

Temporary Classroom Development Supporting Statement.



Neath Port Talbot Council
July 2019

Need for Development

The Council took the difficult decision on the 11th July 2019 to bring forward the summer school holidays for staff and pupils at Godre'r Graig Primary School. The decision was made following receipt of a report from geological experts which identified a risk to the school's playground from a potential landslide

This early information was from our specialist geotechnical advisers and our main focus was the hazard linked directly with the quarry spoil above the school; it was emphasised that the school was closed as a precautionary measure whilst further detailed investigations were undertaken.

The report provided by Earth Science Partnership (ESP), the experts commissioned by Neath Port Talbot Council, identified a medium level risk from a quarry spoil tip near the school which is affected by ground water. ESP's investigation found that if the stream became blocked as the result of a severe weather event, there is a possibility that water levels and pressures in the tip could induce material to flow downhill.

The report specifically referred to the school and its grounds only and did not currently refer to the wider area. The Council are, however, mindful of concerns from local residents and as such, have asked ESP to carry out further detailed investigations and ground modelling to establish if there is any potential impact upon the area surrounding the school.

The draft report is available to view on the Council's website via the following link; www.npt.gov.uk/godrergrraig.

The Council has also set up a dedicated email address as follows:
Email: godrergrraig@npt.gov.uk

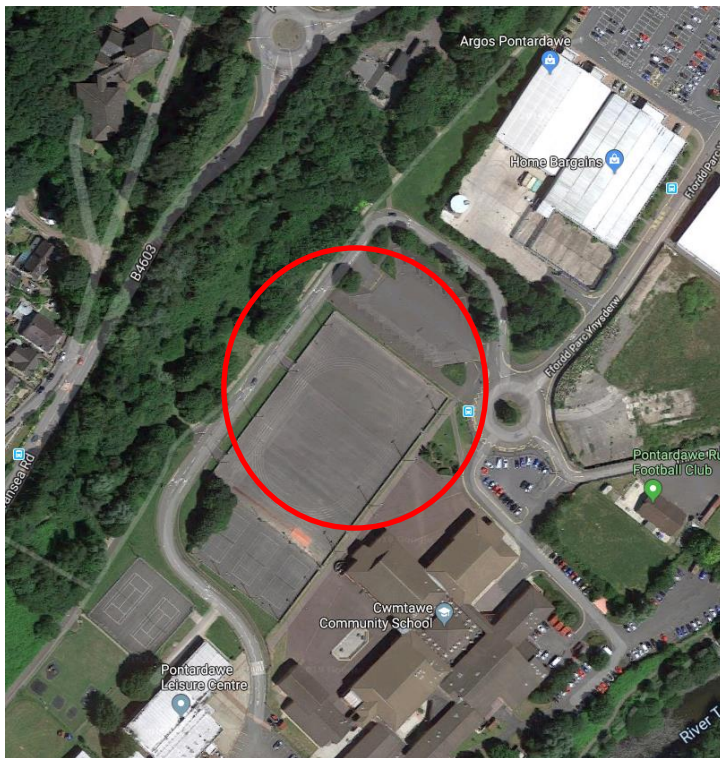
Following on from this, the Education Department have notified staff and parents that a temporary provision will be made available from September 2019, while these further investigations are carried out.

This application seeks permission for that temporary provision.

Site Selection

A number of sites were considered for the proposed development, and the criteria for selection included proximity to the existing school site, linkages to services and facilities, and importantly expediency and speed of delivery. The aim is to provide a suitable operational facility for the start of school term in September 2019.

The option chosen, the subject of this application was both available for immediate use, capable of accommodating the development at short notice, and suitable in terms of highway and pedestrian access, ensuring the pupils and staff can be accommodated safely, with minimal disruption. The site also can benefit from linkages with the existing school at this site, such as catering/ dining, and outdoor facilities.

