

24 November 2015

Dear Councillor Jones,

### **Scrutiny Programme Committee 12 October 2015**

Thank you for your letter dated 28 October. I am sorry for the delay in replying we have been experiencing some technical difficulties.

#### **1. Copy of letter**

You asked for a copy of the letter to the secretary of Parc y Werin Committee which I enclose as Appendix A. I also enclose a copy of the presentation delivered to the Public Meeting held in the Junior School in Gorseinon. Members of the Parc y Werin Committee were present and asked questions (Appendix B).

#### **2. Statutory Notice**

With regard to the statutory notice, the notice but more particularly the plan has to be available for inspection by the public and it is usually put up in the notice space at Civic Centre. A local member may request a copy and arrange additional displays. No notices have to be put anywhere else other than a local newspaper nor does it have to be "advertised" anywhere else and neither do notices have to be put on site.

The notice for Parc y Werin was published in the South Wales Evening Post 23 May and 30 May 2015.

#### **3. School Attendance – Special Teaching Facilities**

- We do not hold specific data on the attendance of pupils attending STF. This could be obtained but would be very time consuming and involve manually interrogating the records of each school hosting an STF.
- However, the vast majority of pupils attending STF do so for reasons relating to learning rather than health.
- The exceptions would be pupils attending the STF for pupils with profound and multiple learning disabilities at Penllergaer Primary and Pontarddulais Comprehensive who are likely to have greater health needs and be more at risk of health related absences.
- WG data for 2014/15 comparing attendance of pupils with statements of special educational needs and pupils without SEN shows slightly lower rates of attendance for those with statements of SEN: 93.1% for those with statements of SEN and 95.1% for those without. However rates for pupils with SEN at school action and school action plus, who would be educated in mainstream settings, show similar rates of absence at 93.6% and 92.8% respectively.
- Formal disaggregation of the STF students' attendance data from the mainstream school attendance data is not possible as the STF students are registered solely at the school in which the STF is based.
- However, schools may informally disaggregate the data to demonstrate any effect on the school's overall attendance, for example in preparation for a school

Estyn inspection, but this would not impact on the formal school attendance data reporting.

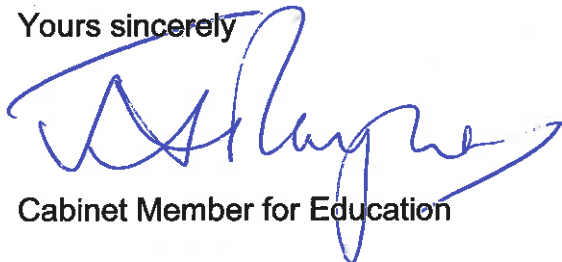
- For all pupils, including those in STFs, we have comprehensive attendance tracking systems in place, including building this data into the VAP.

### **Categorisation**

- An amber support category, within national categorisation, is the result of a three step process. The explanation below is with specific reference to primary schools, including those with STFs.
- Step 1 is an objective view of a school's performance data measures. There is a formula to calculate the standards group of a school. The formula includes six measures. Attendance is one of the six measures. Welsh Government specifies the standards group for each school in Wales. The standards groups can range between 1 and 4. Group 1 indicates high performance.
- Step 2 requires a professional dialogue about the strength of leadership and teaching and learning within the school and this generates a letter between A and D. A indicates the strongest capacity to improve.
- Agreement on the school's support category (step 3) can only take place after step 2. The support category is indicated by four colours ranging from green, yellow, amber and red. Green indicates that less support is required than schools, for example in an amber support category.
- For schools with STFs, the number in step 1 cannot be changed. However, capacity to improve in step 2 can be as high as A provided that the school can evidence that pupils make good progress from their starting points. For STFs, challenge advisers across Wales, will ask the same questions to establish the strength of the school. As a result, schools with STFs and a low standards group of 3 or 4 do not automatically get placed in amber or red.
- Disaggregation is not applied to any of the six measures in step 1 because disaggregation could result in the school being placed in a different benchmark group.
- Step 1 is the start of the categorisation process and does not generate a colour such as amber.

If you require any additional information please do not hesitate to get back to me.

Yours sincerely



Cabinet Member for Education



Appendix A

**CITY AND COUNTY OF SWANSEA**  
**DINAS A SIR ABERTAWE**

Mr Aaron Phillips

**BY EMAIL**

Please ask for:  
Gofynnwch am:  
Direct Line:  
Llinell Unlongyrcchol:

Councillor Jennifer Raynor

(01792) 637429

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Our Ref / Ein Cyf:  
Your Ref / Eich Cyf:  
Date / Dyddiad:

[clr.jennifer.raynor@swansea.gov.uk](mailto:clr.jennifer.raynor@swansea.gov.uk)

JR/SH

18 September 2015

**If you require this or any other information in another format e.g. Braille, audio tape or a different language, please contact me**

Dear Mr Phillips

Many thanks for your letter dated 15 August 2015 and received on 18 August 2015 regarding the proposed development at Parc y Werin which has been passed to me to reply to you from the Leader.

