

Addroddiad Adolygu Dylunio Design Review Report

Review Status: **Confidential**

Meeting date:	22nd April 2009
Issue Date:	1st May 2009
Scheme Location:	Cae Garnedd, Bangor
Scheme Description:	Residential. Extra Care Housing
Planning Status:	Pre-application

Part1: Presentation

This proposal is for an extra care scheme of 42 units, of which 28 are 2 bedroom and 14 are 1 bedroom flats. A communal sitting and dining area faces south over landscaped gardens. The Cae Garnedd site was selected after considering four other sites in the locality and lies in a suburban area of detached and semi-detached houses. A pedestrian crossing over Ffordd Penrhos will be provided as part of the development.

The Local Authority officers appreciate that the building form and elevations have been broken up to create a more domestic appearance, but think that the scale and massing are nevertheless out of character with the surroundings and give the impression of institutional use. They consider that the current proposal is an overdevelopment of the site and any future development on the site should be substantially 2 storey.

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

The Panel welcomed the opportunity to review this scheme at an early stage and we realise that the design development is still ongoing. We appreciate the lack of suitable local sites and the requirement for a certain density to make the scheme viable. However, the proposal is unacceptable in its current form. In summary:

- We have serious concerns about the scale and massing of the scheme. We believe that whilst some elements of 3 storey accommodation might not be ruled out, a consistent 3 storey provision is likely to be too great an imposition on the immediate area character.

- The monopitch roofs create complicated junctions and large roof voids which will be relatively difficult and costly to build and maintain, and may not be the most appropriate way of dealing with the massing of the scheme.
- More daylight should be introduced into corridors and the internal layout made easily navigable for wheelchairs. Some double height spaces should be introduced.
- The ground floor layout should be revised to make better use of the south facing aspect.
- A scheme that delivers so many North facing apartments cannot be acceptable and the block layout should be revised if possible to provide a good aspect for all units.
- We support the commitment to BREEAM Excellent, which should be used to inform the design development. The location of the plant room and consequent height of the flue need to be re-examined.
- We think there is a danger of the small area of garden to the south being overshadowed.

Part 2: Discussion and Panel Response in Full

It was established that this extra care scheme does not include any specific requirements for dementia care. The communal facilities will be open to the public but will not be used as a Day Centre. The budget is approximately £1200 / sqm.

It appears that the site may be too small for the proposed quantum of development and there is a danger that this proposal would constitute over-development of the site in this context. The impact of three storey development on the users should be questioned and could be considered likely to be detrimental to their quality of life. The breaking up of the massing, designed to make the scale more acceptable, together with the monopitch roofs, has significant buildability and maintenance implications and leads to awkward junctions and large roof voids. The effect of the massing on the amenity of neighbouring properties is likely to be unacceptable.

We were informed that lightwells will be introduced to 2nd floor corridors, and that lower floor corridors will be daylit at each end. The architects are trying to maximise daylight access and this in part explains the corridor layout with right angled bends. However, this layout could make the corridors less legible and navigable for elderly residents. Some double height spaces should be provided so that there is visual connection between floors and a greater sense of space.

It is disappointing to see that a considerable number of apartments will be predominantly North facing. This is neither acceptable nor inevitable, especially for non-active residents who will spend long periods of time in their apartments. The internal layout on the ground floor is problematic, where the dining room is north facing and the communal kitchen is located internally with no windows, while the laundry and stores have a south facing aspect.

A BREEAM [non-residential] assessment will be used because of the inclusion of communal space, and a rating of Excellent will be achieved. It is important that the pre-assessment analysis by the BREEAM assessor is used to inform the design. The location of the biomass plant room and the height and impact of the flue should be re-assessed.

It is likely that the narrow strip of garden to the south of the site will be shaded by existing trees.

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	North Wales Housing Association [Phil Danson]
Pensaer/Architect:	Ainsley Gommon Architects [Neil McGill, Mark French, Simon Venables]
Consultants:	ERW Consulting [Elfed Williams]
AwdurdodCynllunio/ Planning Authority	Cyngor Gwynedd [Idwal Williams]
Y Panel Adlygu Dylunio: Design review panel: Alan Francis [Chair] Cindy Harris [Officer] Elfed Roberts	Phil Roberts Ed Colgan David Harvey
Lead Panellist:	Phil Roberts
Sylwedyddion/Observers:	n/a