



Client. K&C Construction Ltd.

Job No. 16026

Date. March 2017

**Ysgol Caerhun,
Dolgarrog**
Design and Access Statement



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Job Title: Ysgol Caerhun, Conwy County Council

Job Number:16026

Report Title: Design and Access Statement

Date of First Issue: March 2017

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1.0 Introduction

- 1.1 This Design and Access Statement has been prepared by TACP Architects Ltd on behalf of K&C Construction Ltd. to support a full planning application for the demolition of Ysgol Dolgarrog and construction of a new school building – Ysgol Caerhun.
- 1.2 The project aims to provide a new 120 place school for the Caerhun ward to replace Ysgol Trefriw, Ysgol Dolgarrog and Ysgol Tal-Y-Bont
- 1.3 The project forms part of Conwy County Borough Council's 21st Century Schools Programme being one of four areas within the county that have been prioritised for delivery during 2014-2018.
- 1.4 The 21st Century School is defined by:
 - Schools configured to respond to changing approaches to teaching and learning which together with strengthened school leadership and the involvement of the school community, will reflect local needs and support young people to achieve their potential.
 - Inspirational environments appropriate for new education developments and technologies, efficient yet adaptable enough to cater for the changing needs of the future up to 2030.
 - World class sustainable environments for teachers to teach and learners to learn, supported fully by ICT and that drive improvements in educational standards and address issues of climate change.
 - Inclusivity providing appropriate provision for the individual learning needs of all learners, spaces in which those with special educational needs and disabilities feel that their needs are respected and which enable all members of the school to work, rest and socialise.
 - An outstanding resource for the whole community which can offer a range of co-located facilities such as childcare, health and social services and adult training.
- 1.5 The Proposal to amalgamate Ysgol Trefriw, Tal y Bont, and Ysgol Dolgarrog will mean the formal closure of all three schools followed by the opening of a new build Community Primary School on the current Ysgol Dolgarrog site for pupils in the Caerhun locality. The new school will provide 120 places for pupils aged from 3 – 11 years old.
- 1.6 The Design and Access Statement accompanies a drawing package which supports the full planning application.

2.0 Context

2.1 Physical Context

- 2.1.1 The project aims to provide a new 120 place school for the Caerhun ward to replace Ysgol Trefriw, Ysgol Dolgarrog and Ysgol Tal-Y-Bont
- 2.1.2 The three existing schools are connected via the B5106 Conwy Road.
- 2.1.3 Ysgol Trefriw is situated in the village of Trefriw just south of the villages of Dolgarrog and Tal y Bont within Conwy County Borough Council. The School has 2 classrooms a Nursery classroom and Library. The building provides approximately 500m² floor space. The pupils make use of 316m² of hard play area and 115m² of habitat area and also make use of the Village Hall and a field in the village.
- 2.1.4 Ysgol Tal y Bont is in the village of Tal y Bont just north of Dolgarrog between the towns of Conwy and Llanrwst in Conwy County Borough Council. **The school has three** classrooms. There is also an I.C.T room and a library. The building provides approximately 400m² floor space. The pupils have access to 880m² of hard play area, and a soft play area of 1316m². The School also make use of the Village Hall.
- 2.1.5 Ysgol Tal y Bont has the capacity to accommodate 60 pupils between the ages of 3 – 11 years old. As of January 2017, there were 21 full time children with 2 nursery pupils.
- 2.1.6 Ysgol Dolgarrog is in the village of Dolgarrog situated between the towns of Conwy and Llanrwst in Conwy County Borough Council and is a short distance North of the Surf Snowdonia development. The school has three classrooms a School Hall, Library and internal play area. The school provides approximately 1300m² of floor space across two buildings. Pupils have access to 3530m² hard play area, habitat area of 2227m² and sports pitch of 2226m².
- 2.1.7 Ysgol Dolgarrog has the capacity to accommodate 90 pupils between the ages of 3 – 11 years old. As of January 2015, there were 60 full time children attending the school with 10 part-time pupils attending the Nursery class.
- 2.1.8 The site is surrounded on three sides by agricultural land with hedgerow/tree boundaries.
- 2.1.9 Below is an image of the Ysgol Dolgarrog site;



