

Title of Report:	Planning Committee Report - LA01/2020/0561/F
Committee Report Submitted To:	Planning Committee
Date of Meeting:	23rd June 2021
For Decision or For Information	For Decision

Linkage to Council Strategy (2021-25)	
Strategic Theme	Cohesive Leadership
Outcome	Council has agreed policies and procedures and decision making is consistent with them
Lead Officer	Development Management and Enforcement Manager

Budgetary Considerations	
Cost of Proposal	Nil
Included in Current Year Estimates	N/A
Capital/Revenue	N/A
Code	N/A
Staffing Costs	N/A

Screening Requirements	Required for new or revised Policies, Plans, Strategies or Service Delivery Proposals.		
Section 75 Screening	Screening Completed:	N/A	Date:

	EQIA Required and Completed:	N/A	Date:
Rural Needs Assessment (RNA)	Screening Completed	N/A	Date:
	RNA Required and Completed:	N/A	Date:
Data Protection Impact Assessment (DPIA)	Screening Completed:	N/A	Date:
	DPIA Required and Completed:	N/A	Date:

<u>No:</u>	LA01/2020/0561/F	<u>Ward:</u> Ballycastle
<u>App Type:</u>	Full	
<u>Address:</u>	Ballycastle High School, 33 Rathlin Road, Ballycastle. Cross & Passion College, 10 Moyle Road, Ballycastle.	
<u>Proposal:</u>	Demolition of existing buildings and construction of a new shared school building, sports buildings, greenhouse building and sports pitches on the site of the existing Ballycastle High School. Demolition of existing buildings and construction of sports pavilion, youth storage and ground maintenance building and sports pitches on the site of the existing Cross & Passion College.	
<u>Con Area:</u>	N/A	<u>Valid Date:</u> 12/06/2020
<u>Listed Building Grade:</u>	N/A	
Agent:	Samuel Stevenson & Sons	
Applicant:	Education Authority	
Objections:	12	Petitions of Objection: 1
Support:	0	Petitions of Support: 0

Executive Summary

- Full planning permission is sought for demolition of existing buildings and construction of a new shared school building, sports buildings, greenhouse building and sports pitches on the site of the existing Ballycastle High School. Demolition of existing buildings and construction of sports pavilion, youth storage and ground maintenance building and sports pitches on the site of the existing Cross & Passion College.
- This a major planning application, which was subject to a PAN. A pre-application community consultation report was submitted to accompany this application.
- The site is located within the settlement limit of Ballycastle and within the Local Landscape Policy Area (BEL 12) as per the Northern Area Plan 2016.
- The eastern portion of the Ballycastle High School site where the development is proposed is identified as a Major Area of Existing Open Space. The proposal includes compensatory open space.
- The proposed development including buildings is of an acceptable scale and design within the urban context and therefore complies with Policy DES 2 of PSRNI. The proposal also complies with the Northern Area Plan 2016, the SPPS, PPS 2, PPS 3, PPS 8 & PPS 15.
- Objections have been received which mainly relate to issues of residential amenity, building design, traffic and road safety.
- Approval is recommended subject to conditions.

Drawings and additional information are available to view on the Planning Portal- <http://epicpublic.planningni.gov.uk/publicaccess/>

1 Recommendation

- 1.1 That the Committee has taken into consideration and agrees with the reasons for the recommendation set out in section 9 and the policies and guidance in sections 7 and 8 and resolves to **APPROVE** planning permission subject to the conditions set out in section 10.

2 SITE LOCATION & DESCRIPTION

- 2.1 The site is located to the north of the town centre of Ballycastle and comprises the existing school sites of Ballycastle High School and Cross & Passion College on the Moyle Road.
- 2.2 The Ballycastle High School site extends to approximately 6.06 hectares and currently comprises existing school buildings, mobile classrooms and sports pitches. The residential dwellings at Atlantic Avenue re located to the northern boundary of the site. Rathlin Road is located to the eastern boundary. Moyle Road is located to the western boundary. St Patrick's & St Brigid's Primary School, the Church of St Patrick and St Brigid and graveyard is located to the south of the site. The site is located outside the town centre but within the settlement development limit. The site is located within Ballycastle High School and St Patrick's and St Bridget's Church LLPA (Designation BEL 12).
- 2.3 The Cross and Passion College site extends to approximately 4.64 hectares and currently comprises existing school buildings, mobile classrooms and sports pitches. The existing buildings are located centrally within the site and the sports pitches are to the west. There is residential development to the northern, western and southern boundaries. Moyle Road is located to the east. The main access is from Moyle Road and there is a service access from Market Street. The site is located outside the town centre but within the settlement development limit.
- 2.4 The area surrounding the site is characterised by a variety of different uses. There is residential development bounding both

sites. There is a Primary School and a Church to the south of the Ballycastle High School site. The western portion of the Ballycastle High School site is identified as a Major Area of Existing Open Space.

3 RELEVANT HISTORY

LA01/2019/1414/PAN – New shared school building, pitches & sports building on the site of the existing Ballycastle High School. Sports pitches, sports pavilion & youth services storage building on the site of the existing Cross & Passion College. Car parks and associated ground works to both sites. PAN Notice Acceptable. 10.01.2020

LA01/2015/0301/PAD – Shared Education Campus. PAD Concluded. 17.07.2019

E/2014/0243/F - Proposed single storey extension to existing art room to provide storage including rebuilding existing corridor. Cross & Passion College, 10 Moyle Road, Ballycastle. Permission Granted 28.01.2015.

E/2010/0349/F - Replacement of existing ground and first floor glazed panels/doors and concrete canopy with new glazed panels/doors and new canopy at main front entrance to college on eastern face of building. Cross & Passion College, 10 Moyle Road, Ballycastle. Permission Granted 14.02.2011.

E/2010/0039/F - Provision of 1 No. steel frame modular classroom to be used by students and staff of Cross & Passion College. Cross & Passion College, 10 Moyle Road, Ballycastle. Permission Granted 08.04.2010.

