



IHP Design Review Report

Modular Extra Care, Porth, Treorchy and
Mountain Ash

DCFW Ref: 19AJ

Meeting of 5th July 2019

Review Status

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

Confidential

5th July 2019
12th July 2019
RCT
Residential – Extra Care
19AJ
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 seeks to build on the implementation of a 40 unit modular care development supported by a previous round of IHP funding by developing three more extra care schemes and additional independent dwellings totalling 189 units. The modular construction would be undertaken by F1 Modular.

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

Some common themes emerged across all the three proposed developments:

- For all sites the design process should include a through site and context analysis, concept and vision for the site and the proposals should be supported by elevations and sections.
- Parking can dominate the external environment and needs to be minimised and treated sensitively to avoid negative impact on the whole site.
- Treatment of external common areas and the landscape approach to the sites is critical to their success.
- SuDS requirements need to be fully integrated into the landscape proposals.
- Balconies are a positive addition to Treorchy scheme and should be considered more widely.
- Learning from each stage should be built into the next development.

Porth

The second option presented for this site is an improvement on the first in terms of the quality of the communal spaces created, the relationship between the existing and proposed buildings and the orientation of the units.

The layout could be further refined to give more enclosure to the central green space by reviewing the arrangement of the bungalows.

The conservation context of the existing listed building is critical to the development of the design. There was insufficient time and detail at this stage to fully review the proposals in terms of materials, form and architectural expression, particularly the proposed extension, which is comparable in size to the existing building.

Mountain Ash

The road is dominant, and consideration should be given to how to address this more as a pedestrian-priority street or a homezone environment.

Connections between the central green space and the entrance to the extra care facility could be improved which would also support improved connectivity around the site.

Treorchy

Parking is very dominant on this site. All options to reduce or relocate some of the spaces should be explored. The external space around the river could be very appealing but it is currently compromised by parking and the need for retaining walls to accommodate this.

The balconies are a positive addition to the living environment for residents and it will be good to test these as part of the modular construction approach.

Options to relate the dining space more closely with the garden space should be explored.

There is a lot of corridor space within this scheme - it is positive that some dwell space has been included in this, but these spaces must be appropriately proportioned and equipped. Views out at the end of the corridors could also help to improve the internal environment.

Placemaking

In all the schemes the communal external spaces both within the extra care complex and the proposed public open spaces are critical in contributing to placemaking and enhancing the setting of the dwellings. These spaces must relate well to the surrounding properties and internal uses such as the lounge and dining spaces. Focusing on the quality of the landscape design and relationship with the buildings would benefit all the schemes.

The public open spaces must also be complemented by appropriately designed streets that promote a low-speed, pedestrian-priority environment. Manual for Streets principles should be applied with the potential for the implementation of shared space principles which should be designed to take account of mobility and visual impairments that are likely to be more prevalent in the context of extra care schemes. It should be noted that, in relation to concerns raised about the letter issued by the Department for Transport in 2018 requesting a pause on the introduction of shared space schemes, this does not apply to streets within new residential areas, or the redesign of existing residential streets with very low levels of traffic. The focus of the pause was on level-surface schemes in areas of relatively large amounts of pedestrian and vehicular movement and therefore there is still significant scope for improved street design in these locations.

Integration of innovation

Overall the proposals would test the up-scaling and pace of delivery of modular construction by F1 Modular within RCT. Learning from the previous IHP round should be fully explained and integrated into the current proposals as well as anything that has been included in addition to the previous round. The potential barriers to upscaling should be considered including the risks or limitations of relying on an ongoing relationship with a single contractor.

Next Steps

- Address street design in conjunction with the landscape proposals for the sites
- Continue to refine the layout to promote quality external spaces.

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

Attendees

Agent/Client/Developer:	Richard Hallett, Linc Cath Divers, Linc Tudor Butler, RPA
Architect/Design Consultant:	Andy Tansill, Quattro Design Architects
Design Review Panel: Chair Panel	Jen Heal, DCFW Lynne Sullivan Chris Jefford