

Addroddiad Adolygu Dylunio Design Review Report

DATGANIADAU O DDIDDORDEB

Mae gofyn i aelodau o'r panel, arsyllwyr a phartion perthnasol eraill ddatgan unrhyw ddi-ddordebau sydd ganddynt **ymlaen llaw** mewn perthynas â'r eitemau Panel Adolygu Dylunio Bydd unrhyw ddatganiadau o'r fath yn cael eu cofnodi yma ac yng nghofnodion canolog Comisiwn Dylunio Cymru.

DECLARATIONS OF INTERESTS

Panel members, observers and other relevant parties are required to declare ***in advance*** any interests they may have in relation to the Design Review Agenda items. Any such declarations are recorded here and in DCfW's central records.

Statws adolygu/Review status

Cyfrinachol/Confidential

Dyddiad cyfarfod/meeting date	October 19th 2011
Dyddiad cyhoeddi/issue date	November 2nd 2011
Lleoliad y cynllun/scheme location	Friars Walk, Newport
Disgrifiad y cynllun/scheme description	Retail
Statws cynllunio/planning status	Cyn gwneud cais/ pre-application

Datganiadau o ddi-ddordeb/declaration of interests
Philip Jardine declared that he sits on the board of Newport Unlimited.

Adran 1/part 1

Cyflwyniad/Presentation

The previous scheme for this site which received consent in 2008 is no longer viable and has lapsed. When embarking on a new proposal the advice from the developer was to keep the retail proposal simple, with limited other uses but a complementary leisure offer in the form of a cinema. Good parking and access arrangements would be critical. The local authority have taken a proactive role, progressing the necessary CPOs and developing a regeneration strategy for the city. All are agreed that the scheme must be of sufficient quality and critical mass to attract the necessary investment and footfall.

This scheme re-establishes the old grid and alignments of the 19th century when the dock operations were in full swing and the links with the city centre were paramount. The shopping mall is arcaded but not fully enclosed, with a floating

transparent roof. The retail units are designed as flexible 2 storey spaces, and there is one major anchor store. A total of nine restaurants are planned on two levels around the piazza opposite the cinema and adjacent to the new footbridge.

The scheme is predicted to achieve a BREEAM Very Good rating. There will be a site specific LZC (low/zero carbon) study, and a block by block compliance strategy. A green lease/green guide for incoming tenants will be developed.

Key issues for the local authority include the quality of the public realm, links with the rest of the city, community safety and security, elevations and roof design.

Crynodeb o'r prif bwyntiau a gododd o'r drafodaeth, i'w darllen ochr yn ochr ag Adran 2 yr adroddiad hwn.

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

The Panel was pleased to review this scheme, especially in view of its strategic importance for Newport. We understand the difficult market conditions which have to be accommodated and we are sympathetic to the challenges involved. We think the remaining issues to be resolved are relatively minor, but nevertheless absolutely fundamental to the success of the scheme. In summary:

- The functionality and logic of the basic plan is commendable, especially the re-orientation and shrinkage of John Frost Square and the re-introduction of Upper Dock Street.
- The servicing is unobtrusive and does not impact upon the pedestrian experience.
- However, the access proposed on the north east corner needs to be improved considerably, with a more generous, direct and attractive link provided.
- The integration of the bus station into the project is welcomed.
- The lack of active frontages on Usk Way is regrettable and should be ameliorated as far as possible, by extending the active frontages at first floor, particularly at the northern and southern ends.
- The colonnade on Usk Way needs to be well-designed and lit to encourage pedestrian use and there should be a line of mature trees extending past the bus station to reduce traffic impacts and part-screen the car/bus park.
- The western elevations facing Upper Dock Street in particular need further refinement to respond better to the existing fabric of the town.
- The treatment of the department store needs to be calmed and the facades made less fractured, while presenting a much more active frontage to Upper Dock Street.
- Overall the elevations and choice of materials need reconsideration to ensure that they bring back some coherence to the town centre and have a quality that will last.

- The concepts for illuminating the facades and the cinema appear interesting and complement the transparency of the main retail areas.
- The artists impression of the Mall internally is bland, and we think the surfaces and facades should be more robustly modelled and treated with external materials.
- The steps linking the piazza with John Frost square should be a major piece of public realm design and should be wide and deep enough to encourage informal gathering.
- There is scant information on the public realm design and although we are encouraged by the aspiration for quality, we think that detailed information on surfaces, landscaping and furniture should be provided and conditioned.
- A strategy which integrates public art with the public realm design as a whole will be more successful and cost effective.
- We would encourage higher sustainability standards and a guide for tenants which emphasises the benefits of installed low carbon measures.
- The roofscape needs sensitive handling and the potential for multiple service terminals should be contained within an envelope constraint. The area of green roof should be maximised and this should be the dominant finish when viewed from above.

Adran 2/part 2

Trafodaeth ac Ymateb y Panel yn Llawn Discussion and panel response in full

The project provides a new retail circuit while also strengthening the pedestrian permeability of the town both east-west and north-south. The Panel thought that the public realm diagram and servicing of the proposed scheme works well, and is an improvement on the 2008 consented scheme. The link from the Usk pedestrian bridge through to a re-oriented John Frost Square is logical, its importance is recognised within the design, and it has the potential to become a successful piece of public realm.

