

23 September 2020



**RE: Planning Application 2020/00874/RG3**

Play Wales is the national charity for children's play. We uphold children's right to play. Freely chosen play is critically important in the healthy development of all children and young people. More importantly, time and time again, children tell us it is important to them.

Play Wales understands that the development relating to the above application results in a loss of open space. We strongly advise that the developer is instructed to engage with the play development team in the Vale of Glamorgan Council to ensure that any play interventions to address this loss support the play needs of the widest range of people.

Play Wales engaged with the school to which the application pertains several years ago. At that time, it was our understanding that the grounds should be available to the wider community when the school was not operating. Recent correspondence from local residents reports that this is no longer the case. If this is true, we advise that every effort is made to investigate the reasons for this and to work with partners to address it.

Children and young people need and are entitled to quality places and time for play as part of their everyday life within their own community. Existing school facilities, in most cases, offer significant opportunities to satisfy not only the learning needs of all learners, but many of the social and recreational needs for the community. School grounds often represent the largest single outdoor asset in many communities and this is certainly the case for the area in which St. Nicholas Church in Wales Primary School is located.

It is unclear as to what extent children and staff will be involved in informing the development of any play and recreation space. We recommend that meaningful engagement with users of the space is undertaken if the development proceeds.

It is well established that playing contributes to the wellbeing and resilience of children. Having welcoming places, enough time and the company of others to play with every day, is of great consequence to all children and we need to foster environments that support this.

Play Wales supports action to protect and improve the access of this local outdoor space due to the positive impact having access to good outdoor space has on the wellbeing of children and their communities. We encourage local authorities and their partners to work together to seek positive ways of providing for the play and recreational needs of children. In doing so they will inevitably be contributing to the prevention of accidents, community cohesion and to the health, wellbeing and happiness of children and communities.

Please feel free to contact me should you have any queries.

Kind regards,



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