

Design Review Report

Glan Llyn Parcels 3C & 4A, Newport

DCFW Ref: N247

Meeting of 21st January 2021



Review Status

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

PUBLIC

21st January 2021
23rd February 2021
Newport
Residential
N247
Reserved matters application
submitted

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

Consultations to Date

This is the first formal review of this scheme which forms the basis of a submission for a reserved matters planning application. It follows desktop consideration of the proposals and correspondence during November 2020, between DCFW and the Local Authority at their request. Subsequently in December 2020 the scheme proposers, Lovell, registered with the Commission requesting formal review in January 2021.

The Proposals

This scheme proposes some 500 new homes over two parcels, landscape and access arrangements at Glan Llyn, Llanwern, Newport. The original proposals responded to a sub area masterplan which was the subject of outline consent. The proposals were not considered to sufficiently address good design and placemaking principles. The current submission focusses on a new masterplan framework prepared by Powell Dobson Architects. A mix of 1,2, 3 & 4 bed homes is proposed with approximately 40% affordable. Lovell have entered into a conditional contract with St Modwen to purchase parcels 3C and 4A. Lovell's partner on delivery of the affordable housing element is Pobl.

Main Points

An important aspect of this proposed new community on the former Llanwern steel works site, is to deliver on the placemaking objectives of the Welsh Government and the Local Development Plan, in terms of creating an aspirational residential neighbourhood that benefits from a range of supporting community uses, a mixed-use neighbourhood centre at its heart, and green infrastructure at all scales. The location is a remediated former steel works site, with little existing character within the two land parcels themselves, predominantly level with existing landscape features to the east/west and to the north and a considerable opportunity for a new high-quality neighbourhood.

Placemaking principles

The approach to placemaking should be focused on creating a development with a clear and distinctive identity that supports a vibrant and active public realm. The recent iterations on the layout have been an improvement but there remains considerable scope to do even more. This will require a commitment from the developer as well the support of the planning and highways departments of the local authority.

A vision for the two parcels should start with analysis of the site and establishing a concept for the type of place that is to be created. This is currently lacking and should be informed by considering: how will people live here, how will they get around, where will they go, where will they meet and interact, what will the place look and feel like? The wider masterplan sets up green infrastructure principles that will provide a setting to the edge of the parcels, but more is needed to develop a sense of place and identity within each parcel.

Streets, spaces and public realm

The street hierarchy is undermined by the limited variation in street width, building-to-building distances and finishes which should define their character. It is disappointing that a negative view is anticipated from the highways authority to the integration of a sense of character within the streets such as street trees, dimensions, corner radii etc. This is an out-of-date perspective and needs to be addressed through a collaborative approach within the authority and communicated clearly to the development team. There is seemingly a lack of commitment to the Manual for Streets approach and use of its guidance which is frustrating the achievements of the best possible outcomes for placemaking and pedestrian prioritisation.

The central space within the site could be emphasised further to provide a setting for more dwellings and enhance the identity of the site.

Shared surfaces

The reason for the incorporation of shared space and its proposed nature needs to be clearer. What will people do in this space? How will it help people move around? What aspects of the design will ensure that pedestrians are given priority?

There seems to be no reason why shared surfaces throughout the site should not be connected to one another. Rat-running is not an issue as these routes will not act as a short cut to anywhere.

The potential of mews streets, as well as greater variation in the widths of streets should be explored as a way of establishing a hierarchy of routes within the site. The utilisation of central drainage channels in the mews areas could assist in differentiating such spaces from others.

Linked to the development of streets of different character is the need for an approach to parking that allows for variety and may include on-plot, on-street and small, well-overlooked parking courts.

Character

While each parcel is not vast, it is still important to explore differences between building types on the different edges of the development, key corners and around key spaces, in order to reinforce a sense of identity and place within different areas of the scheme. Specific corner units are essential to positively addressing the public realm.

Site-wide drainage strategy

A site-wide drainage strategy has been established within the higher-level masterplan, but more could be done within each plot to deal with surface water run-off and further contribute to the character of the development. The SuDS design, if expressed more emphatically within this scheme, could provide a stronger distinct character to each area.

Movement

The walking and cycling routes through the phases have been improved but further moves could be made to enhance them further. For example, ensuring that they connect to the crossing points between each of the phases. At a strategic level there needs to be clarity about what this route is for ie, a leisure route or a route to school/shops etc as this should inform the design of the route and the nature of development around it. Again, the integration of SuDS and biodiversity could add to the quality of these routes.

Biodiversity

A strategy to boost habitat provision would be a significant benefit for the site which requires ecological restoration.

Building types

It is worth exploring whether a mix of residential types, for instance self-build units, would contribute to the 'sense of place' of the development.

Clarity of ideas

An iterative approach has been taken to the development of proposals for the site with each plan responding to the comments on the previous. This has led to the scheme being tweaked rather than there being a clear vision from the outset. The development of this scheme could become an opportunity for something radically different, which would strengthen the landscape character, respond to the history of the site and create a more distinctive and appealing place to live where a sense of community can develop.

Placemaking must be a priority as this scheme is developed further and the approach to the design of streets and spaces should be planning-led with all opportunities for a creative approach explored.

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

Attendees

Agent/Client/Developer:	Sian Diaz, Lovell James Duffett, Lovell
Architect/Design Team:	Bernadette Kinsella, Powell Dobson Emma Baker, EDP
Local Planning Authority:	Geraint Roberts, City and County of Newport
Chair:	Ewan Jones
Lead Panellist:	Kedrick Davies
Design Review Panel:	Toby Adam Jen Heal, Design Advisor, DCFW Efa Lois, Place Advisor, DCFW
Observing	Carole-Anne Davies, Chief Executive, DCFW Lisa Jenkins Communications