



View from Site Entrance



Courtyard Views



Site Plan

Orchid View Care Home Cophthorne, West Sussex

Alexander Sedgley were commissioned by Southern Cross PLC to design this 88-bed Care Home on the site of a former Franciscan Convent in the village of Cophthorne, Sussex.

The tight constraints of the self-contained sloping walled site and the desire to retain as much of the beautiful existing grounds as possible proved a challenge, whilst respecting the proximity of neighbouring residential buildings. The solution was reached through consultation and agreement with the local planning authority, local residents and parish members.

The adherence to Sussex vernacular and traditional brickwork details have helped the building to sit comfortably in its prominent location adjacent the village green, while contemporary materials give the building a crisp modern appearance.

The buildings are comprised of two linear wings juxtapositioned to relate to the site edges and in a gesture towards the lawn area which is a focal part of the site. The two wings are connected by a central block which acts as a hinge providing a dynamic feel to the arrangement of the buildings which in turn informs the internal spaces and corridors. The generous corridors are further broken up by a series of light airy dayrooms located to maximise daylight to the circulation spaces and offer routes out to the courtyard spaces. Bedroom doorways are all recessed to offer privacy and promote a feeling of personal space for residents. Alexander Sedgley hope that all of these design considerations will help to avoid the institutional feel that is often attributed to many care homes of this size.

The use of a pre-fabricated timber panel system has provided great benefits to the construction project offering quick erection and minimal disruption to the local population. And as the panels are pre-lined and arrive with windows installed the building is water-tight from an early stage. The compact and airtight panel construction also provides excellent thermal properties which, coupled with low energy heating and electrical services, make the building particularly energy efficient.

The project has a build cost of approximately £4.1m and was completed in August 2009.

Main Contractor: Metnor Construction
Structural Engineer: WE Smith
Project Manager: Aedifice Partnership
Services Engineer: Norstead