

# Design Review Report

Great Frampton House

**DCFW Ref: 71**

Meeting of 21<sup>st</sup> May 2015

## Declarations of Interest

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.

### Review Status

Meeting date	21 <sup>st</sup> May 2015
Issue date	1 <sup>st</sup> June 2015
Scheme location	Llantwit Major, Vale of Glamorgan
Scheme description	House/farm conversion
Scheme reference number	71
Planning status	Pre-application

### CONFIDENTIAL

## Declarations of Interest

There were no declarations of interest. However, the Commission records here that Welsh Government Planning Division officials, Jon Fudge and Max Hampton, attended the meeting to observe the process.

## Consultations to Date

Pre-application advice has been provided by the local planning authority.

## The Proposals

This scheme proposes the renovation and re-use of a derelict Grade II listed house, including demolition of the rear wing, and conversion of associated farm buildings to dwellings for private sale. The site is in open countryside north of Llantwit Major, with access via two existing entrances to the site. The conversion of the farm buildings would create a shared open courtyard with space for parking.

## Main Points in Detail

The following points summarise key issues from the review, and should be used to inform work ahead of making a planning application:

### Sustainability Strategy

Overall, the Design Commission for Wales is supportive of the proposal to bring this collection of derelict and unused buildings back into sustainable use.

The Design Commission encourages the design team and client to consider a sustainable energy strategy in greater detail at this stage, as decisions will have an impact on the building elevations, such as the need for flues etc. This means that the sustainability strategy is important at this pre-planning application stage.

It is encouraging that the client has experience of biomass energy. A communal biomass plant could be considered for this site, and tests and modelling should be carried out to assess the appropriateness in this case.

### Main House

The Design Commission is generally supportive of the proposal to renovate the main front block of the house, demolish the later rear wing addition and replace it with a

contemporary extension. However, the detail and articulation of this will be crucial and needs further work at this stage.

Clear justification for demolition of the rear block should be set out, including its relative lack of architectural and historic value. Retaining the existing footprint would compromise regeneration of the courtyard for the additional dwellings.

The ventilation, heating, cooling and fenestration strategies for the proposed extension need to be given further consideration. There is more work required to achieve a proposal which is thermally efficient, provides adequate natural ventilation and gives appropriate views in and out of the house. The fully glazed, north-facing ground floor would be prone to heat loss, but the 'floating box' effect could still be achieved without all the elevation being fully glazed. The proposed use of frosted glass on the top floor would not afford views to the landscape from the upper two bedrooms. There is more work to be done to achieve a visually pleasing elevation in terms of fenestration.

The architect should be clear about the strategy for the new extension in relation to the existing house, and the concept should be strongly expressed in the overall design through to the detail. The current proposal which treats the extension as a new floating solid form against the solid form of the existing house could work well, but better resolution of the details is required. Any diluting of the concept would compromise the design quality of the scheme. The proportions of the proposed extension seem appropriate, and the matching of the top edge with the height of the existing buildings works well.

The proposed semi-sunken garage to the main house works well and utilises the existing stone wall. The new opening through the wall might work better as an archway, rather than a full-height opening.

Further consideration should be given to the outside spaces associated with the main house and how these can be used to provide amenity, and relate to the fenestration mentioned above.

### **Barn Conversions**

The two barn conversions into dwellings work well, although the proposed extension to the south end of the smaller barn compromises the quality of the existing stone gable end, along with the new window opening. If an extension is genuinely required, a simpler flat roofed form might be more appropriate, with glazing to the garden. This may not be the most appropriate location for a WC, which might be better located inside the main body of the converted barn.

### **Three Small Dwellings**

The conversion of outbuildings into three small dwellings works well internally. However, concerns about the provision of private outside space and the nature of the shared courtyard space were discussed.

Ideally, the three dwellings would have private gardens to the rear, making them more suited to family living and attractive to the market. It was good to hear that the client had had positive discussions with the owner of the land to the rear of these properties regarding this. The Design Commission would like to see this option explored further.

Concerns expressed by the Local Planning Authority in pre-application discussions regarding development (including private gardens) beyond the site boundary must be balanced against the need for the proposed properties to function effectively in their new use. A sensitive approach to enclosing private space to the rear must be demonstrated.

### **Courtyard**

Different options should be explored for the shared courtyard space to address the following issues: Parking, children's play, private/shared spaces, clothes drying, boundary options, food growing and garden space, management and maintenance. If private garden space to the rear of the dwellings is not possible, this courtyard space will be critical to the success of this part of the scheme. There needs to be a clear strategy for the courtyard which works for the new use.

These considerations also reflect the need to fully pursue the successful refurbishment of this group of building and associated space. The principles of conversion and reuse must be pursued in full, across the whole site, with confidence in order to achieve an outcome that provides sound resolution.

**Comisiwn Dylunio Cymru Design Commission for Wales is the trading name of DCFW LIMITED, a Private Limited Company established under the Companies Act 1985 and 2006, Company No: 04391072 incorporated in England and Wales as a wholly controlled subsidiary of the Welsh Government. Registered office: 4<sup>th</sup> Floor, Cambrian Buildings, Mount Stuart Square, Cardiff CF10 5FL T: 029 2045 1964 E [connect@dcfw.org](mailto:connect@dcfw.org). The comment recorded in this report, arising from formal Design Review through our Design Review Service, is provided in the public interest for the consideration of local planning authorities as a material consideration, and other users of the Design Review Service. It is not and should not be considered 'advice' and no third party is bound or required to act upon it. The Design Review Service is delivered in line with DCFW's published protocols, code of conduct and complaints procedure, which should be read and considered by users of the service.**

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

### **Attendees**

Agent/Client/Developer: Rhodri Davies, Client

Architect/Planning Consultant: Robin Williams, Asbri Planning  
Lowri Hughson-Smith, Asbri Planning  
Charlotte Pugh, Asbri Planning  
Gwyn Davies, Latter Davies Architects

Local Authority: Not present

Design Review Panel:  
Chair Jen Heal, Design Advisor, DCFW  
Lead Panellist Lynne Sullivan

Kedrick Davies  
Mike Gwyther-Jones  
Amanda Spence, Design Advisor, DCFW  
Carole-Anne Davies, Chief Executive, DCFW

Observing:

Max Hampton, Welsh Government  
Jon Fudge, Welsh Government