

Addendum

LA01/2020/0561/F

1.0 Update

1.1 Correspondence was received from Cunnane Town Planning on 4th May 2021 on behalf of a resident, at No. 6 Atlantic Avenue, in relation to the proposed development. This letter is not an objection but suggests that a small part, or at least the artefacts of each existing campus, be retained and developed as a small museum. The letter suggests that the existing Assembly Hall building is retained as part of the development.

1.2 Further comments within the letter are as follows;

- The existing Assembly Hall building would be of considerable local heritage interest.
- A heritage centre would complement the youth and sporting facilities. The proximity of such a centre to the road would mean that it would be readily accessible to visitors.
- The building would easily accommodate displays and artefacts from both schools and provide space for visitor's reception, toilets, talks and lectures.
- Retention of the building can easily be achieved without compromise to the rest of the development on the site.
- Provision of a heritage feature would facilitate a significant element of both schools history being presented to the public within a heritage centre.
- Reference is made to the Shared Education Act (Northern Ireland) 2016. The letter states that the incorporation of a heritage element or building within the permitted scheme would enable the proposed development to comply with the above Act.

1.3 Letters in support of this response have also been provided from The Glens of Antrim Historical Society and the Friends of Ballycastle Museum.

1.4 A further letter was received on 27th May 2021 from Mallon & Co. Solicitors on behalf of the resident at No. 6 Atlantic Avenue, which requests that further consideration is given to funding provision. This raises concerns including;

- Have the case fund providers referenced the historical impact of the two schools in the town of Ballycastle and taken account of the wider stakeholders in that community?
- Is there a heritage clause in the budget and do the fund providers take account of the potential dilution of past ethos/cultural identities of each school?
- What consultation processes have been conducted on the retention of historical identities of each school to date? If any, where can the results be found? Has any action been taken as a result of community responses?
- Have similar projects been looked at and best possible practice models incorporated into this one?
- May our client have sight of any economic/social impact appraisal? Was the local Council consulted in this vein?
- Might a road-map be incorporated into the planning application to chart the journey of this venture sharing the past through a timeline/heritage centre for each school?

1.5 Further objections were received from the residents at 3 Rathlin Court and 32 Rathlin Road. Collectively these raise issues regarding:

- The set back distance of the school building from Rathlin Road.
- Road/ pedestrian safety regarding the retention of the existing pedestrian access to Rathlin Road
- Land ownership of a portion of the site adjacent 55 Rathlin Road.
- Need for a construction management plan.
- The proposal is a missed opportunity that detracts from its surroundings and presents challenges to residents.
- The location of the playgrounds.

2.0 Assessment

- 2.1 The planning application has been assessed against the Northern Area Plan 2016 and all other relevant planning policies and material considerations. The proposed development does not involve the retention of the Assembly Hall or provision of a museum/heritage centre on either the Ballycastle High School or Cross & Passion College sites. The building is not listed and not within a conservation area. Therefore, it is outside the remit of the Planning Department to require the applicant to retain the building in this case. Historic Environment Division has been consulted in relation to the proposed development and have not made comments on this particular building. The funding/budget queries are not within the remit of the planning consideration. The social/economic benefits have been assessed as part of the consideration in the planning committee report. The proposed development has been considered acceptable.
- 2.2 The position of the school building on the site is not considered to be insensitive to the character of the area to an unacceptable extent (Paragraph 8.9 of the Planning Committee Report refers). Overall, the design is considered acceptable and is not considered contrary to policy requirements.
- 2.3 DfI Roads are content with the retention of the existing access to Rathlin Road and significant weight is given to their position as the competent authority (Paragraph 8.44 of the Planning Committee Report refers). A further planning condition is proposed to prohibit dropping off/ pick up of pupils using vehicles at this location.
- 2.4 The issue of land ownership of the portion of the site adjacent 55 Rathlin Road was raised with the Agent. This area has since been removed from the application site/ site location plan.
- 2.5 A Construction Environmental Management Plan (CEMP) is conditioned to be submitted before any works commence on site (Condition 19 refers). This shall allow consideration of amenity impacts on neighbours comprising noise, dust and vibration issues during the construction phase.

2.6 The proposal includes two hard play areas, one to the north and one to the south of the school building. It is acknowledged that the one to the north is likely to be subject to substantial shade. Management of use of these hard play areas is a matter for the school.

2.7 To ensure that the materials are appropriate the following additional condition is proposed:

30. No development shall commence until full details of external finishes and materials of the proposed school building, sports building and sports pavilion have been submitted to and approved in writing by the Planning Authority.

Reason: In the interests of visual amenity and to ensure the development is sensitive to the character of the area surrounding the site.

2.8 To ensure that the existing pedestrian access to Rathlin Road is not used for the dropping off and pick up of pupils using vehicles which may cause road safety issues and potential harm to residential amenity, the following additional condition is proposed:

31. The development hereby approved shall not become operational until a detailed Travel Plan is submitted to and approved in writing by the Council. The Travel Plan shall demonstrate how the dropping off and pick up of pupils using vehicles at the existing pedestrian access to Rathlin Road is prohibited. The measures in the approved Travel Plan shall be implemented before the development hereby approved becomes operational and shall continue to apply unless variation is agreed to in writing by the Council.

Reason: In the interests of road safety, the convenience of road users and to safeguard residential amenity.

3.0 Recommendation

3.1 That the Committee note the contents of this Addendum and agree with the recommendation to approve the proposed development in accordance with paragraph 1.1 of the Planning Committee report.