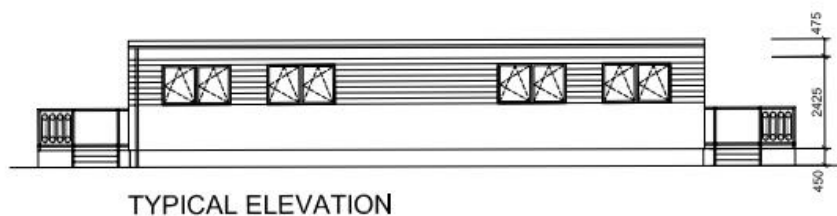
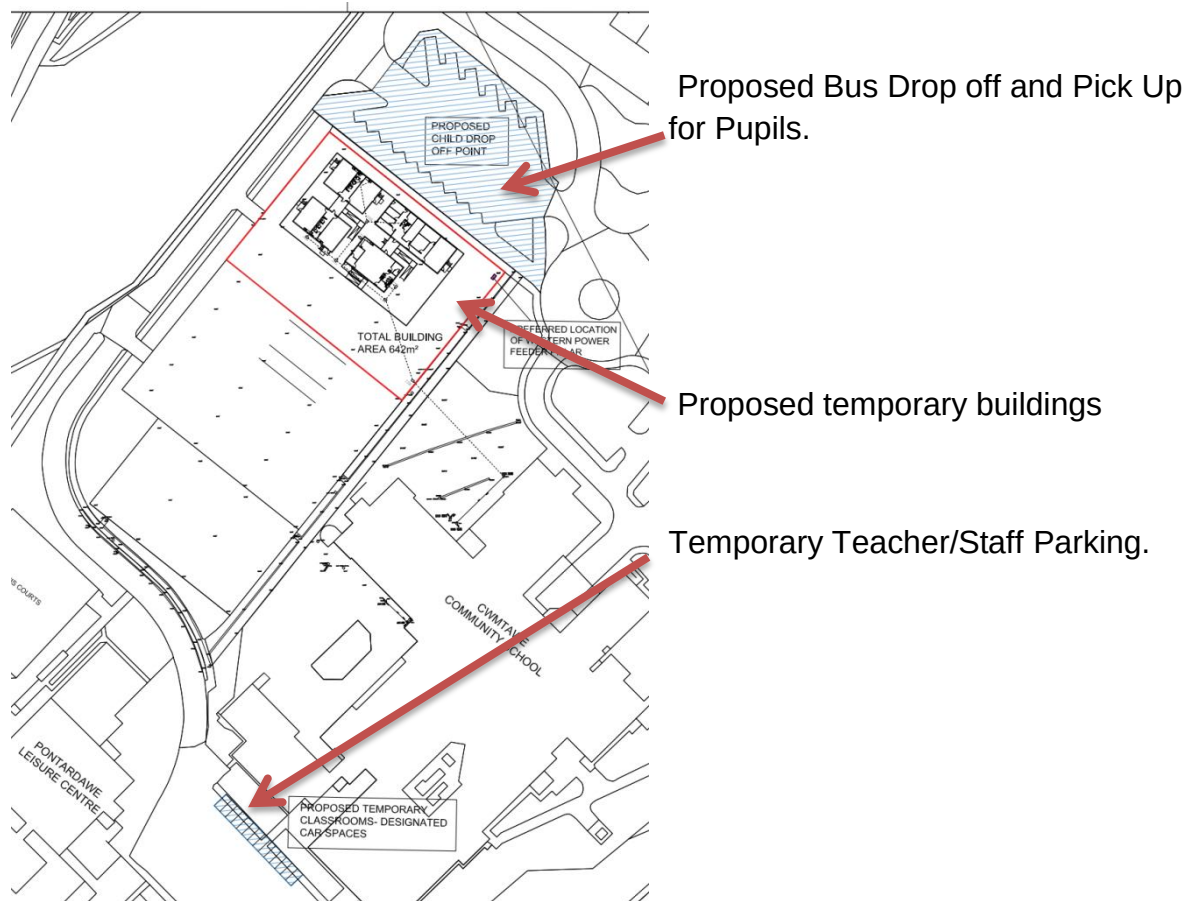


The application site lies within the grounds of Cwmtawe School, and comprises an existing hard surfaced area, enclosed by fencing. To the north of the site lies an existing pick and drop of area, and access to the site is already provided via existing highway network.

The site lies to the north of the Pontardawe Leisure Centre, which also provides an area of hardstanding car park, and beyond this lies an area of pitches and playing fields.

Layout and associated facilities.

The proposals include the provision of temporary classroom facilities, a Bus pick up and drop off facility, and dedicated parking area for staff. The classroom facilities are of pre-fabricated construction, for both speed of construction and delivery.





A layout has been provided as part of this application that provides the following accommodation.

- Classrooms
- Nursery
- Group Room
- W.C Facilities
- Staff/Admin facilities

Other facilities, such as dining/catering are all to be provided by the existing school buildings on the site.

Parking and Access.

As stated, the disruption to staff and pupils, and the wellbeing of the pupils has been paramount in the determination of site selection and, minimising any risk to pupils during this temporary period has been carefully considered.

Pupil Transport

The Education Department have stated that all pupils will be provided with transport to and from the site. A location will be agreed for parents to pick up and drop of pupils as close to the existing school site in Godre'r Graig as possible. Taking into account feasibility, highway and pedestrian safety, and access issues.

A dedicated bus parking area to pick up and drop of pupils is available adjacent to this site, where pupils will be taken to the temporary accommodation.

This will all be managed by the Education Department, to ensure pupil safety and wellbeing. The opening and closing times of the school and bus timings will be staggered with the adjoining school to ensure that any disruption is minimised.

