

Addroddiad Adolygu Dylunio Design Review Report

DATGANIADAU O DDIDDORDEB

Mae gofyn i aelodau o'r panel, arsyllwyr a phartion perthnasol eraill ddatgan unrhyw ddi-ddordebau sydd ganddynt **ymlaen llaw** mewn perthynas â'r eitemau Panel Adolygu Dylunio Bydd unrhyw ddatganiadau o'r fath yn cael eu cofnodi yma ac yng nghofnodion canolog Comisiwn Dylunio Cymru.

DECLARATIONS OF INTERESTS

Panel members, observers and other relevant parties are required to declare **in advance** any interests they may have in relation to the Design Review Agenda items. Any such declarations are recorded here and in DCfW's central records.

Statws adolygu/Review status

Cyfrinachol/Confidential

Dyddiad cyfarfod/meeting date	7th December 2011
Dyddiad cyhoeddi/issue date	16th December 2011
Lleoliad y cynllun/scheme location	White House Hotel Abersoch
Disgrifiad y cynllun/scheme description	Leisure
Statws cynllunio/planning status	Cyn gwneud cais/ pre-application
Datganiadau o ddi-ddordeb/declaration of interests	n/a

Adran 1/part 1

Cyflwyniad/Presentation

A previous proposal for a 35 bed spa hotel on this site was seen at Design Review in June 2006 and subsequently gained planning consent in 2007. This proposal is now judged not to be viable having lost £2.5m in grant aid. The client has therefore commissioned a re-design for 61 units (47 hotel rooms + 14 serviced apartments) partly to improve the financial viability but also to give better access to sea views from more of the hotel rooms.

The architects emphasised that the design development was still at an early stage, and they were keen to get feedback from the Panel. Two 4-storey wings of accommodation are curved around a two storey base of spa and hotel bar/restaurant, in a horseshoe shape. Although this building would be the same height as the consented one, a greater quantum of accommodation has been achieved by extending the building further back into the site, at a height of 5 storeys.

The local authority welcome development proposals for this site which has deteriorated over a long period and is now an eyesore. They have not yet seen detailed designs and elevations. Their main concerns to date relate to the impact on the residential amenity of existing dwellings to the west, north and east. There is a danger of overlooking and noise pollution, in particular from west facing balconies. The local authority also highlighted a change in local planning policy, whereby other types of holiday accommodation could be acceptable at this site.

Crynodeb o'r prif bwyntiau a gododd o'r drafodaeth, i'w darllen ochr yn ochr ag Adran 2 yr adroddiad hwn.

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

The Panel understood that this proposal was still very much a work in progress and we welcomed the open and collaborative approach of the design team. Currently however the proposal is an unsatisfactory response to the site and the context. In summary:

- The scale of the proposed building is too large and would be an over-development of the site.
- The proximity of the building to nearby houses would severely compromise the amenity and privacy of those residents, as well as the buildability of the scheme as a whole.
- The form of the building is too complex and contrived, and cannot be justified by a demonstrated improvement in the quantum of sea views.
- A smaller, simpler building form in a contemporary design could work well, but it needs to respond to the site and the residential context in a sensitive way.
- A full site and contextual analysis should be the starting point, looking at the morphology and form of the village at large, at appropriately scaled footprints and building forms, and assessing views from all key vantage points. Site sections should be provided which go beyond the site boundaries.
- The sustainability and landscape strategies should also be key design drivers in the development of an alternative approach to developing this site.

Adran 2/part 2

**Trafodaeth ac Ymateb y Panel yn Llawn
Discussion and panel response in full**

There were two main issues which caused the Panel concern.

One was the scale of the proposed building in its context. There was unfortunately a lack of sufficient contextual information and analysis, including photomontage views from the north west, as well as from the neighbouring houses and the AONB coast. Notwithstanding comparisons with the consented scheme, the Panel thought that

the scale of this proposal was too large and represented an overdevelopment of the site.

