

Huggens College

College Road, Northfleet, Kent
Almshouse Redevelopment

The Development Brief

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History of Huggens College

Huggens College is a registered charity and an incorporated trust. Located in Northfleet, Kent, Huggens College was founded 1844. Huggens College currently provides thirty bungalows (rebuilt in the 1960's) for people who are ages at least sixty years old and not in full time employment/self-employment, who are of good character, are of limited financial resource, are capable of independent living and recognise that Huggens College is a community with Christian values. The site includes a chapel, community facility, a chaplain's house and a lodge house for the caretaker.

The proposed development objective is to replace the existing single storey almshouses on the site and to increase the number of almshouses with two and three storey buildings. The community buildings will need to increase in size and scope to cater for the increased number of collegians.

Phasing

The existing bungalows are mostly occupied, so the development will need to take place over a number of phases. The phasing strategy will need to be carefully considered to minimise disruption.

The phasing strategy must ensure that existing facilities remain operable, and where not, that alternative arrangements are in place throughout the phases. This includes the laundry, the chapel, etc. Phasing should be planned so that residents should not need to move twice. There should always remain clear demarcation and separation between the access point to the construction site and the public entrance to Huggens College.

The Masterplan

Masterplan proposed circa 100no. homes - see Masterplan drawing.

General design principles:

- Space and flexibility
- Daylight in the home and in shared spaces
- Balconies and outdoor space
- Adaptability and 'care ready' design
- Positive use of circulation space
- Shared facilities and 'hubs'

- Plants, trees, and the natural environment
- Energy efficiency and sustainable design
- Storage for belongings and bicycles
- External shared surfaces and 'home zones'

Communal areas

Chapel

Chapel refurbished and extended into the existing common room to achieve seating for approximately 140 people. There should be flexibility in the arrangement so that partitions can allow the space to cater for a wide range of activities, and smaller services could take place in a smaller, more intimate part of the space.

New College Room attached to chapel, to include:

- Capacity for 100 people seated
- Storage for stacking seating & tables
- Kitchen for catering for 100+
- WCs & store rooms
- Access to external garden with outdoor seating space.

Quiet space/lounge to serve as a library, reading room, card room (could this double up as small prayer room /oratory for small services?)

Sun room, winter garden - in the middle of the college with views out across the green spaces

Covered external seating with views of people and people movement.

Hobbies room or workshop.

Small Laundry, as the new homes will include space for a washing machine. [For discussion]

Staff requirements

Lodgekeeper's accommodation Lodgekeeper's office and workshop, store rooms, garden equipment store, etc.

Chaplain, support worker's and other staff office, welfare facilities etc.[For discussion with Chaplain]

Ancillary and service requirements

Separate lock up storage for bicycles and buggy store (consider options for electrical charging).

Bin stores (distributed). Bin collection strategy to be agreed.

Delivery strategy for post, delivering (shopping) etc. - drop off point or door to door? Delivery hatch or grouped lockers?

Security at main gate (electric?), operation of gates, openness to public, etc.

Alarm system CCTV

Fire strategy

Electric vehicles for Collegians' use?

Chaplain's house

Refurbish and upgrade for energy efficiency, etc.

Some of the garden could be opened up to all collegians, but there must remain a small private garden space for chaplain and family.

Circulation

Open covered deck access to second floor housing.

Enclosed to three storey blocks with lift access.

Access to lift for all blocks

To include seating spaces for social interaction.

Consider whether internal circulation spaces are to be heated and to include small seating spaces?

Homes

One bed homes, 55sq.m, see proposed plan options.

Guest accommodation (like hotel room suite): 4no. double rooms (possibly interconnected for visiting families).

Private garden space

To ground floor homes

Private outdoor space with divider to create privacy - enough room for seating (not a fully enclosed gardens).

A soft edge of low shrubs could divide these spaces from a circular footpath

Hard boundaries should be avoided and fully enclosed gardens should be avoided.

To apartments

Balcony to every home with space to sit out.

Proposed Landscaping

Perimeter walk - a good surface for people with limited mobility (wheeled walkers or wheelchairs etc.)

Wild spaces - naturalistic planting that is good for wildlife.

Retaining existing trees, with some selective tree works as necessary.

Main central green and subsidiary greens with seating and attractive planting.

Equipped space - such as boules/petanque surface or table tennis table.

Community fruit and vegetable growing - community garden with raised beds.

Water - if possible, a pond or bog garden linked to sustainable urban drainage system (SuDS) - taking runoff from roofs and surfaces.

Peace garden and/or sensory garden.