



DESIGN AND ACCESS STATEMENT

NEW PRIMARY SCHOOL

YSGOL TREFERTHYR, CRICIETH

## PROJECT DIRECTORY

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## PROJECT DIRECTORY

### NEW PRIMARY SCHOOL

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**AG** | **A** AINSLEY GOMMON **ARCHITECTS**

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1.00 BACKGROUND TO THE PROPOSAL

1.1 INTRODUCTION

Ainsley Gommon Architects have been appointed by Cyngor Gwynedd to design a new Primary School for Cricieth. Cyngor Gwynedd intend to replace the existing School, Ysgol Trefferthyr with a new 150 capacity school to accommodate the children of the Cricieth catchment area.

After considering ten sites around the town, the current site along the A497 to the West of Cricieth town centre area was chosen as best suited for the proposal.

The proposed site is currently greenfield pastoral land, it’s bordered by a retaining wall for the A497 to the North, a wooded area to the East, by the trainline to the South and the pastoral landscape continues towards the West.

The new school will provide six classrooms, an ALN classroom, a Early Years Unit along with a number of different teaching spaces, staff and administration areas and a large hall.

This Design and Access statement will accompany the application for Full Planning Consent in conjunction with the drawings prepared by Ainsley Gommon Architects.

1.2 BACKGROUND

The second phase of the Welsh Government's 21st Century Schools Programme (Band B) began in April 2019 and will run until 2026. Following a prioritisation exercise based on the Authority's needs and Welsh Government requirements, The authorities vision and needs were highlighted in "Excellent Primary Education for the Children of Gwynedd" strategy and “Towards 2025 - Strategic Programme”. Five projects were identified which formed the successful application submitted by Gwynedd Council.

This application identified the need to improve primary provision in Cricieth, as the surveys identified that the condition of Ysgol Trefferthyr's buildings were in poor condition and that it would be uneconomical to continue to try to maintain these buildings in the future.

1.3 THE APPLICATION SITE

The Site is located at the eastern edge of Cricieth, immediately south of the A497.and occupies part of a pasture field featuring mature trees in its western parts and a small area of grazed mature woodland in its eastern and south-eastern parts. The Site slopes in a broadly uniform manner from its north-eastern edge down to its south-western corner.

The northern boundary of the Site is marked by a random stone retaining wall that rises 3-4m above the field. The retaining wall includes a parapet of ~1m height beyond which is the A497 and a lay-by adjacent to the north-western corner of the Site. The western boundary of the Site is open as the field continues ~200m to the west before meeting a vehicular track lined with a mixture of trees, hedges and fencing.

This western edge of the Site and the area immediately beyond it also includes a dispersed band of mature and veteran trees. The southern boundary of the Site features hedges and



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Image 01 - Current Ysgol Trefferthyr

small area of mature deciduous native woodland, beyond which is the Cambrian Line railway. The railway line is level with the western end of the Site but within a cutting at its eastern end, close to where it passes under Lon Fel.

The eastern boundary of the site features a small area of mature native woodland, connected to that on the southern boundary. A retaining wall wraps around the north-eastern corner of the Site beyond which there is an asphalt footway and grassed verge.

Residential properties in the environs of the site include, amongst others, Tan Lon Lodge adjacent to the A497 west of the Site, Bron Eifion Lodge and Caerfa north-east of the Site, and Titonfa Guest House west of the Site.

#### 1.4 VISION STATEMENT

A Local Review Panel was established in June 2019 to discuss the needs of the new school and identify possible sites for its location. A series of meetings were held between June 2019 and June 2020. Panel membership consisted of Governing Body representatives, the Headteacher of Ysgol Treferthyr, the Chair of the Governing Body and the Local Member. During the meetings the needs of the school were discussed, and consideration was given to 11 possible sites for locating the new school, including the current site along with other locations that had been identified jointly with the Governing Body. Following an appraisal of all the sites, the Panel agreed on the A497 Site as the preferred site.

Following Gwynedd Council Cabinet approval a statutory consultation was conducted on the proposal to increase the capacity of Ysgol Treferthyr to 150 and to relocate the school to an alternative site, referred to as the A497 site on 1 September 2023. The increase in capacity was to ensure enough school places for all primary aged children living within the catchment area.

Following the statutory consultation and releasing a statutory notice on the proposal, Gwynedd Council Cabinet gave its final consent to the proposal in its meeting on 18 May 2021.

The proposed brief for the school was to include the following;

- Reception and administration area
- Large hall with adjoining kitchen
- 1No. Early Years Unit classroom
- 6No. Classrooms from Reception through to year 6
- 1No. Dedicated ALN classrooms
- Food science/group room and library
- Supplementary teaching and group learning spaces
- Outdoor spaces for all classrooms
- Hygiene, WC and shower rooms for all users
- Plant and ancillary rooms

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## 1.00 - BACKGROUND TO THE PROPOSAL

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## 2.00 - CONTEXT

### 2.1 LOCATION

The proposed site is currently greenfield pastoral land, bordered by the railway line to the South, a retaining wall for the A497 to the North, a wooded area to the East and the pastoral landscape continues towards the West. The map to the right shows the current location of the school in Cricieth in blue and the proposed site in red.

The proposed new school will be located on greenfield land to the west of Cricieth. The site is located between the settlements of Cricieth and Llanystumdwy, around 700m to the centre of Cricieth. The site is located off the A497 which runs along the Llyn peninsula connecting the town to Porthmadog to the East and Pwllheli to the West.

The development of this area of Cricieth continued through 19th and 20th centuries and stops at Lon Fel in the West, with no real sense of arrival into Cricieth approaching along the A497 from this direction. The houses along the right as you enter the town here are large villa type Victorian semi's, set back from the wide road, with a lot of green space to their frontages.

The Landscape Visual Impact Assessment by Lingard Farrow Styles accompanies this Design Access Statement and gives an overview of the characteristics in this area and the areas surrounding the proposed development. This report also gives a quantitative and qualitative assessment of how the proposal will have an affect on the location chosen for the proposed a new school.

The main connection to the school in and out of Cricieth will be along the A497. This road into the town centre is well serviced and is likely to become the main route to the school for both staff and pupils.

Along Lon Fel there is access through to the beach and also to some of the nearby residential areas that grew throughout the 20th century along with most of this area to the east of the site for the proposal.

Outside of the site boundary to the North is the landscape and former landscape of Bron Eifion, which is currently a hotel, but was a former manor house that managed the surrounding estate, contributing a lot to the characteristic of the parkland landscape with open fields and mature trees. There is little variety in vegetation types besides pastoral landscape and mature trees.

### 2.2 POLICY CONTEXT

#### 2.21 PLANNING POLICY WALES

This Design and Access Statement explains the approach to creating a sustainable development through good design in accordance with Planning Policy Wales. This goes beyond aesthetics to include the social, environmental and economic aspects of the development.

This Statement aims to explain how the principles of Inclusive Design referred to in Planning Policy Wales have been incorporated to create a development that will be accessible, provide



Image 01 - The site (outlined in red) within its context, showing its relationship with the existing school (outlined in blue)

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flexibility in use, and an environment that is convenient and enjoyable to use for the pupils, teachers and local community.

2.22 TAN 12 - DESIGN

The development has been designed in accordance with the principles of Technical Advice Note (TAN) 12 (2016 edition). As such the Design and Access Statement has been formatted to reflect the content of TAN 12.

