

\*\* This report relates only to the version of the scheme seen at Design Review on May 19th 2010. \*\*

# Addroddiad Adolygu Dylunio Design Review Report

**Review Status: Confidential** [made public on December 3rd 2010]

|                     |                           |
|---------------------|---------------------------|
| Meeting date:       | 19th May 2010             |
| Issue Date:         | 2nd June 2010             |
| Scheme Location:    | Ty Glan Menai, Caernarfon |
| Scheme Description: | Hotel                     |
| Planning Status:    | Pre-application           |

## Part1: Presentation

This scheme was reviewed previously by DCFW in December 2009. For this session it was agreed to focus on amendments to the design arising from the last Review.

The applicants have consulted again with the Environment Agency who have reaffirmed that they have no objections to the proposal. An access report will be submitted as part of the planning application. Gwynedd Council highways officers have agreed that the increased traffic resulting from this development would be negligible. The proposed service access will be relocated to an operational parking area in front of the boathouse, with access to the hotel via a goods lift in the former boathouse.

The concept of three blocks of accommodation stepping down the site has been retained. External facades have been simplified and a greater emphasis placed on the stone plinth. The angled gable walls have been changed to right angled walls and this has resulted in a simpler roof arrangement with a natural slate finish and traditional eaves and gable end details. Larger windows on the south elevation, together with *brises soleil*, allow the benefit of passive solar heating to buffer zones. The proposed external shutters to the north have been abandoned in favour of triple glazed windows.

The Local Authority did not attend this review, but in written comments they acknowledge that the recent design is far more appropriate, while reiterating their previous comments concerning the appropriateness of development on this site. The applicants stated that they have had support from the policy section of the Local Authority but have received inconsistent advice from Development Control.

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

The Panel was pleased to see the progress that has been made with this proposal and the way in which the team has responded to the conclusions of the previous review. This is now a very good design response, although some minor issues remain to be resolved. In summary:

- We are convinced by the viewpoint analysis as presented, that the development will not intrude significantly on views from the east, west or north.
- However, careful screening will be desirable and the landscape plan which reinforces boundary planting will be important for reducing any visual impact and improving amenity.
- We welcome the more elegant form, calmed elevations and predominance of locally sourced materials. However, the oak 'brises soleil' appear clumsy and we think an alternative wood product would be more appropriate in this situation.
- We accept the rationale for the asymmetric roof pitches.
- We urge the team to aim for a BREEAM Excellent rating and to appoint a BREEAM assessor to develop a credible sustainability strategy for the project.

### **Part 2: Discussion and Panel Response in Full**

The Panel was pleased to note that all the issues that we raised at the previous review have been addressed, resulting in a much improved, more refined and better crafted building. Provided that the quality of details and materials is retained, this has the potential to be a high quality development that is well considered and appropriate.

The applicant stated that they were unable to get agreement from the Local Authority on the desired location of viewpoints of the proposed development, but obtained retrospective endorsement of their chosen positions. The Panel judged that the visual impact for the viewpoints presented, taken from the road to the east and west, are minimal. Two of the four trees surrounding the main entrance will need to be removed as they are affecting the stability of the wall, but the Panel was pleased to hear that the landscape buffer along the road will be reinforced. Most of the trees along the front boundary are coppiced sycamore and we advised the team to investigate the extent of the root system and possible conflict with new foundations. Existing trees on site should be retained and protected where possible.

A full ecology report will form part of the planning application. A landscape plan, which should include the tree mitigation and screening, was required to address the external materials for the terraces and pool, and the detailed design of the approach to the main entrance. We appreciated the way in which the slate plinth was linked into the existing terraces on the site. The reasons for the asymmetric roof pitches, in terms of keeping the ridge height low and providing a suitable pitch for solar water heating panels, was accepted by the Panel.

Our main concerns relate to the sustainability strategy and we warned that the appointment of a BREEAM Assessor was overdue. This omission poses a threat to the

successful integration of sustainability measures with the rest of the design development. Although the team expect to achieve the minimum environmental rating of BREEAM Very Good, we encouraged them to aim for an Excellent rating, and to exploit the financial returns available through the feed-in tariffs. The client confirmed that he is looking for a long term investment and agreed to consider this.

The Panel was told that the plant room allows for the installation of a biomass boiler, but that heat pumps are also being considered. If a biomass boiler is to be used, its location underneath bedrooms should be reconsidered as this could present noise and health issues.

While we welcomed the increased glazing to the south, the question of adequate shading is critical. We advised that the proposed shading devices should be modelled to ensure that the angle and width of louvre was optimal. The use of oak in this location – and for the cladding in general - might appear too rustic and we suggested a more stable and engineered wood product, while maintaining local sourcing. Good advice is available from Wood Knowledge Wales and Wood Source Wales.

**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.**

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

## **Appendix 1: Attendees**

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| Asiant/Client/Datblygwr:<br>Agent/Client/Developer  | Mr M. McKenna  |
| Pensaer/Architect:  | David Tyrer Architect                                    |
| Consultants:  | Jan Tyrer, Planning Consultant                           |
| AwdurdodCynllunio/<br>Planning Authority  | Gwynedd CC   |
| Y Panel Adlygu Dylunio:<br>Design review panel:<br>John Punter [Chair]<br>Cindy Harris [Officer]<br>Elly Englefield [Officer]<br>Kedrick Davies | Toby Adam<br>David Harvey<br>Chris Jones<br>Phil Roberts |
| Lead Panellist:   | Phil Roberts   |
| Sylwedyddion/Observers:   | n/a  |

