

Manchester Urban Cohousing (MUCH)

Creating a Cohousing Community for Older People

Design Criteria

Version: Architect Selection Process - Feb 2019

Many elements of this design brief are flexible – such as number and sizes of flats, communal areas, size of garden, etc. They are obviously limited by the amount of space and costs. In that respect this is a 'wish list

Other elements are fundamental such as light, acoustics, insulation and general environmental sustainability of the build, maintenance and running costs. The project is for older people (from over 50 up to 100+), allowing us to age-in-place, so it must meet our changing needs. Most importantly the design should enable the creation of an intentional supportive community so shared space and opportunities for casual interaction are essential.

RESIDENCES

- Between 15-25 unit: 20 preferred
 - 10 one bedroom apartments (approx. 50 m²)
 - 10 two bedroom flats (approx. 70 m²)
- Some dwellings to be located at ground floor level.
- Space for guests
- Each dwelling with some private outside space (balcony/garden)
- High quality sound proofing between residences and around communal spaces
- Rooms being light and airy and temperature controlled with maximum views from apartments and sitting areas. Good air quality throughout.

CIRCULATION

- Informal spaces to meet/sit/chat integral to the layout of communal areas - natural light, space for plants
- Fully wheelchair accessible throughout - Lift access to all floor

SOCIAL/COMMUNAL

- One BIG space, flexible so could be sectioned off. Must be big enough for all residents to come together for occasional meals, meetings, other activities
- Adjacent storage for table/chairs, equipment.
- Linked to outdoor spaces.
- Shared kitchen next to this common room
- Office/small meeting area (4 people) - storage of company documents/admin.
- Laundry facilities [either one central, or smaller clusters across site, depending on design] including drying space
- Hygiene suite/toilets in communal space.
- If possible, other small flexible spaces for reading, messy art work, working from home, playing music, etc

OUTDOORS

- Fully accessible outside space needs to be designed as a whole to be aesthetically pleasing, sunny, quiet, range of spaces for different uses
- Communal outside space – seating/dining, gardening, growing food, greenhouse, potting shed
- Easy access and carefully sited bins and recycling collection points from both individual dwellings and the common kitchen.
- Drying space outside, but secluded from general view

TRANSPORT

- Parking for residents' cars or car-share vehicles. (75% but potential for 100% - e.g. could be flexible outdoor space if not required for parking)
- Visitors & disabled car parking.
- Secure Bike storage and repair space, space for mobility scooters and electric car charging points, equivalent of 'garden shed'

STORAGE

- Storage for shared tools, vacuum cleaners, step-ladders, garden equipment. Conveniently located for access from all apartments possibly on corridors.
- Individual residents' storage, eg suitcases, big items; - possibly lockable storage, individual 'cages' of approx. 2m²

OTHER DESIGN CONSIDERATIONS

- Potential for roof gardens, terraces and energy generation on roof.
- Security and access to different areas within the site.
- Wifi enabled throughout to maximise potential for technology to support communication and functioning of cohousing and individual wellbeing.

BC/GW/LN

7.2.19