2.23 PPW Chapter 4 -PLANNING FOR SUSTAINABILITY

It is understood that buildings have an impact on their environment and contribute to carbon emissions both during their construction and use. Since the change introduced by Edition 7 of the Planning Policy Wales withdrew the national policy requirement for sustainable building standards and cancelled TAN22, the policy for sustainable development has been contained in Chapter 4 ‘Planning for Sustainability’. The approach to the design of the new school has been in accordance with these principles and the accompanying ‘Practice Guidance, Planning for Sustainable Buildings’ published by the Design Commission for Wales for Welsh Government.

2.24 LOCAL PLANNING POLICY

In preparation of this Design & Access Statement, the following policies were highlighted by the Planning service of Cyngor Gwynedd as being relevant to the development and as such, an explanation of how the school addresses each policy follows. The references on this section are from the Anglesey and Gwynedd Joint Local Development Plan and demonstrate the thinking behind the development of the school.

ISA 1	Infrastructure Provision
ISA 2	Community Facilities
PS 1	Welsh Language & Culture
PS 2	Infrastructure and developer contributions
PS 6	<i>Alleviating and Adapting to the Effects of Climate Change</i>
TRA 2	<i>Parking Standards</i>
TRA 4	<i>Managing Transport Impacts</i>
PCYFF 1	<i>Development Boundaries</i>
PCYFF 2	<i>Development Criteria</i>
PCYFF 3	<i>Designing &amp; Place Shaping</i>
PCYFF 4	<i>Design &amp; Landscaping</i>
PCYFF 5	Carbon Management
PCYFF 6	Water Conservation
PS 19	<i>Conserving and Where Appropriate Enhancing the Natural Environment</i>
AMG 3	<i>Protecting and Enhancing Features and Qualities that are Distinct to the Local Landscape Character</i>
AMG 5	<i>Local Biodiversity Conservation</i>

POLICY ISA 1: INFASTRUCTURE PROVISION

As part of the projects development process a Traffic Statement and Survey document was completed by YGC to reviews the current infrastructure and provides recommendations for improvements which includes;

- 20mph and 40mph buffer zones
- additional signage
- widening and upgrading the uncontrolled crossing of Lon Fel

- Provision of additional crossing on the A497

All of these have been included as part of the Civil Engineer’s design package and will be constructed by the appointed main contractor to improve the current infrastructure that is already in place for the site in Cricieth, strengthening its current links to the existing community and surrounding areas.

A new substation will be constructed on site to cover the additional electrical needs the school will bring while a sewerage package treatment plant will be provided on site.

POLICY ISA 2: COMMUNITY FACILITIES

This development is consistent with ISA 2 in terms of the provision of a new school building. The development is an enhanced community facility. The proposed location is adjoining the development boundary of Cricieth, providing an essential facility to support the local community. As part of the development, Cyngor Gwynedd have undertaken Impact Assessments for the New School needed in Cricieth, one of these was the Assessment of the probable impact on the Community and the full appendix of the assessments will accompany this application. As part of this assessment, it is deemed the proposed school with have a positive impact on the community on most considerations and some neutral. The proposal is easily accessible on foot and by cycle with the furthest houses in Cricieth being no more than a mile away from the proposed location, having relocated the school around 500 metres to the west of its current location. Cyngor Gwynedd have conducted a sequential test stating why the school should be situated on this site and this report will accompany the Design & Access Statement in this Application. The existing school falls below standards set by the Welsh Government on the area required by the number of pupils at the school, it was considered to expand the existing school onto neighbouring land to the north of the school site, but there is a covenant in place restricting the development of a school on this land.

POLICY PS 1: WELSH LANGUAGE & CULTURE

Again, as part of the development, Cyngor Gwynedd have undertaken Impact Assessments for the New School needed in Cricieth, one of these was the Language Impact Assessment Report, the full appendix of the assessments will accompany this Application. This report has concluded the following:

“Having considered the content of this assessment, we believe that building a new school in Cricieth would have a positive impact on the Welsh language, primarily as there would be more opportunities for Cricieth children to use Welsh socially and educationally, as the new school will offer better resources for more extra-curricular activities.”

POLICY PS 2: INFRASTRUCTURE AND DEVELOPER CONTRIBUTIONS

As part of the development Civil enhancement works will be provided to enable the development. It is not envisaged that any additional contributions are required as the scheme provides a much needed community School for Cricieth.

POLICY PS 6: ALLEVIATING & ADAPTING TO THE EFFECTS OF CLIMATE CHANGE

The school will take full account to attempt to alleviate the effects of climate change, primarily by proposing the school functions as zero carbon development once built. This is a result of the design team working to reduce energy demand needed for the school, use energy efficient systems, all helping to reduce greenhouse emissions and encourage sustainable active lifestyles of its users. A full SABS application will be made with the Planning Application to illustrate how the development will adapt to the effects of climate change in a future with

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increasing frequency of flooding events and pollution.

From a landscape perspective, Lingard Farrow Styles have developed a proposal to ensure that it has the ability to adapt to the harmful effects of climate change. This has been done through ensuring as many trees as possible are kept, where safe, and planting a range of native species to increase biodiversity. A drainage design has also been designed to cope with increased precipitation.

**POLICY TRA 2: PARKING STANDARDS**

As explored in the traffic survey that accompanies the Planning Application. Following to the CSS Parking Standards in Wales - a primary school in this location would need around 50 spaces at peak capacity, the car park provides 37 spaces for day to day use. At times where additional parking is needed, such as parents evening or a school performance/concert, the MUGA has been designed to accommodate at least 28 spaces. Within the main carpark, four spaces have been designated for disabled use, four are electric vehicle charging spaces, and two are designated for car share spaces to encourage sustainable transport where travelling by car is necessary. There is also the provision for up to two bus or coach spaces.

**POLICY TRA 4: MANAGING TRAFFIC IMPACTS**

This is explored in detail in the traffic report. The development has been planned and designed to promote sustainable modes of transport, encouraging walking and cycling to school. Walking and cycling will be promoted as the best way to commute to school but will also promote sustainable forms of vehicle transport where necessary with car sharing and the use of electric vehicles will be prioritised with spaces closest to the development given to them after disabled spaces. The traffic report examines the safe routes to school, primarily looking at pedestrian and cycling routes, suggesting improvements that would need to be made to make these a viable option for pupils to use certain pavements and cycleways. Once on the site, the hierarchy clearly denotes pedestrians and cyclists have priority and a separate path takes users from the pavement to the school without crossing any access road or parking area. Adjacent to the entrance there is also covered cycle parking area for 10 cycles, more than required, in a spot that benefits from passive surveillance and is close to the entrance to the school.

**POLICY PCYFF 1: DEVELOPMENT BOUNDARIES**

The new build school would lie adjacent to the development boundary as outlined in the LDP. However, policy PCYFF 1 will allow development outside the boundaries if the proposal is consistent with the relevant policies.

During local discussions, the Local Review Panel, which included representation of the Governing Body of Ysgol Trefferthyr, considered several possible sites for building a new school in Cricieth. At the beginning of the discussion, eleven sites had been identified for consideration to build a new school, with capacity for 150 pupils, to replace the existing Ysgol Trefferthyr. The outcome of the discussions was that members agreed on a shortlist of four sites for further consideration following LRP2. As a result of that shortlist, Ainsley Gommon were appointed to conduct a feasibility study on these four sites for the location of the school. Assessments of a more detailed nature were carried out on those sites in LRP3, agreeing to carry out further work on two possible sites, namely the Capel Uchaf Site and the A497 Site. After considering further investigations and work on these two sites, agreement was reached on the A497 Site as the preferred site at the LRP4 meeting, as noted in the Sequential Test provided by Cyngor Gwynedd, which accompanies the Planning Application.

