



PURCELL

DESIGN IN THE HISTORIC ENVIRONMENT: PROMOTING A CONTEXTUAL APPROACH TO NEW HOUSING IN HISTORIC PLACES

CASE STUDIES



JANUARY 2021

REPORT TO HISTORIC ENGLAND BY PURCELL ARCHITECTURE LIMITED

Will Holborow

On behalf of Purcell®

104 Gloucester Green, Oxford, OX1 2BU

will.holborow@purcelluk.com

www.purcelluk.com

 PURCELL

240820

Issue 01

November 2020

Historic England

Issue 02

January 2021

Historic England

Photo credits:

All photographs in this report were taken between September and November 2020 and are © Historic England Archive (Photographers: James O. Davies, Chris Redgrave and Alun Bull), except on p.44 where they are credited otherwise.

Purcell asserts its moral rights to be identified as the author of this work under the Copyright, Designs and Patents Act 1988.

Purcell® is the trading name of Purcell Architecture Ltd.

© Purcell 2021

CASE STUDIES

CONTENTS

INTRODUCTION

The Project

Location of Case Studies

04

04

05

CASE STUDIES

Roussillon Park, Chichester

Wilderness Estate, Sevenoaks

Bourne Estate, Holborn

168 Upper Street, Islington

Temple Gardens, Temple Cloud

Fairmile Hospital, Cholsey

Garden Quarter, Caversfield

Church Fields, Boston Spa

Timekeepers Square

Welsh Streets, Liverpool

06

06

10

14

18

22

26

30

34

38

42

INTRODUCTION

THE PROJECT

The ten case studies here have been selected from a 'long list' of over 50 case studies (see Appendix C of the main report). They were derived from a search of recent award-winning schemes including:

- Civic Trust Awards
- RIBA National and Regional Awards
- Housing Design Awards
- Regional award schemes.

These have been chosen on the basis of the following criteria:

- Completed since 2010
- Are all or mostly residential use
- Have been recognised for excellence in design, in most cases through at least one award
- Have a beneficial impact on any heritage assets

They have also been chosen to represent a broad spread of projects, both geographically, economically and in terms of their scale and settings. Their location is shown over the page.

INTRODUCTION

LOCATION OF CASE STUDIES



ROUSSILLON PARK
CHICHESTER, WEST SUSSEX



ROUSSILLON PARK, CHICHESTER, WEST SUSSEX

A new residential community within the historic boundary walls of a former military barracks.



PROJECT INFORMATION:

Region:	South
Type of Development:	Former military site
Location and postcode:	Chichester, West Sussex, PO19 6BL
Local planning authority:	Chichester District Council
Architects:	Ben Pentreath
Developer/land owner:	ZeroC/Home & Communities Agency
No. of residential units:	252
Size of Site:	6.5ha

Description of development

The site is located approximately one mile north of Chichester city centre. Following the departure of the Ministry of Defence in 2005, the site was acquired by the Homes and Communities Agency (now Homes England) for residential redevelopment. The open green space at the north end of the site and the perimeter boundary wall were retained, with new terraces, villas and apartment blocks configured into newly-formed streets in the otherwise cleared space. Further green spaces were created on the east and west sides of the site.

Heritage assets

The flint and brick boundary wall around the site is locally listed, as are two stones which were moved into the site from elsewhere – an obelisk which formerly demarcated the city boundary and a stone erected as a warning against smuggling. The site is located immediately adjacent to the Chichester and Graylingwell Conservation Areas. Although the site had been in military occupation since 1815, only one 1930s building of any note survived on the site prior to its development; a 19th-century keep survives outside the site boundary.

ROUSSILLON PARK, CHICHESTER, WEST SUSSEX



Planning context

Roussillon Barracks was long-listed as a potential residential development site in the Site Allocation: Preferred Approach Development Plan Document, following adoption of the Chichester Local Plan 2014-2029. A development brief with design standards was prepared by the Homes and Communities Agency (now Homes England) and the draft scheme was independently scrutinised by the South East Design Review Panel prior to seeking planning permission.

Assessment of design qualities and relationship to historic environment

The evolution of the scheme has been cognisant of the site's strong military history and seeks to enhance this association despite very few surviving historical features. A 1930s neo-Georgian block was recognised as having some value but its poor construction-type and low energy efficiency meant it was incompatible with conversion. Consequently, the site was cleared of all buildings, although historic military buildings survive nearby on land still in MoD ownership.



The site is tightly contained within a high flint and brick wall on its east and west sides, which is a strongly characteristic feature of its former military use. Historically, this wall asserted a secure presence to prevent unwanted admission into the site and is a key feature within local streetscapes. In recognition of its importance, the wall has been retained but has had new openings created as part of the development scheme to encourage movement into the site. The re-instatement of gate piers that had been removed for military operations and security reasons now create a formal entrance into the site and assist in demarcating its spatial hierarchy.



The development is set out on a traditional grid of new streets and lanes, creating a hierarchical urban grain inspired by the primary/secondary/tertiary thoroughfares in Chichester's city centre. The primary routes are arranged off the main entrance and around the Green. This is where the larger-scale buildings (three-storey townhouses and apartment blocks) are concentrated so that their presence balances with wide open space and they act as landmarks within the new townscape. To emphasise the new permeability across the site, there are strategic gaps between the larger buildings along the periphery to facilitate views into the site from outside. The houses along the secondary and tertiary routes are of two storeys, scaled down to create more informal, mews-like streetscapes. To further emphasise the new development's link with the city centre, minor adjustments were made to the masterplan layout in order to increase the visibility of the cathedral from the upper floors of a number of the new houses.



The architectural language of the new buildings is a contemporary take on the traditional buildings in the city centre, drawing influence from their scale, proportions and materials. Central Chichester has characteristically polite architecture; features such as tall casement

ROUSSILLON PARK, CHICHESTER, WEST SUSSEX

windows, blind windows, parapet walls and restrained detailing are incorporated into the larger buildings at Roussillon Park. The smaller houses reflect a more vernacular domestic style, with smaller windows, clay peg tile roofs and flint detailing. The overall effect is simple with little extraneous ornamentation that has the potential to become dated.

Across all buildings, a high-quality specification has been adopted for the joinery, metalwork and rainwater goods. Natural materials were chosen for their ability to weather and age well, which is a key factor in designing within the historic environment. As such, no uPVC has been used. Windows are all painted timber and sit back within brick reveals, recreating the subtly modulated elevations typical of historic buildings but often omitted in new design or lost when windows are replaced. Likewise, all brickwork is laid in a Flemish bond using locally-characteristic red and soft grey bricks with header detailing for cills and other dressings, and rainwater goods are of cast metal. The use of a Flemish bond is especially notable as modern developments typically use a standard stretcher bond that does not match the quality of historic brickwork.

In the absence of any historic buildings surviving on the site, the developers have sought to incorporate the site's heritage through the re-location of historic statuary from nearby locations, the reinstatement of a displaced commemorative plaque and choice of street names. By virtue of their simple and occasionally austere design, some pockets within Roussillon Park have recreated a barracks-like character.



© Ben Pentreath



Key Points

In the absence of many strong historic landmark features, Roussillon Park has taken its principal architectural direction from Chichester city centre, whilst successfully retaining a characteristic boundary wall and green space. The strength of the architectural design comes from the quality of materials and detailing: using a characteristic local materials palette and respecting traditional traits such as brick bonds and other seemingly minor features which are frequently overlooked in new design.

WILDERNESSE HOUSE MEWS
SEVENOAKS



WILDERNESSE HOUSE MEWS, SEVENOAKS

A new mews-style development within the setting of a Grade II listed mansion and within an area of historic landscape.



PROJECT INFORMATION:

Region:	South East
Type of Development:	Semi-rural and parkland sites
Location and postcode:	Sevenoaks, Kent, TN15 0EB
Local planning authority:	Sevenoaks District Council
Architects:	Morris + Company
Developer/land owner:	Pegasus Life
No. of residential units:	8
Size of Site:	20ha (total application site)
Other uses:	Care, fitness and social facilities

Description of development

Wildernesse House was formerly in use as a residential college for blind students. The site was acquired for redevelopment as an extra care retirement community, providing quality accommodation within an attractive setting and with first-class facilities. The scheme included the demolition of detracting 20th-century buildings, refurbishment of the main house, reinstatement of key views across the landscape and construction of new dwellings.

