

# Design Review Report

Llanbedr Hall, Llanbedr Dyffryn Clwyd

**DCFW Ref: 79D**

Meeting of 11<sup>th</sup> November 2021



## Review Status

Meeting date  
Issue date  
Scheme location

Scheme description  
Scheme reference number  
Planning status

## PUBLIC

11<sup>th</sup> November 2021  
18<sup>th</sup> November 2021  
Llanbedr Dyffryn Clwyd  
Denbighshire  
Residential  
79D  
Pre-application

## Declarations of Interest

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

None recorded.

## Consultations to Date

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Several iterations of this scheme were presented at DCFW's Design Review in November 2012 and October 2013. Our reports from those earlier reviews should be read in conjunction with this report. The planning history has included more than one consent, the most recent of which in 2015 involves the demolition of Llanbedr Hall and the construction of nine houses and two flats, arranged in the form of a crescent.

## The Proposals

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The site is located within the Clwydian Range and Dee Valley Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB). This scheme proposes eleven new dwellings as part of a mixed-use development on the site of the now derelict Llanbedr Hall. Consent exists for the demolition of the Hall, and a replacement terrace of eleven houses, with some community leisure facilities. The design team stated a desire to create an environmentally responsible development of low energy dwellings, following the principles of Passivhaus

## Main Points

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### Site Analysis and place

The proposals are at an early stage and whilst the Commission understand that early feedback was sought before the next stages, there is some important work to be done to inform and shape these design proposals. The design team need to further explore and fully analyse the site and context of the development to inform the design approach. The materials provided lacked sufficient information regarding what Llanbedr Dyffryn Clwyd is like as a place, and how this new development would relate and contribute to it. Assessment of movement and connections, potential for public transport and/or active

travel links is required to inform the design approach. The Commission was told that a landscape analysis had been undertaken but there was little information provided in the presentation materials or evidence as to how the findings of such analysis had informed the design approach and decision making.

Further analysis is needed to inform the design approach, assess the appropriateness of the scheme and how it responds to the context. Further analysis should also include considering of any local vernacular architecture and the nature of the surrounding and proximate buildings and uses. This location and the site itself are within the Denbighshire AONB. Any design approach must respond to this and provide a compelling vision for development proposals which will positively contribute to the location and setting.

Consideration of the needs of the people who may occupy the new dwellings and what kind of place is desired is critical to the design evolution. This should form part of the analysis and include placemaking principles which are needed to inform and communicate what kind of place this will be.

An aspiration for high performance dwellings was expressed as an ambition but needs to be demonstrated in the design approach so that it can be fully realised in delivery. The sustainability strategy will need to inform the design process – not vice versa. If high building and energy performance is desired then detailed design work will be needed to ensure it can be afforded and delivered. Clarity as to the use of ‘passivhaus principles’ is needed – it should be clear whether the dwellings are to be certified Passivhaus units or whether this is simply an aspiration – the two are not the same and will have budget, cost, construction and timescale implications.

### **Views**

Views to, from and through the site, and an analysis of the site assets should inform design considerations and should be included in materials. Currently the materials available to the Commission are limited and do not include sufficient information demonstrating the analysis and design process, including consideration form key views into and out of the site. It is therefore difficult to consider the proposals in context

### **Parking**

Three car parking spaces are currently proposed per dwelling, in line with LA requirements. Whilst it is recognised that this is a rural location, the Commission urges more detailed consideration of this number and their arrangement, and to find ways to incentivise reduced private vehicle use wherever possible. Quite apart from the stated sustainability aspirations and the imperative for decarbonisation, there will be a significant impact on

the quality of the spaces within the layout which currently indicates a negative impact on spaces for people and amenities including potential for safe play space for children. and children.

The client stated a desire for the development to have a shared electric car system, and the Commission would encourage the client to further explore this and the potential for EV charging points which will be needed at site and or in proximity if this is to become a reality.

### **Placemaking**

It is critical that placemaking is central to decisions made early in the design of this scheme and that it responds to national, place led policy. Site assets including the ruined church contribute to richness and distinctive identity which forms an important part of the development of what is essentially a new place. The Placemaking Wales Charter and Guide will assist the team and can be found here <http://dcfw.org/placemaking/placemaking-charter>

### **Summary**

This location and the site offer the potential for a good, sustainable, energy efficient development of distinctive identity which can contribute positively to the areas and provide new homes. The Commission welcomes the aspiration for a low-carbon, sustainable development of new homes and urges the design team to ensure analysis and decision making in the design process can make this a reality through to delivery.

Much more detailed analysis and the application of findings during the design process, is essential. Whilst we realise these new proposals are at an early stage important analysis ought to be evident and it should be clear how that analysis is informing design decisions.

Sustainability aspirations are welcomed but also require detailed design work at the earliest stages to inform the design strategy and establish the highest possible performance with the available development and construction budget.

The Commission welcomes further consultation as the design evolves and the team will need to plan for future reviews within their programme at the right time. We recommend contact us in advance so that this can be planned for. The Commission also welcomes observers at review meetings and suggests that the design team could benefit further by observing one or two future meetings to help them further prepare.

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

## Attendees

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Agent/Client/Developer:	Rod Cox – Llanbedr Hall Developments
Architect/Design Team:	Hannah Dixon – Progress in Practice Architects
Planning Consultant:	Emma Jones – Acer Town Planning
Chair:	Andrew Linfoot
Design Review Panel:	Angela Williams – Lead Panellist Steven Smith Martin Knight Mike Gwyther-Jones Jen Heal - Design Advisor, DCFW Efa Lois - Place Advisor, DCFW
Observing:	Carole-Anne Davies - Chief Executive, DCFW
Guest Observers:	Clare Wilding - new panellist Gareth Howells – new panellist