



# IHP Design Review Report

Parc Hadau, Rhydyfro, Pontardawe

DCFW Ref: 19L

Meeting of 22<sup>nd</sup> May 2019

**Review Status**

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

**PUBLIC**

22<sup>nd</sup> May 2019  
10<sup>th</sup> June 2019  
Pontardawe, Swansea  
Residential  
19L  
Pre-application – LDP site

**Declarations of Interest**

The panel Chair was advised that Gayna Jones, Chair of the Design Commission for Wales, chairs the IHP Group. Gayna was not present in the meeting.

Andy Sutton is a member of the Innovation Housing Programme steering group.

All present at the review were content to proceed following these declarations.

**The Proposals**

The proposed brownfield housing scheme aims to develop a new neighbourhood with approximately 36 new homes for long term rental. The ambition is to deliver zero carbon homes for future generations with quality spaces and places whilst supporting ecology and enabling low-impact travel. These homes will also operate Sero Energy's management to provide domestic Demand Side Response to the Grid.

**Main Points**

This report is not a record of the full discussion that took place during the review, rather a summary of the key points that have been identified that would help to improve the project and any concerns regarding the funding of the project.

The on-going management by Sero Homes of this innovative approach is a fundamental driver for this development that will have a profound impact on the site biodiversity and quality of life for the future residents.

**Urgent Design Concerns**

It is necessary to establish an early strategy of site hierarchy addressing potential issues regarding the management of communal, private and semi-private spaces.

More detail is needed as to the impact of the houses on the site in terms of scale, physical location, outdoor amenity spaces and street adaptability.

The application of parking standards to this development has the potential to completely undermine the qualities of shared space and low-impact living that are being promoted. This also ruins contrary to the ambition and rationale for the IHP funding stimulus programme. The flexible approach that was outlined whereby additional spaces can be added if needed has a clear rationale and fits with the management approach.

## **Placemaking**

The green 'permeable' central amenity approach to the site is positive and encourages social interaction and supports biodiversity. Semi-private areas of transition between private spaces and communal areas need to be implemented along with a method for maintaining these spaces in line with the design vision and in the interests of its success and the need to avoid the 'privatization' of 'public space'.

The use of space also needs to be rooted in and complementary to the ecological landscape design principles espoused. Consideration should be given to a net gain approach to biodiversity.

Further attention should be given to the following site connections: the current and future neighborhoods, the north link to the school, the crossing points between houses, the green buffer perimeter area, and the walking routes in and around the site.

Social interaction between residents is encouraged with the provision of a communal building and areas for varied and seasonal activities.

## **Integration of innovation**

The schemes innovative element lies in the challenge of achieving zero carbon status beyond building regulations, through a low embodied energy fabric first approach and SuDS system, whilst providing a sense of place and good quality of life for the residents.

This includes the implementation of early site testing, monitoring and training which could potentially reduce the gap between design expectations and built performance. Full strategic engagement from the energy consultant and the design team is fundamental to achieving these objectives successfully.

The site boundary design is seen as a positive feature and could reduce car trips to the school and encourage active travel. The installation of electric car charging points and home integrated battery can be further enhanced with the implementation of a car share scheme to the site.

The SuDS system will contribute to the site landscape, encouraging biodiversity and resident's delight as water should be brought to surface and celebrated, water can pass through the site without obstacles or hard barriers.

Further details are needed in regard to the site entrance legibility and sense of arrival, considering the attenuation pond and a contextually appropriate elevation onto the street.

Services such as waste collection and deliveries should be considered at an early stage.

The design team should consider further the flexibility of the scheme in terms of its on-going management, such that it is prepared to manage change in response to residents behaviour and needs.

## **Next Step**

The Commission would encourage a further consultation through the design review service.

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

## Attendees

Agent/Client/Developer	Yr Hadau Ltd. James Williams, JiMcArdle, Andy Sutton (Sero Homes)
Architect/Planning Consultant	Chris Loy, Tim Fry (Loyn & Co) Nic McEwan (Farrer Huxley Landscape Arch) Osian Roberts (DPP Planning)
Local Planning Authority	Chris Davies, Neath Port Talbot CBC
Design Review Panel Chair Panel	Andrew Linfoot Richard Woods, Jun Huang, Jen Heal, Larissa Berquó