

Addroddiad Adolygu Dylunio Design Review Report

Review Status: **Confidential**

Meeting date:	28th October 2008
Issue Date:	13th November 2008
Scheme Location:	Milford Haven
Scheme Description:	Regeneration Framework
Planning Status:	Pre-application

Part1: Presentation

This study considers the run-down town centre, the thriving marina, and the Haven Head Retail Park and railway station to the west. Milford Haven is a key part of a strategic regeneration area, and is likely to see an extension of the marina in the longer term. The improvement of links between the town centre and marina, and between the town centre and retail park/station, is considered vital. At the moment the town turns its back on the waterfront and access is made difficult by an 18 metre level difference.

The aim is to maximise the assets of the town by: public realm improvements and some new buildings; better traffic management [a trunk road runs through the town centre]; improved connectivity; and a halt to any further out-of-town commercial development.

Some early wins are identified such as signage and shop front design guides, improving the facade and surroundings of the Torch Theatre, and the de-trunking of Hamilton Terrace.

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

The Panel appreciates the opportunity to comment on this scheme at a suitably early stage. More work is needed to bring the study to a satisfactory conclusion and particularly to establish the overall viability of the proposals. We think this is an acceptable beginning but requires major development and revisions. In summary:

- We accept the reasons given for not relocating the railway station and for discouraging further retail development away from the town centre.

- The real attraction is the already successful marina and dock area, and attractive accessible links with the town centre are vital.
- The means of access between the two levels does not require a single grand solution but rather a series of small interventions which knit into the urban grain and provide a sequence of events.
- The proposed relief road and consequent de-trunking will be important to pedestrianise and civilise Hamilton Terrace.
- A new link from Hamilton Terrace to Charles Street should be generously proportioned, gently graded and well landscaped. A landscape strategy should be developed for the whole scheme.
- Viability will depend on how good an offer can be made to potential developers, and the predicted growth in numbers of visiting cruise liners should be exploited.
- The Panel suggests that the development sites and the consequent scheme viability now need to be targeted, before any decisions are made regarding public realm and access improvements and so that the scheme is underpinned by a robust business plan and abortive design costs are avoided.

Part 2: Discussion and Panel Response in Full

We agreed that the physical separation between town and waterfront needs to be overcome and strong linkages established. The possibility of relocating the railway station further east towards the marina has been considered, but we thought that this was not the most cost-effective solution. It would probably need to be funded by more retail space which would threaten the town centre, and the existing infrastructure is not adoptable to current standards. Instead, effort should be concentrated on improving what is already there and providing better links to bus routes.

The proposed new relief road and de-trunking would enable better pedestrian links across Hamilton Terrace and would improve the character of the town centre. Permeability for pedestrians and cyclists should be maximised, especially across the roundabout to the south east.

The solution to gaining access up the cliff separating marina and town should be part of the ongoing development of the urban grain of the town, marked by a sequence of activities and forming a natural easy progression. None of the three presented options is acceptable as a single solution but aspects of each could inform what is eventually proposed. In particular, an iconic tower would not be appropriate. The solution needs to be well integrated with the existing grain.

A new pedestrian crossing on Hamilton Terrace, leading to a wide landscaped pedestrian link rising alongside the Lord Nelson Hotel and breaking through on to Charles Street would continue the link up from the marina and, with gentle gradients, could be a place to linger and socialise. Some demolition would be required on Charles Street which, along with public realm improvements, would hopefully attract a key anchor store and library to the site of the old Bingo Hall and provide an attractive termination of the vista from the Hamilton Road link.

The team confirmed that both public and private funding would probably be necessary and that the viability of the proposal would be re-assessed at the development brief stage. Part of the process would involve reversing the negative perception of the town, and emphasising positive trends in the recent past and the near future. For example, the berthing of cruise liners in the Haven is likely to increase from the current 10 per year, to 50-60 per year over the next five years, and a new jetty is proposed to allow them to berth alongside. This would boost spending in the town considerably, and make land parcels more attractive to developers.

It will be very important to ensure that the development brief[s] commit to ambitious targets for sustainability and a high quality public realm.

The Design Commission for Wales Design Review Panel and staff welcome further consultation and will be happy to provide further feedback on this report and/or where appropriate, to receive further presentations. Thank you for consulting the Commission and please keep in touch with us about the progress of your project.

Please note that DCFW's Design and Access Statement Guide is now available on our website www.dcfw.org

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

Appendix 1: Attendees

Asiant/Client/Datblygwr: Agent/Client/Developer	WAG DE&T [Huw Thomas] Pembrokeshire CC [John Turbervill, Jane Gibson] Milford Haven Port Authority [Andrew Brown]
Pensaer/Architect:	Barton Willmore [Martin Douglas, Ben Stephenson, Robin Shepherd, Helen Ceylan]
AwdurdodCynllunio/ Planning Authority	Pembrokeshire CC
Y Panel Adlygu Dylunio: Design review panel: Alan Francis [Chair] Cindy Harris [Officer]	Jonathan Adams Ed Colgan Steve Smith
Lead Panelist:	Ed Colgan
Sylwedyddion/Observers:	Huw Jenkins [CC Swansea] Melissa Howells [PembrokeshireCC] Anthony Hayward [Pembrokeshire CC]

