



DESIGN
COMMISSION
FOR WALES
COMISIWN
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Design Review Report

Site of the Howardian Centre, Cardiff

DCFW Ref: N175

Meeting of 16th August 2018



Review Status

Meeting date
Issue date
Scheme location
Scheme description
Scheme reference number
Planning status

PUBLIC

16th August 2018
28th August 2018
Cardiff
Residential
N175
Pre-application

Declarations of Interest

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.

Panel member Toby Adams declared that he is working with Wates on an unrelated project. All present at the review were content to proceed following the declarations.

Consultations to Date

Formal pre-application consultation was undertaken with the local planning authority in May 2018.

The Proposals

The proposal is a residential development on the site of the former Howardian Centre. The development will comprise 45 energy efficient, sustainable homes along with a landscape strategy, SUDs, vehicular and active travel access, with associated infrastructure and engineering works.

Main Points

DCFW supports the aspiration to deliver high quality, energy efficient, sustainable homes on this unused site, as part of the Cardiff Living programme. However, further design development is needed to fully achieve this and the following points summarise key issues from the review that should be considered in further design development:

Concept

The design team expressed an aspiration to deliver a development with a strong sense of place, which will be delivered in part by the concept of a central green open space. This concept should be optimised and protected throughout the design process. Opportunities to encourage residents to use this space should be explored from the outset to ensure its success.

Topography

The challenging topography and level solutions within the scheme should be understood through site sections. Changes in level that require retaining walls will impact the public realm and sense of place, so should be well considered early on and designed out where possible.

Sense of arrival

In order to create a strong sense of place the arrival into the site must be welcoming and of high design quality. The arrival on the proposed plans is underwhelming as the primary view comprises the side elevation of a private garage. A strong corner dwelling would be more appropriate for this location, along with a considered landscape approach and a high quality treatment along the site boundary.

Movement

Active travel could be encouraged by connecting high quality pedestrian and cycle routes to the surrounding areas, such as the nearby school, nature reserve and allotments. Electric car charging points should also be considered in order to future proof the scheme and encourage more sustainable travel modes.

Landscape strategy

A landscape architect could be engaged to strengthen the landscape strategy across the site, which should include amenity space, SUDs and planting to soften the streets. The landscape strategy could consider terminating private drives with green amenity spaces.

Street hierarchy

Manual for Streets should be used by both the design team and the Local Authority whilst considering the types of street suitable for a residential development of this scale. A pedestrian-priority approach would help to create the sense of place that is aspired to and encourage residents to use the shared open spaces. The street hierarchy may be better explained using section drawings of the different street types, along with proposed materials. Refuse storage should be considered early to ensure that the streets are not cluttered with bins once residents have moved in.

Boundary treatment

Boundaries onto the streets must be high quality and robust. Hard materials and landscape should work together to create a high quality and pleasant boundary onto the public realm.

Next steps

House types were not presented for review so it is not yet possible to comment on the design quality and sustainability of the homes. However, the precedents presented were contemporary in form with good quality materials, an approach which DCFW would encourage the design team to deliver on this site.

The Commission would welcome further opportunity to review the scheme with the aim of improving design quality through constructive dialogue.

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

Attendees

Agent/Client/Developer:	Teresa Boyle, Cardiff Council
Design Team:	Bill Jewsbury & Jaime Moya, Spring Design Stuart Jones, Wates Group Simon Coop, Lichfields
Local Planning Authority:	David Davies, Cardiff Council
Design Review Panel:	
Chair	Kedrick Davies
Lead Panellist	Toby Adam Amanda Spence Simon Carne Lynne Sullivan Wendy Maden, Design Advisor, DCFW