**POLICY PCYFF 2: DEVELOPMENT CRITERIA**

Looking earlier in this chapter at some of the key Planning Policy Wales, the school complies with the relevant topics in the National Planning Policy and guidance. The proposed school has been designed to be an efficient use of land, both to save purchasing costs for the local authority and to reduce the amount of hard standing and impact on the land.

**POLICY PCYFF 3: DESIGNING & PLACESHAPING**

Whilst being a highly subjective matter, we believe the proposed school demonstrates high quality design; this is a result of the experience of the design team, the development of the design through team design reviews, the feedback on schools from the same designers in the area and addressing the ten points set out within the guidance for this policy.

1. The school seeks to complement the character of the site; we are respecting the fact it is in a rural setting, keeping the building low and lower than the adjacent road, a single storey with a low pitched roof—the elements that do go higher than this roof, the Hall and Early Years Unit area, protrude slightly higher and take on a form using agricultural references found in nearby fields, with corrugated black steel used as cladding.
2. Cricieth is a historic town with a distinct heritage surrounding the castle, the school is not intended to be a landmark building or used as a gateway building into Cricieth; but instead its intended to sit within its landscape, nestling into the sloped field and surrounding trees. The building runs with the contours of the site in an attempt to both reduce the amount of earthworks needed for the school and to reduce its visual impact. The school will also benefit from a planting scheme led by Lingard Farrow Styles to plant a vegetation buffer between the road and the site, working both to reduce noise pollution and building on the reducing the visual impact.
3. The building will use some more contemporary elements such as extensive glazing and softly coloured cladding. These will be used in conjunction with materials more typical of the area and its setting, such as white rendered walls, corrugated steel and local stone walls. The landscape scheme proposed by Lingard Farrow Styles recognises the parkland feel currently developed on the site through and builds on this typology with new tree planting and improving the ecology through increasing species numbers and variety on the site. The soft landscape will both work as an educational resource for pupils of the school and help to screen the development from the roads surrounding the school, the hard landscape proposals are kept to a minimum.
4. The scheme is registered with and is on track to achieve Secure by Design certification, the design has been developed to reduce any spots for any misbehaviour and provides extensive passive surveillance around the site, particularly around areas that would require added security around the entrances and bike storage.
5. As explore in TRA 2 and TRA 4, the proposal is supported by a traffic plan and explores what will be needed to develop safe routes to school with a scheme of renovations to the surrounding area to encourage linkages with the surrounding community. Once on the site, pedestrians and cyclist have priority and the natural wayfinding to the main entrance and classroom entrances is complimented with convenient secure cycle storage and fully part M compliant access routes from the pavement to classroom.
6. As required by developed of this size and nature, a full SABS application will be made to ensure the schemes drainage system is designed to limit surface run-off to reduce the affects of flooding and prevent pollution by dealing with the water on site as much as possible.

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7. As mentioned earlier, the scheme not only ensures a barrier free experience for its future users, but it puts the needs of people with disabilities first ensuring the same principal route and use for all.
8. It is proposed the school will be an exemplar school as part of the 21st century schools programme and as such will include for modern telecommunications and information where practicable.
9. Whilst the scheme will not be located on a street, its entrance is an important frontage for people who enter the site and visit. The public elevation has been designed to naturally guide visitors into the main entrance lobby and will be primarily clad in a local stone, helping to tie the school in its context add a sense of familiarity for its users.
10. The future users of the school will be encouraged to become active in the environment of the school and into the community of Cricieth. In addition to the MUGA, hard play area and sports field, the pupils will have the opportunity to learn about becoming part of and managing the ecology of the school within the horticulture and forest school. As additional resources these will help pupils understand and appreciate the inherent values of going to school with the woodland and horticultural resources the school will provide.

#### **POLICY PCYFF 4: DESIGN & LANDSCAPING**

The landscape design has been conducted by Lingard Farrow Styles, who have been a key member of the design team from the outset and have collaborated in developing the proposal. This section explores how the landscape responds to criteria set out in PCYFF4. LFS have prepared a Landscape Visual Impact Assessment and this report is included within this application that explores the points within this criteria further. As explored in the LVIA by LFS, it was concluded there are no significant effects on the landscape character and this was explored in sections 3 and 7.2 of their report. The building works with the natural contours of the landscape and as such has no significant effect on the landform of the site. With regard to respecting and protecting local and strategic views, this was explored by LFS in their LVIA section 8 where it is concluded there are no significant effects on visual receptors. Section 6 displays how the proposal respects, retains and compliments the existing positive natural features and existing landscape on site.

With regard to existing trees on site to be retained and removed, the design team has worked hard to minimise the impact on any trees and to keep any trees needing to be removed to a minimum. Eryri Arb have conducted an arboricultural report and this will be included within this report. There are a number of trees recommended for removal within this report on safety grounds. The only other tree being considered for removal is an Alder which currently sits in wet ground on the site, following improvement works on the culvert this sits in, the ground conditions will change and not provide a stable environment for this tree and is proposed for removal. The loss of unsafe trees will be mitigated by a significant tree planting. Regarding the proposed new planting and landscape, this is explored in LFS landscape plan and shows details of numbers and species etc. and demonstrates a phased programme of native species planting.

#### **POLICY PCYFF 5: CARBON MANAGEMENT**

As part of the funding requirements Cyngor Gwynedd are aiming to develop a zero carbon School. The first principals are to improve the external envelope of the school and making this as air tight as possible to retain as much of the heat within the building. The U values proposed are much improved on current Building Regulations values. A natural ventilation system will bring in fresh air while keeping CO2 levels within the classroom to a minimum to provide the

students with the optimum teaching conditions. The new school is being designed to reduce the reliance on fossil fuels by embracing low and zero carbon technologies. Air source heat pumps are being designed to provide all of the heating and hot water demands of the site and photovoltaic panels will be installed on the roof to further drive down the energy of the building. These photovoltaic panels will generate on site electricity which will help to reduce the reliance on electricity from the national grid. Future climate change scenarios have been considered within the design and passive ventilation strategies designed to adapt to increasing temperatures.

#### **POLICY PCYFF 6: WATER CONSERVATION**

JP Structural have worked with the design team to develop a Sustainable Urban Drainage System (SUDS) for the school in the form of porous hard surfaces, attenuation tanks positioned under the MUGA and an agreed discharge into the water course as agreed with the SAB officer. A concept application has been submitted to the Authority for review and comments while a full application will be submitted inline with the Planning Application submission.

#### **POLICY PS 19: CONSERVING & WHERE APPROPRIATE ENHANCING THE NATURAL ENVIRONMENT and**

#### **Policy AMG 3: PROTECTING AND ENHANCING FEATURES AND QUALITIES THAT ARE DISTINCTIVE TO THE LOCAL LANDSCAPE CHARACTER**

As noted earlier Lingard Farrow Styles have carried out a Landscape Visual Impact Assessment where they have stated that the new school does not effect the designated character area nor does it effect the local landscape character. The proposal looks to enhancing the site by improving the biodiversity as shown on the LFS landscape scheme.

#### **POLICY AMG 5: LOCAL BIODIVERSITY CONSERVATION**

An Ecology report has been carried out for the site and accompanies the Application which states that the proposal does not negatively effect the local biodiversity of the site and any change will be an improvement to the ecological value of the site.

#### **2.3 SITE FEATURES AND CONDITION**

The proposed site is currently greenfield pastoral land, its bordered by the railway line to the South, a retaining wall for the A497 to the North, a wooded area to the East and the pastoral landscape continues towards the West. [The map to the right shows the current location of the school in Cricieth in blue and the proposed site in red—MF comment: there's no map on this page], the current location is very central to the town but following the feasibility study conducted the proposed site was most suitable and is moving 500m to the west.

