

Shenfield Blood Bank

CLIENT

Estuary Housing Association

LOCATION

Essex

PROJECT DATES

December 2020 to May 2023

CONTRACT VALUE

£2.2 Million

SECTOR

Housing



Shenfield Blood Bank

Well-Managed Affordable Homes Development Redresses Accommodation Imbalance in Prime Commuter Location

Based on a longstanding track record of working with Estuary Housing Association under various roles, FFT was appointed in December 2020 by the organisation’s development team to provide Employer’s Agent and Cost Consultant services to oversee a much-needed affordable housing development, helping to redress an accommodation imbalance in a prime commuter location in Essex.

THE CLIENT

Long term FFT client Estuary Housing Association is a not-for-profit organisation with a strong social purpose and clear focus on building ‘communities not just homes’. They own and manage over 4,600 properties across Essex, East London and Suffolk, offering a range of affordable rent and shared

ownership options, as well as operating a variety of supported living and registered care facilities.

SERVICES PROVIDED

- Employer’s Agent
- Cost Consultant

THE PROJECT

Fairview New Homes had purchased a plot of land in Brentwood, Essex, comprising a former NHS blood donation and test centre which had been closed in 2015 and subsequently demolished. The site, earmarked for redevelopment, was originally made up of the blood centre building, associated workshops and carpark, and around half a hectare of greenbelt-protected green space and woodland.





With a lack of affordable housing in what is considered a comparatively expensive place to live, Fairview had agreed to give over part of the development to Estuary with a view to redressing the imbalance of accommodation in the area.

The development plans included eleven new build apartments in a self-contained block, providing a range of affordable and shared ownership homes in a semi-rural location on an ideally situated London commuter route in Essex.

OUR ROLE

FFT was commissioned to agree variant specifications for each type of accommodation. Because the specifications differed from the Fairview New Homes standard, a derogation schedule was required for comparison between the specifications and to show where changes would be necessary.

As well as overseeing this, FFT was also responsible for conducting a costings exercise for the works, with revised figures agreed on an add/omit basis.

THE CHALLENGES

The Estuary development formed part of a larger gated estate, which meant that careful consideration would be required in regard to ongoing maintenance and management responsibilities between the Estuary estate management team and the appointed managing agent.

Service charges needed special consideration, given that areas would be split between the parties once the development was occupied.

A further challenge arose due to the semi-rural location, which was home to a number of trees protected under a Tree Preservation Order. The works therefore required careful management in order to preserve the root base of the trees. What's more, a number of ecological surveys highlighted various species of wildlife in the area, which also required specialist consideration to ensure their habitat was protected.

ADDED VALUE

The completed development is a beneficial addition for residents in an ideally situated commuter location that has been sorely lacking in affordable housing. The preservation of greenbelt features, including the protected trees and vital wildlife habitats, added significant environmental value.