



## Birch View, Byker Finsbury Avenue

A Core & Cluster scheme of bungalows for residents with autism and learning disabilities

How we meet the requirements of the brief

**Design and Access Statement**

# Constraints and opportunities



1. The site currently occupies an area of land that lies behind Welbeck Road; the site shares boundaries with existing family housing to the north, south and west and with an area of allotments to the east. The boundary of the site is marked with a white line.
2. The site is currently gated and access from Welbeck Road is not possible; this funnell access potentially gives the new development a feeling of security as it will be nestled behind existing properties and separated from passing traffic.
3. The new development needs to ensure that the privacy of the existing properties is not compromised; this is helped by the fact that the proposed properties are all single storey.
4. There are existing allotments to the eastern end of the site (green tint) which provides a tranquil setting to this end of the site.
5. The area of the site is relatively generous - 0.3ha for 6 bungalows, which equates to 20 houses per hectare; this will give us the opportunity to create generous shared garden areas within the scheme.
6. The fact that the site is slightly divorced from Welbeck Road creates a quieter feel to the development that is ideal for the user group, particularly if the residents have autism.
7. The surrounding properties are predominantly two storey brick and render houses.

# Design approach



1. Accommodation set to quietest part of site (away from Welbeck Road), as people with autism/learning disabilities can be very sensitive to noise
2. Staff/shared accommodation set towards front part of site adjacent to main entrance
3. Residents' accommodation within secure garden area that allows residents to fully avail of external space
4. Parking towards the entrance to the site so that residents are not disturbed by cars arriving/leaving the site; 2 accessible and 6 standard parking bays
5. Private garden areas are created to the rear of each property which ensures that residents have private/quiet external space
6. Communal gardens created at the centre of the site
7. Allotment area created (adjacent to existing allotment area - boundary shown in grey/brown dashed line) with raised beds around perimeter to allow residents to engage in gardening activities (shed and greenhouse included to this area)
8. Exercise or high activity area to central area of site
9. Sensory garden wraps around high activity zone
10. Tall and medium planting around perimeter of site to make enclosure less obvious
11. Quieter seating areas created
12. Bungalows detached to avoid issues with noise
13. Shared lounge located to garden side of staff apartment, with link to a private garden or the communal garden areas
14. Trees planted between car park and gardens to act as screen
15. Boundary to the site to have timber close-boarded fence to promote privacy
16. Bin store convenient to highway.

# Meeting the needs of stakeholders



Provide a high standard of accommodation for people with autism and learning disabilities

The design has been developed with particular reference to residents with autism/learning disabilities; this has informed many of the details, from the positioning of the bungalows at the quietest end of the site, through to the creation of shared gardens and allotment areas. There is also a range of different outdoor spaces available to cater for the needs of each resident. Full details of how autism has been considered are outlined on page 37 of this document.

Provide a safe and enabling environment for residents

One of the key aspects of the design is the creation of a single point of entry into the development, adjacent to which is the staff office. This allows surveillance of the access to the units and allows residents to fully utilise a secure garden area.

All units are laid out in accordance with the Habinteg Wheelchair Design Guide, Lifetime Homes and secure 72% in the HQI assessment. The units all have their own enclosed garden space with private patio area to encourage use of outdoor spaces, as well as having larger shared gardens which offer opportunities for interaction and engagement in gardening and group activities. All aspects of the site are overlooked to ensure supervision of external spaces and to promote security.

Ensure residents privacy and provide their own personal space under their control

Each bungalow has its own private garden and patio area with level access from living area. The rear gardens are enclosed with close-boarded fencing and planting to the perimeter of the site between properties. Within the shared garden spaces are smaller more private seating areas which can be used by residents who need time away from interaction or group activity. The allotments also offer residents the opportunity to become involved in gardening activity.

Be domestic in style

The bungalows use traditionally domestic materials (brick, render and boarding), in a contemporary manner. The design has evolved to respond directly to the needs of the users and the inclusion of a variety of outdoor spaces with different characters and functions helps to create a tranquil residential setting.

