

Design Review Report

Upper Cosmeston Farm, Penarth

DCFW Ref: N194

Meeting of 13th June 2019



Review Status

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

PUBLIC

13th June 2019
25th June 2019
Vale of Glamorgan
Residential
N194
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 Agenda items. Any such declarations are recorded here and in DCFW's central records.

None.

Consultations to Date

DCFW was consulted during the early stages of masterplan development for the site in March 2019.

The Proposals

The proposal is for the residential development of an expansion site south of Penarth, situated between the Severn Estuary and Cosmeston Lakes. The site is currently green fields, but is identified as a potential housing site in the LDP. The site is owned by Welsh Government. It benefits from views across the estuary and back to Penarth Head and is close to Cosmeston Lakes park. It also adjoins the Wales Coastal Path. The masterplan will include up to 576 dwellings with 40% affordable, a primary school, public open space, and community facilities.

Main Points in Detail

Vision

The panel welcomed the development of the vision from the initial review which sets out positive aspirations for the development of the site. However, the vision is still rather generic with little specific relation to the unique features of the site and its context. As the masterplan develops it is important that the vision develops or is supported by some more specific objectives. There is a range of things that *could* be done on the site to meet the aspirations of the vision but those things that *must* be achieved on the site should be identified and prioritised otherwise there is a risk that the vision is diluted.

Two of the most compelling aspects of the vision and masterplan as it has developed are the cycle link to Penarth Station along the former railway line and the proposed new pedestrian and cycle connection through the site that will link the coastal path to

Cosmeston Lakes. Both elements require further design detail as well as detail on how they will be delivered and maintained.

The connection through the site to Cosmeston Lakes will help to ensure that this development is stitched into the surrounding settlement and becomes part of the public realm of the town, therefore providing a positive public benefit. There are some positive design ideas to support the significance of this route on the eastern side of the site, but this is less prominent as the route moves to the west. Further design work is needed on the western side to support ease of movement and legibility.

Masterplan Development

The masterplan has developed positively and logically since the previous review and the development since the submission of pre-review material show further progress that has helped to refine the layout. This process must continue further to ensure that the qualities of the precedents that have been highlighted are appropriately incorporated into the masterplan. It is also important that all the different elements tie together holistically, and the site doesn't become too bitty.

The road hierarchy and resulting character of different street types should be developed further to establish key design principles. The entrance 'boulevard' could be further strengthened.

A range of unit types are proposed which is positive, but this could be more mixed across the site to ensure that enclaves of one particular type do not have a negative impact on the overall character of the site and sense of community.

The outcomes of future work with the Welsh School of Architecture on sustainability in relation to individual properties must be well integrated into the masterplan. A fabric-first approach is a positive starting point. Learning from the Welsh Government's Innovative Housing Programme should also be integrated.

Movement and Parking

Further assurance is needed that all possible options have been explored to ensure that this does not become a car dominated development. Discussions with Sustrans regarding the improvement and extension of the cycle route are positive but we are yet to see any detail. For instance, this site could champion innovative ideas for ensuring the cycle route retains primacy in the movement hierarchy. Very little information has been provided on other approaches other than the preservation of a potential bus route. Unless the bus route or other measures are in place at the outset, the default will be car use which will clutter the site with cars. Other considerations include a car club, cycle hire, a link to the Metro with light rapid transit, for example.

School Location

A new school has the potential to provide a focus for community and activity within a development and should be easily accessible by active travel. By locating the school on the southern periphery of the site, the opportunity for these benefits are limited as highlighted by the current masterplan which indicates that the road connection is prominent whereas the school is somewhat disconnected from the residential area. The planning position regarding the location of the school site outside the land allocated for housing is understood but should not be the driver for determining where the school should

be located. Further exploration of the location of the school should be undertaken, for example locating it close to the proposed village green where it could potentially share the open space, support the proposed shop and community facilities and be well connected to the cycle route.

Delivery

How the site is marketed and disposed of is critical to the success of the vision. Given the limited information available to the panel on this to date, this remains a concern as a standard approach to site disposal will not achieve what is required here. Assurance has been given that capital receipt for the site is not the primary interest, but there is currently no detail on how the process will be managed to ensure that there is a focus on design quality and to ensure that all of the elements of the masterplan, over-and-above those that are common to standard housing developments, are delivered.

The Welsh Government, as landowner and under the duty of the Well-being of Future Generations Act, could explore how they could have an ongoing stewardship role that will help to safeguard the vision.

Maintenance is also an important consideration to ensure that all the elements of the public realm including SuDS, play areas and green spaces that comprise an important part of the public realm can be maintained in a high quality and coordinated way.

The precedents highlighted in the masterplan document are all positive, but need be fully worked through to understand what can be delivered on this site and how. Some parts of the layout are dependent on the use of a particular house type, such as the courtyard housing, which will not work if the conditions are not in place to deliver this type of housing.

Planning tools must also be employed to help ensure the delivery of the vision. A vision statement and the masterplan with the outline application alone will not be sufficient. The team will need to consider if some of the design principles could be pinned down through a design code.

Next Steps

DCFw welcome the opportunity for ongoing engagement which could extend beyond the outline planning application.

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

Attendees

Design Team:	Martin Roe, ASL Tanya Simeonova, ASL Theo Ellis, ASL
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Design Review Panel:	
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Observing:	Clare Wilding, ARUP