

**Statws/Status:**

**Cyhoeddus / Public**



<b>Adroddiad Adolygu Dylunio: Design Review Report:</b>	<b>12 February 2007</b>
<b>Dyddiad Cyfarfod / Cyflwyno'r Deunydd: Meeting Date / Material Submitted:</b>	<b>31 January 2007</b>
<b>Lleoliad/Location:</b>	<b>Blaenannerch, Aberporth</b>
<b>Disgrifiad o'r Cynllun Scheme Description:</b>	<b>Airport buildings, including hotel and training centre</b>
<b>Developer/Datblygwr:</b>	<b>The Mann Organisation [Ray Mann]</b>
<b>Pensaer/Architect:</b>	<b>John Gabb Associates [John Gabb]</b>
<b>Ymgynghorwyr Cynllunio: Planning Consultants:</b>	<b>Evans Jones LLP [David Jones, Jamie Folliard]</b>
<b>Awdurdod Cynllunio: Planning Authority:</b>	<b>Ceredigion CC</b>
<b>Statws Cynllunio: Planning Status:</b>	<b>Post-application</b>
<b>Y Panel Adolygu Dylunio/ Design Review Panel: Wendy Richards (cadeirydd/chair) Cindy Harris (swyddog/officer) Charlie Deng (swyddog/officer) Lyn Owen</b>	<b>Ed Colgan Elfed Roberts Martin Knight Roger Ayton</b>
<b>Lead Panellist:</b>	<b>Martin Knight</b>

<b>Sylwedyddion/Observers:</b>	<b>Carole-Anne Davies, DCFW</b> <b>Huw ap Rhys, DCFW</b> <b>James White, DCFW</b>
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### **Cyflwyniad/Presentation**

This proposal is for a small provincial public airport on a ‘featureless’ greenfield site, formerly used by the RAF for training. It is located to the south east of Parc Aberporth, a technical business park which is itself due to expand on land to the north east. The proposal anticipates future requirements for airport use and comprises a terminal building, control tower, two hangars, a fire station, bulk fuel storage, a 48-bed hotel, and a training facility. The proposed site is the only available area in the locality which meets all the functional requirements. A new road diversion to allow the proposed runway extension has been consented.

Apart from the hotel situated to the west of the main site entrance and the training centre situated to the rear of the main terminal complex, the buildings are grouped centrally to the runway, each with attached parking areas. Acoustic banks provide noise attenuation for local residents and a cycle network is incorporated. Materials are consistent throughout the scheme, consisting of white composite panels on brick plinths with green coloured, profiled metal ‘Plastisol’ roofs.

It is anticipated that the annual movement through the airport will rise to about 6,000 aircraft per year. The combined facility includes provision for training in servicing and maintenance and as such will be unique in the UK. It is intended to make the training facility available for community use, eg for evening classes.

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

The Panel queried why the chosen site was located on the main A487, rather than relating to Parc Aberporth, which would complement the hotel and training functions. We were told that there is a functional division between the airport and the Parc, and that the access point had been chosen in conjunction with the Highways Department. The first phase of development would include the hotel, terminal building, one hangar and the bulk fuel storage. The developer acknowledged that they might wish to pursue further development off the new access road, which might include proposals for residential development on the south east of the site. It was confirmed that the training centre would be non-residential.

The Panel thought that there was a lack of clarity between public and private spaces and this was emphasised by amalgamating the control tower with the terminal, and by the symmetrical flanking of the terminal by hangars. This arrangement only served to confuse the legibility of the scheme, which would be improved by clearly distinguishing between activities and providing a hierarchy of buildings. The provision of public facilities appeared to be minimal, despite the developer’s stated

ambition to offer commuter flights to UK and European cities. We thought the distribution and numbers of parking spaces needed further justification and disabled parking should be located close to entrances.

The possibility that the airport might be expanded in the future was discussed. The Panel noted that the building design was inherently inflexible and the present layout did not easily allow for future expansion, which we believed to be essential. Moreover, the likelihood of such expansion means that the current proposal should be considered in strategic regional planning terms and the impact on the locality of a much larger and busier airport. The suggestion that a second terminal building could be constructed on land to the east to meet future demand was, we thought, inherently inefficient. The developer stated that initially only small aircraft of 60-80 seats would be using the airport, along with UAVs [unmanned air vehicles].

