



# IHP Design Review Report

Troy r Afon, Llanrwst

DCFW Ref: IHP AE

Meeting of 19<sup>th</sup> July 2018

Review Status	PUBLIC
Meeting date	19 <sup>th</sup> July 2018
Issue date	20 <sup>th</sup> July 2018
Scheme location	Llanrwst
Scheme description	Residential
Scheme reference number	IHP AE
Planning status	Planning permission granted

## Declarations of Interest

Panel members, observers and other relevant parties are required to declare ***in advance*** any interests they may have in relation to the Design Review Agenda items. Any such declarations are recorded here and in DCFW's central records.

The panel Chair was advised that Gayna Jones, Chair of the Design Commission for Wales, chairs the IHP Group. All present at the review were content to proceed following the declarations.

## The Proposals

The aim is to provide high quality affordable accommodation that will utilise innovative construction methods which also provides training opportunities for future residents as well as existing Cartrefi Conwy tenants.

The units will be constructed using the Beattie Passive system which will deliver affordable (construction and living costs) units, which can be constructed quickly making best use of local labour and materials as well as providing training opportunities for future residents of the accommodation as well as current residents. The development will be delivered by Cartrefi Conwy's subsidiary who will also engage with its employment academy to manage the training opportunities and other community benefits. This development is working with an existing planning permission for eight homes.

## Main Points

This report is not minutes 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.

### **Urgent Design Concerns**

- The materials proposed in the original planning application are at odds with the innovation, especially the use of uPVC.
- The fencing off of SUDs and biodiversity areas does not make a positive contribution to the place and could encourage anti-social behaviour.

## **Placemaking**

### Landscape and site layout

Although some elements of site layout are fixed by the existing planning permission, any scope for improvements should be explored. The landscape elements, especially the drainage and biodiversity areas have the potential to make a positive contribution if they can be integrated rather than fenced off. Safety and security are important, but designing positive connections and ensuring all landscape spaces have natural surveillance will contribute to this.

### Materials and architectural language

The current proposed use of materials is at odds with the innovative construction system, and the Commission strongly encourages the team to reconsider the approach. In particular, the use of uPVC products is not forward looking or sustainable. The project offers an opportunity to move away from the culture of specifying uPVC on RSL schemes to support the use of alternative low-maintenance doors, windows, fascias and rainwater goods.

It would be good to see clear justification for the palette of materials for a scheme which is innovative. The project is an opportunity to move away from 'traditional' affordable housing specifications to provide truly contemporary homes which reflect the innovation. Striving for elegant simplicity with well-proportioned elevations would be a positive step in this direction. There is no obvious rationale for the split render and brick facades.

### Quality of internal spaces

The construction system offers more flexibility in layouts compared to traditional building as the internal walls are not load bearing, and the potential of this should be explored to provide the best quality inside the homes. If it is possible to use the Beattie Passive panels to form the roof pitches, this would create opportunities to utilise the space inside the roof pitch which would otherwise be taken up by rafters.

## **Integration of innovation**

Innovation approach: The approach to innovation is supply chain focussed. It is intended that the Beattie Passive system, which creates panels or modules using low grade timber, will be used for this project and other schemes by Cartrefi Conwy. It is intended that Cartrefi's subsidiary, Creating Enterprise will construct the properties and provide training through its Employment Academy. The ambition is to build a factory to produce the panels, but small 'flying' factories for each site are also possible.

It is positive that the team is engaging in discussions around collaboration with other RSLs and local authorities in north Wales to expand roll out of the system in the future and increase capacity in the construction industry. The ambition to develop the system with wood Knowledge Wales to use local timber would also be positive.

There would be value in developing this proposal alongside the other IHP bids which apply the same system to demonstrate its application to different types of site and resident needs. There are some constraints on the use of the system in this project, due to the existing planning consent, which will need to be addressed.

## Next Steps

- Where possible, make amendments to the site layout to allow integration of SUDs and biodiversity areas so that they make a positive contribution to the place.
- Reconsider that materials palette in light of the innovative construction/supply chain approach. In particular, eliminate use of uPVC which does not uphold sustainability principles.
- Explore the potential of flexibility inside homes.

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

## Attendees

Agent/Client/Developer: David Lowe & Owain Roberts, Cartrefi Conwy

Design/Planning Team:

Design Review Panel:

Chair

Panel

Jonathan Vernon-Smith

Angela Williams

Richard Woods

Amanda Spence

Observing:

Gayna Jones & Darren Hatton