E/2009/0310/F - Extension to provide a new larger store/technicians room for existing classroom. Ballycastle High School, 33 Rathlin Road, Ballycastle. Permission Granted 21.10.2009.

E/2007/0461/F – Proposed retention of a replacement 9m x 6m timber framed modular building and associated site works.

4 THE APPLICATION

- 4.1 The application seeks permission for demolition of existing buildings and construction of a new shared school building, sports building, greenhouse building and sports pitches on the Ballycastle High School site. Also demolition of existing buildings and construction of sports pavilion, youth storage/ground maintenance building and sports pitches on the Cross and Passion College site.

Design & Access Statement

- 4.2 A Design & Access Statement is required under Article 6 of the Planning (General Development Procedure) Order (NI) 2015 as the application is considered to be a major application.
- 4.3 The design and access statement provides details of the design principles and concepts that have been applied to the development and how issues relating to access to the development have been dealt with.
- 4.4 The report date received 17th June 2020 demonstrates that the applicant undertook detailed consideration of the proposal in terms of the design principles and concepts.

5 PUBLICITY & CONSULTATIONS

External

5.1 Neighbours:

Representations

28 representations have been received in relation to the proposed development. This includes 12 letters of objection from separate addresses, 1 letter of petition and 1 miscellaneous representation.

The main issues raised are summarised below and will be considered and assessed in the remainder of this report.

- Privacy at dwellings on Atlantic Avenue
- Noise from proposed ball courts/sports pitches
- Dust pollution from demolition
- Light pollution from flood lighting at sports pitches
- Location of sports facilities in close proximity to Atlantic Avenue
- Increased volume of traffic on Rathlin Road
- Use of proposed new access on Rathlin Road to drop off/pick up children will create road safety issues
- Use of Rathlin Court for turning
- The red line excludes the bank to the rear of the footpath at the southern boundary of the BHS site
- Views of HED Historic Buildings not sought in the PAD application
- Overshadowing/loss of light from proposed fencing adjacent The Abbey

Internal

- 5.2 **DfC Historic Environment Division:** Consider proposal to have impacts on the wider setting of the listed building when considered against SPPS & PPS 6. However they acknowledge that all social, economic and environmental impacts need to be considered.

DfI Rivers: No objection

DfI Roads: No objection

Development Plan: No objection

Environmental Health: No objection

HSENI: No objection

NIEA: Water Management Unit: No objection

NIEA: Regulation Unit (LAND & Groundwater): No objection

NIEA: Natural Environment Division: No objection

Shared Environmental Services (SES): No objection

Proposal of Application Notice

- 5.3 The proposal falls within the Major category of development and therefore must comply with the Proposal of Application Notice and community consultation carried out at least 12 weeks prior

to the submission of the application. A Proposal of Application Notice was received on 23rd January 2020 under LA01/2019/1414/PAN.

- 5.4 Members of the community were consulted on the proposal by press advertisement in Ballycastle Chronicle and Coleraine Times on 7th January 2020. The agent also wrote to the owners/occupiers of all properties on adjoining land within a 90 metre radius of the boundary of the proposed application site. Letters were posted on Tuesday 7th January 2020.
- 5.5 A public meeting was held at Sheskburn House, 7 Mary Street, Ballycastle on Thursday 16th January 2020.

Community Consultation Report

- 5.6 The community consultation report (CCR) was submitted as part of the planning application, received on 28th May 2020, which is more than 12 weeks after the Proposal of Application Notice was received, as required by the legislation.
- 5.7 It contains a copy of the methods of consultation carried out comments and feedback from the consultation exercise in the local context. The report demonstrates that consultation was implemented as agreed in the Proposal of Application Notice.
- 5.8 The public display was held on 16th January 2020 at Sheskburn House, 7 Mary Street, Ballycastle. The general opinion voiced that the proposed development would be a great improvement to the facilities to both schools and the wider community and that it was broadly welcomed.
- 5.9 The CCR demonstrates that adequate community consultation has taken place and the key issues of concern have been considered prior to the submission of the application.

Environmental Impact Screening

- 5.10 The proposed development falls within Category 10 (b) of Schedule 2 of The Planning (Environmental Impact Assessment) Regulations (NI) 2017 and therefore the Council is

obliged under Regulation 12 (1) to make a determination as to whether the application is for EIA development.

- 5.11 The Council determined on 13th November 2020 that the proposal is not an EIA development and as such this planning application, did not need to be accompanied by an Environmental Statement.

6 MATERIAL CONSIDERATIONS

- 6.1 Section 45(1) of the Planning Act (Northern Ireland) 2011 requires that all applications must have regard to the local development plan, so far as material to the application, and all other material considerations. Section 6(4) states that in making any determination where regard is to be had to the local development plan, the determination must be made in accordance with the plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise.
- 6.2 The development plan is:
- Northern Area Plan 2016
- 6.3 The Regional Development Strategy (RDS) is a material consideration.
- 6.4 The Strategic Planning Policy Statement for Northern Ireland (SPPS) is a material consideration. As set out in the SPPS, until such times as a new local plan strategy is adopted, councils will apply specified retained operational policies.
- 6.5 Due weight should be given to the relevant policies in the development plan.
- 6.6 All material considerations and any policy conflicts are identified in the “Considerations and Assessment” section of the report.

7 RELEVANT POLICIES & GUIDANCE

Regional Development Strategy (RDS)

Northern Area Plan 2016

Strategic Planning Policy Statement (SPPS) 2015

Planning Policy Statement 2 (PPS2): Natural Heritage

Planning Policy Statement 3 (PPS 3) Access, Movement & Parking

Planning Policy Statement 6 (PPS 6): Planning Archaeology and the Built Heritage

Planning Policy Statement 8 (PPS 8) Open Space & Outdoor Recreation

Revised Planning Policy Statement 15 (PPS 15): Planning and Flood Risk

Policy DES 2 – A Planning Strategy for Rural Northern Ireland

8 CONSIDERATIONS & ASSESSMENT

- 8.1 The main considerations in the determination of this application relate to: principle of the development, design, impact on conservation area, loss of open space, economic/community benefits, impact on residential amenity, flood risk and drainage, archaeology and built heritage, visual impact, natural heritage, Habitats Regulation Assessment, and other matters.

