

Addroddiad Adolygu Dylunio Design Review Report

Review Status: **Confidential**

Meeting date:	20th October 2010
Issue Date:	29th October 2010
Scheme Location:	Priory Farm, Monkton, Pembroke
Scheme Description:	Residential
Planning Status:	Pre-application [Outline consent exists]

Part1: Presentation

This proposal is part of a wider masterplan incorporating parcels of land in the same ownership which have received planning consent in the last few years for a total of 110 dwellings. This proposal is for 25 dwellings on a sensitive site directly overlooked by Pembroke Castle and next to a conservation area and several listed buildings, including Monkton Priory church and farmhouse.

The greenfield site – originally part of the working farm – has the constraint of a proposed bypass running through it which has been under consideration for 30 years. Although this was dropped by the Inspectorate reviewing the current UDP, it is still a candidate site in the developing LDP, and reserving the protected route is a condition of the outline consent.

The site layout follows Cadw's preferred option of addressing the castle across Castle Pond. The bypass route has been moved away from the western boundary of the site to allow the creation of a street with housing on both sides. The Local Authority is content with this change, and with the minimal road widths and parking standards. Pedestrian and cycling networks will be improved between Monkton and Pembroke. The first phase of development will consist of the larger units to the east.

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

The Panel appreciates the constraints inherent in this important and sensitive site, and we understand the client's desire to progress this development as quickly as possible. However, we think that this proposal is unsatisfactory and fails to demonstrate that

sufficiently robust mechanisms are in place to protect design quality in the long term. In summary:

- The need to include a protected route for the proposed bypass within the masterplan will compromise the creation of a cohesive community and the development of a genuine 'street'.
- The contextual analysis and design statement need to provide more evidence of a strong vision for the site with a particular character and sense of place. Wider sections and 3D views should be included.
- The suburban and highways-dominated character of the layout should be revised and a more urban treatment considered, with a wider variety of house types and a clearer application of the advice contained in Manual for Streets.
- The level of parking provision at 3:1 is unjustifiably high, although we understand that all parking will be on-street, with no individual garages.
- The Panel was concerned that the potential disposal of individual plots to self builders would make it virtually impossible to control design quality. We strongly advocated the development of a robust and tightly controlled Design Code, to be agreed with the Local Authority as a condition of any consent.
- We advised that the input of a landscape architect was essential, particularly as the planting infrastructure proposed was highlighted as being essential to the scheme's successful integration into the landscape context and setting of the castle.
- Long term stewardship and management of the landscape and public areas, including the 'pony paddock', should be considered at this stage.

Part 2: Discussion and Panel Response in Full

The Panel was concerned that the design did not fully recognise the historic and archaeological importance of the site. We were particularly concerned about the proposed bypass and the serious constraint it imposes on the site planning. In spite of the measures taken to mitigate the impact, such as reducing the road width, we still thought that the nature of a bypass would negate the possibility of a well functioning 'street' being created along part of its length. We were informed that the Welsh Assembly Government [WAG] was still processing the feasibility study for the bypass, and that traffic levels would be relatively low. Eventually the road would be serving the fully developed site of up to 200 houses.

The Panel noted that in the contextual analysis provided, there was not sufficient evidence of a response to the historic context and built forms. Wider site sections and 3D views to and from major viewpoints, would help to provide such evidence and form a convincing argument for the particular proposal. Currently, there is nothing specific about the site layout which roots it in this location, and a stronger vision and contextual response needs to be developed. We noted the lack of proposed contours on the plans although existing ones are shown with proposed spot levels. This does not give any design intent as to how the land will be modelled to accommodate the proposed dwellings, which will have a significant impact on the site.

In our view this is a very suburban model of residential development, with very high parking standards of 3:1, although we understand that all parking will be on-street. The loop

road is over-engineered and does not demonstrate any reference to the principles contained in Manual for Streets. For example, it would be possible to have frontages facing the castle, as requested by Cadw, but not the access road with the accompanying intrusions of parking and street lighting. The Panel thought that a more urban treatment with a wider range of house types and sizes would be more successful commercially and would create a better designed scheme in terms of layout and streetscape.

The Panel had concerns over the disposal of the site or individual plots, once planning permission had been obtained. If they are sold to a number of individual self-builders, it will be extremely difficult to control design quality without a very robust and detailed Design Code. This should include built form, scale, boundary treatments, site occupancy, energy standards, materials and surfaces, and would need to be tightly controlled by the Local Authority. We suggested that small local building firms should be encouraged to take a number of plots to develop as small clusters, to avoid the onerous level of enforcement which might otherwise be necessary.

The landscape structure has been arranged to accommodate views and access networks, and the intention is to include implementation of this in the site-wide infrastructure. With this in place, the design team thought that they could be more relaxed about individual plot solutions. However, we thought the housing layout had probably come first, and the planting had been fitted around it. In any event, we strongly advised the team to engage a landscape architect to ensure that all aspects of the scheme are well integrated. A mechanism should be put in place to protect and manage the landscape in the future.

The Panel was concerned to ensure that the 'pony paddock' would be protected from development in the future. Such future proofing, linked to a wider vision for the whole community with an emphasis on protecting precious assets, was not demonstrated in the Design & Access statement.

The Panel understood that the scheme will be exempt from the planning requirements for minimum Code levels, although it will have to meet the slightly more relaxed targets of the new 2010 Building Regulations. Although the layout of the eastern part of the site responds well to solar access, the row of houses shown to the west is more problematic and does not offer much in the way of unshaded south facing roofspace for solar panels. The Panel advised that conservatories should be double glazed to anticipate future heating systems being installed.

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

Mr and Mrs Jenkins

Pensaer/Architect:

Tim Colquhoun Architects [Tim Colquhoun,
Josie Regan]

Consultants:

n/a

AwdurdodCynllunio/
Planning Authority

Pembrokeshire County Council
[Mike Simmons, Stephen Benger]

Y Panel Adlygu Dylunio:

Design review panel:
Wendy Richards [Chair]
Cindy Harris [Officer]
Kedrick Davies

Kieren Morgan
Simon Carne
Roger Ayton
David Harvey

Lead Panellist:

Kieren Morgan

Sylwedyddion/Observers:

Harriet Brown, Pembrokeshire CC