Heritage assets

The 18th-century Wildernesse House is listed at Grade II. The eastern half of the site is located within the Wildernesse Conservation Area, which is characterised by rural lanes, pockets of woodland and Arts & Crafts-influenced architecture. The Seal Conservation Area (a traditional medieval village) is located close by to the north.

WILDERNESSE HOUSE MEWS, SEVENOAKS



Planning context

The site is located within the Green Belt and the Kent Downs Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty, and also has a number of Tree Preservation Orders in place. No specific allocation policies were in place and the application was determined against local and national policy. Extensive pre-application dialogue, including site visits and workshops, was carried out with the local planning authority prior to submission.

Assessment of design qualities and relationship to historic environment

The eight mews houses form one part of a wider masterplan for the Wilderness estate. A core principle of the scheme was the removal of the 20th-century buildings and additions made by the site's previous occupants, which had resulted in a detracting institutional character. A detailed assessment of the landscape informed by historic research resulted in the identification of four distinct character areas. Each of these character areas had different capacities to accommodate change and the masterplan for the site was subsequently adapted to best suit each area. The listed mansion and its immediate setting formed one of these groups.



There was previously a detached stable block range on the north side of the mansion. This was recognised as having little heritage value and identified as an opportunity for demolition and location for new residential units. These have been designed in a mews style to reflect the traditionally ancillary character of this space compared to the formal landscaping wrapping around the mansion.



To promote social interaction and create a sense of place, the mews houses are laid out to form a streetscape. To break up the street line and take a form that sits comfortably with the landscape, the terraces are staggered and set into the base of the sloping mound on which the mansion is positioned. The massing of the blocks is further broken down into a combination of different heights, aided by the existing topography and design features such as dormer windows.



There is an influence across the estate, especially further south where a series of rural lanes leading to individual houses set within generous green plots were laid out in the 1920s. This Arts and Crafts influence has been referenced in the contemporary design of the mews houses, particularly with the inclusion of strong corner chimneystacks, eaves windows and hipped roofs. The exteriors are faced with a grey-brown brick flecked with white pigmentation which adds texture and variety, and strong concrete bandings across the elevations reference the characteristic ashlar banding on the neighbouring mansion. Areas of lattice motif in the brickwork add visual interest to these facades.

WILDERNESSE HOUSE MEWS, SEVENOAKS

The Arts and Crafts tradition has influenced the design intent for other developments across the estate, according to the different character areas. This has been balanced with the overarching objective of re-opening key views towards and out from the mansion in order to re-affirm the relationship between the listed building and its setting. Inside the mansion, ill-conceived modern partitions and other institutional features have been removed to better reveal its historic plan form, creating a series of residential units and communal facilities.



© Morris + Company



Key Points

The success of the mews houses on the Wildernesse estate stems from their recognition of setting and early assessment of where change could be comfortably accommodated across the site at the same time as enhancing the setting of the listed house. The combined team of design, heritage and landscape disciplines has enabled a strongly holistic approach to the historic environment, balancing the needs of the brief with the constraints of the site.

THE BOURNE ESTATE
HOLBORN, LONDON



THE BOURNE ESTATE, HOLBORN, LONDON

An award-winning residential extension on a Grade II listed urban estate, bringing together old and new through quality detailing and landscaping.



PROJECT INFORMATION:

Region:	London
Type of Development:	City/town/village infill sites
Location and postcode:	Holborn, London Borough of Camden,
Local planning authority:	London Borough of Camden
Architects:	Matthew Lloyd Architects
Developer/land owner:	London Borough of Camden
No. of residential units:	75
Internal Area:	7,338m ²
Other uses:	Tenants' hall, playground, MUGA

AWARDS:

Housing Design Awards 2018/NHS 70 Award – Overall winner
Housing Design Awards 2018/NLA Award – Built winner, housing category
RIBA Award 2018 – London region winner

Description of development

Camden Council sought to replace poor-quality housing on the Bourne Estate through the demolition and replacement of a later residential block at the south end of the site, and addition of a new block at the north-west corner containing both residential units and a tenants' hall. The scheme also re-configured the landscaping between the buildings, re-locating a popular MUGA and creating a new public courtyard.

Heritage assets

The original blocks – Nigel House, Laney House, Kirkeby House and Buckridge House – on the Bourne Estate are listed together at Grade II. They date from 1905-9 and were designed by the London County Council Architect's Department. The estate is a significant precursor in form and style of inter-war housing estates throughout Britain, and influential on tenement housing throughout Europe. The boundary of the Hatton Garden Conservation Area cuts through the Estate, incorporating the original buildings but excluding the later blocks.

THE BOURNE ESTATE, HOLBORN, LONDON



Planning context

The planning application was an early determination against the then-new National Planning Policy Framework, as well as the London Plan and Camden Core Strategy. Conservation area consent was also required for the demolition of the south block, which had been identified as a potential regeneration site by the council under their Community Investment Programme.

Assessment of design qualities and relationship to historic environment

The project started as an invited design competition. The successful design was founded on the principle of recreating and enhancing the shared circulation spaces – pedestrian ‘streets’, stair cores and balcony walkways – which continued the sense of permeability and spatial hierarchies through the Estate.



New blocks are positioned at the north-west corner and south side of the Estate, clearly defining its boundary. Their configuration is informed by the linearity of the site: the south block slotting in comfortably with the axis of the Kirkeby and Buckridge Buildings, and the north-west building extending off the Nigel Building to articulate the street corner. As well as the plan form, the rhythm of the elevations and scale of the new buildings draw influence from and sit respectfully alongside the adjoining listed buildings. To reduce their impact, a sixth floor on the south block is set back and the pitched aluminium shingle roof of the junction section at the north-west corner bridges the contrast of the original slate and modern flat roofs.



The issue of potentially detracting cycle storage and plant space is resolved with the addition of basements under the new buildings, mitigating the potential impact of these on the character of the listed buildings and conservation area. The MUGA, a feature which often takes little account of its historic setting, in this instance is neatly contained within the space between the original Buckridge Building and new north-west block.



The style of the new buildings is a contemporary take on the characteristics of the early 20th-century blocks, with subtle contrasts to discern between the old and new but unified by the continued use of defining materials. The north-west block extends off what was formerly a blank gable end wall, but is set back slightly so the end of the historic building is still discernible. The corner treatment draws influence from the nearby junction of Leather Lane and Portpool Lane, with an intermediary block softening the transition between the listed Nigel Building and the new block around the corner. On both new buildings, the articulation of the street-facing elevations successfully evolves from the rhythm and modulations on the neighbouring historic buildings. Inside the courtyard, the new and old elevations are more open with a vertical emphasis to avoid repeating the uncharacteristic

THE BOURNE ESTATE, HOLBORN, LONDON

horizontality of the 1960s blocks.

The materials palette chosen for the new buildings is a key component of their successful integration with the original buildings. This includes the characteristic use of different coloured bricks to separate bays on the elevations, with lighter bricks used inside the courtyard. As with the historic buildings, red and white glazed bricks are used in the shared circulation spaces, with bullnose bricks softening the corners where there is close-up iteration with the brickwork. Timber slats along the ceiling add a softer contemporary note. The tradition for tiled signage has also been continued, echoing the distinctive early 20th-century design of the original signage.

Entrance into the Estate is strongly characterised by the presence of generous archways, a feature which has been continued at the north-west corner and south side. These function to clearly denote access points into the Estate and encourage movement through. The historic archways are ornamented with stuccoed classical mouldings and stand proud of the elevations, asserting a strong presence within the streetscapes. The new archways are equally generous proportionally to encourage movement across the Estate, but are more simply ornamented and consequently compliment, rather than compete with, the original arches. The south side of the Estate was formerly lacking any defined entrance, which has now been successfully addressed with the addition of a new archway. This has also added further architectural interest to what was previously an undistinguished streetscape. At the north-west corner of the Estate, the new plinth level has been lowered compared to the neighbouring Nigel Building, which more clearly articulates the presence of community spaces here on the ground floor



© Matthew Lloyd Architects

and emphasises the status of the new arch as it breaks through the plinth line.

