised. This will complement the natural environment and beauty of the area whilst still giving the new buildings a contemporary feel and help to define the development as a 21<sup>st</sup> century learning facility.

The design of the new school will allow an attractive and fit-for-purpose building that will use sustainable sources of materials and preserve the best traditions of architecture and local building and which are efficient in energy and resources.

The elevations have been designed to give the different building elements recognizable identities. The hall, childcare facilities and general classrooms are easily identified by the change in materials and colours. The design comprises a mix of rendered walls to the main teaching block to give a brighter appearance and the use of coloured cladding panels to identify each shared classroom entrance. This is used in combination with red facing brickwork for the Hall and kitchen areas to differentiate between the two uses.

Windows and curtain walling are colour powder coated aluminium punctuating the render and brickwork areas. Doors are aluminium powder coated to match windows. Large glazed aluminium curtain walling panels break up the mass of the building and flood the classrooms and hall with light. Lanterns above the central street provide both high levels of natural light and ventilation to the open teaching areas. The standing seam anti-glare roof adds a contemporary feel whilst providing a practical solution to allow a low pitch to the building.

Glazed canopies are provided to the southern classrooms and the classrooms that will be affected by heat gains. The entrances are defined with larger pitched glazed canopy to denote the main North and South entrances.

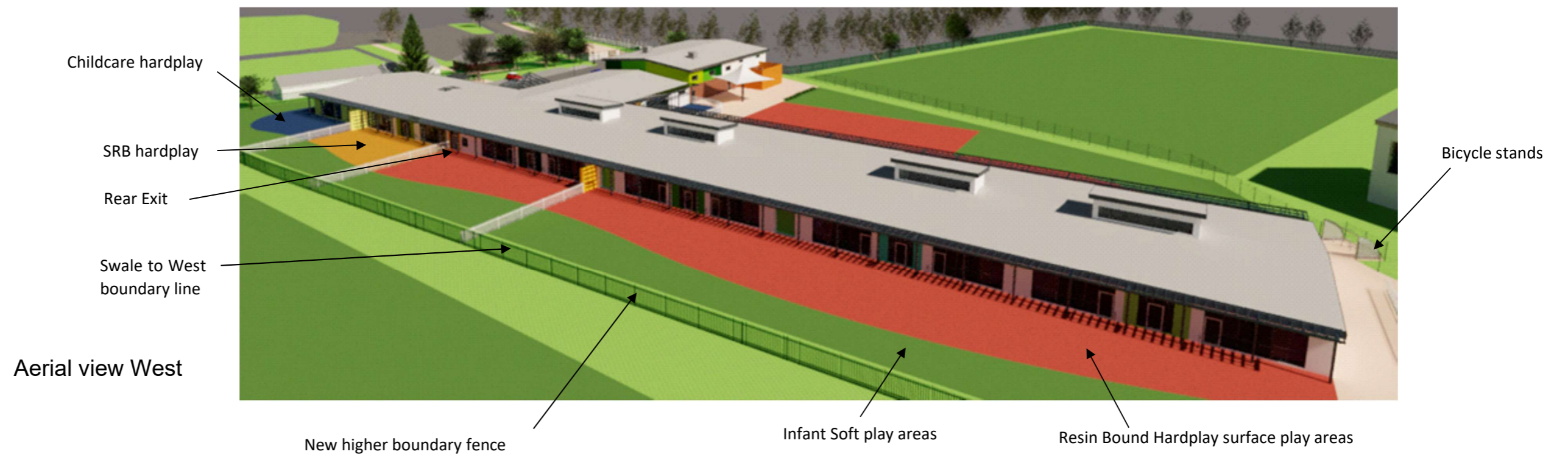
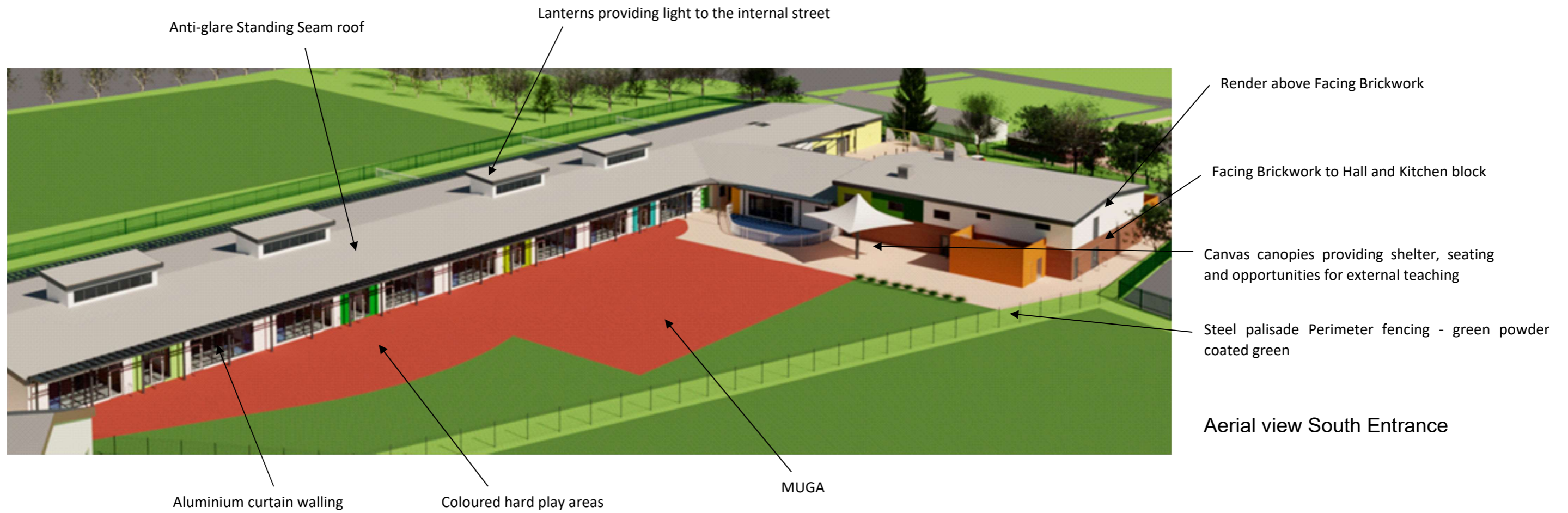
The enclosures outside of the building to house the sprinkler tanks and bin store are clad in timber boarding to give a lighter feel to the large volumes.



