



IHP Design Review Report

MHA Projects, Monmouthshire

DCFW Ref: 19AK

Meeting of 5th July 2019

Review Status

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

Confidential

5th July 2019
11th July 2019
Monmouthshire
Residential
19AK
Pre-application

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.

The Proposals

The proposal is to implement learning from an IHP round 1 project and upscale the delivery of compact homes located within disused garage areas for those starting out on the housing ladder and down-sizers. The proposed courtyard and mews style houses are designed to be zero carbon and of high quality. Proposals for two sites were presented at the review.

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

This is a well-considered approach that addresses both a need – smaller but still generous, well designed, efficient homes, as well as an issue – disused back-land garage areas. No urgent design concerns were raised by the panel, but the following points should be considered as the proposals develop.

Whilst the orientation of dwellings for maximising the potential of PV panels on the roof is not critical to success as renewables can be accommodated more flexibly, this should still be considered.

Low parking numbers are critical to the success of the development of these smaller sites. The nature of the sites and proposed development suggests that a lower level of parking is appropriate in these cases which will help to ensure that parking does not dominate the environment.

The potential for the proposed chimneys to be used as stack vents to tackle overheating should be fully explored.

Placemaking

The mix of house types should be considered for each site to avoid the potential for enclaves of one demographic. The arrangement of different unit types on the site should also seek to appropriately address the edges of streets and public spaces to ensure sufficient natural surveillance.

Including a common open space within each development is helpful for the setting of the dwellings and to encourage social interaction between residents. The landscape approach to these areas should take account of SuDS requirements.

The ability to improve connections through the sites, for example to the school, is of wider benefit to the community and contributes to the resilience of the schemes at both a domestic and urban scales.

Integration of innovation

The proposal is for the upscaling of the 'long life, loose fit and low energy' design approach that was developed as part of an IHP round one project to further sites. By nature these sites are small so the upscaling in terms of number of units per site will be limited but it is understood that there are many sites of this nature across Monmouthshire and other local authorities and therefore the approach has the potential to be applied much more widely. The focus of upscaling is, therefore, in terms of the number of sites rather than the size of individual dwellings.

To support the replicability of the proposed approach, consideration should be given to including the process that has been tested as part of the IHP round one project to create a methodology or guide. This could include who to engage, when and how; how to assess suitable sites; approach to site and context analysis; landscape design and parking principles.

Next Steps

- Use learning from IHP round one to inform the methodology for the application of this approach to sites of this nature.

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

Attendees

Agent/Client/Developer:	Jeremy Baker, MHA John Davies, MHA
Architect/Planning Consultant:	Wayne Forster, WSA Sam Courtney, LRM
Local Planning Authority:	Craig O'Connor, MCC
Design Review Panel: Chair Panel	Jen Heal, DCFW Lynne Sullivan Chris Jefford