

Statws/Status:
Cyfrinachol / Confidential



**Adroddiad Adolygu Dylunio;
Design Review Report:** **13 December 2007**

Dyddiad Cyfarfod / Meeting Date: **28 November 2007**

Lleoliad/Location: **Dinas Powis**

**Disgrifiad o'r Cynllun
Scheme Description:** **Primary Care Development**

**Cleient/Asiant:
Client/Agent:** **Vale of Glamorgan LHB
[Phil Rimell]**

Developer/Datblygwr: **Brackley Investments
[David Brill]**

Pensaer/Architect: **Powell Dobson Architects
[Gareth Howell, Zuzana
Lucivjanska]**

**Awdurdod Cynllunio:
Planning Authority:** **Vale of Glamorgan Council
[Kate Jones, Steve Ball]**

**Statws Cynllunio:
Planning Status:** **Pre-application**

**Y Panel Adolygu Dylunio/
Design Review Panel:**

Wendy Richards (cadeirydd/chair) **Ed Colgan**
Cindy Harris (swyddog/officer) **Jonathan Adams**
Charlie Deng (swyddog/officer) **Jonathan Hines**
Carole-Anne Davies [CEO] **Phil Roberts**

Lead Panellist: **Jonathan Adams**

Sylwedyddion/Observers:

Mallory Armstrong [WHE]

Cyflwyniad/Presentation

The proposed site was chosen after an extensive site search including over 35 options. It is central to the current catchment area of the surgery, and is within 250 metres of the existing facility. The greenfield site is owned by the LEA and has been deemed to be surplus to their requirements.

Parking is provided at a level of 3 spaces per consulting room, which is below the Vale's maximum parking standards, but is considered acceptable. A survey of existing patients showed that 13% more people would walk to the new site. In addition, a bus stop is located just outside the site boundary. The main vehicular access is over a bridge across a water course from Murch Road. The Highways department, Environment Agency, and ecologists have all been consulted. The scheme has scored a 95% AEDET rating.

A south east facing courtyard forms a public space in front of the main entrance. The building has a compact form which has been pulled apart slightly to create an internal winter garden. This brings daylight into the interior and also helps legibility and wayfinding. Every occupied room benefits from natural daylight and rooms not located on an external wall, are toplit. A series of north light lanterns have solar photovoltaic cells on their southern pitch and a solar chimney aids the natural ventilation strategy. Sunpipes and windcowls also support natural daylight and ventilation. Velfac 'intelligent' windows will be used for nighttime purging. A rainwater harvesting system will be used for plant irrigation.

Local larch cladding is used on the elevations together with white through-colour render. The roof finish is standing seam zinc and the north east facing roof will be finished with sedum, helping the building blend in to its greenfield context.

The developer has held pre-application discussions with the Local Authority. There is an in-principle objection to the loss of playing fields as it is contrary to Local Plan policy, and any decision will be for the council's planning committee to make. Otherwise the Local Authority are generally supportive of the proposal.

In terms of the cost plan, the developers carry out their own cost modelling and, despite some special site issues, they are confident of the affordability of this proposal.

Ymateb y Panel/Panel's Response

The Panel noted that the proposed site is the only remaining piece of green field land in the town. The Local Authority has highlighted this use as contrary to policy, but the issue will be addressed by the developers as part of the planning application. Exceptions can be made for equivalent community benefit which the developer believes will be a sufficient justification, given that they will provide a new sports hall for school and community use. It was pointed out that it has already been decided that the land is surplus to requirements and that the community council supports the new use. Nevertheless the Panel was disappointed that an alternative viable, preferably brownfield, site could not be found, to avoid the loss of open space.

The Panel was impressed by the floor plan layout, including the well daylight corridors and internal courtyard. However, the elevations do not seem to correspond to the logic and clarity of the plan. It currently looks like three separate buildings and we noted 16 different materials specified for the external elevations. This in turn will lead to complicated detailing, with cost and maintenance implications, and we thought that an effort should be made to simplify the elevations and re-allocate the resulting cost savings.

