

1. The educational case in favour is unsound and unproven:

- There is no definitive evidence to support the claim that educational outcomes will improve. The Welsh Auditor General's report on C21st Schools Programme questioned the link between new buildings and improved attainment. Estyn's main conclusion is hedged in guarded terms: saying in effect the proposal is unlikely to reduce educational outcomes.
- Demand for new places has been over-estimated. Alternative pupil yield calculations (using other highly regarded models and in light of empirical evidence from the Rhoose Point development), together with the results of the parent survey, indicate demand for pupil places at the new school will be lower than anticipated, leading to a higher level of surplus places than at present. Furthermore, the final 350 houses may or may not be completed by 2026 and might never get built at all.

2. Realistic and mutually beneficial alternatives have not been considered

For example, demand for additional places in Rhoose could be met by using s.106 and/or C21st Schools funding to extend and upgrade Rhws Primary to a two-form entry, 420 place school (increasing capacity in Rhoose by 45 places), with contingency plans for further extension should demand increase in time. At the same time, Llancarfan Primary School could access dedicated Welsh Government funding for rural schools to develop its offer as a pioneering forest school, taking full advantage of its natural setting and community links; attracting pupils from across the Vale and increasing its roll to 126; thereby building long term sustainability and serving parental choice for class-leading alternative provision in the rural Vale.

3. Three proposed 'regulated alterations' will mean the new school is unrecognisable from Llancarfan Primary School:

- it will be located in a different area (moving from a small rural location to a suburban housing estate five miles away);
- its catchment area will be different, and travel times within the catchment area for parents will change as the new site is located at the extreme south of the area;
- it will have capacity for almost twice as many pupils;
- it will have a nursery, extending the age range to 3-11;
- the staff body will change to accommodate the increased size of the school and new nursery provision;
- the governing body will change to reflect the new families and community the school will serve, and a new Instrument of Government will be required

if the school changes its name and if Llancarfan Community Council is no longer the minor authority responsible for nominating a community governor.

RESULT:

- The current school in Llancarfan will no longer exist;
- Primary school provision in Llancarfan will end, to the detriment of the village and local community;
- Llancarfan Primary's small school ethos and rural character, which are key to its appeal and success for parents and pupils, will be lost;
- The only school in the Vale of Glamorgan designated by the Welsh Government as rural will close by default and a new school in Rhoose, which does not meet the same criteria for designation, will take its place.

4. In the face of this, it would be perverse and counter-productive to approve a proposal that has such strong and united opposition from all major interest groups, including:

- **1,046** consultees (**92%** of all submissions);
- The collective view of Governing Bodies at Llancarfan and Rhws Primaries;
- The majority of Llancarfan School Council and pupils formally consulted;
- Llancarfan Community Council;
- All the main businesses and community groups serving the area (Fox & Hounds Pub, After School Club, Llancarfan & District Community Association, Llancarfan Society, St Cadoc's Church, Llancarfan Tennis Club, Llancarfan Community Cinema);
- Local politicians (Andrew RT Davies AM, David Melding AM, Jane Hutt AM, Rt Hon Alun Cairns MP, and councillors of all parties across the Vale).

In approving the proposal, the Council will have lost a golden opportunity to make a bold and mutually beneficial change to Western Vale primary provision: to promote Llancarfan Primary as a beacon of rural education along forest school principles, and to strengthen Rhws Primary's capacity to meet demand for new places in Rhoose without the risk of undermining and dividing the local communities affected.