- 2.1.10 The proposal for the new Caerhun school is to demolish the existing Dolgarrog school which is to be replaced with a split-level two storey building running parallel with the road.
- 2.1.11 The pupils of Ysgol Dolgarrog will be relocated to Ysgol Tal Y Bont/Ysgol Trefriw whilst the construction takes place, leaving the site vacant during the construction period.
- 2.1.12 As the image below shows, the existing Ysgol Dalgrog school building is grey rendered, with a traditional slate roof and traditional style windows. There have been several single storey extensions with flat roofs 'bolted on' to the original building over the years.



- 2.1.13 The canteen building to the south is also grey rendered, with corrugated concrete roofing panels and traditional style windows.
- 2.1.14 There is currently no formal car park on the site, with staff parking along the B5106. Vehicles can enter the site to the south via a pair of gates, this is a dropped curb entrance. There is also a pair of gates to the North allowing maintenance vehicle access to the playing fields.
- 2.1.15 Pedestrians access the site from the pavement off the B5106 via gates.
- 2.1.16 The existing topography and landscaping within the site is well developed and responds to the activities taking place. The site is primarily hard landscaping with a large tarmac playground situated between the two buildings occupying most of the site. To the North of the main school building is a grassed playing field. The site is generally sloping from the North-West down to the South-East with a change of level of roughly 8.5 metres.
- 2.1.17 There is limited vegetation to the Southern end of the site, with many of the trees surrounded by tarmac and a small grassed area. To the north end of the site, the vegetation is well developed with several mature trees to the periphery. The Eastern boundary also contains many trees. The site is bordered with soft landscaping and the boundary is defined with hedgerows, trees and fencing, with a stone wall along the road.
- 2.1.18 A tree survey has been undertaken and the large mature trees within the development site are to be retained, whilst there are a number of smaller trees which will need to be removed to facilitate the development.

2.2 Social Context

- 2.2.1 Local Authorities have a general duty under Section 14 of the Education Act 1996 to ensure that there are sufficient schools for providing primary school education in their boroughs.
- 2.2.2 The proposed development offers a new teaching facility in line with the local authorities 21st century school programme.

- 2.2.3 Through its Primary School Modernisation Programme Conwy County Borough Council has been reviewing current pupil numbers, equality of funding for pupils and the fitness for purpose of current school buildings across the Authority.
- 2.2.4 The Local Authority has been engaging with parents, Governors, staff and communities in order to explain the current position and is proposing to establish a new Community Primary School in the Caerhun and Trefriw district. The proposal is considered necessary for these Schools due to falling pupil numbers in the area, increased cost per pupil figures and the need for sustainable buildings and resources to provide a 21st Century education for the future.
- 2.2.5 As part of the Primary School Modernisation Programme Conwy Education Services have engaged with parents, staff, Governors, pupils and the wider communities of Ysgol Trefriw, Tal y Bont, and Ysgol Dolgarrog. During 2013 key information was gathered to support the completion of Impact Assessments on Language, Community, Transport, Equalities and Buildings 'Fit for Purpose' and associated Options Appraisal were undertaken and completed by Conwy Education Services. Each Impact Assessment and the Option Appraisal considered 4 options for the Area, namely:
- New Build Area School on Dolgarrog Site
 - Maintain Current Schools
 - Area School via re-modelling of Ysgol Dolgarrog
 - An Area School on Existing Sites.
- 2.2.6 Education Services consulted with the school, pupils and the community to discuss the Options for the Caerhun Area. The Option Appraisal examined the various impacts for each option, feedback from children's workshops held with pupils from all three schools in January 2013 and feedback received from the community on the Strategy and associated Implementation Plan.
- 2.2.7 Each of the 3 current School buildings have issues pertaining to suitability and condition with outdated kitchen installations, poor energy efficiency, do not meet required Building Bulletin standards for a 21st Century School, outdated toilet and hygiene facilities and have restricted learning resource space. Owing to these issues to 'Maintain the Current Schools' or provide an 'Area School on Existing Sites' would be unachievable and unfeasible and would not meet the requirements of securing funding under the Welsh Government's 21st Century Schools Programme.
- 2.2.8 The option to re-develop or build a new School on one of the other existing sites was also ruled out given very restricted space available and the complexities of building a suitable Area School on such a site.
- 2.2.9 In November 2013 Conwy Cabinet agreed to take forward the option for a new build Area School on the current Ysgol Dolgarrog site. An Area School on the Ysgol Dolgarrog site was the agreed option owing to land ownership, revenue savings and limitations involved with gaining appropriate funding to provide 21st Century education provision in the area.

