

**Statws/Status:**  
**Cyfrinachol / Confidential**

DESIGN  
COMMISSION  
FOR WALES  
COMISIWN  
DYLUNIO  
CYMRU

<b>Adroddiad Adolygu Dylunio: Design Review Report:</b>	<b>1 August 2007</b>
<b>Dyddiad Cyfarfod / Meeting Date:</b>	<b>25 July 2007</b>
<b>Lleoliad/Location:</b>	<b>Ruabon</b>
<b>Disgrifiad o'r Cynllun Scheme Description:</b>	<b>Primary Care Development</b>
<b>Cleient/Asiant: Client/Agent:</b>	<b>Wrexham LHB [Gaynor Edwards] Ruabon Medical Centre [Rosemary Bartley]</b>
<b>Developer/Datblygwr:</b>	<b>Oakapple [Darren Oxley]</b>
<b>Pensaer/Architect:</b>	<b>Halliday Clark [Mark Pettit]</b>
<b>Awdurdod Cynllunio: Planning Authority:</b>	<b>Wrexham CBC [Gerry Kellett]</b>
<b>Statws Cynllunio: Planning Status:</b>	<b>Planning consent granted</b>
<b>Y Panel Adolygu Dylunio/ Design Review Panel: Wendy Richards (cadeirydd/chair) Cindy Harris (swyddog/officer) Elfed Roberts</b>	<b>Nick Davies Lyn Owen Gerard Ryan</b>
<b>Lead Panellist:</b>	<b>Nick Davies</b>
<b>Sylwedyddion/Observers:</b>	<b>Terry Stevens [DE&amp;T] Ian Stevens [DE&amp;T]</b>

## **Cyflwyniad/Presentation**

This scheme was first seen by DCFW in April 2007 and the resulting report stated that there were fundamental issues which needed to be addressed and resolved. These were itemised in the summary.

The architect stated that the revisions presented here were restricted to minor amendments, in order to keep the existing planning permission intact. The building has been moved back towards the railway line by 3-4 metres and the public footpaths have been extended to link better with the Library and High Street. Attic trusses will be used to provide future expansion space and/or storage, and will accommodate PV powered ventilation units. The built form and location on site were justified on grounds of functionality and the sustainability benefits of extending the life of the existing building for the period of construction.

A NEAT assessment has been carried out and an Aedet review undertaken. A NEAT Excellent rating has been achieved, and rainwater harvesting is being considered along with solar water heating. The thermal performance of the building will be in excess of Building Regulation requirements. A fan driven system will be used for night time cooling. The use of local materials and labour will be written into the employers requirements, along with a robust set of detailed tender drawings.

The Local Authority representative stated that conditions attached to the planning consent related to materials, landscape and a demolition audit.

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

The Panel was disappointed to see that a justification of the building's form and location, based on good design and a comprehensive site analysis as requested in the previous report, had not been provided. The stated intention to restrict the revisions to minor amendments was not an adequate response to our original conclusion that a revised design development was necessary, informed by a comprehensive site analysis, landscape and sustainability strategy.

The Panel did not consider that the reference to an 'improved courtyard' and increased planting adjacent to the entrance, in the pre-review material, constituted a comprehensive landscape strategy which should address the public space as a community asset. However, we accepted in the course of the review that some progress had been made in defining pedestrian routes and developing an interface with the library, although

the realisation of this would depend on negotiations with the Local Authority.

Similarly, the four-line paragraph on sustainability provided insufficient detail and referred to an M&E report which was not included. We supported the intention to use local materials and labour and we were informed that the intention was to use Welsh slate and a brick as similar as possible to Ruabon brick. Nevertheless, we repeated our request for a coherent sustainability strategy to minimise the building's carbon footprint. The Panel did not accept the claim that the advantages of extending the life of the existing building by a relatively short period was adequate justification for the site layout.

The Panel had some reservations about the deliberately domestic style of the proposed building, given its public and civic function, but we were prepared to be convinced by a well argued justification of the design strategy and only if the detail design were of an exemplary quality.

We thought that stepping down the roof to the north east – the result of a request from the Local Authority to reduce the height close to private boundaries – produced an ungainly massing. A reduced massing would have been achieved more satisfactorily by running through the roof line of the pharmacy block.

The Panel accepted that the new canopy helped to define the entrance, but we thought that the flipped up roof marking the entrance was unnecessary and detracted from the simplicity of the canopy.

We were informed that the impression we were given at the last review, namely that the car park area was used informally for games and socialising, was inaccurate.

### **Crynodeb/Summary**

- The role of DCFW is to champion high standards of design and good quality civic buildings which can serve as instruments of regeneration. This has to be an over-riding concern, irrespective of the history of development of a particular project.
- The Panel's position remains essentially the same as it was in the report of April 2007 and we regret that our comments were interpreted as requesting only minor amendments. We referred back to the relevant paragraphs of our previous report and it was agreed that it was unambiguous.
- We are disappointed therefore at the lack of a rationale for the design choices made here. We need to be presented either with a new design and layout or a justification of the present one.

- In particular a comprehensive and detailed site analysis, landscape design, and sustainability strategy need to be produced.

DCFW will require a further full Design Review of this proposal to address the recommendations contained in this report.

**Diwedd/End**

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