

Statws/Status:
Cyhoeddus / Public



Adroddiad Adolygu Dylunio: Design Review Report:	23 October 2007
Dyddiad Cyfarfod / Cyflwyno'r Deunydd: Meeting Date / Material Submitted:	3 October 2007
Lleoliad/Location:	Porthcawl
Disgrifiad o'r Cynllun Scheme Description:	Mixed use regeneration
Cleient/Asiant: Client/Agent:	Bridgend CBC [David Llewellyn, Andrew Parry Jones, Louise Fradd, Aubrey Green]
Developer/Datblygwr:	n/a
Pensaer/Architect:	n/a
Cynllunio: Consultants:	CDN Planning [Kedrick Davies] Halcrow [Howard Davies]
Awdurdod Cynllunio: Planning Authority:	Bridgend CBC
Statws Cynllunio: Planning Status:	Pre-application
Y Panel Adolygu Dylunio/ Design Review Panel: John Punter (cadeirydd/chair) Cindy Harris (swyddog/officer)	Lyn Owen Ashley Bateson

Charlie Deng (swyddog/officer)
Michael Griffiths

Ed Colgan

Lead Panellist:

Lyn Owen

Cyflwyniad/Presentation

The Porthcawl waterfront site comprising 120 acres is part of the wider Seven Bays regeneration project. This area is identified for regeneration in the UDP and was the subject of SPG in 2004. The vision statement refers to quality building and environmental design, within a vibrant waterfront setting. Since the SPG was published in 2004, the design/development proposals have now developed and the marina extension has been replaced with an indoor leisure facility, the food store area has been increased to 50,000 sq ft, the number of residential units has been increased from 1100 to 1350, and improved coastal defences are included along with better access arrangements, public transport and parking.

There are three overarching principles governing the design development:

- Design principles, including sustainability and energy efficiency [BREEAM Very Good is required]
- Inclusiveness, placing people at heart of the design process
- Process and implementation, ensuring delivery through quality control.

Key character areas include the harbour quarter, the commercial core and the promenades.

A six week consultation period has just ended and resulted in a good response. The revised planning guidance document will be adopted as SPG and will be used to market the site to developers. The initial selection will be made on quality, and once a shortlist has been selected costs will become a criterion.

Ymateb y Panel/Panel's Response

The Panel was informed that the land would be released in two parcels as development of the first phase, to the west of Sandy Bay, can begin more quickly, and there is no wish to hold up the whole development because of constraints on the second phase. It was confirmed that the Local Authority are the main landowners and a project board is in place,

comprising the Planning, Highways, Regeneration, Tourism and Transport departments of the council, along with Council members and the one other major landowner. The revised design guidance produced after this consultation period will be the basis on which the team will assess quality. It is hoped that development proposals will gain planning permission by spring 2008, and it is estimated that the whole project will take 10 years, allowing the population of the town to grow by some 20 per cent.

The Panel was not clear about the vision for this area and what nature of resort and residential community was being sought. The development team explained they wanted to see Porthcawl as a 'premier resort', with new leisure facilities around the upgraded harbour, an events programme along the Eastern Promenade and on the Headland Park. There would no longer be a permanent fairground but some limited and possibly temporary rides could be accommodated alongside kiosks and interactive displays. A cafe culture would be sought along the promenade frontages. The retail sector would be a substantial element linked to the existing town centre and of a sufficient scale to stop expenditure leakage.

The Panel felt that this vision could be conveyed more clearly in the guide, in order to assist prospective developers bring forward appropriate schemes. Also the guide should recognise that the traditional caravan user and day tripper trade to Porthcawl would remain an important element of the tourism economy to be catered for.

