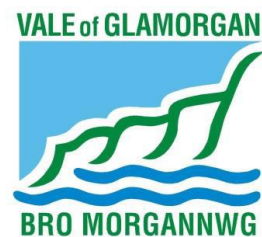


St David's Church in Wales Primary Primary School Objection Report

**On the proposal to expand
St David's Church in Wales Primary School
from 140 places to 210 places
to meet future demand for
Church in Wales education.**



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Background

The governing body of St David's CIW Primary School undertook a consultation exercise on the proposal from 28 January 2019 to 15 March 2019. The aim of the consultation was to inform prescribed consultees about the school re-organisation proposal being put forward under section 2.3 of the School Organisation Code and referred to as a regulated alteration as follows:

- To increase the capacity of St David's CIW Primary School from 140 places to 210 places from September 2021.

The consultation process followed Welsh Government guidelines as outlined in the School Organisation Code 2018. It provided an opportunity for prescribed consultees as well as members of the local community to learn about the proposal and for the governing body to hear the views of all those with an interest so that they can be taken into account before decisions are made.

During the consultation exercise, no responses were received against the proposal. The governing body did respond to a number of queries and concerns that were submitted by members of the community. The responses were published in the consultation report.

Consultation Report

A consultation report was published following the consultation exercise. The consultation report was considered by the governing body on 21 March 2019.

Statutory Notice

Following consideration of the consultation report on 21 March 2019, the governing body decided to progress the proposal and approve the publication of a statutory notice.

The statutory notice on the proposal was published on 29 April 2019 for a period of 28 days to allow for objections. The statutory notice period expired on 27 May 2019.

The notice was published on the school and Vale of Glamorgan Council's website (www.valeofglamorgan.gov.uk/Expanding-St-Davids-CIW-Primary) and posted at the main entrances of the school. Copies of the notice were distributed to parents, carers and guardians, governors and staff members. All other organisations and consultees required under the School Organisation Code 2018 were either provided with a hard copy or e-mailed a link to the published notice on the council's website. All email recipients were provided

with a copy of the letter and notice as an attachment to the email as well as a link to the notice on the website.

Where objections are received to the statutory notice, an objection report must be published summarising the statutory objections and the proposer's response to those objections.

Objections to the Proposal

The governing body received 3 individual objections by the end of the objection period. The objections received are summarised below, along with the governing body's response.

All objections received during the objection period have been made available to the members of the governing body for consideration alongside this report.

Objection theme 1

Tax payers' money should not be spent on a Church in Wales school. Local community primary schools should be prioritised.

Governing body's response to the objection raised

The Council has a statutory duty to secure sufficient school places both in number and character. St David's CIW Primary School has a capacity of 140 school places and currently has 130 pupils on roll. Both reception and year 1 classes are above the published admission number of 20 pupils. This shows that St David's CIW Primary School has limited capacity to accommodate additional pupils. Recent and future housing developments are projected to increase demand for Church in Wales education. This proposal would support the Council to meet its statutory duty to provide sufficient school places.

The anticipated cost of the new school is £4.185million. 85% of this funding will be sought from Welsh Government through the 21st Century Schools Programme. The level of Welsh Government funding is higher for faith schools as the funding rate for community schools is 65%. The Council would provide the remaining 15% funding. However, this would not be funded by the tax payer but from Section 106 contributions received from housing developers. These contributions have been received to mitigate the impact of additional pupils resulting from developments.

It is also worth noting that the condition of St David's CIW Primary School's buildings have been rated by the Council as in poor condition. Investing in a new school building would reduce ongoing maintenance costs and would provide a better teaching and learning environment for the pupils of St David's CIW Primary School.

Objection theme 2

The new school building should not be transferred to the diocese upon completion and should remain in public ownership.

Governing body's response to the objection raised

The land that the school buildings occupy is currently owned by the Diocese and the land surrounding the buildings is owned by the Council. This is the case with all voluntary aided schools in the Vale of Glamorgan. It is proposed that the new school is built on the existing site, this would likely be on the existing school field.

Upon completion of the new school, the land that the new school occupies would be transferred to the diocese. The land that the current school buildings occupy would be transferred to the Council. As the new school building is likely to be a two story building, the footprint of the new school would likely occupy a similar footprint to the existing building resulting in limited change to the existing arrangements.

Objection theme 3

Increasing the capacity of the school would result in increased congestion in the area. This is a serious safety concern for residents and pupils.

Governing body's response to the objection raised

A full transport assessment would be undertaken as part of the design process for the new school building. This would assess the impact on the local infrastructure. The transport assessment would be used as part of the design process to mitigate against any negative impacts identified. The governing body would work closely with the Council's 21st Century Schools Team throughout the design process.

The final design would be subject to planning permission. The planning process includes a statutory consultation with local residents. Local residents would be able to provide feedback on the design, including the transport assessment.

