



DESIGN
COMMISSION
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Design Review Report

Newhouse Farm, Llanblethian

DCFW Ref: N166

Meeting of 12th July 2018



Review Status

Meeting date
Issue date
Scheme location
Scheme description
Scheme reference number
Planning status

CONFIDENTIAL

12th July 2018
24th July 2018
Llanblethian, Vale of Glamorgan
Residential
N166
Pre-application

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 and meeting Agenda items. Any such declarations are recorded here and in DCFW's central records.

None declared.

Consultations to Date

There are ongoing discussions with the local planning authority.

The Proposals

The existing detached farmhouse sits within a rural setting on the outskirts of Llanblethian, near Cowbridge. The site is domestic in form and curtilage, with garden space and a swimming pool associated with the main house. In addition, several farm buildings of varying states of repair, size and aspect are located within the site boundary, closely associated with the dwelling.

The project vision is to create a sustainable and exemplary home in a beautiful rural setting. The relationship between the existing farm buildings is reprogrammed via a subtractive architectural process. Buildings are removed but their traces retained with a careful consideration of landscape and architecture.

Refurbishment and extension of existing farmhouse, barn and milking parlour is proposed. New-build elements link the existing house and annex to the reinvigorated milking parlour which will become a kitchen and living space and act as the hub of the home. A tower element acts as a pivot point between these two buildings and also becomes the architectural centrepiece, drawing influence from similar rural towers found in the county. One other barn is retained as a flexible family utility space. The existing pool buildings will also be retained and the pool itself turned into a natural bathing pond. Remaining minor sheds/outbuildings are removed but their traces retained so as to maintain the site's history.

Main Points

The scheme was at an appropriate early stage for review, where there is scope for constructive dialogue to add value. The physical model was particularly useful for understanding and reviewing the proposal in its landscape context. The following points summarise key issues from the review and should be considered to inform any further design work:

Project narrative

Given the special nature of the site and the relevant local and national planning policies and guidance, it is especially important that a strong and clear design narrative is established for the project. This will be required to justify proposals to the local planning authority and other stakeholders, and should be set out and illustrated in a Design and Access Statement.

The narrative should be founded on good analysis of the site and context, understanding of the landscape and the clients' ambitions for how they will live at Newhouse Farm.

The rationale for retention, demolition and addition of new buildings should be clearly set out.

Justifying the tower

The tower element of the proposal is unusual and, therefore, needs especially strong justification. Consideration will need to be given to relevant planning policy in this respect. The inclusion and design of any tower should add value to the site.

The LVIA will usefully establish the impact of the tower on local views. It is not necessarily bad if the tower can be seen, but it makes it even more important that the design is elegant and well-justified.

If the principle of the tower can be justified, careful thought will need to be given to the language of the tower (agricultural, domestic, new etc.) and how it works with the other building elements and landscape as an overall composition. The height, form, proportions, materials and articulation of the tower will also be important. It will be useful to get a better understanding of how tall the tower would need to be to achieve the views desired by the clients. Options will need to be methodically tested through accurate physical and/or computer generated models and drawings.

Site strategies

There are a number of key strategic design decisions which need to be resolved and justified:

- Approach/access: The proposed new arrival experience removes the axial approach to the existing farmhouse building.
- Location of the car port/garage: currently dominates the front of the property and blocks oblique views to the old farmhouse
- The composition and hierarchy of old, repurposed and new elements (which should speak loudest?)
- Routes, connections and relationships between spaces within the house and outside

Landscape design approach

It is positive that landscape architects have been appointed at an early stage in the design process and are working collaboratively with the architectural team to develop an integrated approach.

The landscape design work to date is based on good understanding and analysis of the site and context. The rationale for the defining and blending of the domestic, meadow and pastoral landscapes is positive. Careful consideration should be given to boundary treatments and the separation of grazing and domestic areas. Future maintenance and upkeep of the gardens, paths and landscape should also be considered.

Further review

The Commission would welcome the opportunity to review the scheme again once design work has progressed. Please note, we are currently experiencing high demand for our design review service and encourage the team to get in touch early.

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

Attendees

Agent/Client/Developer:	Sean and Victoria Jones
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Local Authority:	Peter Thomas, Vale of Glamorgan
Design Review Panel:	
Chair	Kedrick Davies
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