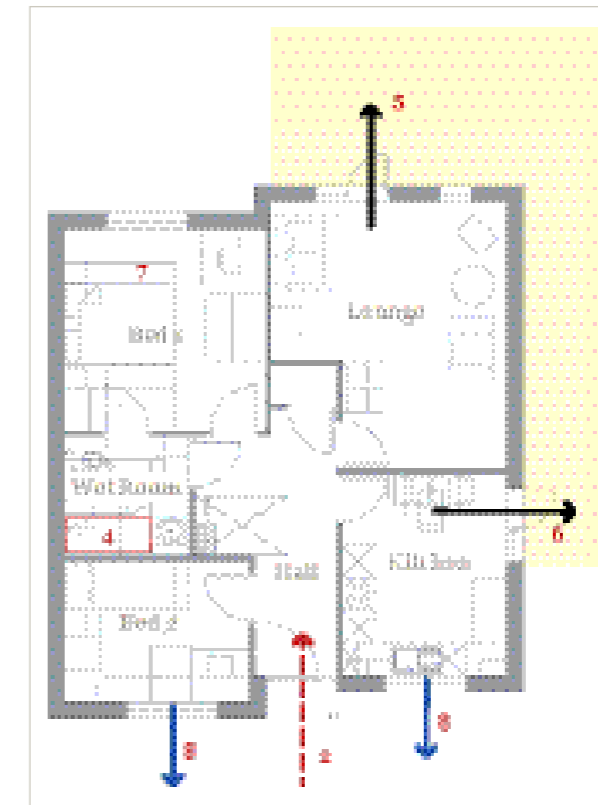
Enable staff to run and manage the properties efficiently and to meet the care and support needs of residents

The creation of an enclosed garden community with one point of access into the site and secure boundary treatments around the perimeter ensures a safe environment for residents and allows staff to monitor access and egress from the site. The staff office is also located immediately adjacent to the site entry to ensure that staff can be aware of people arriving at the development. The staff office is also kept deliberately near the bungalows to reduce travel distances and facilitate movement around the site.

Providing suitable outdoor spaces for exercise and participation in gardening also helps to ensure that residents can engage in activity which helps to reduce the risk of anxiety.



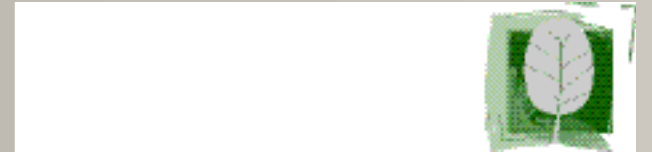
**1** Example of raised planters, which are proposed to edge of allotments. **2, 3, 4:** examples of sensory gardens.



Provide a high standard of accommodation for people with autism and learning disabilities

1. units are detached to avoid issues of noise transmission and ensure a tranquil environment for residents
2. plenty of daylight brought into hall area to ensure a bright airy interior on arrival
3. bungalow (including both bedrooms) is in full compliance with Habinteg Wheelchair Design Guide
4. the bathroom/wet room is laid out such that either a bath or accessible shower can be comfortably accommodated whilst still retaining a 1500x1500 turning area (red line = position of bath in those units where required)
5. the lounge opens onto a private outdoor patio area (hatched in yellow)
6. the kitchen opens onto a private outdoor patio area (hatched in yellow)
7. the main bedroom is kept to the rear of the property to avoid problems with noise
8. the front of the bungalow looks onto the shared garden areas, so that residents can choose whether to avail of the communal space.

# Meeting the needs of stakeholders



## Ensuring the quality of finish is durable

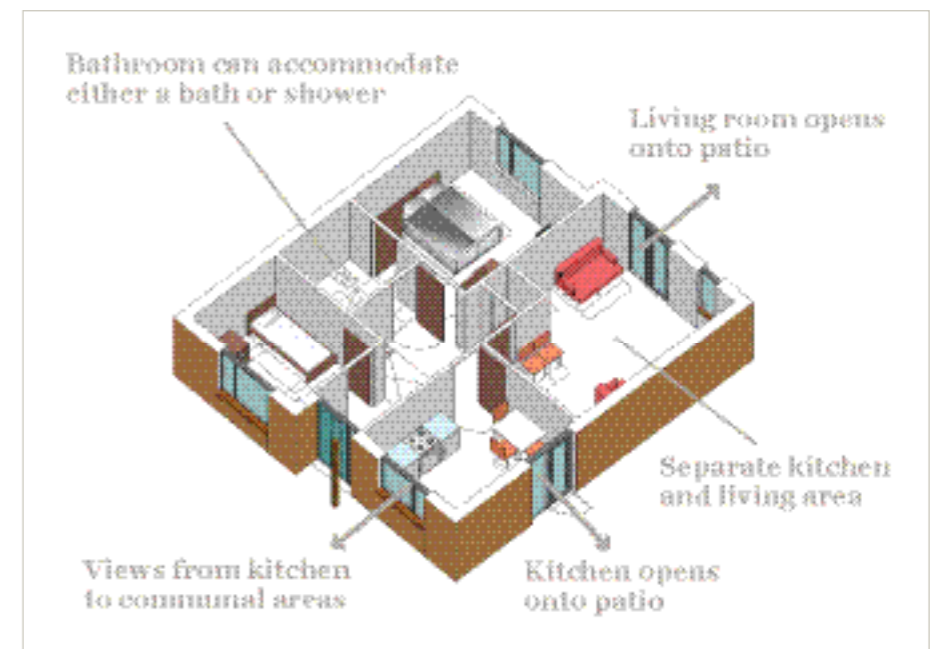
Jane Darbyshire and David Kendall Ltd have extensive experience in hospice and healthcare design, which has contributed to an extensive awareness of how to create robust interiors that give value for money to the Client, whilst simultaneously avoiding an institutional feel.