I can assure you that the Council has considered a number of alternative options for a united Gorseinon Primary School on one site.

The school needs to be in the Gorseinon Primary School catchment area to ensure easy and convenient access for pupils and parents. The school needs to have green space on-site so pupils can play and for 'Foundation Phase' learning and, given the economic climate, it needs to be affordable. A new Gorseinon Primary School at Parc y Werin would meet all the above needs more effectively and more efficiently than any other alternative.

During the community engagement in February of this year, approximately 3500 leaflets were distributed to residential accommodation throughout the Gorseinon Primary School catchment area, including Gorseinon Hospital and local sheltered accommodation. Leaflets, posters and comment boxes were also placed within the three school sites, the Canolfan Gorseinon Centre, the library and the Gorseinon Institute.

**COUNCILLOR/Y CYNGHÖRYDD**  
**JENNIFER RAYNOR**  
**CABINET MEMBER FOR EDUCATION /**  
**AELOD Y CABINET ADDYSG**

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**CITY AND COUNTY OF SWANSEA**  
**DINAS A SIR ABERTAWE**

- 2 -

Community information sessions were held at Canolfan Gorseinon Centre on 23 February 2015, 2 March 2015 and 4 March 2015 and a presentation was given to a Town Council meeting held at the Town Council Offices on 4 March 2015.

All the queries/suggestions received during this time have been published on our website and responses provided. I have asked officers to re-visit all points to ensure that all concerns/views are addressed.

Under the proposal, the park could still benefit from hosting weekly bowls and football tournaments and a new junior all-weather pitch would allow children to benefit from using this pitch all-year round, whatever the weather.

Gorseinon Primary School was established in September 2012 following the amalgamation of Gorseinon Infant and Junior Schools and is currently located across three sites. No Welsh Government funds were awarded to the project in 2012.

All the worries that you raise have and are being considered. The community will have a further opportunity to share its views when a planning application is submitted in the coming months.

Yours sincerely

**COUNCILLOR JENNIFER RAYNOR**  
**CABINET MEMBER FOR EDUCATION**

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1

Appendix B

# Proposed new build for Gorseinon Primary School

Adeilad newydd arfaethedig ar gyfer  
Ysgol Gynradd Gorseinon

Community presentation / Cyflwyniad cymunedol

23 September 2015 / 23 Medi 2015

City and County of Swansea  
Dinas a Sir Abertawe



2

# Introductions

**Cllr Rob Stewart  
(Leader)**

**Cllr Jen Raynor  
(Cabinet Member for Education)**

**Lindsay Harvey  
(Chief Education Officer)**



## Key issues

- The school on three sites, is not appropriate for the 21st century and is not acceptable in the long term to the local community.
- Gorseinon has been waiting a long time for a replacement school and, thanks to the Welsh Government and the work of Swansea Council, the opportunity to secure a new school has arisen.
- The infant school, for ages four to eight, was built in Victorian times and is no longer fit for purpose, despite significant maintenance work by the Council and the efforts of teachers, staff and governors.
- An external wall is being held up by a wooden buttress, damp is a daily experience and there is no green space for sport or lessons.
- Classes have to be walked to the nearest green space half a mile away with an escort of up to six staff.



## Progress to date

- Identification of possible sites in Council ownership
- Initial investigations and scoping of requirements
- Community engagement
- Presentations to stakeholders and consideration of feedback
- Traffic assessment
- Publication of notice of intention to develop on Public Open Space
- Refining the school's requirements
- Welsh Government approval of the full business case
- Appointment of contractor to develop design





5

## Which site?

- Any new site for the school has to already be in the Council's ownership and within the Gorseinon catchment area.
- The site has to be capable of meeting the needs of a 21<sup>st</sup> century school.
- Potential sites were identified following an area review of local authority-owned assets in the Gorseinon area.



6

## Why build at Parc Y Werin?

All pupils would have easy, direct and safe access to green space for lessons and for play, encouraging children to follow their sporting dreams in rugby, football and other pursuits.

For the first time ever, pupils at Gorseinon Primary School would have the same degree of access to green space as pupils of nearby primary schools at Pontybrenin and Penyrheol have taken for granted for many years.



## Why build at Parc Y Werin?

There is an opportunity to enhance and improve the community facilities at Parc y Werin:

- Provision of a 3G mini pitch that will be available for letting by community groups and sports clubs
- Re-siting and upgrading of the existing playground
- The new car park which will serve the school will be available for community use when the school is closed at evenings, weekends and holidays
- Community room in the school building available for hire to community groups



8

## Why build at Parc Y Werin?

- It will help develop Parc y Werin as a community park, discourage anti-social behaviour and increase perceptions of the park as a place in the heart of its community available for people to relax and enjoy.
- This site would reinforce links between the new school and its community to help promote the fact that all education relates to the life and well-being of the wider community, as well as the social and economic benefits to the individual.
- There would be no disruption to pupils while construction is underway.
- This option is the most cost-effective solution and would provide better value for money.