However, we thought that the link from the bus station on the north east corner of the mall through to Austin Friars was weak, and constituted a missed opportunity to celebrate and advertise the development to people approaching from the north, to fully articulate the architectural entity of the anchor store, and to accommodate the footfall from the bus station. This point of entry to the scheme and the important link between the Riverside Arts Centre and the town centre needs to be strengthened, by relocating the WCs and fenestrating the north east corner of the mall, in order to accommodate an attractive and accessible entrance with 24 hour access.

The street elevation of the car park and the retail box onto Usk Way is a long, blank and inactive frontage, given the ground level car park and two storeys of service corridor immediately behind the facade. This is regrettable and we would like to see more effort made to animate this important frontage. The architect stated that they have tried to wrap the active uses round as far as possible at each end, and this

could certainly be pursued further especially on the north east corner. The developer pointed out that the proportions of the car park allowed for retrofitting of active uses in the future. The Panel would like to see some mature tree planting all along Usk Way to soften the public realm and reduce traffic intrusion.

The shop elevations facing west on to Upper Dock Street need further development and a refinement of the window proportions in particular. The architect agreed with this and undertook to look again at the fenestration. The Panel thought that the design of the anchor store should be calmed and the focus should be on the quality of the cladding. We understood that the potential tenants were unwilling to include fenestration except for the restaurant area.

The design of the internal mall is intended to provide a simple and unfussy backdrop for the branding and signage that will be required for individual outlets. We questioned the relatively narrow and deep floorplates on two levels, but were informed that this was now the preferred format for retailers, with the upper level expressed as a mezzanine. The Panel would prefer to see external material finishes in the mall, such as granite or sandstone paving.

The Panel sought further details on the design of the steps up to John Frost Square. The intention is for a grand staircase, inspired by the Spanish Steps in Rome, designed to accommodate seating and gathering spaces. Even though they will be largely shaded we thought that opportunities for impromptu socialising should be maximised.

We discussed the option of external escalators which have been used successfully in Liverpool One, although we agreed that the limited budget should be used to focus quality where it is most visible and immediate. The continuity and quality of paving materials and street furniture will be important and we urged the team to protect their preferred specification of sandstone slabs. We understood that the detailed design of the square was not yet complete, and emphasised the importance of sittable edges, appropriate planting and a sympathetic lighting scheme. A full public realm strategy needs to be developed to integrate landscape, lighting, furnishing, paving and public art.

The Panel was informed that there will be a strategy for public art, and we stated that this should be well integrated with the overall design of the scheme. Artwork could be used to signal the arrival experience, and could add value if it was integrated with the lighting and public realm design as a whole.

For a scheme of this size and prestige, the Panel would expect a higher standard of environmental performance than the minimum statutory rating of BREEAM Very Good . We understood the difficulties in negotiating enhanced servicing arrangements with prospective tenants, but thought that the benefits of low carbon standards should be emphasised in the green lease or guide, and compliance should be treated as an obligation with high levels of control.

The effect on the roofscape of individual tenant's servicing requirements should be handled carefully, and an envelope constraint established to avoid a 'free-for-all' in terms of roof plant. We would like to see the option of rooflights provided for internal daylighting. The proposed strips of green roof are unconvincing and tokenistic, and we urged a more consistent approach which could incorporate a multiplicity of uses while establishing an overall design solution for this 'fourth elevation', which will be visible from surrounding vantage points.

The scheme is designed to be delivered in a single phase, but there will be an incremental approach with the first priority being to secure the anchor store followed by the cinema. The scheme will be built in total as soon as, and only when, sufficient prelets are in place.

The planning application is due to be submitted before the end of this year and we would like to see the developing design again at Design Review, before submission of the planning application if at all possible.

Mae Panel Adolygu Dylunio Comisiwn Dylunio Cymru a'r staff yn croesawu rhagor o ymgynghoriad, a bydd yn hapus i ddarparu rhagor o adborth am yr adroddiad yma a/neu lle bo'n briodol, dderbyn cyflwyniadau pellach. Diolch am ymgynghori â'r Comisiwn a chadwch mewn cysylltiad â ni os gwelwch yn dda ynglŷn â hynt eich prosiect. A fyddech gystal â'n hysbysu o ddatblygiad eich prosiect. Diolch yn fawr am ymgynghori â'r Comisiwn.

The Design Commission for Wales Design Review Panel welcomes further consultation and we will be happy to provide further feedback on this report and/or where appropriate, to receive further presentations. Please keep us informed of the progress of your project. Thank you for consulting the Commission.

***Mae copi iath Gymraeg o'r adroddiad hwn ar gael ar ofyn.
A Welsh language copy of this report is available upon request.***

Atodiad 1/appendix 1 Mynychwyr/attendees

Asiant/Client/Datblygwr
Agent/Client/Developer

Queensberry Real Estate (Jon Munce)

Pensaer/Dylunydd Trefol
Architectural/Urban Designer

Leslie Jones Architects (Andrew Ogg,
David Statman)

Ymgynghorwyr/Consultants

Environmental Services Design
(John Eccles)
GL Hearn Planning Consultants
(Graeme Tulley)

Trydydd Parti/Third Party	n/a
Awdurdod Cynllunio/Planning Authority	Newport City Council (Andrew Dawe, Richard Wood)
Y Panel Adolygu Dylunio/ Design Review Panel Cadeirydd/Chair Swydog/Officer Prif Banelydd/Lead Panellist	John Punter Cindy Harris Michael Griffiths Kedrick Davies Lynne Sullivan David Harvey
Sylwedyddion/Observers	Philip Costa (CDN Planning) Philip Jardine (DCfW Commissioner) Carole-Anne Davies (DCfW)