

Cowbridge is first in line for a new school

6/10/05

COWBRIDGE Comprehensive School is celebrating, after the new Vale schools investment strategy unveiled a revolutionary revamp of school facilities.

The plans include the amalgamation of the lower school into a single site campus, with a rebuilding and improving of the middle school.

The current lower school site will be demolished and the land sold off, although the Vale Council acknowledges that negotiations will have to take place with the trust that controls the old school site.

It is anticipated that the scheme will begin in September 2006, earmarked for completion in 2008. Cowbridge will be the first stage of a rolling development which will incorporate St Cyres Comprehensive School in Penarth, and Llantwit Major Comprehensive School.

Headteacher, Mrs Margaret Evans, was delighted with the news, saying: "This is a challenging and exciting time for the school, and a wonderful opportunity to involve students and their parents in planning a school in the 21st Century.

"Cowbridge Comprehensive School can trace its roots back to 1608 when Cowbridge Grammar School was established.

"The opening of the new premises in 2008 will mark a thrilling new chapter in the development of this fine school."

The mood among the governors was also euphoric.

Governor Martin Blamey told The GEM: "It's definitely hats in the air time for us.

"We've been pushing for this for a long time and now it's finally come we are very relieved.

"We can now concentrate on introducing new initiatives into our curriculum, such as performing arts, and we can dedicate new facilities to new activities.

"We have begun to design various curricular models of the new school, and we will be consulting with parents, staff and pupils throughout the process."

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17/11/06

**NEGOTIATIONS BREAK
DOWN OVER LAND SALE**

Council to use compulsory purchase order on new school

THE CABINET of the Vale Council met yesterday to decide whether to resort to a compulsory purchase order to acquire land for the proposed new Cowbridge Comprehensive School.

The meeting of the cabinet, which took place after The GEM went to press, was called after council officers said that "difficulties had been experienced in reaching a negotiated settlement with the three owners of the land."

The £20 million plan to have Cowbridge Comprehensive School on one site was given the go-ahead last month by the Vale Council. Cowbridge is to be the

by
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first of three schools to have major work done on them. The other two are St Cyres and Llantwit Major.

Construction at Cowbridge is scheduled to begin in autumn 2006.

Most of the new land required, almost 15 acres in total, is earmarked for use as sports fields.

Much of the existing sports fields will be built on to accommodate pupils from the Lower

School in town. The council officers warn that a "reasonable estimate" for the completion of a compulsory purchase order is 12 - 18 months, which would put the start date well behind schedule.

However, they say that it may be less if no objections are lodged, or if an agreement can be reached with the landowners.

The land in question is behind the school. The three landowners have, respectively, 7.8 acres, 5.87 acres, and 1.09 acres.

Vale Council resorts to 26/4/07 compulsory purchase of land for new school

THE Vale Council is set on pressing ahead with plans for a new comprehensive school for Cowbridge, by using a compulsory purchase order to secure land earmarked for playing fields.

The cabinet of the Vale Council met yesterday (April 25), after The GEM went to press, with council officers recommending that the compulso-

ry purchase should go ahead.

Plans have long been in place to bring Cowbridge Comprehensive School onto one site, at Aberthin Road. The news follows a fortnight of bad publicity for the council, after sixth formers highlighted the state of the school buildings in a BBC news website.

In the face of the public exposure of run-down and poorly-maintained classrooms, the Vale Council pointed out that it was finalising a schools

investment strategy that included building the new school in Cowbridge.

The council officers say that the land is for playing fields only, and that the compulsory purchase order could take anything between 18 months and five years.

However, any delay in acquiring the land will not set back the school building programme when it is finalised, according to council officers.

The report being considered

by the council says that the land is currently agricultural and that, once purchased, it will be solely used for school playing fields.

The report says that the cost to the Vale Council "will reflect this." The report is vague about the ownership of the land, saying that it is owned by "at least three separate parties".

In the event of objections to the compulsory purchase order, a public inquiry would be called.