

Mill Lane, Oxford



Client Arcadis/ Oxford City Housing Ltd
Services Architecture / Landscape Architecture
Status Planning approved

The development of the Mill Lane site will create a neighbourhood of 80 homes of varying sizes & types, whilst addressing a number of site constraints including close proximity to a conservation area, surrounding green belt and accessibility. The new homes will be a mix of shared ownership and social rent to help cater to the high residential demand in Oxford.

The site is within close proximity to the Old Marston Conservation area and the scheme's design creates an attentive and careful response to the character of the local context, strengthening the historical local vernacular. Located between two planning approved developments, the scheme seeks to integrate with these by creating new pedestrian/cycle links, emphasising high-quality placemaking and ease of circulation between developments.

The scheme demonstrates a clear street hierarchy with active frontages along the existing Mill Lane and the public open space, providing desirable views across the greenbelt land towards the River Cherwell. Increased pedestrian/cycle links throughout the development, connecting to the wider context, help promote a healthy lifestyle for inhabitants. The scheme focuses around a centralised public realm to the west of the site, where as well as providing active areas of new and existing residents to enjoy, helps provide ecological and biodiversity enhancement. Variations of street typology of the scheme establish a layered approach to emulate the rich contextual heritage of the conservation area.

The scheme creates a focus on sustainability as well as good placemaking. The dwellings are to be manufactured off-site using modular construction, maximising use of sustainably-sourced materials and minimising waste. The dwellings have been designed to minimise the number of modules required per dwelling, in order to further reduce the number of site deliveries. As a means of creating a low-carbon scheme, the dwellings have been designed to reduce carbon emissions by 70% of the current building regulations by the use of a fabric first approach and the introduction of renewable energy sources such as ASHP, WWRS and PV panels.

