

Statws/Status:
Cyfrinachol / Confidential



Adroddiad Adolygu Dylunio: Design Review Report:	29 July 2008
Dyddiad Cyfarfod / Meeting Date:	16 July 2008
Lleoliad/Location:	Sea Bank Hotel, Porthcawl
Disgrifiad o'r Cynllun Scheme Description:	Residential
Cleient/Asiant: Client/Agent:	Park Hill Hotels and Leisure Ltd [Rohit Patel]
Developer/Datblygwr:	n/a
Pensaer/Architect:	Lawray Partnership [Mike Goodall]
Ymgynghorwyr Cynllunio: Planning Consultants:	RPS Planning [Lyn Powell]
Awdurdod Cynllunio: Planning Authority:	Bridgend CBC
Statws Cynllunio: Planning Status:	Pre-application
Y Panel Adolygu Dylunio/ Design Review Panel: Wendy Richards (cadeirydd/chair) Cindy Harris (swyddog/officer) Charlie Deng (swyddog/officer)	Jonathan Adams Ed Colgan Ashley Bateson Michael Griffiths Elfed Roberts
Lead Panellist:	Jonathan Adams

Cyflwyniad/Presentation

The team advised us that the owner's original intention was to sell this building as a hotel, but there was no market interest in this. A commercial feasibility study was done and the case for retaining it as a hotel, or redeveloping it as a new hotel, was found to be negative. Of the alternative uses considered, residential development was thought to be the most viable. The site is within a conservation area, but the building itself is not listed and has been altered and added to in various ways over the past 150 years. The option of conversion to apartments with or without extensions was considered, along with the option of new build. The deep floor plan meant that it was not particularly suitable for conversion. Asbestos is present in the building and it was concluded that too much work would be required to bring the existing building up to current standards.

This proposal is for a new building containing 55 dwelling units with 68 parking spaces. The brief specified that all apartments should have sea views, and this generated the U-shaped plan, with parking in the central courtyard and soft landscaping round the perimeter. The block rises to six storeys in the centre, dropping down to 3 or 4 storeys at each side. Apartments are arranged as clusters of three around a staircase, and a glazed penthouse is set back behind a glass balustrade on the top storey. Externally, curved walls, recessed balconies and horizontal glazing refers back to the 'art deco' building of the 1930s. Vertical strips of coloured render give it a more contemporary appearance.

The Local Authority have been approached for their views, pre-application, but were unable to supply detailed comments without a firm proposal.

Ymateb y Panel/Panel's Response

It was agreed that, as part of the conservation area, any new building should harmonise with the scale and texture of adjacent buildings. However, as a prominent local landmark, the applicants expected a greater degree of latitude for this site. It was pointed out that a new apartment block immediately to the north of this site was granted permission on appeal last year, and is due to start on site in the near future. It was claimed that this sets a new context, but unfortunately no visualisations of the new development were provided to the Panel.

The Panel discussed the option to retain the principal features of the existing building, combined with a radical redesign and elements of new build. The project team objected that, if the existing facade were retained, the fenestration would not lend itself to the inclusion of balconies, which were considered paramount. However, we thought that this option of a partial refurbishment / partial new build should be explored, especially in view of the

building's popularity locally. We accepted that this would mean fewer units but thought that the local significance required that the existing character be valued and retained where possible. The team commented that they had sought guidance from the Local Authority on this matter which had not been forthcoming.

The Panel advised that the conservation and contextual analysis should come from the design team and should form the basis of the design development. It was established that the quoted commercial case for demolition was based on informal consultations rather than a fully commissioned study. We commented that a more convincing case needed to be made as part of a planning application, based on a proper character analysis and viability assessment, and that the current proposal should be either fully justified or modified.

Our opinion was that currently the case had not been made that the new build option would preserve or enhance the character and appearance of the conservation area, and that ultimately the success of any proposal should depend on its architectural quality. We thought that the scale and massing were not appropriate in this context and led to an over-dominant development. We noted that the quality of materials in this marine environment would be critical, and therefore new build would not necessarily be the cheapest option.

The Panel urged that a sustainability strategy be included in the overall appraisal study. We thought that there should be a commitment to achieve CSH level 4 as a demonstration of low carbon development. More attention should be paid to pedestrian access, cycle storage and the provision of lifts.

Crynodb/Summary

The Panel welcomed the opportunity to discuss these proposals at an early stage. However, we think that the new build option as presented is an unacceptable response to the site and context. In summary:

- We would prefer a much more detailed evaluation of an option which seeks to retain the principal features of the existing building, and uses conversion and refurbishment, with an element of newbuild, to deliver accommodation which meets contemporary standards of amenity and sustainability.
- We think that the proposed new building is overbearing in terms of its scale and massing and does not respect the conservation area context.
- We are disappointed at the lack of a contextual analysis and any information on the new development on the adjoining site to the north.
- We think that any new development should aim to achieve Code for Sustainable Homes level 4, and that a sustainability strategy should be included with the planning application.

Diwedd/End

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