2.3 Economic Context

- 2.3.1 Given that the proposal is for an educational development, there are unlikely to be long term economic benefits. However, the provision of improved educational facilities will support residents, encourage people to move into the area which in turn will support local businesses and thus the local economy.
- 2.3.2 One of the main drivers of Primary School Modernisation is the rationalisation of pupil numbers across the County. The 3 current Schools pupil numbers have been in

decline over the last 5 years and this trend is forecasted to continue. Ysgol Dolgarrog currently has 44% unfilled places, Ysgol Tal y Bont has 63% unfilled places and Ysgol Trefriw has 68% unfilled places. By establishing a new Area School there will be a significant decrease in the number of unfilled places in this locality.

- 2.3.3 The average cost per pupil in Conwy is £3,956 with a low of £3,227 in schools with higher pupil numbers and a high of £9,616 in schools with lower pupil numbers. The funding allocation given to Ysgol Dolgarrog for 2017/18 is £290,803 with the cost per pupil figure of £4,892. For Ysgol Tal y Bont the funding allocation for the school for the 2017/18 financial year were 2017-18 financial year is £186,782 and the cost per pupil figure was £8,894.
- 2.3.4 One of the drivers for Primary School Modernisation is equality of funding for pupils and through the amalgamation of the 3 schools we would expect the cost per pupil figure for the Caerhun and Trefriw Area to be reduced.
- 2.3.5 In the short term, the proposal will also provide employment for those contracted to carry out the construction works which will be aimed at locally sourced contractors where practical.

3.0 Planning Policy Context

- 3.1 With regards to the efforts outlined by the Local Authority to maintain positive development and growth of the local areas, the following section provides an overview of the key policies contained within the Development Plan of relevance to the proposed development.
- 3.2 The Conwy Local Development Plan was adopted in October 2013 and forms part of the statutory development plan for the borough. The Conwy Local Development Plan (LDP) covers the part of the Conwy County Borough outside Snowdonia National Park (known as the Plan Area).
- 3.3 The LDP sets out the key challenges facing Conwy, identifies the Vision, Objectives and the Spatial Strategy for development in the area over the period 2007 to 2022. The LDP will be used by the Council to guide and control development providing the basis by which planning applications will be determined. The LDP replaces existing Structure Plans and Local Plans which previously provided the policy framework for the Conwy Plan Area.
- 3.4 The LDP includes policies that have been informed by a suite of evidence based documents prepared to support the Plan to ensure that the policies reflect locally determined priorities. Outlined below are those policies contained in the Conwy Local Development Plan which have been identified as relevant to the proposed development:
- **SO7:** Concentrate development along existing and proposed infrastructure networks and, in particular, at locations that are convenient for pedestrians, cyclists and public transport.
 - **SO10:** Ensure that good, sustainable, inclusive design is delivered which includes the opportunity to design out crime, to develop strong, safe and locally distinctive communities and encourage the younger population to remain and return to the area.
 - **SO11:** Reduce energy consumption through the careful siting and design of buildings and the promotion of renewable energy developments where they have prospects of being economically attractive and environmentally and socially acceptable.