Movement through the archways is supplemented with a sensitive landscape scheme, which using natural and neutral-toned materials to subtly blend with its historic setting. A new courtyard works well as a central node and the formal arrangement of the new trees reflects the linearity of the buildings. The large plane trees which have been retained are strongly characteristic of the city. The introduction of maisonettes with individual doors at ground level and creation of further apartments accessed off the balcony walkways promotes movement and active frontages across the Estate, rather than in concentrated bottle-necks.

Key Points

The evolution of the scheme at the Bourne Estate was strongly influenced by community feedback, highlighting the importance of public consultation through the design process. In this instance, the solution to position the north-west block as a continuation of the Estate's perimeter was put forward by a member of the public and resulted in a highly successful design.

The attention to detail and quality of finishes across the Estate have been key to bringing together the old and new, avoiding the extremes of either a stylistic clash or pastiche dilution of the listed buildings' character. This was enabled by the re-appointment of the design architects for the detailed design and construction stages, and their close collaboration with the appointed contractors.

168 UPPER STREET
ISLINGTON, LONDON



168 UPPER STREET, ISLINGTON, LONDON

An imaginative reinstatement of a missing corner building that reproduces the original facade in a contemporary way whilst unifying the Victorian terrace of which it forms a part.



PROJECT INFORMATION:

Region:	London
Type of Development:	Infill development
Location and postcode:	Upper Street / Barnsbury Street, London N1
Local planning authority:	London Borough of Islington
Architects:	Amin Taha Architects
Developer/land owner:	Aria
No. of residential units:	3
Internal Area:	Internal area 545 m ²
Other uses:	Retail at basement and ground floor

AWARDS:

RIBA London Award 2019, RIBA National Award 2019

Description of development

Located on a prominent corner site, part of a late nineteenth century parade of buildings in Upper Street, the previous building was significantly damaged during the Second World War and was eventually demolished in its entirety. A design competition was held following purchase of the vacant site in 2012. The ground floor and basement provide retail space. The residential accommodation above comprises a one-level apartment at first-floor level, a duplex apartment on the second and third floors and a further duplex apartment on the fifth and sixth floors. These apartments are accessed from Barnsbury Street via a secret hinged section of the façade which leads through to a glazed passage.

Heritage assets

The site is located in the Upper Street (North) Conservation Area. This is Islington's main historic thoroughfare, a lively mixture of shops, bars, restaurants and other commercial uses. The adjacent block 159-167 Upper Street is not listed or locally listed. There are a number of Grade II listed buildings along Barnsbury Street, these include Nos.6-16 (Even), Nos.7-27 (Odd) and Nos.29-41 (Odd).

168 UPPER STREET, ISLINGTON, LONDON



Planning context

The final design emerged after a period of pre-application consultation with planning officers between June and December 2013. The initial proposal was to form the 'replica' building with a veiled facade of bronze metal. The planners' preference was for the building to exactly replicate what previously existed. During the pre-application process, planning officers were concerned about the quality of the 'imprinted' image of the historic building and about the proposed irregular fenestration which varies from the uniform and regular pattern of window openings which is a strong characteristic of the area. However, they accepted that an alternative solid material, such as ceramic or terracotta, could be acceptable with contemporary style windows 'punched' into the façade. In order to reassure the planners about the appropriateness of the design, the architects included a more detailed design for the terracotta facade with regard to its look and detail. They consulted with the leading craftsman and suppliers of terracotta facades in an effort to bring in their expertise from an early stage. The planning application (Ref. P2014/0189/FUL) was approved in July 2014.

Assessment of design qualities and relationship to historic environment

The new building completes a long terrace of late-19th century four-storey buildings facing Upper Street. There is a consistent facade treatment to the whole of this frontage which extends from Waterloo Terrace to Barnsbury Street. The new building reinstates the final unit of this long facade, which is faced in brick with contrasting architectural details – parapet details, string courses, quoin blocks etc, now mostly painted white. On the return elevation along Barnsbury Street, the building abuts an earlier terrace of three-storey houses.

Rachel Whiteread's 'House' - a cast concrete representation of a typical Victorian house – was a conscious influence. Other examples of this approach cited by the architects are the new east wing of the Natural History Museum in Berlin (designed by Diener & Diener), the Hotel Fouquet Barriere in Paris (designed by Edouard Francois) and La Caixa Forum in Madrid (designed by Herzog and De Meuron).

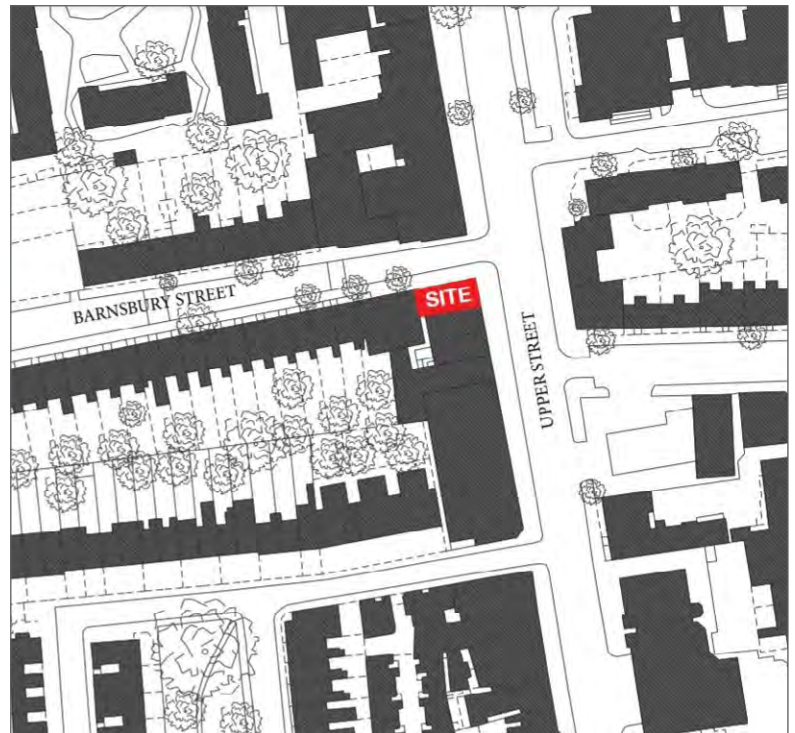
A computer model of the previous building was constructed, based on a study of historic photographs and three-dimensional point cloud surveys of the site and the intact southern pavilion of the terrace. All external mouldings, window surrounds and features as well as internal skirtings, dado rails, cornices and even anaglypta wallpaper were modelled. Within the monolithic cast shell, floor plates are introduced to suit contemporary needs rather than replicating the historic floor to ceiling heights. A series of purposefully punched window openings align with the new interior to provide the internal spaces of the building with quality

168 UPPER STREET, ISLINGTON, LONDON

amounts of daylight and views out. The depth of the openings gives the impression of a solid terracotta facade wrapping the entire building.

The RIBA Award citation comments:

Contributing to the streetscape with remarkable delight this intervention is a 1:1 cast monument and memory to the Victorian terrace which previously existed on this plot. The terracotta tinted concrete facades deftly play with the themes of memory; actual, imagined, created, true and false. Painstakingly cast into machine milled polystyrene moulds constructed from photographs and a digital 3D survey of the mirror corner at the other end of the terrace, it creates, rather than re-creates, sculptural facades which are both energetic and reposeful.



© Amin Taha Architects



Key Points

The design solution emerged following two rounds of pre-application negotiation with local planning officers. It accurately recreates the detail and architectural style of the existing terrace facade in a contemporary and modern way, unifying the block as a whole, whilst achieving a well-detailed and contemporary standard for living and retail.