9

## Why not build on the junior school site?

- Traffic, highway and child safety issues would be much greater.
- Improvements to access and parking arrangements that may be required are likely to impact on the available site.
- Access to the site for demolition and construction purposes would be challenging.
- The shape and topography of the site is more difficult both in terms of layout and construction costs.
- There would be significant disruption to junior school pupils while the new school was built either on a live site or possibly having to be relocated.



## Why not build on the junior school site?

- Additional costs arising from the decant and temporary classroom provision.
- Loss of playing field during construction.
- The junior school site would not bring the same community benefits as the Parc Y Werin proposal.
- The junior site would be less cost effective and give less value for money than the Parc y Werin proposal.



## Highways issues at the junior school site

- The school is primarily accessed off a classified road and is shared with a busy rear car parking facility for a Sainsbury's supermarket. This potentially will give rise to many highway safety concerns especially in view of increasing pupil/staff numbers from the locality.
- The existing highway infrastructure at the 'school gate' and peripheral is not ideal, and may be inadequate given the current lack of highway infrastructure; however, this may be challenging given the existing highway footprint.
- There are no controlled or uncontrolled crossing facilities for pedestrians who wish to head towards Alexandra Road and in general there is little provision for pedestrians and especially potential foot fall of children.



# What will happen to the existing school buildings if this project goes ahead?

- The future use of the existing sites would be determined as part of the Council's corporate asset management process.
- No decisions have been made as it would pre-empt the outcome of this planning process.
- Initially the local authority would consider whether the existing buildings have an educational benefit.

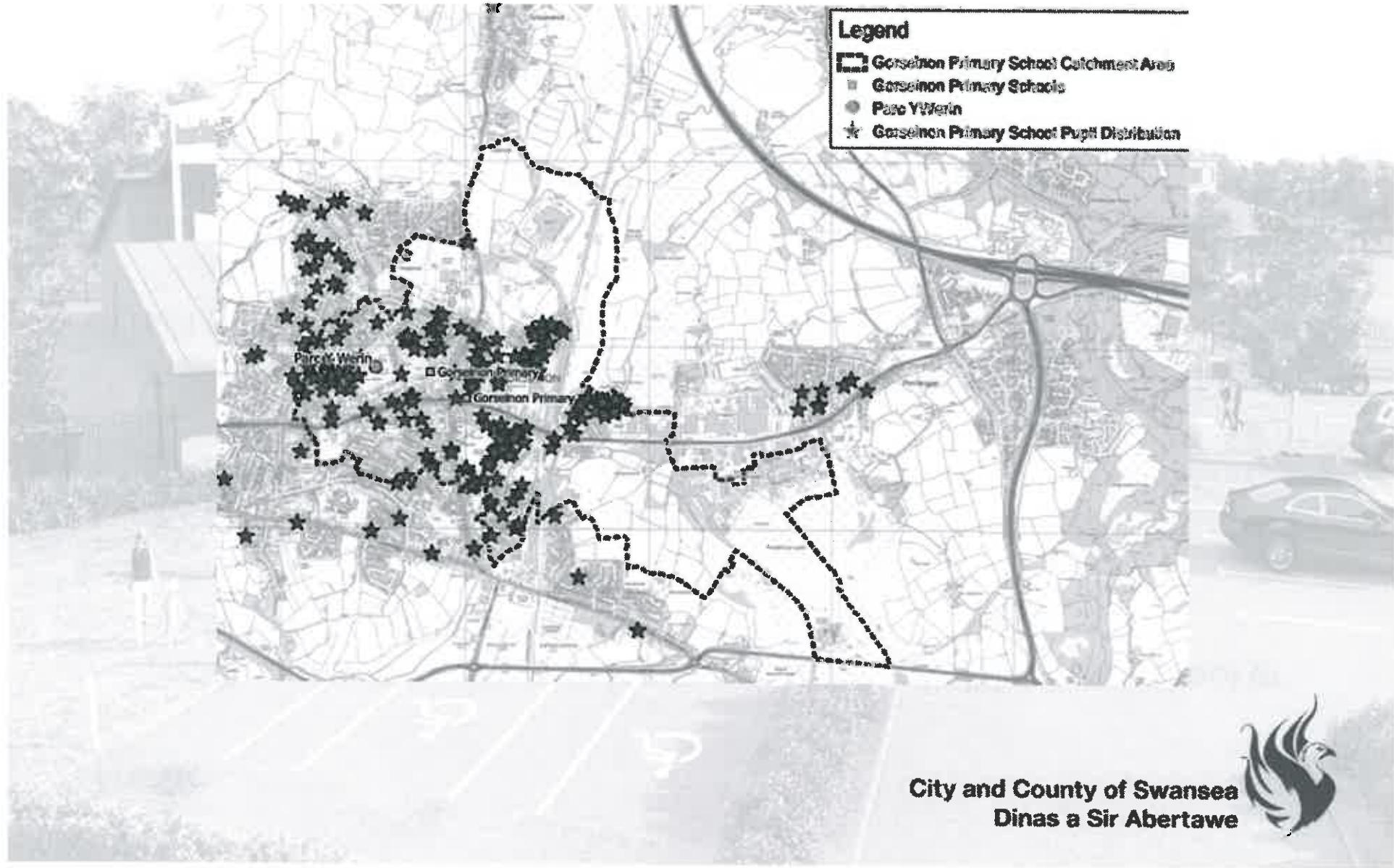


## Traffic

- Traffic is always a concern in any proposal to build a new school or expand an existing school.
- A traffic assessment has been undertaken by an independent consultant and this will be submitted with the planning application.
- The school will also have a travel plan for the new build which they will be required to implement and monitor going forward, this is intended to encourage pupils, parents and staff to use modes of transport other than cars.
- The school is on three sites now; it is expected that this will help reduce volume of car journeys undertaken by parents.
- The school car park will be available for community use when the school is closed.