The Panel was gratified to see the design investment in this scheme but we found the elevational treatment overwrought, and in need of calming and simplifying. We thought that it should be more coherent, more consistent with the rigour shown in the plan, more regular in outline and with a more refined and subtle expression. In particular, a rationalised building footprint could be used to enlarge the internal courtyard. We believed that the potential inherent in the plan can be realised and that the current design team is capable of achieving a successful resolution.

The Panel questioned whether the northlights were in fact necessary. We thought that the highly glazed block would be well daylight without them and the roof form could be simplified and savings made. Similarly, the solar chimney may only be necessary because of excessive glazing and might be dispensed with, depending on the results of thermal modelling and a re-evaluation of the facade treatment. We would like to see the north western end of the ground floor corridor opened up with fenestration, to replicate some of the delight of the glazed link corridors.

A masonry construction with steel infill will be used, with a concrete flat roof to the single storey block, to enable future expansion to be built above with minimum disruption. The Panel stated that any possible future expansion space should be designed at this stage.

The Panel commended the sustainability strategy, beginning with good fabric performance, thermal mass, air tightness, and natural ventilation. The floor-to-ceiling height is 2.7m and a two part window allows for multiple ventilation options. An air tightness rate of <8 ach@50Pa will be aimed for. A dense

internal plaster provides useful thermal mass. The team has opted for solar electric rather than solar water heating, partly because of localised hot water use and the inefficiency of long pipe runs. We thought it would be quite possible to have a central water heating system, with a solar pre-heat, and minimal pipe runs, and this would probably deliver more financial and carbon savings than solar PV. The Panel questioned the claimed sustainability of zinc as a roofing material and suggested that stainless steel had fewer environmental impacts.

The heating system will be a conventional gas-fired, low pressure hot water system. The team have considered biomass, but there is restricted space available on site for fuel storage and CHP technology does not provide a good fit with the energy demand profile. The Panel was not convinced by these arguments and pointed out that the future asset value of the building would be best protected by installing a low or zero carbon fuel source. In particular, the increasing efficiency of biomass technology and the low running costs, against a background of rising fossil fuel prices and penalties for carbon consumption, constitute a very strong case against using mains gas.

It was confirmed that a bus stop is located immediately outside the site, with bus routes along Cardiff Road and Murch Rd. The Panel questioned whether the parking provision could be even lower, allowing for more public open space. With more land available, we thought the building would benefit from being pulled away slightly from the site boundaries.

The Panel explored the possible conflict that might arise between patient confidentiality and the need to ventilate ground floor consulting rooms adjacent to the entrance courtyard. The team intend to mitigate this risk by planting but we thought that a better solution lay in re-considering the design and landscape strategy.

The Panel was told that the sophisticated plan was developed from intensive discussion with users, and was then refined by the developers. This took place over a long period and was generally regarded as a positive process.

The team stated that they were made aware of the need to consult DCFW about six months ago, at a relatively late stage in the project development, which had been ongoing since 2003.

Crynodb/Summary

The Panel welcomed the opportunity to review this scheme and appreciated the good internal plan and adjacencies that had been carefully developed with full user consultation. We think that the proposal is broadly acceptable in its response to the site and the context, but is in need of further significant refinement. In particular:

- The elevational treatment needs to be calmed, simplified and rationalised to provide greater architectural coherence, cost savings, and other benefits such as a larger internal courtyard.
- We think the parking standards might be reduced further to provide more public open space and allow the building to 'breathe' within its site.
- Any possible future expansion space should be designed in at this stage.
- We support the energy efficient fabric performance including natural daylight and ventilation, but we would like the team to re-evaluate the benefits of biomass heating and avoid conventional solutions which rely solely on fossil fuels.
- The resolution of public/private space in the entrance courtyard should be resolved through a revised internal layout and/or landscape strategy
- We regret the loss of one of the few remaining green spaces in Dinas Powis and we would have liked to see the Local Authority work with the developers to identify a viable alternative site.

Diwedd/End

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