



DESIGN
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Design Review Report

Rhyl New School

28th November 2013



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

CONFIDENTIAL

Meeting date	28 th November 2013
Issue date	18 th December 2013
Scheme location	Rhyl, Denbighshire
Scheme description	Redevelopment of High School
Scheme reference number	28
Planning status	Pre-application

Declarations of Interest

None declared

Consultations to Date

Initial planning consultations have taken place, as well as public consultations with neighbours and local community as well as pupils, staff and governors. Highways issues are being resolved with the Local Authority Highways Department.

The Proposals

The proposal is to redevelop the existing school and leisure centre site to provide a new 8FF 11-16 secondary school for 1200 pupils. This will replace the existing Rhyl High School which has come to the end of its serviceable life. The scheme proposes demolition of the current school once the new school has been completed. The leisure centre will remain, but may be refurbished or replaced in the future. The proposed three-storey school is located centrally within the site with open space, car parking and playing fields around it. Two forms are linked by an atrium, with the entrance connecting to the car park and a footpath which runs through the site.

Summary

- It is encouraging to hear that a contractor is already on board and that proposals are on budget.
- The client can be commended for having a strong vision for the new school. They must now ensure that the team deliver the quality and detail they expect.

- This is a well resolved scheme which has the potential to be a catalyst for regeneration in the community. The architect gave a very clear presentation of the design story, including how analysis and brief had informed designs.

Main Points in Detail

Design and Delivery

The team have taken a comprehensive approach to this project, thoroughly analysing the site conditions, requirements of the brief and aspirations of the client, as well as undertaking wide reaching consultation. This approach has resulted in a coherent design for the building and surrounding spaces.

It was good to hear that potential future expansion for the school has been considered to future proof designs.

It is encouraging to hear that the team is already working on a sustainability strategy with the aim of achieving BREEAM Excellent.

The overall way in which the elements of the building have been articulated works well. However, the detailing and materiality of this simple design will be crucial, and must be well managed throughout the delivery.

The proposed programme appears to be realistic. The LA must ensure minimal disruption to existing pupils during construction.

Community

The project aspires to be the 'beating heart' of the community, showcasing education and providing community facilities to extend the hours of operation. The Local Authority (LA) is developing a strategy for the leisure centre and how it might integrate with other activities and facilities in the community such as the Rugby and Football Clubs.

The team should be commended for their efforts to engage with children and parents in the local community, and for the desire to make the most of the facilities the new school will provide.

External Spaces and Routes

It is good to see the attention given to the design of external spaces and efforts made to integrate these with the building design at this stage.

The team might consider if there is opportunity to provide external space for pupils on the west side of the building which would get the sun in the afternoon and evenings.

There is only one vehicle route into the site which arrives at the large car park. The entrance strategy could be given further attention to create a more pleasant arrival experience. Also the build up of heat on the hard surface of the car park could be problematic. This, and the visual impact, could be lessened through the use of more planting.

Integration and improvement of the footpath which currently runs through the site should be commended. This provides an important pedestrian link to the surrounding community and encourages walking.

Security

There are currently security problems at this site, so it is good to see that a security strategy has been considered in the design.

The robustness of the materials used, particularly for the cladding of the colonnade, will be important.

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

Attendees

Agent/Client/Developer:	Jackie Walley, Denbighshire CC Siôn Evans, Denbighshire CC Darren Siddall, Willmott Dixon
Architectural/Urban Designer:	David Wood, Aedas
Design Review Panel:	
Chair	Ewan Jones
Lead Panellist	Kedrick Davies Simon Carne Lynne Sullivan Amanda Spence, Design Advisor, DCFW
Observing:	