

## 201 City Road Surgery

201 City Road, 1996

**Architect[s]:** [Hodder Associates](#)

**Area[s]:** [Hulme](#)

**Theme[s]:** [Contemporary Buildings](#)

201 City Road is in the St George's area of Hulme, a district of bleak inner-city housing designated for regeneration. As part of Hulme's City Challenge Initiative the architects have designed a building that contributes to this process and fulfils the city's desire to provide a better and safer environment for local people.

The building is situated between 1950s local-authority housing, a four-storey terrace to the north-west of the site and a row of terraces to the north-east. By responding thoughtfully to the scale of the surrounding area the architect has designed a two-storey building that is not only impregnable to drug thieves, but that also provides a welcoming and comfortable environment.

To meet the City Challenge Initiative requirements the surgery had to work at street level and reinforce the building line; this has been successfully achieved. Externally, a series of architectural mechanisms cleverly manipulate the building's scale, giving it greater impact on the street. The most impressive statement is a boomerang roof; with its 'V' balanced upon a column above the exposed steel lintel of the recessed entrance, it appears to hover above the building. This impression of detachment is enhanced by a glazed clerestory that allows light to filter through the building. Of 'plywood stressed-skin monocoque construction', the roof is an excellent deterrent to burglars.

## Boundary Lane

Boundary Lane, 1996

**Architect[s]:** [Mills Beaumont Leavey Channon](#)

**Area[s]:** [Hulme](#)

**Theme[s]:** [Regeneration](#)

Since the demolition of the notorious 1960s system-built housing estate, Hulme has undergone radical changes through its physical development and has emerged as a vibrant gateway to the centre of the city. Here after a lengthy consultation process with tenants and the local authority, the architects have created a robust housing scheme, diverse in character.

The development consists of a wide variety of living units, complete with a complex arrangement of public and private spaces, dominated by the housing office, an important central reference point for tenants. The construction of the housing blocks engenders surprise yet remains familiar a response to the previous monotonous urban environment which reflects tenants' wishes. A sense of security and safety is promoted by positioning living rooms overlooking the public realm. Porches, walls and bin stores are carefully blended into the fabric of the scheme, demonstrating attention to detail and the interrelationship of architecture and landscape was clearly foremost in the designer's mind. Materials were selected for durability and cost-effectiveness; red brickwork reflects the Manchester vernacular. OMI should be congratulated on their approach to revitalising the scarred landscape of Hulme. The Boundary Lane development placed the values and needs of the tenants first through all its stages.

## Homes for Change

Chichester Road, 1996

**Architect[s]:** [Mills Beaumont Leavey Channon](#)

**Area[s]:** [Hulme](#)

**Theme[s]:** [Contemporary Buildings](#) [DesRes](#) [Regeneration](#)

Homes for Change are situated where the infamous crescent deck-access maisonettes once stood. This new model of co-operative social housing has taken their place, providing accommodation for large and small families, single parents and first-time buyers. Fully involved throughout all stages of its development, the co-op members demanded a housing scheme that fulfilled their varied needs, with a strong emphasis on social integration and communal activity '18 hours a day'.

The first phase features 50 flats of varied sizes to suit diverse lifestyles, providing the development with a richness and vibrancy that is so often missing from social housing schemes in the UK. Built in a U-shaped layout, the flats surround a central courtyard designed for social activity and special events and maintained by the residents. Despite the failings of its predecessor, the developers have managed to satisfy residents' wishes to have deck-access housing, carefully linking all the four- and six-storey buildings together.

Materials for the flats were chosen for minimal maintenance, hardware, affordability and, most importantly, environmental friendliness. The sensitive use of hard and soft materials provides the development with an unusualness and sophistication that belie its tight budget.

## Hulme Arch Bridge

Stretford Road, 1997

**Architect[s]:** [Chris Wilkinson \(Wilkinson Eyre Architects\)](#)

**Area[s]:** [Hulme](#)

**Theme[s]:** [Bridges](#) [Regeneration](#)

Chris Wilkinson's bridge is a key structure in the regeneration of Hulme. The bridge, a mile south of the city, spans Princess Road, the major arterial route from the city centre to the main motorway network. It is ideally placed to indicate the changing significance of the area to all road traffic travelling beneath the bridge, both in and out of the city.

