

Tuar Gaer
St Nicholas
Nr Cardiff
Vale of Glamorgan
CF5 6SG
2 September 2020

Dear Sir

Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (as amended)

Application No 2020/00874/RG3

Location: St Nicholas Church in Wales Primary School, St Nicholas

Proposal: Proposed replacement primary school including additional nursery provision and associated works.

Thank you for giving us an opportunity to comment on the proposals which appear on the Vale Council's Planning Register under the number 2020/00874/RG3.

St Nicholas Primary School appears to be managed professionally and the pupils are a credit to their teachers. It is a delight to hear the children at play. Our comments are not a reflection on the school or indeed of the Council.

We wrote in response to the school consultation process although our neighbours suggested we should not do so as they had been told that something worse might be developed on the site if the development did not go ahead. We know not who has made such threats or spread such a rumour and as a matter of public administration, the application (as with any other development) must be considered on its planning merits without predisposition. The objections we raised in our initial response should be treated as if repeated in this letter.

This development is a material change of use by virtue of the intensification of the use and involves building operations. In our opinion, the fact that the school has been given funding for the development is not a material planning consideration. This development of the site as proposed would not be contemplated if it were not for the funding and there are good planning reasons why the Council should reject this application.

For ease of reference we summarise our concerns

1. The development is out of scale and is unneighbourly because of the overall massing of the structure. The design and materials of the new school structure, as illustrated by the drawings, are unsympathetic to the village setting and to the character which the Conservation Area is intended to maintain.
2. The intensification of the use which this development facilitates is inconsistent with the village setting and out of keeping with the area.
3. The access to and egress from the school is unsatisfactory and the increased use will give rise to unacceptable nuisance, congestion and be a danger to pedestrians and road users. The highway access from the A48 and within the village to the existing school is already substandard and dangerous and the increased traffic and the parking generated as a result of the proposed development will exacerbate an already unsatisfactory situation.

- (a) The A48 is a heavily trafficked road and there has been an increase in the number of large heavy goods vehicles since the improvement of Five Mile Lane. It is particularly noticeable as the standard of the road surface is so poor the vehicles can be heard travelling the length of St Nicholas. The speed limit is not observed except on those occasions when there is a speed trap. The Council does not seem to have a coherent plan for the management of traffic going to Barry and Aberthaw from the M4 and so it is reasonable to expect the traffic on the A48 to increase. The proposed development adds to the traffic albeit a small amount in proportional terms. In this case the development involves more vehicle turning movements into the village in conflict with this fast flowing commercial traffic.
- (b) The three accesses from the A48 do not meet modern standards and each of them suffer from limited visibility both when entering and leaving the village.
- (c) By reason of width or the parking of residents' vehicles, all the lanes in St Nicholas are effectively single track.
- (d) The junction of the lane at Pwll Sarn Farm leading to the school has two properties immediately accessing onto the junction with a third having been given planning permission. This junction is blind to those coming from the west and often unseen by those coming from the east. There are frequently vehicles parked on and around the junction adding to the risk to road users and pedestrians.
- (e) The lane from Pwll Sarn Farm to the school is single track and has a pinch point immediately after its junction with the A48 which means that traffic backs up in either directions on occasion. All of the 6 properties which have access onto the lane have restricted visibility splays and vehicles exiting onto the lane can neither see nor be seen until they have actually entered onto the carriageway.
- (f) The lane after the traffic lights on the A48 is single track with walls restricting sightlines.
- (g) The lane after the Old Post Office has extremely limited visibility from the west and vehicles often park immediately after the post box.
- (h) The documents accompanying the application make it clear that almost all of the pupils come from the urban fringe of Cardiff and come by car. The proposals to provide a pick up point within the school grounds to address the problems of vehicles coming to the school, is unrealistic in that it assumes that parents arrive in a sequence neatly timed to coincide with their child's exit from the school. Simple observation will show that parents arrive some considerable time before pick up time often as much as an hour beforehand and park their vehicles where a space can be found, sometimes obstructing other road users, residents' accesses or preventing residents from parking near their homes. There is always congestion around the school and it is at its worst at peak times. The vehicles manoeuvre around and in close proximity to the children and parents and there are no footpaths so that the children and parents congregate and walk in the lanes. This is a clear danger. This is the current situation and with the anticipated increase of vehicles as recorded by the applicant's consultants (up to three times as many as currently) it seems unlikely that the limited pick up/drop off on the school grounds will either ameliorate the existing situation or address the exacerbation of those problems one can reasonably expect from the additional vehicles. In my letter on the consultation I referred to specific instances where the issue of school related traffic had caused problems. Unfortunately, these incidences are not matters that the school can control.

If the Council is minded to approve the proposed development, then we would request that it makes it a condition of any approval that

- (1) No development takes place until there are in place traffic calming measures on the A48 and the speed limit on the A48 is reduced to 20mph between the Duffryn junction and the lane to Trehill Chapel between the hours of 0730 and 0930 and 01430 and 1730

To ensure safe manoeuvring of school associated traffic

- (2) No development takes place until the lane between the property known as Pwll Sarn and the current school entrance is widened for its whole length so as to allow the passing of vehicular traffic and a separate footpath.

To ensure safe passage and free flow of vehicles and pedestrians

- (3) No development takes place until the junction of the first lane into St Nicholas after the traffic lights, is widened and the walls either side are removed to provide a full vision splay onto the A48

To ensure safe passage of and free flow of vehicles

- (4) During the period of construction, no building work or engineering operations or any associated activities may take place between the hours of 1830 and 0730 and not at any time on Saturdays or Sundays and the applicants place on the village notice board the dates and times of deliveries of building materials to site at least one week in advance of the proposed delivery.

To protect the amenity of the residents during the construction phase.

We realise that some of these proposed conditions require works/actions outside the site however such requirements are not unusual and it is open to the Council to make appropriate highway orders or to promote the same and the Council has powers of compulsory acquisition which it can exercise.

We would request that this application is considered by the full Planning Committee rather than determined under delegated powers. We would be grateful if the Council would give this application full and unbiased consideration taking into account our legitimate concerns.

Yours faithfully

Oscar and Stephanie King-Davies

The Vale of Glamorgan Council
Dock Office
Barry Docks
Barry CF63 4RT