



CABINET – 20TH SEPTEMBER 2017

**SUBJECT: DEMOLITION OF OAKDALE AND PONTLLANFRAITH
COMPREHENSIVE SCHOOLS**

REPORT BY: ACTING DIRECTOR OF CORPORATE SERVICES

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1 To seek approval for the demolition of the vacant Oakdale and Pontllanfraith Comprehensive Schools and secure the approval of funds to cover these costs.

2. SUMMARY

- 2.1 The Oakdale and Pontllanfraith Comprehensive Schools were vacated at the end of June 2017 following the completion of the new Islwyn High School.
- 2.2 The buildings are surplus to operational requirements and do not readily lend themselves to an alternative use.
- 2.3 Costs, including NNDR, will continue to be incurred whilst the buildings remain.
- 2.4 It is recommended that the buildings are demolished and surveys completed to facilitate disposal of the sites.

3. LINKS TO STRATEGY

- 3.1 The council's Medium Term Financial Plan has identified Asset Rationalisation as a means of reducing the council's revenue budget costs.
- 3.2 Vacant sites offer potential for capital receipts.
- 3.3 Well Being of Future Generations

The proposal contributes to the following Well-being Goals within the Well-being of Future Generations Act (Wales) 2015:

- ✓ A sustainable Wales
- ✓ A prosperous Wales

4. THE REPORT

- 4.1 The Oakdale and Pontllanfraith Comprehensive Schools were vacated at the end of June 2017 following the completion of the new Islwyn High School. In both cases the vacated buildings are on steeply sloping sites, contain asbestos and do not readily lend themselves to an alternative use. No service need has been identified for the buildings so they are consequently surplus to requirements.

- 4.2 Ongoing security is a concern and the empty buildings have been broken into several times. The buildings are locked, alarmed, insured and are inspected weekly. Also a key holder has been nominated and is called out should there be an alarm activation. All of the foregoing incur cost and significant standing charges for utilities apply. These ongoing costs are estimated at circa £12,000 per site per annum. Furthermore NNDR liability will be incurred from 1st October at the rate of £56,387 and £50,299 per annum for Oakdale and Pontllanfraith respectively.
- 4.3 Given the foregoing it is recommend that both schools are demolished as soon as possible. Plans indicating the proposed scope of the demolition projects are included as Figures 1 & 2 attached.
- 4.4 The services that supply Pontllanfraith Leisure Centre run through the school therefore services diversion works are required prior to demolition. Estimated cost £97,000.
- 4.5 The cost of the demolition is estimated at £1.021m and £1.172m for Oakdale and Pontllanfraith respectively. These include the necessary invasive pre demolition asbestos surveys. It is confirmed that demolition notifications would need to be served under Part 31 of Schedule 2 to the Town and Country Planning Order.
- 4.6 It is proposed that following demolition both sites are disposed of and in order to facilitate this surveys, including topographic and ground investigation, will need to be completed. The cost of these surveys is estimated to be £45,000 per site.
- 4.7 For the avoidance of doubt it is confirmed that Pontllanfraith Leisure Centre is separate to the school, continues to be operational and is excluded from the proposed demolition.

5. WELL-BEING OF FUTURE GENERATIONS

- 5.1 This proposal does contribute to the Well-being Goals as follows.
- 5.2 A Sustainable Wales: The closure of these schools has reduced the council's carbon footprint.
- 5.3 A Prosperous Wales: Revenue savings, the closure of these two aging schools has contributed to the council's MTFP proposals.

6. EQUALITIES IMPLICATIONS

- 6.1 An Equalities Impact Assessment (EqIA) screening has been completed in accordance with the Council's Equalities Consultation and Monitoring Guidance. No potential for unlawful discrimination and/or low level or minor negative impact have been identified and, therefore, a full EqIA has not been carried out.

7. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 7.1 The ongoing cost of retaining the empty buildings totals circa £130,000 per annum but this will cease on demolition.
- 7.2 The cost of the demolition works is estimated to be £1.021m for Oakdale and £1.269m for Pontllanfraith. The latter includes the services diversion works necessary to maintain services to the leisure centre. Furthermore site surveys are required following demolition and the cost of these is estimated to be £45,000 per site.
- 7.3 It has been established that Welsh Government will not part fund the demolitions via the 21st Century Schools programme and it is therefore proposed that the demotion work is funded from capital earmarked reserves. These funds were not allocated to schemes

7.4 Council on 22nd February 2017 agreed a transfer of £7.469m to capital earmarked reserves at that meeting. There is currently sufficient headroom in this allocation.

8. PERSONNEL IMPLICATIONS

8.1 There are no personnel implications arising out of this report.

9. CONSULTATIONS

9.1 There are no views expressed as a result of consultation that differ from the recommendation.

10. RECOMMENDATION

10.1 That approval is given to progress the demolition of the vacant schools and the subsequent site surveys at a total estimated cost of £2.380m funded from the capital earmarked reserve.

