



IHP Design Review Report

Rowley's Drive, Shotton

DCFW Ref: 19U

Meeting of 3rd July 2019

Review Status

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

PUBLIC

3rd July 2019
10th July 2019
Shotton, Flintshire
Residential
19U
Live 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 for the development of seven affordable homes on the site of a derelict former medical centre. Previous proposals for the site have received an objection from Natural Resources Wales (NRW) based on flooding. The current proposals seek to overcome the flooding constraint through the design of the properties. The properties would also be modular in construction with a common renewable energy system.

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

Although at a relatively early stage, the evolution of proposals for the site demonstrate a well-considered approach that seeks to tackle the challenges of the site and provide sustainability benefits. The approach was well presented. As the design progresses, the following should be considered.

Consider the accessibility of the properties further. Whilst the current proposals would be compliant, the ability for the properties to be adapted to accommodate an internal lift and meet Lifetime Homes standards should be demonstrated.

The recent change in the design to locate the main door at the front of the properties improves access and orientation but the route in and out remains convoluted – involving going through the garage, outside and up the external steps. This should be reconsidered with the potential for a stairway within the garage space explored further. There will be advantages and disadvantages of different approaches that will need to be weighed up.

The end elevations need further articulation particularly to the north-east where the gable is prominent. Further consideration of the roof form may also help with this.

The emerging appearance of the building is appropriately contemporary to reflect its form, function and era. In developing this further, consideration should be given to whether it is clearly expressed as a building elevated off the ground or as a three-story building rooted to the ground. Both are valid approaches but will result in different expressions.

Placemaking

The contribution of the development to the street should be a key consideration in determining whether to include kitchen balconies and the nature of the garage doors. The addition of balconies would help to provide more activity and natural surveillance to the street as well as provide benefits to residents being able to enjoy evening sun. Considerations for the choice of garage doors include appearance, resilience in the event of a flood and security. The front elevation could be problematic, particularly with lack of natural surveillance at ground floor, if these elements are not well resolved.

The raised terraces could create an issue with overlooking in the rear gardens. The potential for all or some of the space to the rear of the properties to be a communal space should be explored. Appropriate buy-in and management will be needed for this to be successful, but it could complement the private terraces.

Integration of innovation

The complete picture of why this approach is necessary is needed to fully justify it. This should include whether it is likely that wider flood defences will come forward that will eliminate the problem.

The proposals seek to combine several elements including flooding resilience, affordable housing, low carbon and renewable, low cost energy. If these are well integrated and executed, they could provide a toolbox for further development on other sites with similar constraints.

Next Steps

- Expand on the replicability of the project.
- Continue to refine the proposals based on the points raised above.

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

Attendees

Agent/Client/Developer: Alistair Holl, Etheco Development Limited

Architect: Randal Turner, Raise Architects

Design Review Panel:

Chair

Panel

Jamie Brewster

Toby Adam

Jamie Yeoman

Jen Heal, DCFW