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## EDWARD WILLIAMS ARCHITECTS

This newsletter focuses exclusively on our recently completed **Chobham Road development** in Stratford, East London, UK, which inserts four new, sustainable timber buildings into the underused car park of an existing housing development. The project has already been shortlisted for a Structural Timber Award. The buildings were completed in July 2022 and a few completed apartments are already rented. Below we set out an overview of the project and some of its specific aspects. We are very proud of this work. We have created a beautiful place. If you have the chance to visit you will see it is even better in person than in the photos. Enjoy!

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### An overview of the development



The east courtyard buildings

The new 800 sq.m (8,600sq.ft) scheme is the first pilot scheme for developer Cliveden Land Ltd. It provides contemporary homes and adds to the amenity of the existing flats by turning much of a half empty car park into a landscaped courtyard. The striking Scandinavian pine clad buildings help transform the immediate area, which is starting to benefit from the regenerative effects of the Olympic Park and where well-designed new homes are in demand. Neighbouring areas such as Leytonstone and Walthamstow have become some of the most sought-after districts in East London in recent years.

The four buildings comprise two blocks conjoined in 'L' shapes positioned carefully in the rear carpark alongside the 39 existing homes. Together they provide nine apartments including four 3-bedroom homes, three 2-bed homes and two 1-bed semi-detached homes.

By creating intimate landscaped courtyards in the underused car park, the development is contributing to the security of all residents and the greening of Chobham Road. The strong, uncluttered design of the buildings has attracted a lot of interest from neighbours who say they are enjoying the visual uplift that the flats bring to the area.

In line with Newham's Sustainable Community Strategy 2010-2030, the development not only provides additional homes for the borough, but it has been designed with a variety of tenants, their accessibility, and need for quality homes, in mind.

See more images of the project [here](#).

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### Built in timber for sustainability and speed



All interior ceilings are the exposed timber structure

We have used off-site prefabrication and cross-laminated timber (CLT) to deliver contemporary, daylight and sustainable housing. The prefabricated buildings were constructed in a very short time, with little noise and minimal disruption to the residents of the adjacent buildings.

The off-site fabricated cross laminated timber construction (mass timber) essentially fits together on site like a large jigsaw puzzle. The main structure was completed in April 2022 with the other building components following on.

The structure is approximately 400m<sup>3</sup> (14,126 ft<sup>3</sup>) of timber which means this project, in its structure alone, has captured 400,000 kg of CO<sub>2</sub> or 400 tonnes (440 US tons) CO<sub>2</sub> and removed this amount from the atmosphere. To give this some scale, a modern petrol driven car emits about 22 tonnes of CO<sub>2</sub> over its life, so this is like removing 20 petrol cars from our roads permanently.

Read more about the structure on the article published by Italian magazine *Struttura Legno* [here](#).



Timber structure under construction

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## Roofing that provides more than shelter



The edge to edge PV glass roofs against the existing buildings

The buildings feature edge-to-edge photovoltaic panelled pitched roofs inclined to allow daylight into the existing ground floors with active panels south facing and passive north facing. The roofs feature skylights to add daylight into the flats, especially on the north facing side in order to avoid heat gain.

Working closely with GB-Sol Ltd, a side-to-side photovoltaic roof system is installed to achieve a sleek looking roof that neatly connects to the façades wooden battens whilst producing a high solar power output meeting the sustainability targets of the development. We believe it is a truly holistic contemporary architectural solution.

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## Visual amenity, screening, security, longevity, biodiversity and sustainability all provided by clever landscaping



The new courtyard landscaping

The new buildings successfully close off the back of the development creating more of a mews feel, with heightened security alongside inclusion of a barrier with access control. The addition of landscaped gardens increases the soft landscaped area, reduces the tarmac and rationalises the car parking.

The landscaping includes pedestrian walkways, green hedges, new trees, and rich borders to protect the existing ground floor windows from cars. Low timber gates define the front space.

The new landscaping and planting provide rainwater run-off and enhance biodiversity as well as a covered bicycle storage area and new bin storage on the street side. The parking area and internal roadways are all permeable to absorb the water runoff.

The garden turns what could easily have been a dull parking lot into a forecourt filled with colour, scent and texture, creating a place for residents to share and enjoy. The car park has a porous surface which allows rainfall to soak away, naturally replenishing ground water. All



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## A development designed for sustainability



Dawn view of the East Courtyard buildings

Sustainability has been designed in from the start and materials offering a very high degree of thermal efficiency have been specified throughout. The new residences have been designed to be zero carbon in operation, through the use of electricity as the only energy source with a green mains electricity supply supplemented with the roof mounted photovoltaic (PV) panels. All roof surfaces, other than those north facing, are covered with photovoltaic panels.

On sunny days the PV panels will power 100 per cent of the communal demand, including the electric car charging points, with excess power fed back to the grid. The highly insulated buildings and underfloor electric heating minimise the demand for electricity within the apartments. At least one third of the car parking spaces will have electric charging points.

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## Timber facades bring warmth and modern Scandinavian aesthetic to Chobham Road



The hit and miss timber facades with the aluminium window surrounds and floor markers

The new facades have been built in timber, to complement the existing brick façades, to give a 'warm' feel to the backyards and to express the mass timber structure. The Scandinavian pine facades have crisp hit-and-miss batten detailing to create a textured rhythm of timber and shadow, with painted aluminium trims to mark the edges, floor levels, window and door openings.

All facade elements are fire rated minimum class B and the timber battens are pressure



The east car park before construction.



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