The single steel arch rises an impressive 15 metres above deck level and 32 metres from Princess Road beneath it. Diagonally rotated, with a 50-metre span, it allows traffic to travel in both directions along Stretford Road, while maintaining a strong sense of presence. Slender spiral-strand steel cables support the main deck below. The Hulme Arch Bridge successfully demonstrates that dramatic architectural gestures can maintain their elegance through 'clarity of intent and simplicity'. The bridge is a fitting complement to Hulme's regeneration plans, a focal point to the gateway of the city.

## Hulme Park

Hulme, 2000

**Architect[s]:** [Landscape Projects](#)

**Area[s]:** [Hulme](#)

**Theme[s]:** Regeneration Urban Spaces and Parks

Hulme Park is the first large scale park to be created in Manchester in the last 50 years at a cost of over £3m, linking Stretford Road to Castlefield.

Its success is predominantly due to the many participants involved in its development. Firstly, Hunt Thompson Associates ran a Community Planning weekend in November 1992 which led to a major feasibility study. Consequently, a competition brief was issued which was won by a team that included Ian Simpson Architects; Landscape Projects; Simon Fenton Partnership and HRL.

The park's design and completion is a testament to the extensive public consultation process, as a consequence major adjustments were made. It combines a diverse range of community and leisure activities that include equipped play areas; equipped sports areas; a new public square and a general open space. Hulme Park offers a sensation of openness which provides a welcome contrast to the surrounding urban density of Hulme.

## New Mancunian Way Footbridge

Hulme, 2002

**Architect[s]:** [Arca](#)

**Area[s]:** [Hulme](#)

**Theme[s]:** [Bridges](#) [Civic Regeneration](#)

The pedestrian footbridge links Hulme Park with Knott Mill and Manchester City Centre. Opened in 2002 it is one of Europe's largest timber footbridges and was the last major project commissioned by the area's regeneration organisation, Moss Side and Hulme Partnership.

The bridge was a result of a design competition managed by Moss Side and Hulme Partnership for a 'landmark' bridge which also 'symbolically' reconnects Hulme with the City Centre. It is principally designed for sole use by pedestrians and cyclists from Hulme Park allowing them to cross the busy Mancunian Way beneath the bridge.

The superstructure is formed from a single 150m long steel frame with a cantilevered deck. Celebrated for its use of environmentally sustainable materials and elegant form, the bridge is an intelligent and creative response to a difficult and challenging brief.

## Rolls Crescent

Rolls Crescent, 1997

**Architect[s]:** [ECD Architects](#)

**Area[s]:** [Hulme](#)

**Theme[s]:** [Regeneration](#)

Rolls Crescent stands on the former Crescent Blocks, a system-built, deck-access development that led to segregation, anonymity and alienation. The new scheme, developed in consultation with the Crescent Blocks previous residents, follows the principles set down by the Hulme Redevelopment Guide. This has resulted in 67 dwellings designed to promote a sense of community, identity and membership with the rest of the city. With a clear distinction between public and private space, a selection of one- two- and three-bedroom dwellings is arranged around three enclosed central courtyards (one on each block). Each dwelling faces outwards with either a private garden or a roof terrace to the rear that backs on to a central meeting place, encouraging neighbourhood surveillance - the scheme complies with the Building Research Establishment's 'Secure by Design' standards. The variety of dwelling types, structural forms, colours and textures, from acrylic render to buff brick and steel balustrading, has resulted in a friendly and humane architecture far removed from the sterility of the off-white concrete Crescent Blocks of the 1970s.

## Zion Arts Centre

Stretford Road, 1999

**Architect[s]:** [Mills Beaumont Leavey Channon](#)

**Area[s]:** [Hulme](#)

**Theme[s]:** [Contemporary Interiors](#)

Bright and playful, the Zion Arts Centre occupies an Edwardian former church at the heart of the Hulme Regeneration Area. Built in 1911, the building has been redeveloped to provide dance and music facilities for young people, including studio space for rudimentary ballet classes for 4-5 year olds and rehearsal rooms for national orchestras and choirs.

The new entrance is cheerful and welcoming and has been formed by remodelling the ground and basement spaces at the front of the building. The partial removal of the ground floor has created a 7.5-metre-high space, allowing light from the double-height vaulted windows to flood into the previously hidden basement area. This space is bridged by a curved ramp constructed from two truss frames that form its deck structure and balustrades. The outer balustrade is clad in perforated metal, the inner balustrade in toughened glass panels, and the deck in machine-grooved, kiln-dried southern white pine.