As well as careful selection of materials, a key starting point that helps to avoid damage to the fabric of the building, is to ensure that the proposals offer the opportunity to 'design out frustration' as far as possible. Adopting this approach and augmenting it with durable material selection provides a much more robust strategy for building maintenance than material selection alone. For this reason we have included the following fundamental elements within our design:

- plenty of opportunity for residents to be able to see and access the outdoors (this avoids feelings of being trapped inside); the living room and kitchen both have glazed doors to private external patio areas (see photograph 1)
- generous space standards within each dwelling help to avoid feelings of frustration on the part of the resident and consequently minimise damage to the fabric of the building, where possible. The entrance hall in particular is very generous with an area of 2.6mx2m for negotiating access into all of the rooms
- providing a designated external exercise/high impact space outside, which can help residents vent feelings of frustration and expend pent up energy (see photographs 4+ 5)
- providing opportunities for engagement in group or gardening activities, as well as quieter space for quiet contemplation offers residents a choice of spaces that helps minimise feelings of frustration (see photograph 6)
- doors with vision panels to kitchens and lounges (communal areas) allow residents to see into the space before entering (photograph 2 shows a view from the kitchen into adjacent circulation space)

In tandem with the approach above the choice of materials has been developed to avoid maintenance/damage issues:

- the properties are all detached in order to avoid issues of sound transmission (which can lead to frustration on the part of residents), and simultaneously provide robust perimeter walls to each property (the external walls are all brick and block)
- within the properties there is an option of either double boarding the walls or lining internal partitions with British Gypsum Duraline board. Both of these options offer a severe duty rating. In areas prone to continuous damage there is an option to use wallboard with a plywood backing
- walls are to be skimmed as damage to thin plaster is less noticeable and can be more easily repaired
- windows to have laminated or toughened safety glass for both inner and outer panels; dependant upon client preference these could include integral blinds to avoid ongoing damage to curtains
- robust ironmongery to all windows and doors
- additional wall sockets specified to reduce trailing cables and avoid unnecessary accidents
- Dulux Sterishield Diamond Matt paint gives an extremely robust finish that is scrubbable, but also comes in a wide variety of colours; the matt finish helps to avoid an institutional feel. The range of colours will also help us to use colour contrast to highlight functional features within the spaces
- carpet tiles (rather than carpet roll) to be used in properties to allow scope for replacement if they become damaged - noise reducing underlay to be laid underneath to avoid impact sound
- non slip sheet vinyl to be used in kitchens and bathrooms
- pvc cladding used for splashbacks in kitchens and bathrooms as this is more robust than a tiled solution; including bright colours to avoid an institutional feel (see photograph 3).





# Our vision: Aerial view from western side of site





# Our vision: Aerial view from north western side of site





# Our vision: Aerial view from south eastern side of site







# Our vision: Site plan and roof plan



Site plan



Roof plan



# Our vision: Proposed elevations



Front elevation



Side elevation (showing door from kitchen to patio)

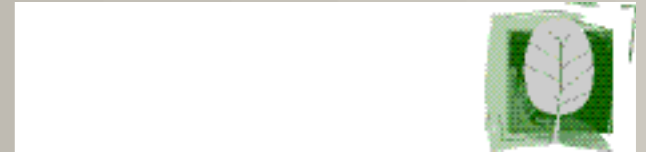


Rear elevation



Side elevation (showing bathroom window)

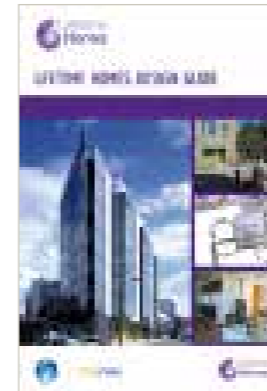
# Meeting general requirements Following best practice and accommodation schedule



## HQI Project Summary

Project Name: **Finsbury Avenue, Newcastle**  
Total number of units being assessed and scored: **5**

HQI Scores for this project	Score	Weighting	Weighted Score
Location	66%	10%	6.6%
Visual impact	89%	10%	8.9%
Open space	81%	10%	8.2%
Routes and movement	82%	10%	6.0%
Unit size	60%	10%	6.6%
Unit layout	66%	10%	6.6%
Unit Noise Control, Light Quality, Services	56%	10%	5.6%
Accessibility within the unit	100%	10%	10.0%
Sustainability	45%	10%	4.5%
Building for life	75%	10%	7.5%
<b>Combined score</b>	<b>72%</b>		