Planning Policy

- 8.2 The principle of development proposed must be considered having regard to the Northern Area Plan (NAP), the SPPS, and relevant Planning Policy Statements specified above.

Principle of development

- 8.3 The application site is located within the settlement limit of Ballycastle and comprises the existing school grounds of

Ballycastle High School (BHS) and Cross and Passion College (CPC). The proposal involves demolition of the existing buildings on both sites and construction of a new shared school building with sports building and associated development on the BHS site and a new sports pavilion, sports pitches and associated development on the CPC site.

- 8.4 Policy DES 2 of PSRNI sets out current planning policy for development proposals affecting townscape and requires development proposals in towns and villages to be sensitive to the character of the area surrounding the site in terms of siting, scale, layout, design and use of materials.
- 8.5 As the site is located within a settlement and is for the extension of educational infrastructure within the grounds of two existing schools, the principle of the development is considered acceptable. The proposed use relates to the existing use of the site for educational purposes and would not introduce a form of development likely to alter the existing balance of uses.

Siting, scale, layout, design and use of materials

- 8.6 Policy DES 2 of PSRNI relates to townscape and emphasises the importance of urban design within the built environment. New development is required to be appropriate in use and sensitive in siting, scale, layout, design and materials both in itself and in relation to adjoining buildings, spaces and views. The main concern is to ensure that development proposals neither conflict with nor detract from the character, amenity and design of an area.
- 8.7 Both the BHS and CPC sites are located within a suburban, primarily residential area. The proposal seeks a reconfiguration of the educational components within the existing site. The proposed school building will be sited on the existing school playing fields and will address Rathlin Road. The majority of the car parking will be located to the west of the site and accessed from Moyle Road. The location of the proposed school building allows for the existing school buildings to continue to operate for educational purposes while the new campus is constructed.

Ballycastle High School Site

- 8.8 The proposed building has been designed over 3 levels and includes a lower ground floor, upper ground floor and first floor. There is a 1 storey step in the building to follow existing levels on the Ballycastle High School site, which fall towards the eastern/south-eastern boundaries. The highest part of the proposed building measures 12 metres to the ridge. The frontage of the building facing Rathlin Road measures 105 metres and is broken up by the dining/kitchen block. The building has been designed around a large central courtyard. Proposed finishes include; grey multi clay facing brick façade; coloured solid composite rainscreen cladding panels; textured grey buff natural stone wall panel system and zinc vertical standing seam cladding. The nature of the design is modern and contemporary. The hardstanding areas surrounding the building have been broken up by the provision of a variety of finishes including, decorative coloured concrete, block paving setts, bitmac and asphalt. This together with proposed planting and grassed areas will assist in helping the proposed development to have an acceptable frontage along the streetscape when viewed from along Rathlin Road. The nearest part of the proposed building is located 22 metres from the edge of the Rathlin Road with the main frontage located approximately 35 metres back from the edge of the Rathlin Road. The proposed levels of the school building generally reflect the existing levels of the sites. There is a small step up of approximately 2.5 metres in ground levels to accommodate the rear portion of the school building.
- 8.9 The proposed building has a significantly larger footprint than the existing Ballycastle High School building. The scale and massing of the proposed building is considered to be substantial. While the scale is large and the building is close to Rathlin Road, it is not considered to be insensitive to the character of the area to an unacceptable extent. The proposal seeks to amalgamate two existing schools and therefore the size of the building is considered to be necessary.
- 8.10 A sports building is also proposed on the Ballycastle High School site. This will be located on the footprint of the existing school building. The highest part of the building measures 9.9m from finished floor level. However, the rest of the building measures 4.8m from finished floor level. The proposed finishes are similar

to that of the proposed school building. The proposed building is located 14 metres from the boundary with St Patricks & St Brigids Primary School, which is located to the west. It is located 10 metres from the boundary to the south, which is currently a field. The scale and design of this building would be considered appropriate in the context of the overall scheme.

Cross and Passion College Site

- 8.11 All existing buildings on the Cross and Passion College site will be demolished to accommodate a new 3G synthetic multi-use pitch to the east of the site and a 3G GAA pitch to the west. A sports pavilion, ballcourt, grass play area and associated car parking and storage will be located in the southern portion of the site. Floodlighting will be installed around all of the proposed sports pitches within the CPC and BHS sites.
- 8.12 The proposed sports pavilion has a ridge height of 8.8m from finished floor level at its highest point and a frontage length of 22m. The main views of the building will be from both directions on Moyle Road. Proposed finishes include autumnal buff multi clay facing brick façade; aluminium powder coated curtain walling system; zinc vertical standing seam and coloured glass spandrel panels. The eastern roadside boundary treatment comprises 2.4m high mild steel railings, with brick pillars at the entrance. The remaining boundaries will comprise 2.4m high open mesh anti-climb steel panel fencing with concrete mowing strip. The existing open mesh anti-climb steel panel fencing to the western boundary with Gortamaddy Park will be retained. A vertical timber board acoustic fence is proposed to the south between the proposed car parking area and boundary with dwellings at The Abbey. The sports facilities will be open for use by the local community.
- 8.13 The overall design and layout is considered to be acceptable in terms of design, scale and use of materials and on balance complies with Policy DES 2 of PSRNI.

Economic/Community Benefits

- 8.14 The project is a £40 - 50m investment in shared education and community/ sports facilities. It will see new and unique facilities

created for the benefit of 1,180 pupils in the Ballycastle area. It will also create employment opportunities both during and after the construction stage.

- 8.15 The proposal involves the development of a new core school building with a series of shared facilities across both sites. The project builds on well-established sharing arrangements between both schools and it is intended that it will help embed and enhance these sharing arrangements. The project also involves facilities for two other stakeholders; the EA Youth Service and Causeway Coast & Glens Borough Council. This includes a youth centre, which will be held within the sports building on the BHS site and a youth storage building, which is a separate building on the CPC site, and enhanced sports facilities on both sites for use by the local community. It will offer education, health and wellbeing benefits through the additional of new sports buildings and playing fields.

