



Ysgolion yr 21ain Ganrif

21st Century Schools

Newport City Council – Objection Report

Proposal to establish a Welsh-medium secondary school in Newport

Purpose

This report is published in line with the requirements of Section 49 of the School Standards and Organisation (Wales) Act 2013 and the School Organisation Code, July 2013. This is a summary of the statutory objections and the proposer's response to those objections – otherwise known as, the Objection Report. **This is the provisional response of the authority which is being provided to Cabinet for discussion, a final view and objection report will be published before the end of 7 days beginning with the day of determination.**

Publication of the Statutory Notice

Following the Formal Consultation period and the publication of a consultation report, the Cabinet Member for Education & Young People took the decision to proceed to publish the proposal by way of a statutory notice for 28 days from the 3rd June to the 1st July 2015.

The 2013 Act requires that anyone wishing to make objections to a school organisation proposal has the opportunity to do so. Two Formal Objections have been received against the proposal to establish a Welsh-medium secondary school on the site of Duffryn High School.

The tables that follow set out each of the objections points lodged by each of the two proposal objectors. There are two columns of responses: one column refers to how information was previously made available during the consultation, within the consultation pack and the report, the minutes of the consultation meeting of 3rd March 2015 and the website Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ) document. The second column of responses is a supplementary response by Newport City Council to further clarify the position in order to answer each of the objection points.

Proposal Objector		Objection point	Response – information previously made available during the consultation	Supplementary NCC Response
1 & 2	1	Mixing two Schools and Mediums on one site is going to lead to issues, especially bullying on the way to and from school. Who is going to take responsibility for the health and well-being of the Welsh Medium Pupils?	The behaviour of school pupils is a matter for the schools, but Newport is a culturally diverse city. Mixing with and understanding different cultures is to be encouraged, and diversity embraced.	Your comments are noted, all stakeholders involved in this project are very keen to assure parents and pupils that behaviour strategies will be employed and well-being is the focus of their attention as the two schools move forward.
1	2	Capacity – How do you expect to house 900 plus Welsh Medium Pupils in one building when it currently houses approx. 400 English Medium Pupils?	The existing Lower Block will be used to accommodate the initial intake to the Welsh-medium school. The proposal is to build a new extension to this block to enable the school's capacity to grow up to 900 places.	The current building will be extended and an assurance is being given that the final school premises will be able to deliver education to circa 900 children.
	3	Toilet / Changing Facilities – Are there going to be adequate facilities for 900 Welsh Medium Pupils?	The new school will have all the usual facilities you would expect in a secondary school in order to deliver the full spectrum of the curriculum, including subject-specific learning spaces for science, ICT and technology, kitchen and dining rooms and a gymnasium.	<p>The existing Lower Block building already has new toilets and a gymnasium for the pupil cohorts who will attend the school.</p> <p>The proposal is to build a new extension to this block to enable the school's capacity to grow up to 900 places.</p> <p>This work will include a sufficiency of toilets / changing facilities for 900 pupils.</p>

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1	4 Building – The building is 56 years old and is in condition “C” Grade. At the meeting we were told that the building was not in a good condition under the grading, but when asked what was the life expectancy of the building an answer was not given. On a sliding scale, where does the building sit within that C grade category, to the top or bottom? Given the age of the building, it is full of asbestos and poses a health risk to the pupils and staff on a daily basis that’s without any remedial work being carried out. Has a full risk assessment been carried out?	We are aware that the building contains asbestos. An asbestos survey conducted in 2014 identified the vast majority of samples taken as being low risk. As part of the design process, a full refurbishment and demolition survey will be undertaken to ensure asbestos present is managed or removed as necessary during the development.	There is no ‘sliding scale’ within the condition grade categories. The project has a Risk Register which includes Asbestos remediation during the build scheme. The school will have an Asbestos Register when it opens and the premises management policies for the school will be in line with all other schools maintained by the Council.
	5 Canteen / Dining Facilities – Has this been factored in for the Welsh Medium Pupils as there was no mention of it?	The new school will have all the usual facilities you would expect in a secondary school in order to deliver the full spectrum of the curriculum, including subject-specific learning spaces for science, ICT and technology, kitchen and dining rooms and a gymnasium.	The existing Lower Block building already has a canteen for the pupil cohorts who will attend the school. The proposal is to build a new extension to this block to enable the school’s capacity to grow up to 900 places. This work will include a sufficiency of dining facilities for 900 pupils
1 & 2	6 Costs – What is going to be the split between the two mediums of the funding available for the project? No one at the presentation could answer that. Surely the costs are known otherwise what is the point of the project and consultation?	The £17m project budget will provide two new buildings and the necessary access and ground works required to enable effective operation of the two schools. Each school will have a new build addition to accommodate a similar number of pupils. While we do not know the exact cost split, the money is being used to provide similar facilities for each school.	NCC wish to reassure all the consultees and stakeholders that the project is on track to budget and that any split in financing of the separate schools is not known at this time as it is a whole site project from which two new schools will emerge.

