

NB. This report was confidential when it was seen at pre-application stage and relates only to the version seen at that stage. It has been made public since the planning application was submitted in December 2011

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

Public

Dyddiad cyfarfod/meeting date	19th October 2011
Dyddiad cyhoeddi/issue date	1st November 2011
Lleoliad y cynllun/scheme location	Ysgol Bro Dysynni, Llanegryn
Disgrifiad y cynllun/scheme description	Education
Statws cynllunio/planning status	Cyn gwneud cais/ pre-application
Datganiadau o ddi-ddordeb/declaration of interests	None

Adran 1/part 1

Cyflwyniad/Presentation

The proposal is for a new 110 place primary school to replace four existing schools, and the team expect a decision from the minister on the proposed closures very soon. The finance for this project is in place and the procurement will focus on local supply chains and contractors.

The site is greenfield, on the edge of the village, and in the foreground of significant views up the Dysynni valley from the A493. At least twelve other sites were considered and this proved to be the only viable one. There will be one vehicular access point into the site off the narrow lane and a separate exit to ensure public safety, as well as a pedestrian link from the village.

The new school building will be located close to the village edge and treated as an extension of the existing settlement pattern. A row of south facing classrooms is combined with community and administrative functions to the north. Two small

internal courtyards are used for natural ventilation and daylight, and the multi-purpose school/community hall rises in height above the rest of the low-lying building. Recently revised designs were presented to the Panel which showed a reduced height and pitched roof form for the hall, along with a slight re-orientation of the building.

The scheme will achieve BREEAM Excellent with an EPC 'A' rating. The building has good southerly orientation and natural ventilation. Heating will be via a biomass pellet boiler, and 100 m² of PV panels will provide 20% of the electricity demand generated onsite. The construction system will be a loadbearing steel frame.

The local planning authority still have some concerns about the height of the hall element, although they welcome the recent revisions which in their view soften the previous harsh elevation. Views across the site to the mountains, landscaping and the protection of residential amenity are important aspects of the scheme, and there has been extensive consultation with local groups. Putting aside the emotive issue of school closures, most people have been willing to engage with the design process and the results of the consultation are positive.

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 was pleased to review this scheme in a very sensitive location, and we think that the design development is progressing well. Minor issues remain to be resolved and these are detailed below. We also think that this scheme has the potential to be exemplary, especially if it could showcase the use of local timber frame/panel construction and demonstrate a high quality public realm treatment and sensitive interface with the village. In summary:

- The Panel accepted the choice of site resulting from extensive investigation of other options, and agreed with the decision to site the building as close to the village as possible.
- New vehicular access points are necessary but will need to be sensitively integrated with the narrow lane approach to the village. The one way system and the proposed landscaping will help achieve this.
- We understand that the visual impact on the landscape is a major issue for the local planning authority and we think that this proposal will not adversely affect the key views, providing the proposed native species landscaping and suggested low level lighting are implemented.
- The revised height and roof form of the hall reduces the visual impact but we think that an alternative finish of Welsh slate should be explored.
- The option of timber frame construction using local timber should be thoroughly investigated, and expert advice sought.

- We strongly commend the commitment to BREEAM Excellent and the rounded sustainability strategy including renewable heating, on site generation, and robust daylighting and ventilation systems.
- The treatment of the public realm, including access points and security fencing, will be critical and should be sensitively integrated with the village and rural setting. Public art could be used as an integral element to provide interest and identity for users of the building.
- We understand that the planning application has to be submitted in the near future. However we would be happy to comment on any revisions to the scheme.

Adran 2/part 2

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

The Panel appreciated the sensitivity of the greenfield site, and the visual impact of any building on the view up the Dysynni valley. Having heard the site selection process explained, we have to accept that this site is the only viable option.

We were also aware of the impact on the narrow country lane of the proposed road widening and multiple access points. This needs to be sensitively detailed with high quality materials and robust landscaping, so that it becomes an asset for the community. Similarly the security fencing, boundary treatments and external lighting should be as sympathetic and unobtrusive as possible.

The Panel thought that the hall, with its community functions, should be celebrated and allowed to stand out from the rest of the building, rather than attempting to disguise it. The architect referred to other communal buildings such as churches which stood clear of the village skyline. Given the reduced height of the hall it was accepted that some functions, such as badminton, would be limited.

The Panel was not convinced that the proposed sedum roof would work with a 30 degree pitch, and thought that an alien monoculture would soon be overtaken by self-seeded native grasses and plants. We did think however that there was a strong case for using Welsh slate in this context. PV panels could be easily incorporated into the south facing pitch, to increase the generating capacity and/or to avoid laying them flat on the classroom canopy.

The Panel regarded the proposal for a steel frame as a missed opportunity to use timber as a locally sourced, renewable material, and to stimulate and support local supply chains and contractors. The scale of the building would lend itself well to a structural timber frame or panel construction in a relatively durable softwood, such as Larch or Douglas Fir, which could be expressed internally. Timber posts for the canopy would be more attractive and tactile than steel especially for the children.

The main entrance is defined by a subtle change in materials, and the internal plan and circulation works well with intuitive wayfinding. The courtyards and protected areas outside the classrooms offer useful external teaching spaces. The daylight and

ventilation strategies are convincing, and we understood that PVs embedded in the south facing glazed canopy would provide solar shading.

Some excavation will be necessary and engineered fill will need to be imported to create the plateau, with landscaped terracing to the south and east. A wetland habitat will be created to the north east, and the parking area will have a porous surface. The planted boundary to the south and east will be reinforced with native species. Public art could be used imaginatively to announce the building, and/or could be incorporated into the landscape or boundary treatment.

Close attention should be paid to external lighting so that sports pitches, access and parking areas do not result in significant light pollution in this sensitive location.

The project team has considered possible future expansion to the south west, although 10% additional capacity has been built in to this scheme.

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	Gwynedd Council (Richard Farmer, Derec Parry Williams)
Pensaer/Dylunydd Trefol Architectural/Urban Designer	B3 Architects (Geraint Roberts)
Ymgynghorwyr/Consultants	Atkins (Bob Baker)
Trydydd Parti/Third Party	n/a
Awdurdod Cynllunio/Planning Authority	Snowdonia National Park (Aled Sturkey,

Huw Roberts)

Y Panel Adolygu Dylunio/
Design Review Panel
Cadeirydd/Chair
Swydog/Officer
Prif Banelydd/Lead Panellist

John Punter
Cindy Harris
Lynne Sullivan
Michael Griffiths
Kedrick Davies
David Harvey
Philip Costa (CDN Planning)

Sylwedyddion/Observers