The proposed new school is located on greenfield land to the west of Cricieth. The site is located between the settlements of Cricieth and Llanystumdwy, around 700m outside the center of Cricieth. The school is located off the A497 which runs along the Llyn peninsula connecting the town to Porthmadog and Pwllheli.

The site is currently accessed by a field gate to the north west of the site directly off the A497 but this access is limited in width and visibility splay and was deemed unsuitable for access for a proposed school. Any vehicular access for the site will have to be from this northern boundary, this boundary to the site predominantly a stone retaining wall as seen in the photos to the right. This retaining wall varies from 2 meters up to 4 meters in parts, part of this will have to be removed to form an access road onto the site however this wall does provide a

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good level of security to the site and will also help to passively reduce the effect of noise pollution from the traffic along the A497.

The western site boundary was decided based on the area the school needed and has no existing site boundary per se, however the line of existing trees in this area will form a strong boundary to the open field of the school and distinguish the school from the surrounding pasture. The ground along this boundary is slightly water logged. The watercourse feeding this area will be diverted to reduce the water causing this making better ground for school grounds and a playing field.

There are a significant amount of trees on the site; an arboriculture report has been undertaken by Eryri Arb. to identify and categorise the trees to understand the work needed on any of the trees. The trees are predominantly located to the east of the site inside the junction of the A497 and Lon Fel. Following the arb. report, most of these trees will remain with some in a poor condition that will need to be removed. Any trees removed will be mitigated by the planting of new trees to help support the mixed broadleaf woodland feel to the area. This corner of the site is also a logical point of entry for both pedestrians and cyclists coming to the site.

The trees of the eastern area also continue along the southern boundary which separates the site from a railway line with infrequent services along the llyn peninsula. The vegetation forming this boundary is a mixture of mature trees and more pioneering species that have developed in the past 10-20 years forming a strong boundary with the vegetation restricting sound and views of the railway behind. There is also a signal box along this boundary where access for maintenance will need to be retained for Network rail.

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3.00 - FACTORS AFFECTING DEVELOPMENT

3.01 TAN 15– DEVELOPMENT AND FLOOD RISK

The National Resources Wales’ website from which the Flood risk map to the right was attained confirms that the site in question is not within a fluvial or tidal floodplain. However, a Flood Consequences Assessment has been prepared by Waterco Consultants on behalf of the Applicant which will be submitted with the Planning Application.

3.02 EXISTING GROUND CONDITIONS

Ground conditions are discussed in the Geo-Environmental Report which will be submitted as part of the Planning Application.

3.03 ARCHAEOLOGY

The Archaeology Report that will accompany the Planning Application finds there are no significant archaeological issues to be aware of that will have an impact on any proposed development.

3.04 PROPOSED SERVICES

All service utility searches have been sought, and show the possibility of connecting to services either on the A497, Lon Fel or the access road for the Welsh water depot West of the site towards Llanystumdwy. It is currently imagined the school will not connect to gas mains and will produce heating and hot water through heat pumps and the ovens in the kitchen will be fully electric with induction hobs. A new substation will be constructed on site to serve the school

3.05 DRAINAGE

The surface water drainage strategy for the site will be detailed in accordance with the Welsh Assembly Government’s Implementation of Schedule 3, ensuring that a fully compliant sustainable drainage system will be provided. This will restrict the forward flow of the site to the current greenfield run off levels whilst ensuring that there is capacity within the design to cater for storm events up to an including the 1 in 100 year event with a 30% allowance for climatic change and 10% for urban creep.



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Image 01 - Image from the flood risk plan, Natural Resources Wales

Image 02 - Image of the site from the south near the wet ground

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4.00 - DESIGN OBJECTIVES

4.01 THE BRIEF

The project involves the design and construction of a new Primary School for Ysgol Trefferthyr in Cricieth, located on a greenfield site south of the A497 to the west of Cricieth.

The Brief is for a development of a new primary school with 6 classrooms, additional learning needs classroom (ALN), a Early Years Unit along with a number of different teaching spaces, a hall, staff and administration areas.

The school is needed to meet the demand for more spaces for pupils to relieve pressure on local primary schools, including Ysgol Trefferthyr, that are overcapacity and to accommodate additional pupils from the new developments in the area.

This project will be one of the schools in Cyngor Gwynedd’s 21st Century School Programme forming part of its Primary School Modernisation.

The key measure is to improve educational services for Ysgol Trefferthyr by providing modern Primary Education facilities offering the potential for growth and facilitating improved services, integration and access for the area.



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Image 01 - Proposed site plan

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4.02 DESIGN CONCEPT AND PRINCIPLES

From the outset it has been all parties aim, working closely with Ysgol Trefferthyr, Cyngor Gwynedd, the local community and other stakeholders, to create a modern, well-equipped facility that will enhance the pupils’ learning environment. While being contemporary, the new development must sit comfortably within the landscape and being energy efficient, encouraging ease of operation and convenience, with the aim of achieving BREEAM excellent.

The main principle that led the schools initial design stemmed from the school being below the level of the A497 and, with the majority of the development being low level roof, trying to sit within the landscape, while the form of the Hall creates a larger element sitting above the remaining school. This approach reflects the form of typical agricultural structures found in the fields around.

The building was established on the principles of orienting itself in the landscape in such a way as not to disturb rural characteristics of the site, yet still providing a safe, suitable and enriching environment for the pupils of the new school. The form of the building helps divide the school in terms of Key Stages and at the same time creates a safe environment, separating the road from the school. Passive surveillance of the play spaces will create a safe space to play for the all years of the school.

The school will be accessible to all with facilities, such as ALN classrooms and hygiene facilities, being wheelchair accessible with level access throughout, satisfying Part M, but also helping the building sit in its context. Lowering the height of the building reduces the visual impact of the development and with some key design choices regarding its layout and façade, helps blend in with its wooded surroundings.

The layout of the site was largely informed by working with the existing contours to minimise the amount of earthworks and also navigated the RPAs of the existing trees. The level difference between the road and the site meant the access road for the school and car park was sloped to deal with this, but at the same time helped to strengthen the concept of sitting the building deep within its landscape.

The choice of materials for the school building were decided through careful study of the locale and a consideration for buildability. The stone was chosen to provide grounding in terms of its geological context and architectural similarities to buildings of the area. The metal coated composite panels are being used to build up the scale of the building and to articulate elements of the buildings such as the Main Hall and the Early Years Unit. The panels were also chosen because of their excellent environmental qualities.

The form of the roof stems from the design objective of minimising the impact of the building on the surrounding landscape. The pitch of the roof is kept low to reduce the scale and impact of the build. The material choice is one of practicality, longevity, low maintenance and a finishing colour that will reduce the visual impact for passers by.

The colour choice of camouflage green colour was chosen based on a colour study of the surrounding landscape and looking at the landscape features that are being proposed on the site as part of the improvements. The colour will blend into the muted green tones of the seasonal meadows and tree plantings that will encompass the site.



