

Case Study - Former Smith Medical Site, Boundary Road, Hythe, Kent



Background – This Eight Acre Site is allocated for mixed use development under the local plan and has been vacant since 2017.

The site was granted OPP at Committee in March 2021 for the development consisting of ninety-seven residential homes together with 153m² of Commercial office space and the development of a Sixty-Six Bedroom Care Home.

Roddy New Homes purchased the site in December 2022.

Over 80% of the site is currently under concrete and tarmac surfacing and has lain in a dilapidated state since 2017.

Design Objectives

We have carefully designed the scheme around the existing constraints both on and off site. The design proposal has considered the existing Victorian terraced houses to the North on Fort Road, Frampton Road and St Nicholas Road with the southern area of the development reflecting the adjoining existing architecture with some modern influence. Proceeding South through the development the design moves to a more contemporary feel as you transit towards the seafront via the dedicated cycle and footpath route to progressively reveal more contemporary brickwork colours, weatherboarding and outdoor terrace areas to transition into a more modern architecture.

The Houses comprise 2 & 3-bedroom homes complete with rear private gardens and off-street parking.

The Apartments comprise one- & two-bedroom units each with outdoor space and dedicated off-street parking.

The Commercial spaces comprise two separate spaces of 76.5m² each. One commercial space will be a dedicated Community hub where Residents can meet or use the space as a work from home area along with a communal bench seating outside giving a sense of vibrancy as an area where Residents can interact with each other. This space will be owned and managed via the Resident's management company giving the Residents total control of the space.

The remaining commercial space will be allocated as a startup space for a local Business / Entrepreneurs in the Hythe area at a heavily reduced discount. In the first instance the space will be allocated rent free for 3 years to any Resident who purchases a Home and needs a start-up space to establish their business/service.

We have partnered with Boutique Care Homes who will deliver the 66 Bed Care Home. Boutique like us is a family run business and they provide the best-in-class Dementia and Residential care. The Care Home has been designed to reflect as well as possible the architecture the residents would be familiar with, having transitioned from their own Family home to the Care Home facility providing a sense of continuity and a homely feel. The Care Home facility will provide over twenty full time staff positions which will be advertised locally in Hythe.



Place Making objectives for this Development:

Roddy New Homes core business objective is selecting great locations, creating great places to live for our customers and the design proposal has been heavily focused on this aspect under the key headings listed below.

Connectivity & Streets for All: The Scheme has proposed introducing a dedicated cycle and footpath through the spine of the development which will be used by Residents and the surrounding community as a direct link, with limited local traffic, to the seafront to promote cycling and walking. This ensures that the development connects to the wider built-up area and the proposal adds to local connectivity.

Services & Facilities: The location of the site within the Town gives easy access to all the amenities and service Hythe has to offer. With the construction of the dedicated public cycleway and footpath, we are encouraging the residents to utilise walking and cycling to these amenities, and this will also benefit the surrounding existing community in utilising this new infrastructure.

Local Housing Requirements & Needs: The Scheme has been carefully designed to meet local requirements. The delivery of 77 No 2 & 3 Bed Houses and 20 Apartments is a significant boost of starter homes in the Town. The Scheme is delivering 30% as affordable homes which is above the newly adopted requirement of 22% in the Core Strategy Review. Four larger self/custom-build plots are also to be delivered to meet local needs.

Vernacular & Character: The Scheme has balanced the architectural difference in the Area spanning from Victorian /Edwardian era to the more modern contemporary design seen along the seafront in the Town and this has been reflected in the house types as you transit from North to South through the scheme. Providing this balance in design does not alienate the existing settlements around the development which might alienate the existing community, we believe a good aesthetic balance has been struck.

Working within the Site Constraints and its Context: The site being a brownfield site has its challenges which have been overcome following extensive negotiations with local stakeholders, integrating the steep level change on the site, the neighbouring MOD Ranges, and mitigating the flood risk measures during the lifetime of the development.

Brownfield sites with considerable areas of hardstanding do not generally offer great potential for habitat and wildlife. The proposed ecological and habitat plan for this site has generated a significant biodiversity net gain by increasing the green spaces and habitats by 250% which then complements the existing hedgerows particularly around the Hythe Green boundary to the East of the Scheme.

