

Addroddiad Adolygu Dylunio Design Review Report

Review Status: **Public**

Meeting date:	19th August 2009
Issue Date:	2nd September 2009
Scheme Location:	The Mill, Ely Bridge
Scheme Description:	Residential / Mixed use
Planning Status:	Resolution to approve outline application

Part1: Presentation

Since the last review of this scheme in 2005, there have been major changes in the economic drivers for development, and the political commitment to address the climate change agenda.

A Design Code has been produced based on the One Planet Living principle developed by WWF [World Wildlife Fund]. There is a range of allowable solutions within the UK government's definition of 'zero carbon' and these will be evaluated. The shortlist of 4 developer bidders will be assessed according to a weighting of 80% design:20% costs.

A Community Panel will be involved in the project development and the decision against a rail halt may be reviewed with Arriva. It was acknowledged that the orientation of buildings shown in the masterplan is not optimal for passive solar benefits, and this could be reviewed, while retaining the proposed mix of uses and character areas.

The resolution to grant approval is dependent on the Section 106 agreement being signed. This provides for 30% affordable housing, a public transport commitment and the provision of community facilities and open space. The Local Authority supports the Design Code which matches their own 'carbon light' aspirations. There was some discussion about the merits of setting a minimum recycled content for materials. White Design is working with WRAP [Waste Resources Action Programme] on a more flexible approach which provides a more sustainable solution in the long run.

Summary of key points arising from discussion, to be read in conjunction with Part 2 of this report.

The Panel was pleased to have the opportunity to review this scheme again after such a long interval. We applaud the strength and rigour of the Design Code based on sustainable living principles, and think that this is an exemplary document. However, we think that the masterplan will need substantial revision if it is to deliver the vision contained in the Code. In summary:

- The masterplan should be sufficiently flexible to respond to a number of considerations which have arisen or changed since the document was produced. These include current parking policy, public transport provision, effective mix of uses, the desirability of optimising orientation and providing opportunities for food growing.
- The parking strategy shown in the masterplan is likely to adversely affect the development of neighbourhoods and character areas.
- The client should consider setting overall energy-in-use targets, to emphasise the energy hierarchy and the need to reduce demand as far as possible before adopting measures to offset carbon emissions.
- A higher BREEAM target for non-domestic buildings should be considered, along with other benchmarking tools.

Part 2: Discussion and Panel Response in Full

The depth and rigour of the sustainability strategy was strongly endorsed. We suggested that it may be appropriate to set overall energy-in-use targets, as in the PassivHaus design strategy. The team agreed to consider this and stated that 'smart' metering will be installed to record energy use data. However, if this were to be an overriding design driver, it may require some modifications to the masterplan layout.

The Panel sought confirmation on the current status of the masterplan. While it is intended to be a flexible document and still seen as negotiable, any major changes at this stage could be interpreted as prejudicial to the procurement process. It is important that its status is clarified and that it does not become a constraint on the delivery of the sustainability aspirations.

Given the carbon emissions associated with particular activities, a holistic approach to sustainable development needs to concentrate on food and transport indicators. For example, opportunities for local food growing are not supported by the masterplan. The team confirmed that the proposed live/work units, which have proved unsuccessful elsewhere, could be reviewed.

We noted that the location of the commercial element and major road junction to the north east appears to have been decided in relation to the proposed train stop [currently not an option], while the more obvious linkage to the north west has been downgraded. These aspects should be revised to respond to the current situation.

Similarly, it appears that prescribed parking levels have determined the principles of site layout, and the consequent limitation on private and semi-private space caused by double-stack, on-road parking. The adopted layout which will inform more detailed design development should be based on the most recent [and more flexible] parking policy framework developed by Cardiff CC.

The Panel questioned whether BREEAM Outstanding might be a more suitable target than BREEAM Excellent for non-domestic buildings. We advised the team to consider other benchmarking tools including BREEAM Community and CEEQUAL [Civil Engineering Environmental Quality Assessment].

The Community Panel which is yet to be formed, will be consulted on uses and operational issues, rather than design, and might include relevant NGO's and future residents. It is hoped that the scheme as a whole will serve as an engine for wider community regeneration.

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.

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

Appendix 1: Attendees

Asiant/Client/Datblygwr: Agent/Client/Developer	WAG, DE&T [Mike Cuddy, Ian Roberts, Tim Howard]
Pensaer/Architect:	White Design [Matt Harrison]
Consultants:	n/a
AwdurdodCynllunio/ Planning Authority	Cardiff CC [Peter Kingsbury, Liz Lambert]
Y Panel Adlygu Dylunio: Design review panel: Wendy Richards [Chair] Cindy Harris [Officer] Ashley Bateson	Jonathan Hines Lynne Sullivan
Lead Panellist:	Lynne Sullivan
Sylwedyddion/Observers:	Takayuki Kumazawa, Okayama University

Declaration of Interests:

1. DCFW Chair Alan Francis is a director of Gaunt Francis Architects which is part of a developer consortium bidding for this site.
2. Richard Parnaby, a Commissioner of DCFW, is a director of White Design.

