

3-16 CONSULTATION MEETING

GOVERNORS & HEADTEACHERS

Thursday 29th April 2021

(via Microsoft Teams)

PRESENT:

Mrs Sue Walker - Chief Education Officer, MTCBC
Mrs Anne Robertson – Director of Schools, Archdiocese of Cardiff
Mr Anthony Lewis - Head of School Planning & Improvement, MTCBC
Mr Chris Jones - Building & Property Services Manager, MTCBC
Mrs Jayne Jones - Clerk to the Governors
Mr Dan Jones – Bid Manager, Willmott Dixon
Mr Simon Kneafsey - Lead Architect, Atkins
Mrs Fiona Gwilliam - Project Architect, Atkins
Mr Jason Pritchard - Project Manager, Aecom
Mr Gary Mitchell - Consultant Engineer, Cambria Consulting

IN ATTENDANCE:

Councillor Julian Amos (Chair of Governors)
Canon Barry English (Vice Chair of Governors)
Mr Adam Ridley
Councillor Lee Davies
Mrs Kath Phelan
Deacon David O’Keefe
Mr Julian Long
Mrs Mary Eaton
Mrs Karen Jones
Mrs Judith Budding
Mrs Sarah Thomas
Mrs Suzanne Williams
Mrs Georgina Thomas
Mrs Karen Lewis - Headteacher, St. Aloysius RC Primary School
Mrs Karen Wathan - Executive Headteacher, Federation of St. Mary’s and St. Illtyd’s RC Primary Schools
Mrs Sarah Hopkins - Headteacher, Bishop Hedley RC High School

APOLOGIES:

Mr Phil Strand
Mrs Leanne Adams
Mrs Carol Wheelwright

| NO. | DISCUSSION |
|-----|--|
| 1.0 | <p><u>Welcome/Background</u></p> <p>AL welcomed Governors and Headteachers to the meeting and introduced LA officers and external partners.</p> <p>AL explained that the purpose of the meeting was to consult on the revised options for the new 3-16 school. As part of the consultation process there will be targeted stakeholder sessions with Governors & Headteachers, Gurnos Football Club, Residents and there will also be a Public</p> |

| NO. | DISCUSSION |
|-----|---|
| | <p>Meeting on Wednesday, 5th May 2021.</p> <p>The consultation period follows on from the first consultation which took place in November 2020 and is being undertaken in response to a number of concerns raised which required looking at for the school site.</p> <p>The meeting today is to provide an opportunity to gather your views and answer any questions, raise any concerns on the revised options before completing the individual surveys. The revised options are: -</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Option 1 - build the school on plateau 1. • Option 2 - build the school on plateau 4. <p>SK, Lead Architect will now take you through the presentation and there will be an opportunity at the end of the presentation for any questions or comments you may have.</p> |
| 2.0 | <p>Presentation</p> <p>SK, Lead Architect gave a detailed presentation on the 3-16 school site consultation and advised that the initial feasibility highlighted that the existing Bishop Hedley site is not large enough for the new 3-16 school and as a result there was an initial consultation held in November which led to Option A being chosen. Following further review and scoping work that has been carried out in response to some of these concerns and the desire to provide an alternative option to site the school it was decided to go back out for a second consultation.</p> <p>Today's meeting is part of a series of consultation meetings and will be used to share information and provide an opportunity for Governors / Headteachers to ask questions at the end of the presentation.</p> <p>SK proceeded to outline the key issues identified in the initial consultation and the next steps to engage on the following options.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Option 1 - build the school on plateau 1. • Option 2 - build the school on plateau 4. <p>Governors noted the pros and cons to each option and SK advised the main difference to Option 1 is that all parking and drop-off is located on the same side of the road. Option 2 reverses the order of the site with the school building being located at the top of the site and the sports and playing fields at the bottom.</p> <p>The meeting was opened for questions/comments and governors asked the following questions: -</p> <p>Q: With the new options on the table, will the cost of the school increase or will it remain within budget?</p> <p>R: As it stands, currently we expect to remain within budget, however this may change as we progress through the project.</p> <p>Q: Can I ask a question on the ground water management of the site?</p> <p>R: There has been a change over the last 2 years in how ground water is managed. Since January 2019 we manage surface water at source.</p> <p>C: This is an interesting site and there will be further investigation of the ground to look at</p> |