# Pupil distribution





## What happens if we don't proceed?

- It is unlikely the school will be built.
- Funding is dependent on accessing a Welsh Government grant this year. If that doesn't happen the children of Gorseinon Primary School will continue to be educated in facilities not fit for the 21st century for the foreseeable future while alternatives are considered.
- Welsh Government confirmed this again in a letter to Local Authority Chief Executives this month, stating '...we are still evidencing slippage, which is disappointing, and as a consequence there are now budget pressures for the next financial year. It is important to avoid further slippage in light of these pressures and Welsh Government may not be able to guarantee funding in future years where slippage continues.'



## Community benefits

- Relocated and upgraded playground with new equipment designed to meet the needs of local children.
- The school would also include a community room that would be available for letting by arrangement with the school.
- Externally a 3G mini pitch would be provided that would be available for letting by arrangement with the school.
- The car park, will be open during evenings and weekends, so that it can be used by the community.
- Co-located existing facilities that will remain include: the grass sports pitch, the bowling green and pavilion.
- Provision has also been included in the cost plan to invest in other pitch facilities in the locality.



## How will the new school build benefit local businesses?

- 80% of contract delivered by suppliers based in in Wales, of those 20% within 10 miles, 30% within 25 miles, and 75% within 50 miles
- 75% spent on business in Wales
- 100% of money spent on businesses in Wales spent on SMEs in Wales



## The new school build will:

- achieve British Research Establishment Environmental Assessment Method (BREEAM) 'excellent'; and
- have a minimum recycled content of at least 15% of the total value of the materials used.



## When will the relocated and upgraded play area be installed?

- The location of a new play area, including equipment, will form part of the planning application due for publication in the coming weeks.
- It would be the first work to be carried out once construction begins.
- Cwmbwrla and Manselton Wards are already benefiting from a new community changing room block, developed as part of the new school for Burlais as promised by the Council.
- Similarly, the Gowerton Ward is already benefiting from a new children's play area with new equipment on the public park at the Elba as part of a new primary school for the community.

