

Addroddiad Adolygu Dylunio Design Review Report

Review Status: **Public**

Meeting date:	20th October 2010
Issue Date:	29th October 2010
Scheme Location:	Montrose, Penally, Tenby
Scheme Description:	Residential
Planning Status:	Application submitted August 2010

Part1: Presentation

This is a full planning application for a compact single dwelling which has already been submitted to the Local Planning Authority. The small, triangular, sloping site is located within a conservation area, and bounded by two narrow lanes.

The proposal states that the modest house will fit discreetly into its setting and respect the very sensitive context, easily achieving Code for Sustainable Homes Level 4. The building is designed to 'grow out' of the existing wall on the east side, in a similar way to other houses in the locality. A two storey element faces south over a sunken courtyard (approximately 3 meters below existing ground level), while single storey accommodation steps down and occupies most of the northern area of the site in a staggered floor plan. 'Stone slabs' will be used for the wall cladding and the roof will be zinc standing seam.

The Local Authority's main concerns are the successful negotiation of the change of levels across the site in both directions, and the response to the conservation area.

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

The Panel appreciates the constraints of this very tight site and the difficult design challenge this presents. However, we consider the design at this stage to be unsatisfactory and ultimately overdevelopment of the site. We would make the following recommendations:

- We have serious concerns about the impact of the proposal on the conservation area, which we think could be detrimental given the prominence of the site.

- The Design and Access Statement does not show adequately how the design team has arrived at this particular design solution, nor what alternatives were considered.
- Accurate 3D images are needed to illustrate what is being proposed and to place the building in its context.
- The relationship of the building with the eastern boundary wall needs to be clarified. Currently they read as two separate elements and the new wall is not a sympathetic response to the old.
- A sample panel of the proposed wall cladding should be provided to the LPA for their assessment
- The removal of large sections of the western boundary wall should be reconsidered.
- We support the aspiration of achieving Code Level 4 but the sustainability strategy needs to be demonstrated and made explicit. Further evidence is needed to show that the courtyard will receive adequate solar access.
- The details provided in this full planning application are not sufficient to assure us that the desired quality will be achieved.

Part 2: Discussion and Panel Response in Full

The Panel's main concern is the likely impact on the conservation area, and the 'village green' in particular. Given the way the building is wedged into the northern corner of the site which is elevated above the village green, we think it is likely to be too dominant in this context. We would have expected the D&A statement to contain an account of the evolution of the design and consideration of other building forms, together with reasons for the design choices made.

The proposed footprint as it stands dominates the plot, leaving very limited outdoor spaces. In addition, the tightness of the site and access raises issues of buildability. We suggested that the small triangles of leftover land on the western boundary could be incorporated into the building, with a compensating reduction in length of the plan. Also the parking area could be reduced to accommodate one car [rather than two], and the building pulled back towards the south, leaving more useful outdoor space at the northern tip of the site.

The claim that the building grows seamlessly out of the boundary wall to the east, is not substantiated in the drawings. The Panel understood that the building would be set back from the existing wall and the wall cladding and details would be deliberately more honed and sophisticated than the crude and roughly quarried stone of the existing wall. This would read as a completely separate element from the boundary wall. There is confusion between the rationale offered in the contextual analysis, and what will actually be delivered. This needs to be clarified and robustly justified as an appropriate response to the conservation area. We advised that a sample panel of the proposed cladding be provided to the Planning Authority before any decision is made on the application.

The Panel had concerns about the removal of a large part of the boundary wall to the west for vehicle access, especially given the importance placed on these walls in the contextual analysis. Despite the claim that the wall was merely being diverted and returned at right angles to the existing line, we thought that this degree of removal, together with the further break in the wall to the north [for access to the bin store] was not justified.

The Panel applauded the client's commitment to achieve Code Level 4, and welcomed the news that a Code pre-assessment had been carried out. This should have been included in the D&A statement along with a strategy for achieving this level of environmental performance, which requires a 44% reduction in carbon emissions over the 2006 Building Regulations.

We questioned whether the sunken south facing courtyard would receive good solar access; this should be demonstrated by a sunpath analysis. It may be necessary to restrict the height of new planting to the south, in order to avoid shading now or in the future. The upper south elevation has minimal glazing and thus misses the opportunity to benefit from passive solar heating, which should be an integral part of the low-energy design approach.

Accurate photomontage views from significant viewing points are necessary to place the building in context and to help the planning authority assess whether the impact is acceptable. The level of detail is insufficient for a full application and 1:20 details should be provided.

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	Michael Argent
Pensaer/Architect:	Argent Architects [Michael Argent, Adam Chandler]
Consultants:	n/a
AwdurdodCynllunio/ Planning Authority	Pembrokeshire CC [Rachel Elliot, Mike Simmons]
Y Panel Adlygu Dylunio: Design review panel: Wendy Richards [Chair] Cindy Harris [Officer] David Harvey	Kieren Morgan Simon Carne Kedrick Davies Roger Ayton
Lead Panellist:	Kedrick Davies

Sylwedyddion/Observers:

Harriet Brown [Pembrokeshire CC]