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1 & 2	<p data-bbox="248 268 887 400">7 Access and Egress to the proposed new school – Has this been risk assessed considering that the volume of traffic in the area at school opening and closing times?</p> <p data-bbox="248 435 887 1367">Playing Fields - Access to the playing fields, is there going to be a bridge? Are the playing fields going to be made secure? As currently the playing fields are used by dog walkers who's dogs foul the pitches (Public Health Issue), Off Road Bikes and Quads currently tear up the pitches day and night (Health and Safety Issue), Fly Tipping (Health and Safety Issue), Used by other sporting clubs, is that still going to happen? Used for Rabbiting and Hare Coarsing with individuals armed with guns (Health and Safety Issue), Gypsies using the playing fields as a temporary camp (Health and Safety Issue), Currently being policed by British Transport Police due to cable theft from the railway line adjacent to the playing fields (Health and Safety Issues). Vandalism of the fence on the Cycle Path that runs adjacent to Edney View is constant too. (Please check with Gwent Police as they are currently investigating this and are liaising with the Head of Duffryn High School, 17th June 2015) Has a full Risk Assessment of the area been carried out?</p>	<p data-bbox="898 268 1563 363">The governing body for the new school will decide the start and finish times for the school can best fit with neighbouring schools.</p> <p data-bbox="898 403 1563 603">Ensuring the safety of children crossing Lighthouse Road is of paramount importance and proposed arrangements for the new Welsh-medium secondary school includes a review by the Highways Department, who in turn will make recommendations.</p> <p data-bbox="898 643 1563 802">Traffic issues will be considered within the design process. Traffic plans will be submitted with the planning application and will be reviewed by the highways department, to ensure traffic is manageable.</p> <p data-bbox="898 842 1563 1209">The current proposal for Lighthouse Road is to remove the existing crossing near the junction to Duffryn Way and relocate the crossing closer to the Duffryn High School site entrance. Highways feel this will provide a safer and more suitable crossing for pupils accessing both schools, it will also be key in providing safer access to the sports pitches on the opposite side of the road. The sports pitches will be secured with fencing for the provision of timetabled curriculum sports activities.</p>	<p data-bbox="1574 268 2107 467">Highways officers have attended design team meetings and planning officers have also been consulted. Funds to address traffic issues have been earmarked from within the total project envelope.</p> <p data-bbox="1574 507 2107 635">A full Risk Register is held for this project through which assurance is given that the delivery of two school settings suitable and safe for our pupils.</p>

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1	8	Project Completion Date – Is it doable? Bearing in mind it is nearly half way through April, by the time the Formal Consultation Period, Publication of Statutory Notice, Determination of Proposal, Construction Tenders and build time, what will happen to the Welsh Medium Pupils if the September 2016 deadline is missed?	<p>The new build section for Duffryn High will be complete by September 2016 and the new Welsh-medium secondary school will also be operational by this date.</p> <p>The new extension to the Welsh-medium school will then be complete before September 2018.</p>	<p>The project is on target to be delivered on time.</p> <p>Contingency planning has been developed as part of this major project.</p>
	9	Outside / Communal Area – Will there be enough outdoor space for 900 Welsh Medium Pupils?	This proposal allows the reconfiguration of the layout of the English-medium school at Duffryn which will make better use of the available space. The size of both sites will be in excess of the Building Bulletin (BB98) guidelines for schools.	<p>Stakeholder engagement is key in such design stages, it is hoped that the Temporary Governing Body would support and influence the design of the communal areas.</p> <p>The permanent Governing Body and the leadership team would be well placed to influence the emerging communal areas around and about the extension which will be completed by September 2018.</p>
	10	Catchment Area – Has this been taken into account for both mediums given the nature of the catchment area and the proposed new build home developments in the area?	The catchment area for the new Welsh-medium secondary school is proposed as the whole of the city of Newport, plus the area of south-Monmouthshire denoted as the catchment area for Ysgol Y Ffin (subject to MCC consultation). A copy of the proposed catchment area for the new Welsh-medium secondary school is included within this consultation pack. The new catchment areas will be applied to those applications received for the September 2016 admissions round and beyond with priority of admission given to those residing within the catchment areas of the respective schools.	<p>The WM2 catchment area formed part of the consultation. There is no change for Duffryn High School.</p> <p>Education planning includes noting planned housing developments across the city and the impact on the delivery of education is identified through the development of legal agreements including the calculation of Section 106 Planning Contributions.</p>

