



PLANNING & DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE

25 FEBRUARY 2021

REPORT OF: DIRECTOR PROSPERITY AND DEVELOPMENT

PURPOSE OF THE REPORT

Members are asked to determine the planning application outlined below:

APPLICATION NO: 20/1253/12 (BJW)
APPLICANT: Rhondda Cynon Taf CBC
DEVELOPMENT: Internal remodelling of the existing swimming pool and changing rooms area to create a new childcare facility comprising a playroom, office, children and staff toilets, kitchen and cloakroom.
LOCATION: DOLAU PRIMARY SCHOOL, BRIDGEND ROAD, LLANHARAN, PONTYCLUN, CF72 9RP
DATE REGISTERED: 19/11/2020
ELECTORAL DIVISION: Brynna

RECOMMENDATION: Approve, subject to favourable referral of the application to Welsh Government Planning Division.

REASONS: The planning merits of the proposal are considered acceptable under the associated accompanying planning application (20/1298/08).

The proposed works are considered to be acceptable in terms of their impact on the special architectural and historical significance of the Listed Building.

The internal works are to areas of partition walls that have little significance to the special architectural and historical significance of the building, while the external alterations, in this case the two metal access ramps, are not attached to the Listed structure and are therefore removable and completely reversible. Additionally, the ramps are contemporary and utilitarian additions with a clear distinction from the Listed structure to whom they represent an acceptable but relatively minor element.

Consequently, the application is considered to represent an acceptable scheme.

REASON APPLICATION REPORTED TO COMMITTEE

The Listed Building Consent (LBC) application accompanies an application for full planning permission by the Council for an upgrade to its own facilities and is included in the agenda for transparency.

APPLICATION DETAILS

Listed Building Consent is sought for the internal conversion of an area within Dolau Primary and Infants School as a childcare facility. A separate planning application (reference no. 20/1298/08) is also presented on this agenda dealing with the planning merits of the development.

As the application property, Dolau Primary School, is also a Grade II Listed Building an application for Listed Building Consent (LBC) for the alterations to the Listed Building has also been submitted.

The area that would be used for the development currently houses an infrequently used swimming pool, its associated plant and changing rooms. The external areas, within the existing front and side yards (north and east) would accommodate the two proposed steel access ramps. In planning terms the development would provide 40 no., dual language, early years childcare spaces within the locality.

In terms of the physical works that would be subject to LBC, the application proposes the following:

- The removal of the existing pool enclosure and the making good of the floor;
- The creation of an open-plan play area including a sink/base unit enclosure;
- The removal of existing 1920's and 1970's partitions to the male and female changing areas, W.C. and boiler room;
- The installation of new internal partitions to create a nappy change area, children's W.C., kitchen and store, staff W.C. and cloakroom;
- The window cill heights to the former swimming pool will be reinstated to their original height and the timber louvre to the plant room replaced with a new timber window;
- Installation of a steel access ramp to the existing northern access point of the school. The access ramp would measure 10m in length by 1.5m in width and would have a maximum platform height of 500mm, a rail height of 1.5m and a gradient of 1:20; and
- Installation of a steel access ramp to the existing eastern access point of the school. The access ramp would measure 5m in length by 1.5m in width and would have a maximum platform height of 500mm, a rail height of 1.5m and a gradient of 1:15.

The application is accompanied by an associated application for planning permission – reference no. 20/1298/08, which is also being considered at this meeting.

The LBC application also includes a Heritage Impact Statement (HIS) in support of the proposal.

SITE APPRAISAL

The application property is a large detached school building sited on the southern side of the A473, Bridgend Road and is on the edge of the village of Bryncae about 1km from Llanharan.

The school was designed by D Pugh Jones, County Architect, built by Williams and Davies of Caerphilly and opened in 1928 as Dolau Council School. It has a courtyard plan which is characteristic of schools designed by Pugh Jones of this period. The building was designated Grade II Listed status on 14th November 2000 for its architectural interest as a finely composed Georgian-style school dating from the inter-war period, which clearly expressed the segregation favoured in education during the period. There are no other Listed Buildings or Scheduled Monuments within the vicinity of the school.