The governing body would also work closely with the Council's 21st Century Schools Team and the contractor to limit disruption during the construction of the new school building on the existing site. Delivery times would be restricted during peak times to limit the impact. The Council has advised that site logistics are assessed as part of the tender process.

Objection theme 4

The proposal does not offer value for money for taxpayers.

The governing body's response to the objection raised

As outlined above, the Council has a statutory duty to secure sufficient school places both in number and character. This proposal supports the Council to meet its statutory duty as projections indicate St David's CIW Primary School would not have sufficient capacity to meet future demand without expansion.

The proposal would also result in new facilities that would be available for community use. The existing facilities are in poor condition and are unsuitable for community use.

The new school building would also reduce ongoing repairs and maintenance costs. The new school building would also meet BREEAM Excellent by ensuring efficiency and sustainability.

The proposal would result in 21st century learning environments for existing and future pupils of St David's CIW Primary School.

It is also worth noting that the Council's contribution would not be funded using taxpayers' money but would utilise Section 106 funding received from housing developers. The remaining funding would be sought from Welsh Government through the 21st Century Schools Programme. A higher contribution rate is allocated to faith schools at 85%. The funding would be subject to a business case which would be assessed by Welsh Government.

This proposal meets a number of the 21st Century Schools Programme objectives, including;

- expansion of schools and colleges in areas of increased demand for educational services;
- addressing condition of educational assets; and
- making assets available for community use where demand exists, to optimise the infrastructure and resources for public services.

Objection theme 5

The methodology used to model future demand for school places is flawed and does not reflect recent national social attitude surveys which put Anglican Christianity between 14-18%.

The governing body's response to the objection raised

The projected future demand for pupil places was provided by the Council's School Access and Organisation Team. The Council's pupil projection methodology follows Audit Commission guidance and is based on the application of catchment ratios and cohort survival rates (the relationship between the number of pupils in one cohort in one school year, and the same cohort in the following school year). Pupil projections are evidence based and also take account of current and historical school data, birth rates, planned housing developments and cross catchment movement. A 2013 Estyn Inspection of the Vale of Glamorgan's Services for Children and Young People reported "The authority has appropriate systems in place for forecasting pupil numbers and the requirements for school places using a suitable range of data".

In terms of housing developments, the projected number of pupils emanating from a development is calculated using a formula derived from census data of householders in the Vale of Glamorgan. The formula is contained within the Council's Supplementary Planning Guidance for planning purposes. At nursery level this is calculated at 0.1 pupils per unit and at primary level 0.278 per unit. The demand for individual schools is based on historical percentage split.

It is also worth noting that 60% of pupils attending St David's CIW Primary School have been identified as being Christian.

Objection theme 6

Section 106 funding should not be used to fund this proposal as it would not benefit all of society. Affordable housing could be an alternative use.

The governing body's response to the objection raised

The Council has the power to enter into legal agreements with developers under Section 106 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990, to require developers to provide works, services or financial contributions to mitigate the impacts that arise as a consequence of the new development.

The Council's policies on affordable housing and planning obligations are set out in the Vale of Glamorgan Local Development Plan (LDP) (2011-2026) and the adopted Affordable Housing and Planning Obligations Supplementary Planning Guidance documents (SPGs).

The contributions that would be utilised to fund this proposal have been received for education and could not be used for alternative purposes, such as affordable housing, as per the individual Section 106 Agreements. As outlined in the consultation document, the anticipated future demand for St David's CIW Primary School is increasing as a result of recent and proposed housing developments. Therefore, the use of Section 106 contributions to fund this proposal would be consistent with the Section 106 Agreements.

Conclusion

The governing body conclude that the proposal would have a positive impact on the existing and future pupils of St David's CIW Primary School. The proposal would result in 21st century teaching and learning environments that would promote pupil wellbeing and attitudes to learning. Improved ICT infrastructure would ensure the school is adaptable to future changes to the curriculum.

The proposal would also ensure the Council is able to meet its statutory duty to provide sufficient school places. St David's CIW Primary School has limited capacity and oversubscription is becoming more regular as the local population increases with additional housing developments.

The existing buildings are in poor condition and ongoing maintenance is costly and disruptive. A new school building would reduce the revenue impact of this ongoing maintenance.

The governing body notes the concerns of local residents regarding increased traffic and would work closely with the 21st Century Schools Team to limit the impact of this. As outlined above, a full transport assessment would be undertaken and would be factored into the design. The final design would be subject to a planning application. This includes a formal consultation with local residents.

Recommendations

It is recommended:

1. That the governing body consider the objection report along with the individual objections received during the objection period.
2. That the governing body approve the publication of the objection report
3. That the governing body approve the implementation of the proposal to increase the capacity of St David's CIW Primary School from 140 places to 210 places from September 2021.
4. That the governing body refer the Consultation Document, Consultation Report, Statutory Notice, Objection Report and Objections to the Council for final determination in line with section 51 of the School Standards and Organisation (Wales) Act 2013.