

Accordia Cambridge, England

Biography

Project Type: Residential
Project Context: Urban
Completion: 2010
Number of Dwellings: 378 (166 apartments, 212 houses), 30% affordable with mixed tenure (affordable units - 76% for rent, 24% shared ownership)
Dwelling Type: 2-5 bedroom houses, 1-4 bedroom apartments
Typical Unit Area: 170-1200 square feet

Accordia, Cambridge is a mixed-income mixed-tenure residential development masterplanned by Feilden Clegg Bradley Architects (FCBA). In order to bring design variety to the project, FCBA worked with two other architects, Maccreanor Lavington (25% of units) and Alison Brooks Architects (10% of units) to design a total of 378 individual units. The goal of the project was to create a balanced place to live with usable public and private space, pedestrian and cycle circulation, and a variety of housing types, including terraces, courtyard houses, and set-piece apartment buildings. The project has received several design and housing awards.

Sustainability

The project is built on a brownfield site and is surrounded by a conservation area. Government buildings previously housed on site are being consolidated into one large, multistory building on-site to allow for increased residential density. Mature trees were protected. The scheme significantly outperforms current building standards for insulation and allows for future integration of renewable energy technology. Green roofs provide insulation above units and aid in rainwater retention and runoff along with permeable ground surfaces and reed beds.

Connections

The simple road layout combines vehicular and pedestrian circulation on a rectilinear series of main roads and small lanes which access ground level, below-unit parking spaces. Home entries off the lanes provide a small private space for planting. Ample pedestrian and cycling paths are integrated with the site and connect to local bus and train routes. The main Cambridge bus terminal is within a half mile and amenities in central Cambridge are only about one mile away.

Open Space

A series of open spaces at a variety of scales are integrated within the site, including a large communal lawn, several shared garden spaces, and a number of childrens play areas. The project provides three times the amount of open and wooded outdoor space of surrounding developments. Private open space is provided through attached courtyards and terraces at several levels.

Context

The project is built on an urban infill site (brownfield) that formerly housed government buildings, and it is within one mile of the city center of Cambridge. Accordia blends into the surrounding lower-density neighborhoods by maintaining mature vegetation, and by using common local-style brick throughout the scheme, which also provides visual coherence within the community. Plots have a relatively shallow depth and buildings are set close to internal streets and lanes.

Home Qualities

A variety of layout types are provided within the project, ranging from single-bedroom apartments to five-bedroom houses. High quality materials are used throughout the project on the interior and exterior, including the affordable units. All units have at least one parking space. Parking is allocated on streets and courts and in private garages and covered parking below units.