Further, the Panel would like to see the whole project treated as a sustainable urban extension striking a balance between a high quality residential seaside town, and a regional tourist destination. The question remains as to how well the two functions can work together but the Local Authority confirmed that this project has regional significance, is a key component of the wider Seven Bays regeneration strategy, and is also linked with the Valleys to Coast initiative. They have tried to knit this project into the existing pattern of development in the town. In this context, the importance of sub-area masterplans was emphasised and Portishead quoted as a key exemplar. The Panel questioned whether the existing documents were sufficiently detailed to provide good guidance and a sound basis for judgment. We suggested including more specific requirements, such as local stores, but the team wished to avoid too much detail at this stage.

The parking strategy recognised that meeting the peak summer demand could effectively sterilise a large area within the town. Parking provision has been based on the average weekday use throughout the year, and there is enough capacity to accommodate that. In addition, a Park and Ride service, making use of out-of-town parking, will be made available for limited peak times. A new commercial car park attached to the new retail outlet, together with the existing parking facilities, will be available

for year round use and controlled by the Council. In order that the retail core is not dominated by extensive open parking the option of a multi storey unit, possibly combined with other uses on the ground floor, should be accommodated by the guide. The Panel strongly urged that full public transport provision be in place for the first completion. The team agreed that this was the aspiration but could not guarantee it, and would accept it becoming available after the 500th unit was completed.

The Panel did not examine in depth the partly developed ideas for the different character areas, especially as development proposals may differ. However, there were some key concerns raised by Panel members which should be addressed in the guide. These include the need for the new retail development to avoid the appearance of a separate shopping block in open parking, by including street type facades especially on links to the existing town centre. Similarly, close urban links are needed at the northern entry to the scheme adjacent to the town centre. In the Harbour area the need for the new leisure complex to be a high quality feature should be referred to, and the vacant site at the turning of the harbour area into the Esplanade should also be identified as needing a very high quality building. The Panel found the role and nature of the expanded central park was unclear. Its relationship to the town centre, housing and tourism functions should be discussed and the strong link to the promenade and sea front referred to and illustrated.

In terms of environmental sustainability, the Panel urged the team to be more ambitious, more demanding and more specific. The current document does not encourage exemplary environmental performance and could be compatible with a 'business as usual' solution, contrary to emerging Welsh policy on low carbon buildings. We recognised that much of the capital receipts generated would be used to pay for improved flood defences and as such the town was a victim of climate change and past market-led development. The Panel advised that BREEAM / EcoHomes Excellent should be the minimum standard and that pre-contract documents should specify a single site-wide energy system.

Similarly, the Panel thought that the consultation documents did not demand the highest quality of architectural design. This should be an exemplar project, raising the bar in architectural and urban design as well as sustainable development. Otherwise, and despite the good planning work that has been done, a tremendous opportunity and a potential national asset will be lost.

Crynodb/Summary

The Panel welcomed the opportunity to gain information about one of the biggest residential projects in Wales. We support the broad thrust of the

development framework, based on a logical reinforcement of the town centre, good linkages, and the re-routing of the approach road. We think this presentation is a good basis from which to develop the detailed design guidance, but the quality control process is our major concern. In summary:

- We think the vision statement and detailed objectives should be more ambitious, more specific and more prescriptive.
- We would like to see a greater degree of control to provide guarantees of quality in urban design and sustainability.
- We support the gridded residential layout but think that the green spaces are poorly disposed and can be improved to create a better layout. The sacrosanct nature of Griffin Park is a particular problem.
- We welcome the efforts made to keep town centre parking provision to a level which reflects year round use and we would like to see the option of multi storey parking accommodated
- We think it is imperative that public transport improvements are included to coincide with the first completions.
- The retail area, links to the town centre and the adjacent northern link should be characterised by strong, urban 'street type' frontages
- The desired high quality of the key harbourside leisure centre and linking block to the Esplanade should be embedded in the procurement process, and the superstore should be better integrated with the urban grain.
- The role of the expanded central park needs clarifying, and a strong link to the promenade should be established.
- We would like to review the revised guidance before it is approved, along with full details of the criteria that will be used to evaluate bids, and to set the parameters for each phase of the development.

Diwedd/End

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