Loss of Open Space

- 8.16 The east/south-east portion of the Ballycastle High School site is designated as a Major Area of Existing Open Space in the Northern Area Plan 2016. The proposed school building will be located in this area, currently comprises playing fields.
- 8.17 Policy OS1 of PPS 8 states that the Department will not permit development that would result in the loss of existing open space or land zoned for the provision of open space. An exception will be permitted where it is clearly shown that redevelopment will bring substantial community benefits that decisively outweigh the loss of the open space.
- 8.18 The agent has provided open space calculations. The overall existing open space on both sites is 95,329m². The overall proposed open space is 93,672m². This represents an overall reduction in open space to both sites of 1,657m², which equates to 1.5%.
- 8.19 Given the overall minimal net reduction in open space along with the benefits from improvement to facilities to both schools and the wider community, on balance the proposed development is not considered contrary to Policy OS1.

Local Landscape Policy Area

- 8.20 The Ballycastle High School site comprises the largest component of the Ballycastle High School and St Patrick's & St Brigid's Church LLPA (Designation BEL 12). This designation incorporates a very prominent listed building (the Church) and the buildings of Ballycastle High School and their related grounds which includes significant tree groups.
- 8.21 Policy ENV 1 within NAP 2016 states that planning permission will not be granted for development proposals that would be liable to adversely affect those features, or combination of features, that contribute to the environmental quality, integrity or character of a designated LLPA. Designation BEL 12 states that any further extensions of the existing buildings should be consistent with their character and provide for the maximum retention of the existing groups of trees.
- 8.22 The Development Plan team was consulted regarding potential impacts on the LLPA. The LLPA refers to the need for extensions to be consistent with the character of the host building and provide for maximum retention of trees. Although the proposal relates to new development, the existing character of the site will remain as an educational one and may be considered to accord with the intention of the designation.
- 8.23 In terms of trees within the LLPA, the Council's Tree Officer was consulted to consider these separately.
- 8.24 Development Plan conclude that the proposal is acceptable in principle as the site lies within the settlement development limit for Ballycastle. It seeks the provision of a new school campus rather than extensions to existing buildings as envisaged by the LLPA designation commentary. Notwithstanding this, the proposal relates to the continued educational function of the site, rather than a new land use. The commentary does not prohibit new development. The impact of trees is considered acceptable and further detail is considered below.

Impact on Conservation Area and Trees

Conservation Area

- 8.25 The proposal involves the construction of extensive buildings on a large dual frontage site which is located outside the Ballycastle Conservation Area. Due to the existing landform there is a physical separation and limited views from the site through to the main Historic form of the Conservation Area. It is welcomed that the features of the raised embankment and the tree grouping to the south-east of the site are retained, with the built form having appropriate setback, height and massing to respect the topographical change in levels and views to the Conservation Area. This limits views of the development into this lower section of Rathlin Road and junction with Anne Street/Quay Road, which provides an attractive approach and backdrop to the Conservation Area setting.
- 8.26 Under the policy context of Paragraphs 6.18 & 6.19 of the SPPS and Policy BH12 of Planning Policy Statement 6 (PPS6), Conservation Section have no objection to this proposal, given that it is sufficiently removed from the Conservation Area as to not directly impact on its character and setting.

Trees

- 8.27 There are a variety of trees on site which are not protected by a Tree Protection Order and not within the Conservation Area. These trees provide an important asset to the site and the wider area and should be retained and incorporated into the proposal where possible.
- 8.28 The agent provided a comprehensive Tree Survey Report, which includes details of tree protection measures along with a schedule of recommended remedial works. A number of trees will be removed in order to facilitate the development, such as the Hockey Pitch and playing fields. It is important to consider that the more significant linear forms of mature trees on the exterior of the site, Moyle Road entrance, Northern Boundary of site towards Rathlin Road and the embankment to Rathlin Road to the south east corner of the site all remain largely intact with the tree removal involving less prominent trees to the interior of the site.

Another consideration is on the significant level of tree/shrub planting and landscaping proposed throughout the site, which along with level of retained trees will mitigate any loss of trees on site.

- 8.29 It is evident when considering the design process and level/content of the information provided that effort has been made to seek the maximum retention of trees on site. The level of retained trees on site along with the landscaping proposed should help maintain the attractive local landscape setting.

Archaeology and Built Heritage

- 8.30 The application site lies just outside the Area of Archaeological Potential for Ballycastle, as defined within NAP 2016. It is close to several archaeological sites and includes a large greenfield site which is to be developed upon. The development site has the potential to contain further, previously unrecorded archaeological remains,
- 8.31 Historic Environment Division (Historic Monuments) is content that the proposal satisfies PPS 6 policy requirements, subject to conditions for the agreement and implementation of a developer funded programme of archaeological works in accordance with Policy BH 4 of PPS 6.
- 8.32 The application site is in proximity to St Patrick's & St Brigid's Church, which is a Grade B1 listed building of special architectural and historic interest, protected under Section 80 of The Planning Act (NI) 2011. Policy BH 11 of PPS 6 applies.
- 8.33 HED Historic Buildings consider that a new school campus on this site is acceptable in principle, but in its current form raises potential concerns relating to its impact on the setting of the listed building. The key concerns in terms of the impact on the setting of the church relates primarily to the key views across the green on approach into Ballycastle from Rathlin Road. HED requested additional information including existing and proposed 3D photomontages of the proposal.
- 8.34 Further information was submitted by the agent on 2nd December 2020, including 3D photomontages as requested by HED. Upon

assessment of this further information, HED remain of the opinion that the proposal will have an impact on the setting of the church and that the proposal will adversely screen existing long views of the church, notably its spire, on travel along Rathlin Road.

