

Statws/Status:

Cyhoeddus / Public

DESIGN
COMMISSION
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DYLUNIO
CYMRU

Adroddiad Adolygu Dylunio: Design Review Report:	26 March 2008
Dyddiad Cyfarfod / Meeting Date:	12 March 2008
Lleoliad/Location:	Marcol Court, Cardiff
Disgrifiad o'r Cynllun Scheme Description:	Mixed use
Cleient/Asiant: Client/Agent:	Ivor Holdings Ltd
Developer/Datblygwr:	n/a
Pensaer/Architect:	M2h architects [Rhodri Morgan] DLG architects [Matthew Borowiecki]
Cynllunio/Consultants:	Arup [Brendan Wright]
Awdurdod Cynllunio: Planning Authority:	Cardiff CC
Statws Cynllunio: Planning Status:	Outline application submitted December 2007
Y Panel Adolygu Dylunio/ Design Review Panel:	
Wendy Richards (cadeirydd/chair) Cindy Harris (swyddog/officer) Charlie Deng (swyddog/officer)	Richard Parnaby Lyn Owen Kedrick Davies
Lead Panellist:	Lyn Owen

Sylwedyddion/Observers:

Peter Ashby, Cadw

Cyflwyniad/Presentation

The site for the proposed development is centrally located in Cardiff city centre, to the east of the St David's 2 (SD2) development, to the north of Cardiff International Arena (CIA), to the south of a Conservation Area, and on the corner of Bridge Street and Churchill Way. The site is one of the last remaining undeveloped sites in the city centre and is located on one of the main routes into SD2. The proposal has been influenced by the prevailing and developing urban grain, and forms part of an arc of tall buildings following the railway line.

Previous planning applications have been for single office use – an outline consent was granted in 1993 and a detailed consent in 2002. The current proposal is an outline application, and consists of a mixed-use urban block. It proposes ground floor flexible uses of retail/A3, with 5 storeys of flexible uses of office/hotel above, and residential blocks of 8 storeys on Churchill Way and 18 storeys on David Street. Different external materials and architectural treatments will reflect the different uses, and facade materials include reconstituted stone, glass, coated metal and slate. All car parking is provided underground on one level, with one space per two residential dwellings, and one space per 3,000 square feet of commercial space, totalling 120 spaces. Cycle provision is located in the basement, with one stand per 200 square metres of office space and one stand per residential bedroom. The quantum and location of affordable housing is still being negotiated, but is likely to be 25% on site.

The proposal aims to achieve a BREEAM 'Very Good' rating. The basic form and orientation are considered appropriate for natural ventilation and a good energy profile. Serious consideration is being given to biomass heating, CHP, solar water heating and rainwater harvesting. It is intended to use the roof areas for residential amenity space and to explore a green roof treatment.

The Local Authority consider the location to be appropriate for a tall building and support the proposed mix of uses. The scale and massing are thought to be an improvement on previous applications. There remains some concern over the elevational treatment, and the pavement level recesses which might encourage anti-social behaviour.

Ymateb y Panel/Panel's Response

The Panel supported the proposed mix and flexibility of use. We were informed that although a specific quantum of accommodation is envisaged for different uses, the development has been designed to be adaptable and there could eventually be substantial changes. The final allocation will be developed in conjunction with end users and it is thought that the blocks could even be developed independently.

The Panel also supported the active street frontages and accepted that the multiple entrance points supported this increased activity, especially on David Street. We understood that this proposal has responded to the conservation area with a five storey podium, reflecting the guidance which was mainly concerned with height. Above the podium, thinner extruded blocks have been developed to be lighter and more elegant than the lower massing. The Panel was generally content with the proposed heights.

In terms of massing, we stressed that Cardiff has long been a city of streets with continuous blocks, and we thought that the current development should re-install this character. This could be done by a unifying perimeter block of say 4-5 storeys, which could then be extruded into taller elements at certain points. This approach would also allow a larger central courtyard, which would improve daylighting and amenity for all the proposed uses.

We thought there should be a clearer, more successful relationship with the ground and an architectural treatment which differentiates between the base, middle and top of the taller blocks. In particular, the tops of the blocks need a more elegant treatment. The Panel thought that there was a bland uniformity in the elevations as presented. The corners in particular, which terminated vistas, should be better defined. We would like to see a more varied fenestration on the blank wall of the tower facing the conservation area, and we think this could be done without prejudicing the passive design strategy. The simplicity of the office block elevation will require high quality detailing if it is to be successful.