TEMPLE GARDENS
TEMPLE CLOUD, SOMERSET



TEMPLE GARDENS, TEMPLE CLOUD, SOMERSET

Traditional forms, complementary materials combined with bold architectural features has led to a development that is confidently contemporary but fits with ease into its historic context.



PROJECT INFORMATION:

Region:	South West
Type of Development:	Village infill site
Location and postcode:	Temple Cloud, Bristol, BS39 5EL
Local planning authority:	Bath and North East Somerset Council
Architects:	Archio
Developer/land owner:	Bath and Stratford Homes
No. of residential units:	9
Size of Site:	0.34ha
Other uses:	Hospitality (pub and hotel)

AWARDS:

Winner, RIBA South West Project Architect of the Year
Winner, RIBA South West Regional Award
Short-listed, British Homes Awards Small Development of the Year
Short-listed, AJ Housing Project of the Year (up to £10 million)

Description of development

This scheme comprises the refurbishment and alteration of the vacant Temple Inn public house along with the construction of ten lettable hotel rooms associated with the pub and nine new residential units, all with three to four bedrooms. Five of the new dwellings are in a terrace, two form a semi-detached pair and the final two dwellings are within a converted outbuilding of the pub. The scheme also includes hard and soft landscaping including a private courtyard for residents and separate car parking for the pub and residential units.

Heritage assets

The site includes the Grade II listed Temple Inn, a historic village pub the oldest parts of which date to the 17th century with 18th and 19th century alterations. The curtilage of the pub contained two outbuildings, one of which was demolished as part of the scheme and the other converted into two residential units. Adjacent to the site, on the opposite side of Temple Inn Lane is Temple Cloud Court House, a Grade II listed mid-19th century former court house and police station, now a private dwelling.

TEMPLE GARDENS, TEMPLE CLOUD, SOMERSET



Planning context

There are no site-specific policies related to the site, however the public house had been vacant for some time and was deemed to be 'at risk'. The development was considered against NPPF and BANES policies relating to sustainable development, the significance and setting of heritage assets, housing provision and good quality design.

Assessment of design qualities and relationship to historic environment

This development is located at the heart of the village of Temple Cloud on the brownfield site of a vacant public house, the Grade II listed Temple Inn. The developers identified an opportunity to secure the refurbishment and viable use of the pub through the addition of lettable hotel rooms, expanding the hospitality offer, and supported by bespoke new housing.



The scheme has arisen from careful consideration of the site constraints and opportunities including reusing one of the pub outbuildings for residential accommodation and using the lettable rooms building to screen the car parking and new houses from the main road.



The new buildings have been arranged in an informal arrangement reminiscent of various outbuildings the site held historically. Two of these outbuildings survived, both curtilage listed but neither of particular special interest. One has been retained and converted whilst the other has been demolished to allow sufficient new development to ensure the viability of the scheme and repair of the listed building.



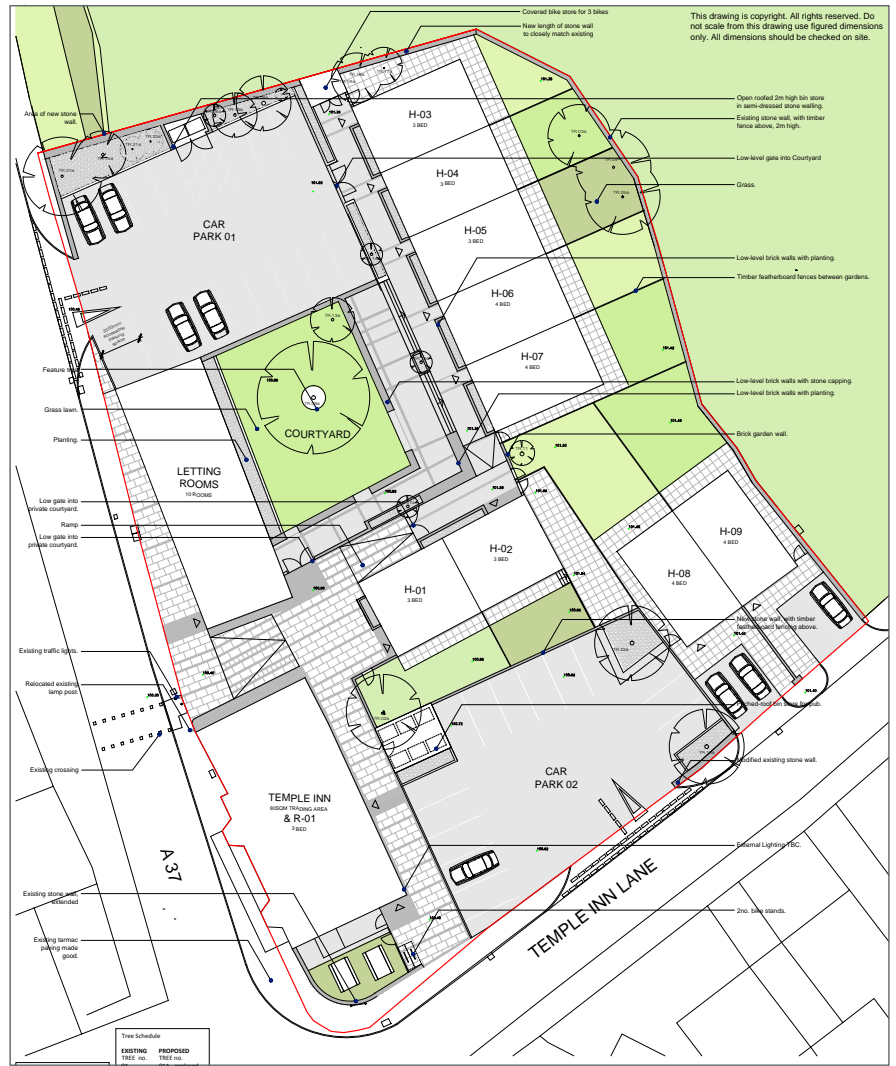
The lettable rooms building, at two storeys, is subservient in scale and fully detached from the pub. The terrace of five dwellings parallel to the rear is part one and a half storeys and part two storeys with attic accommodation. The other pair of new dwellings, fronting Temple Inn Lane, is similarly two storeys with attic. These slightly taller elements are set sufficiently away from the three storey listed building so as not to compete. Furthermore, the varying scale of the building draws upon the vernacular character and informal planning of a site of this type.

The traditional pitched roof forms of the proposed buildings continue the deferential relationship with the listed building reflecting the simpler appearance of the outbuilding. However, the new buildings do not seek to be pastiche, holding their own with bold features, simple lines and material palette. Different aspects of the scheme respond to their context in different ways. The lettable rooms building is perhaps the most traditional in its appearance and in keeping with other similar local buildings, being clad in stone and with a clay-tiled roof. The use of slender-framed glazing and brick detailing elevate the design. The rear terrace and semi-detached pair have a more contemporary design through the

TEMPLE GARDENS, TEMPLE CLOUD, SOMERSET

use of bold dormers, asymmetrical gable windows and strong, contrasting architraves. The use of natural stone to clad all the new buildings was unviable, however this allowed for an innovative approach to be taken for the other new buildings. Although not a common local building material, a brick shade similar to that of Bath stone was selected. This ties the new buildings in with the stone buildings on the site and with the character of the local area.

Due to the uses within the scheme, a relatively large amount of surface car parking is required. This is broken into two separate zones to reduce their impact, one for the pub and one for the residences. The use of tarmac has been limited, with a fine, pale gravel used for the car parks softening and creating a more vernacular appearance. The scheme also includes a private green courtyard for the residential units, providing structure to the layout.



© Archio

Key Points

The impetus of the scheme has been to bring about the refurbishment and viable use of the listed pub, however in achieving this aim the architects have conceived a highly contextual, sensitive scheme of new housing and hotel development which fits well with its surroundings.