| NO. | DISCUSSION |
|-----|---|
| | <p>appropriate drainage strategies, so the water is managed at source.</p> <p>Q: We are essentially building on a tip. With the amount of water penetration is this stable and will there be subsidence further down the line?</p> <p>R: We have already undertaken a desk top exercise to look at the general condition of each plateau. Plateau 2 is clay and was probably backfilled in the 1970s and this was identified as an issue. It has been identified that neither plateau 2 or 3 are suitable for building a school on. There will be further investigations to deal with the ground water management at source.</p> <p>C: With the mixed materials of the site, slip planes etc, stability is a concern.</p> <p>R: Part of our remit is to stay within the current topography and we will look closely at all elements and this will aid ground improvement and management of ground water at source.</p> <p>Q: In relation of parking, how many spaces will there be in option 2?</p> <p>R: There are challenges between parking and movement of traffic in and out of the site. GM can explain further.</p> <p>(GM) We work closely with Highways and Transport in this area, currently we are at the early stages and we are aiming to create a balance and to have a travel management plan that is fit for a 3-16 school. The travel plan will look to encourage less traffic and look at safer routes to schools, walking bus and will be considered in detail once an option has been agreed.</p> <p>C: It is great to have a travel plan and ideals on walking to school, but with the number of schools and the distances involved the reality is most parents will drive. With the amount of staff and pupils parking will almost certainly be an issue.</p> <p>R: As part of the decision, it is planned to have a one-way in, passengers alight on the left, which minimises the spaces needed and reduces parking conflict. Our previous expertise in this area will be drawn upon and this together with a travel management plan will minimise traffic conflict.</p> <p>Q: Can I clarify that there have been sufficient parking spaces included in the plan for the size of school required to be built i.e. numbers of staff and pupils etc.?</p> <p>R: Yes, we have included in the current design enough spaces for staff, visitors and drop off based on the accepted standards being used for parking facilities in schools. These standards have been shared with the Council's Highways and Engineering departments. The main car park indicatively includes 120 parking spaces but with a travel plan less may be needed.</p> <p>Q: Where will the changing rooms be for community use?</p> <p>R: Changing rooms will be considered as part of the design and may be added. As part of the consultation, we will be meeting with key users tomorrow to gather information and this will be used to inform decisions as part of the design stage.</p> <p>Q: The school is quite a distance from the pitch, what about ambulance access to the community pitch?</p> <p>R: This is a good point and has been included in the indicative plans – see F on the site plan for Option 2. We will look at this further once the option has been agreed and will be part of the design plan.</p> <p>C: Firstly, can I say that both options are much better and on one side of the road, which is therefore beneficial to staff and our pupils.</p> |

| NO. | DISCUSSION |
|-----|--|
| | <p>The travel plan will only be effective if we educate parents and work to change behaviour. The drop-off area is a good idea and is used correctly will work. We will need to try to discourage parents from parking outside the school for 30 minutes at the end of day.</p> <p>R: Yes agreed, it is about managing the situation, educating parents and ensuring the proper use of the one-way system.</p> <p>Q: Does both options have the same size footprint?</p> <p>R: Yes, similar size. We are aiming to achieve the required GIFA (Gross Internal Floor Area) with both options. The choice of plateau will not impact being able to build the right size building.</p> <p>Q: Out of both options, are the budget profiles different and are the timescales better/worse for each option?</p> <p>R: Both options are achievable, and this is a huge investment which has a significant budget of which the design team will use effectively to deliver a 3-16 school for our community, both options are viable but not without their challenges.</p> <p>Q: Can I go back to what (GM) said about the travel management plan, we need to be realistic, our climate is wet, and the surrounding area is hilly, and so walking buses, cycling etc will not always be an option and parents will drive.</p> <p>R: As part of our work, we will look at this and aim to deliver a working travel plan and include safer routes to schools. Sufficient parking spaces will be included and we can meet the required number for the school but there is also a strategy and an element of choice.</p> <p>Q: At the end of the school day there could be 3/4 buses arriving at the same time, will there be capacity for the buses?</p> <p>R: The current design has space for 7 buses to park.</p> <p>Q: Our school holds concerts/school productions after school, will there be enough spaces for parent to park on-site?</p> <p>R: Parking will be an on-going consideration and we can look at this when the option has been agreed. One option is having an overspill parking area to use for such events.</p> <p>Q: Gurnos Football Club are considering floodlights, if the pitch moves downs to the bottom area, this will be a concern for the residents. Currently Bishop Hedley use an indoor 3G football pitch, is it within the budget to consider this or could the existing 3Gs pitch remain?</p> <p>R: This is a fabulous facility; however, we are working within a budget and so it will be a consideration going forward.</p> <p>C: I can confirm the 3Gs facility is well used by the school and community.</p> <p>Q: What size is the current 3Gs pitch?</p> <p>R: ¾ size pitch.</p> <p>C: We will look at this and what key sports are needed.</p> <p>Q: We have a gym, is it possible to take this to the new school?</p> <p>R: A gym is a large space, and we need to look at this as we move forward with the design.</p> <p>Q: Last meeting I did mention a site meeting, I think a visit would be useful, taking on board current guidance, would anyone else like to visit the site?</p> <p>R: (BE) I would definitely like a site visit.</p> |

| NO. | DISCUSSION |
|-----|--|
| | <p>R: We would need to look at this in relation to timings and current social distancing guidance.</p> <p>C: This is a fantastic site which will add value to the community and consultation is so important.</p> <p>Q: When could a visit to the site take place?</p> <p>R: I will liaise with AL on this, if anyone is interested can you email the clerk, Jayne.jones@merthyr.gov.uk with an expression of interest.</p> <p>Councillor Amos thanked everyone for their input.</p> |
| 3.0 | <p><u>Timescales</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Decision on 2nd consultation expected 26th May. • Current plan is to start on site January 2022 and to open the new school in September 2023. |