Proposed new 3-16 Catholic school

TRAVEL PLAN
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1. INTRODUCTION AND OBJECTIVES

BACKGROUND

This Travel Plan has been produced for the proposed new school building and facilities that will enable a new 3-16 Catholic school in Rhyl to operate. This involves the amalgamation of Ysgol Mair St. Mary’s primary Catholic school and their neighbours- Blessed Edward Jones Catholic High school. Denbighshire County Council (DCC) and the Diocese of Wrexham feel that safe access to the new school building is a high priority for existing and future pupils. All parties also wish to see a successful transition from the current locations to the new site.

The amalgamation process is running concurrently with the planning for the new school. Whilst the Travel Plan would normally be produced by the Governing Body of the school in the absence of the new temporary governing body this travel plan has been developed in partnership with the Headteachers and Chairs of Governors of the two existing schools.

AIMS AND OBJECTIVES

This document identifies pupils, employees and visitors travelling to the new building for education and other purposes (e.g. accessing on-site facilities). It also covers how users will be managed on the school site.

This document will directly contribute to the Building Research Establishment Environmental Assessment Method (BREEAM) appraisal of the project.

This document will also function as the schools travel plan which has four specific objectives:

- To manage a new on-site traffic management system.
- To improve opportunities for and encourage travel by sustainable modes and to reduce unnecessary travel.
- To improve road and personal safety awareness.
- To raise staff and visitor awareness of this travel plan and its objectives.

BENEFIT

This document aims to help us to identify the potential effect of the development on traffic. This informs the Travel Plan which identifies ways to make significant changes to the way we travel to work and school. This can contribute to cleaner air, a better local environment for residents, pedestrians and cyclist and possibly decreasing congestion.

The School travel plan is ‘owned’ by a school. It encompasses all the issues relevant to journeys to and from the school for both pupils and staff and includes the school site management plan.

LINKS TO POLICY

The Welsh Assembly Government\(^1\) also makes reference to encouraging the production of Travel Plans and their importance as a ‘tool to raise awareness of the impacts of travel decisions’.

All schools are encouraged to develop and implement school travel plans, which aim to:

\(^1\) Planning Policy Wales Technical Advice Note (TAN) 18 – ‘Transport’ (March 2007): Sections 9.12 – 9.15
• Promote active and sustainable travel
• Reduce traffic congestion around schools
• Offer children and parents an alternative choice of travel mode.
• Increase personal safety of pupils and parents on the way to and from school
• Improve health and fitness
• Meet school pupils needs by identifying problems they face on the school journey
• Develop pupil independence and self-esteem.
• Reduce the vicious circle of school travel (i.e. Parents fear danger from traffic - parents drive children/pupils to school - traffic increases - parents fear danger from traffic).

2. CURRENT FACILITIES AND ARRANGEMENTS

Ysgol Mair St. Marys Catholic primary school is located in the town of Rhyl on St. Margaret’s Drives. It is a Category 5 Voluntary Aided school providing education for pupils aged 3-11 years old. The majority of pupils who attend the school come from Rhyl. The school currently has 283 full time pupils on roll and 46 part time (nursery) pupils (as of January 2017 – School Census PLASC data). The school also has a playgroup which operates from the school grounds. At January 2017 there were 13 pupils attending the morning session and 10 attending the afternoon session.

Blessed Edward Jones Catholic High school is located next door to Ysgol Mair but has its main entrance on Cefndy road. It serves an age range of 11-16. It is designated as an English Medium school. It is a Voluntary Aided School under the authority of the Diocese of Wrexham; and established to serve the children of Denbighshire wishing to receive a Catholic and/or Christian education in Rhyl and the surrounding areas. The school currently has 313 full time pupils on roll (January 2017 PLASC).

Figure 1: Google maps satellite image of existing school sites

The Town of Rhyl is served by 6 primary schools. The overall yearly capacity for the town is approximately 380 pupils of which 320 places are for English medium provision. Most pupils that
attend Ysgol Dewi Sant continue their education at the secondary Welsh medium Ysgol Glan Clwyd in St. Asaph.

