

**Business Case Scrutiny Group – 22 January 2026**

**Item xx – RCT - Ysgol Gyfun Gymraeg Cwm Rhondda - FBC**

**RCT – YSGOL CWM RHONDDA FBC  
OVERALL FEEDBACK ASSESSMENT**

**1. STRATEGIC CASE**

**Please could all assessors sign off their comments on the Capital Panel section of this report?**

<b>Branch/Division</b>	<b>Sustainable Communities for Learning Programme Delivery</b>
<b>Assessor</b>	<b>REDACTED</b>
<b><u>Comments Section</u></b>	
1. Internal comments	
2. Question(s) for Local Authority or College (for follow up questions, please add the date)	
3. Response(s) from Local Authority or College	
<i>Please update the summary table <a href="#">HERE</a></i>	

<b>Branch/Division</b>	<b>NZC and Condition / Suitability</b>
<b>Assessor</b>	<b>REDACTED</b>
<b><u>Comments Section</u></b>	
1. Internal comments	

---

Content subject to the LA continuing to reduce the embodied carbon through final stages to meet the 600kgCO<sub>2</sub>e/m<sup>2</sup> target,

**2. Question(s) for Local Authority or College  
(for follow up questions, please add the date)**

Content subject to the LA continuing to reduce the embodied carbon through final stages to meet the 600kgCO<sub>2</sub>e/m<sup>2</sup> target.

---

**3. Response(s) from Local Authority or College**

03/02/26: As required by all new schools delivered in Wales from 2022 that are funded under Welsh Government's Sustainable Communities for Learning Programme, the new school development for Ysgol Gyfun Cwm Rhondda will achieve net zero carbon in operation and meet the embodied carbon targets, below 600kgCO<sub>2</sub>/m<sup>2</sup>.

As the design has progressed through RIBA Stage 2, the overall carbon values have been reduced using various initiatives and further reduction measures will be sought to ensure the current target of 600kgCO<sub>2</sub>/m<sup>2</sup> is achieved.

*Please update the summary table [HERE](#)*

<b>Branch/Division</b>	<b>Tertiary Education</b>
<b>Assessor</b>	<b>REDACTED(TED)</b>

**Comments Section**

**1. Internal comments**

**REDACTED** - Positive to see JAs and vocational skills mentioned through Welsh medium

---

**2. Question(s) for Local Authority or College  
(for follow up questions, please add the date)**

**REDACTED** - The existing links with Cymoedd for JAs is very positive. Would the school intend to collaborate further with Coleg y Cymoedd to broaden the offer available to learners (particularly for vocational subjects)?

1. What strategic planning has been undertaken to address the anticipated increased demand for Welsh-medium provision, given that post-16 Welsh-medium learner numbers have continued to decline rapidly year-on-year despite previous interventions and investment?

2. How will future planning ensure that provision is both sustainable and responsive to the specific factors contributing to this decline?

Decline in sixth form why is sixth form so big.  
Assurance that LA follow collaborative approach – need to get response for OBC so need to add to addendum,

12/02 Approval is granted for the proposal to proceed to the Education Investment Panel, on the assurance that further justification is provided for retaining a sixth form capacity of 150 places despite numbers on roll falling from 125 in 2021 to 65 in 2024–25. While recent Cymraeg 2050 investments have supported modest improvements, the benefits of the newly awarded Medr funding have not yet been realised and, as the Medr funding is for one year only, it cannot be relied upon to justify such a significant expansion at this stage. Additional clarity is therefore required on realistic future demand, long term sustainability, and alignment with wider Welsh medium tertiary planning across RCT.

---

3. Response(s) from Local Authority or College

*To sign off your comments please click [HERE](#)*

Branch/Division	Cymraeg 2050
Assessor	REDACTED- Cymraeg 2050 REDACTED- FE

### Comments Section

#### 1. Internal comments

Improving the conditions and facilities of Welsh medium secondary education in this area of the county borough will improve the continuum of learning from primary through to secondary education, ultimately supporting an increase in the number of learners receiving their education through the medium of Welsh, meeting WESP targets and contributing to the Cymraeg 2050 goals.

---

2. Question(s) for Local Authority or College  
(for follow up questions, please add the date)

---

3. Response(s) from Local Authority or College

*To sign off your comments please click [HERE](#)*

Branch/Division	School Organisation and Admissions
Assessor	REDACTED

### Comments Section

#### 1. Internal comments

As mentioned in previous assessments, a reduction in capacity will address the significant surplus places at the school, with room to grow demand as part of Cymraeg 2050.

A statutory consultation is not needed when a reduction in capacity is higher than the number of pupils on roll in the previous two years.

