

**Statws/Status:**  
**Cyhoeddus / Public**



**Adroddiad Adolygu Dylunio:** 13 March 2006  
**Design Review Report:**

**Dyddiad Cyfarfod / Cyflwyno'r Deunydd:** 01 March 2006  
**Meeting Date / Material Submitted:**

**Lleoliad/Location:** Site of old Victoria Hotel  
Llanrwst

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

**Developer/Datblygwr:** Bid Red Homes  
[Carl Rickerby]

**Pensaer/Architect:** WM Design

**Ymgynghorwyr Cynllunio:** CDN Planning [Rhys Davies]  
**Planning Consultants:**

**Awdurdod Cynllunio:** Conwy CC [Richard Evans]  
**Planning Authority:**

**Statws Cynllunio:** Full application submitted  
**Planning Status:** Dec 05

**Y Panel Adolygu Dylunio/Design Review Panel:**  
John Punter (cadeirydd/chair) Paul Vanner  
Cindy Harris (swyddog/officer) Ed Colgan  
Lyn Owen Douglas Hogg  
Ewan Jones

**Lead Panellist:** Douglas Hogg

**Sylwedyddion/Observers:** Charlie Deng  
Design Review assistant

## **Cyflwyniad/Presentation**

This is an important focal site, situated within the Llanrwst Conservation Area, between the Grade 2 listed Conwy Terrace and Penybont Inn, and immediately opposite the Grade 1 listed Pont Fawr designed by Inigo Jones. However, there is to be no attempt to replicate the landmark nature of the former Victoria Hotel with this scheme. On the contrary, this scheme allows the bridge to take precedence, while the proposed design reflects the nature of Llanrwst's terraced streets and predominantly rendered facades. It is intended that this residential development contributes to the street scene rather than attempting to be a standalone statement.

A recent flood risk assessment has effectively raised the finished floor level 1.5m [max] above the footpath level. While it is acknowledged that this poses problems in terms of the relation of the building with the street, the massing does respect the height of adjoining buildings.

Materials will be traditional, durable and sustainable. The energy performance will be improved over the statutory requirement where practicable. Heating systems will be fuelled by mains gas and rainwater harvesting is being considered. The developer has established that a market for such 2 bed accommodation exists particularly among retired couples. Very little housing is currently available within Llanrwst. Lifts will be incorporated for upper floor residents. This will be a managed development with low maintenance requirements.

Negotiations with the Local Authority are ongoing. The Conservation Area Advisory Committee has reservations about this proposal for a prominent gateway site and recommends rejection. A previous application was withdrawn 12 months ago, due to flood level problems and conservation concerns. The Local Authority accept that the site is in need of development but, as befits the importance of the location, it should be of high quality. There is no conservation area design guide, but the Conservation Officer has commented extensively on the design shortcomings of this scheme.

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

The Panel welcomed the principle of redevelopment of this site which has lain empty since the 1980's, but thought that the elevational response should be more varied. The two storey block should pay more attention to the Penybont Inn, while the three storey element should make greater reference to Conwy Terrace. Both should reflect traditional details accurately and convincingly.

Roof and dormer pitches should be steeper to reflect the surrounding buildings. We applauded the use of natural slate and advised that ridge tiles should be butt rather than lap type. The new chimney heads as proposed are not convincing and should be located over the end gables, rather than in the centre of the roof. It would seem to make sense to use the chimneys for ventilation, rather than having separate stacks protruding through the roof. Wallhead detailing should match adjacent buildings and rainwater goods should be of cast iron.

The fenestration on the principal frontage should not be the same right across the development. It would be better to treat the frontage as three separate buildings. The two storey block should have timber sash windows which match the Penybont

Inn in terms of proportion and, ideally, detailed section. Projecting bay windows should be avoided on this block and the central vertical strip should be removed, though banding round windows and at the quoins could be considered. The three storey block should also have timber sash windows which reflect the proportions of Conwy Terrace, and existing window sections should be measured and replicated. Projecting bays at first floor level only could be considered. Lime mortars should be used for all pointing and rendering.

The rear elevations are overly repetitive and could be varied in the same way as suggested for the front elevations. All windows should have a vertical emphasis. Timber cladding should be replaced with hung slates and access doors should be lined rather than panelled. Additional windows in the side gables would bring better daylight levels to top floor flats.

The lack of front doors, which are a necessary feature of all traditional town buildings, makes for an unfortunate and rather forbidding frontage. We recognised the problem of the raised floor level necessitated by the flood risk assessment, and suggested that some window openings could be proportioned to resemble doorways, perhaps allowing access to the amenity spaces behind the pavement..

The Panel pointed out that the proposed demolition of the ruined building to the rear requires Listed Building consent and we were told that this is in hand. More details of the rear boundary treatment are necessary, and the Panel thought that a very high wall would be needed to protect the housing off Jones Terrace. There appeared to be some confusion over the exact extent of public and private space around the edge of site, and this needs defining. The Panel would prefer to see quality paving of a traditional kind, rather than coloured gravel on public spaces. We thought the bin store should be relocated, away from the main site entrance.

The Panel supported the design aspirations for good energy performance, rainwater harvesting and sustainable materials. We thought that the suggested use of uPVC windows and doors did not reflect either the aesthetic or environmental aims of the scheme. We recommended that a single group heating system be considered, possibly using bio-fuels and incorporating CHP, or ground source heat pumps.

### **Crynodeb/Summary**

The Panel welcomes the opportunity to review proposals for this historically and locally important site. We find the current proposals to be an acceptable response to the site and the brief, with minor revisions. In particular:

- We recommend that the overall composition is treated as a series of smaller buildings, with more varied fenestration responding to the buildings on either side.
- Windows should be timber sashes with sections copied from the originals.
- Roof pitches, chimneys and rainwater goods should reflect traditional detailing and materials
- The lack of an active street frontage could be overcome by innovative design
- A greater definition of public/private space is needed and a hard landscape treatment is preferred. We would like to see some amenity space provided to the rear.

- We support the use of local sustainable materials and recommend consultation with the Carbon Trust and the inclusion of a single, low-carbon heating system.

**Diwedd/End**

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