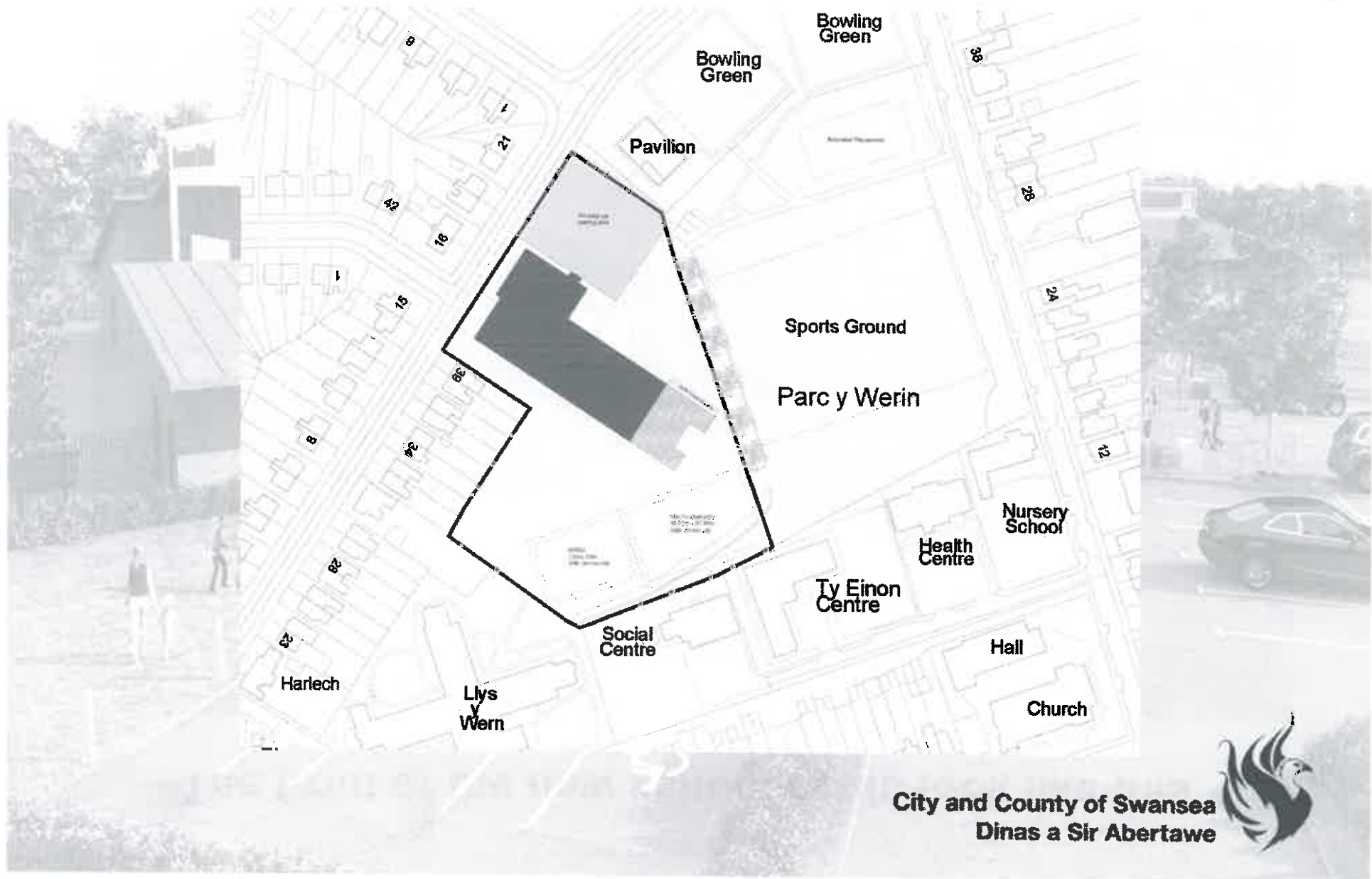


# Site plan showing the new build, car park, 3G and MUGA





# Site layout plan



## The front of the new school could look like