11. REASON(S) FOR THE RECOMMENDATION

11.1 Continued implementation of the Council's asset rationalisation strategy.

12. STATUTORY POWER

12.1 Section 123 of the Local Government Act 1972 (as amended). Local Government Act 2000. This is a Cabinet function.

Author: Mark Williams, Interim Head of Property Services, g.mark.williams@caerphilly.gov.uk
Consultees: Chris Burns, Interim Chief Executive, burnsc@caerphilly.gov.uk
Nicole Scammell, Acting Director of Corporate Services, scammn@caerphilly.gov.uk
Steve Harris, Interim Head of Corporate Finance, harrisr@caerphilly.gov.uk
Tim Stephen, Development Control Manager, stepht@caerphilly.gov.uk
Gail Williams, Interim Head of Legal Services & Monitoring Officer, willige@caerphilly.gov.uk
Equalities, Equalities & Welsh Language, equalities@caerphilly.gov.uk
Cllr Lisa Phipps, Cabinet Member for Homes and Places, lisaphipps@caerphilly.gov.uk
Sue Richards, Interim Head of Service - Education, richase@caerphilly.gov.uk
Cllr Roy Saralis, Member for Penmaen, saralr@caerphilly.gov.uk
Cllr Ben Zaplatynski, Member for Penmaen, zaplab@caerphilly.gov.uk
Cllr Mike Adams, Member for Pontllanfraith, adamsm3@caerphilly.gov.uk
Cllr Colin Gordon, Member for Pontllanfraith, gordocj@caerphilly.gov.uk
Cllr Gez Kirby, Member for Pontllanfraith, kirbyg@caerphilly.gov.uk

Background Papers:

Council - 22nd February 2017 - Budget Proposals 2017/18 and Medium Term Financial Strategy 2017/18

Figure 1 Scope of demolition – Oakdale Comprehensive School

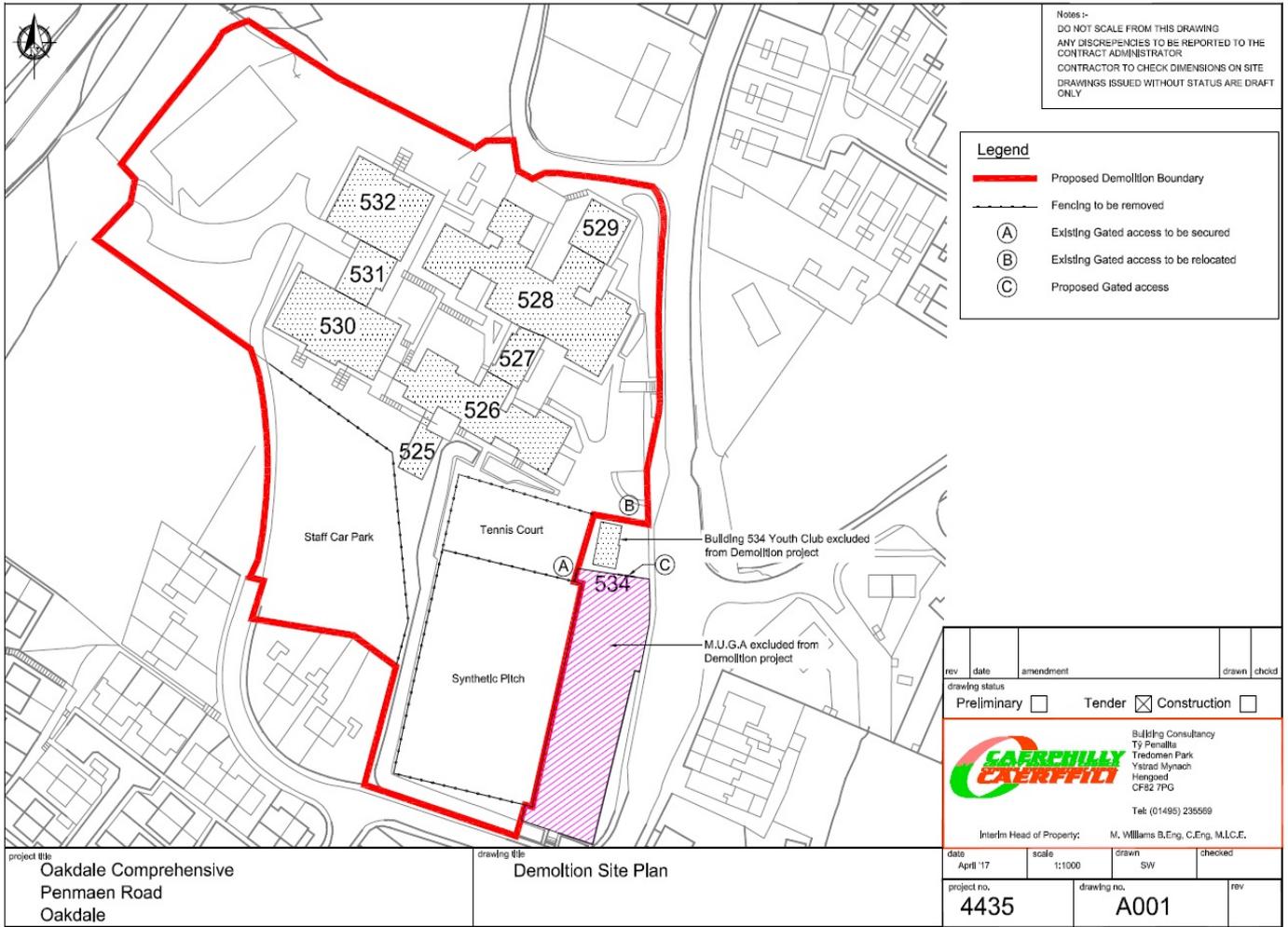


Figure 2 Scope of demolition – Pontllanfraith Comprehensive School

