

Statws/Status:
Cyfrinachol / Confidential



Adroddiad Adolygu Dylunio: Design Review Report:	21 September 2007
Dyddiad Cyfarfod / Cyflwyno'r Deunydd: Meeting Date / Material Submitted:	12 September 2007
Lleoliad/Location:	Steelworks site, Ebbw Vale
Disgrifiad o'r Cynllun Scheme Description:	New local general hospital
Cleient/Asiant: Client/Agent:	Gwent Healthcare NHS Trust [Karen Jones, Peter Sampson]
Developer/Datblygwr:	HBG
Pensaer/Architect:	Nightingale Associates [Nick Durham]
Awdurdod Cynllunio: Planning Authority:	Blaenau Gwent CBC [Richard Crook]
Statws Cynllunio: Planning Status:	Outline approval granted for masterplan. Reserved matters application imminent.
Y Panel Adolygu Dylunio/ Design Review Panel: Alan Francis (cadeirydd/chair) Cindy Harris (swyddog/officer) Mike Biddulph Martin Knight Lead Panellist:	Ann-Marie Smale Kedrick Davies Ashley Bateson Ashley Bateson

Sylwedyddion/Observers:

**David Clague,
Constructing Excellence
Timothy Cantrell, SW England
Design Review Panel**

Cyflwyniad/Presentation

This proposal was last seen at Design Review in March 07, when the Panel broadly supported the concept scheme as a work in progress. The design team stated that this revised scheme addresses the public square better and provides a stronger edge to the street, as required by the masterplan. The internal layout improves adjacencies and travel distances. Site levels have been adjusted to improve access and the main vehicular entrance has been moved further north. Cost efficiency has also been addressed as part of this revision.

The masterplan, which now has outline approval, specifically requires this scheme to demonstrate: consistency of materials, public transport facilities, a separate service entrance, and clear sustainability targets. The importance of close integration between the masterplan and the hospital design was emphasised. The same landscape architect is working on this scheme as on the masterplan.

The design has progressed from the inside out, starting with the single bed layout, which has informed the ward design, which has in turn influenced the building form and massing. Wards are located at first floor level, with outpatient, support functions and public areas at ground level. Two enclosed external courtyards help to create a therapeutic environment. The Mental Health unit is treated as an integrated but functionally separate part of the building. The more public block facing the access road to the east will be finished in a dark coloured, fibre cement 'Eternit' tile, while the more private block to the west will have a light-coloured insulated render cladding. The roof finish is standing seam aluminium.

The scheme will achieve a NEAT Excellent rating and will include a biomass boiler and solar water heating. A minimum percentage of recycled materials [20-25%] will be specified. The single bed rooms will have mixed mode ventilation, a good daylight factor [3-5%] and solar shading.

It is intended to start construction in spring 2008, with completion two years later.

Ymateb y Panel/Panel's Response

The Panel welcomed the detailed sustainability strategy, based on thermal modelling, and the inclusion of biomass heating and solar water heating. Mechanical ventilation will be used only in areas where natural ventilation is impossible, and mixed mode will be used wherever possible. Using IES modelling, the aim is to minimise the amount of artificial cooling required. We noted that the masterplan aspires to a target of 30% carbon reductions over and above the requirements of Part L 2006, and the outline permission requires this target to be fulfilled.

The Panel was informed that the railway line will be extended as far as Ebbw Vale Parkway, to the south of the steelworks site, by the end of this year. A further extension running north through the site will be the subject of a detailed planning application in 2008. The hospital is a 10 minute walk from Parkway station, which has a park and ride link to the town centre, and a bus service which hopefully will be detoured to serve the hospital site. The promotion of cycling is included in the green transport plan, and covered cycle parking is provided along with changing facilities. There will be links to Sustrans routes and greater provision for cycles to be carried on trains. It was confirmed that the maximum parking allowance will apply to any future expansion.

The Panel had serious concerns about the legibility of the main entrance and thought that it should have a much stronger architectural treatment, using the design, possibly reinforced by public artwork, to announce its presence and function. Any artwork should be integrated with the wayfinding and interior design strategy. The Panel noted that the entrance was obscured by trees from the eastern approach and questioned whether the square and street edge should have hard landscaping only.

We enquired whether shadow studies had been done for the open courtyards, and suggested that cloistered roofs be included for shelter in wet weather.

The Panel was not convinced by the sombre facade materials proposed for the eastern block, and we would prefer to see a more uplifting effect achieved on the main public elevation. We thought that the darkness of the tiles would be augmented by high rainfall and low light levels and, while this material treatment could work if it was crisply detailed, it needed softening at appropriate points along its length.

The Panel was concerned about the position and function of the L shaped building to the south of the access spur into the site. It appears to be isolated and it is not clear whether it would face the square or the site entrance. We thought it should be integrated with the residential strip and the access road moved further south to run alongside the square. This would have the additional advantage of a better alignment with the main hospital entrance.

The Panel welcomed the improved enclosure of the square and the stronger building line along the street, both of which were also requirements of the masterplan. We thought there could be more active uses on the urban edge and questioned [but accepted] the location of the wards to the rear, as more appropriate to the therapeutic context. We repeated our previous concern about the location of the service stairs on the southern tip of the ward block, and thought this was a missed opportunity to include some south facing accommodation.

The Panel thought that the revised form of the building had a less convincing relationship with the site. The strong geometric chevron pattern appeared inflexible and constraining, although we were told that it was driven by functionality. We thought that if it proved appropriate, it should be carried through with more conviction, and the rest of the design and site layout should respond to that form. As stated in our previous report, we would like to see daylight introduced into the ground floor corridors, and we thought that this would be facilitated if the tight form was relaxed slightly. The generous area of gardens to the south would allow for this. There is provision for future expansion of 40% to the north. In addition, if the pinch point by the drop-off point was opened up, this would create a better sense of arrival and highlight the entrance. It is important that the entrance and drop-off point are designed to accommodate the 40% expansion envisaged for the future.

While we welcomed the dual role of the landscape architect, with regard to this scheme and the masterplan, we thought that the landscape design was not sufficiently advanced and that 1: 200 landscape drawings should accompany the reserved matters application.

Crynodb/Summary

The Panel welcomed the quality and depth of the presentation. While we have some reservations about the strong geometric form, we think this is an acceptable response to the site and the brief. Minor revisions are necessary, specifically:

- The logic of the strong form, if fully justified, should be followed through in all aspects of the site layout. We think that if the

footprint could be eased and loosened slightly, this would improve its relationship with the site and allow more daylight into unlit areas.

- We strongly support the sustainability strategy and the inclusion of biomass heating in particular. We regret that it has not proved possible to incorporate green roofs, especially given the valley setting.
- We think it is essential that the main entrance be made more legible. It should be clearly identifiable from the approach road to the east, and the car park to the north.
- The access spur road should be moved further south to front the square. The vehicular approach, drop-off point and main entrance should be better integrated
- We would like to see the facade treatment softened and made more uplifting especially on the public approaches.
- The character and usability of the courtyards needs to be better defined.
- The landscape strategy needs progressing to the same level of detail as the rest of the design
- It is essential that close collaboration with the masterplan team continues to inform the design development

Diwedd/End

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