this

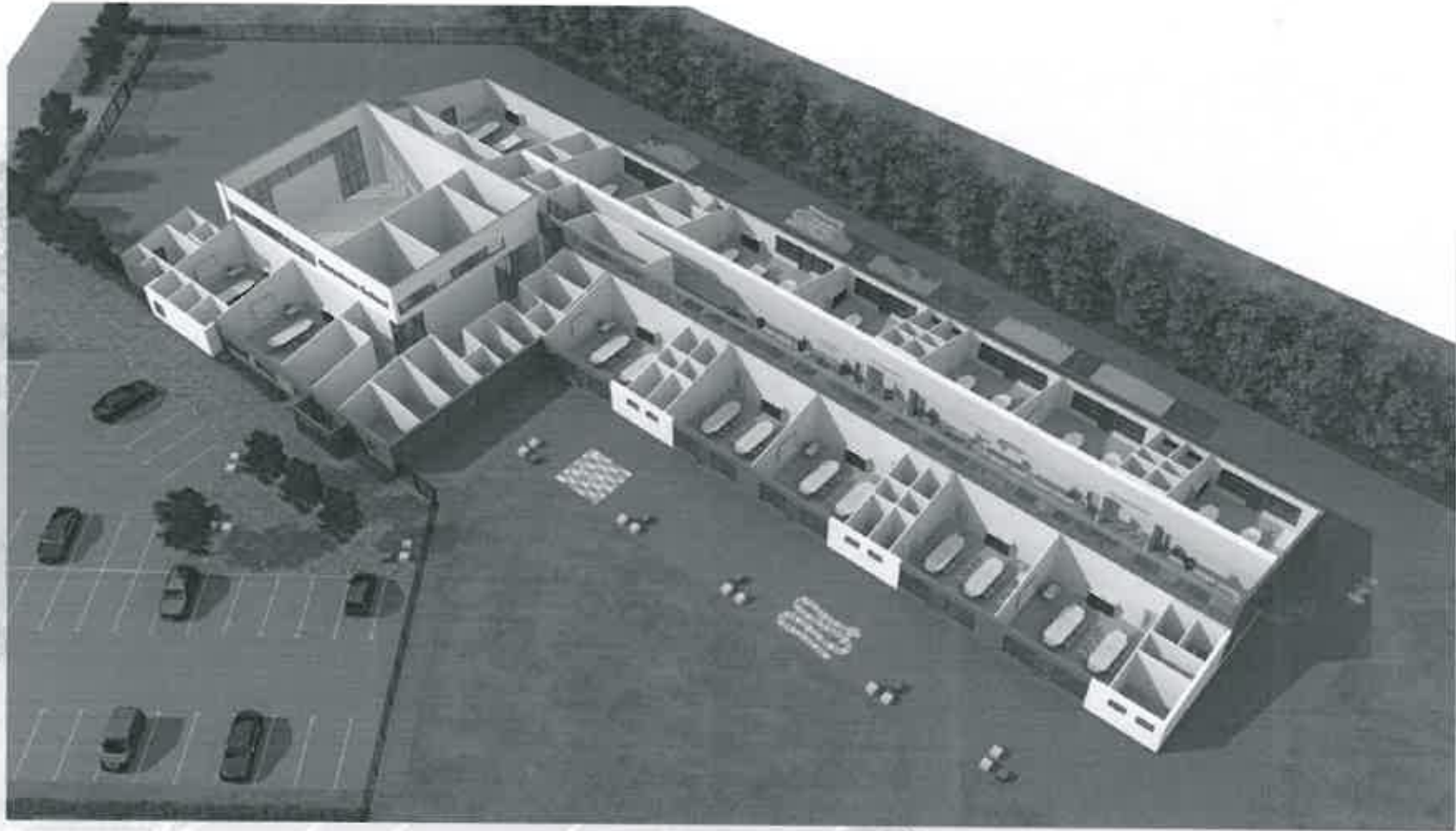


# This is a 3D eye-level perspective



24

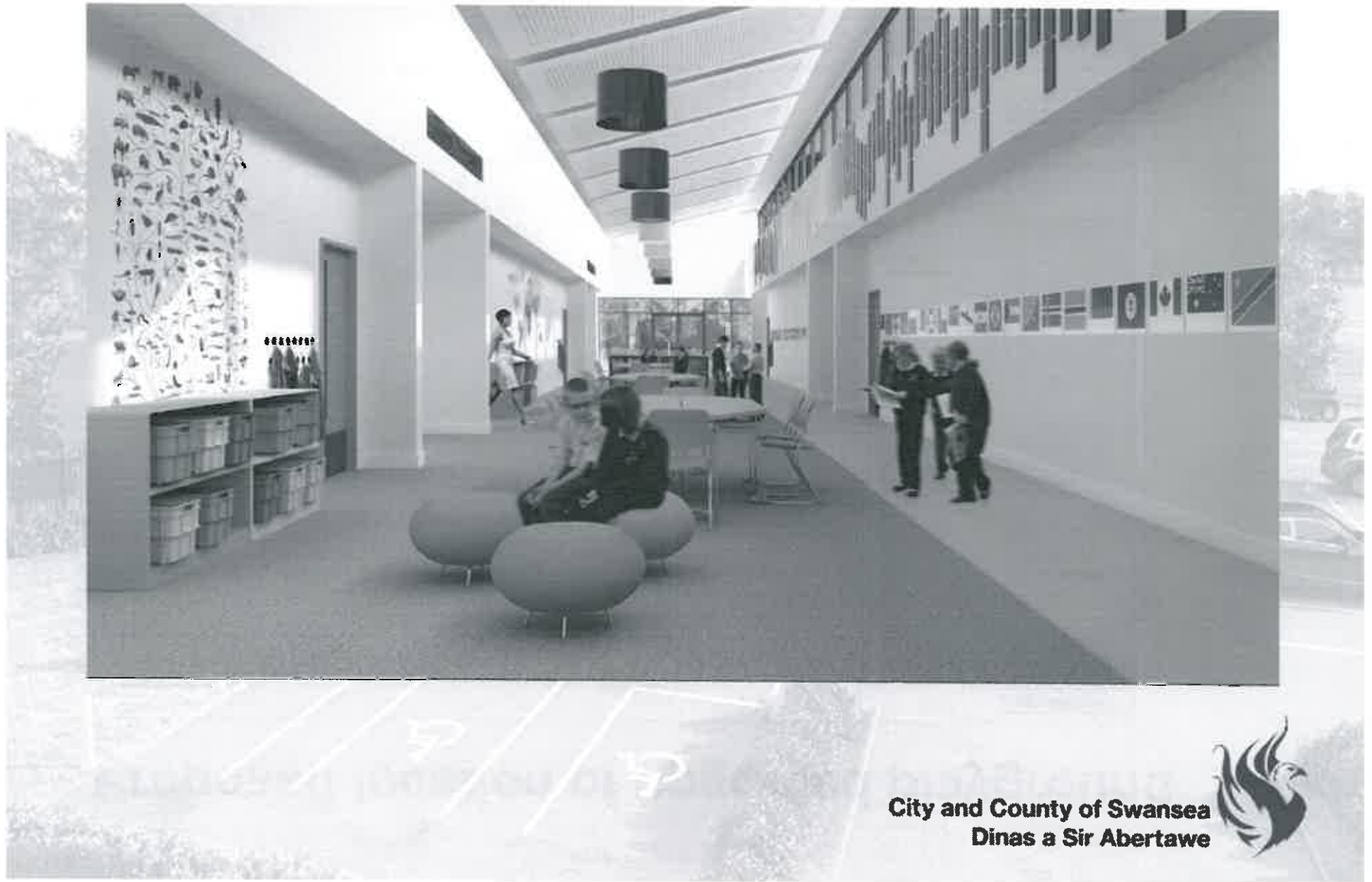
## 3D cut-away plan



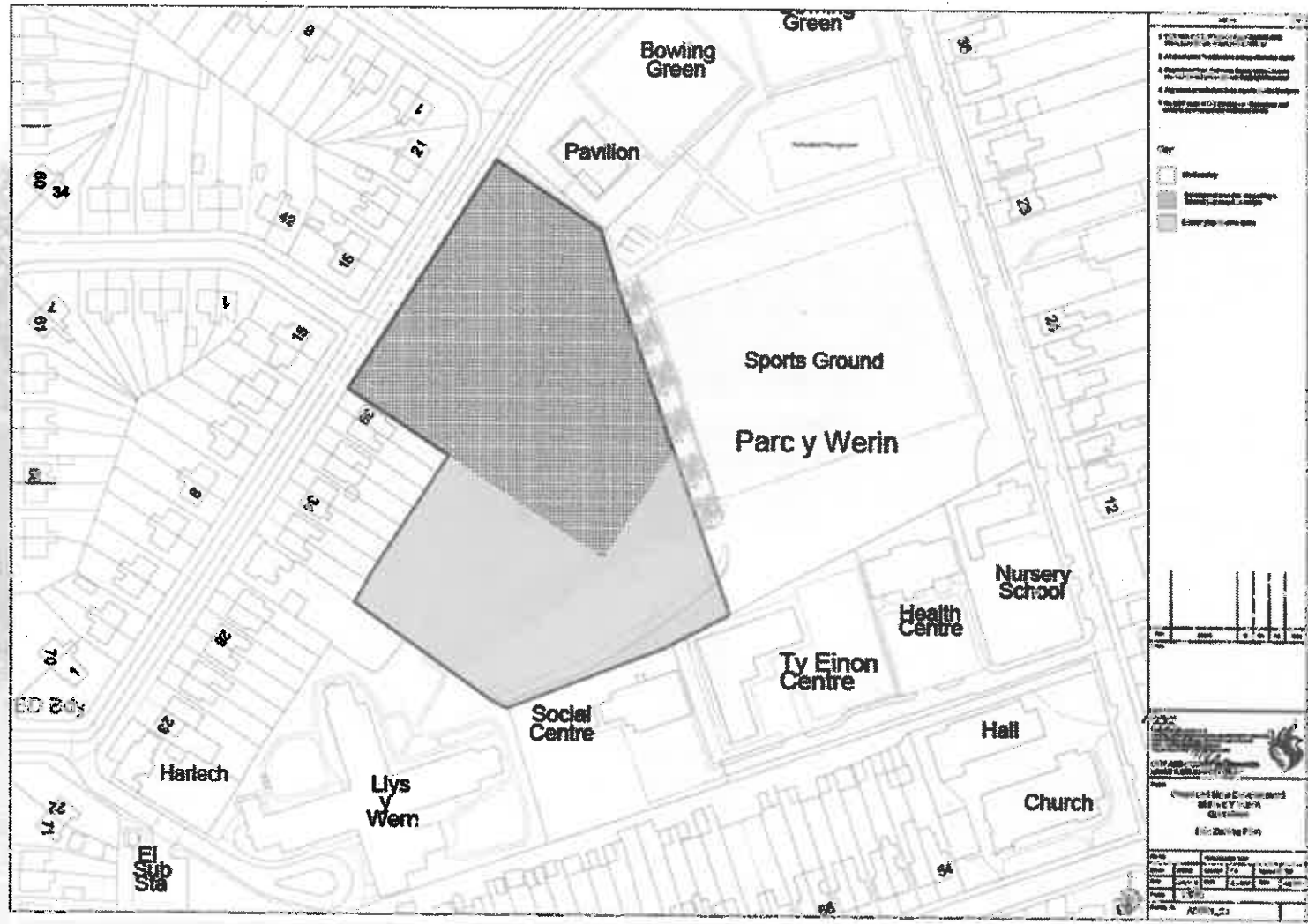