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1	11	Health – How is the new M4 Relief Road going to impact on the health of both English and Welsh Medium Pupils?	The land across the road is for timetabled curriculum sports and the final notification on the M4 relief road is yet to emerge.	<p>The M4 relief road is a separate consultation exercise by Welsh Government.</p> <p>NCC has not been given to understand that the proposal to host two school settings in this area will be compromised by the M4 Relief Road.</p>
	12	Expenditure – Is this going to be money well spent given the fact that Duffryn High School was going to be the next Super School for Newport as it was not fit for purpose? As stated earlier, the building is 56 years old, and to be honest, is a money pit. It has been in a state of disrepair for years, and to bring it up to code is going to drain the funds available, excluding the new build costs? Surely other avenues should be investigated before a final decision is made.	Other options were developed and considered by officers over four years, with assets and estate across Gwent being reviewed for suitability. The long list of options was detailed in the 21CS Regional Strategic Outline Case and the long list of options were tested and reduced to a shortlist of three options. The three options were further tested to give us our preferred option. The recommendation that Duffryn High School site is the preferred option and the principles of working towards the delivery of this preferred option has been accepted by Welsh Government to date. They approved the Outline Business Case further qualifying this preferred option and have now requested a Full Business Case to that effect.	Since that date the Full Business Case has been approved by WG which detailed the preferred option.
	13	Options – Are there any other available sites in Newport that would provide a safe and suitable environment for the Welsh Medium High School Pupils?		

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1	14	When is the planning application being submitted as I have not yet seen it published anywhere?	The recommendation that Duffryn High School site is the preferred option and the principles of working towards the delivery of this preferred option has been accepted by Welsh Government to date. They approved the Regional Outline Business Case further qualifying this preferred option and have now requested a Regional Full Business Case to that effect.(OBC and FBC set out the timelines) – Minutes of the Meeting	The planning application is scheduled for submission in August 2015.
2	15	At the consultation on 3rd March I felt it impossible to make valid judgements on many of the issues raised and subsequently responded to due to the lack of concrete information.	<p>A full Consultation Report was produced with all details of the school reorganisation proposal available at the time of going to press.</p> <p>Since the public meeting on the 3rd March a Frequently Asked Questions document was produced and published on the Newport City Council web site.</p> <p>This document was frequently updated as and when questions emerged from all consultees during the process.</p>	<p>The level of information available at the time was set out in the consultation report.</p> <p>There are many project based issues yet being developed which depended upon approval of WG funding at FBC stage.</p> <p>Other issues raised are to be determined by the Temporary Governing Body should the school be established.</p>
	16	The proposals as to how the new school would be staffed was not answered, as many other points raised were also unanswered, as this would be the responsibility of the new board of governors.	The Minutes of the meeting dated 3 rd March set out how the new school governors would select the staffing structure of the new school, commencing with the Headteacher.	This is an operational question in respect of setting up the new school. If the decision is to establish the new school, then the Council will arrange for a Temporary Governing Body to be appointed. It is the function of the temporary governing body to set up and recruit to the structure.

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	17	During the consultation there was quite a heated and extended exchange regarding the design and form of the barrier and whether it would be in place by next September. This seems not to have been recorded in the minutes of the meeting or responded to in any detail subsequently.	The schools sites will be separated by a fence from day 1 and the children will not be able to traverse the site. (Minutes of meeting)	At the time of the public meeting the project was in very early stages. Since that time the design team have been engaging stakeholders. Final decisions on the type, style and structure will be discussed with the Temporary Governing Body of the new Welsh-medium secondary and the Governing Body of the Duffryn High School.
2	18	I am not confident at all that this process concerning such a vital area of our children's lives has been carried out as it should have been.	The public meeting on the 3 rd March was the opportunity to ask questions and provide feedback. This process continued throughout the consultation period with a Frequently Asked Questions document published on the NCC web site – this was frequently updated as and when questions were asked with their NCC response.	Your comments are noted, following the full statutory consultation process a final determination will be taken by reviewing the case for change against the objections.
	19	I would like to know in more detail the timeline for the remainder of the project such as when the design will be completed, a detailed schedule of the building works, budget allocation etc. I'm sure many of the parents do too and I hope this information will become available. In addition, I would expect information such as a concrete staffing plan to be available.	The recommendation that Duffryn High School site is the preferred option and the principles of working towards the delivery of this preferred option has been accepted by Welsh Government to date. They approved the Regional Outline Business Case further qualifying this preferred option and have now requested a Regional Full Business Case to that effect.(OBC and FBC set out the timelines) – Minutes of the meeting	Design and build contractors will be appointed by the end of July 2015 Planning application will be submitted in August 2015 Design finalised by November 2015 Building works planned to begin in January 2016

In accordance with the School Organisation Code (2013) this Objection Report is published electronically on Newport City Council's website at www.newport.gov.uk

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