Staff Parking

In addition all staff parking will be accommodated within the existing parking for the adjoining Leisure Centre. This arrangement has been agreed with the operators of the centre, and will be maintained during school hours and term times. As such there will be no parking within the grounds of the temporary school buildings, except for emergency access only, ensuring pupil safety within the grounds.

These areas are shown on the submitted plans and hatched blue. Controls will be imposed upon any planning decision ensuring these are maintained, and that the arrangements for pupils transport, and staff parking will be reviewed after each term. In the interests of Highway and Pedestrian safety, and pupil safety.

Planning Policy.

The site lies within settlement limits, as defined within the Neath Port Talbot Local Development Plan. The following planning policies are considered relevant to the development proposed;

Policy SC1 Settlement Limits

Development within settlement limits that is proportionate in scale and form to the role and function of the settlement as set out in the Settlement Hierarchy will be acceptable in principle. Outside settlement limits, development will only be permitted under the following circumstances:

1. It constitutes a sustainable small scale employment use adjacent to a settlement limit; or
2. It constitutes live-work unit(s) immediately adjacent to a settlement limit in the Valleys Strategy Area only; or
3. It constitutes the small-scale expansion of an existing business or the suitable conversion of an existing building; or
4. It constitutes the appropriate replacement of an existing dwelling; or
5. It is an affordable housing exception site; or
6. It is an appropriate rural enterprise dwelling; or
7. It is an appropriate 'One Planet Development'; or
8. It is a sustainable tourism or farm diversification proposal that is suitable in a countryside location; or
9. It is associated with the provision of public utilities, infrastructure and waste management facilities that cannot reasonably be located elsewhere; or
10. It is associated with either agriculture, forestry, minerals or energy generation; or
11. It relates to the appropriate provision of accommodation for Gypsies / Travellers;

or

12. It constitutes the provision of open space and small scale ancillary facilities adjoining the settlement limit.

Where development is permitted outside settlement limits, any new buildings must be located adjacent to existing buildings or settlements wherever possible and be of an appropriate scale and form.

Policy BE1 Design

All development proposals will be expected to demonstrate high quality design which fully takes into account the natural, historic and built environmental context and contributes to the creation of attractive, sustainable places. Proposals will only be permitted where all of the following criteria, where relevant, are satisfied:

1. It complements and enhances the character and appearance of the site, building or area in terms of siting, appearance, scale, height, massing and elevation treatment;
2. It respects the context of the site and its place within the local landscape, including its impact on the important arterial gateways into the County Borough, its effects on townscape and the local historic and cultural heritage and it takes account of the site topography and prominent skylines or ridges;
3. It utilises materials appropriate to its surroundings and incorporates hard and soft landscaping and screening where appropriate;
4. It would not have a significant adverse impact on highway safety, the amenity of occupiers of adjacent land or the community;
5. Important local features (including buildings, amenity areas, green spaces and green infrastructure, biodiversity and ecological connectivity) are retained and enhanced as far as possible;
6. It achieves and creates attractive, safe places and public spaces, taking account of 'Secured by Design' principles (including where appropriate natural surveillance, visibility, well lit environments and areas of public movement);
7. It plays a full role in achieving and enhancing an integrated transport and communications network promoting the interests of pedestrians, cyclists and public transport and ensures linkages with the existing surrounding community;
8. It uses resources, including land and energy, as efficiently as possible through:

(a) Making the best and most efficient use of the land available through being of appropriate density taking into account the character and appearance of the area, normally a minimum of 35 dwellings per hectare in the Coastal Corridor Strategy Area or a minimum of 30 dwellings per hectare in the Valleys Strategy Area;

(b) The layout and form of the development does not preclude the reasonable use of other adjacent land;

(c) Developing brownfield land in preference to greenfield land where possible;

(d) Minimising building exposure while maximising solar gain.

9. Its drainage systems are designed to limit surface water run-off and flood risk and prevent pollution;

10. The layout and design of the development achieves inclusive design by ensuring barrier free environments, allowing access by all and making full provision for people with disabilities

Policy TR2 Design and Access of New Development

Development proposals will only be permitted where all of the following criteria, where relevant, are satisfied:

1. The development does not compromise the safe, effective and efficient use of the highway network and does not have an adverse impact on highway safety or create unacceptable levels of traffic generation;

2. Appropriate levels of parking and cycling facilities are provided and the access arrangements for the site allow for the safe manoeuvring of any service vehicles associated with the planned use;

3. The development is accessible by a range of travel means, including public transport and safe cycle and pedestrian routes;

4. Transport Assessments and Travel Plans are provided for developments that are likely to create significant traffic generation.

Conclusion.

It is considered that the proposed development complies with these overarching planning policies, and in land use terms lies in an area of similar existing uses, without resulting in any unacceptable impacts upon visual amenity, amenity of adjoining properties or highway and pedestrian safety. Subject to conditions, relating to the above transport issues.