

Addroddiad Adolygu Dylunio Design Review Report

Statws/Status: **Public**

Dyddiad Cyfarfod / Meeting Date:	20 August 2008
Lleoliad/Location:	Rodney Parade Rugby Ground, Newport
Disgrifiad o'r Cynllun Scheme Description:	Mixed Use
Cleient/Asiant: Client/Agent:	PEP Resources – Project Manager
Developer/Datblygwr:	Not known
Pensaer/Architect:	S&P Architecture
Ymgynghorwyr Cynllunio: Planning Consultants:	RPS
Awdurdod Cynllunio: Planning Authority:	Newport City Council [Ian Carter, Emyr Davies, James Baker, Rachel Stevens]
Statws Cynllunio: Planning Status:	Full planning application lodged June 2008
Y Panel Adolygu Dylunio/ Design Review Panel: Wendy Richards (cadeirydd/chair) Cindy Harris (swyddog/officer) Carole-Anne Davies [CEO]	Richard Parnaby Ewan Jones Roger Ayton Steve Smith
Lead Panellist:	Ewan Jones
Sylwedyddion/Observers:	Barrie Todd, MAG, N Ireland

Cyflwyniad/Presentation

This proposal is the subject of a detailed planning application submitted in June 2008 and seeks consent for a 15,000 capacity stadium, with enabling development of residential and student accommodation [605 and 590 units respectively], provided mainly in three tower blocks rising to 23 storeys. Also included are a 440 m² convenience store, 568 m² of commercial office space, a community centre, two restaurants, squash club, training barn and sports club accommodation. Car parking provision for 500 spaces is included.

The project was presented by Ian Carter of Newport City Council. Representatives of the applicant were invited but declined to attend.

Ymateb y Panel/Panel's Response

We are grateful to Newport City Council for providing us with the opportunity to assess this proposal in detail. We have a number of concerns which are detailed below:

Scale and contextual response

We think this proposal represents gross overdevelopment of the site, given the nature of its context. The excessive scale of development is unacceptable. It would have a detrimental impact on the immediate context, namely the residential properties, and would be a poor quality backdrop to the carefully considered riverfront development. The CABE / English Heritage guidance on tall buildings, which is endorsed by DCFW, states that 'tall buildings should set exemplary standards in design because of their high profile and local impact'.

For a development of this scale to be considered acceptable, it would have to be of exceptionally high architectural quality; set exemplary standards of sustainability; include a wider mix of uses and community facilities; and establish a genuinely positive relationship with the immediate context and the conservation area. This proposal meets none of these criteria.

Incomplete application material

The Panel noted that several items of information appeared to be missing from the supporting material, namely:

- Townscape character and visual impact analysis
- Computer generated images or photorealistic images – verified as accurate - showing views from agreed viewing points, as part of a Visual Impact Analysis which would identify the zone of visual influence for this development.
- Accurate views of the development from ground level
- Wind study tests and evaluation
- A sunpath study with a qualitative analysis of the data
- Large scale sections
- An evaluation of the additional local traffic and movement impact on match days

Impact on other development areas and the realisation of the vision set out in the Newport City Centre Masterplan Supplementary Planning Guidance and the Newport 2020 Vision from Newport Unlimited

We think this development would seriously undermine Newport's strategy for regeneration and residential development on the west bank of the river, and overall could have a degenerative effect rather than a regenerative one. We believe that the Local Authority should ensure that it is pursuing a coherent and consistent approach to city-wide regeneration, and should obtain or commission an economic impact assessment of this proposal. There is the additional danger of setting an undesirable precedent for future development.

Sustainability Strategy

The proposal to achieve Code for Sustainable Homes Level 2 for the residential elements is simply not good enough and falls well short of the Welsh Assembly Government's intention to set minimum Code standards from next year and the aspiration for zero carbon buildings by 2011.

Other comments

We think that the proposed improvements to the internal and external quality of the stadium will be minimal. There is nothing distinctive about the design of the new stadium, and the extra accommodation – an increase of only 25% on the current provision - appears to be provided at the narrow ends of the ground behind the goals, which is not the best location for viewing a game.

The scheme relates poorly to the public realm, with the ground residential floors raised above the parking deck, contributing to lack of activity on the ground and potentially leading to spaces which could be perceived as unsafe.

Crynodeb/Summary

We thank the Newport CC officer for presenting the scheme to us and we regret the failure of the applicant to attend, especially given the stated intention in the application documents to present the scheme to DCFW during the consultation period.

We find the proposal to be completely unacceptable and to show a fundamental disregard for the principles of urban design. We have no doubt that the application should be refused. In summary:

- This is gross overdevelopment of the site.
- Its impact on the surrounding area would be detrimental and have a negative effect on street activity, natural surveillance, and the use of public open space.
- It could affect the desired level and quality of residential development elsewhere in the city.
- The sustainability aspirations are inadequate and should better reflect WAG policy

The Design Commission for Wales Design Review Panel and staff welcome further consultation and will be happy to provide further feedback on this report and/or where appropriate, to receive further presentations. Thank you for consulting the Commission and please keep in touch with us about the progress of your project.

Diwedd/End

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

Issued 28 August 2008

Previous Reviews: None