



DESIGN
COMMISSION
FOR WALES
COMISIWN
DYLUNIO
CYMRU

Design Review Report

Development at Junction 33,
Cardiff

DCFW Ref: 50

Meeting of 17th October 2014



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.

Review Status

Meeting date

Issue date

Scheme location

Scheme description

Scheme reference number

Planning status

CONFIDENTIAL

17th October 2014

xxth October 2014

Land north of Junction 33, Cardiff

Residential, mixed-use, park & ride

50

Outline submitted

Declarations of Interest

None declared.

Consultations to Date

Some engagement with existing communities has been undertaken and there has been statutory consultation through the Local Development Plan preparation process. There is an expectation from the Local Authority that there will be an ongoing engagement strategy.

The Proposals

An outline planning application was submitted in April 2014 for this mixed-use development proposed for land north of the M4 Junction 33 in Cardiff. The site is allocated for development in Cardiff's emerging Local Development Plan (LDP), submitted to the Planning Inspectorate on 14th August 2014. This is the second time the site has been to design review with the first meeting on 14th August.

The site is steeply undulating in places, with significant areas of existing green infrastructure which the team proposes to retain or enhance to add value to the development. The proposed scheme comprises up to 1500 dwellings, a new primary school, park and ride facility, a new business park and employment area and a neighbourhood centre with the potential for retail space.

Main Points

Progress since the previous review

The Panel welcome the progress that has been made since the last review, particularly in relation to developing the emerging Character Areas where the relationships between the buildings, public realm and the site's natural features has been explored. However, this progress has yet to link back to the development of the masterplan and the two now

need to be considered together so that the masterplan is informed by the detailed studies.

One Place

It is encouraging to see that the integration of the development with the existing settlements of Creigiau and Pentrych forms part of the vision of “three communities, one place”. How this will be achieved requires further coherence in terms of physical connections (particularly across Llantrisant Road), shared facilities and social and cultural identity. The latter may be reflected in the name(s) chosen for the development.

How the proposed development will relate to the character of the existing settlements needs to be explored in more detail to ensure that there are complementarities between the two.

Character Areas

In general there had been good progress on detail relating to the identified character areas. One area to develop further is the transition from the hard landscape of the employment areas and park and ride, through the neighbourhood centre and into the green/woodland areas. The woodland is rightly identified as one of the features of the site to be utilised in developing the character of the development and so the relationship with this very important. The Panel considered that this relationship needed to be developed further.

Neighbourhood Centre

The Panel were keen to explore the viability of the neighbourhood centre and whether it is in the optimal location. The development team explained how the location of the centre close to the park and ride was important to its success by capturing sufficient footfall. The Panel welcome the integration of the school and community centre within the neighbourhood centre. Flexibility is considered to be key to ensuring that the centre can respond to varying intensities of demand for different uses over the lifetime of the development. Precedents have been identified but more could be teased out of these to apply to the proposals, particularly regarding the flexibility of ground floor spaces.

Sections through the neighbourhood centre showing the topography of the site would also be helpful to assess the impact of the topography on the spaces.

Concerns still remained regarding the link of the initial phase of residential development in the north of the site with the Park and Ride in the south. We understand that both must happen and therefore they will be linked, but how this will happen and what the interim landscape/public realm strategy for this connection will be is not yet fully resolved and explained.

Layout

Variations in density across the site are suggested but not yet fully resolved. The Panel would like to see further detail of what the density will be and how much of the type of development identified in the precedents will be provided and where.

The orientation of buildings and the solar gain benefits of this should not be forgotten. This will form part of the ‘fabric first’ approach that the developer is proposing.

Uncertainties remained about the implications of locating employment uses in the west of the development area that would be accessed through the residential development. However, it was explained that this would be a different type of employment use, closely associated with the residential area such as small workshops. The interaction between these uses requires some additional explanation and demonstration of how this would work. It is understood that this employment development provides a buffer between the residential area and the M4 so a section through this area could help to explain this relationship.

Design Quality

The need for design quality is written into the Spatial Framework document and the Design and Access Statement that accompanies the planning application, however, it is not clear how this will be ensured. Design Codes are not the preferred option of the Development Team and addendums to the DAS are proposed but it is not yet clear whether this will be sufficient. With a development of this scale there needs to be variety across the site but there also needs to be unity and clarity within the development as a whole. The masterplan needs to go further than its current position to achieve this.

Opportunities for the integration of public art into the development should be considered to ensure it is not an 'add-on' at a later date.

Movement and connectivity

The "story" of Llantrisant Road needs to be developed with greater clarity and in collaboration with the North West Cardiff development site, where a number of interventions along the road are also proposed. Interventions that will enable greater connectivity across the road for pedestrians are welcomed but the overall impact needs to be considered. The creation of additional traffic burden and delays on this route will be one of the greatest concerns for existing local residents and so the impacts on journey times and the potential offsetting benefits of alternative routes or additional public transport provision need to be very clear in advance of further public consultation and engagement.

The timing of the proposed Metro/rapid transport network is likely to follow after the development so the design team should continue to retain provision for the route and design in flexible spaces within movement corridors. The density of development within and around the neighbourhood centre must be sufficient to support a public transport node.

The pedestrian and cycle network is developing but more evidence is needed on how this will work alongside the public transport network and the geometry of the proposed streets and paths.

Further Engagement

The Design Commission for Wales has welcomed the opportunity to review this scheme as it has progressed and we see the value in further review and discussion in the future. The character areas have been developed and the DCFW is keen to see how these will now influence the development of the masterplan and the detail of specific areas before the reserved matters stage.

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

Attendees

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Designers:	Barry Williams, Barton Willmore Tim Gent, Savills Mike Axon, Vectos
Local Authority:	Phil Williams Amanda Sutcliffe Emma Parsons
Design Review Panel:	
Chair	Roger Ayton
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Cardiff Livable City Forum:	Sue Essex Geraint Talfan Davies Mark Barry