



IHP Design Review Report

Gwynfaen, Swansea

DCFW Ref: 19A

Meeting of 2nd May 2019

Review Status

Meeting date	PUBLIC 2 nd May 2019
Issue date	14 th May 2019
Scheme location	Swansea
Scheme description	Residential Housing
Scheme reference number	19A
Planning status	Reserved Matters

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.

Panelist Toby Adam is working with Hoare Lea on a separate project but not with any of the team members present.

Elfed Roberts attending on behalf of Pobl Group is a DCFW panel member.

The land is owned by Welsh Government and the City and County of Swansea Council.

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

The Proposals

Gwynfaen is a joint-venture housing development by Pobl Group and Coastal housing Association for 165 low carbon new homes in Penyrheol, Swansea, overlooking the Loughor Estuary. The site is formed by two contiguous parcels of greenfield land, jointly owned by the Welsh Government and Swansea Council.

Main Points

This report is not a set of minutes of the full discussion that took place during the review, rather a summary of the key points that have been identified that could help to improve the project and any concerns regarding the funding of the project.

The Design Commission welcomed the opportunity to review this scheme at an early stage and welcomed the holistic sustainable vision behind the proposal. The scheme is a potential future exemplar that may be replicated as an example of how to explore the integration of green infrastructure in a residential context. Very careful stewardship will be needed in order to grasp this opportunity.

The approach sensitively focused on a hydro micro system that supports an integrated 'green' housing development with sustainable methods of construction, energy and spaces for the benefit of its users.

Whilst the Commission is encouraged by the approach to the scheme, we urge further consideration of the following main points:

Urgent Design Concerns

The project is at a stage where the opportunity to consolidate the vision of a green sustainable development is available, but there is still a wealth of strategic options being proposed. These must be tested in detail, prioritized within a hierarchy, clearly demonstrated in the master plan and supported by diagrams ensuring that the vision is retained as detail is developed. This includes further consideration of orientation of buildings at entrances and the financial viability of the project including where IHP funding is to be focused.

Placemaking

- SuDS integration is a strong placemaking idea. The team must ensure that it is fully expressed in the layout
- A balance must be struck between private and communal spaces with the view to creating a central point that supports activity and the opportunity for social interaction
- A community hub is a positive idea and worth exploring further
- Further consideration of the site walkability in terms of routes, public realm language and multiple crossings when reaching for green areas is needed
- Consideration of property variations, including higher density in central spaces

Integration of Innovation

Further detailed consideration is needed to establish:

- Good connectivity to public rights of way and blue routes
- Configuration of the alignment of what could be a grand entrance route to link to the core green space
- The impact of street parking, including outward edges
- The construction approach and how it may be replicated
- The potential of a variety of cladding materials
- Scope of flexibility of construction systems based on user choices

Next Steps

The team needs to define and demonstrate which direction the proposal is leaning towards by testing the scheme whilst making a case for innovation based on site opportunities and unique elements. Evaluation of lessons and outcomes from the process will be necessary for success now and for future adaptation/replication.

The Commission encourages a further consultation through the design review service given the commitment of the public sector joint-venture clients to a project with considerable potential.

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

Attendees

Agent/Client/Developer	Adam Roberts (COASTAL) Elfed Roberts, Kathryn Morris (POBL)
Architect/Planning Consultant	Dai Lewis, Phil Dascombe (EDP) Rob Wheaton (STRIDE TREGLOWN) Amy Beacham (WSP)
Local Planning Authority	Andrew Ferguson, City and County of Swansea
Design Review Panel Chair Panel	Jen Heal Toby Adam Larissa Berquó