The nearest alternative Catholic primary school would be Ysgol Sant Joseph’s Catholic Primary school (English Medium, voluntary aided) located in Colwyn Bay, Conwy, 13.8 miles away from Ysgol Mair / St. Mary’s.

As well as Blessed Edward Jones there is also another secondary in the Town of Rhyl-Rhyl High School. The new building for Rhyl High School opened its doors to pupils in April 2016. The new school has an overall capacity of 1200 pupils.

The nearest alternative Catholic secondary school would be St Richard Gwyn R.C High School (English Medium, voluntary aided) located in Flint, Flintshire, 22.7 miles away from Blessed Edward Jones.

Ysgol Mair currently have 19 full time members of staff and 23 part time members of staff, Blessed Edward Jones currently have 39 full time members of staff and 10 part time. The proposed new school is estimating that there will be 48 teaching staff and 70 non-teaching therefore a slight increase in current staffing levels at the schools.

CURRENT HOURS OF OPERATION

The school current operational hours are as follows:

- Nursery – 8.55-11.25, 12.45pm-3:15pm
- Reception – Year 6 – 8.55am until 3:15pm
- Secondary school– 8.40am- 3.15pm
- Breakfast Club from 8am at the primary school, current pupils approximately 25/30
- After school club at the primary school- 3:15pm-6:00pm- current numbers are approx. 24.

School transport is provided by DCC for pupils who live more than 2 miles from their nearest suitable primary school or 3 miles from their nearest secondary school; or part of the route to school is deemed as hazardous.

The costs for the academic years 2016/17 for ‘Home to School Transport’ for St. Mary’s/ Ysgol Mair is £15,960. This is for 9 pupils split between 2 contracts. The cost of ‘Home to School Transport’ for Blessed Edward Jones is £3,825. This is for 17 pupils who are provided with Arriva bus passes. These passes are purchased per term and are the most economical option. Based on the proposal we do not anticipate any additional costs. Should there be a greater demand by other Diocesan schools outside of Denbighshire it would be for that Local Authority to consider within their own policy. A Hands up survey conducted in July 2017 at both schools revealed the following use of transport by full time pupils and staff:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Mode of transport</th>
<th>Pupils*</th>
<th>Staff</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Walk</td>
<td>192</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bus</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Car</td>
<td>230</td>
<td>69</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Taxi</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cycle</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Train</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
*There were no Year 11s present at Blessed Edward Jones when the survey was carried out, and many Year 10 pupils were out on work experience.

**CURRENT SITUATION**

Ysgol Mair: The entrance for cars and pedestrians at Ysgol Mair is on St. Margaret’s Drive- this is a residential narrow two way street which suffers considerable congestion at peak school times, i.e. drop off in the morning and pick up in the afternoon. The site entrance is located on a chicane in the road with limited visibility.

Pupils being transported via DCC Home to school transport drop off pupils at Blessed Edward Jones and pupils walk through a path which connects the 2 schools on the site.

Blessed Edward Jones: is currently accessed from Cefndy Road. The entrance for cars and pedestrians is at the top end of Cefndy road. Cefndy road is fed from the A525 which is the main road into Rhyl from the A55 North Wales expressway.

Current catchment:

Maps below shows pupil catchment from postcode location of each pupil form January 2017 PLASC:

Ysgol Mair:
Blessed Edward Jones:

Ysgol Mair - currently has 27 car parking spaces including 1 disabled space.

Blessed Edward Jones - currently has a total of 36 car parking spaces consisting of 22 in the staff car park at the rear and 14 at the front. 2 of these at the front are for visitor and there is also 2 disabled spaces. At the front there is also a "bus" stop/space which is used as a parking space by staff and visitors and will fit approximately 2 cars.
ACCESSIBILITY BY SUSTAINABLE MODES

Pedestrian Facilities – There are pavements around each school. The pathway between the 2 schools is only accessible at drop off and pick up times, the gate is managed by the primary school who local and unlock it during these times.

