

Statws/Status:

Cyfrinachol / Confidential

DESIGN
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DYLUNIO
CYMRU

Adroddiad Adolygu Dylunio: Design Review Report:	2 March 2007
Dyddiad Cyfarfod/Cyflwyno'r Deunydd: Meeting Date / Material Submitted:	14 February 2007
Lleoliad/Location:	Rhyl
Disgrifiad o'r Cynllun Scheme Description:	Primary Care Centre
Cleient/Asiant: Client/Agent:	Denbighshire LHB [Roy Drinkwater] Clarence House Practice [Lesley Rogers]
Developer/Datblygwr:	Apollo Capital Projects [Chris Philbidge]
Pensaer/Architect:	B3 Burgess [Rob James]
Awdurdod Cynllunio: Planning Authority:	Denbighshire CC [Mark Dakeyne]
Statws Cynllunio: Planning Status:	Pre-application
Y Panel Adolygu Dylunio/ Design Review Panel:	
Alan Francis (cadeirydd/chair) Cindy Harris (swyddog/officer) Charlie Deng (swyddog/officer) Richard Parnaby	Ewan Jones Ashley Bateson Jonathan Hines
Lead Panellist:	Ashley Bateson

Sylwedyddion/Observers:

**Carole-Anne Davies, DCFW
Mallory Armstrong, WHE**

Cyflwyniad/Presentation

The proposed site was chosen after a site options appraisal which considered 11 possible sites. This site is next to an existing car park, close to rail and bus stations and within 200m of the main shopping area. It is bordered by a main railway line to the south east, and West Kinmel Street to the north west. An existing sewer and easements run along the south east boundary, where cycle and pedestrian links are proposed. A pair of semi-detached houses front on to West Kinmel Street and will remain, between the proposed surgery and the car park.

The building addresses the corner of West Kinmel Street and Elwy Street to the north of the site. A large glazed wall faces the main approach from the station. A separate pharmacy is located behind a curved wall which opens out towards Elwy Street and together with the glazed wall encloses the steps to the main entrance. The building's finished floor level is 1200mm above ground level, due to anticipated flood risks. A variety of material treatment is proposed including [local] brick, render and timber. It is proposed to cover the flat roof with thin film PV cells incorporated into the roofing membrane.

A central reception desk directs and monitors movement horizontally and vertically. There are protected routes for staff and the internal layout is functional, compact and legible. The waiting area is open and transparent and the corner atrium is passively vented via a 3 storey high stack.

There is general support from the Local Authority, who are connected with this project in a number of ways - as planning authority, regeneration partner, and landowner. The choice of this neglected, derelict site sits well with the West Rhyl regeneration strategy for one of the most deprived wards in Wales. The development will provide an enhanced setting for the adjacent listed signal box.

Ymateb y Panel/Panel's Response

The Panel congratulated the project team on the quality of the submission documents, which describe the site selection and constraints well. We appreciated the way in which the building footprint responds to the site and addresses the approach roads. The design team described the curved wall, which also acts as an acoustic buffer, extending forward as a welcoming feature to help pull people into the building. However, the Panel thought it appeared rather dominant and would like to see it

stepped down towards the car park, following the line of the ramp. The layout which shows a turning point poking through the curved fin wall at its eastern end should be revised, and it was agreed that the fin should meet the ground all along its length.

The rear of the pharmacy block which borders the cycle and pedestrian route, is an unrelieved blank wall and we would like to see this facade enlivened and redesigned to respond to the public realm and landscape. The Panel suggested that the main signage would be better located on the curved wall by the main entrance steps. We were informed that the car park would be jointly managed by the health centre and the council and would include covered cycle parking. We welcomed the development of a landscape strategy for the car park and would like to see this extended to include the whole site.

On the approach from the car park, privacy for most of the consulting rooms would be achieved given the height of the ground floor, and it was confirmed that clear glass would be used with internal blinds. For those rooms nearer the top of the ramp, we suggested that other less sensitive ground floor uses could be placed in these locations.

The designer stated that the setback on the top floor was done to break down the mass and to provide a staff amenity, but the Panel doubted the amenity value of a north facing balcony overlooking the street. The cladding for this element will be heat treated timber and the brick on the lower storeys will be sourced locally from Holywell. The Panel supported the intention to use local contractors and suppliers wherever possible. However, we thought that the facade treatment should be calmed, with a reduced palette of materials. The Panel advised that an anodised rather than powder coated aluminium curtain wall system would probably be necessary in a marine environment, and the use of 'sto' render at ground level was likely to be problematic.

The Panel welcomed the glazed entrance, and advised that the frames for the glazed wall should coincide with storey heights. While supporting the open transparency of the waiting area, which benefits from natural daylight and ventilation, and the vertical visual link between ground and first floor, we had serious concerns about the strong probability of overheating. It was agreed that external brises-soleil would be the best solution to avoid overheating and reduce glare. However, the Panel wondered whether it was sensible to provide large areas of glazing which were then permanently shaded, rather than designing an opaque/transparent facade which, together with roof overhangs, could respond to solar access at different times of the year.

The Panel noted that a NEAT Excellent rating will be achieved and that two AEDET review days with end users have been carried out to assist

the design process. We thought that there should be a strategic review of all renewable technology options, in relation to the site and the brief, and a Part L assessment should be carried out at an early stage. Thermal modelling should be used to check the performance of the design proposals for shading and ventilation inlets / outlets. We had concerns that such a large area of PV might prove unaffordable and, while allowing for future incorporation, we suggested a turf or sedum roof as an alternative to standing seam metal sheet. We supported the use of a biomass boiler which would be appropriate for this size of building and suggested that solar water heating could be a more cost effective alternative to PVs.

It was confirmed that there would be a ground slab and a floating concrete ground floor, with an accessible undercroft in between. Floor levels were designed to accommodate the worst case of a 1 in 200 years flood event. We suggested that the undercroft could be used for passive ground source cooling, or to accommodate a biomass system at semi-basement level. Grilled vents would be used over the voids, which have to be kept accessible, but we observed that these would give no protection against litter and vermin.

The Panel queried the rationale for the slight bend in the south eastern facade, and noted some inconsistencies between the floor plans and 3D images as presented.

Crynodeb/Summary

The Panel welcomed the simple, straightforward design response to the site and the brief. While we appreciated the quality of the presentation material, there was a lack of contextual information and inconsistencies in some areas. However, we think this proposal has the potential to succeed, provided that the following relatively minor issues are addressed and resolved:

- We think the scheme would be improved by simplifying the facade treatment.
- The rear elevation to the pharmacy should be revised to achieve a better relationship with the public realm.
- Issues of security and overlooking for consulting rooms adjoining the ramp should be resolved through a revised internal layout.
- We welcome the detailed sustainability strategy and encourage the inclusion of low carbon technologies such as biomass or solar PV. We support the intention to use local supply chains and suggest a 'green' roof be considered if PVs prove unfeasible.
- The large amount of south facing glazing and the corresponding use of louvers should be revised, with the help of thermal modelling, in order to optimise solar access during the winter and provide

summer shading. We thought the medical secretary's office was overglazed.

- The curved fin wall should be kept separate from any turning head.
- We think the volume of space in the waiting area appears less than promised by the glazed elevation, and we wonder whether the size of the void between ground and first floor is sufficient to allow the latter area to be monitored by the reception desk.

DCFW will undertake a further assessment of the proposal, on receipt of revised drawings [3 hard copies and 1 electronic copy] addressing the above points and prior to a planning application being submitted.

Diwedd/End

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