



IHP Design Review Report

Carmarthenshire Wellbeing, Therapeutic and
Social Hub

DCFW Ref: 19R

Meeting of 19th June 2019

Review Status

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19th June 2019
25th June 2019
Carmarthenshire
Supported Accommodation
19R
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 is for the development of 15 self-contained timber framed homes with associated communal social, training and therapeutic facilities targeted at supporting young people with complex needs. Supporting uses include hub and office buildings, planting areas and photovoltaics.

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

The aims of this project are commendable and the response to the challenge of youth homelessness and the limitations of The Wallich's current facility was clearly set out. It is evident that the design will have a significant impact on the success of the project and there is further work to be done to ensure this. The layout and design of the properties and supporting facilities must be developed to align with the vision for the development.

A key factor in the service provision and design approach is the site location. The site response would be very different if located in a very urban or very rural location but this site is semi-rural and somewhat peripheral and needs to be fully thought through in terms of the type of place this will be, how connections will be made to the nearby settlement and how to ensure residents will feel safe and comfortable. Walking and cycling links need further consideration as these will be the main modes of movement for residents. For example, access into the site in the north east corner would provide a more direct and convenient pedestrian and cycle route to the nearby bus stops and amenities.

The current layout presents some areas of concern. Key areas for review include:

- Left over spaces that have no clear use could become a maintenance burden or problem areas.

- Lack of a clear definition between public and private space which is important for the feeling of security and responsibility for residents.
- Lack of clarity in where the front and back of units are. In a residential development you would expect the front door to face on to the public street and the back door to open on to the private garden.
- Some of the units at the far end of the site could feel isolated.

Further work on the design of the Hub building is also needed to ensure that everything can be accommodated within it and it becomes a series of positive, welcoming spaces.

Placemaking

The development is described as a village, but the layout does not reflect this. The communal facilities and social spaces should be more integrated to become the heart of the layout. The Hub is clearly a very important building, and this should be reflected in the layout, particularly if it is to be available to residents 24 hours a day. Considering a 'day in the life' of a resident will help to think through the flow of the site and how different aspects relate to each other.

Working with a landscape architect at this stage will help to inform the character of the development and the nature of the spaces around the homes, including the circulation road/footpath.

Integration of innovation

A much stronger link between the vision, analysis of the constraints and opportunities of the site and the proposed layout is needed.

The benefits of using temporary structures should be fully explored in relation to how the site might develop and adapt over time.

Next Steps

- Revisit the layout to reflect the aims of the project.
- Develop the design of the buildings to ensure they have a positive relationship between interior and exterior and that the communal buildings can accommodate everything needed.
- Integrate an energy strategy for the site.
- Consider whether the site could accommodate more units and how it might grow or adapt over time.

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

Attendees

Agent/Client/Developer:	Phill Stapley, The Wallich Paul Sheridan, The Wallich Gareth Corbin, The Wallich
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Support:	Sara O'Shea, PhD Student
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