



IHP Design Review Report

Former Social Club, Bangor

DCFW Ref: 19C

Meeting of 22nd May 2019

Review Status

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

PUBLIC

22nd May 2019
31st May 2019
Bangor
Residential
19C
Application submitted

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. Gayna was not present in the meeting.

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

The Proposals

The proposed brownfield development is a mixed tenure housing scheme comprising 23 x 2-bedroom apartments and 15 x 1-bedroom apartments on four floors with associated parking. The Social Club that formerly occupied the site was demolished and cleared several years ago.

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.

Urgent Design Concerns

A planning application for the proposed development has already been submitted, limiting the scope for strategic changes to the proposals and a holistic design approach. DCFW recognises the proposed use of modern methods of construction to provide greater certainty regarding build times as well as the use of local supply chains and sustainable technologies. However, the Commission was concerned to see the wider wealth of place-making and sustainability benefits being missed and the lack of a holistic approach.

The site is well located for access to local facilities and public transport. It provides a great opportunity to promote low/no car ownership and more sustainable living. However, parking requirements and the current proposed provision do not support this opportunity and are driving negative decisions regarding the use and quality of open space and the ground floor. Whilst it is important to be realistic about the number of potential cars that need to be accommodated, the potential to challenge the parking requirements, given the sustainable location of the site, must be explored. Alternatives to private car ownership, such as a car pool should form part of these considerations.

The design is being negatively influenced by the desire to create a 'statement' building. This is a residential building in a primarily residential context which suggests that it should be more subtle and integrated with the tone of other residential properties on the street. Whilst the density may be appropriate given the local context of larger buildings and in support of higher-density living, the form and use of colour could be used in a more focused way to provide subtle elegance.

Opportunities to improve the contribution that the development makes to the street needs to be explored. In particular, the corner presents a blank wall with little activity or natural surveillance. The potential to curve or chamfer this corner could be explored to help address this.

Placemaking

The benefits of speed of construction and improved u-values should not overshadow important placemaking considerations that will ensure that this is a nice place to live with health and well-being benefits for residents.

Currently the proposals offer very limited external space and what is proposed is difficult to access and offers little amenity value for the residents.

Additionally, the corridor spaces are minimal and provide little sense of 'home' or the opportunity for interaction with neighbours. This should be a core consideration and not be addressed through 're-fitting' into the current layout.

More thought needs to be given to how to improve the quality of life for all residents as well as the impact at ground level on the street scene.

Integration of innovation

Pursuing the use of local materials and construction is positive and could be carried through further to inform the choice of cladding materials for example. This material needs to be robust and long-term, therefore ensuring it is fade and rust resistant.

The proposed development has carried forward many aspects of a previous planning permission which suggests that the full benefits of a holistic approach to innovation, sustainability, place-making and well-being will not be realised.

Next Steps

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protocols, code of conduct and complaints procedure, which should be read and considered by users of the service.

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

Attendees

Agent/Client/Developer:	Huw Evans, Cartrefi Cymunedol Gwynedd Elliw Owen, Gwynedd Cymunedol Gwynedd
Architect/Planning Consultant:	Simon Venables, Ainsley Gommon Architects
Local Planning Authority:	
Design Review Panel:	
Chair	Andrew Linfoot
Panel	Jun Huang Richard Woods Jen Heal, DCFW Larissa Berquò, DCFW