



IHP Design Review Report

Sefton Road, Old Colwyn

DCFW Ref: IHP AC

Meeting of 19th July 2018

Review Status	CONFIDENTIAL
Meeting date	19 th July 2018
Issue date	20 th July 2018
Scheme location	Old Colwyn
Scheme description	Residential
Scheme reference number	IHP AC
Planning status	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. All present at the review were content to proceed following the declarations.

The Proposals

The vision is to provide a high quality affordable alternative to traditional temporary accommodation that will utilise innovative construction methods which also provides training opportunities for future residents as well as existing Cartrefi Conwy tenants.

The scheme will provide 8 units of 'pod' accommodation to be utilised by the Local Authority as an alternative to traditional temporary accommodation. The units will be constructed using the Beattie Passive system which will deliver affordable (construction and living costs) units, which can be constructed quickly making best use of local labour and materials as well as providing training opportunities for future residents of the accommodation as well as current residents.

The development will be delivered by Cartrefi Conwy's subsidiary who will also engage with its employment academy to manage the training opportunities and other community benefits.

Main Points

This report is not minutes 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

- Refining the site layout and amending the standard pod type to maximise the benefits of the site would add value.

Placemaking

Approaches to site layout

Good site and context analysis should inform the site layout along with consideration of placemaking principles. The current layout would benefit from some further refinement to get the best value from the site.

The Commission encourages the team to challenge local authority parking standards as the site has good access to public transport and shops and facilities are within walking distance. In addition, the target residents are more likely to own a bicycle than a car, so it would be better to utilise open space for amenity space rather than parking.

It is positive that outdoor space for each unit is defined. The arrangement of the pods, covered deck spaces and communal outdoor areas should aim to encourage a sense of community whilst respecting the need for privacy of individuals and avoiding an institutional feel.

The current proposed orientation of the rows of pods creates unusable triangles of leftover space at the edge of the site. It would be beneficial to 'design out' such spaces, whilst still dealing with the steep topography.

Bins and waste management should also be considered and integrated.

DCFW's guide for Welsh Government, *Site and Context Analysis: Capturing the Value of Site*, can be found here:

<https://gov.wales/topics/planning/policy/guidanceandleaflets/site-and-context-analysis-guide/?lang=en>

Landscape and shared spaces

A landscape design strategy should ensure that all spaces have a positive purpose and contribute to a welcoming, safe and comfortable place to live. Boundary treatments are particularly important.

Future management of landscape areas and outdoor spaces belonging to each unit should be carefully considered, especially as tenancies are likely to be short term.

Design of the access road into the site needs careful consideration to ensure it feel safe, welcoming and is identifiable. Low level lighting would help to achieve this without disturbing existing neighbours.

Architectural language and materials

The site and function of the units allow for the architectural language to be contemporary and express the innovative construction process. The Commission encourages the design team to take a fresh approach to the interior finishes so that they provide contemporary, comfortable places to live and do not feel institutional or like traditional social housing.

It is especially important that materials and finishes are robust. For example, plywood rather than plasterboard might be more appropriate for internal walls as it is more difficult to damage.

Integration of innovation

Innovation approach: The approach to innovation is supply chain focussed. It is intended that the Beattie Passive system, which creates panels or modules using low grade timber, will be used for this project and other schemes by Cartrefi Conwy. It is intended that Cartrefi's subsidiary, Creating Enterprise will construct the properties and

provide training through its Employment Academy. The ambition is to build a factory to produce the panels, but small 'flying' factories for each site are also possible.

It is positive that the team is engaging in discussions around collaboration with other RSLs and local authorities in north Wales to expand roll out of the system in the future and increase capacity in the construction industry. The ambition to develop the system with wood Knowledge Wales to use local timber would also be positive.

There would be value in developing this proposal alongside the other IHP bids which apply the same system to demonstrate its application to different types of site and resident needs.

It is positive that this project works with the opportunities provided by the construction system and expresses the innovation, whilst addressing a particular housing need.

Next Steps

- Refine that site layout to provide positive useable spaces which add value.
- Make adjustments to the standard pods to exploit views and sunlight where possible.
- Take an innovative approach to the fit out of the pods which further expresses the innovation and creates distinctive, contemporary places to live.

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

Attendees

Agent/Client/Developer: David Lowe & Owain Roberts, Cartrefi Conwy

Design/Planning Team:

Design Review Panel:

Chair
Panel

Jonathan Vernon-Smith
Angela Williams
Richard Woods
Amanda Spence

Observing: Gayna Jones & Darren Hatton