The January 2025 data show that 625 pupils were on roll.

---

**2. Question(s) for Local Authority or College  
(for follow up questions, please add the date)**

---

**3. Response(s) from Local Authority or College**

*To sign off your comments please click [HERE](#)*

<b>Branch/Division</b>	<b>Support for Learners Division, Additional Learning Needs Branch</b>
------------------------	--

<b>Assessor</b>	<b>REDACTED</b>
-----------------	-----------------

**Comments Section**

**1. Internal comments**

---

**2. Question(s) for Local Authority or College  
(for follow up questions, please add the date)**

---

**3. Response(s) from Local Authority or College**

*To sign off your comments please click [HERE](#)*

<b>Branch/Division</b>	<b>Early Years, Childcare and Play</b>
------------------------	--

<b>Assessors:</b>	<b>REDACTED</b>
-------------------	-----------------

**Comments Section**

### 1. Internal comments

Positive to read that the proposal supports the local community to safely use the facilities, both during and after the school day. Would this include children and young people access to improved play and recreational spaces / activities?

---

### 2. Question(s) for Local Authority or College (for follow up questions, please add the date)

---

### 3. Response(s) from Local Authority or College

03/02: In line with Welsh Government policy – particularly the Wellbeing of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015, Planning Policy Wales and the Curriculum for Wales, the new school development at Ysgol Gyfun Cwm Rhondda will promote health, wellbeing and active lifestyles. The provision of high quality outdoor and indoor facilities will strength the existing opportunities for the pupils, staff and the wider community.

The re-development of the school will enhance accessibility and inclusivity ensuring facilities are suitable for a wide range of needs and abilities. The school has excellent links with the community and neighbouring Cymmer Primary School, Flying Start setting, The Rainbow Room as well as several community organisations and groups. These relationships will be strengthened with the new facilities being modern, attractive and fully accessible.

The much-improved outdoor areas, now including an all-weather pitch and Multi Use Games Areas as well as improved internal facilities will enable grassroots activities to thrive and flourish.

*To sign off your comments please click [HERE](#)*

<b>Branch/Division</b>	<b>Sports Division</b>
<b>Assessor</b>	<b>REDACTED</b>

### Comments Section

#### 1. Internal comments

---

#### 2. Question(s) for Local Authority or College (for follow up questions, please add the date)

---

**3. Response(s) from Local Authority or College**

*To sign off your comments please click [HERE](#)*

<b>Branch/Division</b>	<b>Transport Policy, Active Travel</b>
<b>Assessor</b>	<b>REDACTED</b>

**Comments Section**

**1. Internal comments**

The integration of active travel measures within the new school design, including cycle and scooter storage, EV chargers, car-sharing bays, and real-time public transport information is very positive and aligns well with the Welsh Government's Active Travel Delivery Plan 2024–27. We recognise the challenges around encouraging active travel due to the school's catchment, but we welcome the school's intention to promote sustainable travel and will continue to support them through the development of the plan. Happy to proceed.

---

**2. Question(s) for Local Authority or College  
(for follow up questions, please add the date)**

---

**3. Response(s) from Local Authority or College**

*To sign off your comments please click [HERE](#)*

<b>Branch/Division</b>	<b>Digital Inclusion Unit</b>
<b>Assessor</b>	<b>REDACTED</b>

**Comments Section**

**1. Internal comments**

---

**2. Question(s) for Local Authority or College  
(for follow up questions, please add the date)**

---

**3. Response(s) from Local Authority or College**

To sign off your comments please click [HERE](#)

<b>Branch/Division</b>	<b>Environment &amp; Local Government &amp; Planning</b>
<b>Assessor</b>	<b>REDACTED</b>

