

Addroddiad Adolygu Dylunio Design Review Report

DATGANIADAU O DDIDDORDEB

Mae gofyn i aelodau o'r panel, arsyllwyr a phartion perthnasol eraill ddatgan unrhyw ddi-ddordebau sydd ganddynt **ymlaen llaw** mewn perthynas â'r eitemau Panel Adolygu Dylunio Bydd unrhyw ddatganiadau o'r fath yn cael eu cofnodi yma ac yng nghofnodion canolog Comisiwn Dylunio Cymru.

DECLARATIONS OF INTERESTS

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.

Statws adolygu/Review status

Public

Dyddiad cyfarfod/meeting date	16th November 2011
Dyddiad cyhoeddi/issue date	23rd November 2011
Lleoliad y cynllun/scheme location	Queens Arcade, Working Street, Cardiff
Disgrifiad y cynllun/scheme description	Retail
Statws cynllunio/planning status	Planning application submitted November 2011

Datganiadau o ddi-ddordeb/declaration of interests

Jonathan Hines is a cousin of one of the directors of Holder Mathias Architects. Mark Hallett, who is a Commissioner of DCfW, has engaged Holder Mathias for detailed design work on Porth Teigr.

Adran 1/part 1

Cyflwyniad/Presentation

Constructed in the early 1990's, Queens Arcade is now facing major challenges, partly due to the impact of St David's 2, and partly because of unit size and layout. The frontage to the Queen Street entrance has recently been rebuilt successfully, and this scheme proposes to alter the Working Street entrance likewise, by filling in the 'horseshoe' area, removing the curved steps and bringing the building forward to the street line.

An entrance will be maintained at ground level in the centre of the largely glazed facade, and the quality of materials will be improved. A large (17,000 sq ft) anchor unit is planned at first floor level behind the Working Street elevation. Two new

corner units will be formed at ground floor level either side of the entrance, and the enlarged circulation space could accommodate a cafe. The current escalator accessing the first floor will be removed, so opening up the view down the arcade.

The local authority have met with the applicants at pre-application stage, and a planning application has just been submitted. Their concerns relate to: the loss of the existing 'landmark frontage'; the loss of permeability and legibility through the arcade; the impact on disabled users; and the design quality of the Working Street elevation.

Crynodeb o'r prif bwyntiau a gododd o'r drafodaeth, i'w darllen ochr yn ochr ag Adran 2 yr adroddiad hwn.

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

The Panel was pleased to review this important proposal for Cardiff city centre although we would have preferred to see it at pre-application stage. We understand the constraints involved, but we think that major issues remain to be resolved. In summary:

- We welcome the proposed infilling of the 'horseshoe' and the reinstatement of the building line along Working Street.
- The proposal will remove the existing direct upper level access between Queen Street and Working Street, so reducing overall permeability. Further thought should be given to how this could be maintained.
- The new upper floor retail unit would be visible only from Working Street, yet would have to be accessed via the escalators at the Queen Street end of the arcade. Although we appreciate the attempt to improve viability of the lower level retail units on Working Street, the proposal seems both convoluted and awkward. A staircase close to the Working Street entrance, linking the lower and upper levels, would greatly improve this situation.
- The architectural articulation and scale of the facade should respond more sensitively to the urban grain and context.
- The main entrance should be recessed slightly and doors should be of the appropriate size and quality for an arcade. The entrance should read as the entrance to an arcade, and not to a large shop unit.
- The transparency of the glazed facade at first floor should be ensured by planning conditions.

Adran 2/part 2

**Trafodaeth ac Ymateb y Panel yn Llawn
Discussion and panel response in full**

The project team pointed out that, unlike the Queen Street entrance, the Working Street entrance could not be configured as a two storey arcade, and would need to be handled differently. The project team's intentions behind removal of the existing

escalators at the Working Street end was to open up the lower level view along the arcade, making the space more attractive and accessible to shoppers.

The Panel agreed with the proposal to bring the building forward to the street line, but we had serious concerns about the effect of this proposal on the wider permeability of the city. Direct access between Queen Street and Working Street at the upper (Queen Street) level would be made far less convenient than it is at present.

Within the arcade, access to the first floor would be awkward and convoluted and we suggested the provision of a new staircase near the Working Street entrance, located in such a way so as not to impede views or a potential cafe use. This would enable a more direct access to the anchor store from Working Street, while offering a more robust and future-proof layout, which could respond to changing conditions.

The Panel would like to have seen a more evident connection with the pedestrian axis across the important public space behind St Johns Church. However, it was accepted that the requirements of some existing arcade tenants limited the scope for change.

The Panel thought that the proposed symmetry and scale suggested a sense of classical grandeur which was inappropriate, and we advocated a more flexible response to the varied urban grain and predominantly vertical axis of Working Street. We suggested that the remaining northern facade might be included within the scope of the project, so as to avoid two original and similar sections of elevation being oddly retained either side of the new intervention. The project team explained however that the proposal would not be viable if alterations to the superstructure were to be involved. While understanding the constraints, the Panel was concerned that the proposed facade was too bold, lacking in subtlety and sensitivity to the local character and context, and tending towards a 'retail park' response.

The anchor store tenant, Wilkinsons, do have cafes in their other stores and it is hoped that a cafe could be included here behind the first floor glazed frontage. While there is no guarantee of this, there could be a planning condition which does not allow the glazed area to be obscured.

We thought that the main entrance doors should be set back slightly from the facade. It will also be important that the quality of the doors themselves signal the nature of the space being entered – an arcade rather than a single retail unit.

Mae Panel Adolygu Dylunio Comisiwn Dylunio Cymru a'r staff yn croesawu rhagor o ymgynghoriad, a bydd yn hapus i ddarparu rhagor o adborth am yr adroddiad yma a/neu lle bo'n briodol, dderbyn cyflwyniadau pellach. Diolch am ymgynghori â'r Comisiwn a chadwch mewn cysylltiad â ni os gwelwch yn dda ynglŷn â hynt eich prosiect. A fyddech gystal â'n hysbysu o ddatblygiad eich prosiect. Diolch yn fawr am ymgynghori â'r Comisiwn.

The Design Commission for Wales Design Review Panel welcomes further consultation and we will be happy to provide further feedback on this report and/or where appropriate, to receive further presentations. Please keep us informed of the progress of your project. Thank you for consulting the Commission.

***Mae copi iath Gymraeg o'r adroddiad hwn ar gael ar ofyn.
A Welsh language copy of this report is available upon request.***

Atodiad 1/appendix 1 Mynychwyr/attendees

Asiant/Client/Datblygwr Agent/Client/Developer	Addington Capital LLP (Martin Roberts)
Pensaer/Dylunydd Trefol Architectural/Urban Designer	Holder Mathias Architects (Terry Morley)
Ymgynghorwyr/Consultants	DPP (Gary Sutton)
Trydydd Parti/Third Party	n/a
Awdurdod Cynllunio/Planning Authority	Cardiff City Council
Y Panel Adolygu Dylunio/ Design Review Panel Cadeirydd/Chair Swyddog/Officer Prif Banelydd/Lead Panellist	Alan Francis Cindy Harris Jonathan Adams Jonathan Hines Kedrick Davies Chris Jones
Sylwedyddion/Observers	Various from Flintshire CC