In 2009 a new 8 no. classroom teaching block was opened adjacent to the original school building and linked via a covered walkway. The main entrance for Dolau Primary is now via this new block.

The Listing for the building, reference no. 24369, contains the following details:

Location

In its own grounds on the south side of the A473 Llanharan to Bridgend Road, approximately 1.1km south-west of Llanharan village.

History

Opened in 1928 as Dolau Council School, by D Pugh Jones, county architect, and Williams & Davies of Caerphilly, contractors. The courtyard plan is characteristic of schools designed by Pugh Jones during this period, other examples being Tonyrefail Grammar School of 1931-3 and St Ilan Higher Elementary School, Caerphilly, of 1911-13.

Exterior

A single-storey brick school in neo-Georgian style, composed of wings enclosing a square inner yard, in which are a school hall and an additional classroom. The classrooms form the wings around the courtyard and are under hipped roofs, the boys originally occupying the west wing, girls the east wing and infants the south wing. They are linked by lower service rooms such as cloak rooms, toilets, staff rooms and vestibules. The roofs are slate with projecting billeted eaves and brick stacks over the service rooms. The main angles have stressed quoins. Horned small-pane sash windows are used throughout, although the classrooms have tall windows with openings lights above the sashes.

The main entrance is on the north side, which has a symmetrical front with a central, recessed 3-bay porch with round arches, above which is an inscription band in reconstituted stone and a stepped parapet with the Glamorgan Coat of Arms. The main doorway has a moulded architrave with inscription 'Deffro Mae'n dydd' and double panelled doors with raised fields. On its right side is a segmental sash, on its left side a similar segmental-headed vent with louvres to ventilate the boiler room. The entrance is flanked by 4-bay classrooms. On the left side the sills of 2 no. of the windows are raised, while the upper parts of the windows are infilled with boarding. The entrance front retains original cast iron rainwater goods with heads dated 1927.

On the west front the classroom of the north wing has a 2-bay return. To its right is a lower entrance link which has a pedimented doorway, the plain entablature of which

bears inscriptions recording architect and contractor, and 'Bechgyn'. The doorway is flanked by a sash window to the left and 3 no. small sash windows to the right. Further right is a projecting single-bay office with pedimented gable, beyond which is a 16-bay classroom wing. Set back beyond this is a lower 3-bay link with a double-panelled door on the left side and sash windows to the staff room on the right. This has a 1-bay return under a hipped roof to the south front, balanced by a single hipped bay, housing the cloak room, projecting on the right side between the recessed 12-bay infants' wing. The cloak room has a single bay set back further right and a single-bay return to the east front, to the right of which is a doorway over which is the inscription 'Babanod'. The east front has a 16-bay classroom, to the right of which is a projecting single-bay office with pedimented gable, then a 3-bay link with central pedimented doorway with 'Merched' in the entablature, flanked by a sash window to the left and 2 no. small windows to the right. The single-bay return of the classroom facing north has a single altered window and an added stack rising from the eaves.

Within the yard the east and west wings had open-fronted canopies on cast iron piers that continued around the south wing, but these have been enclosed to form corridors. On the east side the piers have been retained but the openings are infilled. On the west side the piers have been replaced by a modern brick wall. The classroom on the south side is offset from the original canopy by a short entrance vestibule, and has a hipped roof. It has 2 no. windows in the east wall, while the west wall has a window to the right and a door replaced in its original opening to the left. The main hall projecting from the north wing also has a hipped roof. On its east side are 2 no. tall windows breaking through the eaves line, and to the left replaced double doors beneath a tall segmental overlight. On the west side are 2 no. similar tall windows and a segmental-headed sash window to the right. A lower projection is built against the south wall. In the north-east corner of the yard is an extension of the toilet block.