*Classrooms to South West Elevations*

Teaching block – Infants classrooms on the South West Elevation. Large curtain walling panels provide ample light to the deep classrooms. The brightness of the render is broken up with the vibrant coloured cladding panels denoting each classroom entrance.

Glazed Canopies/Brise Soliel provides some shading and shelter to the classrooms.





## 6.0 Ecology, Landscaping and Aboricultural Survey

6.1 An Ecology and Biodiversity survey has been undertaken by Wildwood Ecology Ltd and an Ecological Impact Assessment has also been produced. A copy of this report is included as part of the PAC information. All information here is taken directly from the Ecological Impact Assessment Report WWE20321 EclA Rev A.

### 6.2 Summary

Purpose	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Wildwood Ecology was commissioned by Caerphilly County Borough Council (the client) to undertake an Ecological Impact Assessment (EclA) of Cwm Gwyddon, Cwmcarn.</li> <li>The site is the subject of a planning application for a new school on the site.</li> </ul>
Methodology	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>A PRA and PEA was undertaken consisting of a desk study and field survey undertaken in September 2020 following best practice in line with the Bat Surveys for Professional Ecologists: Good Practice Guidelines, 3rd edn (Collins 2016).</li> <li>A reptile survey was carried out at the site in September and October 2020.</li> <li>A bat activity survey was carried out in September 2020 following best practice in line with the Bat Surveys for Professional Ecologists: Good Practice Guidelines, 3rd edn (Collins 2016). A second survey is due to be carried out in September 2021.</li> </ul>
Key issues	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The remaining onsite structure was confirmed to be a roost for common pipistrelle bats with 6 individuals emerging from four different locations towards the southern end of the structure.</li> <li>No reptiles were confirmed to be onsite.</li> <li>Hedgehog were confirmed to be using the site.</li> </ul>
Recommendation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>A European Protected Species licence for bats must be obtained in order for any works (should they be necessary) to the remaining structure onsite to be legally undertaken. This will require the implementation of mitigation (timing of works, maintenance of roosts, supervision of high risk works by an ecologist) and compensation (provision of further roosting features within the building and maintenance of dark flight lines) measures.</li> <li>Further recommendations regarding invasive eradication, sensitive vegetation removal with respect to nesting birds, hedgehog and dormice, and precautionary methodology to prevent pollution impacts to the River Ebbw are advised.</li> <li>We also recommend that areas are retained and enhanced for invertebrates, as part of the site is classed as open mosaic on previously developed land (priority habitat).</li> </ul>
Conclusions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Further survey is required to fully understand the ecological impacts of the proposals, with this report provided as an interim.</li> <li>This ecological report will remain valid for a period of 18 months from the date of the last survey – i.e. until April 2022.</li> </ul>

