

## DESIGN REVIEW PANEL

### NOTES OF MEETING Wednesday 14<sup>th</sup> December 2011

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Agenda and notes (where appropriate) can be viewed at the Council's website at:

<http://www.merton.gov.uk/living/designandconservation/designreviewpanel.htm>

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#### Panel Members Present:

- Marcus Beale
- Tim Belcher
- Councillor John Bowcott (Chair)
- David Breen
- Duncan Michael
- Terry Pawson
- Andre Sutherland
- Sally Warren

#### Council Officers Present:

- Paul Garrett

#### Apologies:

- John Merivale
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#### **Item 1: Pre-Application, Dundonald Primary School**

Pre-Application – Notes Confidential

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#### **Item 2: 11/P2865, Application, AELTC Covered Courts**

The Panel were generally supportive of the principle of the proposal and its aims and, following explanation by the applicant, understood the purpose and use of the building throughout the year and during the annual championships. The Panel were also generally supportive of the overall approach taken in terms of the architecture in relation to the rear and side elevations and the roof form picking out the individual court areas.

However, the Panel felt that the application was in serious risk of missing an important opportunity and had gone too far in trying to be a 'good neighbour' to surrounding residents, such that the building was trying to hide itself

completely, becoming almost apologetic of itself. The neighbour concerns seemed to have been addressed more than adequately. The purpose and clientele of the building was also being used wrongly as an additional reason to have no public face or presence. The Panel felt clearly that this was wrong.

Not only did the Panel feel that the frontage of the building needed to be visible and display a distinct and positive architectural integrity, it felt that it needed to relate well to the character of the remainder of the AELTC by developing its style and image. It was felt that, although it was a private members club, it needed to 'give something back' to the locality, and that this should be achieved through high quality architecture visible from the public realm. This opportunity should not be missed.

The Panel noted that a lot of engineering and thought had gone into the design and construction of the building, notably the roof form. It was felt that the high quality of the interior needed to be expressed clearly externally. The failure to do this, particularly with the detailing on the roof form and the screening of the front elevation, meant that the building was in danger of appearing like a faceless distribution centre, rather than an exclusive sporting facility. Just because it is a private club does not exempt it from having to contribute to the surroundings.

Although it was appreciated most visitors to the club would arrive by car, the panel felt that the pedestrian access to the site was poor and needed to be improved and that the entrance needed to be obvious, with a clear footpath provided to it. It was felt that, as part of the frontage, the entrance needed to be clearly identifiable and was an obvious location for architectural expression of the quality of the building. It was felt that the ivy-clad trellis on the front was a mistake and made the building feel like it was being hidden – rather like a trellis in front of a garden shed.

Overall the Panel felt that whilst the need to respect neighbours amenity was important, the proposals had gone too far in this respect. The building needed to express its architectural quality and add to the positive international brand the club provides for Wimbledon.

VERDICT: **AMBER**