- **SO13:** To protect and improve accessibility to essential services and facilities, including open space, allotments, health, education and leisure.
- **SO14:** To promote the prudent use of resources through the minimisation of waste and assist in providing an integrated network of waste management facilities consistent with the needs of the area and the waste hierarchy.
- **SO16:** Ensure that development supports and sustains the long-term wellbeing of the Welsh language and the character and linguistic balance of communities within the Plan Area.
- **POLICY DP/2 - OVERARCHING STRATEGIC APPROACH:** The scale of proposed future development will reflect the settlements' needs in terms of the size and function and their physical and functional relationships with the urban areas. Main Villages provide a service function for the Minor Villages and Hamlets and this will be maintained and further developed to meet the needs of these communities.
- **POLICY DP/3 – PROMOTING DESIGN QUALITY AND REDUCING CRIME:** All new development will be of high quality, sustainable design which provides usable, safe, durable and adaptable places, and protects local character and distinctiveness of the Plan Area's built historic and natural environment.
- **POLICY DP/4 – DEVELOPMENT CRITERIA:** Development proposals, where appropriate and in accordance with the policies of the Plan and the Council's Standards should provide the following:
 - a) Affordable Housing for Local Need
 - b) Safe access from the highway network and enhancement of public transport, cycling and pedestrian infrastructure
 - c) Car parking
 - d) Safe and secure cycle parking
 - e) Open Space
 - f) Safe and convenient access for all to public buildings and spaces, including those with limited mobility or those with other impairments such as of sight or hearing
 - g) Screened storage of refuse, including recyclable materials
 - h) A design and layout that minimises opportunities for crime
 - i) Financial contributions towards the provision and maintenance of infrastructure, services and facilities required by the development.
- **POLICY CFS/15 – EDUCATION FACILITIES:** Development Proposals for new schools during the Plan period will be supported providing they are in accordance with the Development Principles.

3.5 Planning Policy Wales (PPW) (Edition 9, October 2016) sets out the land use planning policies of the Welsh Government. It is supplemented by a series of Technical Advice Notes (TAN). Outlined below are those policies contained in the Planning Policy Wales which have been identified as relevant to the proposed development:

- **TECHNICAL ADVICE NOTE (TAN) 6:** Planning for Sustainable Rural Communities (2010)
- **TECHNICAL ADVICE NOTE (TAN) 11:** Noise (1997)
- **TECHNICAL ADVICE NOTE (TAN) 12:** Design (2016)
- **TECHNICAL ADVICE NOTE (TAN) 18:** Transport (2007)