- 8.35 HED continue to be mindful that all social, economic and environmental impacts of this strategic major application will have to be balanced by the Council in their determination of the application.
- 8.36 It is acknowledged that the building will have an effect on the views of the Listed Building on Rathlin Road. However, in assessment of this matter, substantial weight is given to the substantial separation distance between the listed building and proposed buildings which preserves its immediate setting. Furthermore, substantial weight is given to the economic and community benefits deriving from the development. These material considerations are given greater weight relative to preservation of the view of the spire of the Church from Rathlin Road as forming part of the setting of the listed building.

Flood Risk and Drainage

- 8.37 The Strategic Flood Map (NI) indicates that the development lies outside the 1 in 100 year fluvial flood plain and the 1 in 200 year coastal flood plain. DfI Rivers has no specific reason to object to the proposed development from a fluvial or coastal flood risk perspective.
- 8.38 A Drainage Assessment was submitted with the application. DfI Rivers initially stated that the Drainage Assessment failed to meet the requirements of PPS 15 and requested additional information. Following submission of further information, DfI Rivers comment that while not being responsible for the preparation of the drainage assessment, accepts its logic and has no reason to object to the proposed development from a drainage or flood risk perspective.
- 8.39 DfI Rivers request that a condition is included which requires a final drainage assessment to be submitted to the planning authority prior to commencement of any of the approved development on site.

Access & Parking

- 8.40 Policy AMP 2 of PPS 3 Access, Movement & Parking applies and states that planning permission will only be granted for a development proposal involving direct access, or intensification of the use of an existing access onto a public road where;
- Such access will not prejudice road safety or significantly inconvenience the flow of traffic; and
 - The proposal does not conflict with Policy AMP 3, Access to Protected Routes
- 8.41 The main vehicular access to the proposed school building on the Ballycastle High School site is to remain from Moyle Road. The initial site layout plan also indicated a proposed new service entrance and new secondary pedestrian entrance from Rathlin Road. The access to the sports pavilion and sports facilities on the Cross and Passion College site will also be from Moyle Road.
- 8.42 Concerns were raised by objectors in relation to the proposed secondary pedestrian entrance from Rathlin Road. The main concern relates to pupils being dropped off at this entrance and vehicles parking on Rathlin Road which would be a road safety issue. Also turning of vehicles in Rathlin Court.
- 8.43 DfI Roads was consulted and requested amendments. DfI Roads advised that the proposed new pedestrian access to the school off Rathlin Road is unacceptable and this access should be removed from all of the relevant plans.
- 8.44 The most recent submitted plans show the proposed new secondary pedestrian access removed from the plans and retention of the existing pedestrian access next to the northern boundary. Further objections were received relating to the retention of the pedestrian access. DfI Roads was re-consulted and advised that the existing pedestrian access is a historic access for pedestrians and are content that it should be retained to provide permeability from the site to and from this area of Ballycastle. DfI Roads have no objection to the proposal subject to conditions.

- 8.45 DfI Roads have considered objection letters relating to parking and turning on Rathlin Road and in Rathlin Court and are content subject to conditions. Substantial weight is given to the position of DfI Roads as the competent authority.
- 8.46 A service entrance is proposed from the Rathlin Road. A condition will be included to ensure it will not result in other users accessing the site.
- 8.47 A Transport Assessment Form was submitted which indicates no proposed increase in the volume of traffic to the site as the traffic will be redistributed from CPC to BHS. The hours most likely for students and staff to arrive and depart from the site would be 08:00 – 09:00 and 15:30 – 16:30. The proposal will be accessed via existing accesses on Moyle Road.
- 8.48 Buses will be the most common form of transport to the site. In order to improve transport to site, 12 bus spaces with shelters will be created within the BHS site to wait as opposed to waiting on the west side of Moyle Road. A one-way system will be in place to aid traffic flow through the site during busy times.
- 8.49 Policy AMP 7 of PPS 3 requires development proposals to provide adequate provision for car parking and appropriate servicing arrangements. Proposed car parks at the existing Ballycastle High School site holds 152 car spaces, 8 accessible parking spaces, 9 service vehicle spaces, 12 bus spaces, 3 minibus spaces and 72 bicycle racks. The proposed car parking at the Cross & Passion College site holds 44 car spaces, 5 accessible parking spaces and a secure parking area including 2 minibus spaces. Car parking on site will include parking for the mobility impaired and for visitors. The proposal is considered to meet the requirements of Policy AMP 7 in relation to parking provision.
- 8.50 A Travel Plan has been submitted as part of the application. The main objectives of the travel plan are to take into consideration the existing transport conditions along the Moyle Road and Rathlin Road, surrounding the site, and to promote and increase awareness of sustainable transport options.

Natural Heritage

European Protected Species

- 8.51 NIEA Natural Environment Division was consulted regarding the ecological appraisals submitted with the application. NED note the findings of the ecologists in relation to bats.
- 8.52 For Ballycastle High School, the ecologists assessed that development within the site boundary may have an impact on roosting bats as trees assessed as having high and moderate bat roost potential are to be felled to facilitate the proposed development. Furthermore, there is potential to impact on bats that may be using the buildings with low bat roost potential when they are demolished as part of the proposed development.
- 8.53 On the Cross & Passion College Campus, buildings on site were assessed as having low bat roost potential, with four potential egress/ingress features identified. These features offer access to a small number of bats and could be classified as a day roost or transitional roost if occupied by bats. The removal of trees could result in the loss of bat foraging habitat. Bats are light-sensitive and proposed floodlighting will result in an increase of light levels across the site.
- 8.54 NED have reviewed Floodlighting Strategy & acknowledge that floodlighting and external lighting is essential in this school setting. NED acknowledge the proposed efforts within the plan to reduce light spill into surrounding areas. As such, NED has no concerns with the proposed external lighting on site. A condition is included which requires the proposed mitigation measures to be implemented in full.
- 8.55 NED requested the submission of one bat emergence or re-entry survey for each of the buildings on site assessed as having low bat roost potential and for trees as having moderate and high bat roost potential. Also, an internal assessment of each building assessed as having moderate and high bat roost potential. Further information was submitted by the agent including an Interim Bat Survey Report and Wildlife Friendly Plan.

