

Addroddiad Adolygu Dylunio Design Review Report

Review Status: **Public**

Meeting date:	19th August 2009
Issue Date:	3rd September 2009
Scheme Location:	Morrison's, Cwmbran
Scheme Description:	Retail
Planning Status:	Planning application submitted April 2009

Part1: Presentation

This proposal is for a 7,275 sq metre foodstore located to the east of Cwmbran town centre. Morrison's always insist on design excellence and do not use fixed design templates. The elevations proposed here are simple, functional and make reference to local materials. Landscape proposals for the perimeter of the site will reinforce native species and use trans-location to minimise disturbance.

It is envisaged that this proposal will lead to the comprehensive redevelopment of the eastern employment area adjacent to the town centre, promote connectivity with the town centre and a possible future transport interchange, and enhance the use of the leisure centre. Car parking use on this site will be unrestricted to promote access to town centre shops, and a raised deck will be provided over St David's Road. The building will achieve a BREEAM Very Good rating, and a CHP [combined heat and power] system will be installed using gas condensing boilers.

The Local Authority has concerns that this proposal is poorly integrated with the town centre, does not improve physical or visual links, and locates the building to the east of the site, rather than closer to the town centre.

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

The Panel was encouraged by the aspiration for the bridge link and the additional information provided on this, as part of the ongoing discussions with the Local Authority. However, we are unable to support this proposal as an isolated planning application without a broader masterplan which identifies an appropriate model for town centre

redevelopment and regeneration of surrounding areas, together with a realistic strategy for achieving the vision. In summary:

- The delivery of attractive, integrated and pedestrian friendly connections will be crucial to the success of this project.
- The link west to the town centre across St David's Road is most critical, but the upgrading of pedestrian routes to the railway station to the north should also be considered.
- The landscape strategy needs further development and to be embedded across the site. It should reinforce the delivery of a high quality public realm and pedestrian linkages.
- We support the sustainability strategy contained in the Design & Access statement, and urge the team to go beyond their standard practice and in particular to introduce high daylight levels to the store interior.

Part 2: Discussion and Panel Response in Full

The developer confirmed that they were committed to funding the link across St David's Road and this would be included in the Section 106 agreement. While the Panel welcomed this commitment, we noted that the information to support this element of the scheme is not included within the planning application.

In our view any proposals for development should fit within a broader masterplan, and be fully integrated with the regeneration of the town centre. This proposal should not result in another supermarket unconnected to its surroundings. The bridge link should be treated as a necessary and integral part of the application. The link is intended to accommodate a wide walkway and active frontages. We questioned the capacity for the extra retail uses envisaged to deliver this, and suggested that additional weather protection should be offered in this exposed location. Improving the connections with the existing train station to the north should also be considered.

The landscape proposal is confined to the periphery of the site and this could be improved with a more integrated planting scheme which reinforces the east/west connections and the existing green strip running north/south.

We support the commitment to achieve a minimum rating of BREEAM Very Good and welcomed the site-wide energy strategy which uses waste heat for hot water, and includes a CHP system. Further opportunities for exceeding this level of performance should be explored. For example, internal daylight levels could be improved by using rooflights.

The team confirmed that they had been offered the Prupim site to the west of their site, but this was not appropriate for their needs.

The Design Commission for Wales Design Review Panel and staff welcome further consultation and will be happy to provide further feedback on this report and/or where appropriate, to receive further presentations. Thank you for consulting the Commission and please keep in touch with us about the progress of your project.

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

Appendix 1: Attendees

Asiant/Client/Datblygwr: Agent/Client/Developer	WM Morrison Supermarkets PLC [James Brook]
Pensaer/Architect:	DLA Architecture [Phil Cotton, John Orrell]
Consultants:	Peacock & Smith [Chris Creighton]
Awdurdod Cynllunio/ Planning Authority	Torfaen CBC [Duncan Smith, Richard Lewis, Neil Boardman, Craig Mead, Andrew Ferguson]
Y Panel Adlygu Dylunio: Design review panel: Wendy Richards [Chair] Cindy Harris [Officer] Lynne Sullivan	Ashley Bateson Richard Parnaby Jonathan Hines
Lead Panellist:	Richard Parnaby
Sylwedyddion/Observers:	Takayuki Kumazawa, Okayama University

Declaration of Interest: DCFW Chair, Alan Francis, is director of Gaunt Francis Architects who are working with DLA Architecture as part of a Joint Venture in Wrexham.