Underused or vacant sites within a settlement boundary offer excellent opportunities to enhance and reinforce village character. New development, including at increased densities, is often less controversial with local communities than edge of settlement expansion. The success of this scheme is in its contextual design, complementing the existing pub and local character in terms of its scale and material choices in particular. The scheme also offers more than just housing bringing a selection of tangible public benefits including

the reopening and refurbishment of the village pub and providing long-term jobs in the hospitality sector for the local community.

Community engagement was an important part of the process, particularly as concurrently a larger, more contentious scheme was passing through the planning system. When consulted during the design process, the local community reacted positively to the proposals, in particular bringing a derelict site and building back into use and the material and form of the proposed buildings. Residual concerns remained around traffic and parking, however from a heritage perspective the scheme was deemed to have been highly successful by the LPA, the community and by the architectural profession having been awarded or shortlisted for several industry awards.



FAIRMILE HOSPITAL
CHOLSEY, OXFORDSHIRE

FAIRMILE HOSPITAL, CHOLSEY, OXFORDSHIRE

The re-development of a former hospital on the edge of a rural village with new homes designed as distinctive groups influenced by the historic buildings.



PROJECT INFORMATION:

Region:	South
Type of Development:	Former NHS hospital site
Location and postcode:	Cholsey, South Oxfordshire, OX10 9HH
Local planning authority:	South Oxfordshire District Council
Architects:	JTP (masterplanners and design of new housing in the grounds) and Woodfield Brady Architects (for conversion of existing buildings)
Developer/land owner:	Linden Homes, Thomas Homes, Homes & Community Agency
No. of residential units:	220 new-builds (plus 95 within converted buildings)
Internal Area:	27ha
Other uses:	Community facilities – sports' pitches, allotments, play area, multi-use hall

Description of development

The scheme at Fairmile sought to re-develop the former hospital site on the edge of the village of Cholsey into a new mixed-use community with a variety of different homes. The 19th-century buildings were converted into residential units and community facilities, with new-build clusters across the site following the demolition of lower-quality and modern hospital buildings. Allotments and sports' pitches were established within the surrounding landscape. To incorporate the new community and its facilities with the surrounding area, provision was also made for an enhanced bus service.

Heritage assets

The original hospital was built 1868-70 to the designs of C H Hine, and later extended at several periods. The main hospital building, former chapel and entrance lodge are all individually listed at Grade II. The surrounding parkland landscape – comprising pleasure grounds, airing courts, walled gardens and woodland extending down to the River Thames – is designated as a Grade II Registered Park and Garden.

FAIRMILE HOSPITAL, CHOLSEY, OXFORDSHIRE



Planning context

The South Oxfordshire Local Plan 2011 (adopted in 2006) included a policy specifically for the future re-development of the former hospital site. The Cholsey Plan was produced following consultation with the local community in 2006, setting out their aspirations. A development brief was also prepared by South Oxfordshire District Council in 2003. One of its recommendations was the preparation of a conservation plan, which was ultimately endorsed by the Council and given material weight in the decision-making process.

Assessment of design qualities and relationship to historic environment

The preparation of a site-wide conservation plan and gazetteer identified three groups of building on the hospital site:

- the original 1870s structures (listed and curtilage);
- curtilage-listed structures added between the original construction phase and 1948; and
- post-1948 structures with little or no merit, or which detract from the site.



Demolition was concentrated to the north-east and south-west of the site, where later development had little relationship with the 1870s hospital buildings, and detracting infill development around the core of the main building. This freed up defined areas around the edge of the site for new development, which ensured the historic landscape on the north and south sides of the main hospital remained largely unbroken and any new development was respectful of its local landscape context.



At the north-west corner of the site, closest to the village, the new buildings were more densely configured in a more urban arrangement of terraces. Beyond this, along the thickly planted west perimeter road, development was more rural in character with weatherboarding and cottage/agricultural building typologies.

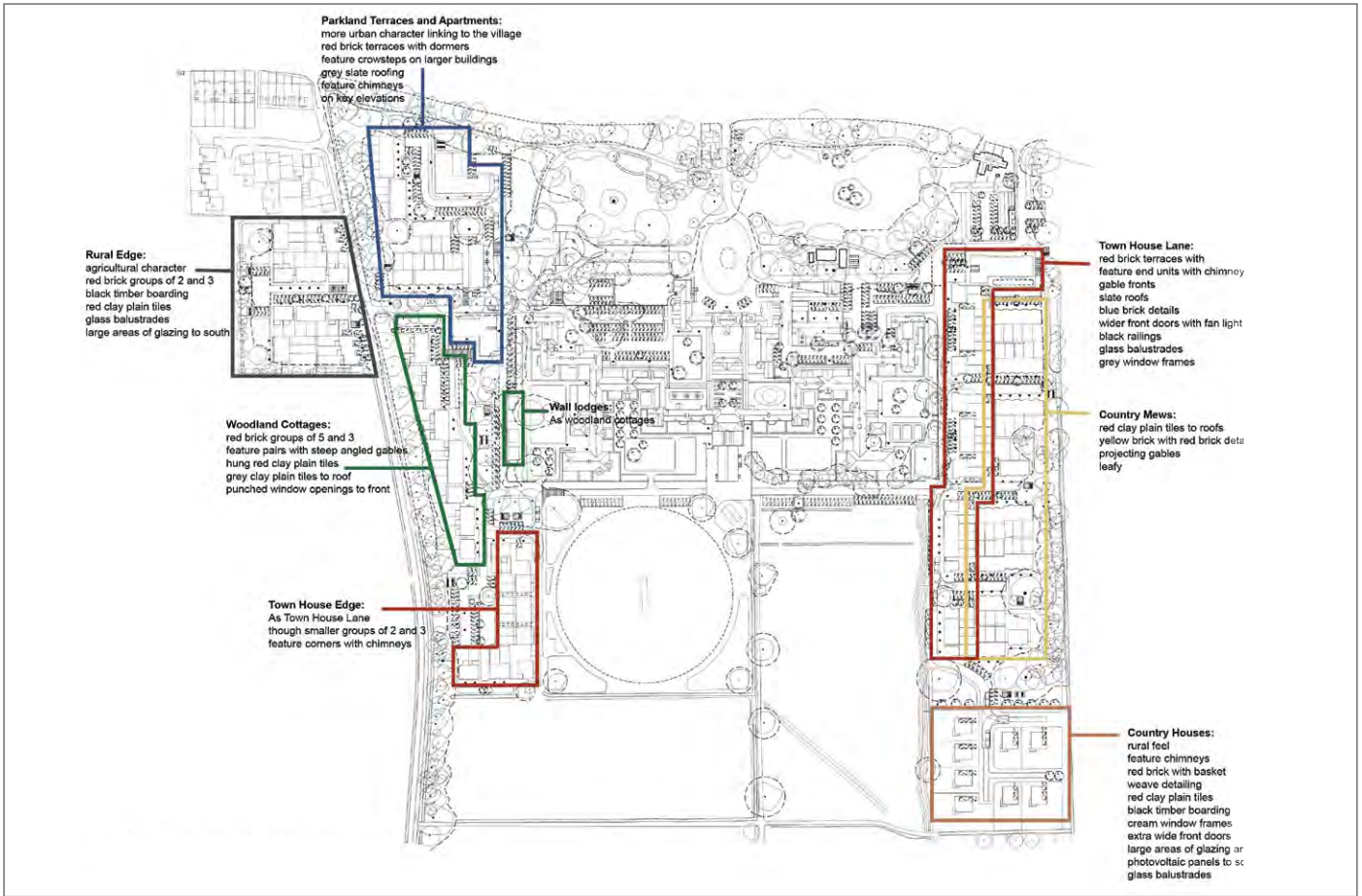


On the south and immediate east sides of the main hospital building, the new development was more formally arranged as flanking townhouses responding to the orientation of the listed building's south elevation and views outwards. As with the west side, development along the eastern edge is more rural in character with country mews-style homes tucked behind the townhouses and a detached group of slightly larger houses.

The varied development densities and building typologies create an evolving sense of character moving through the site. The prominent use of red brick and architectural detailing using this material ties the new buildings back to the original 1870s structures.