8.56 NED has considered the impacts of the proposal on natural heritage interests and, on the basis of the information provided, has no concerns subject to conditions.

Priority Species/Habitats

8.57 Paragraph 6.192 of the SPPS and Policy NH 5 of PPS 2 states that planning permission should only be granted for a development proposal which is not likely to result in an unacceptable impact on; or damage to known priority habitats.

8.58 NED understand that 605 metres of hedgerow will be removed in the development of the site. Hedgerows are NI Priority Habitat and may support protected species such as badgers, bats and birds. NED consider the ecologists suggested mitigation proposal should be implemented. NED would encourage the retention of existing site trees and hedgerows as much as possible.

8.59 Planting plans have been submitted to show the extent of existing trees to be retained and proposed planting on both sites. On the BHS site, trees to the northern boundary with Atlantic Avenue and to the south-east of the site on Rathlin Road are to be retained. The planting plan shows a variety of tree species to be planted within the site to the car parking area and also along site boundaries. The plan includes proposed hedgerow planting along boundaries as well as woodland and wildflower meadow. On the CPC site, proposed tree and hedgerow planting is located mainly to the site boundaries. Grassed areas surround the proposed buildings and sports pitches with proposed trees throughout.

8.60 Extensive boundary planting includes woodland and hedging along site boundaries and within the site. The planting has been selected based on wildlife friendly properties and in the long term, the overall planting scheme will increase the biodiversity of the local area.

Impact on Residential Amenity

8.61 The Ballycastle High School site is bounded by residential development at Atlantic Avenue to the northern boundary and on Rathlin Road to the east. The proposed school campus is to be

located on the eastern part of the site, which currently comprises playing fields. The proposed site layout brings the school building closer to existing residential development at Atlantic Avenue and Rathlin Road. The sports pitches also present an opportunity for noise and general disturbance and are located to the north of the site, adjacent properties at Atlantic Avenue. This layout allows for the ongoing use of the existing school during the construction phase. The proposed ballcourt is located 5 metres from the boundaries with No. 16 & No. 18 Atlantic Avenue and sits at a lower level than these dwellings. The 3G synthetic hockey pitch is located 5 metres from the nearest dwelling at No. 14 Atlantic Avenue and is also at a lower ground level.

- 8.62 Concerns were raised regarding loss of privacy and overshadowing from the proposed school building in relation to dwellings at No. 30 and No. 31 Atlantic Avenue. Site sections were submitted showing the relationship between the proposed building and these dwellings. The proposed building is located 30 metres from the nearest part of the boundary with No. 31. There are first floor classrooms facing onto the private amenity space of No. 30 Atlantic Avenue. The nearest part of the proposed building is 10 metres from the boundary with No. 30. To address privacy issues these windows have been amended to include obscure glazing. This is regulated by planning condition. In addition, planting will be carried out along this boundary to ensure no adverse impact on amenity. Currently a gap in the boundary exists along the rear of no. 30 and this planting will help infill this gap.
- 8.63 There are sports pitches proposed on both the BHS and CPC site. The sports pitches are in close proximity to existing residential developments. Potential impacts may include noise and general disturbance and also light pollution from the proposed floodlighting.
- 8.64 The Environmental Health Department note that acoustic screening is being installed in areas close to housing in The Abbey but no screening is shown on drawings in the proximity of houses at Atlantic Avenue. Acoustic screening was not deemed necessary at this location, however Environmental Health have advised that in order to deaden the impact of balls hitting the ballcourt walls, consideration should be given to treating the wall

surface with a sound absorbent finish. This can be provided by a condition.

- 8.65 The impact of the proposed floodlighting was considered in the submitted Lighting Assessment. Environmental Health have advised that conditions pertaining to the floodlighting should be included if approval is to be granted. This will ensure guideline levels are not exceeded in order to protect residential amenity. Advice has also been provided with regard to control of dust from construction & demolition. Conditions have been included to address these issues. This includes submission of a Construction Management Plan to address issues regarding dust and issues arising from demolition and construction activities. Also a condition which regulates light levels from proposed floodlighting.
- 8.66 Acoustic fencing is proposed to the southern boundary of the CPC site adjacent to The Abbey. Concerns were raised regarding overshadowing and loss of light. The agent submitted amended plans in which the acoustic fence is set back from the boundary with The Abbey. This is located between 9 to 6.5 metres from the boundaries with those properties closest to the site along The Abbey. This should minimise any potential overshadowing/loss of light. Overall, the relationship between the proposed development and all surrounding residential properties is considered acceptable subject to the relevant conditions set out in Section 10.

Other Matters

- 8.67 An issue was raised by an objector in relation to the red line boundary of the application site. The red line excluded the bank to the rear of the footpath at the southern end of the boundary, which is critical to the delivery of the service access.
- 8.68 The agent submitted amended plans to include the bank within the red line. This is to ensure provision of visibility splays for the service access.
- 8.69 In the context of the PAD application, consultation was not considered necessary with HED on the setting of St Patrick's & St Brigid's Church given the substantial separation distance from the listed building to the proposed buildings.

Habitats Regulations Assessment

- 8.70 The application was considered in light of the assessment requirements of Regulation 43 (1) of the Conservation (Natural Habitats, etc.) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 1995 (as amended) by Shared Environmental Service on behalf of Causeway Coast and Glens Borough Planning Authority.
- 8.71 The potential impact of this proposal on Special Protection Areas, Special Areas of Conservation and Ramsar sites has been assessed in accordance with the requirements of Regulation 43 (1) of the Conservation (Natural Habitats, etc.) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 1995 (as amended). The proposal would not be likely to have a significant effect on the features of any European site.

9 CONCLUSION

- 9.1 The proposal is considered acceptable in this location having regard to the Northern Area Plan 2016 and other material considerations including relevant planning policies. Both the Ballycastle High School and Cross and Passion College sites comprise existing school buildings and therefore a new school building and associated works is considered acceptable in principle. The design and appearance of the proposed building is acceptable. Potential impacts on residential amenity have been addressed so as to minimise impacts. The loss of open space has been compensated for and the economic/social/ community benefits taken into account. Vehicle and pedestrian access arrangements are acceptable in addition to car parking provision. Issues regarding natural and built heritage have been considered in assessment of the application. Approval is recommended.

