

Leicester Waterside



Client Keepmoat Homes
Cost c. £30m
Services Architecture 0-7 / 3D Visualisation / BIM for Extra Care Block
Status Ongoing (Phase 1 complete)

BM3 and Keepmoat won a design competition organised by Leicester City Council for this development. The proposals designed for the local authority are for the regeneration of Leicester Waterside Phase 1 comprising of approx. 367 new dwellings with an extra care block for affordable rent and shared ownership. Homes planned for this first phase of the Waterside development will be a mix of mainly two and three-storey town houses in tree-lined streets, with a new neighbourhood park.

The scheme will also help create better access to the River Soar and space for wildlife to flourish. It includes the creation of new riverside footpaths, wooded nature-areas and more public green space, including a small park, with a pub or cafe/bar and pontoons for launching canoes, on Soar Island. The constructed 52 houses and 3 blocks of apartments already provide a clear idea of the potential of the scheme not only for the new homeowners but also for the wider community.

The proposals for Leicester Waterside comprise 367 new dwellings, including an extra care block for affordable rent and shared ownership. Homes in this first phase are a mix of mainly two and three-storey townhouses along tree-lined streets with a new neighbourhood park. The overall ethos is to create a safe, secure, and desirable place to live. The design was informed by extensive consultation with the council and had to sensitively incorporate existing heritage features such as a listed stone wall, Grade II listed bridge and a historic public house, shaping both the appearance and material palette.

Given the canal-side location, flood risk and pathway protection were addressed. The 7-hectare site, bordered by major roads and canals, also boasts excellent access to the city centre. High-quality design was prioritised, with new pedestrian and cycling routes, open public spaces, a small park, a pub/café bar, and pontoons for canoe launching on Soar Island.

The scheme creates better access to the River Soar and spaces for wildlife. A diverse mix of house types was developed based on a housing need survey, undertaken in collaboration with the council. Special attention was also paid to access issues and managing canal water egress.

The scheme was featured in the UCL Bartlett School of Architecture report, “How High-Quality Housing Can Be Delivered in Less Well-off Areas,” for raising design standards in challenging contexts. This recognition highlights our capabilities in placemaking and long-term community benefit.



Client Testimonial

"I am not sure if anyone at the outset of this relationship could have understood the potential complexity of this development or the diverse nature of the issues that **BM3** have adapted to - it is however a credit to them that they have...During these uncomfortable times **BM3** have offered **creative solutions** which have helped bridge the gap between the two parties providing an equitable outcome and to the benefit of the scheme...I think that the scheme as a whole is well designed and has brought forward a development that has much merit and which is a **credit to BM3** along with all of the other stakeholders. In general terms it has also been my experience that **BM3** handle the day to day function well. **The provision of timely working drawings, schedules, detailing, trackers and someone at the end of the phone when you need some information is also what they do well. I have no hesitation in recommending their services.**"

- Malcolm Ball MSc, Project Manager, Keepmoat Homes