4.00 - DESIGN OBJECTIVES

NEW PRIMARY SCHOOL

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Image 01 - Proposed Building Plan showing the building layout

Image 02 - Southern Elevation showing the colour pallet of cladding

01

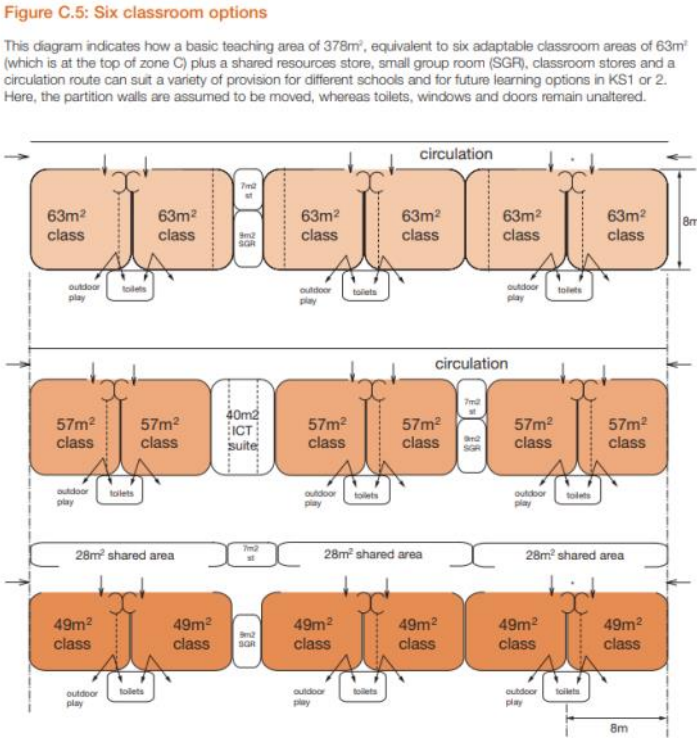
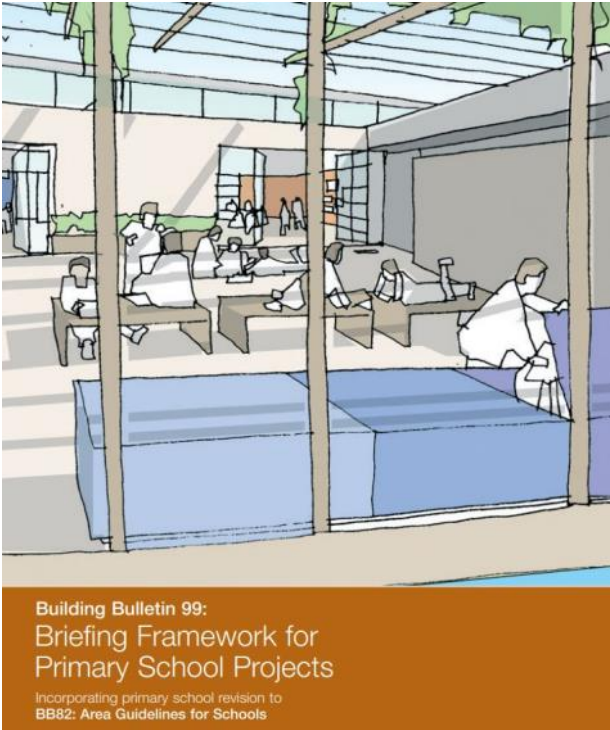
02

The one element that will stand above this low roof is the Main Hall. The intentions of replicating an agricultural hut or barn are evident in the material choice of a black corrugated steel profile roof, with this material also being explored on the walls of this element.

4.03 REQUIREMENTS

The requirement is for a 120+ school with an ALN classroom, and a Early Years Unit which will provide the level of accommodation and facilities commensurate with the number of pupils and the guidance taken from Building Bulletin 99, The Department of Education and Skills Briefing Framework for Primary School Projects.

The plan of the building takes into account the levels of the surrounding area, the aspect from the A497 and also the site analysis that was carried out prior to design work commencing. The building layout is designed in such a way to put associated rooms near to each other whilst considering their scale and activity.



02	03
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Image 02 - Cover of BB99  
Image 03 - Typical diagrammatical arrangement outlined in BB99

4.00 - DESIGN OBJECTIVES

NEW PRIMARY SCHOOL

YSGOL TREFERTHYR, CRICIETH

## 5.00 CHARACTER

## 5.1 LAYOUT AND LANDSCAPE

The provision of the building on this site provides a much needed educational and community resource. The scale and massing of any new building is carefully considered, so that it fits in with the surrounding context. The built form is proportioned to allow for as much space as possible for soft and hard play areas and also the required sports facilities.

Whilst the plan shape is designed to create private and semi-private spaces for the school, it also considers the relationship with the adjacent road that overlooks the school site.

The general landscaping has to include for the following provision, outlined in our Client's brief and within BB99: sports area, multi-use games area, habitat teaching zone and soft and hard play areas. Lingard Farrow Styles have undertaken the landscape design for the school and their plans accompany this Planning Application. Further information can of course be found on their proposals, as well of the impact of the proposals explored in great depth in their LVIA.

The main aspect when approaching the site from Cricieth will remain largely unchanged, with the wooded area remaining on site. Dangerous trees will be removed and new trees will be planted to preserve the stability of the existing trees and ensure this woodland will remain a valuable visual and ecological asset to the area for years to come.

The main boundary of the site that fronts onto the A497 already benefits from a significant level difference, this boundary will also be planted up with a buffer strip that will be designed by LFS which will provide a number of benefits: increasing tree planting, visual buffer between the road and the school, audio buffer to reduce impact from the road and will also continue to increase ecological benefits with an opportunity to increase onsite biodiversity.

The approach along both the access road and footpath will be planted up either side to provide an important threshold sequence for everyone arriving at the school. Once inside the school, the surrounding landscape opens up, with play spaces and outdoor learning environments making the most of the long reaching views to surrounding fields and towards the sea. Planting will focus on low maintenance, native species that will develop to become a natural learning resource for the pupils to engage in their surrounds and also provide a massive ecological benefit to the site, which is currently considered to have low value from the lack of variety in species and the lack of consistent landscape management.

The figures regarding the parking standards for the site as agreed with Cyngor Gwynedd's Highways Department can be found in the Traffic Survey conducted by Cyngor Gwynedd. We have considered the appropriate location of the following to generate the proposed layout:

- School and Nursery
- Disabled spaces (inc Visitors)
- Drop off zone
- Commercial Vehicle
- Cycles pupils & staff