The Panel considered the architectural style to be anachronistic. We thought the proposed site arrangement was constrained and the architectural form lacked the necessary future proofing. We would like to see a more contemporary approach, using simple structures which would enable greater flexibility. In our view, the detailed building designs do not respond to solar orientation, and the large areas of unshaded glazing on the south facing hangar offices will be prone to overheating. The fact that the same palette of materials is used for all buildings irrespective of their function will be confusing for users and is a lost opportunity to express function through form and facade treatment.

The Panel asked about acoustic impacts and was told that the Environmental Statement, which was not included in the presentation documents, included recommendations for acoustic mitigation in the form of bunding, the dimensions of which were based on the advice of consultants. The Panel regretted the fact that the Environmental Assessment had not been provided for our information. Nevertheless, the Panel thought that the depth and height of the bunds needed to be a lot greater to successfully mitigate local effects, even though we understood that most of the noise attenuation is achieved through the buildings themselves and the way they are linked together.

The Panel considered that the proposal did not adequately respond to the beautiful landscape setting, or protect the Grade II listed chapel from unnecessary impact. In particular the location and architectural design of the hotel appeared to dominate the chapel and graveyard setting. Concern was also expressed about the potential visual impact of the acoustic bund upon the open setting of the listed chapel, and if the bund has to be increased this concern would deepen. We would have liked to see evidence of the visual impact of this proposal from a number of key vantage points. We were informed that the main entrance will be landscaped and stone banks will run the full length of the frontage along with deciduous trees. Cycle routes will link to existing or proposed footpaths. The Panel noted that the emergency access as shown runs through a lorry park and the designer agreed that this needs to be resolved.

The Panel acknowledged the potential contribution that a development of this type can make to the local economy. However, we were not certain that the role and purpose of the provision had been rigorously investigated, either at its initial scale or at its potential expanded role. We believe that there is a clear justification for this

proposal to form part of a wider development strategy and briefing for the airport site and adjoining areas. We were therefore concerned that this proposal, considered in isolation, may not deliver the economic and environmental contribution of which it is capable. The developer stated that there has been a full consultation process, both with the Local Authority and the local community. A public exhibition and meeting have been held and produced a favourable response. The Panel was disappointed that Ceredigion Council was not able to be represented at the discussion, to provide input on the local policy and development context.

This project was presented as a significant regeneration opportunity for the area and as such contributed towards economic sustainability. The Panel was told that the incorporation of rainwater harvesting, wind turbines and solar panels were under consideration. However, none of these measures were evidenced in the presentation material and the Panel advised that these and other sustainability measures, such as a district heating system using CHP, should be fully integrated into the design from an early stage. The possibility of green roofs was discounted because it was claimed they would encourage nesting birds.

### **Crynodeb/Summary**

The Panel found it difficult to assess the scheme because of the limited amount of presentation material. However, we noted the following major strategic and design concerns:

- We think it is essential that this proposal should be considered in the context of current and future development in and around the airport, and that a development brief should be prepared in advance of determining this application. Such a framework is crucial to ensure that this development is appropriate in layout and design and capable of efficient future expansion if required.
- The lack of clarity between public/private space and function results in a confused legibility
- We would like to see a more flexible architectural form and material treatment, based on a contemporary simplicity and offering more potential for future proofing
- We advise that sustainability measures and renewable technologies need to inform the design development from the outset. We are not convinced by the claim of the dangers posed by green roofs.
- The landscape response to the beautiful natural setting is disappointing. We would have liked to see more evidence of local distinctiveness and a sympathetic response to the chapel. We are not convinced by the acoustic bunds and their effectiveness in noise mitigation.
- We regret the lack of any Local Authority representation, which made it difficult to assess the scheme in the light of relevant policy and its impact on the region.

### **Diwedd/End**

**NB This report is being translated and a Welsh language version will be sent to you shortly.**