



IHP Design Review Report

Coed Darcy, Skewen

DCFW Ref: IHP J

Meeting of 26th June 2018

Review Status	PUBLIC
Meeting date	26 th June 2018
Issue date	3 rd July 2018
Scheme location	Skewen
Scheme description	Residential
Scheme reference number	IHP J
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. Gayna was not present in the meeting. All present at the review were content to proceed following the declarations.

The Proposals

Through SPECIFIC (Swansea University) the project is an exploration of international technologies incorporating off-site construction with highly energy efficient designs. These designs will come from the best of UK, European and Japanese systems, with the aim of these being sustainable homes.

This will be an 'Innovation Park' entitled SMILE (Sustainable manufacturing for Integrated Low Energy Buildings); a project that has already been initiated by SPECIFIC. The team aims to identify and procure the most promising systems relevant to our environment (climate and energy demand/availability) which will be applicable and have a sustainable future in Wales. The wider scope of this project will yield a number of real life case studies; the best of which can replicated across the wider site possibly up to 100 homes.

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

- Overcoming the constraints of modular dimensions to provide good places to live whilst responding to the sloping topography.
- Balancing the conflict between Innovation Park demonstration houses and the sense of place required for people's homes.
- Consider this phase in relation to a masterplan for future development of the wider Innovation Park site.
- Landscape/public realm strategy required as the scheme develops.

Placemaking

It was good to review this scheme at an early stage when strategic approaches are still being considered.

Modular and response to site and context

There is a challenge to develop a standard modular system which can respond to analysis of individual sites and their contexts, whilst meeting Welsh Government standards for social housing. The topography of this site presents a particular challenge. Dealing with the level changes whilst providing useable and accessible indoor and outdoor spaces will require careful and sensitive design.

The form of the modular volumes may be informed by the energy strategy and modelling. For example, mono-pitch roofs might be more efficient for solar energy.

The initial ideas about a palette of materials are good as they are robust and appropriate to modular construction. It may be worth considering use of Welsh timber as a cladding material.

Future masterplan context

It would be good to consider this site in relation to a masterplan for future extension of the Innovation Park across the wider site. This would help with strategic decisions about fronts and backs, parking, road layout, orientation, dealing with corners, landscape strategy, access and arrival, Active Travel and SUDs.

There may be value in exploring potential for custom-build style procurement of modular homes in further phases of development, but this will need to be planned for early.

Demonstration house and placemaking

The team should carefully consider the balance between creating demonstration houses as part of the Innovation Park and providing comfortable homes with the right levels of privacy for residents. The arrival and entrance to the site and parking will be important if visitors are likely to want to come in the future to see the innovation. If information and interpretation for visitors is to be provided, this should be designed in.

Integration of innovation

Innovation approach: Developing and testing a modular standard which meets Welsh Government standards for social housing, and creating an 'Innovation Park' which will be extended with homes from different suppliers in the future.

Innovative approaches to parking and streetscape, and using modular homes on steeply sloping topography might also be considered.

In relation to energy and sustainability, the team are encouraged to specify 'performance' in the procurement process. This would also represent an innovative approach.

Next Steps

- Continue to explore layout options in relation to a wider masterplan.
- Clarify approaches to innovation.

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

Attendees

Agent/Client/Developer: Daniel Lloyd, Lindsey Barnard, David Cox & Adam West, Coastal Housing

Architect/Planning Consultant: Lindsey Rees, Pentan
Jonny Williams, Specific

Local Planning Authority:

Design Review Panel:
Chair Cora Kwiatkowski
Panel Lynne Sullivan
Chris Jefford
Amanda Spence