

## Case Study : Briefing and In-Use Stages

### The National Assembly for Wales



Images of the Assembly courtesy of Redshift Photography

**The National Assembly for Wales was completed in early 2006 and in May 2006 the building was tested with the in-use version of the DQI. This followed on from a brief stage DQI carried out in July 2002 when the Assembly trailblazed the DQI.**

The project mission statement was:

*“To deliver a National Assembly Debating Chamber which will be a unique place that people will want to visit and use”*

In May 2006 representatives from the supply and demand sides reconvened to evaluate whether or not their original aspirations and standards for the project had been met.

The DQI was used as part of a ‘lessons learned’ away day arranged by the Assembly with Schal, the project managers. The workshop was run with 20 stakeholders including the quantity surveyor, facilities manager, structural engineer, planning supervisor, and building users and clients.

Schal appointed Adrian Burton, a trained DQI facilitator from Broadway Malyan, to facilitate the workshop. Adrian said of the workshop:

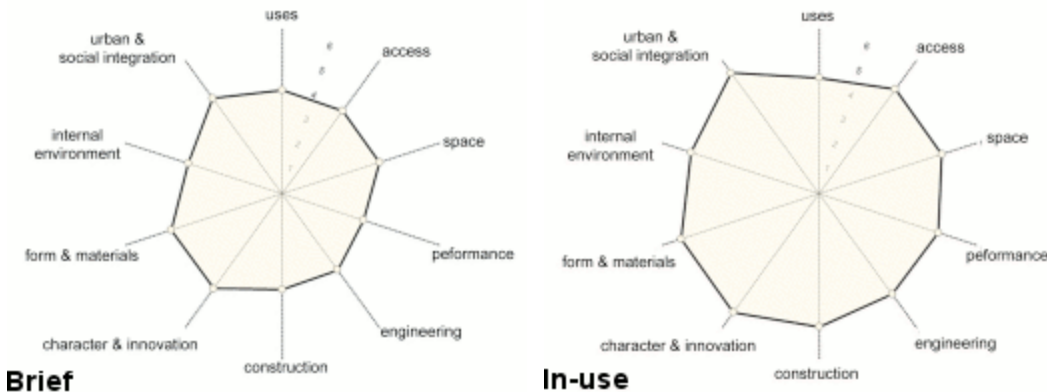
*“The DQI assessment after occupation of the building has been helpful for communicating how well the building did achieve the objectives set at briefing and to celebrate the successful completion of the building.*

*The DQI assessment at the in-use stage has established the ‘ground truth’ as seen from the diverse perspectives of the various participants.... On this occasion, the Welsh Assembly are able to justly claim that the building has achieved what it set out to do.”*

### Findings

In July 2002, during briefing, the stakeholders were concerned with the integration of the building in the site as well as the physical appearance of the building and they were against cellular office space and lack of flexibility in internal spaces.

In May 2006 the stakeholders were pleased with the overall design, highlighting the quality of materials used, the clear and simple layout, the roof and chamber and the comfort the building afforded visitors and users as particular successes.



**Brief**

Hover on graphs for larger view

The initial DQI session was useful in directing design development and the recent session in capturing the successes and failures of the building for guiding future projects and the ongoing management of the Assembly building.

The DQI results revealed that the completed Assembly building not only met the criteria and aspirations outlined during briefing but exceeded expectations. The briefing stage assessment identified that the design only met 57% of the default fundamental factors, whereas the current building passed on 94% of the factors.

The building scored particularly well to questions such as:

- There is clear vision behind the building; it has character and is widely acclaimed for its quality
- The building lifts the spirits and visitors like coming here
- The building is low energy and will minimise CO2 emissions
- The building is sited well in relation to its context
- The area immediately outside is pleasant, is well sited and contributes to the neighbourhood
- The shape of the building is pleasing; provides good views and the materials add to its quality

Feedback from respondents on the DQI was positive:

*“All too rarely do we designers find out what our clients and users think of their new facilities - good or bad. The DQI Workshop was an excellent forum for drawing these responses out”*



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