- **TECHNICAL ADVICE NOTE (TAN) 20: Planning and the Welsh Language (2013)**

4.0 Design Principles

- 4.1 Planning Policy Wales and TAN 12 are the principle planning documents of the Welsh Government which set out the context for the consideration and evaluation of all types of development. The main thrust of the documents is to promote sustainable development by ensuring that the planning system provides for an adequate and continuous supply of available and suitable land to meet needs in a way that is consistent with overall sustainable principles.
- 4.2 A key element of sustainable development is good design, which should contribute positively to making places better for people. National Planning Policy also states that it is important to plan for the achievement of high quality and inclusive design for all development, including individual buildings, public and private spaces and wider area development schemes.
- 4.3 The proposal is for the amalgamation of Ysgol Dolgarrog, Ysgol Tal y Bont and Ysgol Trefriw with a new 120 capacity school built on the current Ysgol Dolgarrog site. The new school will be built and developed through the Welsh Government's 21st Century Schools Programme to accommodate all pupils from the current schools and the Caerhun Area.
- 4.4 The new school will provide five general teaching classrooms, a cylch meithrin classroom, two community canolfan iaith rooms, specialist practical area, main hall, full service kitchen, staff & administrative accommodation, and learning resource centre with ancillary facilities throughout.
- 4.5 The building's footprint has been kept to a minimum to maximise the external space and accommodate a new Multi Use Games Area (MUGA) on the site.
- 4.6 The proposed building will run parallel with the B5106, this creates a frontage to the main road and generates a physical barrier between the main road and the playground to the rear, aiding with security of the children whilst they are outside.
- 4.7 The existing site gradient has been utilized to create a split ground floor level with a lower ground floor level at the southern end of the site providing mainly administrative and community areas. The main hall, kitchens and several classrooms are situated at an intermediate ground floor level, with two classrooms and specialist practical areas at first floor level above the lower ground floor level.
- 4.8 This proved the opportunity to create a two-story element whilst maintaining a relatively low overall height to the development.
- 4.9 There is an opportunity for the new building to be architecturally appealing and improve the visual character of the site. The new building will be visible from the B5106 Conwy Road and presents the opportunity for the school to create a new impressive facility for primary education in the Caerhun area.
- 4.10 Responding to the architecture of the existing school building and the immediate local area, the new structure will use gable ends with pitched slate roofs to maintain a visual relationship whilst breaking up the large volumes demanded of a modern teaching environment to create a building of appropriate scale for the area.
- 4.11 The mass of the building will be broken down into a variety of elements of complementary finishes to reduce the overall impact of the new building. The building will be primarily clad with grey panels, which will be broken down by using a variety of glazing, feature colour cladding and reconstituted stone.

5.0 Proposed Character

- 5.1 The design process included an analysis of the context of the application site. This analysis informed the design process and as such it is considered that the proposal offers development that complements the character of the local buildings and surrounding area.
- 5.2 It is proposed that the façade will be a composition of reconstituted stone, cladding panels and curtain wall glazing. This provides the opportunity for natural daylight to easily penetrate the spaces and enables views both in and out of the building. The use of reconstituted stone enables the new construction to share characteristics with the local vernacular, whilst the cladding introduces a contemporary element to the new construction.
- 5.3 The palette of materials will be used sympathetically to break down the large linear elevations, and create a scale appropriate for both the local context and the users of the building. Both vertical and horizontal cladding panels with a feature colour will be used alongside the stone to compose the elevations with elements of glazing where appropriate.
- 5.4 It is proposed that the roof will be pitched with gable ends and finished with grey slate, again in response to the local vernacular. A series of ridge heights will create a varied roof line to provide the proposed building with interesting characteristics.
- 5.5 It is proposed that the lower roof, to the North, will be profiled to create a concealed plant area.
- 5.6 The building will benefit from natural lighting and ventilation as much as possible throughout. This will be achieved through large areas of glazing with opening lights. Artificial lighting will be required if the building is used outside of its normal school hours as will emergency illumination.
- 5.7 The front elevation is a linear façade which is broken down with a variation in finishes transitioning from the two-storey lower ground floor element into the double height hall space and dropping down to the single storey kitchen at the North end. This is achieved through a change of cladding orientation and colour along with defined breaks in the glazing.
- 5.8 A glazed canopy will help to emphasize the position of the main entrance whilst providing immediate shelter from the elements before entering the building.
- 5.9 These design features have been carefully considered to ensure the building has an attractive appearance and suitable for its function and location.
- 5.10 The proposal, therefore, is considered appropriate for the site and wider area, providing a new primary school with community amenities which respond to the character of the surrounding area and provides facilities to suit current and future needs.

6.0 Accessibility

6.1 Movements to, from and within the Building

- 6.1.1 The new building will be fully compliant with the current publication of BS8300 and the relevant Approved Documents within the current Building Regulations.
- 6.1.2 Planning Policy promotes that Local Authorities should consider the issue of 'accessibility to all' including the needs of those with visual and hearing impairments and those with limited mobility, the elderly and people with young children.
- 6.1.3 Guidance outlined in the Conwy Local Development Plan has been considered in the preparation of this proposal.

