



Green Base

Location: St Helens, Lancashire

Completion Status: August 2011

Architect: Simmonds Mills Architects

Contractor: Paragon Construction

Occupancy: August 2011

Consultant: Alan Clarke

Client: Helena Homes

This Passivhaus certified building houses the headquarters for the Green Base service which manages all of the landscaped areas within Helena partnerships' rented housing estates. The building is also a community resource, with large multi-purpose room, for use by various community groups focused on learning and enjoyment of horticultural activities.

The GreenBase team had a visionary approach to the planned service - a building to match this vision was paramount. As well as maintenance & enhancement of public landscapes, the team also engage the community in sustainable horticulture activities.

The approach was to design a landscape integrated, contemporary building, of a scale appropriate to its context, to sit calmly in its 1970's housing estate setting - whilst also signalling a centre of public activity. The adoption of domestic scale & 'conventional' products & materials was intended to make the PH approach relevant to local residents and builders. In its prominent corner site, the building is already a popular local landmark.

The design emphasises Helena's intention that the community facility is open to those living & working in the neighbourhood. The housing estate has a high crime rate requiring the designers to work closely with the client to ensure the building form & security detailing resulted in a safe environment for building users - without creating an overly 'defensive' design.

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