

**Statws/Status:**

**Cyhoeddus / Public**

DESIGN  
COMMISSION  
FOR WALES  
COMISIWN  
DYLUNIO  
CYMRU

**Adroddiad Adolygu Dylunio:  
Design Review Report:**

11 August 2005

**Dyddiad Cyfarfod / Cyflwyno'r Deunydd:  
Meeting Date / Material Submitted:**

3 August 2005

**Lleoliad/Location:**

Parc Bryn Cegin, Llandygai

**Disgrifiad o'r Cynllun  
Scheme Description:**

Headquarters for CCW

**Cynllunio / Consultants:**

Atkins [M&E - Phil Davies]  
EC Harris[Project

**Management**

Peter Glynn]

**Cleient/Asiant:  
Client/Agent:**

Countryside Council for Wales  
[Mark Hughes,  
Les Warmington]  
UK Land & Property  
[Paul Johnson]

**Pensaer/Architect:**

Austin-Smith:Lord  
[Ian Brebner]

**Awdurdod Cynllunio:  
Planning Authority:**

Gwynedd CC

**Statws Cynllunio:  
Planning Status:**

Full planning approval

**Y Panel Adolygu Dylunio/Design Review Panel:**

John Punter (cadeirydd/chair)  
Cindy Harris (swyddog/officer)  
Howard Wainwright

Ed Colgan  
Lyn Owen

**Lead Panellist:**  
**Sylwedyddion/Observers:**

**Lyn Owen**  
**Gerard Ryan [DCFW Commissioner]**  
**Allan Boyd, Richard Baker,**  
**[WAG Estates Division]**  
**Peter Roberts [DCFW]**

## **Cyflwyniad/Presentation**

When DCFW last reviewed this scheme in October 2004, outline planning permission existed for industrial use. This proposal was seen as an anchor development which would set high environmental and design standards for the whole site. The chosen developers, UK Land & Property, have worked hard with the client to mitigate the greenfield site issue by creating a highly sustainable building. CCW has remained committed to this choice of site, despite an initial failure to gain planning approval, because of its environmental qualities. This revised scheme was produced in response to objections from local residents which mainly concerned the visual impact of the proposed development on their residential properties.

The building has been moved downhill away from the main road [A5], resulting in the loss of views for the occupiers but greater protection from prevailing winds. The distance from the nearest houses has been increased from 120 metres to more than 200 metres. This new siting is considered an improvement in terms of how well the building sits within the landscape and the visual screening of the car park. The access road is at a lower level and the slope can be used more effectively for sustainable drainage.

The circular drum turrets that were a feature of the design have been removed at the request of the local authority. The reduced footprint [by 600 m<sup>2</sup>] reflects the fact that the local CCW office will now not be accommodated in this building. However, the whole atrium space remains and the functionality of the building has not been compromised.

The enforced pause in the design process has enabled the architects and M&E consultants to further explore and refine the environmental performance of the building. UK sourced sheep's wool insulation, untreated timber and green oak cladding are now specified. Some elements of the envelope will be factory assembled, thus increasing efficiency and reducing waste. Any requirement for active cooling has been designed out. Ventilation will be primarily through openable windows and the stack effect created by the central atrium. For roughly 25 per cent of the time this will need to be supplemented by a mechanical system. Together with the clients, the designers are looking at innovative ways of minimising the cooling load, with flexible occupancy patterns. A BREEAM score of 72+ is predicted which puts this scheme in the 'Excellent' category.

## **Ymateb y Panel/Panel's Response**

The Panel welcomed the production of the WDA Design Brief for the whole site as an invaluable aid to setting a high standard of design. This is now available and will be sent to DCFW. UK Land & Property have signed an agreement with the WDA to develop the whole site and are committed to maintaining high quality design. The developers confirmed that detailed planning consent for this building had been gained with relatively few conditions and none relating to materials or landscaping.

A green transport plan is being developed by the client and the developer as one important way to mitigate the siting of this building in a rural location. A collector bus service will be run from Bangor and be sponsored for the first two years, in the expectation that as the site is developed the service will become independently viable. Provision of parking spaces has been based on an assessment of real need, slightly exceeding the Local Authority minimum requirement [140 spaces will be provided for 250 staff]. CCW, who are developing green travel plans throughout the whole of their organisation, will work to reduce this demand year on year, and have the support of their staff to do this. The possibility of a rail halt to serve the site has not been progressed.

The internal layout of the 5000 m<sup>2</sup> of office space will encourage staff contact and minimise distances between desks. Specific interaction spaces will be included. It would still be possible to extend the building in the future irrespective of its revised location, and the proposed M&E system is sufficient to cope with any expansion. The Panel saw flexibility of use and future adaptability as an important aspect, given the possibility of changes in ASPB status and subsequent reorganisation.

The Panel explored some details of the materials to be used. A mix of solar control and fritted glass will be used to minimise overheating through south facing glazing. The structure will be steel frame with timber core / aluminium faced glazing frames, on a slate plinth wall using dry wall construction. The roof will be natural slate.

The landscape strategy is designed to add ecological value to the site, not to force an ecology that does not exist already. Hedgelines will be reinforced and long grass will be allowed to grow around the settlement ponds. There will be an agricultural feel to complement the surrounding field system. Any landscape intervention will be low-key using existing species. The road will be kept to 5.5 metres in width and edged with limestone chippings rather than hard kerbs. A grasscrete type finish using recycled nylon will be used for the car parks.

### **Crynodb/Summary**

The Panel are reassured that the revised proposal presented here represents a well devised scheme with an excellent environmental performance. We recognise that efforts have been made to mitigate the effects of building on a greenfield site and to ensure that the building performs very well against other environmental indicators. We congratulate the design team for their positive response to what were over-stated objections to visual impact and overlooking, and their seizing of new design opportunities presented by relocating the building on the site. In particular:

- Although the Panel regret the loss of the circular turrets, we find the building height and form to be sympathetic and sensitive to its environment
- We support the intention to develop a green transport plan, and the realistic assessment of parking need based on the staff's willingness to cooperate.
- Natural passive ventilation; locally sourced and low embodied energy materials; and sustainable drainage are all positive environmental features.
- We encourage the developer to use the positive features of this scheme to inform the design for the rest of the site.

**Diwedd/End**

**NB A Welsh language copy of this report is available upon request.**