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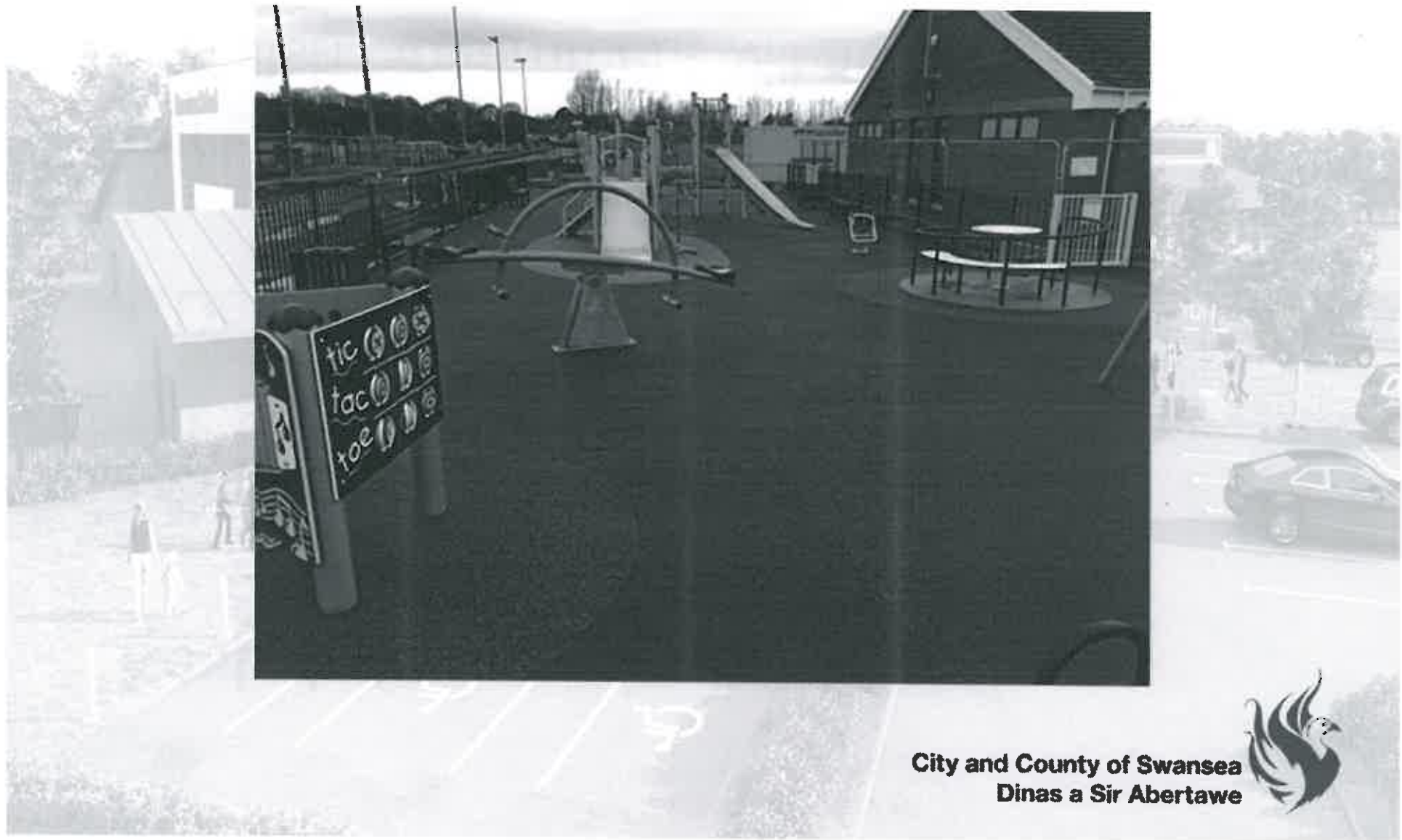
# The learning street could look something like this....