10 CONDITIONS

1. As required by Section 61 of the Planning Act (Northern Ireland) 2011, the development hereby permitted shall be begun before the expiration of 5 years from the date of this permission.

Reason: Time Limit.

2. No development shall commence until the proposed vehicular accesses and alteration to the existing vehicular access, including visibility splays and any forward sight distance, are provided in accordance with Drawing No's 45 (Rev. 02) and 46 (Rev. 02) bearing the date stamp 8th April 2021. The area within the visibility splays and any forward sight line shall be cleared to provide a level surface no higher than 250mm above the level of the adjoining carriageway and such splays shall be retained and kept clear thereafter.

Reason: To ensure there is a satisfactory means of access in the interests of road safety and the convenience of road users.

3. The access gradient to the development hereby permitted shall not exceed 4% (1 in 25) over the first 10 m outside the road boundary. Where the vehicular access crosses a footway, the access gradient shall be between 4% (1 in 25) maximum and 2.5% (1 in 40) minimum and shall be formed so that there is no abrupt change of slope along the footway.

Reason: To ensure there is a satisfactory means of access in the interests of road safety and the convenience of road users.

4. No other development hereby permitted shall become operational until the existing accesses indicated on Drawing No. 45 (Rev. 02) bearing the date stamp 8th April 2021 been permanently closed and the footway reinstated to the satisfaction of DFI Roads.

Reason: In order to minimise the number of access points on to the public road in the interests of road safety and the convenience of road users.

5. The proposed service entrance as shown on Drawing 03 REV 4 dated 18th May 2021 shall be used solely for service vehicles entering and exiting the site and shall not be used by pedestrians or other vehicles.

Reason: In order to minimise the number of vehicles and pedestrians using this access in the interests of road safety and the convenience of road users.

6. The felling of the mature oak tree (located at D11623 4108) identified as having high bat roost potential shall be carried out using soft-fell techniques, under the supervision of a suitably qualified and experienced bat ecologist, within the time periods 15th August to 15th October or 15th March to 15th May only.

Reason: To protect bats

7. A soft-felling approach shall be implemented for the felling or arboricultural works on any tree assessed as having low bat roost potential. Should any bats be discovered during felling, NIEA must be contacted immediately.

Reason: To protect bats

8. The landscaping and planting plans shall be carried out in accordance with the approved details and the appropriate British Standard or other recognised Codes of Practice. The planting plan shall be carried out during the first available planting season after the commencement of development, in accordance with the *Landscape Works Specification and Management \ Maintenance Plan* (Doc. No. 321701-DCL-ZZ-00-SP-L-80003 – Rev. P1) produced by David Clarke Landscape Architect, dated the 19th March 2020. If within a period of 5 years from the date the development is completed any tree, shrub, or hedge is removed, uprooted, destroyed, dies, or becomes, in the opinion of the Planning Authority, seriously damaged or defective, another tree, shrub, or hedge of the same species and size as that originally planted shall be planted at the same place, unless the Planning Authority gives written consent to any variation.

Reason: To minimise the impact of the proposal on the biodiversity value of the site.

9. No tree felling, vegetation clearance and building demolition, shall take place between the 1st of March and 31st of August inclusive, unless a competent ecologist has undertaken a detailed check for active bird's nests in the trees/vegetation/buildings, immediately before works commence and provided written confirmation that no nests are present/birds will be harmed and there are appropriate measures in place to protect nesting birds. Any such written confirmation shall be submitted to the Planning Authority within 6 weeks of works commencing.

Reason: To protect breeding birds.

10. No retained tree shall be cut down, uprooted or destroyed, or have its roots damaged within the crown spread nor shall arboricultural work or tree surgery take place on any retained tree to be topped or lopped other than in accordance with the approved plans and particulars, without the written approval of the Planning Authority. Any arboricultural work or tree surgery approved shall be carried out in accordance with British Standard 5837:2012 Trees in relation to design, demolition and construction – Recommendations.

Reason: To ensure the continuity of the biodiversity value afforded by existing trees.

11. The proposed mitigation measures in the Bats and Lighting Position Paper, produced by Tetra Tech, dated March 2021, shall be implemented in full.

Reason: To protect bats.

12. No development shall take place until a final drainage assessment, compliant with Annex D of PPS 15 and containing a detailed drainage network design including a demonstration of how out of sewer flooding will be managed is submitted to the Council for its consideration and approval.

Reason: To safeguard against flood risk to the development and elsewhere.

13. All fuel storage tanks and the associated boiler infra-structure, must be fully decommissioned and removed from site. The fuel tank decommissioning shall be undertaken in accordance with current Guidance for Pollution prevention (GPP 2) and the Pollution Prevention Guidance (PPG27) and the quality of surrounding soils and groundwater verified.

Reason: Protection of environmental receptors to ensure the site is suitable for use.

14. The development hereby permitted shall not commence until a detailed remediation strategy to address the non-aqueous phase liquid (NAPL) fuel oil contamination of groundwater at the former boiler on the Cross and Passion School. The strategy must include provisions for the removal of residual NAPL to an acceptable minimum at the site through the direct excavation or installation of sump(s) and include groundwater monitoring points for verification. The remediation strategy must be submitted in writing and agreed with the Council and should identify all unacceptable risks on the site, the remedial objectives/criteria and the measures which are proposed to mitigate them (including maps/plans showing the remediation design, implementation plan detailing timetable of works, remedial criteria, monitoring program, etc).

Reason: Protection of environmental receptors to ensure the site is suitable for use.

15. The development hereby permitted shall not be occupied until the remediation measures as described in the remediation strategy submitted under Condition 13 have been implemented to the satisfaction of the Council. The Council must be given 2 weeks written notification prior to the commencement of remediation work.

Reason: Protection of environmental receptors to ensure the site is suitable for use.

