

PRESS RELEASE
6 April 2017

Mikhail Riches wins Tiverton housing competition

Competition winning scheme for Local Authority-led housing project will unlock a site on the banks of the river Exe that has lain vacant for over 30 years.

Mikhail Riches has been appointed to design 40 new homes overlooking the River Exe in Tiverton, following a design competition organised by Mid Devon District Council.

The Practice will now work up its proposals and submit a planning application on behalf of the Local Authority, which has undertaken to develop the site through a newly-established Special Purpose Vehicle (SPV).

Mikhail Riches' winning design scored highly for design quality, picking up 65.3 of the 70 percentage points available for its competition submission and interview.

David Mikhail, