

**Application Number:** DM/2020/00238

**Proposal:** 1 no. classroom extension (103 sq.m) to existing school and an extension (67.9 sq. m) to an existing stand-alone nursery. There will be no change of use

**Address:** Ysgol Y Ffin Primary School, Sandy Lane, Caldicot, NP26 4NQ

**Applicant:** Mr Mark Davies

**Plans:** All Proposed Plans 02-01 - b, All Proposed Plans 02-02A - , Floor Plans - Proposed 02-03 - , Site Sections 03-01 - , Bat Survey - , Location Plan -

## **RECOMMENDATION: APPROVE**

Case Officer: Mrs Helen Hinton

Date Valid: 11.06.2020

**This application is presented to Planning Committee as the application involves the extension and alteration of a school run by the Council**

### **1.0 APPLICATION DETAILS**

#### 1.1 Site Description

The application site comprises the buildings and grounds of primary school, Ysgol Y Ffin and its associated nursery building Clych Meithrin Y Ffin. The site as a whole has an area of 0.75 hectares and is positioned within the north-west part of Caldicot.

The primary school building is at the north-eastern end of the site fronting Sandy Lane to the north-east from which pedestrian and vehicular access is gained. An area of parking for buses is provided within the grounds, to the north-east. A staff parking area is provided to the south-west. The boundaries of the site are defined by a combination of walls, metal fencing and close boarded timber fences. The main school building is predominantly single storey in height finished externally with pre-fabricated window walls and a flat roof. A tarmac playground area adjoins the south-western elevation of the building.

The nursery building is positioned to the south-west of the main school. Externally the building is finished with yellow coloured brick and a concrete tiled roof. The playing field is located to the south-west of the school and nursery buildings.

The school site as whole is located within the built up area of Caldicot. The playing field to the south-west is designated as an area of amenity importance in the LDP.

#### 1.2 Proposal Description

Schedule 2, Part 32 of the Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) Order 1995 (as amended), grants schools permitted development rights (i.e. works that can be undertaken without first applying for planning permission) for;

"The erection on the site of any school, college, university or hospital of any building required for use as part of, or for a purpose incidental to the use of, the school, college, university or hospital as such, as the case may be."

Subject to a number of restrictions.

In this instance it has been determined that the buildings and structure proposed require planning permission as:

- (c) The cumulative total cubic content of buildings erected on a particular site (other than the original school, college, university or hospital buildings) would exceed 250 cubic metres; and
- (d) Part of a building erected would be within 20 metres of the boundary of the site.

The proposed school extension would adjoin the north-western (side) elevation of the building and would be developed to the north-west of the main hall and to the north-east of an existing classroom, on the site of a small enclosed playground and two parking spaces. The development would measure at its greatest 9.3m wide, 12.2m deep with a lean to roof with a maximum height of 5.2m falling to 3.45m. Although the existing building is predominantly finished externally with pre-fabricated panels/ window walls and a flat roof, in the interests of sustainability the proposed extension would be constructed from cavity blockwork finished with a through coloured render of a colour to be agreed. The roof would be finished with Garland felt. A SAPA Monarch dual frame window wall would be provided in the north-eastern (front) and north-western (side) elevation of match those already used in the school. A small yard enclosed by 1.8m high bow top railings would be provided to the north-east (front) of the development. The extension would be used to provide an additional classroom and storage facilities.

Although the windows in the north-western elevation of the hall would be retained these would overlook a new fire escape path between the extension and the existing building. A number of new light tubes are therefore proposed for the main hall to compensate for the decreased light.

The proposed nursery building extension would adjoin the north-western (side) elevation and would measure 6.3m wide, 10.8m deep with a pitched cross gable roof with a maximum height of 5.3m falling to 2.2m at eaves level. Externally the development would be finished with brick facing, concrete roof tiles and white polyester powder coated aluminium framed windows. Rooflights would be provided in the north-eastern (front) roof plane. A free standing lean-to sun canopy would be provide to the front of the extension over an enclosed yard. The plans detail that the existing windows would be replaced/ upgraded to match those proposed in the extension. The development would be used to provide additional play space, bathroom and kitchen facilities.

## **2.0 RELEVANT PLANNING HISTORY (if any)**

<b>Reference Number</b>	<b>Description</b>	<b>Decision</b>	<b>Decision Date</b>
DC/1977/00839	Aged Persons Day Luncheon Centre APP_TYP 01 = Full DEV_TYP 01 = New Development MAP_REF = 348050188450	Approved	12.10.1977
DC/2008/01108	External lighting to existing car parks	Approved	05.12.2008
DC/2008/00445	Removal of demountables, space to be used for new additional parking and altered pedestrian access	Approved	04.07.2008

## **3.0 LOCAL DEVELOPMENT PLAN POLICIES**

### **Strategic Policies**

- S5 LDP Community and Recreation Facilities
- S12 LDP Efficient Resource Use and Flood Risk
- S13 LDP Landscape, Green Infrastructure and the Natural Environment
- S16 LDP Transport
- S17 LDP Place Making and Design

## **Development Management Policies**

CRF3 LDP Safeguarding Existing Recreational Facilities and Public Open Space

SD2 LDP Sustainable Construction and Energy Efficiency

SD4 LDP Sustainable Drainage

GI1 LDP Green Infrastructure

NE1 LDP Nature Conservation and Development

EP1 LDP Amenity and Environmental Protection

MV1 LDP Proposed Developments and Highway Considerations

DES1 LDP General Design Considerations

DES2 LDP Areas of Amenity Importance

## **4.0 NATIONAL PLANNING POLICY**

### **Planning Policy Wales (PPW) Edition 10**

The primary objective of PPW is to ensure that the planning system contributes towards the delivery of sustainable development and improves the social, economic, environmental and cultural well-being as required by the Planning (Wales) Act 2015, the Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015 and other key legislation. A well-functioning planning system is fundamental for sustainable development and achieving sustainable places.

The planning system should create sustainable places which are attractive, sociable, accessible, active, secure, welcoming, healthy and friendly. Development proposals should create the conditions to bring people together, making them want to live, work and play in areas with a sense of place and well-being, creating prosperity for all.

## **5.0 REPRESENTATIONS**

### **5.1 Consultation Replies**

**Caldicot Town Council** - Recommend approval

**MCC Ecology and Biodiversity** - Raise no objection subject to the submission of detailed information with regards to the ecological mitigation proposed.

SEWBReC Search Results - No significant ecological record identified.

### **5.2 Neighbour Notification**

The application has been advertised by direct neighbour notification and the erection of a site notice. No objections or representations have been received.

### **5.3 Local Member Representations**

Cllr A. Easson was notified of the application on the 11 June 2020. Cllr Easson has advised he is in support of the proposal but has registered a personal non-prejudicial interest due to his position as a Local Authority Governor at the School.

## **6.0 EVALUATION**

### **6.1 Strategic & Spatial Choices**

#### **6.1.1 Principle of Development**

The application seeks full planning to provide two extensions, one to the main building of Ysgol Y Ffin and one to the Clych Meithrin Y Ffin building. Given the existing and established use of the

site and buildings, the principle of developing extensions to facilitate and enhance the school environment is considered acceptable.

### 6.1.2 Good Design/ Place making

Although the extension to the school building would be visible from the highway to the north-east, it is considered that the development would be of a size and scale subordinate and subservient to the main building. Although the construction, roof design and external finish would vary relative to the main building, the materials and design are considered acceptable in the interests of sustainability and longevity of the structure. It is considered that the lean-to roof indicated clearly and honestly defines the extension but would remain of a scale in keeping with the main building with the highest point being akin to the height of the adjacent roof.

Although concerns were initially raised with regards to the loss of light to the main hall and the implications this would have on the feel and use of the space, this has been compensated for by the maintenance of a gap between the existing building and extension, the provision of additional roof lights and the maintenance of an area of unobstructed glazing in the south-eastern elevation of the existing building.

Although the extension to the nursery building would appear substantial, the design has been driven by the architecture and scale of the existing building, the desire to prevent encroachment on designated play spaces and a mature tree and the need to position the development away from neighbouring dwellings.

Subject to a condition securing details and samples of the external materials to be used, the application is considered compliant with policies S17 and DES 1 of the LDP.

### 6.1.3 Impact on Amenity/ Promoting Healthier Places

The playground and school playing field, within which the nursery building is located, is allocated as an area of amenity importance (LDP Policy DES2). Although the works proposed would result in the loss of a very small section of this space, it is considered that the role of the designation as a venue for formal and informal sport or general recreation would not be adversely compromised by the developments proposed.

As a result of its positioning within an established residential area, the site is enclosed on all sides by residential properties. However being mindful of the single storey height of the works in conjunction with their design, positioning, existing boundary treatments and the intervening distances maintained, it is considered that the developments proposed would not have a detrimental impact on the residential amenity of those living closest to the site.

The application is therefore considered compliant with policies S13, S17, EP1, DES1 and DES2 of the LDP.

### 6.1.4 The Welsh Language

The School and nursery are Welsh medium education providers. It is therefore considered that the developments proposed to enhance classroom space and facilities would have a beneficial impact on Welsh language development in the County as a whole.

## **6.2 Active and Social Places**

### 6.2.1 Transport / Housing - sustainable transport issues (Sustainable Transport Hierarchy)

This site is well established and located within the residential area of Caldicot. The site is accessible by foot and public transport.

### 6.2.2 Access / Highway Safety

Vehicular and pedestrian access to the school and nursery is gained from Sandy Lane. Whilst the development of the extension would remove two existing parking spaces, a car park for staff capable of accommodating at least 20 vehicles is located within the south-western part of the site. The bus bays within the grounds to the north of the school extension would not be affected by the proposal.

Given the existing level of provision on site and the position of the proposed development, it is considered that the works would not have detrimental impact on the highway safety and free flow of traffic and is compliant with policies S16 and MV1 of the LDP.

### 6.2.3 Community Facilities

The developments would provide enhanced classroom, storage and play space of a design, size and scale in keeping with and proportionate to the existing buildings and are considered compliant with the LDP policies S5 and CRF3.

### 6.2.4 Recreational Spaces

Although the nursery building extension would result in the loss of small section of land designated as an area of amenity importance, it is considered that a sufficient and appropriate area of playing field would be maintained for formal and informal sport or general recreation and the development would not have an adverse impact on the use of the land and is compliant with policies S17 and DES2 of the LDP.

## **6.3 Productive and Enterprising Places**

### 6.3.1 Transportation Infrastructure

In conjunction with the wider site, the developments would be accessed from Sandy Lane, a publically adopted but unclassified highway, to the north-east, making use of an existing 5m wide vehicular entrance, pedestrian accesses, and crossings demarcated by tactile paving and raised platforms with no alteration to the existing provision proposed. It is therefore considered that the proposals would not have a detrimental impact on local transportation infrastructure and is compliant with policy S16 of the LDP.

### 6.3.2 Energy

The developments are likely to be served by existing mains supply. Although no renewable energy systems are indicated on the proposed plans they could be installed under Part 43 (installation of non-domestic microgeneration equipment) permitted development rights. Given the position of the site outside of and away from any Conservation Area or Historical designations, it is considered unreasonable to propose the removal of such allowances.

## **6.4 Distinctive & Natural Places**

### 6.4.1 Landscape/ Visual Impact

Given the scale, position and design of the developments proposed relative to the existing buildings and the distances that would be maintained between the extensions and the boundaries of the site, it is considered that the works would not have any adverse impact on the street scene or wider landscape, and are compliant with policies S13, S17, EP1 and DES1 of the LDP.

### 6.4.2 Green Infrastructure and Biodiversity

The development of the nursery building would result in the loss of 3 immature trees adjacent to the south-eastern boundary of the car park. Although this loss is regrettable the trees could be compensated for the in wider site, details of which can be sought and secured by condition.

Following consideration of the bat report, the Councils Ecology and Biodiversity Officer has confirmed that they are satisfied with the report and its recommendation. However the enhancement information is not detailed enough to be enforceable and is only an initial indicator. It is therefore requested that details of biodiversity enhancements (to include specification, location, positioning and numbers of bat/bird boxes to be installed) be submitted for consideration. Whilst this information has been requested, it could also be secured by condition if not received prior to Committee consideration.

Subject to the imposition of conditions requiring detailed information with regards to Biodiversity and Ecological mitigation and enhancement and green infrastructure compensation the application is considered compliant with policies S13 and NE1 of the LDP.

#### 6.4.3 Water (including foul drainage / SuDS), Air, Soundscape & Light

As of the 7th January 2019, all construction works with drainage implications, of 100m<sup>2</sup> or more are required to have Sustainable Drainage Systems (SuDS) to manage on-site surface water, designed and constructed in accordance with the Welsh Government Standards for Sustainable Drainage. The agent has been made aware of this requirement and will be seeking advice from the SuDS Approving Body (SAB) independently of the planning application.

### **6.5 Response to the Representations of Third Parties and/or Community/Town Council**

Following consultation the Community Council have recommended the application be approved.

Following direct neighbour notification and the erection of a site notice, no public objections or representations have been received.

### **6.6 Well-Being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015**

The duty to improve the economic, social, environmental and cultural well-being of Wales has been considered, in accordance with the sustainable development principle, under section 3 of the Well-Being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015 (the WBFG Act). In reaching this recommendation, the ways of working set out at section 5 of the WBFG Act have been taken into account and it is considered that this recommendation is in accordance with the sustainable development principle through its contribution towards one or more of the Welsh Ministers' well-being objectives set out in section 8 of the WBFG Act.

### **6.7 Conclusion**

It is considered that the extensions proposed would be of a form, scale and design appropriate for the site and the development would not have an adverse impact on the character and appearance of the area, the residential amenity of those living closest to the site or the highway safety and free flow of traffic. Subject to the imposition of conditions to secure details with regards to ecological mitigation and external finishes the application is considered compliant with the policies of the Monmouthshire County Council Local Development Plan and is recommended for approval subject to conditions.

## **7.0 RECOMMENDATION: APPROVE**

### **Conditions:**

- 1 This development shall be begun within 5 years from the date of this permission.

REASON: To comply with Section 91 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990.

2 The development shall be carried out in accordance with the list of approved plans set out in the table below.

REASON: To ensure the development is carried out in accordance with the approved drawings, for the avoidance of doubt.

3 Prior to installation, details of the proposed external finishes shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The development shall be carried out in accordance with those agreed finishes which shall remain in situ in perpetuity unless otherwise approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. Samples of the materials to be used shall be presented on site for the agreement of the Local Planning Authority and those approved shall be retained on site for the duration of the construction works.

REASON: To ensure a satisfactory form of development takes place and to ensure compliance with LDP Policy DES1.

4 Prior to commencement of any construction works a detailed plan of proposed biodiversity enhancement illustrating "net benefit features" including location, positioning and specification and green infrastructure compensation shall be submitted to the Local Planning Authority for written approval. The compensation features shall be provided before the development, hereby approved, is brought into use and maintained as such in perpetuity.

REASON: To provide biodiversity net benefit and ensure compliance with PPW 10, the Environment (Wales) Act 2016 and LDP policies S13, NE1 and GI1.