Plot no	Beds/function	Area
1	2b3p	70sqm
2	2b3p	70sqm
3	2b3p	70sqm
4	2b3p	70sqm
5	2b3p	70sqm
6	Office/communal	70sqm



## Meeting general requirements

- 5 2 bed 3 person bungalows which comply with the target minimum size of 70sqm are shown in blue on the plan below left
- 1 bungalow for staff use, shown in green on the plan to the bottom left-hand side, which includes staff en-suite sleeping accommodation, an accessible wc, staff kitchen, office area, communal space for residents to meet; this meets the target minimum size of 70sqm
- three of the bathrooms have a bath with a shower over, the remaining 2 have fully accessible wet rooms
- the spatial allocation in the kitchen of each of the units allows full compliance with the Wheelchair Housing Design Guide; this gives the flexibility to include a fully accessible kitchen (in all properties) in the future, should this be required.

## Following best practice

- The proposals have been developed in line with the publications (above left) to ensure that the layouts are fully accessible and adaptable to the changing needs of residents
- Also, to the left is the HQI project summary, which confirms that the proposals achieve an overall score of 72% and exceed the requirements of the DQS which require unit size, unit layout and unit noise to achieve 41%, 32% and 22% respectively; the Finsbury Avenue proposals achieve 60%, 66% and 56%. The bungalows achieve Code for Sustainable Homes Level 3
- The flexibility of the bungalow layouts (they are laid out to be able to accommodate a fully wheelchair accessible kitchen and have either a wet room or bathroom dependent upon requirements) enables residents' homes to adapt to meet potentially changing needs and offers the scope for people to remain in their homes for as long as possible; this consequently reduces pressure on health and social care systems.

# Building for life



## Character

Is the design specific to the scheme?

Yes: The design has developed in direct response to the site constraints, and with particular reference to designing for autism/ learning disabilities; for this reason the bungalows are located on the quietest part of the site and are grouped around a large garden space.

Does the scheme exploit existing buildings, landscape or topography?

Yes: The scheme has deliberately evolved to create a secluded setting using the adjacent housing to provide a buffer to Welbeck Road.

Does the scheme feel like a place with distinctive character?

Yes: The bungalows are all grouped around a shared garden area which gives opportunities for interaction, whilst simultaneously providing a tranquil and restful setting.

Do the buildings and layout make it easy to find your way around?

Yes: There is one point of entry into the site and this avoids confusion over access. The entrance is adjacent to the staff building, which allows surveillance of the entrance point.

Are streets defined by a well-structured building layout?

Yes: The bungalows create a new street frontage and shared garden that links directly to Welbeck Road.

## Streets, parking and pedestrianisation

Does the building layout take priority over the streets and car parking, so that the highways do not dominate?

Yes: The car parking is deliberately kept remote from the bungalows to avoid issues with noise. The perimeter planting and shared garden areas also help to mask the view of the cars from

the bungalows.

Is the car parking well integrated and situated so it supports the street scene?

Yes: A small number of parking spaces are grouped together next to the point of entry into the site.

Are the streets pedestrian, cycle and vehicle friendly?

Yes: A separate pedestrian access has been created to link the development into the existing road network.

Does the scheme integrate with existing streets, paths and surrounding development?

Yes: The scheme links directly onto Welbeck Road.

Are public spaces and pedestrian routes overlooked and do they feel safe?

Yes: By arranging the properties around a shared garden area, we have ensured that all communal space is well supervised; this is augmented by positioning the staff facility at the site entrance.

## Design and construction

Is public space well designed and does it have suitable management arrangements in place?

Yes: The public space is designed to sit centrally within the existing residential layout to ensure surveillance of the space, and it is anticipated that the residents will be able to participate in the maintenance of these gardens, alongside maintenance staff.

Do the buildings exhibit architectural quality?

Yes: the buildings are designed with close attention to detail to ensure that they are fit for purpose, durable, and are aesthetically pleasing. The design is well thought through and caters for the residents' needs, as well as allowing for future flexibility should these needs change. From the design of the bungalows to the surrounding landscaping we have sought to ensure that the development will raise the spirits of its residents and lead to an improved quality of life.

Do internal spaces and layout allow for adaptation, conversion or extension?

Yes: The bungalow has been designed so that it offers flexibility in layout to respond to the potentially changing needs of residents. The kitchens are designed to ensure adequate space for a fully wheelchair accessible kitchen, should this be required in the future, and the bathrooms are adequate to take either a bath or an accessible shower dependant upon residents' needs.

Has the scheme made use of advances in construction or technology that enhance its performance, quality and attractiveness?

No; the buildings are of traditional construction.

Do buildings or spaces outperform statutory minima, such as building regulations?

No; the buildings achieve code level 3, which is generally in line with current building regulations.

**BUILDING  
FOR LIFE**