On the north side of the site, the group value and configuration

FAIRMILE HOSPITAL, CHOLSEY, OXFORDSHIRE



© JTP

of the former hospital's principal elevation set back behind a formal lawn and flanked by a farm and the chapel is protected as part of the masterplan. The rural streetscape has been continued around the west and east sides of the site with the new development, which has been configured to permit views outwards towards the surrounding countryside. In further recognition of the

importance of the landscape, features including balconies and principal elevations have been articulated to take in views across the green spaces. The positioning of chimneystacks and the angle of gable pitches have also drawn influence from the existing buildings to avoid stark contrasts between old and new.

Key Points

The unsuitability of the site to function effectively as a hospital in the 21st century was recognised in 2003 when NHS services ceased to operate at Fairmile. Following this, the need to establish a new use was instigated by the transfer of 96 former hospital sites from the NHS in 2005 to the former Homes & Communities Agency (now Homes England), whose key aims were to protect the heritage assets, efficiently re-use the buildings, and to deliver homes, including affordable homes. Although historic buildings should ideally not be left vacant for extended periods, the five years between transfer and planning permission were spent in assessing the capacity of the site and the expectations of the local community.

The preparation of a conservation plan and gazetteer to inform the master plan ensured that the varying significance of the buildings across the site was understood and the resulting demolitions and pockets of new development could be justified. This exercise also highlighted opportunities to enhance the listed buildings; such as the removal of later infill extensions and a revived use for the former chapel. Endorsement by the local planning authority also added weight to the proposals.

Consultation with the local community played a particularly important role in striking the right balance of residential development and public amenity.

THE GARDEN QUARTER CAVERSFIELD, OXFORDSHIRE



THE GARDEN QUARTER, CAVERSFIELD, OXFORDSHIRE

The re-development of a former RAF site into a residential community with sensitively-designed infill development and conversion of the historic military buildings, united by landscape enhancements.



One of the new villas (far left), 1930s barrack block (centre) and 1920s barrack block (right)

PROJECT INFORMATION:

Region:	South East
Type of Development:	Former military site
Location and postcode:	Bicester, Oxfordshire, OX26
Local planning authority:	Cherwell District Council
Architects:	Feilden+Mawson
Developer/land owner:	City & Country
No. of residential units:	187 (160 conversion; 27 new builds)
Internal Area:	9.27ha
Other uses:	Shop and café

Description of development

The scheme at Caversfield sought to re-develop part of the former RAF Bicester site as a residential community. It was previously referred to as the RAF 'domestic' site to distinguish it from the 'technical' site and airfield across the road. RAF Bicester is recognised as one of the most intact early 20th-century military sites in England, retaining a distinctive group of accommodation and other ancillary buildings on the domestic site. Modern accretions were demolished to better reveal the historic buildings, which were converted into residential dwellings, and new houses were strategically positioned in alignment with the existing buildings. The extensive hard landscaping was reduced and a group of three 'greens' was introduced, framed by the different groups of buildings.

Heritage assets

The site is located within the RAF Bicester Conservation Area. There are also 12 individual Grade II listings on the site, recognising the distinctive military use and character of the structures. These include barracks, mess buildings and stores. On the opposite side of the road are further listed buildings and scheduled monuments on what was formerly the technical part of the airbase and the adjoining airfield.

THE GARDEN QUARTER, CAVERSFIELD, OXFORDSHIRE



New terraced housing



Former officers mess building (foreground) and new terrace beyond



New single-storey lodges



Retained military buildings (foreground) and new terraces beyond

Planning context

Under planning legislation at the time, the development required planning permission, listed building consent and conservation area consent. A Design Brief was prepared by Cherwell District Council in 2009 following the preparation of a Conservation Area Appraisal in 2008.

Assessment of design qualities and relationship to historic environment

The scheme challenged initial assertions that the site would not be suitable for residential conversion and sought to balance the cost of conserving the listed buildings with enabling development that enhanced the distinctive character of the site. Early heritage assessment identified the strong group value of the buildings and the spatial relationships across the site. The principal consideration in evolving the scheme was consequently the enhancement of this character. This was achieved through the demolition of detracting later extensions and the strategic positioning of new buildings that respected the axial configuration of the site and the generous spacing between buildings (which was originally intended to mitigate bomb damage).

The location and orientation of the new buildings was strongly influenced by the relationships created with the existing buildings and spaces. At the northern end of the site two new residential terraces have been added, bordering the open space in front of the former Officers Mess (Buildings 16) and the former Dining Room & Institute (Building 20). They frame the new Orchard Square in the centre, replacing the car park previously located there.

On the southern half of the site, the original barrack blocks dating from the 1920s are placed symmetrically on either side of the former parade ground (now an open grassed area). The demolition of a detracting later building left a vacant plot on the west side of the parade ground where new development could be sensibly placed. This has been filled by the addition of a new building matching the style of one of the original barrack blocks. Four detached villa-style houses have been introduced along the west site of the site within the site's green edge where their domestic curtilage can be disguised. Similarly, three new single-storey houses are arranged in parallel formation behind Building 25, near the eastern boundary of the site. A new lodge marks the entrance to the site, echoing the status and character that is typical of a military site.

The new buildings continue the use of flat roofs and concrete string courses above the ground and first floors, which emphasises their horizontality and echoes the Art Deco characteristics of the site's 1930s buildings. The restrained and orderly detailing of the new terraced houses and villas sits comfortably with the military

THE GARDEN QUARTER, CAVERSFIELD, OXFORDSHIRE

architecture of the inter-war buildings; for example, the villas have taken inspiration from the Art Deco Watch Office on the adjacent technical site, but without direct imitation.

The Design Brief set out comprehensive guidelines for how the character of the site should be retained and enhanced. This included the signage, rooflines, pointing, colour schemes, domestic ephemera (aerials, refuse points, etc.) and means of enclosure so that the obvious 'domestication' of the site was avoided and its military character was preserved. It also highlighted the potential benefit of an Article 4 Direction for the future management of change, although this has not been implemented to date.

Due to their functional character and continued military use for a century, the historic buildings proposed for residential conversion retained very little original ornamentation and had been subject to adhoc alteration. To reinvigorate the uniformity of the buildings across the whole site, missing or mismatched features such as windows and chimney pots were replaced. Patches of incongruous pointing repairs were raked out and re-applied to match the historic finish, a minor element of work but which strongly emphasised the consistency of the brickwork across the site.

The existing and new buildings were further tied together through the landscaping scheme. Key to this was the creation of three 'garden squares', echoing the open character of the parade ground at the south end of the site and two further open spaces in the centre and at the north end of the site. Previously, there had been extensive hard landscaping and car parking provisions close up against the listed buildings, which were detracting from their architectural value. The setting of the listed buildings and overall character of the site have been enhanced with the dispersal of the car parking and introduction of new green spaces.



© Feilden + Mawson - The fully shaded buildings are new. Hatched shading indicates retained buildings.

Key Points

The residential re-development of the site was initially considered to be unsuitable as domestic use had the potential to conflict with its distinctive military character, which had survived remarkably intact. Uncertainty around whether military activity would continue on the site after the MOD had vacated the airfield opposite also meant that recommendations in the Conservation Area Appraisal specific to this site were vague. The impetus was consequently on the developer to investigate and prove the optimum viable use which still fulfilled the requirements to preserve and enhance the heritage assets. With several major residential new-build developments across the town (including another former MOD site), there was the potential for 'consultation fatigue' within the community. Local interest had the benefit of maintaining community engagement and confirmed support for a residential scheme over other options.

The success of the new buildings stems from how the master plan and design details respect the site's historic configuration and functional simplicity of the historic military buildings. As a consequence, the new development sits comfortably within their setting and compliment the revived listed buildings.

CHURCH FIELDS
BOSTON SPA



CHURCH FIELDS, BOSTON SPA

Residential extension to the edge of an historic village, reinterpreting traditional architectural forms to create a strong sense of place and a high quality of public spaces.