### **Comments Section**

#### **1. Internal comments**

---

#### **2. Question(s) for Local Authority or College (for follow up questions, please add the date)**

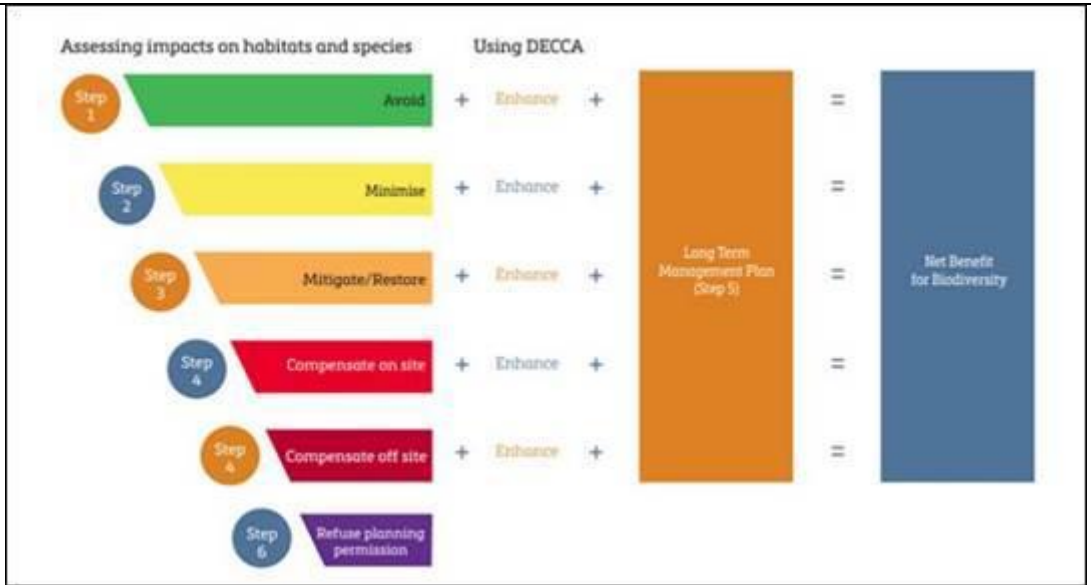
Please outline how you have followed the Planning Policy Wales stepwise approach to biodiversity as included in your Green Infrastructure Statement as part of your planning process (20/01/26).

---

#### **3. Response(s) from Local Authority or College**

03/02: We have followed the Stepwise Approach as follows:

- 1.AVOID – where possible we have avoided GI loss on site, especially to the periphery of the school grounds where most of the existing GI occurs. As part of the GI strategy, we have avoided any development works within the northern woodland area, to maintain the flora and fauna of this area.
- 2.MINIMISE – Some GI will need to be lost for the development, mainly the loss of 4o trees and 1No tree group to the south of the site, and some amenity grassed areas to deal with the phasing of the project. Wherever possible we have minimised loss.
- 3.MITIGATE/RESTORE – A variety of new biodiverse GI is proposed to mitigate any loss or to enhance retained GI, concentrating on creating new north-south and east-west corridors, which includes tree planting (more than the required 1:3 replanting ratio), hedges, shrubs, species-rich grassland and SuDS planting. Species are chosen for being climate resilient and where possible native and locally relevant.
- 4.COMPENSATE ON SITE – The above planting types will be implemented within the school boundary, and overall, they provide the holistic net gain for biodiversity.
- 5.COMPENSATE OFF SITE – the proposals plan to compensate within the masterplan, however there may be opportunities the future to compensate outside of the site boundary in the local environs.



To sign off your comments please click [HERE](#)

<b>Branch/Division</b>	<b>Regeneration</b>
<b>Assessor</b>	<b>REDACTED</b>
<b>Comments Section</b>	
<p><b>1. Internal comments</b></p> <p>Town Centre First has not been explicitly covered in the FBC. It is acknowledged that the LA state that no other suitable site is available, and it is accepted that the required space would be difficult to find in Town Centre location. The school is within close proximity to Porth town centre, so offers a boost to local businesses during the construction phase.</p> <p>It is encouraging that there will be a digital screen available in the main school reception for staff, pupils and visitors to view live data of local bus and train times to encourage the use of the transport facilities at the nearby local transport hub in Porth town centre, again which can offer a potential boost to the town centre through increased footfall and dwell time.</p>	
<p><b>2. Question(s) for Local Authority or College (for follow up questions, please add the date)</b></p> <p>Given that Town Centre First has not been explicitly covered in the FBC, it would be helpful to have a better understanding of how the links will be strengthened between the school and Porth town centre, so businesses can gain maximum benefit from this investment.</p>	
<p><b>3. Response(s) from Local Authority or College</b></p> <p>03/02: With Porth town centre facing challenges common to many town centres, connecting education, business and regeneration plans to the new school development will actively contribute to Porth's social and economic resilience, as well as providing greater opportunities for pupils.</p> <p>The redevelopment of the school aligns directly with the Porth Town Centre Strategy, which aims to create a place where people want to live, work, and visit. The proximity of the</p>	

school's location supports this goal by encouraging increased footfall in the area. This, in turn, will provide a boost to local businesses, attracting more visitors and supporting the regeneration of the main retail area.

Significant investment is being made into Porth town centre, with initiatives to bring empty buildings back into use for both commercial and housing purposes. The redevelopment of the school complements this broader effort. Funding streams such as the Welsh Government's Transforming Towns initiative, Social Housing Grant, and the United Kingdom Government's Shared Prosperity Fund are already being utilised to revitalise the town.

