



IHP Design Review Report

Parc Ceirw, Morriston

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Meeting of 26th June 2018

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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

In addition to the new private market Energy Positive homes, the scheme will remediate a former landfill site, creating a new public open space and a community hub building.

The project will include 50 zero carbon homes which will operate holistically to be more efficient than individual low-energy homes.

Innovative new tenures and construction methods will be market tested along with new consumer offerings in energy management and supply. Smart heating controls coupled with self-learning algorithms will enable the building to react effectively to the needs of the consumer.

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

- Integration of upper and lower parts of the site, ensuring accessibility and inclusivity, avoiding overlooking and providing routes for pedestrians and cyclists which deal with the topography.
- Getting the most value from this unusual site through site-specific placemaking and response to site and context analysis.
- The standard Edenstone house types are not designed to minimise energy demand (i.e. through passive design principles) before the Sero Homes system is applied.
- Lack of consideration for green amenity space on the upper level.

Placemaking

Parking

Good car parking strategies will help the development to not feel dominated by cars. The Commission encourages the team to challenge the local authority's parking standards, but safe, convenient and integrated walking and cycle routes for Active Travel and public transport options must be available as an alternative. The local authority's Active Travel plans should be considered. An integrated electric car club scheme would be a welcome addition to the development.

Response to site analysis and topography

The former landfill site is unusual, which presents challenges but also many opportunities to add value. A scheme based on and informed by good site analysis will be the best way to maximise value and create good places to live. 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>

It will be important to ensure that the upper and lower levels of the site are integrated and accessible. Sections drawings will help with this process.

The way the developments addresses the 'edge' of the upper level, which provides good views to the lower level and over Swansea is especially important. It is a good idea to provide a circular walking route along the edge, but the houses should be set far back enough to maximise the usability and enjoyment of the route and allow sufficient space for strategic landscape design. Providing more generous open landscape spaces at key points along the route to allow people to stop and enjoy the view would be beneficial. The proportions and frequency of 'gaps' in the building line through to the edge should be carefully considered.

Landscape Design Strategy

The Commission would like to see a good landscape strategy for both this phase and the wider development. This should take into account:

- Integration of play provision
- Purposeful open spaces, avoiding useless 'leftover' space
- Routes for walking and cycling which deal with the topography
- Distances between open amenity spaces – the lower level cannot be relied on as the only provision

Street Design

The nature and character of the different street types should be fully explored using sections, perspectives and elevation drawings. Walking and cycle routes and the landscape strategy should be well integrated. In the hierarchy of streets, secondary and tertiary streets should be designed to promote slower driving and give a feeling of pedestrian priority. The car parking strategy should also be integrated.

Integration of innovation

Innovation approach: The approach needs clarification, but could be to test a comfort and consumer-led approach to community-integrated energy generation and service for private market homes. The user interface and community incentive to reduce energy consumption could be innovative.

Good, systematic post-occupancy monitoring of the scheme will be important so that lessons can be learned for future phases and other schemes. It will be interesting to compare the use of the Sero Homes system and servicing on this private market scheme with a social housing scheme, but monitoring should be well planned and consistent for this to be valuable. Monitoring should cover residents' experience, comfort and well-being and usability as well as technical performance data.

The Commission has concerns about the energy system being applied to a development of 'ordinary' houses which is not laid out and oriented and with units not designed using passive design principles. This will have an effect on the performance and monitoring results and should be kept in mind in any post-occupancy reporting. A passive design and fabric-first approach would reduce energy demand and is likely to produce better results and provide better value for home owners.

Next Steps

- Define and clarify innovation approach.
- Reconsider urban design and place-making principles and landscape strategies to get the best value from this extraordinary site.
- The Commission would welcome the opportunity to review the scheme again, outside of the IHP programme, once design work has progressed.

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

Attendees

Agent/Client/Developer:	Tim Smale, Edenstone Homes James Williams, Sero Homes
Design Review Panel:	
Chair	Cora Kwiatkowski
Panel	Lynne Sullivan Chris Jefford Amanda Spence