PROJECT INFORMATION:

Region:	West Yorkshire
Location and postcode:	Boston Spa, Wetherby, LS23
Local planning authority:	Leeds City Council
Architects:	John R Paley Associates
Developer/land owner:	Taylor Wimpey
No. of residential units:	170
Internal Area:	7,338m ²
Other uses:	None

AWARDS:

Housing Design Awards, 2013
Building For Life 12 'Built For Life' status, 2013

Description of development

Church Fields is an eight-hectare site within the conservation area of Boston Spa. It occupies a broad swathe of land at the west end of the village, lying between the High Street on the south side and the River Wharfe to the north. It replaces an area of hutments built as accommodation for munitions workers at the nearby Thorp Arch factory during the Second World War.

The development provides a wide range of different house types, ranging in size from two-bedroom to five-bedroom properties, and incorporating a proportion of affordable housing. The housing is a mixture of two and three storeys in height, some terraced and some detached. Whilst a variety of vernacular architectural forms and features are employed, the use of natural stone for all external walling ensures a degree of consistency and continuity with the nearby village houses.

There are three hectares of public open space, both formal and informal, including a large green between the new houses and St Mary's Church to the south east. There is also a broad space

CHURCH FIELDS, BOSTON SPA



along the northern edge of the development which provides an attractive green buffer space between the housing the River Wharfe. Each house is provided with a small courtyard or garden as a private open space surrounded by fences. The masterplan incorporates a number of pedestrian routes through the site and ensures that the roads are pedestrian-friendly.

Heritage assets

Boston Spa is a linear village located between Wetherby and Tadcaster, founded as a small spa resort in the mid-18th century. Its built environment is of extremely high quality, a fact which is demonstrated by the high density of listed buildings in the village. Boston Spa is unusual in that it developed rapidly over a short space of time, with the majority of buildings in the historic core built between 1770 and 1830. The development site is within the setting of the Church of St Mary the Virgin, which in its present form dates largely from the 1870s. The church is listed at Grade II. Along the south side of the High Street, facing Church Fields, are numerous stone-built village house, several of which are listed at Grade II.



Planning context

The development was the subject of two applications on this allocated housing site, both of which were refused by Leeds City Council. Following appeals and a public inquiry in 2011, planning permission was granted by the Planning Inspectorate for both Scheme A (170 homes) and Scheme B (153 homes). Planning appeal references APP/N4720/A/09/2117381 and APP/N4720/A/10/2120991.



The formal consultation response to the planning applications by English Heritage (now Historic England) stated that: *'we are satisfied that the proposal in its current form would meet our primary requirement of reinforcing local distinctiveness'* and *'the house types and layout have been developed using local vernacular detailing, based on an assessment of the landscape setting and historical development of the village'*.

Assessment of design qualities and relationship to historic environment

The architects undertook a series of site visits to develop an understanding of the site, its context and the built fabric and structure of Boston Spa. The information gathered by these sites visits was augmented with historical research into the evolution of the town over the past 250 years and combined with experience gained on smaller projects within the immediate geographical area.



The road layout is designed to create changing vistas within the scheme and has sharp turns which help to slow traffic speeds. The scale and disposition of houses is irregular, helping to create a sense of informality which mirrors the varied arrangement and juxtapositions of older houses on the opposite side of High Street.

CHURCH FIELDS, BOSTON SPA

The individual house designs adapt a variety of Georgian architectural forms, including terraces, mews houses and detached villas, all with timber sash windows and slate-covered roofs. External walls are faced with the pale cream-coloured magnesian limestone which is the prevailing walling material for the older houses in the village. The overall design approach is therefore closely related to the architectural forms and materials found elsewhere in the Conservation Area, although with a certain freedom in adapting them to suit present-day requirements.

The layout takes full advantage of views across a broad green space views towards the listed church and across the River Wharfe to rural views beyond the village. There is generous provision of open space, with existing trees retained and new trees added.

The Inspector, in granting approval for the scheme at appeal, commented that the proposals *'would respond to and, to an extent, reinforce the existing character of this area'* and *'the proposed streets and new frontages would be in keeping with the existing street scene and pattern in older Boston Spa'*. He also commented that *'the proposed dwelling types are individually well proportioned and generally in character with the range of older buildings elsewhere within the Conservation Area'*.



© John R Paley Architects

Key points

The scheme's character reflects the historic vernacular architecture and use of materials in Boston Spa, invoking a sense of place through the composition of spaces between buildings, their heights, textures, forms and solidity. Without direct imitation, the houses reflect the forms and details of traditional buildings in the neighbourhood, combining formal and informal terraces, and courtyard forms.

In the masterplan of the development, there is a clear hierarchy of circulation in the site, with pedestrian routes connecting the riverbank with the High Street in various ways and connecting well with each unit of the neighbourhood. At the perimeter of the scheme, houses face outwards across green frontages – towards the river bank on the north boundary, towards the listed church on the east side of the site and towards historic village buildings across the High Street to the south. The development incorporates several public open spaces and takes advantage of existing trees to create a harmonious green landscape setting.

TIMEKEEPERS SQUARE
SALFORD



TIMEKEEPERS SQUARE, SALFORD

Recreating the vernacular Georgian terrace and urban grain within the setting of a listed church.



PROJECT INFORMATION:

Region:	North West
Location and postcode:	Salford, M3 6FJ
Local planning authority:	Salford City Council
Architects:	Buttress
Developer/land owner:	English Cities Fund
No. of residential units:	36
Internal Area:	0.5ha

AWARDS:

RIBA North-West Awards 2018: Winner
Housing Design Awards 2018, Richard Feilden Award: Winner
Manchester Society of Architects Award 2017, Best Multiple Residential: Winner
RICS Awards North-West 2018, Residential Award: Winner

Description of development

This residential development forms part of the phased mixed-use masterplan for the regeneration of central Salford. Six blocks of terraced houses are configured on new landscaped avenues around St Philip's Church. The houses are dual aspect with private gardens and roof terraces. A limited number of car park spaces are located in an off-street courtyard.

Heritage assets

The site partially overlaps the Adelphi Bexley Square Conservation Area, which covers an area of Salford which evolved in response to the prosperity of the Industrial revolution. The Grade II* listed St Philip's Church is a focal point within the conservation area, with external bollards separately listed Grade II. To the north of the church, the former courthouse with its attached railings and gates are listed together at Grade II. The terraced row on the east side of Encombe Place is also listed at Grade II. There is also a locally listed modern sculpture on the site. Across the road is the Grade II* Cathedral of St John.

TIMEKEEPERS SQUARE, SALFORD



Planning context

The development forms part of a wider masterplan for Salford Central, which was granted a separate outline permission under the Environmental Impact Assessment process. Local planning policy identified the regeneration potential across the city, with a separate Development Framework expanding on this vision. Material consideration was also given to supplementary planning documents concerning design.

Assessment of design qualities and relationship to historic environment

The configuration of the site has been strongly influenced by the urban grain of Encombe Place, which frames the north side of St Philip's Church. The primary aim of the scheme was to reinstate a historic street pattern and to strengthen the presence of the church within the new streetscape. In response to this, a new avenue was created on the east side of the church, re-framing the view from Great George Street and continuing the axis westwards from the neighbouring cathedral. The listed terrace on Encombe Place previously only filled half the length of the street. The scheme subsequently took the opportunity to balance the streetscape with the addition of a new terrace block, which also helped to articulate the missing corner of the square around the church.



A terraced townhouse typology is recreated across the site, drawing on the existing scale and rhythm of the listed terrace. On Encombe Place, the new block sits up on a plinth to create the same stepped entrances and sense of status as the historic buildings. The new block is taller than the adjoining terrace, with the upper level set back to break up this increased height. The vertical emphasis is continued through the fenestration, including the inclusion of Juliet balconies which reiterate the scale of the neighbouring Georgian sash windows. The deep recesses also help break up the street-facing elevations.