16. If during the development works, new contamination or risks are encountered which have not previously been identified, works should cease and the Council shall be notified immediately. This new contamination shall be fully investigated in accordance with the Land

Contamination: Risk Management (LCRM) guidance available at <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/landcontamination-how-to-manage-the-risks>. In the event of unacceptable risks being identified, a remediation strategy shall be agreed with the Planning Authority in writing, and subsequently implemented and verified to its satisfaction.

Reason: Protection of environmental receptors to ensure the site is suitable for use.

17. After completing the remediation works under Conditions 14, 15 and 16; and prior to occupation of the development, a verification report needs to be submitted in writing and agreed with Planning Authority. This report should be completed by competent persons in accordance with the Land Contamination: Risk Management (LCRM) guidance available at <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/land-contamination-how-to-manage-the-risks>. The verification report should present all the remediation, waste management and monitoring works undertaken and demonstrate the effectiveness of the works in managing all the risks and wastes in achieving the remedial objectives.

Reason: Protection of environmental receptors to ensure the site is suitable for use.

18. No development or piling work shall commence on this site until a piling risk assessment has been submitted in writing and agreed with the Planning Authority for any built structure in the location or area of the NAPL contaminated part of the former Cross and Passion School. Piling risk assessments should be undertaken in accordance with the methodology contained within the Environment Agency document on “Piling and Penetrative Ground Improvement Methods on Land Affected by Contamination: Guidance on Pollution Prevention” available at <http://webarchive.nationalarchives.gov.uk/20140328084622/http://cdn.environment-agency.gov.uk/scho0202bisw-e-e.pdf>.

Reason: Protection of environmental receptors to ensure the site is suitable for use.

19. A construction environmental management plan addressing noise, dust and vibration impacts arising from the site workings/activities shall be

submitted in writing to, and agreed by Council prior to any works commencing on site. Such a plan shall state the mitigation measures to be employed to reduce/minimise noise, dust and vibration emanating from the activities carried out on site. All mitigations measures proposed shall have cognisance of best practice and all relevant guidance, British Standards and Codes of Practice. Site preparation, enabling and construction works shall be carried out in accordance with the agreed Construction Environmental Management Plan. Noise impacts shall be minimised/controlled by employment of best practice and mitigation measures in accordance with BS5228 Part 1 2009 Code of Practice for noise and vibration on Construction and Open Sites.

Reason: To ensure no adverse effect on residential amenity arising from construction activities

20. All vehicles associated with construction on site shall be fitted with broadband spectrum reversing alarms.

Reason: To ensure no adverse impact on residential amenity.

21. Vibration arising from activities associated with the site shall not exceed 1mm/s ppv (peak particle velocity) at any residential property in the vicinity of the development site.

Reason: To ensure no adverse impact on residential amenity.

22. Within 2 weeks of the Council being notified of a reasonable noise complaint, from the occupant of a dwelling which lawfully exists or has planning permission at the date of this consent, the permitted development operator shall at his/her expense employ a suitably qualified and competent person to undertake a noise survey in order to assess the level of noise immissions from the permitted development.

The duration of such monitoring shall be sufficient to provide comprehensive information on noise levels with the development operating at the maximum capacity.

Details of the noise monitoring survey shall be submitted to Causeway Coast and Glens Borough Council for written approval prior to any monitoring commencing.

2 weeks prior notification of the date of commencement of the survey shall be provided.

The noise survey information shall include detail of:

- Any noise limit/s breaches
- Recommendation of acoustic mitigation required
- Confirmation of implementation of mitigation measures and evidence of noise limit/s conformance.

The noise survey information shall be provided within 4 weeks (unless extended with Causeway Coast and Glens Borough Council) further to a written request from the Council.

Reason: To ensure no adverse impact on residential amenity

23. The proposed ballcourts adjacent Atlantic Avenue shall not become operational until their wall surface is treated with a sound absorbent finish which has had prior agreement in writing by the Council.

Reason: To ensure no adverse impact on residential amenity.

23. Light levels from any floodlighting or security lighting to be installed shall not exceed 10 lux pre curfew (up to 11pm) and 2 lux post curfew (after 11pm) at the closest residential receptors.

Reason: To ensure no adverse impact on residential amenity

24. Following installation of the proposed lighting a post verification assessment shall be undertaken by a competent person to verify that light levels do not exceed those stipulated in condition 22 at the closest residential receptors

Reason: To ensure no adverse impact on residential amenity

25. All retained trees on site, as indicated on the approved Landscape drawing No 10 , shall be permanently retained, unless necessary to prevent danger to the public in which case a full explanation shall be given to the Council in writing within 14 days. No retained tree, other

than those required to be removed for the purpose of carrying out development, shall be, cut down, uprooted or destroyed, or have its roots within the crown spread damaged or subject to any soil level changes, without the prior written consent of the Council. Development will be taken to include the main development, any associated buildings, access and service provision.

Reason: To ensure the retention of trees and to the ensure continuity of the landscape amenity afforded by these trees.

26. All arboricultural work and tree protection measures shall be implemented in accordance with the submitted Tree Survey Report by M. Large Tree Services Ltd, (Doc 16) received 6th November 2020. All works shall be carried out in accordance with these approved details in accordance with BS5837 (2012) 'Trees in Relation to Construction' by a competent Tree Surgeon, preferably an Arboricultural Association approved contractor.

Reason: To ensure the continuity of amenity afforded by existing trees and provision of a professional standard of workmanship.

27. All fencing and boundary treatments as shown on drawing Nos 05 REV 4, 06 REV 3, 48, 60 & 62 shall be installed prior to the proposed development becoming operational.

Reason: In the interest of residential and visual amenity.

28. The windows at first floor level on the northern elevation of the school building shall be obscured as shown on drawing No 17 REV 01 received 6th November 2020 before operation of the school and permanently retained as such.

Reason: In the interests of residential amenity.

29. None of the outdoor sports areas hereby approved shall be used outside the following times 07:00am- 10.30pm.

Reason: In the interests of residential amenity.

Site Location Map



Block Plan

