

Strategic Planning Policy - Consultation Response

From:	Enq. Number:	Officer:	Enquiry Ref	Date Rec'd:
Mike Gilbert on behalf of Welsh Governmen		Carol Evans	ENQ509	22/07/2020

Site Address: A55 Junctions 15 and 16

Description: Dear Mr Harland:

In October 2019, James Healey of Welsh Government wrote to your Chief Executive advising that following the announcement of the Preferred Junction Options, the draft Orders for the A55 Junctions 15 & 16 Improvements scheme were going to be prepared over the coming months in accordance with the Highways Act 1980, Acquisition of Land Act 1981 and Compulsory Purchase Act 1965 (Copy Attached).

I am writing on behalf of the Welsh Government and the Project Team as an update. To advise you we are approaching the point where we are nearing completion of the draft Orders production process.

As you are aware we have identified that Conwy County Borough Council (CCBC) and Cartrefi Conwy own a number of plots of land that are managed by yourselves and would be affected by the draft Compulsory Purchase Order. These include the following land, as confirmed during email correspondence between ourselves and yourself, that would be defined as Open Space under the Acquisition of Land Act 1981:

Junction 15: The plot forms a small area at the eastern end of the promenade, near to the junction with Shore Road East. Since the plot would only be taken for a short period of time for the purpose of temporary working space, we would advise you that we are not proposing to provide exchange land. (Plans: Location Plan and Extract from Environmental Masterplan Attached)

Junction 16: The plots concerned consist of an informal playing field land owned by Cartrefi Conwy, located to the east of Maes Y Llan. This informal playing field is understood to be maintained by your authority (Plan: Location Plan and Extract from Environmental Masterplan Attached).

As highlighted at the June 2019 Public Information Exhibitions, a proportion of this land would be taken by the proposed link road and associated environmental mitigation measures. Consequently, the playing field would require reconfiguration.

It is proposed that an area of land would be provided in exchange to allow the reconfiguration of the area (for Cartrefi Conwy), immediately on the opposite side of the Public Footpath. It is assumed that this exchange land would be maintained by your authority, similarly to the current situation. These areas of land were highlighted in the Environmental Statement and the associated Environmental Masterplan, which you have been previously consulted on. The latest version of the Environmental Masterplan is attached for your information.

On behalf of the Welsh Government we seek your agreement to what is being proposed and your Authority is content.

If you have any queries with respect to either of these areas of Open Space or the draft Orders process, please let us know and we can organise a meeting via a video conference link.

Regards and thanks.

Mike Gilbert - Public Liaison Officer

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Response:

Dwygyfylchi (J16)

The plans detail that part of the playing field currently owned by Cartrefi Conwy will be lost to the junction works. It is the only playing field in the settlement of Dwygyfylchi and is used as an informal kickabout area by children and young people. The open space assessment for Dwygyfylchi shows a deficit of this (and other) open space types in the area. The plans also show a loss of adjacent open

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space which is recorded as amenity greenspace.

National and local planning policies seek to protect playing fields from loss. Para 4.5.4 of Planning Policy Wales states that all playing fields should be protected from loss except where:

- facilities can best be retained and enhanced through the redevelopment of a small part of the site;
- alternative provision of equivalent community benefit is made available locally, avoiding any temporary loss of provision; or
- there is an excess of such provision in the area.

The adopted Conwy LDP also seeks to protect all open space types. LDP policy CFS/12 requires any loss in areas of a deficit to be replaced with acceptable alternative provision and where the proposal demonstrates community benefit.

The plans show that the existing pitch is to be repositioned and retained on the existing site. The plans do not detail whether there will be any qualitative enhancements to the pitch. There will be a loss of 4018m² of this typology. CCBC GIS records show that the football pitch currently is 9,963m², including the access point. There will be an additional loss of 1,032m² of amenity space. These are therefore, significant losses in an area which already has deficits of open space. Enhancements to the repositioned pitch would meet the requirements of local and national planning policy. It is not clear how the proposal as it currently stands will provide community benefit.

The plans show that there is alternative open space lands provided for, but these are labelled as amenity open space. They may provide community benefit, but in an area where there is a deficit of provision of playing fields and open space for children and young people, this change in typology would worsen this situation. The area includes a surface water attenuation basin, where it would not be appropriate to encourage play. Enhancing this provision to better meet the needs of children and young people would be more in-line with local and national policy. This could be as natural features which encourage children's play, which has been found to be favourable with children in recent Play Wales surveys.

The new open space provision and development of the existing provision shows that there will be various new paths added to link these with the settlement. These potentially provide a positive contribution to the area, particularly if access to the beach is improved. There is no detail of the type of surface that these paths would have, or whether they would be lit. It's also not clear how well integrated with the existing open space provision these would be. The new provision is in area that is not currently well over-looked by neighbouring residential properties. This could cause problems with anti-social behaviour. Fields in Trust guidance provides guidance on both quantitative and qualitative standards. One key qualitative standard states that open space provision should be: "Designed so as to be free of the fear of harm or crime". Other safety considerations with the site being in such close proximity to a road would need considering.

Llanfairfechan (J15)

The plans show that the current school playing field is to be used as a flood compensation storage area. This could impact on the school's ability to use the playing field.

The advice given in this response by the Strategic Planning Policy Service Officers does not bind the Council's decision making or constitute a formal decision to a future planning application. Notwithstanding the advice provided, you are also advised to submit a pre-application enquiry to Development Management to ensure detailed consideration and comprehensive feedback can be given on the proposal. Pre-application advice forms are available here:

<http://www.conwy.gov.uk/planningadvice>

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