

Addroddiad Adolygu Dylunio Design Review Report

Review Status: **Public**

Meeting date:	23rd September 2009
Issue Date:	7th October 2009
Scheme Location:	Morrison Hospital
Scheme Description:	Healthcare
Planning Status:	Application submitted August 2009.

Part1: Presentation

Begun as a consolidation project for Morrison and Singleton hospitals, this proposal seeks to deliver improved facilities and infrastructure for Morrison Hospital. Specifically, it improves circulation for pedestrians and vehicles and creates a new access route into the site from the north west. Car parking is rationalised and relocated, together with a helipad, to the southwest of the new building, which replaces older 'time-expired' buildings on the site. The main entrance and reception area are aligned directly with the existing internal 'street' and the pedestrian route from the car park.

This proposal is intended to create a 'new face' for the hospital and good legibility is seen as crucial. The difference in levels between the entrance roundabout and ground floor of the building, of about 3m, allows for the creation of a sunken dining terrace on the north west corner. The cranked blocks to the south of the site animate the avenue and reduce internal travel distances.

The first [infrastructure] phase of the development is currently on site and the principle of use has been agreed. This hybrid application for phase 1B seeks to progress the main entrance block and north west corner first, and agree details of the general elevations and materials.

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

The Panel was disappointed with the timing of this review, being post-application and after certain key decisions have already been made. While we support the principle of use and

the masterplanning approach, we are unable to support this proposal for the following reasons:

- The main entrance is not sufficiently legible. This key aspect needs addressing urgently to achieve a good resolution using the form of the building to clearly identify the point of entry.
- The north west corner is not well resolved and the outdoor space is inappropriate in this location.
- The pitched roof forms should be reconsidered, and the block form and palette of materials need simplifying. A more coherent architectural approach which also reduces the number of forms, junctions and changes of material, will prove more robust and durable for the future.
- The new access road should be treated as part of a landscaped corridor, with input from a landscape architect, and the location of the bus layby should be reconsidered, all as part of the redesign of the entrance spaces both inside and outside.
- It is important that the team demonstrates how BREEAM Excellent will be achieved.

Part 2: Discussion and Panel Response in Full

The Panel supported the clear and logical approach to site planning, including the new access road to run along the western side of the site.

The details of the proposal, however, are more problematic. It is important that the new road is integrated as part of a landscaped corridor. Generous strips of planting either side of the road are welcome, but the road area itself and the materials used should aid legibility and signify different patterns of use. We were reassured to hear that the entrance and exit arrangements for the car park will not infringe on the pedestrian access across the road. An existing cycle storage shed will be replaced.

The bus layby directly outside the glazed atrium is not ideally located, but we were told that the steep gradients further down the avenue mean that this is the most practicable solution. Nevertheless, we had concerns about the detrimental impact on the public space in front of the building, of long 'bendy' buses possibly waiting for some time in the layby. The images in the documentation should reflect the likely density of parking, and should also include people.

The combination of rectangular blocks and the echelon block form to the south appears awkward and confusing, and we sought justification for this departure from the predominant grid layout. The design team stated that the chevron blocks would probably be future ward accommodation, and offered good diagonal views out. It was envisaged that they could set the pattern for future development. Where orthogonal blocks are used or envisaged, this reflects the functional requirements of the building. If the requirement for accommodation is reduced in the future, the echelons would be made smaller or reduced in scale. We would be interested to see how this form would carry round to the rest of the site. Within the first phase we were concerned to see a more complex form emerging behind the entrance pavilion, when this could be treated as a simple extended 'tail' to the echelon block.

Our main concern is with the legibility of the main entrance. We welcome the double height space but we are not convinced that the entrance block as shown presents an open, accessible, and welcoming aspect. It appears rather low key and hidden from view on the main approach, especially given the level differences, and we would like to see more resources diverted within the budget to enhancing the legibility through the built form. The north west corner is not well resolved and might benefit from increased massing at this point. We thought the outdoor terrace would not be well used given its orientation and proximity to a busy traffic area. The design team acknowledged these problems but thought this space needed an active use.

The pitched roofs on the rear sections of the building appear incongruous. We understand that these were a client requirement, but in our view they appear as an unnecessary complication in the layered massing as it rises to the rear. The continuation of these pitched roofs over the chevron forms works against the simple linear form which should characterise the chevrons. Material choices should relate more directly to the two key forms – the echelon block, including its continuation behind the entrance, and the main entrance pavilion. Simplifying the form and the palette of materials will produce a more coherent architectural composition, and reduce future maintenance problems.

The team aim to start on site with part 1 in April 2010, and part 2 in December 2010. It was confirmed that BREEAM Excellent will be achieved as a condition of the funding package.

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

ABM University Hospital Trust
[Hardy Rodde]

Pensaer/Architect:

Nightingale Associates
[Terry Sullivan, Sean Woodhead]

Consultants:

Arup [Keith Patterson]
BAM [Justin Price]

Awdurdod Cynllunio/
Planning Authority

CC Swansea [David Owen]

Y Panel Adlygu Dylunio:

Design review panel:

Ewan Jones [Chair]

Cindy Harris [Officer]

Jonathan Hines

Howard Wainwright

Ed Colgan

Mark Hallett

Simon Carne

Lead Panellist:

Howard Wainwright

Sylwedyddion/Observers:

Glen Dyke [DCFW]

Maria Amparo Asenjo [DCFW]

Declaration of Interest: Mark Hallett is currently working with Arup, Davis Langdon, White Young Green and Gardiner Theobald on other projects.