

Design Review Report

Velindre Cancer Centre, Cardiff

DCFW Ref: N91

Meeting of 18th February 2021



Review Status

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

PUBLIC

18th February 2021
12th March 2021
Cardiff
Cancer Centre
N91
Outline approved

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.

Phil Roberts declared that he is a member of the DCFW Design Panel, representing Velindre on this occasion on the client team.

Ashley Bateson declared that it is possible Hoare Lea & Prtnrs may be approached as part of bidding consortia, however he will not be party to the bid, or be working with colleagues who may become involved.

Both the above are standing declarations with which the VCC client team are comfortable and all present at the review were content to proceed.

Note on current operational context:

The Design Commission for Wales is operating during necessary public health measures due to the impact of the Coronavirus Covid 19 pandemic and this report follows the recent online review meeting.

Consultations to Date

Previous Design Reviews in November 2015, March 2016, and November 2017.

Workshops previously conducted in March 2018, April 2018, October 2020, and February 2021.

The Proposals

The proposal is for a new cancer treatment centre with associated parking, landscape works, access and includes arrangements for the relocation of the Maggie's Centre.

Main Points

It is encouraging that a the 96A request has been approved as this will allow more time for the tender process to take place in advance of the submission of reserved matters applications.

The main themes that arose in the Design Review are themes previously highlighted in correspondence from DCFW to the client team, principally:

- 1) The clarity and consistency of briefing/technical documents to communicate ambition and design intent and as a means of protecting both;
- 2) The need for clear principles for landscape, movement and layout of the site;
- 3) The need for a collaborative and ambitious client team to reflect the required skills within the bidding team.

The latter point is now well on its way. The following are key matters for consideration as the scheme progresses.

Legibility of Documents

As highlighted in previous correspondence from DCFW, the documentation and materials provided to bidders needs to clearly convey the client's qualitative ambitions.

The future bidding teams would benefit from the creation of a graphic showing the hierarchy of the suite of tender documents, due to the vast number of documents that will be provided to bidding teams. This suite should move sequentially from the high-level vision, through the client brief, to the technical and legal requirements in an organised way. It should be recognised that different parts of the documentation suite will be used for different purposes by the bidding teams, who may benefit from strategic level documents for selling the scheme within their own organisations.

DCFW are yet to see the full suite of documents and some documents in the current package were developed some time ago. Therefore, it is difficult to comment on the overall clarity and messaging as it has not all been seen. Time is now tight to review these in the light of lessons learnt from the revised reference design before tender action begins.

A short, one page summary document was discussed as a means of conveying the essence of the project in a way that is quick and easy for the bidding teams to assess.

Sustainability and Energy Performance

Measurable targets should be established throughout the employers requirements, with clearly stated consequences if those targets are not met. This will crucial for control of sustainability and energy performance. Alongside broader measurement tools, BREEAM or WELL, we understand that operational energy performance will be measured. We would strongly encourage establishment and monitoring of carbon targets as well, for both operational and embodied carbon. Measurement of embodied carbon may be more effective and flexible than stating a requirement or preference for specific construction materials.

The client team may benefit from an analysis of what would happen if the energy performance of the building were to change over time and ensure that future resilience is built in.

Use of the Reference Scheme

The process of testing the reference design has been valuable to the scheme. However, the important elements and lessons learnt from the reference design now need to be extracted, analysed and written into the employer's requirements. It is also important to ensure that any imagery of the reference scheme reflects the aspirations for the development and are in alignment with the precedent case studies that have been explored, otherwise they could be misleading.

Landscape

As the landscape forms such an important and integral part of the overall vision for the scheme, there must be a sufficient budget and processes in place for maintaining it and ensuring it is kept up to a high quality. The landscape needs to be of sufficient maturity and quality from day one to meet the aims of the project.

Security

The proposed approach to security within the site moves away from a high security fence and instead uses the landscape as a buffer or deterrent in certain places. This could be a very positive approach that helps to make the site more open and welcoming but requires further explicit description to ensure it is delivered successfully. It is an example of a key design principle for the landscape which must be extracted from the reference design and explained clearly in the tender documentation.

Assessing Submissions

As highlighted in previous correspondence, given the emphasis on delight categories in the scoring mechanism, it is important that the assessing team has the right expertise to review and interpret whether the elements in this category are being met.

There is value in having the right professional team in place who can provide advice and client monitoring during the construction process, in order to check that what was agreed to is being delivered on-site.

Development of the brief

The brief was reviewed some time ago by DCFW and may benefit from further review to ensure that it expresses the aims of the project. The brief will set the agenda and explain how this project is unique. Further review of material by DCFW must be undertaken with the benefit of the full package of material available so that each element can be considered in context.

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

Attendees

Agent/Client/Developer:	David Powell - Velindre Mark David - Velindre Andrea Hague - Velindre
Architect/Design Team	John Cooper - John Cooper Architecture Hrafnhildur Olafsdottir – John Cooper Architecture Phil Roberts – Consultant Rupert Grierson – MacGregor Smith Philip Morgan – Consultant Phil Jones – Consultant – Cardiff University Richard Wilks – WSP Craig Salisbury Jonathan McMillan Allan West
Chair:	Ewan Jones
Design Review Panel:	Simon Richards Toby Adam Ashley Bateson Jen Heal, Design Advisor, DCFW Efa Lois, Place Advisor, DCFW