## 6.3 CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Wildwood Ecology was commissioned by Caerphilly County Borough Council (the client) to undertake an ecological impact assessment (EclA) at Cwm Gwyddon, Cwmcarn. The site is the subject of plans for a new school to be built on the site.

### Designated sites

We recommend that pollution control measures are outlined within a CEMP to ensure that there are no pollution related impacts within the River Ebbw SINC – this will consider working practices close to the river itself, with no refuelling of machinery within 10m of the river corridor, and with spill kits onsite, and appropriately trained staff to use them should the need arise. Dust control may also be required, depending on the scope of the works to the lower car park area.

Other designated sites in the vicinity of the site are sufficiently well separated so that no impacts on their designated features are anticipated as a result of the proposed development.

### Invasive species

An eradication plan for Himalayan balsam and Japanese knotweed is required to be undertaken (and continued in the case of the knotweed), to prevent any spread of these plants outside the site boundaries.



## 6.4 PROTECTED HABITATS AND SPECIES

Recommendations regarding protected species are shown in Table 12.

**Table 12 – Recommendations.**

Species	Recommendations
Bats	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A further bat survey is required in Spring to ascertain the presence of any breeding roosts within the remaining structure.</li> <li>• A lighting plan is required to be in place to show that there will be retained dark corridors around the site, with no lighting above existing levels at these locations (see Appendix III).</li> <li>• Installation of integrated bat roost features upon the new build structure is advised – this is to enhance the site for bats. Should the building remaining be removed, then further compensation and mitigation measures will be necessary, in line with an EPS licence. Additional compensation would also be necessary for the mitigation/compensation features for the loss of the previous roost in 2018.</li> </ul>
Nesting birds	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• If any suitable for nesting birds are to be removed, then any building works (the bat survey in Spring will include a check for nests) / vegetation clearance will take place outside of the bird nesting season. In the event that clearance work has to be undertaken during the nesting season (generally from 1<sup>st</sup> March until 31<sup>st</sup> August, although birds are known to nest outside of these dates in suitable conditions), a breeding bird survey will be required and must be carried out by a suitably qualified person. Any active nests identified should be protected until the young have fledged. Where a Schedule 1 species (as defined in the Wildlife and Countryside Act - <a href="http://www.jncc.gov.uk/page-3614">http://www.jncc.gov.uk/page-3614</a>) is involved, compensation for impacts, e.g., loss of nesting sites, should be devised and implemented.</li> </ul>
Non-volant mammals	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• All excavations will be provided with a means of escape, should they be unable to be covered over at the end of each day.</li> <li>• All chemicals, fuels and materials will be safely stored away from animal access.</li> <li>• Any vegetation removal will be done so cautiously, in a staged manner to prevent the killing or injury of hedgehogs – the staged manner means that full vigilance of the cutting arc can be maintained. Where denser layers are encountered, these will be searched by hand (fingertip search) by an ecologist.</li> <li>• Gaps will be retained in boundary fencing to allow hedgehogs to cross the site.</li> </ul>
Dormice	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A precautionary removal of the boundary vegetation to the north of the site around the entrance is recommended – this will include a pre-commencement check and toolbox talk by an ecologist (dormouse licenced). Should any evidence of dormouse be found onsite, then works will immediately cease and an NRW licence sought.</li> <li>• The loss of any suitable habitat may be compensated by new planting (or ideally transplantation of the existing to new locations).</li> <li>• Any new planting will be native species of local provenance.</li> </ul>
Invertebrates	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Should the area to the east of the site be removed or managed, further planting will be required to support invertebrates. Large scrapes can be created with low nutrient soil used (if being brought onsite – or translocating onsite material of low nutrients to these areas) and plug planted with species to include: field scabious, common bird's foot trefoil, ragwort, great mullein, evening primrose, red clover, kidney vetch, agrimony, common knapweed and gorse.</li> <li>• Additional wildflower areas are recommended with all grassland margins allowed to become tussocky (reduced management/mowing with only scrub encroachment management carried out) – this will support flowering grasses to support invertebrates year-round.</li> </ul>
Reptiles	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• No further survey is required or action in relation to this species group.</li> </ul>