The second major issue was the proximity of the building to adjacent properties and particularly to Hunters Moon to the west. We agreed with the local authority that this proposal in its current form would impact on those residents in an unacceptable way. The pinch point between the two buildings severely compromises the rational development of the site, and we doubted that this particular scheme could actually be built unless Hunters Moon was acquired as part of the development.

The architect stated that the form of the building was aspect-driven, with the aim of maximising the number of rooms / apartments with sea views. However, the Panel noted that, compared with the consented scheme, there was no proportional increase in the number of units with sea views.

We thought that the design was compromised by the overly complex geometry of the footprint, although we understood that this was to some extent constrained by the original consent and the curved line of the existing covenant, to the front of the site. The Panel suggested that a constraints plan would be a useful way to develop a strategy for dealing with these issues. A 'rough and ready' 3D model could also serve as a design tool to improve the relationship of the building with its immediate context. Site sections should include the surrounding topography and buildings.

The complexity of the form suggests an expensive solution and we thought that a smaller, simpler building could be more cost effective, while retaining the quality of design and finishes appropriate for a 5 star hotel or similar. In our view this proposal should be fundamentally re-thought, beginning with a good contextual analysis and without reference to the consented scheme. The Panel thought that a contemporary design could work well, at an appropriate scale and with sensitivity to its context.

Further work is needed on the approaches to the building, from the car park to the north and from the town to the south. The entrance should be sufficiently legible without recourse to signage. The impact of this proposal on the street should be considered, and the landscape used to enclose the street and screen the car parking.

The Panel was presented with a number of sustainability measures which need to be properly assessed and used to develop a site-specific sustainability strategy which delivers a high BREEAM rating. Early integration of this strategy with the design development will yield benefits in terms of cost effectiveness as well as environmental performance. The eventual operator will have their own requirements and these should be incorporated as soon as possible.

In general, we thought that the complex form was driving other aspects of the scheme in a negative way, and that an alternative design approach led by sustainability and landscape considerations would deliver a better solution and could be better justified to the local authority and other consultees.

Mae Panel Adolygu Dylunio Comisiwn Dylunio Cymru a'r staff yn croesawu rhagor o ymgynghoriad, a bydd yn hapus i ddarparu rhagor o adborth am yr adroddiad yma a/neu lle bo'n briodol, dderbyn cyflwyniadau pellach. Diolch am ymgynghori â'r Comisiwn a chadwch mewn cysylltiad â ni os gwelwch yn dda ynglŷn â hynt eich prosiect. A fyddech gystal â'n hysbysu o ddatblygiad eich prosiect. Diolch yn fawr am ymgynghori â'r Comisiwn.

The Design Commission for Wales Design Review Panel welcomes further consultation and we will be happy to provide further feedback on this report and/or where appropriate, to receive further presentations. Please keep us informed of the progress of your project. Thank you for consulting the Commission.

***Mae copi iath Gymraeg o'r adroddiad hwn ar gael ar ofyn.
A Welsh language copy of this report is available upon request.***

Atodiad 1/appendix 1 Mynychwyr/attendees

Asiant/Client/Datblygwr Agent/Client/Developer	David McLean
Pensaer/Dylunydd Trefol Architectural/Urban Designer	Calderpeel (Ewen Miller, Mike Park)
Ymgynghorwyr/Consultants	n/a
Trydydd Parti/Third Party	n/a
Awdurdod Cynllunio/Planning Authority	Gwynedd CC (Gruffydd Wyn Morris)
Y Panel Adolygu Dylunio/ Design Review Panel Cadeirydd/Chair Swydog/Officer Prif Banelydd/Lead Panellist	John Punter Cindy Harris Richard Keogh Mark Hallett Phil Roberts Gerard Ryan
Sylwedyddion/Observers	Alison Smith (Welsh Government) Glen Dyke (DCfW)