

Design Review Report

Little Hill House, Rhossilli

DCFW Ref: 86

Meeting of 17th September 2015



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 September 2015

7th October 2015

Rhossilli

House extension/conversion

86

Pre-application

Declarations of Interest

None declared.

Consultations to Date

The team is in pre-application discussions with the local planning authority.

The Proposals

The proposal is to make a contemporary intervention and extension to a former barn conversion to provide a family house with good relationship to the countryside views whilst maximising daylight. It is also proposed that two derelict out buildings will be brought back into use as an accommodation annex.

Main Points in Detail

This review took place at a good, early stage in the project where there is scope for design review to improve the scheme as the design process progresses. The following points summarise key issues from the review, and should be considered to inform work ahead of making a planning application:

Design Approach & Ambitions

The ambition to maximise the potential of this existing house for the clients' lifestyle and setting is encouraging. As the property already requires structural intervention, it is positive that a comprehensive approach is being taken to update the whole building to provide a contemporary family home which improves energy efficiency and improves the relationship with the garden and wider landscape.

Bringing the derelict out-buildings back into use is particularly positive as it will ensure their preservation and improve the contribution that they make to the site. The local

authority should consider how they might ensure that this happens concurrently with development of the main house.

In general, the proposed layout and form of the house and annex works well, and the architects can demonstrate that different options have been tested to arrive at the options presented at the review.

Detail Design

The success of this scheme will be heavily dependent on the details. The design of the details, especially at junctions between different old and new materials, will affect the overall quality of the scheme.

Overall, a consistent and simplified approach to detailing should provide the most robust and elegant solutions.

It is suggested that 1:20 (or larger) details are provided at the planning application stage. This would help the local authority assess the quality of the proposal, 'lock in' design quality for the construction phase, and provide better cost certainty.

The method of making the proposed green roof to the annex safe should be carefully considered, as the late addition of poorly placed railings could have a negative impact on the scheme as a whole.

Landscape Design

The quality of the landscape design in the courtyard area will be important, as this is the arrival space and would provide the link between the main house and the converted out-buildings. The courtyard must accommodate and organise parking, bin storage access and other outdoor facilities. Removal of the existing porch to the house is positive.

The proposed garden levels and arrangement of floors of the house and outbuildings improve the relationship between inside space and landscape.

Involving a landscape architect at this stage might help to better coordinate detailed landscape proposals as the project progresses.

Energy Strategy

The scheme requires a robust energy strategy which sets out and designs in requirements for plant room, mechanical equipment, heat distribution and flues. If the strategy is not properly considered at this stage, there is a danger that unplanned flues and plant rooms would compromise overall design clarity. It is important that flues and ventilation grilles etc. are included in the designs before a planning application is made.

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

Attendees

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| Architect/Planning Consultant: | Huw Griffiths, Huw Griffiths Architects Ashley Davies, Huw Griffiths Architects |
| Local Authority: | Huw Jenkins, Swansea Council |
| Design Review Panel: | |
| Chair | Jen Heal, Design Advisor, DCFW |
| Lead Panellist | Kedrick Davies Amanda Spence, Design Advisor, DCFW |