



DESIGN
COMMISSION
FOR WALES
COMISIWN
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CYMRU

Design Review Report

Wylfa Newydd Main Site, Anglesey

DCFW Ref: N60

Meeting of 18th August 2016



Declarations of Interest

Panel members, observers and other relevant parties are required to declare **in advance** any interests they may have in relation to the Design Review Agenda items. Any such declarations are recorded here and in DCFW's central records.

Review Status

PUBLIC

Meeting date	18 th August 2016
Issue date	2 nd September 2016
Scheme location	Wylfa, Anglesey
Scheme description	Main Nuclear Facility
Scheme reference number	60
Planning status	Pre-application

Declarations of Interest

None declared.

Consultations to Date

The Design Commission for Wales has been engaged in consultation on the development associated with the new nuclear facility for over two years during which time several review meetings have taken place. This is the first time that the main site has been reviewed.

The Proposals

This review focused on main site of the proposed nuclear power station. There is limited scope to influence the design of the many of the buildings but the design team are working on proposals for 15 buildings on the site as well as the landscape proposals.

Main Points

The Commission welcomed the opportunity to review and discuss proposals for the main site of the nuclear power station following several meetings regarding off site and associated development. This initial review allowed for discussion regarding strategic considerations of both the built form and the landscape proposals. DCFW understands that there are a number of fixed elements within the site so the discussion focused on those elements where there are options and opportunities to enhance the design of the site.

Concept for the main site

In developing a design approach to the main site, the whole site should be considered as a landscape and a strategy developed for both the man-made landscape and buildings.

The material set out for the review provides a useful brief for the next step in determining a design concept for the main site particularly relating to colour and materials. A clear approach to decision making is now required that will enable the design team to move forward with confidence. There is a danger that a compromised or watered down solution will result if there is not a clear direction from the design team, particularly following consultation with a wide range of stakeholders.

Additional expertise beyond those already on the team may be required to help move the design proposals forward. A new perspective could help to develop a story or language that is reflected in the design choices that are made. This could be an artist, colourist or poet who has a different way of understanding and interpreting the landscape and taking account of the cultural aspects of the site.

X10 are a group of artists who have explored the relationship between nuclear power and the landscape at Wylfa for collaboration called Power in the Land. This collaboration could provide a useful starting point for exploring who might be able to contribute additional expertise to the design team.

The aerial imagery of the site as presented in the review material can be misleading in the development and assessment of a design approach for the site as it is not a view that will be seen in reality. Whilst photo montages are almost meaningless at a large scale, they are useful in understanding the impact of decisions about colour and the design of ancillary buildings at a smaller scale. Decisions made at one scale should be checked back at other scales so that the impact is understood. Sketches and diagrams can also be helpful in developing the concept.

The team need to identify what the most important views are to help assess the proposals. The distance at which any variation in the colour and design of buildings on the site can be perceived should be determined and used in the decision making.

Buildings on the site

The potential to take an honest approach to the requirements for concrete in the main buildings on the site was discussed with the team. This approach would not try to hide or disguise the functional necessities of the materiality of the buildings but instead celebrate them. A high quality concrete could be a much better finish than one that will need repainting periodically. This would also be less of a maintenance burden. The approach taken needs to fit in with the overall concept as discussed above.

In relation to the range of buildings to be provided on the site and their design, an overall concept would be helpful in developing a language for the site. Some options that were discussed at the review included:

- An organisational approach based around a kit of parts whereby different sets of buildings would be approached differently; or
- A city with a collection of individual buildings which are unique and different.

DCFW welcomes the commitment to the quality of materials and the 'human scale' approach to the design of the key worker buildings on arrival to the site. Consideration should also be given to how the proposals reflect the values and ethos of Horizon as a company.

The team outlined that lighting will be at a low level for security and access and around the perimeter of the site and it would, therefore, seem that there is limited scope to do something creative with lighting on the main site.

Landscape works

DCFW understands that the design of the earth mounds is still ongoing and that there will be further development of their form and nature. In the same way as the approach to the buildings, the site should be considered at a whole and the large and small scale impact of design decisions need to be understood.

Consideration should be given to the interface of the earth mounds with adjoining properties and cross sections will help in the exploration and development of the design. The mounds must avoid being overbearing on neighbouring properties, particularly in the interim while the majority of material is stored in fewer locations before it is spread out across the site.

Exploring other options for the future function of the earth mounds could unlock a more interesting and value-adding idea. For example, a forest option could have potential leisure and tourism or industry benefits. Other options may include an approach based on biodiversity management, restoring a pre-farming landscape, an art landscape or a teaching and learning landscape. We encourage the design team to consider all options, including those on a bigger and bolder scale and to weigh these up against a framework of objectives which include visual, ecological, environmental, cultural and economic impact and opportunity.

Next Steps

A further session on this aspect of the development could be helpful for the team once a clearer sense of direction has been established. There are other aspects that are yet to be reviewed and we would welcome the opportunity to see these in due course and encourage the team to plan ahead to schedule a review at an appropriate time.

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

Attendees

Horizon:	Trystan Mabbitt
Jacobs:	David Ellison Thomas Darcy Steven Lamb
Aecom:	Helen Smith
Design Review Panel:	
Chair	Jen Heal, Design Advisor, DCFW
Lead panellist	Steve Smith
Panel	Jonathan Hines Kedrick Davies Amanda Spence, Design Advisor, DCFW
Observers:	Samia Amina Wendy Maden