

Vox (Build to Rent)

Vox pops in Manchester

£40m

/ Project value

August 2018

/ The project commenced

December 2020

/ The project was completed

Setting a “high standard for build to rent developments in the UK”, Vox is a 235,000 sq ft, 280 apartment scheme spread across two 15-storey buildings in Cornbrook (Manchester) beside the lively setting of Castlefield. Adjacent to Trilogy, another iconic GRAHAM residential project, it offers residents “balanced city living” with a blend of 98 one-bed, 168 two-bed and 14 three-bed units. Vox was designed with “wellbeing in mind”. The “stylish bright and spacious” apartments are finished to a high specification and are complemented by top-class amenities, including an expansive rooftop that features a unique 130m residents’ running track and a lounge with an eye-catching cloud pine tree. We applied our technical expertise throughout, influencing the feasibility stage before concluding a two-year construction programme in December 2020.

The brief

Demonstrating our on-going, collaborative working relationship with Glenbrook, Vox is our third significant, high-quality residential tower building for the leading property developer. It followed the completion of the Trilogy and Duet buildings in 2020. Funding was provided by Barings.



“Glenbrook has worked hard to deliver a high-quality product that we can both be proud of and we look forward to welcoming our first residents in due course.”

Darren Hutchinson
Managing Director and Head of UK Real Estate
Transactions at Barings

"This project sees the transformation of a disused industrial site into a highly-sustainable development which will undoubtedly spearhead further regeneration in this area of Manchester. The health and wellbeing of its residents have very much influenced the design and fit-out of the scheme, from the inclusion of a running track to the location of the shared areas, which are located on the rooftop to maximise sunlight and views."

Danny Roberts
Glenbrook Senior Project Manager

The challenges

The onset of the Covid-19 pandemic in early 2020 presented a range of challenges, however, the implementation of robust health and safety measures and the strict adherence to government guidelines ensured the project remained on track. In addition, the development occupies a strategic position between Chester Road and Cornbrook Metrolink station, on a prominent arterial access route into Manchester city centre. We improved pedestrian links around the site and created a landscaped area running along the front of the retail unit facing Chester Road, with an enlarged footpath to the entrance on Trentham Street.

The solution

Our £40m design and build programme has created one of "Manchester's most exciting new developments". The Build to Rent scheme, just a ten minute walk from the city centre, includes 280 apartments, a ground floor convenience retail unit and landscaped public realm. It is complete with 50 under-building car parking spaces, together with EV charging points, and storage for over 280 bikes. Vox was constructed using piled foundations, with a concrete frame structure, precast columns and walls, and insitu slabs. The balconies were formed with thermal breaks and insitu concrete plus a precast corbel expressed slab edge on every floor. In order to deliver high acoustic performance, we installed twin wall partitions. Designed by Sheppard Robson Architects, Vox's community and wellbeing "vibe" is exemplified in its 15th floor rooftop that blends leisure (gym, studio and external running track) with social (lounge, garden) in one iconic space. We applied digital construction tools, such as VR and AR, to simulate and inform the residential scheme, enabling the client team to suggest changes to the finishes and to complete quality management inspections.

Outputs & Benefits

- Completion:** Timely completion despite the challenges presented by the Covid-19 pandemic
- OSM:** Precast columns, walls and slab edge corbels were installed in addition to prefabricated bathroom pods
- Community:** Reflecting our commitment to the local community, we hosted 13 young unemployed people from the Manchester Street League as part of a vocational construction programme, and we teamed up with AMACO Vending Ltd in a joint venture to raise money for Wood Street Mission's Christmas donation appeal
- Wellbeing:** Vox's expansive rooftop has an exclusive residents' running track, a fully equipped gym and a Wexer Studio
- Supply chain:** 60% of the local supply chain was within 40 miles of the project



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