## 6.5 OVERALL CONCLUSIONS

*Further survey is required to understand the use of the site by bats. This report will be updated once the survey is completed, with full recommendations for enhancement also.*

This survey will be undertaken and submitted as part of the formal Planning Application.

### 6.5 Landscaping

The outline design for hard and soft landscaping is included on drawings 4661 P104 and P105 which are included as part of the PAC information.

Detailed soft landscape proposals drawings have been prepared by our Landscape Consultants - Tirlun Design Associates (TDA). Please refer to drawing no. TDA.2607.01 Detailed Soft Landscaping Proposals and drawing no. TDA.2607.02. The proposals also include a Landscape Specification and Management Plan.

Within the proposals, hard and soft landscaping areas are clearing marked. The trees around the site will be retained as far possible, except for those that have to be removed to create the new north entrance, but these will be offset with new areas of trees planted on the approach to the building from the south in the Ecology Area and along the pathway to the south, where feasible.

Included in the proposals are details of seating, play equipment, and sheltered features. To the South of the site the areas are Ecology areas, which also act as rainwater gardens, a meadow area and the Dry Basin. Just south of the building itself will be an outdoor teaching area with covered gazebo and mounded area for storytelling.

## 7.0 Community Safety

7.1 The safety of pupils, staff, visitors to the site and the surrounding community is a fundamental consideration for the LEA in the design, layout, and operation of education facilities.

Consultation will be undertaken with the Gwent Police Designing Out Crimes Officer (DOCO) and recommendations received will be implemented in the design. It is also intended that the building will be designed in accordance with the principals of Secured by Design (SBD) in Schools guidance. This aims to reduce crime in the built environment and improve safety standards.

The DOCO usually provide recommendations in respect of some of the areas below. These will be refined and added to as the design detail is developed.

- Site enclosure height
- Out of hours vehicular control
- Defensive planting and Landscaping considerations
- Safe route, drop off and collection points
- Signage
- Community Access
- Motorcycling & bicycle parking
- Troublesome meeting places

Within the design the following considerations have been made:

7.2 The new school is situated within the boundary of the previous school site and thus some high palisade fencing is in place to the West and North of the site and also at the South boundary along the line of the existing vehicular access road and at the lower car park level. In addition to this there will be localised steel welded mesh security fencing at a height of 2.1M around the building. Inside this boundary will be lower height railings of 900mm around the play areas.

7.3 Parent drop-off will be situated outside the North boundary, with a small number of onsite staff and accessible parking on site. This prevents primary school traffic from adding to the congestion at the South with the main staff parking and bus bays.

Deliveries will also access through the new North entrance to the delivery space outside the school hall and kitchen.

Motor-cycle parking will be accommodated within the North car park.

Additional signage noting site rules and speed limits (5mph) will be used throughout the site.

7.4 Staff parking inside the boundary at the North entrance, will be made available for 'out of hours' community parking.

7.5 Signage: the building and outside facilities will be clearly signposted.

7.6 Community Access: The Hall and main Foyer will be open and accessible without opening the main building. The main entrance lobby is secure from the rest of the building with access control on the inner doors.

7.7 Troublesome meeting spaces have been designed out where possible. The outside social areas are well overlooked by the school classrooms and activities.