# Proposed location of upgraded playground



**The image below is of the new playground at The Elba.  
We would expect that a new playground at Parc Y Werin would be similar.**



# Next steps

- Submission of planning application
- Detailed design development
- If planning permission is granted, the Welsh Government will award the Grant





## Milestones

### September/October 2015

Design development and submission of planning application

### January 2016

Start on site

### January 2016

Works start on new playground

### January 2017

Completion

### Spring 2017

School opens in new build



# Frequently asked questions



## Swansea Council wants to build on all of Parc y Werin

No, we don't.

It's anticipated the amount of space for a new school building will occupy about 12% of the park.

Improved sports facilities the community has been campaigning for over the last few years will also form part of the project including a new 3G pitch and MUGA (multi-use games area).

As is the case with the bowls pavilion and bowls pitches, a section of the school grounds will be fenced off to protect the facilities.



## **If the Council builds a new school on Parc y Werin, it'll take over the rest of the park in a decade**

This isn't the case and there is no evidence to support that claim.

The new school will bring together the junior section, the primary and the nursery section together on one site for the first time in Gorseinon's history - just as is the case at Penyrheol Primary School.

It is being built with current and potential future demand.

The design will create enough space on the school site for 315 pupils (plus a nursery) but also future-proof the school to take an additional 105 pupils (if needed) and extra land will not be needed in the years ahead.



## Why hasn't the Council considered alternatives?

The Council has considered alternative options for a united Gorseinon Primary School on one site.

The school needs to be in the Gorseinon Primary School catchment areas to ensure easy and convenient access for pupils and parents.

It needs to have green space on-site so pupils can play and for 'Foundation Phase' learning. Pupils who don't have access to such facilities place them potentially at a natural learning disadvantage which teachers and staff have to overcome.



## **We won't be able to play sport at Parc y Werin any more**

Not true.

Informal sport and formal sport such as rugby and football would continue to be played there.

This is because the majority of the park would be open, green space.

Sports facilities would be improved as part of the Gorseinon Primary School project.



## We should stop and start the engagement process again

- All the concerns and issues currently being raised were raised in February and March. They were also addressed at that time.
- The planning application for the new Gorseinon Primary School will give residents an opportunity to comment on the proposals again and issues such as traffic management and plans for the play area will be considered as part of the process.
- A new Gorseinon Primary School is much-needed. At the moment pupils learn on three sites, one of which is Victorian-built, has no immediate access to green space and is not fit for purpose.
- If, for any reason, work does not start on the school in this financial year, it is unlikely Gorseinon Primary School will be built. This is because it is partly dependent on the allocation of Welsh Government grants which are available for Gorseinon Primary School only in this financial year.



**Many thanks for listening**  
**Diolch yn fawr iawn am wrando**

**Questions?**  
**Cwestiynau?**

**[www.swansea.gov.uk/gorseinonprimaryproject](http://www.swansea.gov.uk/gorseinonprimaryproject)**

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**City and County of Swansea**  
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