- 6.1.4 All external approaches to new entrances will offer clear and flat access with a maximum gradient of 1:20 with level thresholds throughout the building.
- 6.1.5 Sufficient clear widths will be provided to all door openings and corridors to meet current Building Regulations.
- 6.1.6 The new building will include a passenger platform lift suitable for use by wheelchair users and with controls in accordance with the Building Regulations.
- 6.1.7 Where new disabled toilet facilities are provided, they will comply with current Building Regulations in terms of access and fittings as will the accessible toilet in the new building.

6.2 Vehicles and Pedestrians Access

- 6.2.1 Vehicular access is only available from the B5106 Conwy Road, to the west, which is a main road linking Dolgarrog, Tal y Bont and Trefriw. The road is currently 30mph.
- 6.2.2 There is currently no on-site parking with staff/visitors and delivery vehicles parking along the B5106 main road.
- 6.2.3 Vehicles can currently enter the site via gates, either to the North with access to the higher level playing fields, or to the South with access onto the playground.
- 6.2.4 The existing access to the South is proposed to be upgraded to provide access to an on-site car park to be used by staff and visitors only.
- 6.2.5 A speed management exercise is proposed to take place on the B5106, with the narrowing of the road outside the school, reduction of speed limits to 20mph during school hours and the provision of a layby to act as a pupil drop-off zone, and a space for delivery vehicles to pull in.
- 6.2.6 Pedestrian access is currently available off the B5106. It is proposed that the pedestrian access is to remain however it will be modified to provide access to the Main Entrance area at lower ground floor level, and access to the kitchen area as well as providing pupil access to the north end of the site.
- 6.2.7 Footpaths will be defined by fences/planting to aid segregation between pedestrians and traffic where applicable.