In addition to this the following will be included:

- 7.8 Windows and doors will be to Secured by Design standards.
- 7.9 A 'property safety' standard sprinkler system will be installed to BS EN 12845.
- 7.10 A centrally monitored CCTV and intruder alarm system will be installed.
- 7.11 A category L2 fire alarm system will be installed. The system will include a main fire alarm panel, smoke detectors, sounders and beacons in all rooms and integral emergency lighting as part2of the overall lighting design.
- 7.14 The external lighting strategy will be designed in compliance with Table 1 (and its accompanying notes) of the ILE Guidance notes for the reduction of obtrusive light, 2005.

## 8.0 Environmental Sustainability

### 8.1 Sustainability

Caerphilly County Borough Council has a commitment to sustainability and the environment. The following measures are proposed to be incorporated into the design of the scheme:

- The scheme shall achieve a BREEAM 'Excellent' rating.
- The scheme shall achieve an EPC rating of A.
- Site surface water drainage will be limited to site run-off rates agreed with CCBC Drainage Section.
- PV panel array applied to roof -South West facing.
- Natural ventilation.
- A or A+ rated materials in accordance with BRE Green Guide to Specification.

### 8.2 Waste

Caerphilly CBC will provide collection for waste and recycling collection from the new site. A new store area with separate recycled and non-recycling waste store is provided in a separate enclosure located away from the side of the kitchen, sized appropriately to serve the new school.

### 8.3 Noise

An Acoustic Report has been prepared for the proposed school in line with Building Bulletin 93: *acoustic design of schools - performance standards*. The summary is as follows:

Noise surveys have been carried out across the site. Road traffic is indicated to control the existing ambient noise climate during the daytime period.

The assessment concludes that a natural ventilation strategy is feasible for general teaching areas at the proposed development; however, for more acoustically critical spaces such as SEN teaching spaces etc. a natural ventilation strategy is feasible providing these critical rooms are located away from the easterly façade of the school building – not facing the A467 road.

Initial advice on external building fabric elements is included; however, a detailed review should be undertaken by a Suitably Qualified Acoustician (SQA) at the detailed design stage.

Atmospheric plant noise limits have been set in accordance with BREEAM PoI 05 based on measured background sound levels. These limits shall be confirmed acceptable with the Local Planning Authority/Environmental Health Officer prior to any orders being placed.

### 8.4 Light

With regards to light pollution, proposals will be submitted to the Local Planning Authority for consideration. The external lighting strategy will be designed in compliance with Table 1 (and its accompanying notes) of the ILE Guidance notes for the reduction of obtrusive light, 2005.

### 8.5 Air Quality

Other than for general heating and ventilation requirements, no fumes will be generated by any processes within the building.

## 8.6 Drainage

Below is a pre application statement from the Civil Engineers Curtins.

## 8.7 Pre-App Drainage Statement

### Existing Drainage

#### Public Sewers

DCWW Asset Records show that there are no public sewers within the proposed redevelopment area. There are however two large diameter combined sewers (975mm & 825mm diameter) combined sewers running under the grass sport pitch to the west. The join and become 1350mm diameter adjacent to the south west corner of the site, discharging in a southerly direction. The mapping suggests there is an overflow outfall into the river Ebbw at this point. A section of foul sewer is also shown serving the cul-de-sac of houses south of the site area although it is unclear where these discharge to.

These sewers are sufficiently distant from the proposed new building for there to be no interference with DCWW's easement rights.

#### Private Drainage

The proposed building is located on the site of former playing fields associated with the now demolished Cwmcarn High School. A CCTV survey of the private drainage around the former school buildings has been undertaken. This shows the site to be served by separate surface and foul water networks. These both head towards the south west corner of the site where they are likely to discharge into the river and combined sewer respectively.

The proposed location of the new building is shown to be clear of any existing drains.

## 8.8 Flood Zones

The development lies 30m – 100m away from the River Ebbw. NRW's online Flood Risk Assessment Wales Map shows the proposed site development boundary to be crossed by the flood extent associated with the River Ebbw.