Cycling Facilities – Currently Blessed Edwards has a carousel which holds 8 bicycles. Ysgol Mair has a rack which holds 12 but it is placed up against a wall so only 6 can be accessed, which is not sufficient as they have approximately 10 - 15 pupils arriving on bikes each day. A problem at both schools is lack of storage for scooters as quite a number of pupils arrive on these.

Public Transport – The number 51 service is the public bus service which goes along the main road near to both schools- this bus links to Rhuddlan, Ysbyty Glan Clwyd, St.Asaph and Denbigh. It is available every day with service during the week every 20 minutes during peak times. For timetable information please click here.

Rhyl train station is 0.7 miles away from both schools. Trains run regularly in both directions along the coast towards Chester to the East and Bangor to the West. For timetables please click here.
PERSONAL INJURY ACCIDENT DATA
Accident data in the vicinity of the school site was obtained via North Wales Police and DCC Highways department for the 5 year period of 2012 to 2017. The interrogation of the data found that there have been 2 serious accidents on the junction of Cefndy road and the main road into Rhyl- Vale Road. In the same location there has been 2 accidents classed as slight. Data also showed there has been 2 slight accidents on the junction of St. Margaret’s Drive and Vale Road.

In terms of children involved in the accidents, our data found that one of the serious accidents involved a child on a bike and this occurred on Tuesday 21st May 2013 at 8pm. In one of the accidents classed as slight- a child was a passenger in a car and this accident occurred on Saturday 10th June 2017 at 5.33 pm.

HIGHWAY SURVEY
Please see the Transport Statement undertaken by Atkins for further information.

3. PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT
OVERVIEW
The development proposal is to build a new Catholic 3-16 school in the town of Rhyl. It will accommodate up to 420 full time children between the age of 5 and 11 years old, 60 nursery pupils (part-time) between 3 and 4 years old, 24 place playgroup and 500 places for pupils aged 11-16.

LOCATION
The proposed site location is shown in the image below which demonstrates where the new school will be and the current position of both existing schools:
MEANS OF ACCESS

PARKING
The above drawing shows that the car park will be able to accommodate 80 vehicles with an additional 4 disabled spaces.

The proposal for the operation of the new school site will be that access to the school site will be restricted to staff, visitors, buses / taxi’s and for parents dropping off disabled pupils etc. This approach of restricting access for parents to the site is designed to reduce congestion on the site and reduce the risk of injury via reducing uncontrolled vehicle movements on the site.

PROPOSED HOURS OF OPERATION

The new school building will be open between 7.45am and 6pm.

The Breakfast Club will operate from 8:00am every morning. The after school club will start at 3.15pm until 6pm. Home to school transport is not provided for children to attend clubs, therefore parents bring the children to and collect the children from the clubs. The onsite car parking facilities will support families using this provision.
Pupils will be expected to be on site for the teaching day from 8.50am to 3.15pm. Staff members are generally on site between 8.30am and 4.00pm.

The options for how pupils access the school in the morning is seeking to encourage pupils, particularly in Key Stage 2 to access the school prior to the commencement of the school day. This has been considered to improve access for the building.

**METHOD OF TRANSPORT**

Pupils arrive in school by home to school transport, car and by walking. This depends on their home location, attendance in breakfast and after school club and eligibility for free home to school transport.

**SERVICES**

Catering – Catering supplies will be delivered to new building on a weekly basis. It is expected that two vehicles will be used (one for chilled and one for other supplies). Milk will continue to be delivered to the school site on daily basis.

Refuse collection

General deliveries to the school site will be encouraged to avoid the key times at the start and end of the school day and will be able to access the school site.

