

Statws/Status:

Cyhoeddus / Public



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

18 December 2007

Dyddiad Cyfarfod / Meeting Date:

5 December 2007

Lleoliad/Location:

Crindau Gateway, Newport

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

Mixed use regeneration

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

**Newport Unlimited
[Andrew Dakin]**

Developer/Datblygwr:

**Crindau Gateway Ltd
[Clive Pulteney]**

Pensaer/Architect:

Holder Mathias [Stephen Hill]

**Ymgynghorwyr Cynllunio:
Planning Consultants:**

GVA Grimley [Ben Lewis]

**Awdurdod Cynllunio:
Planning Authority:**

**Newport City Council
[Andrew Dawe, Sue Hall,
Rob Frowen]**

**Statws Cynllunio:
Planning Status:**

**Outline application submitted
October 2007**

**Y Panel Adolygu Dylunio/
Design Review Panel:
Richard Parnaby (cadeirydd/chair)**

Phil Roberts

Cindy Harris (swyddog/officer)
Charlie Deng (swyddog/officer)

Lyn Owen
Ann-Marie Smale
Michael Griffiths

Lead Panellist:

Richard Parnaby

Sylwedyddion/Observers:

Alison Smith [WAG]

Cyflwyniad/Presentation

The 11 hectare site is identified in the Newport 20/20 masterplan as suitable for regeneration, but land ownership issues have been complicated and it has taken the developer 3-4 years to assemble the current land parcel. It is a brownfield site but includes the protected habitat of Crindau Pill which will be retained. Newport City Council have an aspiration for a new marina in this section of the river. Although it will be well integrated with its context, this scheme can proceed independently of the proposed new Sainsbury's store and approved access road to the north east of this site.

The comprehensive regeneration proposal begins with the entire removal of the existing light industrial buildings and proposes a mix of use and scales in the creation of a coherent, sustainable new district for Newport, based on accessibility, permeability, enclosure and landmark buildings where appropriate. The developer stated that linkages will be maximised and the scheme will be sensitive to the highly tidal river edge. Increased flood protection will be included and a riverside cycle route will link into existing routes. Car parking will be at grade, hidden under blocks where possible.

Commercial uses, including hotels and office space, are concentrated at the Northern end of site. A residential tower is proposed to the south east fronting the river, with a small multi storey car park block, community centre, and some A3 retail around a south facing piazza. There is the possibility of a bridge link to Shaftesbury Park. Student and elderly housing will be located to the south of the site. Existing road networks will be used wherever possible, and a potential new route, running roughly east/west, is shown on the outline masterplan. They will not rely on the new 'Sainsburys' link road for access.

There will be a hierarchy of routes and spaces, and different character zones, including a waterside area to the south; a neighbourhood area to the east; and a commercial area

to the north. Town house developments are shown on existing streets to provide a continuity of scale, with higher density blocks sited towards the open area and river.

A planning application was submitted three weeks ago and the Local Authority are still awaiting consultation responses. There has been considerable pre-application discussion and SPG guidance for the area is being drafted, which will be an important consideration in assessing the application. There are some concerns about the proposed density and access arrangements, which need to be clarified, including the height of the proposed bridge. The authority supports the riverside walkway and the inclusion of other green space, especially in light of the high density. The landmark buildings will need to be carefully assessed. It is still hoped that a marina and canal basin will be progressed.

Ymateb y Panel/Panel's Response

The Panel noted that the UDP envisaged approximately 420 dwelling units or 38 du/ha, compared with the current proposal for 1100 dwellings or 100 du/ha. We were informed that the former was a historical number, and that the Local Authority is prepared to consider the increase, although they may require more indicative information. After some time spent discussing the model, the Panel realised that it showed 850 units only and was purely illustrative. This made it difficult for us to comment in a way that was relevant.

