

Addroddiad Adolygu Dylunio Design Review Report

Review Status: **Public**

Meeting date:	24th March 2011
Issue Date:	13th April 2011
Scheme Location:	Pier Pavilion site, Llandudno
Scheme Description:	Leisure
Planning Status:	Pre-application

Part1: Presentation

This conceptual proposal is for a 200 bed hotel (although the exact numbers are negotiable) with associated facilities, on the site of the now demolished Victorian Pier Pavilion in Llandudno. The site is within the Llandudno Conservation Area. It falls within the Grade II* listing of Llandudno Pier and is surrounded by other Grade II listed buildings including the adjacent Grand Hotel.

After negotiations with the local authority over a period of 18 months, the current proposal shows a block with stepped massing linking the height of the former Pavilion Theatre with the height of the adjacent Grand Hotel building to the north east (although no elevations or diagrams confirming this were provided). The design is still at an early stage and the applicant is seeking constructive comments on these concept proposals. The new hotel is seen as complementing recently developed facilities in the town, such as Venue Cymru, and the team were confident that a hotel developer was ready and waiting to take this proposal forward.

In view of the sensitivity of the site, the local authority Conservation Officer has produced a guidance document for any proposed development on this site. This emphasises the role of the Grand Hotel as a strong termination to the Promenade frontage and states that 'the former profile of the pre-existing Pavilion building is an important constraint when considering the height and massing of any redevelopment proposals'. In response to the current tabled conceptual design, it is not clear how this design response has evolved, nor how the characteristics of the site and context have been analysed and integrated into the design concept.

Summary of key points arising from discussion, to be read in conjunction with Part 2 of this report.

The Panel welcomed the opportunity to review this highly significant and sensitive proposal. However, this concept proposal is unsatisfactory in its response to the site and context. In summary:

- The Panel is not opposed to hotel development on this site per se, but the capacity of the site needs to be tested, analysed and demonstrated.
- We have serious concerns about the lack of any evidence of a site and contextual analysis, which should have preceded and underpinned any design concept.
- The massing of the proposed block, its relationship with the Grand Hotel and the existing seafront properties, are all problematic and require further consideration and justification.
- There was nothing in the images presented to suggest that this development is located in Llandudno. It is in fact more suggestive of an 'international hotel anywhere', which is not appropriate in this context.
- A fundamental reappraisal of this proposal is necessary, beginning with the background studies referred to above and moving on to a clear demonstration of how this analysis has driven the design development.

Part 2: Discussion and Panel Response in Full

The Panel thought that the material presented was premature and lacked the information and analysis necessary to agree parameters with the local authority and inform the subsequent design. There was no evidence of a character appraisal, conservation area study or site analysis including key views, access considerations and microclimate. These should be provided, along with a critical analysis of the information gathered, in order to clearly demonstrate how the subsequent design proposal has responded to the site and context.

Presentation of the basic research which should underpin this proposal is particularly important given the sensitivity of the site and the number of designations which have been applied to it. The notes produced by the local authority are useful in this respect, but do not relieve the applicant of the responsibility to carry out a full site and contextual analysis.

Currently there is no indication of what considerations have informed the design concept and development. There is nothing in the material provided which refers to the particular character of Llandudno. Any references to large global leisure complexes are negative in this sensitive context.

The Panel had particular concerns about the proposed massing, which would have to be well justified if it is to be acceptable. The repetitive fenestration appears to work against the intricacy and delicacy of the Victorian facades of the Promenade and the Grand Hotel. This, combined with the irregular roof form, presents design contradictions which will require considerable care and skill to resolve. The danger is that a Design & Build procurement will involve value engineering and this will detract from the necessary quality of materials and detailing.

The orientation of the block does not respect the alignment of the Grand Hotel, and the only justification offered for its position on the site was in terms of capacity and quantum of development. The elevation facing Prince Edward Square is critical but is currently dominated by an escape staircase. The south western elevation which addresses the entrance to the pier and faces the town viewed from North Parade/The Parade, is important and is currently not reflected as such within the design concept. There is no indication of the contribution which this significant scheme might make to the public realm, nor any identification of connections, treatment or materials.

It should be understood that the Panel's comments are not subjective but are based on objective and recognised principles of good design and reflected through current Welsh Assembly Government Planning Policy and Technical Advice Notes. For such an important and prominent site, we would expect the applicant to demonstrate a similar professional approach, which would be detailed through the design process and demonstrated within the Design and Access Statement

The Design Commission for Wales Design Review Panel and staff welcome further consultation and will be happy to provide further feedback on this report and/or where appropriate, to receive further presentations. Thank you for consulting the Commission and please keep in touch with us about the progress of your project.

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

Appendix 1: Attendees

Asiant/Client/Datblygwr: Agent/Client/Developer	DP Development (Michael Hilton, S.Yoosawai) Mr J Sims (client)
Pensaer/Architect:	RCP Architects (Joachim Zadow)
Consultants:	n/a
AwdurdodCynllunio/ Planning Authority	Conwy CBC (Peter Jones-Hughes, Rob Dix) (Councillor Janet Finch-Saunders, Councillor Brian Cossey)
Y Panel Adlygu Dylunio: Design Review Panel: Wendy Richards [Chair] Cindy Harris [Officer]	Elfed Roberts Toby Adam Chris Jones
Lead Panellist:	Toby Adam
Sylwedyddion/Observers:	Officers and members from Wrexham CBC and Flintshire CC

