



New Social Housing, Land Use and Viability

More land for development won't, on its own, solve the under-supply of social housing. Business cases for social housing can be harder to establish than housing for private sale or affordable rent. Optimum land use is a critical issue, and when there is uncertainty over build costs and times, risk-aversion can become a barrier to badly needed homes being built.

Osborne has partnered with Innovaré and their new Flexihomes by Innovaré systemised housing solution, to implement a new managed service approach to social housing that brings greater confidence over the cost, timing and viability of projects and eases the flow of projects from feasibility to handover.



The Social Housing Challenge

Social rented housing is in desperately short supply and is the only affordable option for millions of people. Building for open market sale or affordable rent typically has a less risky business case, which may explain why the number of starts for homes for social rent is low in comparison.

Figures for completions of homes for social rent in 2017-18 were just 6363, compared to 30,000 a decade before. We need a way to open up the supply of social housing on a massive scale. To do this we need a product and a process that optimise land use, are cost effective and which offer certainty over cost and timing. The homes created must also be durable, affordable to heat and have the lowest possible carbon footprint.

The Need for Simplification

From assessing site feasibility, to designing optimum land use, financial modelling, planning, construction and handover there can be many different organisations involved. Each interface adds an additional element of risk to both costs and timing.

Additionally, many local authorities no longer have the capacity to assess, procure and project-manage new social housing schemes on a significantly larger scale.

If we really want to see social housing being built at a faster rate the solution has to simplify the product without compromising quality and also make the whole process easier to manage.

A Simpler Approach

Osborne, in partnership with Innovaré have risen to the challenge by developing a simplified model for new social housing.

The component-led product features standardised designs for a range of house types from one bed apartments to four bed houses. Each provides the economies of mass production with the advantage that the designs can be adapted very easily and quickly and often without a cost penalty to deliver the flexibility to make maximum use of all shapes and size of plot.

All homes can be based around prefabricated bathroom and kitchen pods that are shipped to the site as fully fitted out units.

The remainder of the structure is built from Structural Insulated Panels (SIPs). SIP technology has been used by Innovaré for over 15 years and has been successfully applied to housing, schools and hospitals.

Panels have a minimum certified design life of 60 years.



The end-to-end process

The managed service process encompasses every stage from feasibility to handover.



1 Feasibility

Flexibility of design combined with accurate cost projections ensure the optimum density of housing can be achieved to realise the financial viability at the very early stages.



2 Design Consultancy

Our expertise de-risks projects by helping to ensure that sites are viable and the available space is fully utilised through the design flexibility of the product.



3 Design & Build

CAD and BIM methodologies guarantee buildability and building performance. The manufacturing process brings control, simplicity and certainty over costs and build times.



4 Handover

Fewer defects and comprehensive 'as-built' documentation simplify the handover and ongoing maintenance of new homes. Maintenance requirements are minimal, providing long-term cost savings to social housing providers.

The systemised product and process overcome the product, speed and quality barriers faced by local authorities and housing associations wishing to step up the supply of social housing.



Contact Osborne to discover more about how component-led design can simplify the supply of new housing.

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