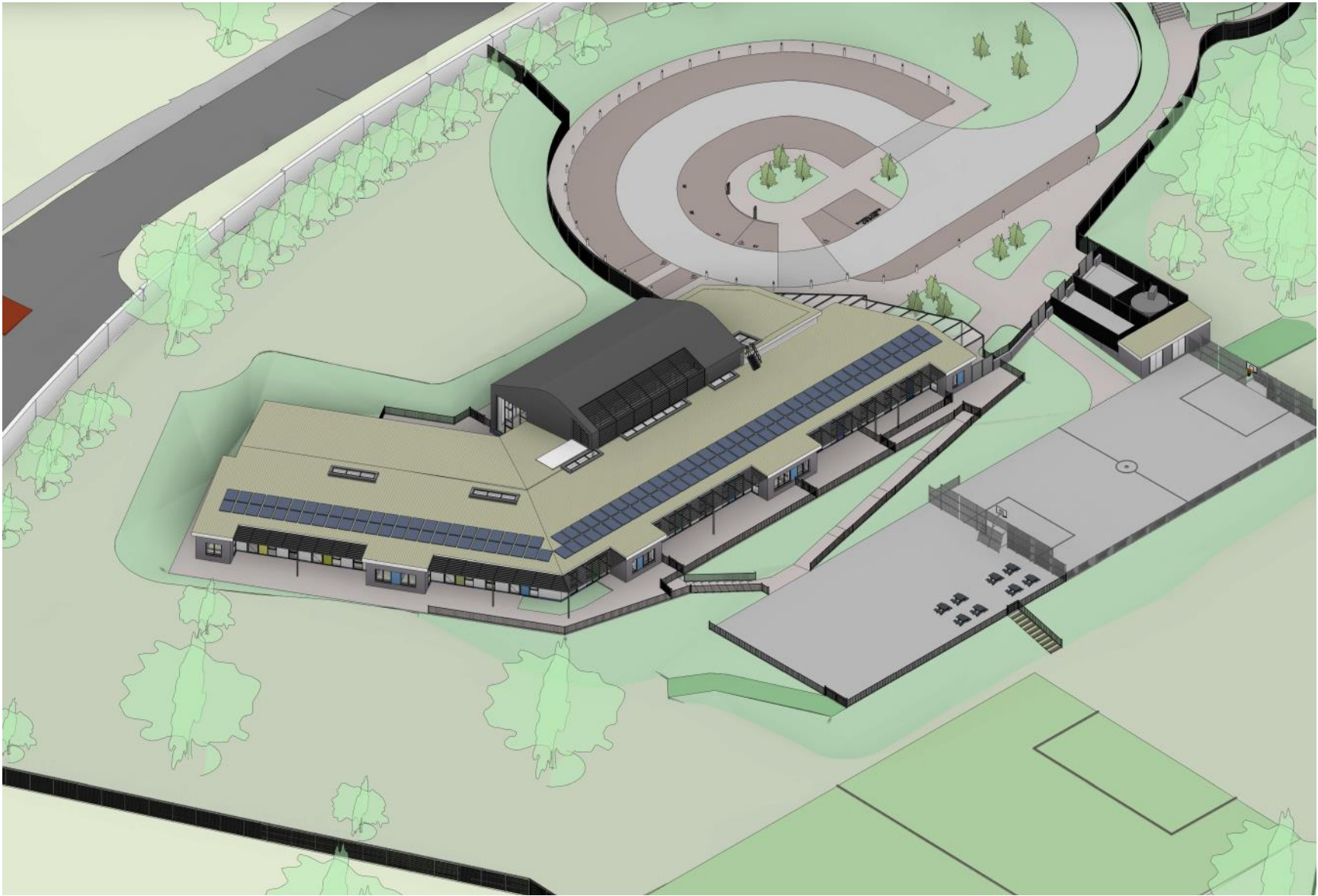
## 5.02 SCALE

The proposed development site is located in a rural area, and the scale of the proposed



Image 01 - Proposed Landscaping plan

building will reflect this. The building will remain mostly single storey and in parts for plant and servicing become two storey, reflecting the general nature of the surrounding agricultural and residential buildings. The building will be designed in a way to help reduce the overall scale and visual impact of the building on the surrounding environment, particularly by setting it below the road level and attempting to reduce the impact of this roof with an green coloured roof. As well as relating to the road, the building will also be designed to take into account the relationship to the adjacent woodland.



03
04

Llun 03 - Golygfa 3D o'r dde o ddyluniad yr ysgol yn dangos ei chysylltiad gyda'r ardaloedd cyfagos

Llun 04 - Gweddllun yr ysgol yn dangos y brif neuadd uwch ben strwythur isel y to

5.00 - CHARACTER

NEW PRIMARY SCHOOL

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### 5.03 APPEARANCE

The rural character of the development site means a suitable palette of materials is key to ensuring the development does not appear completely out of character and the choice aims to complement the surrounding context. Materials will be used in a way to articulate the function of the building in certain areas and will help to break down the scale of the development to bring it to a human scale.

It is proposed that the new development will be sympathetic to the existing character whilst also providing some architectural interest and variety within the building forms and detailing to create an uplifting scheme within the area. The external built form of the buildings has been designed with low lying roof to sit the building in the landscape, heavy built stone walls and reserved, expressive fenestration. A palette of materials has been chosen in a sensitive manner in order to reduce the impact of the building and allow the development to be sympathetic to the local vernacular. The proposed external materials are:

**STONE WALLS:** Some areas of existing boundary/retaining walls and new buildings external walls will be clad in natural stone, particularly in areas that protrude from the main footprint of the building for cloakrooms, toilets and practical teaching spaces. This will be salvaged from the demolition process of the wall or sourced locally and allow the building to fit into its context.

**RENDER WALLS:** The majority of the external materials to the classrooms and the entrance area will be white render walls, these will match a large majority of the houses in the locality and help make the school feel more familiar for pupils. It creates contrast with elements such as the stone walls.

**COLOUR COATED METAL PROFILED PANELS:** As the primary cladding material of the hall, the panels will allow easy and fast construction of the new school but will be used in a way that gives the opportunity to articulate these elements. Through using a patchwork of panels around the entrance, this will help to reduce the overall scale of the building and the verticality of the woodland will be reflected by the orientation of the cladding in this entrance.

**ROOFING:** The roof has been designed in a way that is low lying, so it has a low impact on the surrounding area while the colour selection of camouflage green will help it be concealed in the surrounding landscape.

**PV ROOF:** A fully integrated Photovoltaic roof is proposed in parts of the south-facing slope of the roof, this will not be too dominating visually from the main approach of the building, being oriented away from the south façade.

**WINDOWS:** A combination of Grey aluminium and uPVC windows are proposed throughout. The scale of these windows will change along the elevation which adds interest and variety to the elevation, whilst the rhythm reflects the internal layout; rooflights in the corridors help bring light deeper into the plan and also provide a way of naturally ventilating this central space.