Our ability to assess the proposal was also hindered by the lack of certainty concerning the status of any approved outline application. We asked whether the land would be sold off in separate parcels, and whether any design codes would be attached as conditions. The team stated that it was basically the framework which had been submitted for approval, ie the road pattern, density zones, landmark building positions. There would be, for instance, no prescribed number of units per zone. The SPG will also deal with the broad outlines of the development. The representative from Newport Unlimited stated that they had high aspirations for the scheme and would be looking to the Local Authority to provide some guarantee of quality through design guidance and control. It was pointed out that unlike similar regeneration areas [eg SA1 in Swansea] this land was not in public ownership.

The Panel was in favour of the principle behind this development but felt that there was insufficient substance and detail in the proposal on which to make any useful observations. We strongly supported the stated intention of the design team to create an urban quarter made up of clearly defined streets and squares, but we noted that there was little evidence of this approach on the model submitted. We thought that the form of the public realm and the enclosing buildings would be crucial to the development of the masterplan, and advised that for instance the long rows of town

houses should be reconsidered to avoid rear boundary fences dominating what appeared to be public spaces. We requested details of how a new sustainable community would be ensured and we were informed that the new neighbourhood would be supported by a mix of uses including some employment opportunities, and that some live/work units could be provided. We advised that it would be important to clarify appropriate uses for the proposed community building.

The Panel thought that the access via existing roads appeared tortuous and, even if it was demonstrated that it would provide sufficient capacity, it was an unsatisfactory entrance for a large mixed use area – especially if the separately proposed Sainsburys link was not built. The team have been assured that proposed traffic levels can be managed, based on a trip rate exchange assessment.

The Panel noted that elsewhere in Newport there has been a comprehensive approach to the treatment of the riverbank, across several schemes, and we wished to see the same quality of design approach for this scheme. We were advised that the development of the river edge would have to be intrinsically linked to the flood defences and would need specialist input.

The Panel was keen to see the provision of a single district heating scheme for the development, which should be enshrined in all tender documents and contracts from the beginning to ensure that the necessary infrastructure is installed. We were assured that any site contamination present would be dealt with.

The Panel strongly supported the development of this site, but thought that much work remained to be done to deliver a high quality urban design approach which would ensure a workable, mixed use neighbourhood, with lively outdoor spaces and good connectivity.

The architect noted that the current proposal including the model was “illustrative”, which we understood to mean that it showed an example of the development that could be built but not necessarily what would be built. We did not consider this acceptable – in our view a masterplan must be, to some extent, flexible but it must also be robust and describe an environment that, if built, would deliver the urban and architectural qualities all parties aspire to. Unfortunately the layout provided did not meet this standard. The Panel considered that it contained too many examples of poorly defined public realm and unsatisfactory building forms.

A clear masterplan based on good urban design principles is essential. It must define the urban form proposed and give the LPA a clear basis (perhaps through the use of design codes) for determining future reserved matters applications.

Crynodeb/Summary

The Panel was pleased to see these positive proposals for a highly visible area in need of regeneration. We find the principle of the proposal acceptable, but we do not have sufficient detailed information to give a full assessment. Failing that, we would make the following observations:

- We think the LPA should request a full masterplan study for approval. This should contain clearly stated aspirations with a means of delivery based on codes and planning guidance, but with some inbuilt flexibility designed to encourage ambition
- We remain to be convinced that the relatively high density proposed is appropriate and sustainable. It may be that a lower rise scheme with less dominant parking, would be preferable
- We would like to see more family housing included
- We think that small starter industrial units should be offered, and possibly some existing employment uses continued
- We applaud the commitment to retain and build on the existing street structure, although we think the main entrance to the site may need revising.
- We suggest that basement or undercroft parking options be explored
- We would like to see the development of courtyard blocks explored as a way of dealing with rear boundaries
- We would like to see the inclusion of live/work units and a district heating system in a revised and expanded masterplan
- The presentation would have benefitted from a single site analysis plan, and site sections. The usefulness of the model was undermined by its illustrative nature
- We would like to see the scheme again in more detail, as it develops

Diwedd/End

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