



DESIGN  
COMMISSION  
FOR WALES  
COMISIWN  
DYLUNIO  
CYMRU

# IHP Desktop Review

DCFW Ref: 20Z Is y Llan Llanddarog,  
Carmarthenshire

Meeting of 15 September 2020

## **Review Status**

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

## **CONFIDENTIAL**

15<sup>th</sup> September 2020  
29<sup>th</sup> September 2020  
Carmarthenshire  
IHP4 Residential  
20Z  
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.

None.

## The Proposals

The proposals are for a 0.4 acre vacant site in Council ownership and the development of 6 homes in total, comprising a mix of 2 bedroom homes and 2 bedroom bungalows aiming to address Carmarthenshire's vision for energy efficient, low carbon affordable homes which help reduce fuel poverty for tenants. PassivHaus principles are to be employed in a fabric first approach, rather than PassivHaus certification, alongside MVHR, battery storage and PVs. Construction is described as an off-site MMC coordinated approach, employing SIP panels etc to reduce construction timescales. The project budget is £1.2m to be procured via the South West Wales Regional Framework.

## 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.

The ambition of the Council to bring forward high quality energy efficient homes is welcome however a number of key strategic design considerations need greater attention including some aspects of response to the locale, site and context.

### **Urgent Design Concerns**

The focus appears to have been on the dwelling units and much greater attention is needed on testing of options and placemaking.

### **Integration of Innovation**

MMC is the selected approach however we question reference to PassivHaus as it is clear this is not intended to be a certified scheme and the extent of the application of 'principles' is unknown.

### **Placemaking**

The approach to site and layout appears to maximise land use and a southern aspect which has some advantages. However, the response to site and context needs further consideration in terms of housing mix and their layouts. There are extensive and costly hard surfaces in a layout that favour private car use and greater attention could be given to issues of connectivity and stimulating availability of or access to public transport. There

is currently a lack of evidence of the testing of alternative options for the site and its constraints or opportunities. Irregular boundary/hedgerow proposals as currently presented adds little value. Further work and/or clearer explanation would be helpful.

The approach to built form is presented in a rather polarised 'either/or' manner and would benefit from full design testing including attention to internal layouts and materials as one would expect in a Design and Access Statement accompanying a planning application. The usage of existing access infrastructure to facilitate a development needs to be considered again as the current proposal result in large surface areas which may not actually be necessary with a different site and more economic development strategy. Selection of materials would benefit from simplification.

### **Next Steps**

Development and testing of the design response, layout and connections will be necessary given that there remain some key questions to resolve. A follow up opportunity would be welcomed by the Commission should the team find it useful.

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

## Attendees

Agent/Client/Developer: Desktop Panel only due to late submission.  
Team not present.

Local Planning Authority: Carmarthenshire County Council

Design Review Panel:  
Chair Kedrick Davies  
Panel Simon Carne  
Efa Lois, Place Advisor, DCFW  
Carole-Anne Davies, Chief Executive, DCFW