The NRW mapping in figure 1 identifies Low and Medium Risk extents encroaching on an area of existing car park that is to be retained for re-use serving the new school. This area is in the lowest part of the site and based on the topo survey levels the highest flood water level would be around 77.4m AOD. The proposed new building is located on a plateau and will have a finish floor level of circa 80.1m AOD. Being some 3m higher than the extreme flood level the building is not at flood risk even accounting for climate change impacts. Mitigations will however need to be considered for the risks associated with the occasional flooding of the car park.

Low Risk extents are also shown over the area where the former buildings were located. This is proposed to become a car/bus drop-off zone. Mitigations will need to be considered for the flooding risk associated with the occasional flooding of this area too.

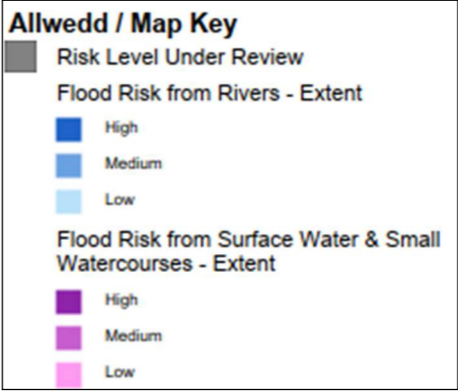


Figure 1 – Extract of Flood Mapping (note - this map shows the previous school prior to demolition)

## 8.9 Proposed Surface Water Drainage

Current best practice and the Regulatory requirements direct that new surface water drainage should discharge in accordance with the drainage hierarchy of:

1. Infiltration to the ground
2. Discharge to a water course
3. Discharge into a surface water sewer
4. Discharge into a combined sewer.

Soakaway testing at the site was undertaken as part of the Phase 2 Ground Investigation by White Young Green in June 2019. This reported very variable ground conditions and thus very variable infiltration rates were obtained from the two test locations. Based on these results it is considered that utilising infiltration as the primary means of disposal will not be viable, although this will be subject to review following further insitu testing at locations appropriate to the developing scheme.

The site is located along side the River Ebbw and the survey of the drainage serving the previous school buildings had a surface water network that discharges in the direction of this watercourse. Thus future discharge to a watercourse is viable for the proposed development. The existing drainage infrastructure will be targeted for re-use, subject to confirmation by further investigation that the surface water system does actually discharge into the River Ebbw and not into the public sewer system that has to be crossed in order to reach it.

## 8.10 Sustainable Drainage Systems

To comply with Planning and SAB requirements, surface water discharge from the site will need to be restricted to greenfield runoff, to mitigate any downstream flood risk. As such, the surface water will be attenuated on site for the 1 in 100 + 30% climate change event.

An outline drainage strategy for the site has been drawn up and identifies that the surface water run off from the proposed building is to be conveyed from the rain water pipes into permeable paving located within the hard standings using diffuser boxes. This then discharges into swales located along side the boundary of the site, these then convey the water to an attenuation basin which is located within the Ecology area. The discharge from the basin is to be restricted to greenfield run-off and will connect into the existing on site drain which is assumed to discharge into the existing watercourse.

The existing car park is to be retained as existing with only new surface course and white lining therefore the assumption is that the existing drainage will be retained.

The SAB process require a number of factors to be considered within the development, these include:

- Green Blue Roof
- Water Quality
- Rainwater re-use
- Biodiversity and Amenity

### Green/Blue Roof:

The roof structure of the proposed building will be a dual pitched single span of some 20m and is thus suited to being of lightweight construction. Adoption of a green/blue roof would thus be unsuitable as the increase in dead loading would significantly increase the tonnage of steel required.

### Water Quality:

Water quality benefits will be achieved through the use of the SuDS Management Train.

### Rainwater Re-Use:

The end use of the building as a primary school does not suit the use of rainwater recycling on a large scale, particularly within the building itself. Thus rainwater re-use will be limited to that associated with landscaping maintenance.



### Biodiversity / Amenity

The proposed drainage strategy includes SuDS features that will add to the biodiversity and amenity of the site. These along with the inclusion of the outdoor teaching area and ecology area means that the proposed development is in compliance with the SAB guidance.

### Foul Drainage

The new building will include toilet blocks, sinks in classrooms and a kitchen. The latter is of sufficient size to require the use of a grease interceptor to restrict the discharge of FOG (fats, oil & grease) into the public sewer system. The number and distribution of foul appliances warrants the creation of a buried services zone around the building perimeter where SuDS features will generally be excluded.