Interior

The interior has a glazed tile dado throughout. Facing the yard each classroom retains half-lit doors and 2 no. sash windows, while above all the openings are hinged small-paned lights above the level of the canopies to the yard. The east and west wings each have 4 no. classrooms, while the south wing has a single and a double classroom, of which the latter has a movable half-glazed partition. In the north wing is a corridor giving access to the other wings and into the main hall through 2 no. double half-lit doors. The hall has a boarded ceiling with trusses exposed to collar-beam

Listed

Listed for its architectural interest as a finely composed Georgian-style school dating from the inter-war period, which clearly expresses the segregation favoured in education during the period.

PLANNING HISTORY

20/1298	Dolau Junior and Primary School, Bridgend Road, Llanharan, Pontyclun, CF72 9RP	Internal remodelling of the existing swimming pool and changing rooms area to create a new child care facility. Externally new powder coated metal ramps will be installed to existing entrances to improve	Not yet decided
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09/0138	As above	access and the cill height of two windows will be reinstated to their original level. Biomass boiler flue to plant room	GTD 26/03/09
07/1817	As above	New classroom block and main hall with associated facilities.	GTD 29/11/07
06/1509	As above	Erection of mobile classroom	GTD 14/09/06

PUBLICITY

The application has been advertised by neighbour notification letters, site notices and a press notice. No responses have been received.

CONSULTATION

Consultation was undertaken with the Joint Secretary of the National Amenity Societies who administer the following conservation bodies: Ancient Monuments Society; The Georgian Group; Royal Commission for Ancient and Historic Monuments in Wales; The Society for the Protection of Ancient Buildings; The Victorian Society; The Twentieth Century Society and The Council for British Archaeology Wales/Cymru – no responses have been received.

Llanharan Community Council – no response received.

POLICY CONTEXT

Rhondda Cynon Taf Local Development Plan

The application site is within the settlement boundary of Brynna and is a Grade II Listed Building.

Policy CS2 - sets out criteria for achieving sustainable growth including, promoting and enhancing transport infrastructure services.

Policy AW2 - advises that development proposals on non-allocated sites will only be supported in sustainable locations.

Policy AW5 - sets out criteria for new development in relation to amenity and accessibility.

Policy AW6 - requires development to involve a high quality design and to make a positive contribution to place making, including landscaping.

Policy AW7 - development proposals which impact on sites of architectural/or historic merit and sites of archaeological importance will only be permitted where it can be demonstrated that the proposal would preserve or enhance the character and appearance of the site.

LDP Supplementary Planning Guidance (SPG): The Historic Built Environment (March 2011)

National Guidance

In the determination of planning applications regard should also be given to the requirements of national planning policy which are not duplicated in the Local Development Plan, particularly where national planning policy provides a more up to date and comprehensive policy on certain topics.

Planning Policy Wales Edition 10 (PPW) sets out the Welsh Government's (WG) current position on planning policy. The document incorporates the objectives of the Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act into town and country planning and sets out the WG's policy on planning issues relevant to the determination of planning applications.

It is considered that the proposed development is consistent with the key principles and requirements for placemaking set out in PPW; and is also consistent with the Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act's sustainable development principles through its contribution towards the Welsh Ministers' well-being objectives of driving sustainable development and building healthier communities and better environments.

Other relevant national policy guidance consulted:

Welsh Office Circular 61/96 (98)

Welsh Office Circular 1/98

PPW Technical Advice Note (TAN) 12 – Design (2016)

PPW Technical Advice Note (TAN) 24: The Historic Environment (2017)

REASONS FOR REACHING THE RECOMMENDATION

Section 16(2) Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 states that

Main Issue:

Acceptability of the proposed development on the special architectural and historic merit of the Listed Building

The application proposes internal and minor external alterations to the property to facilitate its re-purposing as a childcare facility.

The proposed works are well-justified in the submitted Heritage Impact Statement (HIS) which demonstrates a competent and thorough understanding of the significance of the property and the effect of the proposed works.

