

**Statws/Status:**  
**Cyfrinachol / Confidential**



<b>Adroddiad Adolygu Dylunio: Design Review Report:</b>	<b>5 October 2007</b>
<b>Dyddiad Cyfarfod / Cyflwyno'r Deunydd: Meeting Date / Material Submitted:</b>	<b>3 October 2007</b>
<b>Lleoliad/Location:</b>	<b>Connahs Quay</b>
<b>Disgrifiad o'r Cynllun Scheme Description:</b>	<b>Primary Care Development</b>
<b>Cleient/Asiant: Client/Agent:</b>	<b>Flintshire LHB [Paul Bowker]</b>
<b>Developer/Datblygwr:</b>	<b>Haven Health Properties [Michael Luckley]</b>
<b>Pensaer/Architect:</b>	<b>Holder Mathias [Emma Jackson, Matthew Thomas]</b>
<b>Cynllunio: Consultants:</b>	<b>Hoare Lea [David Hilton] Opus International [Simon Hill]</b>
<b>Awdurdod Cynllunio: Planning Authority:</b>	<b>Flintshire CC [Niall Waller] Connahs Quay Town Council [Lisa Fearn]</b>
<b>Statws Cynllunio: Planning Status:</b>	<b>Pre-application</b>
<b>Y Panel Adolygu Dylunio/ Design Review Panel:</b>	

**John Punter (cadeirydd/chair)**  
**Cindy Harris (swyddog/officer)**  
**Charlie Deng (swyddog/officer)**

**Michael Griffiths**  
**Ed Colgan**  
**Lyn Owen**

## **Cyflwyniad/Presentation**

This proposal was reviewed by DCFW in July 2007, when the Panel highlighted the lack of connectivity between the site and the town centre as a major concern. We also requested more detail on sustainable design and environmental performance.

The developer confirmed that the position of the culvert, and the restriction on building over it imposed by the Local Authority, had dictated the location of the main building on the site. A smaller block will hopefully accommodate a pharmacy and Town Council offices. The design and layout has not changed since the last presentation apart from the raised height of the ancillary block to accommodate residential use. Additional space has been included on the ground floor of this block for an additional use, such as a cafe or training facility, which would front any future pedestrian link running between the two blocks towards the high street. Residential units would be added on the second floor providing surveillance over the walkway and the car park in the evening.

While a sketch was presented to show an indicative layout for a future link, it was confirmed that for reasons of safety and security a fence would be erected on the site's north eastern boundary. Owners of the adjacent retail units on the High Street are reportedly keen to renovate and/or expand, especially if grant aid were to be available, and the PCC scheme is seen as a catalyst for future regeneration.

In response to other points raised at the previous review, the team stated that they were satisfied that the parking provision was appropriate. A further document outlining renewable and low carbon energy options for the scheme was presented.

The Local Authority strongly supported the proposal and emphasised its importance as a stimulus to future investment and regeneration, especially in an area of low property values and few exemplars.

## **Ymateb y Panel/Panel's Response**

The Panel stated that we too wished to see the regeneration potential of the area realised and we recognised the unique opportunity which this scheme offers for increasing footfall into the town centre and attracting future investment.

The Local Authority has not produced a development brief but, together with the Town Council, has pursued direct negotiations with the retail unit owners for some years. These did not bear fruit in an era of low property values, and the particular difficulty of the culvert frustrated earlier attempts at regeneration. Now, with the possibility of grant aid from WAG, and the increased confidence and footfall which this development would generate, there is more hope for achieving the much needed improvements to the shopping parade and establishing the all important link between this site and the High Street. Any grant aid would be linked to design quality which would also be controlled through the planning process, and an area of Local Authority owned land to the north east of this site could be made available for the creation of larger retail units, giving an additional level of public control over the project.

The Panel noted that the presented sketch of a notional link with the High Street shows shops built over the culvert. As we have been told, this is not a realistic option and is therefore not the 'credible solution' we requested at the previous review.

It was confirmed that the smaller pharmacy block will be included in the planning application together with the new residential use. The developer was confident that the development of the original uses of this block would prove commercially viable, although residential development might prove more problematic. We repeated our concern that the site layout should be revised if for any reason this block does not proceed. The Local Authority signalled their intention to condition the retention of the access route and the developer stated that he would be happy with a planning condition providing for a 1:20 gradient link to the High Street. The intention is to start on site in the spring of 2008.

The Panel welcomed the greater detail provided on renewable energy options, but noted that this had not led to any additional carbon reduction targets. Solar water heating, green roofs and a sustainable drainage system remained part of the proposal.

## **Crynodeb/Summary**

Our comments are summarised as follows:

- The Panel is reassured by the Local Authority and Town Council's determination to improve the public realm on and around Connahs Quay High Street, and to establish the direct pedestrian link with the PCC which we see as fundamentally important. We accept that this is more likely to happen once this development is built.
- We anticipate that any future link will have to follow the line of the culvert and the rear elevations of both buildings should address this link to make the route safer and more legible.
- Land ownership, grant aid and development control should all be used to ensure an enclosed, legible and high quality public realm.
- We welcome the proposed increased mix of uses, although we are aware of the commercial difficulties involved. We still have concerns about the deliverability of the ancillary block.
- The internal residential layout as shown is unconvincing and problematic. Issues of overlooking and internal layout need to be addressed to ensure liveability.
- We retain our concern about overprovision of parking and possible underuse of the far reaches of the car park.
- We welcome further detail on potential sustainability measures and regret that this has not led to improved carbon reductions.
- In general we accept that our major concerns have been addressed and, while there is no guarantee of future connectivity to the town or viability for the ancillary block, we acknowledge the confidence and commitment of the local organisations, and we are content for this scheme to proceed to the funding and planning stages.
- We would like to receive a copy of the planning application when it is submitted.

**Diwedd/End**

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