Image 01– Aerial view of proposed school, looking South

01

## 5.00 - CHARACTER

### NEW PRIMARY SCHOOL

YSGOL TREFERTHYR, CRICIETH

#### 5.04 DENSITY MIX AND USE

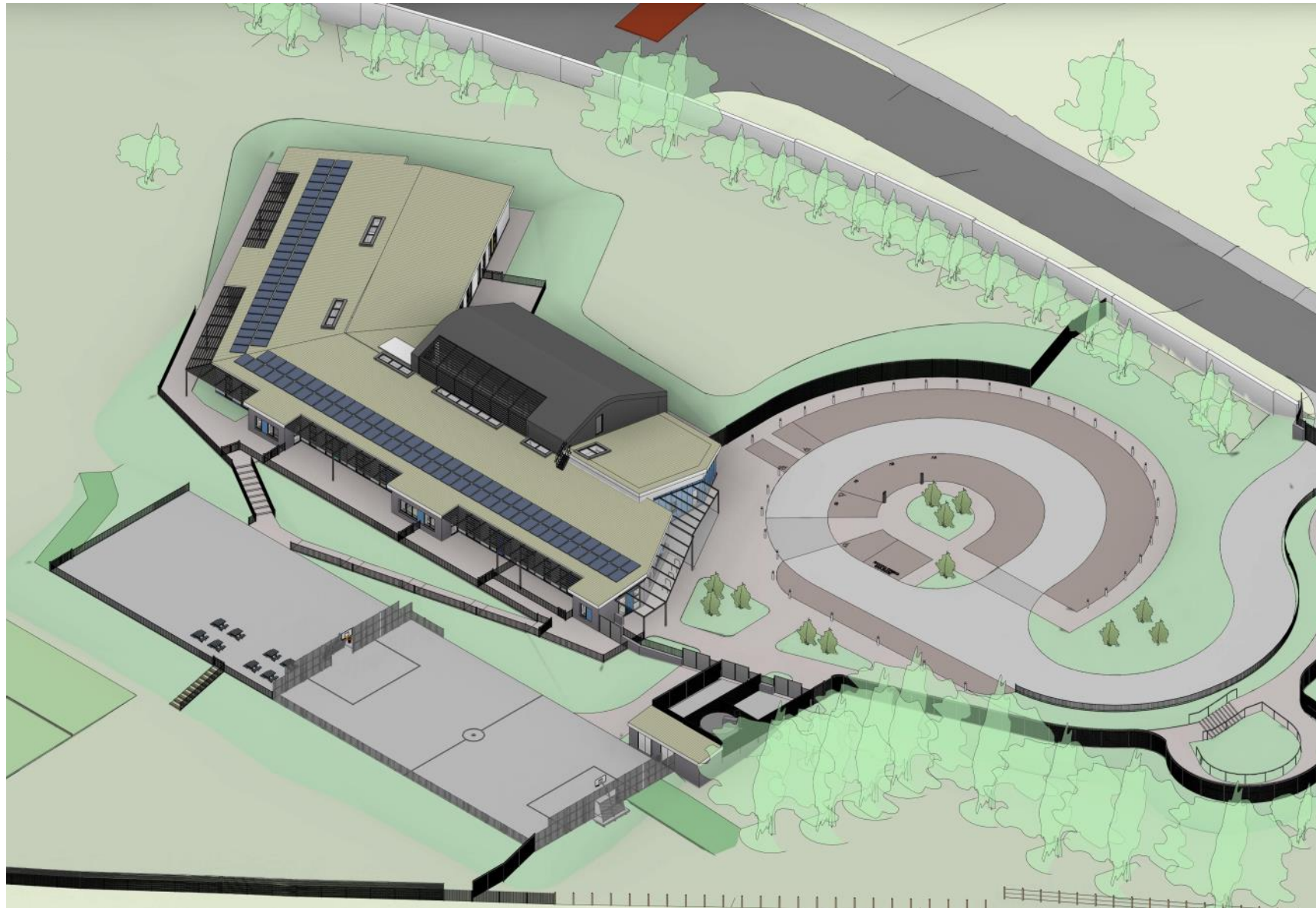
The development will provide 6 classrooms, 1 additional learning needs classrooms (ALN), a Early Years Unit along with a number of different teaching spaces, a large hall, staff and administration areas.

The school will also include the following central resources;

- Library / IT Suite / Food Science classroom
- Main Hall (also used for dining)
- Small group room & practical teaching space
- Chair store
- Staging/appliance store
- PE Store (internal and external)
- Kitchen facilities/servery

Staff and Administration spaces

- Main Entrance/general office/reception
- Head's office/meeting room
- Staff room
- PPA room
- Server room
- Reprographics bay
- Caretaker/maintenance
- Central stock store
- Sick bay
- Therapist room
- Accessible toilets/hygiene facilities
- Toilets for visitors and disabled
- Staff toilets
- Cleaners stores



02

Image 02 - Aerial view of proposed school, looking North west

5.00 - CHARACTER

NEW PRIMARY SCHOOL

YSGOL TREFERTHYR, CRICIETH

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5.05 EXTERNAL SPACES

As part of the site plan, shown on the right, an initial landscape design demonstrates the treatment of the external spaces, and parking areas. The scheme layout has been carefully considered to maximise the relationship between the new school and its surroundings. The lower years of the school - from Nursery to Year 2 have been situated facing directly South along the main part of the building, with Years 3-6 along the Northern wing on an angle and all of the classrooms have dedicated fenced external spaces allocated for each class.

Access Road Entrance and Carpark:

A new one way road system will be created for access from the A497, with 2 dedicated drop off spaces for larger vehicles and the car park area. This car park will be used for parking for staff and visitors and also a provision for drop off spaces. A bike path will be introduced along the primary pedestrian and cycle path meandering through the wooded area to the east and help to encourage a healthier and more environmentally aware lifestyle.

Habitat Area/Forest School:

Entering east from the MUGA, this wooded area will be utilised as a forest school and habitat development area. A mixture of native mature trees will be retained where advised from the arboriculture report and new species will be planted to create a genuinely biodiverse environment that the pupils will be able to actively engage in the woodland and able to become a part of as the school develops this area over time.

Main Entrance and ALN/Meithrin drop off:

The main entrance will be accessed on hard level surfacing with a logical way to approach. Easy way finding to the main entrance for staff, parents and visitors, whilst students will use a separate dedicated entrance off the hard play spaces. The ALN will have its own dedicated entrance to the left of the main school entrance.

Horticulture Area:

The future horticulture area to the north of the school will provide a valuable space for pupils to understand the process of growing. This area will be mostly left with a framework for the school to take ownership of over the years and plant up themselves rather than imposed by the design team

MUGA Playing Field Area:

A MUGA will be unlit with fences will be provided for sports and break times for the students as well as hard play surface and soft play for the KS2 pupils. This space will also be used for overflow parking at peak capacity such as parents evenings or school performances.



5.00 - CHARACTER

NEW PRIMARY SCHOOL

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Image 01 - Proposed Site Plan showing external area



02
03
04

Image 02 - Image of the local agricultural barn in the near field which gave inspiration to the main hall

Image 03 - View of the site looking south

Image 04 - View of the existing woodland

6.00 - ENVIRONMENTAL SUSTAINABILITY

6.01 LANDSCAPE/TOWNSCAPE SETTING

After considering a number of different sites within the area, the current site along the A497 to the West of Cricieth town centre area was chosen as it was best suited for the proposal. The proposed site is currently greenfield pastoral land, it is bordered by the railway line to the South, a retaining wall for the A497 to the North, a wooded area to the East and the pastoral landscape continues towards the West.

As previously mentioned, Lingard Farrow Styles have undertaken a Landscape Visual Impact Assessment that explores the impact of the development on the landscape and townscape; and this Assessment will accompany the main Planning Application. Within this report, they have concluded the following: *“No significant landscape or visual effects have been identified. The proposed planting plays a role reducing a number of landscape and visual effects. The proposed development is considered acceptable in terms of its likely landscape and visual effects.”*

A detailed soft landscape scheme will be provided for the site and incorporate habitat areas, future planting beds for the children’s use, soft and hard surfaces along with a number of different external learning zones. New trees and plants will take into account the user group and its relation to the surrounding landscape and rural area.

6.02 BIODIVERSITY & LOCAL ENVIRONMENT

An Ecology Survey was carried out by Gritten Ecology and will be submitted with the Planning Application. It is noted within this report that *“It is worth noting at the outset that there appear to be no known designated sites pertaining to the land subject to the ecological surveys but it is recommended that future surveys should include a search of the COFNOD Local Record Centre database.”* The report concludes that the site has low biodiversity for the most part, particularly around areas that are being developed such as the grassland that is currently managed through grazing. As outlined in the landscape architects proposals and LVIA, the proposal will work hard to improve on site biodiversity and encourage an improvement in the ecology of the area.

**Bats, Otters, Water voles and Badgers** - No signs of bats were found on site however its suggested another survey is carried out prior to the removal of the trees before construction starts to check if any bats have roosted in these trees.

**Reptiles** - It is considered unlikely that reptiles will be affected by the proposal.

**Great Crested Newts** - eDNA analysis was carried out for the site but no signs were detected so the conclusion was that the species will not be affected by the proposal.

**Birds** - Birds will not be negatively affected by the proposal. However, no tree works for the new school should not be carried out during the bird nesting season in case birds are nesting here. If works are likely to coincide with this period, an additional bird survey is recommended.

