



## The Chocolate Works



**Location**  
South Bank, York

**Client**  
David Wilson Homes

**Project Size**  
320 homes

**Value**  
£50m

**Status**  
Completed

**Awards**  
British Construction Industry Awards 2018  
Shortlisted for Housing Project of the Year (Phase 1)

Housing Design Awards 2018  
Shortlisted for the Completed Category (Phase 1)

York Design Awards 2017  
Large Residential Category Winner (Phase 1)  
Lord Mayor's Award for Best Overall Scheme

Housebuilder Awards 2016  
Best design for Three Storeys or Fewer  
Built for Life Quality Mark

The Chocolate Works is an ambitious housing project on a strategic site bounded by York Racecourse Conservation Area and the listed Terry's of York chocolate manufacturers buildings, which are intrinsic to the city's history. The development provides 320 homes including apartments and family houses.

### Overview

The scheme responds to the historic context referencing and complementing the adjacent Grade II listed 1924-30 Terry's of York buildings by architects J G Davies and L E Wade. The unused industrial site was a concern for the local population for some time, and this scheme has acted as a catalyst for the redevelopment of the existing buildings. A formal urban square at the centre of the new development reflects the symmetrical neoclassical layout of the chocolate manufacturer's buildings. The central square contrasts with the generous landscaping around the edges of the site with existing mature trees. The scheme frames and references the existing listed buildings enhancing their historic resonance and creating a distinctive character and sense of place for the new development.

### Masterplan

The site layout provides connections, vistas, and views through and across the site, creating a clear hierarchy of street types. A wide tree-lined avenue runs past Hallmark House, a landmark apartment

building at the site entrance, through the development towards the listed Terry's of York Clock Tower. The positioning of the avenue frames views of the Clock Tower – visible from just about anywhere on the site – establishing a dramatic focal point for the development and way-finding landmark and emphasising the new buildings' visual references to the historic buildings.

There is a clear distinction between vehicular and pedestrian routes, and priority is given to pedestrians and cyclists throughout much of the site. Traffic is limited on quieter 'home zone' streets that run through the site's centre, and pedestrian priority is emphasized by shared surface treatment and landscaping choices. Parking is a mixture of on-street, on-plot and secure parking courts, and bicycle storage is also provided. With a strong orthogonal arrangement, the project takes its lead from the regular layout of its surroundings.





“Everything, from the site’s layout to the detailing of individual buildings, takes its lead from the formal feel of these surroundings.”

– Building for Life Assessment



**Homes**

The houses offer good natural surveillance to keep the site’s streets secure, since much of the main living is elevated to first-floor level; there are direct and oblique views from living rooms with balconies and large windows. Each family home has a private garden and terrace. The homes are well-proportioned with high ceilings and large windows, providing natural light and ample storage. A convenience store is provided on the ground floor of Hallmark House Apartments.

**Materials**

The choice of traditional materials that reference the historic buildings, such as, brick as well as precast and drycast stone that do not rely on surface treatments will be robust and long lasting. Red or pink brick with distinctive multi colour variations is used for Neapolitan Apartments and for houses in homes zones to reflect and tone with the red brick in English bond Terry’s of York buildings and the predominantly red brick local vernacular. An ivory white brick framed with precast stone is used for Hallmark House Apartments to create a standout building at the site entrance. The differing designs of the two apartment buildings respond to the different characters of the Terry’s of York buildings: ivory white brick Hallmark House Apartments reflects the intricate Baroque Revival style Head Office building with façade facing Bishopthorpe Road all in sandstone ashlar; while rich red brick Neapolitan Apartments relates to the red brick Factory.

Houses facing the avenue use a pale buff brick that changes to a much warmer tone when wet like the sandstone ashlar of the Terry’s of York buildings. The buff

coloured brick is chosen to contrast with the pink brick used for the houses in the home zones establishing hierarchy and legibility between the different types of street within the development. The aim of creating this differentiation also informs the choice of paving materials and use of drycast stone bases for corner houses on the avenue. Large, gold coloured windows tone with the warm colours of the ivory, buff and red bricks and provide continuity to the elevations.

**Community**

Community involvement at the initial design workshop gave local people and key stakeholders a say in the scheme’s design. Consultation continued through a project specific Community Forum. The layouts of the homes are simple and clear, and focus on the demands of the residents: ample storage space is offered both internally and externally, while high ceilings and large windows provide good amounts of natural light.

**Sustainability**

The basis of the sustainability strategy is a ‘fabric first’ approach: highly efficient building fabric, with good U-values, low air-permeability, and carefully controlled thermal bridging, will be used in conjunction with modern methods of construction. On the basis of the fabric measures alone, all homes are designed to Code for Sustainable Homes level 3. There is also a strong emphasis on creating ecological zones and amenity spaces, and existing mature trees and generous landscaping are retained around the site’s edges.



“This is a major step forward for York. The council is committed to providing new homes and helping businesses thrive and we are delighted that we’re able to help bring this brownfield site forward for much needed homes. The Chocolate Works is a central platform in that programme [and] we will do everything we can to support the development of this site.”

– James Alexander, Labour Leader of City of York Council