In terms of internal layout, we were concerned that some residential units have a mainly northern aspect and we encouraged the team to explore the possibility of through apartments where daylighting from two facades cannot be achieved. We were informed that 8-9 units were served by a single core. More cross sectional information would have helped our assessment of this aspect.

The Panel stated that there was a clear need for residential amenity space and supported the roof space being used for this. We would also like to see amenity space provided for retail and office workers, possibly in an enlarged internal courtyard, where there is currently an atrium space proposed. The team stated that this had been considered at an earlier stage but was found to interfere with the desired flexibility. The Panel commented that it would have been useful to see the submitted Design and Access statement which

presumably showed the evolution of this proposal from earlier design approaches.

The Panel welcomed the proposed limited level of parking provision and the approach of locating the car park underground, and we enquired how the car park would be managed. The design team stated that this issue was yet to be resolved, along with the subdivision of areas for different uses. The parking entrance from Churchill Way, along with the parking layout and management, were also acknowledged as outstanding issues which would be dealt with as the design developed. The Panel emphasised that the detailing of the car park entrance would be crucial. The design team hoped that basement ventilation would be achieved by mostly natural means, but acknowledged that there may need to be some mechanical ventilation, and some grillage at pavement level. The Panel commented that the successful detailed design of the ventilation at street level would have a major influence on the proposed active frontage for the building and the public realm. We thought that the cycle parking provision was very generous and were informed that this may be revised downwards.

The Panel noted that no plant room or identified space was shown on the drawings, despite the fact that this was likely to be substantial. We urged the team to minimise the location of plant on the roof. We suggested that some private storage space for residents could be located in the basement.

It was confirmed that all servicing will be from Churchill Way, and we had some concerns about the impact on Churchill Way of several service areas located close together, including the one nearby for the Cardiff International Arena. The team stated that this was the least negative location, and that a separate service road to the south had been considered but discounted. The Panel suggested a time control on the delivery bay and it was agreed to explore this option. There will be a taxi and hotel drop off point in Bridge Street.

We thought it was vitally important for this development to contribute to the improvement of the public realm and to raise the quality of an area which was in danger of becoming the 'back land' of SD2. We were told that the pavement will be widened, and the north-east corner between Churchill Way and Bridge Street will be the focus of public realm improvements. The Panel stressed that an integrated public art strategy was necessary, to avoid an ad hoc 'add-on' approach, which was currently illustrated in the architectural renderings presented to the Panel.

The Panel urged the team and the developer to be more ambitious in their sustainability targets. A BREEAM Excellent rating should be the minimum standard, with Code Level 4 for the residential elements. We advised that the first step should be to optimise the basic form and orientation, and to maximise natural daylighting. We welcomed the team's consideration of a single boiler and heating delivery system and stated that individual electric

heating solutions should be avoided. The southerly aspect should be exploited and we thought that solar water heating and photovoltaic cladding as part of the elevational treatment, were likely to be viable technologies.

We were informed that the owner intends to develop the site rather than sell it on with outline consent.

Crynodeb/Summary

The Panel supports the scheme in principle, and in particular applauds the flexible mixed use and active frontages. We think that it presents an acceptable response to the site and the context, but major revisions are required. In particular:

- We think that a perimeter block and courtyard solution would deliver an improved street frontage and urban grain, along with better amenity and daylight levels internally.
- The architectural treatment should differentiate between the base, middle and top of the taller blocks. The corners of the blocks require better definition and the blank north facing wall of the tower needs a more varied treatment and fenestration.
- The orientation and layout of the apartments should be reconsidered to maximise natural daylight.
- More amenity space needs to be included, for residents and workers, together with a definite commitment to public realm improvements and an integrated public art strategy.
- There is currently insufficient ancillary space and this should be integrated into the design as soon as possible, in appropriate locations. Roof space plant should be minimised and consideration given to providing separate storage space for residents.
- We support the quantum and location of the car parking, but urge the team to resolve the basement ventilation with minimum intrusion onto the street scene.
- We would like to see more ambitious targets for sustainability [BREEAM Excellent and Code Level 4] with firm commitments to low carbon technologies and efficient heating systems. The potential for green roofs and PV cladding as part of an integrated facade, should be explored.
- The detailing will be crucial to the success of this scheme and a full planning application should be accompanied by 1:20 detailed drawings.

Diwedd/End

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