Place Finding & Navigation: We have used the cycle and footpath as the primary wayfinding link through the scheme incorporating a native tree lined avenue where pedestrians, cyclists and members of the wider community can congregate at the Community and start up hubs. The dedicated cycle and footpath will be finished in a Resin bound material to match the colour of the Pebble found on shoreline at the Seafront with native planting and more coastal features of landscaping and shingle as people navigate to the South of the scheme the closer you get to the sea front, using the hard and soft landscaping as a destination direction measure. The Scheme will have signage to direct residents and visitors to the dedicated new access into the adjoining 16-acre Hythe Green directly to the east of the scheme.

Private Parking / Car Usage: The Scheme has been designed to provide sufficient car parking spaces for Residents and Visitors. Careful design has ensured that the streetscape is not dominated with carparking spaces. The Northern area of the development has utilised undercroft car parking in response to the flood risk constraints. The main spine of the scheme will appear car free with the use of smart landscaping and prioritising the public cycle and footpath as the primary artery through the scheme.

Public and Private Spaces: The Scheme has been designed to SBD standards and all spaces can be clearly defined as public and private.

External Amenity spaces and Storage: Adequate space for vehicles, bins, recycling, cycle storage and EV charging for all Residents has been carefully considered.

Health & Wellbeing: The re-development of the site in the first instance will mitigate any potential antisocial behaviour at the site which benefits the existing community adjacent to the site. The scheme is clearly designed to have Walking and Cycling as the primary activity through and around the site. The Scheme has proposed access directly to the adjacent Hythe Green to the East of the site. The existing wall and palisade fencing along Boundary Rd will be removed to provide an open green buffer space with a public path from East to West.

Social interaction is at the forefront of our placemaking objectives for the scheme. The construction of dedicated public cycle and footpath through the centre of the scheme allows members of the existing community into the scheme to interact with the newest members of their community.

The creation of a Community Hub will allow the Residents to come together and interact with each other and future possibilities for existing residents to interact with the newest members of the community at the Hub.

The creation of a startup Hub for local entrepreneurs will invite people from outside the scheme into the area to provide vibrant social interaction.

The proposed new link into Hythe Green will allow the newest members of the community to utilise Hythe Green directly on their doorstep which hosts outdoor events, boot fairs, Food Markets, Festivals and funfairs at various points throughout the year along with its dedicated outdoor play area.

We have carefully designed the scheme to enable interaction and integration into the existing community and utilise the amenities directly on their doorstep whilst providing new infrastructure and spaces to invite the existing community into the new scheme.

Attention to Detail/Build Quality: Placemaking also needs to consider Build Quality and the overall design not just for the scheme but how it interacts with the existing community and its surroundings. The design as proposed strikes a balance between new and old giving consideration to the surrounding area where we have terraced Victorian and Edwardian Homes, the neighbouring Ranges, Hythe Green and the local business units to the South. The proposed materials capture the existing materials used locally along with incorporating more contemporary building materials in a sympathetic manner.

Integration: This is one of the most important aspects of Placemaking especially for Brownfield sites located within existing residential areas within a larger urban area. The overall consideration is linking the new scheme to the existing community architecturally, socially, and economically of which all three key aspects have been carefully considered within the design process. The proposals have sought to achieved this in the following ways:

- 1: Reflecting the local architecture and surroundings of the area in the design consideration.
- 2: Providing new infrastructure that benefits the scheme and the surrounding community.
- 3: Providing direct access to the established recreation ground and its amenities directly on the doorstep.
- 4: Providing commercial space to allow integration and community interaction via local / home working.
- 5: The creation of a Care Home facility that will provide local jobs and on-going employment opportunities for local residents and business serving the needs of the Care Home.



Proposed cycle and Footpath linking Boundary Road to Range Rd.

Sustainability

Roddy New Homes are committed to Modern Methods of Construction (MMC) along with building energy efficient homes using sustainable building materials. With the significant reduction in Co2 emissions during the build coupled with the significantly reduced demand for energy in heating the Homes for the lifetime of the scheme, brownfield sites coupled with MMC provide enhanced benefits and genuine low or carbon neutral construction if designed, managed, and executed correctly.

