



DESIGN  
COMMISSION  
FOR WALES  
COMISIWN  
DYLUNIO  
CYMRU

5<sup>th</sup> April 2023

Dear Mr Cooke,

Thank you for consulting the Design Commission for Wales. We have considered the proposal and have the following comments.

The proposed development is in a good location, close to the city centre and train station, with great potential for redevelopment.

The DAS does not provide evidence of the evolution of the design and therefore doesn't demonstrate why this is the best design solution for the site. There may be better solutions for the form, mass and scale of development that would accommodate the quantum of accommodation and provide more placemaking opportunities.

Given the site's accessible location, we would encourage a reduction in car parking. The car parking, as proposed, is visually dominant from the street and affecting the quality of the amenity space between the proposed flats and houses. We suggest considering a car-free scheme, or at least a reduction in the number of spaces and redesign of how they are accommodated, to enable the building facing the street to be extended further south and for the central area to be a more pleasant and useable amenity space. Reducing the car parking could be considered alongside opportunities for exploring shared mobility, such as car clubs.

It is unclear how the central amenity space will operate. Will this be open or enclosed, public or private? Can people living in the ground floor flats walk out from their balconies onto the amenity space and will they have some semi-private space? This area could be the scheme's biggest asset, yet currently seems quite undefined and is unlikely to be well used as a result. We suggest a rethink of this whole central area and greater consideration of how it can better meet the needs of the people who will be living there.

Dual-aspect flats would provide more light, cross ventilation and a better living environment for the people living there.

There are bin stores proposed on the corners facing the street. This will create a dead frontage and would be better located to the rear.

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The main lobby appears to be to the north, whereas it is likely most people (walking or driving) will come from the south.

The design of the houses could be simplified, and the living environment improved, with the removal of their off-street car parking spaces. The car parking could either be removed completely or designed as part of the proposed shared surface street.

The scheme should improve the walking environment along Factory Road, with further attention needed to how people will cross the vehicular entrance. Consideration could also be given to introducing SUDS and street trees along Factory Road.

The location of bike storage should be easy to use and feel safe to store your bike. As proposed, it looks tucked around the back and awkward to access.

Further advice can be obtained through our Design Review service. Schemes can be brought to Design Review by the local authority. Although Design Review is best undertaken early in the design process, it would still be beneficial for this project.

Yours sincerely.

Max Hampton

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