

Addroddiad Adolygu Dylunio Design Review Report

Review Status: **Public**

Meeting date:	18th August 2010
Issue Date:	31st August 2010
Scheme Location:	Bakers Lane, Llantwit Major
Scheme Description:	Residential
Planning Status:	Planning Application submitted April 2010

Proceedings were recorded by the presenting team for their client who was in hospital and unable to attend the review.

Part1: Presentation

This proposal is for a single house designed around the very specific needs of the paralysed and wheelchair-dependent client. Although the site is just outside the settlement boundary, its development would round off the boundary line.

The design process started with a sunpath diagram of the site, to determine the best form and location for the building, and considerations of the local vernacular and materiality. An L-shaped plan emerged, facing south around a courtyard garden. A stone boundary wall fronts on to Bakers Lane, becoming a two storey gable at the northern end. Local Blue Lias stone will be used for all stonework, much of it recycled from the site.

The client is committed to achieving a very high environmental rating, and the Design and Access statement refers to Code for Sustainable Homes [CSH] Level 6, and PassivHaus.

The Local Authority commended the high quality of the planning submission, while acknowledging that the issue of the settlement boundary still needs to be resolved. Their main concern is with the two storey element, and the position of the building on site, although they recognise the proposed siting protects nearby dwellings from overlooking. As a result, during the course of pre-application discussions, the house has been moved slightly to the south but with the same alignment.

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

The Panel was delighted to receive this comprehensive and impressive submission. We regretted the fact that the client could not be present and sent our best wishes for a speedy recovery from this latest surgery. In our view this is a potential exemplar project of sensitive development in a rural location, responding to a specific and demanding brief. We trust that there will be a speedy and favourable resolution of the settlement boundary issue, so that the project can proceed. In summary:

- The position of the building on the site has been optimized for passive solar gain, and to avoid any overlooking, and should not be altered further.
- While there could be some adjustment to the eaves height, we are convinced by the argument in favour of a part two storey building, and impressed by the sensitive treatment of the street frontage.
- There should be a specific commitment to a high Code for Sustainable Homes, PassivHaus or other similar standard in the planning application. However, we strongly recommend a pre-assessment evaluation is undertaken as soon as possible, to determine viability and what level of standard can be achieved at the site.

Part 2: Discussion and Panel Response in Full

The Panel was impressed by the excellent presentation based on a well executed set of documents. In particular, we welcomed the way in which the environmental strategy was reflected in the built form. However, we noted the lack of any specific commitment in this context and, while we understood the client's need to resolve the principle of use first and foremost, we advised that a CSH pre-assessment should be undertaken as soon as the broader planning issues are resolved.

It is important that the planning application contains clear commitments as to what can be achieved, and we would encourage a commitment to a high CSH rating and an aspiration to aim for Level 5 or 6, subject to site constraints. The Panel advised that PassivHaus certification was a particular, rigorous process with stringent conditions to be satisfied, and therefore would normally be incorporated into the design development from the very beginning. On a minor point we advised that the positions of the solar thermal and solar electric panels be reversed, so that the solar water heating panels were closer to the hot water cylinder.

The Panel understood the sensitivity of the site locally and wondered what feedback had been received from local consultation. The client's representative stated that there was a lot of support in the village for the client as a lifelong resident, and that they had actively tried to engage with all shades of opinion and provided information for residents via a website. They had also addressed the perceived threat of 'development creep' by offering to covenant the land to the north to restrict any further development.

We discussed the Local Authority's concern regarding the two storey element, and the implications of a single storey development. Given that the building has to accommodate

space for a live-in carer and space for physiotherapy, it was agreed that a single storey version would result in a footprint which would be too large for the site. It would also intrude on the garden space, which is understandably seen as a therapeutic necessity. The two storey element also provides a convincing 'stop-end' against any further development to the north. We suggested that the eaves height could be reduced by making more use of the roof space internally.

The Panel accepted that any reconfiguration of the L-shaped plan would compromise solar gain and therefore the energy performance of the building and the high sustainability aspirations. The design team had considered setting the building back from the road by 2m, but we thought that one of the strengths of the design was the way in which it addressed the lane. In our view the elegance and refinement of the design and its contextual response overrides any concern with extending the settlement boundary or impinging on the conservation area.

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	John Grieg [represented by Robert Hanna]
Pensaer/Architect:	Feilden Fowles Architects [Edmund Fowles]
Consultants:	n/a
Awdurdod Cynllunio/ Planning Authority	Vale of Glamorgan CC [Stephen Butler, Peter Thomas, Morgan Williams, Yvonne Wildey]
Y Panel Adlygu Dylunio: Design review panel: Wendy Richards [Chair] Cindy Harris [Officer] Kieren Morgan	Mark Hallett Lynne Sullivan Michael Griffiths Ashley Bateson
Lead Panellist:	Ashley Bateson
Sylwedyddion/Observers:	Richard Keogh [DCFWD]