**4. IMPACT**

**ACTIVE TRAVEL - WALKING AND CYCLING**

The site is accessible on foot or by bike for pupils living in the town of Rhyl and the wider communities. There are dedicated footways and cycle lanes between the town of Rhyl and the village of Rhuddlan (approx. 2.2 miles), along the promenade there is cycling path to Kinmel Bay (approx. 2.4 miles) one way and Prestatyn to the East (approx. 4.1 miles)

Both schools are keen to utilise the new arrangements of the new school to explore further options such as “walking buses” to provide a designated controlled walking route to school. This approach will encourage safer walking to school whilst also encouraging pupils to take part in active exercise which may have a positive impact on punctuality at the school.

The use of secondary pedestrian and cycling routes will form part of the strategy. The options of alternative entrances for the start and end of the school day may reduce the reliance on car journeys.

**VEHICULAR TRAVEL**

Driving – The new site will provide improved facilities for vehicles for staff and visitors. This includes on-site parking and a designated drop off area for pupils arriving by buses / taxi’s or for pupils with disabilities.
Public transport - There is an Arriva bus number 51 service which goes along the main road near to both schools- this bus links to Rhuddlan, Ysbyty Glan Clwyd, St.Asaph and Denbigh. It is available every day with service during the week every 20 minutes during peak times. Rhyl train station is 0.7 miles away from both schools. Trains run regularly in both directions along the coast towards Chester to the East and Bangor to the West.

JOURNEY REDUCTION

Journey sharing - There is no official journey sharing scheme in operation at present. However, the promotion of car sharing is a proposal in this travel plan for reducing unnecessary journeys.

CONGESTION

Currently the roads around the school site are at their busiest between 8.35 and 9am and 3:15 and 3:30pm. The lack of onsite traffic management means that all vehicles use the adjoining highway.

The majority of staff members will arrive before 8.45 and leave after 3.15 with the exception of catering and caretaking staff.

5. TRAVEL PLAN IMPLEMENTATION, MONITORING & REVIEW

INTRODUCTION

As a new school site this Travel Plan has four specific objectives:

- To manage a new on-site traffic management system
- To improve opportunities for and encourage travel by sustainable modes and to reduce unnecessary travel.
- To improve road and personal safety awareness.
- To raise staff and visitor awareness of this Travel Plan.

The key aims to the success of the Travel Plan are summarised below:

- Set up school travel plan group
- Communicate traffic management layout with site users.
- Implement the management of the new car park.
- Promote Car / Journey sharing
- Promote reduced speed on to and approaching the school
- To increase awareness amongst pupils, staff and parents about the environmental, safety, health and social consequence of their travel choices.
- Regular reviews to monitor the success of the plan.

This travel plan will be reviewed by the stakeholder group.

TRAVEL PLAN GROUP

The Travel Plan will be delivered through a Travel Plan group at the school, which may be comprised of members from each current School Council, Governors and school staff.

The overall role of a Travel Plan group will be to:

- Set clear dates for action.
- Hold periodic meetings with key groups to review progress.
- Develop future initiatives
- Identify objectives and targets and progress initiatives.

**INITIAL ACTION POINTS**

The initial action points include:
- Set up travel plan group
  - Establish group and identify key stakeholders
  - Establish link to both eco-school and healthy schools initiatives
  - Arrange future group meetings
- Promotion of:
  - Traffic Management layout
  - Car / Journey sharing
  - Reduced speed on approaching roads

**PROMOTION**

The travel plan group will decide on suitable methods of communication. These may include placing promotional material up in the schools, school newsletters, school websites and use of social media such as twitter.

**STAFF/PUPIL INDUCTION**

Research indicates that the best time for people to change travel habits is when there is change such as changing jobs/schools or moving house. Prior to moving to the new site the school travel group will prepare information that will be provided to prospective staff and students.

**MONITORING**

In order to achieve the Travel Plan’s objectives, the initial actions identified will be monitored. The Travel Plan group will be required to monitor the plan and will undertake the following as part of their monitoring process:
- Keep minutes of meetings.
- Keeping records of promotion.
- Recording feedback regarding site use and road safety.
- Identify emerging issues.
- Keep records of participation in national travel awareness campaigns.

The travel plan group will then be able to set new targets that will be incorporated in the plan.

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