

Statws/Status:
Cyfrinachol / Confidential



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| Adroddiad Adolygu Dylunio: Design Review Report: | 21 September 2007 |
| Dyddiad Cyfarfod / Cyflwyno'r Deunydd: Meeting Date / Material Submitted: | 12 September 2007 |
| Lleoliad/Location: | Hartridge, Newport |
| Disgrifiad o'r Cynllun Scheme Description: | Secondary school |
| Cleient/Asiant: Client/Agent: | Newport CC [Tony Pope] |
| Developer/Datblygwr: | n/a |
| Pensaer/Architect: | HLM Architects [Richard O'Neil, Henk Weringa, Gareth Woodfin] |
| Ymgynghorwyr Cynllunio: Planning Consultants: | Arup [Matthew Chambers] Davis Langdon [Wayne Ganderton] |
| Awdurdod Cynllunio: Planning Authority: | Newport CC [Haydn Ames] |
| Statws Cynllunio: Planning Status: | Pre-planning |
| Y Panel Adolygu Dylunio/ Design Review Panel: Alan Francis (cadeirydd/chair) | Kedrick Davies |

Cindy Harris (swyddog/officer)
Ashley Bateson
Martin Knight

Ann-Marie Smale
Mike Biddulph

Lead Panellist:

Ann-Marie Smale

Sylwedyddion/Observers:

David Clague,
Constructing Excellence
Timothy Cantrell, SW England
Design Review Panel

Cyflwyniad/Presentation

The existing school at Hartridge is spread over three separate buildings on the site and they are in need of replacement. The project team aim to resolve this fragmentation and create a single school building which is iconic, inspiring, inviting and inclusive. They wish to create a strong sense of place and a high level of community use and ownership. Two curved teaching wings surround a glazed link, which serves as a social, gathering and dining space, with good visual connections and legibility. The landscape will flow through this central 'heart' of the building.

The design team is aiming to achieve BREEAM Excellent and predicts a reduction in carbon emissions of 30% compared with the Building Regulations 2006. The central link will have a green roof, natural daylight and ventilation will be maximised, and sustainable drainage is included. Thermal modelling is about to be undertaken.

The school will be funded by the sale of part of the site for residential development. A parcel of land to the south of the site has been earmarked for this purpose and this, together with the location of the existing buildings which need to remain open until the new school is completed, have determined the location of the proposed building on the site. It is anticipated that a planning application will be submitted in 3-4 weeks time.

Ymateb y Panel/Panel's Response

The Panel supported the decision to integrate the existing disparate buildings, and the aspiration towards inclusivity and accessibility. However, we thought that there was a fundamental confusion over entrances and access. Given that 95% of the pupils arrive on foot, and 50% enter the site via the footbridge to the north, it seemed incongruous to locate the main entrance to the west. The design team stated that,

once on site, direct pedestrian routes would lead to the main entrance, but we thought that the opposing curves and offset of the northern wing to the west, would work against the legibility and accessibility of this route. We were informed that some upgrading was planned around the subway entrance to the west, through which the other 50% of pupils arrive, but no improvements to the subway itself, or the footbridge which is not in Local Authority ownership.

The Panel noted that the main access road to the school from the west would be shared with the residential development, which we thought would affect residential values, especially as the service area and parking for the school would be located on the northern edge of this access road. This is likely to ensure that future houses face south, away from the school, thus reinforcing the fragmentation between school and community and undermining any claims about natural surveillance. We would like to see a masterplan produced for the whole site, which addresses the need to reinforce links between school and community, and which also addresses the major regeneration planned to the south in Llanwern.

The Panel was informed that the small area of land to the south west, shown as being part of the residential development, will now be included within the school boundary and could be used for parking or a larger drop-off area. We suggested that this could present an opportunity to bring the access road down to the southern boundary, to separate vehicular access from pedestrian, but we were informed that this piece of land may be needed in the future for expansion of the Welsh school to the south west. This comment reinforced our belief that an overall masterplan was critical in achieving an effective and future-proof site layout. The Panel advised that it would not be acceptable to locate an access to the residential area at the pinch point created between the main access road and the site boundary, and that this would have to be moved further east.

The Panel was not convinced about the rationale for the curved forms, which appeared to be working against each other. We thought that parallel or splayed, orthogonal blocks might be a better design solution. We advised that a different roof treatment for the second floor element could improve the overall composition. The strong southerly aspect of the site should be used to inform the location of the central 'heart' and to address the residential development better. In general, we questioned the value of locating car parks and service areas to the south, and social / teaching spaces to the north.

The Panel thought that the vertical circulation areas should be better connected and located more centrally. We understood that, while future expansion was technically feasible, it was not expected in the foreseeable future.

The Panel was informed that external materials would be dark brick or slate for ground floor elevations, with render at higher levels and timber [oak/cedar] features for the sports hall. Different colours of single ply membrane would be used as the roof finish for different functions. We regretted the limited use [and therefore limited environmental benefit] of green roofs, but we were told that their more extensive use was not affordable. We questioned the durability and robustness of Sto render, especially in an area prone to vandalism, and thought that materials used at ground level should be carefully chosen to minimise the effect of graffiti. The glazed curtain walling elevations would inevitably be broken up by transoms and mullions, and careful detailing would be necessary to ensure the desired quality.

The Panel commended the sustainability strategy presented by the team. We thought that the ventilation strategy had been well thought through, using natural stack ventilation, and exposed concrete ceilings and thermal mass. It was confirmed that the predicted reduction in carbon emissions of 30% was relative to the 2006 Building Regulations. Rainwater will be recovered and used for WC flushing. The Panel would like to see a stronger commitment to achieving BREEAM Excellent, and suggested that the educational value of installing renewable energy generation could be exploited. The team stated that they were investigating ground source heat pumps, with the electricity needed to run them supplied by photovoltaics. The Panel advised that a district heating system, which included the residential development and ran on biomass, might deliver better carbon credits.

It was confirmed that a perimeter security fence would run around the whole site. The Panel was concerned that any landscaping in the central link should not bisect the space or compromise its open character. The Panel wished to see cycle parking located close to the main entrance, and we were told that the large canopy would facilitate this.

Crynodeb/Summary

The Panel welcomed the aspirations for a high quality and inclusive school building with strong links to the community. However, and especially given the lack of a site-wide masterplan, we find this proposal to be an unacceptable response to the site and the brief. In particular:

- The form and location of the proposed building should be informed by a site wide masterplan, and should address the residential development to the south in a way which fosters connections and encourages natural surveillance. The masterplan should also

address the form and structure of the residential layout, to promote connectivity.

- We are concerned that the value of any residential development will be affected by a shared access road bordered by a security fence, car parking and service area, and that this could affect the viability of the current proposal.
- While we welcome the creation of a central gathering space, we are not convinced by the curved forms of the teaching blocks, in terms of design rationale, function, or cost effectiveness. We suggest that the orientation of the blocks, their relation to each other, and the location of the main entrance to the west, be reconsidered.
- A detailed landscape design should be developed and submitted with the planning application.
- We applaud the limited palette of materials, but have concerns about the effects of vandalism / graffiti over time, and would like to see the material specification revised with this in mind.
- We strongly support the sustainability strategy but would like to see a commitment to achieving BREEAM Excellent.
- We note the lack of any reference to public art and would like to see provisions incorporated into the design from an early stage

Diwedd/End

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