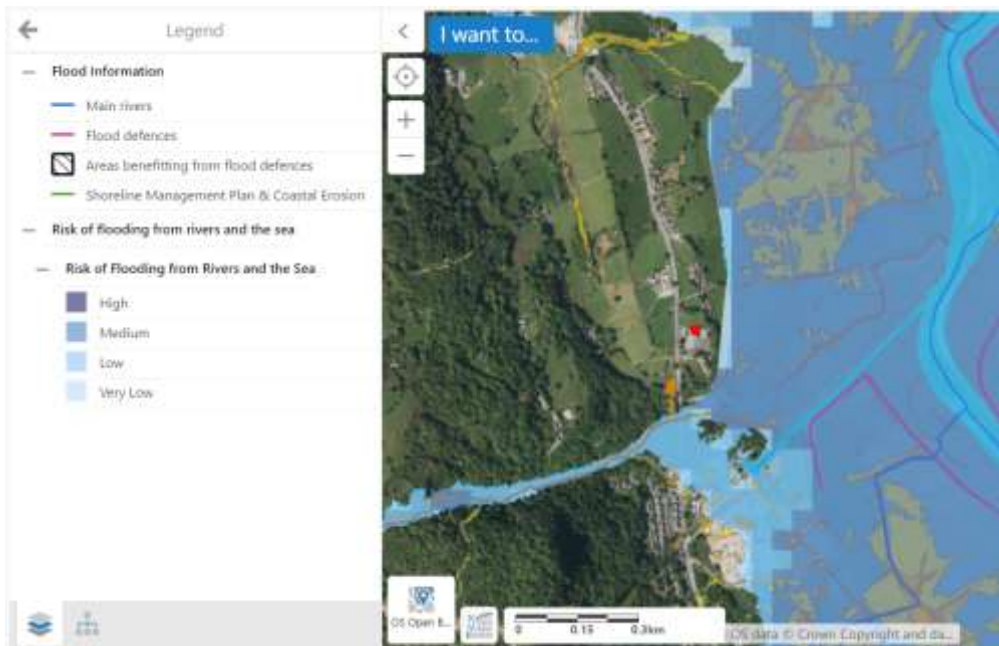
7.0 Community Safety

- 7.1 During the design process design measures, such as layout, appearance and landscape have been carefully assessed to help to prevent crime. It is proposed that the fully designed scheme will be assessed under the Secure by Design Scheme and the recommendations adhered to where possible.
- 7.2 Secured by Design accreditation is being sought. TACP Architects Ltd. have been in contact with North Wales Police Secured by Design Officers and their comments have been considered and incorporated into the design of the scheme. The potential for crime has been considered & minimised throughout the design process.
- 7.3 It is not anticipated that there will be any adverse increase of risk / security on the site as a result of the development.
- 7.4 The remote nature of the site leads itself to a potential crime risk however, natural passive surveillance offered from the main Conwy Road (B5106) is maintained.
- 7.5 The school's existing procedure for security ensures that all gates and access doors / windows are securely locked outside of school hours. This policy is to be expanded/modified to suit the new construction. A secure lobby is incorporated into the design, with access controlled doors via the reception/office.

- 7.6 The secure bin store will be a minimum of 10metres from the proposed building, to minimise the potential risk of fire spread.
- 7.7 The new building will benefit from modern doors and windows that minimise the potential for intruders and break ins. CCTV and intruder alarms/detectors will also be considered. External lighting will also be included to provide adequate coverage of new external spaces, walkways and car parks.
- 7.8 All existing boundary treatments including fences within the site will be maintained and modified as required to facilitate the new site layouts.
- 7.9 Careful consideration has been given to the eaves line of the new building, ensuring that potential access onto the roof is minimised. An internal mansard style roof has been incorporated into the design, which is accessed via an access controlled store room. It is anticipated that general roof maintenance can be undertaken from the lower site levels and upper playground areas.

8.0 Environmental Sustainability

- 8.1 The proposed development will fulfil the requirements of the current Building Regulations in terms of environmental sustainability.
- 8.2 The project is being reviewed under BREEAM to achieve an Excellent rating.
- 8.3 As well as implementing energy efficiency measures to reduce energy demand and carbon omissions to fulfil the Building Regulations, other measures have also been considered including ecology, sustainable materials, water, waste management and sustainable building standards.
- 8.4 Sustainable heating systems are being reviewed including, roof mounted photovoltaic panels for the new building and the roof structures will be designed to accept this additional loading either now or in the future.
- 8.5 A Bat/Ecology Survey has been completed by Cambrian Ecology and will form part of this application.
- 8.6 A Tree Survey has been completed by Ascerta and will form part of this application.
- 8.7 Sustainable materials with a low environmental impact will be used where possible. All timber will be sourced from sustainable managed forests and certified by the Forest Stewardship Council.
- 8.8 The below image shows the flood risk for the immediate area from Natural Resources Wales;



8.9 The image shows that whilst there is some medium/low risk of flooding from the River Conwy in the vicinity of the site, there is no specific flood risk identified to the proposed site.

8.10 Secure Waste/Recycling Stores are provided and will be collected by the local authority

9.0 Land Use

9.1 The site will remain for educational use providing all facilities required to sustain education at the site.

10.0 Noise Pollution

10.1 Noise will be generated during construction works but every effort will be made to keep this to the absolute minimum where practical in the interests of the local area. Once complete it is anticipated that the new school will create no greater noise levels than that which exists with the current school.

11.0 Air Quality

11.1 There may be a limited amount of dust resulting from the construction works but every effort will be made to keep this to the absolute minimum.

11.2 The proposed uses do not generate any additional air pollution.

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For the reasons set out above it is considered that the proposals represent a well designed and coherent scheme and accords with the relevant Development Plan Policies and preserves the character and appearance of the local area.