

Lot 5 Student Residences, North West Cambridge

A graduate complex for sustainable living

£27.5m

/ Project value

October 2014

/ The build commenced

May 2017

/ The duration

Forming part of Cambridge University's visionary 'urban-academic' community, the Lot 5 Student Residences project provides sustainable, long lasting living spaces to meet the city's chronic shortage of affordable housing. Comprising 325 post-graduate student rooms within four three-to-five storey blocks, our £27.5m design and construction programme achieved Code for Sustainable Homes Level 5 and a BREEAM Excellent rating. Encompassing 5000m², the CCS Bronze Award winning development also featured an alternative pre-cast interior structure manufactured off-site, which significantly reduced labour requirements while eliminating potential H&S risks.

The Brief

As one of nine Lot contractors in Cambridge University's wider £500m North West Cambridge Development, we were tasked with designing and constructing post-graduate accommodation, now known as Swirles Court, with the highest levels of interior and exterior finishes. The four modern blocks, set around landscaped courtyards, had to complement the sustainable vision of the ambitious redevelopment.



"Our vastly experienced team understands how to deliver the best in student residences to a highly international market"

Jonathan Hall
GRAHAM Regional Managing Director

“Who would have thought, when the first resident graduate student arrived at Girton in 1901, that she would pave the way to a 325-room purpose-built, graduate-focused facility to enable us to deliver our part in the University’s vision for the future?”

Professor Susan J. Smith
Mistress of Girton College

The Challenges

In recognition of the scale of the overall Eddington project, and the continual interface associated with nine separate contractors on site, our team had to closely monitor, and coordinate, its construction delivery procedures with those of the overall development and client requirements. Regular communication, and engagement, with the Site Wide Infrastructure Coordinator was maintained throughout our 113-week programme. Early in the process we also identified surface and perched water one-metre below ground. Dewatering was implemented to ensure the timely completion of substructure works.

GRAHAM’s added value solution

Described as “an exemplar of sustainability”, the purpose-built complex includes a range of sustainable features including solar shading screens to prevent overheating in summer and perforated window surrounds to advocate natural ventilation. Completed in phases, with sectional commissioning and handover, the four blocks contain 325 en-suite rooms with social study spaces, fully equipped kitchens, laundry facilities and secure indoor cycle storage wrapped around a series of south facing courtyards and gardens. Linked to the site-wide sustainable urban drainage system, and to the district heating system, our widely-acclaimed work promotes sustainable community living. We committed to reducing waste and produced volumes less than half of those of other contractors. This was due to our alternative design and the use of precast instead of traditional block and plaster. Best practice also translated into excellent safety statistics and no RIDDORS throughout 627,811 ‘man-hours’.

Outputs & Benefits

- / **Award Winning:** Awarded Considerate Constructors Scheme Bronze at the National Site Awards
- / **Programmed Handover:** Phased delivery of the four blocks with sectional commissioning and handover
- / **Digital By Default:** Building Information Modelling was employed throughout design and construction, which was particularly beneficial for underground coordination
- / **Alternative Design:** Altered to a fully pre-cast interior structure manufactured off site, eliminating internal wet trades
- / **Environmental Sustainability:** BREEAM ‘Excellent’ rating
- / **Waste Reduction:** Waste volumes were less than half of those produced by other contractors



For more information on how we’re delivering lasting impact:

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