Also included in this application are a full drainage statement from Curtins, together with and Indicative SuDS strategy drawings 077517 – CUR – XX – DR- C – 92005/6.

## 8.11 Ground Conditions

A ground investigation report has been commissioned and produced by WYG Environment Planning Transport Limited and has been submitted in support of this application.

A summary of this report is as follows:

### **Geotechnical**

Shallow foundations formed on the shallow fine grained and coarse-grained alluvial deposits may be designed to an allowable net bearing pressure of 150kPa for foundations no wider than 0.7m.

If greater loads are required a higher bearing capacity may be achieved with foundations placed solely within coarse grained material, however this would be subject to a more detailed assessment of settlement, primarily within the underlying clay and silt.

Given the instability of the alluvial soils, high groundwater, and the compressibility of the clay and silt, piled foundations may be considered a more favourable option. Floor slabs may be ground bearing.

### **Ground Contamination**

Only minimal extents of Made Ground were recorded across the site, with no contamination exceedances considered to pose a risk to the primary school development.

Historical mapping indicates the potential presence of a refuse heaps located on southern extent of the site. Investigation locations within this area did not indicate the presence of potential contamination and the current development proposals do not extend onto this part of the site.

Similarly, the general Made Ground is considered to pose a Low Risk to the wider environment (surface waters and groundwater), with a higher level of risk (Moderate to low) assigned to the possible former refuse heaps. A new hardstanding carpark is proposed within this area and it is recommended a watching brief be in place during excavations.

### **Asbestos**

Asbestos samples have been obtained from the general made ground on site and in the footprint of the former school buildings.

Only one sample from the general Made Ground identified the presence of asbestos containing materials and quantification testing recorded concentrations below the laboratory limit of detection. It is also noted that this sample was obtained from outside the current proposed development area and as such, additional risk management plans are not considered necessary. It should be noted that the current development proposals do not extend into this area of the site and an Asbestos Management Plan is not considered necessary to support the current proposed development.

### **Ground Gas**

Ground gas monitoring from six visits has shown low concentrations of carbon dioxide and methane coupled with low flow rates. Monitoring was undertaken during periods of low, falling, and steady atmospheric pressures and monitoring data is therefore considered to have been undertaken during worst case conditions.

The site is therefore classified as Characteristic Situation 1 whereby gas protection measures are not considered necessary in new developments. Radon protection measures are not considered necessary.

### **Recommendations**

Based on the findings of the site investigation, the following recommendations are presented outlining the requirements for further ground investigation and general recommendations to support the current proposed development:

- Testing and classification of any excess soils to inform reuse or disposal.
- Groundworkers should be informed of the nature of the historical developments on the site including the asbestos removal process and identification of a limited extent of asbestos fibres within two samples on the site. Works should be undertaken following a watching brief to identify any asbestos containing materials and outline the procedures to assess and manage any impacted soils.
- Preparation of a geotechnical design report to fully assess the potential for settlement once required loads and foundation type has been confirmed.

### **8.12 Construction Waste**

As part of the project requirements the Contractor will be required to construct the building to ensure that a minimum of 15% of total material used in construction, by value, derives from reused and recycled content. The Contractor will use the WRAP Net Waste Tool ([www.wrap.org.uk/nwtool](http://www.wrap.org.uk/nwtool)) to quantify this, in accordance with Welsh Assembly Government funding requirements, and submit a final report verifying the final achieved recycled percentage.

## 9.0 Movement to, from and within the development

9.1 A Traffic Statement (TS) is included as part of the PAC information and summarised below:

### Summary

This Transport Statement has been prepared by RPS to support an application for the proposed relocation and expansion of Ysgol Gymraeg Cwm Gwyddon, a Primary School located in Abercarn, Newport.

YG Cwm Gwyddon is located on Gwyddon Road, Abercarn, Newport. The School is located approximately 10 miles north of the centre of Newport. The existing Site has 234 students and 25 staff. The new school is to be located at the vacant site of the Cwmcarn High School, to the west of the A467 in Cwmcarn. The relocation and expansion will lead to the ability to accommodate a total of approximately 574 students and 50 staff.