The new blocks to the east of Encombe Place continue the distinctive proportions and rhythm of the Georgian terrace. The blocks framing the east view of St Philip's are three storeys with a stepped parapet wall to emphasise the status of the church and visibility as a local landmark. A more modest massing and asymmetric pitched roof is used for the block facing on Great George Street, instilling a sense of hierarchy across the site.



A limited materials palette is used throughout the scheme, predominantly a light brick in response to the sandstone of St Philip's Church. On Encombe Place, where the streetscape already differs on either side, the lighter brick introduces a third architectural feature which, whilst providing a point of contrast within the local streetscape, helps unify the spaces created around the church. Delicate metal railings with a dark finish are introduced within the landscaping and across the new balconies, repeating

TIMEKEEPERS SQUARE, SALFORD

the characteristic railings present around the church and in front of the former courthouse. The materials and architectural detailing of the new buildings are otherwise restrained and simple.

The landscaping is focussed on the principle of framing views of the church with the creation of the new St Philip's Square avenue on its east side. The locally listed sycamore seed sculpture has been re-positioned at the top of the shallow incline on St Philip's Square, against the backdrop of the church's east window. The trees are positioned formally to soften the streetscape, repeating the same characteristic as Encombe Place. The use of York stone slabs for the pavement finish also continues the traditional landscape character from the historic into the new spaces, and is sympathetic to the appearance of the conservation area.



© Buttress



Key Points

St Philip's Church has been utilised as an anchor point for the masterplan of Timekeepers Square. The success of the scheme comes from its urban grain, expressly the careful positioning of the new terrace blocks to frame views of the church and provide rational corridors for moving across the site into its wider area. The simplicity of the new architecture, characterised by the disciplined proportions of the facades and restrained detailing, demonstrates how a successful contrast can be achieved between historic and contemporary, providing the established built scales and rhythms are respected and threaded through into the new design.

WELSH STREETS
LIVERPOOL



WELSH STREETS, LIVERPOOL

An ambitious and popular scheme that re-uses hundreds of derelict Victorian terraced houses and mends the urban fabric with sympathetically designed infill development.



PROJECT INFORMATION:

Region:	North West
Type of Development:	Urban infill and regeneration site
Location and postcode:	Liverpool, L8
Local planning authority:	Liverpool City Council
Architects:	MCAU
Developer/land owner:	Placefirst
No. of residential units:	TBC
Other Uses:	N/A

AWARDS:

Outright Winner of the Sunday Times Homes Awards 2018 for the Best Housing Project in the UK
The Building Awards 2018 Refurbishment Winner

Description of development

The Welsh Streets comprise a block of terraced Victorian streets in inner-city Liverpool. Seven parallel streets run from High Park Street to the north-west to South Street to the south-east. These are Wynnstay Street, Voelas Street, Rhiwlas Street, Powis Street, Madryn Street, Kinmel Street and Gwydir Street. Two further streets (Pengwern Street and Treborth Street) run from Admiral Street to the south-west to Gwydir Street. The area is bordered by Kelvin Grove to the north-east. These streets are mainly residential with some scattered commercial uses along High Park Street. The original houses are of two storeys, with some larger three-storey terraces along Kelvin Grove.

The Welsh Streets were the subject of a protracted planning battle to determine their future, culminating in a public inquiry in 2014. At that time there were around 400 empty Victorian terraced houses. The scheme which was subsequently approved is being delivered over six development phases. It involves the retention of almost all the surviving houses in the area. This has been achieved through comprehensive remodelling of the existing

WELSH STREETS, LIVERPOOL



© Historic England Archive



© MCAU Architects



© MCAU Architects



© MCAU Architects

houses combined with new-build houses which occupy gaps in the street frontages. Adjacent properties have been knocked through to create a mix of family homes that are for affordable private rent, and where all residents have access to landscaped communal gardens. The later phases of new housing are contemporary in their design, whilst respecting the heritage and character of the existing and remodelled terraces.

Heritage assets

The site comprises seven streets of Victorian terraced houses, designed by architect Richard Owens, and laid out in the 1870s. They lie immediately to the north-west of the Princes Park Conservation Area and are close to Princes Park itself, though visually separated from it behind grand villas that line Devonshire Road. The houses in the Welsh Streets are neither listed nor within a designated conservation area, however they are recognised as non-designated heritage assets. The Secretary of State, in determining an application to demolish the majority of the houses, considered that the surviving built and cultural heritage in the Welsh Streets is of considerable significance. The survival of Ringo Starr's birthplace at No.9 Madryn Street gives the area added cultural significance as part of Liverpool's Beatles heritage.

Planning context

The Welsh Streets were earmarked for clearance under the Housing Market Renewal policy, also known as the Pathfinder programme, which operated between 2002 and 2011. The demolition of the area had not commenced when the programme was cancelled in 2011, however most of the houses were left empty. Plans to demolish the majority of the houses were again proposed in 2013. SAVE Britain's Heritage mounted a vigorous campaign to protect the Welsh Streets from demolition. The scheme was the subject of a public planning inquiry in 2014. The Inspector was minded to approve the scheme. However the decision was called in by the Secretary of State who overturned their Inspector's decision and refused permission. The reasons for the decision are contained in a letter from the MHCLG of January 2015.

The current development has been the subject of a number of planning approvals granted between 2017 and 2019. The refurbishment, partial demolition, conversion and rebuilding of houses in the Welsh Streets was the subject of a series of four planning applications that were granted permission by the City Council in 2017 and 2018 (planning refs.17H/0818, 17H/1812, 18F/0012 &18F/2803). A further permission was granted in 2019 which covers the erection of 52 new dwellings on land at Wynnstay Street, Voelas Street, Rhiwlas Street and South Street. (planning ref. 19F/0112).

Assessment of design qualities and relationship to historic environment

The developer, Placefirst, along with Plus Dane Housing and the City Council have been working towards regenerating the Welsh Streets through an extensive programme of refurbishing the existing terraced housing stock where possible. The new-build element consists of 52 new dwellings which re-instate the original terraced form on land where the former dwellings had been demolished. Two thirds of the land was formerly designated as a neighbourhood park, located to the rear of derelict dwellings that had been in a very poor condition in excess of ten years. However this land did not provide a safe or attractive amenity.

There are two main elements to the design – one which entails the use of a contemporary twist on the terraced form using a ‘saw tooth’ approach where the existing terraces are to be continued, or infilled, and the other using a much more contemporary approach to the development facing South Street.

The designs were altered during the course of the application to ensure that eaves and window heights line through with the original terraces. Although somewhat controversial, the use of the ‘saw tooth’ roof form



© MCAU Architects

was considered by the City’s planning officer to be appropriate. The facing materials pick up on the colour and type of the original terraces. The proposed new dwellings therefore re-emphasise the terraced character of the Welsh Streets area.

The design of the end-of-terrace units that front onto South Street was amended in the course of negotiations with City planners. The result has been revised house types that include pitched roofs and fewer flat-roofed elements. The use of a modern contemporary approach on these end units signals the end of the terraces with a more dynamic form that creates visual interest and helps to re-animate South Street.

Key Points

The City Council played a crucial role in transferring the empty and derelict houses to a residential private rental company – Placefirst – for a nominal sum which ensured that the scheme was made viable. Local opinion, which had been divided during the protracted planning battle over the area’s future, is now fully supportive of the development; this is attracting former residents to return and where a new ‘Welsh Streets’ community, which the area was historically renowned for, is starting to once again re-establish itself.

The re-configuration of the original houses, including the removal of rear extensions and provision of communal spaces at the rear of the terraces,

encourages community and creates space for family living. Negotiations with the City planners led to design changes which improved the relationship of the new housing to surrounding streets.

The scheme provides a blueprint for developers and local authorities whereby the typical outdated ‘two up two down’ terrace houses have been reconfigured to deliver a more varied mix of two, three and four-bedroomed homes, more suited to modern-day family living and market demand. The result is attractive homes that have retained their historic nature characterised by attractive brickwork detailing, large window openings, and high floor-to-ceiling heights, and an array of homes that are also larger than the MHCLG’s current space standards for housing which are applied by the majority of volume housebuilders.