By enhancing the town's infrastructure and economy, these initiatives will also support the community that the school serves. The recently developed Porth Transport hub is a short walk from the school and staff will be encouraged to use sustainable transport as part of the school's Travel Plan. It is hoped while travelling through the high street, the offer within the town will be attractive and encourage local spend from pupils and staff alike.

There are established links between Ysgol Gyfun Cwm Rhondda and the business community of Porth town centre, and the school's aim is to enhance these. With the new school benefiting from a fully accessible school with dedicated community access, the school intend to make facilities available for business community meetings and/or town centre events. It is intended the links will be further expanded, establishing the opportunity for work experience schemes, apprenticeships and work- related learning opportunities to embed the town centre businesses into the curriculum.

*To sign off your comments please click [HERE](#)*

<b>Branch/Division</b>	<b>Enrichment &amp; Engagement - Community Focused Schools</b>
<b>Assessor</b>	<b>REDACTED</b>

### **Comments Section**

#### **1. Internal comments**

Business case states that proposed work will include dedicated internal and external facilities within the school boundary (which can provide educational, cultural, sporting, creative and recreational enrichment activities for all pupils and the wider community) that the local community will be able to safely use, both during and after the school day. This supports a Community Focused Schools approach.

#### **2. Question(s) for Local Authority or College (for follow up questions, please add the date)**

#### **3. Response(s) from Local Authority or College**

*To sign off your comments please click [HERE](#)*

<b>Branch/Division</b>	<b>Curriculum Experiences and Access</b>
<b>Assessor</b>	<b>REDACTED</b>

**Comments Section**

**1. Internal comments**

---

**2. Question(s) for Local Authority or College  
(for follow up questions, please add the date)**

---

**3. Response(s) from Local Authority or College**

*To sign off your comments please click [HERE](#)*

<b>Branch/Division</b>	<b>CADW</b>
<b>Assessor</b>	<b>REDACTED</b>

**Comments Section**

**1. Internal comments**

Disappointing to see another proposal for demolition. The existing building has a backlog of maintenance however, the new scheme is in the millions. Schemes should have a better understanding of embodied carbon in existing buildings and the opportunities for suitable retrofit.

No adverse comments in relation to the historic environment

---

**2. Question(s) for Local Authority or College  
(for follow up questions, please add the date)**

---

**3. Response(s) from Local Authority or College**

*To sign off your comments please click [HERE](#)*

<b>Branch/Division</b>	<b>Treasury – MIM projects</b>
<b>Assessor</b>	<b>REDACTED</b>

**Comments Section**

**1. Internal comments**

---

**2. Question(s) for Local Authority or College  
(for follow up questions, please add the date)**

---

**3. Response(s) from Local Authority or College**

*To sign off your comments please click [HERE](#)*

**ECONOMIC CASE**

<b>Branch/Division:</b>	<b>Education Economist</b>
-------------------------	----------------------------

<b>Assessor:</b>	<b>REDACTED</b>
------------------	-----------------

**Comments Section**

**1. Internal comments**

---

**2. Question(s) for Local Authority or College  
(for follow up questions, please add the date)**

---

**3. Response(s) from Local Authority or College**

*To sign off your comments please click [HERE](#)*

**3. COMMERCIAL CASE**

<b>Branch/Division:</b>	<b>Procurement</b>
-------------------------	--------------------

<b>Assessor:</b>	<b>REDACTED</b>
------------------	-----------------

**Comments Section**

**1. Internal comments**

---

**2. Question(s) for Local Authority or College  
(for follow up questions, please add the date)**

---

**3. Response(s) from Local Authority or College**

*To sign off your comments please click [HERE](#)*

**4. FINANCIAL CASE**

<b>Branch/Division:</b>	<b>Sustainable Communities for Learning Programme Finance</b>
-------------------------	---

<b>Assessor:</b>	<b>REDACTED</b>
------------------	-----------------

**Comments Section**

**1. Internal comments**

---

**2. Question(s) for Local Authority or College  
(for follow up questions, please add the date)**

---

**3. Response(s) from Local Authority or College**

*To sign off your comments please click [HERE](#)*

**5. MANAGEMENT CASE**

<b>Branch/Division:</b>	<b>Sustainable Communities for Learning Programme Delivery</b>
-------------------------	--

<b>Assessor:</b>	<b>REDACTED SCfL Programme</b>
------------------	--------------------------------

**Comments Section**

**1. Internal comments**

Good delivery track record – clear project management, risk register and project plan.

---

**2. Question(s) for Local Authority or College  
(for follow up questions, please add the date)**

---

**3. Response(s) from Local Authority or College**

*To sign off your comments please click [HERE](#)*