The proposed school is within easy access of local footways, cycleway and bus stops. Most students travel to the school via coach, due to the large catchment of the school.

The site provides two accesses, the southern access will provide an access point for buses and staff and includes 71 car parking spaces of which 54 are in the lower south car park and 17 spaces within the site, four of which are accessible spaces. There is also a bus bay at the south of the site. The northern access will provide an access point for parents drop off and pick up where there are 61 car parking spaces available. Cycle parking will be provided in the line with the CCBC standards.

It is proposed that the increase in staff and students can be accommodated on the site. There is a reduction in staff and student numbers in comparison to the previous Cwmcarn High School.

### Conclusion

It is concluded that the proposed redevelopment will have no detrimental impact on the local highway network as the proposal includes for fewer staff and students than the previous school in this location. The impact is therefore considered not to be severe.

Accessibility to the School by all modes is good, with sufficient staff car parking, drop-off / pick-up collection areas, and facilities for cyclists and pedestrians.

The School will prepare a Travel Plan prior to occupation which will promote Active Travel which seeks to increase the number of people travelling on foot and by cycle, as well as public transport.

Overall, it is concluded that the proposal accords with both central and local government transport planning policy providing safe and suitable access and provides for sustainable travel whilst not impacting on the local road network. As such there are no transport related reasons why the proposed Schools relocation and expansion should not be permitted

9.2 The safe and efficient movement of vehicles within the site has been a considered factor during the design process in defining the site layout and parking areas.

9.3 Pedestrian routes into the site have been carefully considered to ensure safe routes are created to the building.

- Approaching from the South East, pedestrians will be directed via a new pathway, through a pedestrian gate and along the existing safe route path, leading directly to the school. A new path will be included to connect the bus bay area to the new access path to the school.
- Approaching from the North East, pedestrians will come via the existing footpath leading from the main A467. This path will be extended to lead directly to the school site.

9.4 Vehicular movements to and from site will be via the existing highway network A467. There will be two access points the existing one which served the previous school, via Chapel Farm Terrace and from the North via the existing public car park which will lead to the new North entrance. Provision for 16 No. staff spaces and 4 no, accessible parking bays will be accessed via this new North Entrance point. This will also provide access for delivery and emergency vehicles.

9.5 The bus parking bay will be located at the South of the site off the existing access road via Chapel Farm Terrace and will be for occasional bus parking such as for school trips.

9.6 Staff parking and visitors parking will be located to the South in the existing lower car park, again accessed off the existing access road via Chapel Farm Terrace. Again from here, they will be directed to the new pathway leading to the South East Entrance.

9.7 Appropriate signage will be provided to these areas. Advice has been sought from the Authority's Highways Department and any further recommendations have been accommodated.

## **10.0 Accessibility**

- 10.1 A fundamental requirement of the C21st Schools Programme is that facilities are made fully accessible for all users. External areas are required to conform to accessibility standards in terms of ramps, paths, and levels. Internal areas similarly must meet building control regulations in this respect. The proposed development will ensure equality of access regardless of physical or mental impairment
- 10.2 Consultation will be undertaken with the Authority's Access Group. As part of the Authority's Access protocol, meetings with the Access Group will continue throughout the duration of the project to ensure matters are appropriately addressed.

## Appendix A

### Drawings:

Drawings submitted are:

4661 P100 Site Location Plan  
4661 P101 Existing Site Plan  
4661 P102 Topographical Survey  
4661 P103 Proposed Site Layout  
4661 P104 Proposed Ground Floor in Context  
4661 P105 Proposed Ground Floor Plan Only  
4661 P106 Proposed Elevations  
4661 P107 Proposed Typical Sections  
4661 P108 Proposed Roof Plan  
4661 P109 Proposed Visualisations

### Landscape Proposals by TDA

TDA .2607.01 Detailed Soft Landscaping

TDA .2607.02 Details and Images

### Outline SuDS Proposals by Curtins

077517 – CUR – XX – DR - C – 92005 – Proposed Drainage Strategy Sheet 1

077517 – CUR – XX – DR – C – 92006- Proposed Drainage Strategy Sheet 2