

# Design Review Report

Ty Du, Masterplan, Nelson, Caerphilly

**DCFW Ref: 254**

Meeting of 13<sup>th</sup> May 2021



## Review Status

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

## Confidential

13<sup>th</sup> May 2021  
28<sup>th</sup> May 2021  
Nelson, Caerphilly  
Residential  
N254  
Pre-Application

## Declarations of Interest

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

## Consultations to Date

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None.

## The Proposals

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The Welsh Government (WG) owns the majority of the Ty Du site and have invited United Welsh/Harmoni Homes to promote and deliver an innovative housing scheme following strong placemaking principles. The scheme is very much seen as a potential 'exemplar' development and the materials states it aspires to be a model for future WG housing land releases. The materials state that the scheme *aspires* to develop:

- Circa 13 acres for residential development (to be verified)
- Up to 220 dwellings
- Mixed Tenure housing comprising up to 50% affordable housing & market sale housing
- Embracing Passive House principles & Toward Net Zero Carbon development
- Beautiful Homes (DQR) Standard Houses with space standards adopted across all tenures
- Innovative house design to consider post Covid-19 requirements
- Building resilient communities through emphasis on 'placemaking'

## Main Points

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The Design Commission welcomed the thorough presentation.

### **Sustainability of the location**

The panel queried the creation of what could become a car-dependent low carbon place in this location. However, it was highlighted that this could become an exemplar project if public transport and active travel facilities are in place.

As both physical and social connections will be of paramount importance in the development of this scheme, the project team may benefit from a 15-minute neighbourhood analysis of the existing facilities and active travel routes in Nelson. This

could look at potential pedestrian routes, as well as other active travel and public transport routes. This should be more than controlled crossing points and could tackle the severance of the A472 to create an active and social street to encourage connections between the new development and other local developments. It is important that the new development becomes a part of Nelson, giving its significant size. It should be seen as an extension to the village and link in better with its existing uses. A narrative needs to be developed as part of the overall concept and a 15-minute neighbourhood study will assist with this.

### **Green Infrastructure**

The panel would encourage the design team to consider how green infrastructure at all scales could make this development a distinctive place.

It is important that the project team consider who will be maintaining these green spaces in the future.

### **Construction method**

The design team would benefit from fully exploring how to create distinctive places out of prefabricated elements, specifically in MMC construction. Distinctive character and placemaking should be balanced with flexibility.

Materials should be selected for both their sustainability, and for their longevity.

### **Housing typology**

Further design development of the housing should consider the user types, and how those people would use the spaces that have been created. Consideration of the daily movements of those who will be living in this development would be highly beneficial to the development of this scheme.

### **Sustainability**

The panel would encourage the design team to fully explore how the carbon aspirations of this development could be pushed further and how this fits in with the different house types and ways of living. A carbon strategy will assist in the delivery and shall also be considered for any self-build properties.

### **Placemaking**

The design team may benefit from analysis regarding the history of the site and allowing this to inform the identity of the place.

The creation of safe and secure paths and routes through the site is of key importance.

It is important to consider whether the design and nature of the industrial estate road to the east/ south of the site can be reviewed, and how can traffic be slowed, green infrastructure introduced, and pedestrian priority introduced on this site.

It is also worth considering whether the settlement strategy/ LDP includes potential further development to the east of this site across to Heol Fawr and if so, whether the area can be coherently master planned. In this context, it is also worth considering whether the A472 roundabout is compatible with the vision for a potential exemplar sustainable village extension.

In accordance with Future Wales, the public sector (both WG and CBC) have the potential to demonstrate leadership in placemaking with an exemplar place including connections, not just exemplar the house types, and this is worth considering as the scheme is developed further.

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

## Attendees

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Agent/Client/Developer:	Lynn Morgan, United Welsh
Architect/Design Team:	Bernadette Kinsella, Powell Dobson Sara Ifan, Powell Dobson Bethan Thomas, Powell Dobson
Other Consultants:	Jon Whitehead, Whitehead Surveyors
Planning Consultant:	Robin Williams, Asbri Planning
Local Authority:	Caerphilly Council

### **DCFW Design Review Panel**

Chair:	Cora Kwiatkowski
Lead Panellist:	Stephen Smith Maria Asenjo Matt Thomas Steven Smith Carole-Anne Davies, DCFW, Chief Executive Jen Heal, DCFW, Design Advisor Efa Lois, DCFW, Place Advisor
Observers:	Gemma Christian, Welsh Government Jonni Tomos, Welsh Government Rachel Willis, Swansea Council