

Retirement accommodation

PROJECT FACTS

- Client:** Arena Housing Association, supported by Lancashire County Council
- Location:** Ormskirk, Lancashire
- Proposal:** Extra-care retirement scheme; 111 multi-tenure apartments with health and well-being centre and a 'community-hub'
- Site area:** 1.1 ha.
- Local Authority:** West Lancashire BC



Mosaic has acted for housing associations, charitable trusts and private sector providers who wish to develop different forms of accommodation to cater for the demands of an ageing population. This has included retirement housing to meet the different expectations of a more affluent society, alongside specialist facilities such as dementia care.

We worked for Arena Housing Association on a proposal for an 'extra-care' retirement scheme and a health centre in Ormskirk. The site was located near to the town centre and contained obsolete residential care and health facilities.

Despite the benefits for the local community, the promotion of such projects is not always straightforward. Typical issues are:

- Occupancy and how this is controlled, especially where open market housing would raise planning or highways issues
- The nature and extent of any use of facilities by non-residents
- Concern by neighbours about the scale and the impact of an institutional use



The scheme was granted full planning permission in 2009 and work started the following year, with additional funding from the NHS, the Department of Health, and the Homes and Communities Agency.

The extra-care accommodation will allow for varying levels of support, so that residents can retain the maximum level of independence. The health and well-being centre will offer comprehensive services for people with dementia and their carers, both from within the scheme and the wider community.

We were able to achieve this by:

- Successfully arguing that the specialist accommodation should be exempt from restrictive housing policies
- Analysing the Council's Housing Needs Survey to provide justification for the scheme
- Showing how the type of the occupants together with the accessible location would limit traffic generation and parking
- Working as part of a team which included district and county councils, health agencies and voluntary groups to build a consensus for the scheme

With the increasing requirement for such specialist accommodation, Mosaic is experienced in putting together the planning case for the approval of different types of facilities.