The sustainability proposals for this development fall under the following categories which will also contribute to National Net Zero targets.

Construction Methods – Each home will be constructed from Timber frame utilising materials from sustainable forests, Manufactured locally in East Kent. The carbon capture using timber is well documented and is considered the most sustainable structural building material.

Using Timber Frame reduces our dependency on Cement on the scheme by 50%. The Cement industry contributes 8% of all Global Co2 emissions.

Using MMC reduces the amount of HGV visits to the site by 30% resulting in less Co2 emissions from Transport and reduces traffic into the local area.

The existing concrete slabs on site will be recycled on site for aggregate thus reducing HGV movements importing aggregates and fill by 70% resulting in less Co2 emissions from Transport and reduces traffic movements in the local area.

Each Home will be insulated well above current Building regulations to future proof the housing stock resulting in an EPC Rating of B 90.

Target Insulation thicknesses for the build will be as follows:

- Floors to all habitable Areas – 200mm
- Walls – 120mm
- Lofts – 500mm

The Residential scheme will be fossil fuel free where Air Source Heat pumps (ASHP) with Underfloor Heating will be installed using (ASHP) equipment manufactured in the UK. There will be no Gas Boiler installed.

The Apartment Block will have Solar PV panels installed to allow the energy generated to be off set against the communal energy consumption for lifts, heating and Lighting, future proofing the Residents against elevated energy prices in the future.

The Care Home will have an array of Solar PV panels sited within their Roof space to contribute further to microgeneration efforts on site.

The Care Home and Commercial spaces are designed to achieve a BREEAM Very Good rating.

Each House on the scheme will be fitted with a Water Butt to reduce drinking water consumption.

Each Home will be fitted with an EV charging Point.

With all these measures the development will provide superior energy efficient properties compared with any Small or Major Residential development in the district particularly with the Installation of Enhanced structural insulation.

The Site surface water drainage system will incorporate a SUDS system meaning surface water will not be discharged into public drains and together with the incorporation of Water Butts meaning a large volume of Rainwater from Roofs will also be diverted away from public infrastructure.

Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG) – Regenerating a dilapidated brownfield site currently with over 80% coverage of hardstanding in place will yield a significant (BNG). Regenerating this site into mixed use and incorporating both Communal Green space and Private Gardens immediately increases habitat opportunities.

The Residential aspect providing Open Green space along Boundary Road with the Central Green area together with private gardens will see several hundred tons of concrete slab and tarmac lifted and recycled on-site making way for landscaping and ecological enhancements.

Ecological Enhancement –

- Hedgehog cutout will be provided in every rear garden.
- The installation of dozens of Bat Boxes
- The installation of dozens of Swift Boxes
- The installation of dozens of Bee Bricks
- The installation of 6 Loggeries

These are enhancements that never previously existed at this location.

Arboricultural Gain - Utilising this site means there is little or no arboricultural impact meaning the removal of a significant number of existing trees to make way for development is not required. There are four existing trees on the southern end of the site which will be retained, and protection measures will be implemented during the construction phase, to maintain their health.

Given the net gain of Green and planting spaces provided with the regeneration, the site benefits with the planting of native species through the scheme.

The existing Treeline along the Hythe Green boundary will be preserved in its current state.

The exiting native hedgerow to the Southeast of the scheme will remain preserved in its current state.

End User Benefits – The residents will benefit from new homes constructed to exceptionally high standards meaning comfort and greatly reduced comparative energy bills for the lifetime of their home.

The scheme being centrally located, being a short walk from the Town centre, the Royal Military Canal and the seafront, allows the residents to access amenities locally and so reduces their dependency on cars.

Residents have their own private outdoor space, communal space and also have direct access to sixteen acres of open space on Hythe green and all the amenities it has to offer year-round.

Dedicated EV charging points at all residential and visitor bays to encourage the transition to cleaner methods of transport.



Plots 1-28 facing towards the green buffer zone adjacent to Boundary Rd.

Prepared by Roddy New Homes Limited

www.rodдынewhomes.co.uk