

Statws/Status:
Cyfrinachol / Confidential



Adroddiad Adolygu Dylunio: 27 October 2006
Design Review Report:

Dyddiad Cyfarfod / Cyflwyno'r Deunydd: 18 October 2006
Meeting Date / Material Submitted:

Lleoliad/Location: Celtic Manor Resort Hotel,
Newport

Disgrifiad o'r Cynllun Leisure /residential
Scheme Description:

Cleient/Asiant: Lewis & Lewis Ltd
Client/Agent: [Mark Bailey]

Pensaer/Architect: Holder Mathias Architects
[Nic Downs, Scott Frederick]

Awdurdod Cynllunio: Newport CC
Planning Authority:

Statws Cynllunio: Pre-planning
Planning Status:

Y Panel Adolygu Dylunio/Design Review Panel:
Douglas Hogg (cadeirydd/chair) Ann-Marie Smale
Cindy Harris (swyddog/officer) Elfed Roberts
Charlie Deng [swyddog/officer] Mike Biddulph

Lead Panellist: Ann-Marie Smale

Sylwedyddion/Observers: James White, DCFW

Cyflwyniad/Presentation

A planning consent exists for a 180 bed, 7 storey 'aparthotel' in a linear serpentine form on this site to the north of the existing hotel, and this is due to expire within a year. The current proposals will form the subject of two new and separate planning applications for two sites, both within the setting of the existing Championship Golf Course in the Celtic Manor resort, to be submitted within the next few weeks. This development is aimed at the leisure market and will be occupied for 11 months a year.

The scheme proposes 133 large apartments (circa 1,300 ft² each) divided into seven identical blocks or 'villas'. Four blocks are arranged in a crescent on the 'Fairways' site, which is currently an overspill car park close to an existing two storey private house. The other three blocks sit on the 'Lakeside' site, next to the 14th hole, between the lake and a realigned road linking to a new roundabout with Cats Ash Road, which will be upgraded by Newport CC in readiness for the 2010 Ryder Cup.

The proposed 4 storey blocks have undercroft parking on one side, and three ground floor apartments on the other. At the client's request, the style reflects the work of Frank Lloyd Wright and the Arts & Crafts movement. The top storey uses the hipped roof space and a heavy stone plinth surrounds the ground floor on one side, using the same reconstituted stone as the hotel. The client wishes to retain as much of the surrounding vegetation as possible and the intended effect is of a development subdued by its landscape.

Ymateb y Panel/Panel's Response

The Panel regretted that we had been presented with inadequate information with which to assess the proposal. We would have liked to see a site plan which showed both developments together, site sections showing level differences, and scaled drawings with North points. We noted that the Fairways site, which will probably be the subject of the first planning application, has a smaller footprint than the consented scheme, although it is bigger than the existing hotel.

The Panel considered that the stated aim of achieving a subdued placement within the landscape had not been successful. The large identical blocks appear to have landed on the site and the heavy stone plinths not only add to the apparent height, but separate the accommodation from the ground. We thought that the claimed architectural references to Frank Lloyd Wright were not followed through successfully. Wright's domestic architecture was mostly two-storey and low slung. We thought that these blocks should show more evidence of responding to their individual location, topography and orientation, should sit lower down within the landscape, and have a greater clarity between 'fronts' and 'backs'. The Panel suggested that the existing clubhouse be used as a precedent for an appropriate built form on the site.

The internal layout shows a deep plan, with some areas appearing to get very little daylight or natural ventilation. We thought that the fire escape arrangements might need amending and that any such problems should be solved through the design rather than by adding sprinklers. We were told that floor to ceiling heights were 2.6m, but found it difficult to evaluate the quality of the internal spaces without section drawings.

Essentially, this appears to be a large residential suburban scheme set in open countryside, with all the impacts associated with such a development. While we acknowledge that the

location within the resort hotel is unique, we would not wish to see this constitute a precedent for future development. We would like to see more views of the proposed developments from different viewpoints around the site.

The lack of response to the particular orientation and topography for each block, as well as the deep internal plan, were also concerns when assessing the sustainability strategy. The designer confirmed that a CHP district heating system is under consideration, but they have not yet decided on a target Eco Homes rating.

Throughout the discussion, the Panel remained convinced that the scale and identical form of the blocks were deeply problematic. We accepted that the LPA preferred separate blocks to a built corridor, but we nevertheless thought that they could be made more connected, with each other, with the ground and with the surroundings. Pedestrian links would help to achieve a sense of community and neighbourliness. Built-in horizontal strata would help reduce the apparent height and achieve a more low slung appearance. However, we considered that at present they do not refer convincingly to the Arts & Craft style, by virtue of their scale and formality.

Crynodeb/Summary

The Panel welcomed the opportunity to comment on this scheme. While recognising that these proposals will be presented as two separate applications, we thought that they should be shown and assessed together, in terms of the overall impact. We accept that the proposed use already has consent for one of the sites, but we think that major revisions are necessary in the design approach if either or both sites are to be developed. In particular:

- The design should move away from identical blocks towards a more individual response to particular site conditions.
- The buildings should be reduced in scale, with a greater horizontal emphasis and a more subservient response to the landscape and setting. We support the idea of a 'subdued placement' within the landscape, but this is not achieved in this proposal.
- We think that if both sites were developed this would significantly urbanise the landscape and compromise the enjoyment of the golf course
- We would like to see a more convincing approach to sustainable development, especially a re-assessment of the deep floor plan and a commitment to a high EcoHomes rating
- Given the more or less permanent occupation envisaged, we would like to see evidence of the emergence of a sense of place, with accessible communal areas linking the isolated blocks.

Diwedd/End

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