



IHP Design Review Report

Plas Penrhyn, Conwy

DCFW Ref: 20N IHP4

Meeting of 8th September 2020

Review Status

Meeting date
Issue date
Scheme location
Scheme description
Scheme reference number
Planning status

PUBLIC

8th September 2020
9th September 2020
Penrhyn Bay, Conwy
IHP Residential
20N
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.

Mark French of Ainsley Gommon Architects attended to observe only and declared that he was a member of the IHP independent Panel. All present were content to proceed.

The Proposals

Plas Penrhyn is a residential proposal for 21 new-build, affordable homes being developed through a collaboration between Adra and North Wales Housing Associations at Penrhyn Bay, Conwy. Ainsley Gommon Architects are appointed to further develop their IHP3 'passiv principles' housing type to a fully certified PassivHaus system delivered via the Beattie Passiv system. A budget of £3.8m is currently outlined for a mix of highly flexible whole-life homes, accommodating general and specific affordable housing need. The dwelling types include 8 x 5P3B houses; 8 x 4P2B houses; 4 x 3P2B general needs homes and 1 x 3P2B special/wheelchair user needs bungalows. The location and site are in proximity to local education, leisure and small-scale retail facilities, a Sustrans cycle route and public transport.

Main Points

This report is not a verbatim 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

Key placemaking opportunities are yet to be captured and the wider benefits of the proposals will not be realised without further detailed site analysis and attention enhancing layout.

Placemaking

There are considerable opportunities to be drawn from further site analysis to enhance placemaking, distinctiveness and contributions to decarbonisation and biodiversity, as noted in the main points above.

Improved and possibly new pedestrian links should be explored to help strengthen the links between the existing settlements and this new build. Safe and pleasant pedestrian routes would aid connectivity and access to the nearby popular play area.

The extent of hard standing allocated to car parking/parking standards are challenging given an existing flood risk and demonstrate an outdated approach to highway design. These are constraining landscape and amenity opportunities and frustrating more innovative ways of addressing the flood risk and SUDS requirements.

Opportunities for growing space, orchard/fruit tree species in place of closed board fencing along with reduced car parking could enhance the quality of amenity space and wider benefits for residents. A detailed analysis of the use of space in the current layout would almost certainly highlight and allow the testing of such opportunities. Car share schemes might be considered to improve the contribution to greater sustainability across the site.

Integration of Innovation

The innovation strategy was identified around four areas focusing on addressing local housing needs through attention to capital investment in affordable homes, energy efficiency, flexibility of living space and fuel efficiency for affordability. All these are demonstrable in the housing units themselves in architectural design terms, evolving as they have from IHP3, to provide flexible, inclusive whole life homes. The critical design issues here are rooted in placemaking as noted above.

Next Steps

Site analysis and testing of opportunities noted above, in order to ensure the treatment of the place responds sufficiently to the wider opportunity and benefits for residents. The dwellings themselves contribute a great deal in terms of innovation and meeting housing need. The overall success resides in the placemaking and improved layout underpinned by better highway design as per the Manual for Streets. DCFW would welcome further consultation if the team would find it helpful within the timescales for IHP.

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

Attendees

Agent/Client/Developer: Chris Wells, North Wales Housing Association
Helen Williams, North Wales Housing Association

Architect/Planning Consultant: Mark French, Ainsley Gommon Architects
David Parry, Ainsley Gommon Architects

Local Planning Authority: Cyngor Bwrdeistref Sirol
Conwy County Borough Council

Design Review Panel:

Chair: Carole-Anne Davies, Chief Executive DCFW

Panel: Efa Lois, Place Advisor, DCFW
Simon Carne, Architect & Urban Designer,
Angela Williams, Architect.