

Design Review Report

Review status

Public

Meeting date	12 September 2012
Issue date	25 September 2012
Scheme location	Affordable housing sites ISV, Cardiff Bay
Scheme description	Preswyl/residential
Scheme reference number	77E
Planning status	Application submitted June 2012
Declaration of interests	n/a

Summary

The Panel welcomed the opportunity to comment on the proposed development. However, it would have been preferable if we could have seen the proposal at the pre-application stage, when our comments would have been more useful to the applicant and the local authority. In our view the current proposal is unacceptable. In summary:

- A coordinated masterplan of the whole International Sports Village (ISV) site should be commissioned as soon as possible, so that individual schemes can be designed and assessed in their context.
- It is not appropriate to apply the design principles of the Cardiff Pointe development uncritically to the Morrisons site, which requires a more bespoke approach.
- The quality of living accommodation and external amenity space on the Morrisons site is inadequate.
- The inadequate level of information presented on the Offices site (which is an outline application), particularly in relation to context, makes it difficult for us to offer any detailed constructive comment.
- We welcome the commitment to achieve CSH level 4 on both sites.

Discussion and panel response in full

The Panel was concerned by the lack of an overall masterplan for the ISV site, outlining a vision for a sustainable neighbourhood in this potentially attractive and distinctive part of Cardiff Bay, and showing connections, facilities, uses, and densities. We think this is urgent to allow the separate applications coming forward to be designed and judged in their context, and should be commissioned/prepared by the local authority. The need for such a masterplan is particularly critical in the case of the ISV Offices site, where the lack of contextual information has made it very difficult for a meaningful rationale to be applied to the design proposals.

The two sites planned for residential development are challenging ones, but in neither case do the designs presented anticipate a pleasant place for people to live in, nor do they describe how they will integrate with or contribute to a sustainable integrated community within the International Sports Village. We were informed that the smaller units on the Morrisons site were targeted at young professionals rather than families, and that the designs met the Lifetime Homes standard. 90% of the units will be for intermediate rent, with 10% affordable.

On the Morrisons site, the lack of adequate external amenity space and the quality of some internal spaces within the flats and public circulation areas was a grave cause for concern. The Panel also found the location of main entrance doors potentially confusing, with some positioned in the apparent 'rear' facade, and some to the front.

The Panel thought that the intended reference to Cardiff Pointe in the layout, massing, scale and materials of the apartment blocks was not appropriate on this constrained site, with more challenging boundary conditions and lower internal space standards. The design approach needs to be site specific and maximise the limited opportunities for place making.

Consideration should be given to realigning the blocks to follow the curved line of the road. This could increase the street presence of the development and leave more space to the rear for amenity use. If parking was sensitively designed, perhaps located underneath the building at grade, this would also increase the amount of potential amenity space.

With regard to the Offices site, we were unsure why this was submitted as an outline application. The Panel discussed the road layout in some detail, and questioned the location and width of the entrance and the large amount of road space, ending with an incongruous roundabout at the end of the parking zone. Discussion also focused on how the proposed buildings might be arranged to form a buffer zone to limit the impact of noise from the overhead flyover. We were informed that the water pumping station serves the whole peninsula and, together with underground pipes, will need to remain located on site. The Panel thought that more detailed and definitive proposals should be prepared, within the context of a masterplan, before any planning application is progressed

The Panel welcomed the commitment to achieve Code Level 4. We understood that the option for a site wide CHP district heating system was the subject of a study currently being undertaken by Arup. If this is to be a possibility in the future it will be important to instate the underground pipework at the infrastructure stage.

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

Appendix 1

Attendees

Agent/Client/Developer	Helium Miracle/Greenbank
Architectural/Urban Designer	Scott Brownrigg (Stephen Quinn)
Consultants	Neame Sutton (David Neame)
Third Party	n/a
Planning Authority	Cardiff CC (Lawrence Dowdall)
Design Review Panel	
Chair	Wendy Richards
Officer	Cindy Harris
Lead Panellist	Angela Williams
	Simon Carne
	Gerard Ryan
	Richard Parnaby