The HIS indicates that the pool and its attendant associated enclosures were installed at the school in the 1970's and that the original plan-form of what was previously the cookery room as well as the wooden flooring was replaced at that time with quarry tiles. Additionally, it was during the previous works that the cills of two windows were raised and louvres installed to facilitate the use of the area for the pool enclosure.

There is an argument that the current plan form represents the evolution of the building and precedes its Listing and is therefore of some significance in this regard. However,

it is clear that the modifications are of little value in of themselves and could not be successfully used to serve the new use due to the requirements of childcare provisions. A condition to record the plan form could however be attached to secure recording of the details of the resultant floorplan and added to the architectural record.

The proposed new windows and change of the cills would re-introduce the original detailing in these areas. It is considered that the resultant installations would return the windows to their original aspect and appearance. Subject to a condition it is considered that this element would be wholly acceptable.

The other external element, that of the two steel access ramps, are considered to be a contemporary and utilitarian additions to the northern and eastern facades of the property. The ramps would clearly be read in the setting of the original building as such and this is a commonly used and successful method of dealing with the upgrading of historic properties. Additionally, the ramps are not attached to the main building and are therefore completely reversible, another key consideration in retro-fit additions.

Consequently, having regard to the above, it is considered that the proposed scheme is acceptable in terms of its effect on the special architectural and historic merit of the Listed Building.

Conclusion

The proposed works would facilitate the re-purposing of an underused part of the school and not have an adverse impact on the historical and architectural significance of the building, and as such, are considered acceptable.

RECOMMENDATION: Approve, subject to favourable referral of the application to Welsh Government Planning Division.

1. The development hereby permitted shall be begun before the expiration of five years from the date of this permission.

Reason: To comply with Sections 91 and 93 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990.

2. The development hereby approved shall be carried out in accordance with the approved plan(s) no(s):
 - Site Location Plan, dated 04/11/2020
 - Proposed Plan, Childcare facility, Drawing No. 5135-3603-V1-GF-B-20:20:40-008-S2-P01
 - Demolition Plan, Drawing No. 5135-3603-V1-GF-B-20:20:40-007-S2-P01
 - Proposed North Elevation, Drawing No. 5135-3603-V1-GF-B-20:20:40-004-S2-P01
 - Proposed East Elevation, Drawing No. 5135-3603-V1-GF-B-20:20:40-005-S2-P01

and documents received by the Local Planning Authority on unless otherwise to be approved and superseded by details required by any other condition attached to this consent.

Reason: To ensure compliance with the approved plans and documents and to clearly define the scope of the permission.

3. Prior to the development hereby approved commencing, copies of plans and a photographic record of the internal plan form of the property shall be deposited by the applicant in the Royal Commissions archive.

Reason: To retain a record of the building to accord with Planning Policy Wales.

4. Building operations shall not be commenced until samples of the materials proposed to be used have been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority and all materials used shall conform to the sample(s) so approved.

Reason: To ensure that the external appearance of the proposed development will be in keeping with the character of the area and adjoining buildings in the interests of visual amenity in accordance with Policies AW5 and AW6 of the Rhondda Cynon Taf Local Development Plan.

5. Before work starts, the design and details of the following shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority:
 - The replacement windows on the north elevation; and
 - cill and head treatments to the replacement windows.

Drawings shall be submitted to a minimum scale of 1:5 with full size moulding cross section profiles. The works shall be carried out in accordance with the approved details.

Reason: To ensure that the appearance of the proposed works will be in keeping with the special architectural and historic character of the Listed Building in accordance with Policy AW7 of the Rhondda Cynon Taf Local Development Plan

6. All disturbed fabric shall be made good to match the existing building.

Reason: To ensure that the appearance of the proposed works will be in keeping with the special architectural and historic character of the listed building in accordance with Policy AW7 of the Rhondda Cynon Taf Local Development Plan.