6.03 ENERGY EFFICIENCY/CARBON REDUCTION

The aim of the sustainability strategy is to minimise the energy demand and carbon emissions

6.00 - ENVIRONMENTAL SUSTAINABILITY

NEW PRIMARY SCHOOL

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associated with the proposed school and therefore limit the effect on the environment. The new school will include a number of renewable energy sources which will reduce the development's carbon emissions. The new school will include roof mounted air source heat pumps, photovoltaic panels and a heat exchanging passive ventilation system to minimise the heating and cooling loads of the building. The orientation, micro-climate and built form have all been carefully considered to allow the new area school to benefit from passive solar gain and plentiful natural light. Due to the nature of the build the new school is required to be assessed under BREEAM, the proposals will follow the principles as far as possible in order to achieve an energy efficient and sustainable building. The sustainability strategy will concentrate on a 'fabric first' approach by maximising the thermal performance and airtightness of the building fabric, whilst using an energy efficient heating, hot water and lighting approach, to see a reduction in CO2 emission greater than required for Part L Building Regulations. In line with the funding conditions the new build must achieve a minimum of A rating EPC.

#### **6.04 SUSTAINABLE MATERIALS**

Environmentally responsible methods of construction and materials will be used where possible in order to achieve a building that is both energy efficient and environmentally responsible. Materials will be selected from local sources wherever possible to minimise transport energy use and help sustain the local economy.

The school will be constructed from a steel frame structure with composite insulated metal cladding panels, render and stone wall. We aim for the construction 'build up's' to achieve a Green Guide for Specification A+ and A ratings where possible.

#### **6.05 WATER**

In order to reduce the water consumption of the new area school, all new toilets will be dual flush and low flow sanitary fittings will be fitted. Permeable paving will be used around the building to reduce ground water run off. The civil engineering approach for the school will be approved by the local SABS and ensure high consideration of SUDs within the design

#### **6.06 WASTE MANAGEMENT**

A waste minimisation plan will be produced to follow the WG 'Construction Waste Minimisation Good Practice Guide, and the contractor will be a member of the Considerate Constructors Scheme. A recycling strategy for internal waste will be implemented in line with the existing Schools procedure.

#### **6.07 CLIMATE RESILIENCE**

To ensure the proposed development will cope with any future climate changes, the school has been designed to be as energy efficient as possible.

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## **6.00 - ENVIRONMENTAL SUSTAINABILITY**

### **NEW PRIMARY SCHOOL**

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7.00 - ACCESS

7.01 SITE LOCATION

The proposed site is currently greenfield pastoral land, bordered by the railway line to the South, a retaining wall for the A497 to the North, a wooded area to the East and the pastoral landscape continues towards the West.

The proposed new school is located on greenfield land to the west of Cricieth. The site is located between the settlements of Cricieth and Llanystumdwy, around 700m to the centre of Cricieth. The school is located off the A497 which runs along the Llyn peninsula connecting the town to Porthmadog to the East and Pwllheli to the West

7.02 INCLUSIVE DESIGN

The primary aim of the scheme is to create a place that is easily accessible to everyone using the school.

All external surfaces on the site will have minimum undulation, be non-slip and well laid. Any joints between paving or between changes of material will be no more than 10mm wide and any utility access covers featuring within the hard landscaping will protrude no more than 5mm above the paving level. Where there are any changes in height or direction the surfaces will be clearly marked by a change of texture and a contrasting colour and where appropriate up stand kerb or low rail.

All paths will be a minimum width of 900mm and will be continuous with no obstructions. It is anticipated that paths around the buildings will be a minimum of 1200mm for wheelchair access, and where possible will be 1500mm wide. Building entrances will be highly visible and ramped approaches to entrances will be a minimum of 1200mm wide with a maximum gradient of 1:12. All doors will have a minimum effective clear width of 800mm.

7.03 PROVIDING ALTERNATIVE MODES OF TRANSPORT

As part of the school development a number of civil alterationswill be made to improve the safety of the children and parents driving and walking to school. New crossing points will be provided along with areas to store bikes and scooters at the school. A bus and car drop off point is provided near the entrance to make journeys easier. Electrical charging points are also provided for electrical cars.

## 8.00 MOVEMENT

### 8.1 SITE INTEGRATION / CONNECTIONS

The proposals maintain and improve all current access and connectivity to the surrounding area and there will be enhanced cycle provision through the addition of a cycle lane on the improved access roads and implement the improvements outlined in the traffic survey report to encourage active travel.

### 8.2 TRANSPORT MODES

All existing transport connections to the site are to be utilised and sustainable methods of transportation will be encouraged.

### 8.3 SERVICING

An enclosed secure service pull in area is provided near the main entrance for deliveries and waste storage.

### 8.4 PARKING

A one way road system will provide a safer and more manageable drop off and parking areas for the staff and parents within the school boundary. There is provision for bus drop off if this becomes a necessary form of transport for pupils to the school in the future. This new road system will be created for access from the A497, with 2 dedicated drop off spaces for larger vehicles and the car park area. This car park will be used for parking for staff and visitors and also a provision for drop off spaces. A bike path will be introduced along the primary pedestrian and cycle path.

## 9.00 COMMUNITY SAFETY

### 9.01 SECURED BY DESIGN

Security is of paramount importance within the proposed development and methods to prevent crime have been considered from the outset of design. Secured By Design Approval will be sought for the scheme. A Secured by Design application has been submitted and discussions regarding the scheme are being held with the Crime Prevention Design Officer and DOCO, David Williams.

CCTV will be provided externally around the school. A CCTV layout will be provided to the Planning Department at a later date. SBD accredited bicycle racks will be provided within the boundary of the school so children and staff can lock them up in a safe location throughout the day. That will have passive surveillance from the main office and head teachers office along this facade

### 9.02 BOUNDARY TREATMENTS

To enclose and protect the site there are a range of proposed boundary treatments. The school and the surrounding playing areas will be enclosed by a variety of fences with varying degrees of security based on a hierarchy of deemed importance. Anti-climb fences will be used to deter people from trying to access the new building. Where there is an existing fence, these will be surveyed, improved or replaced, as deemed necessary by their quality and condition.

Metal gates will be used for access between the playing areas and ALN drop off area and similarly to the main entrance, between the courtyard and service yard a stone wall with timber gates separate the two spaces.

A 900mm high hoop top railing fence will be around the class/year group outdoor play spaces to allow for the space to appear open but provide a safe enclosure to any children playing within.

A 900mm high retaining stone faced wall runs along the front of the western part of the new build site with railing on top of this to prevent falling from the upper side to provide a boundary between the school and the public footpath.

The existing boundary treatments will remain around most of the sports field but a new hedge will be provided to the north of both sports pitches and along the boundary to Ysgol Friars to the east.

### 9.30 SURVEILLANCE

The numerous windows within the enclosed design of the building allows natural surveillance of its surroundings and of the school itself. The position of the staff offices help this as they are located to face the enclosed courtyard.

All classrooms are also outwards looking, allowing surveillance of the soft landscaped areas surrounding the school. The Staff Room overlooks the internal courtyard and hard play area for additional observation during the children's breaks.

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## 8.00 - MOVEMENT / 9.00 COMMUNITY SAFETY.

### NEW PRIMARY SCHOOL

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External motion sensor lighting will highlight to the neighbours any intruders during the evening or night time and help deter them from trying to enter the building. CCTV cameras will provide surveillance along with any evidence of intruders within the site.

10.0 COMMUNITY CONSULTATION

10.01 PRE-APPLICATION CONSULTATION

Full Pre-application Consultation is currently being undertaken with the local community and all stakeholders before the full Application is submitted. A Pre-Application Consultation (PAC) Report will be submitted as part of the Planning Application. Where necessary the Design Team will respond to the consultees comments in the Report. Additional and revised documentation will be submitted as part of the Planning Application following the consultation period.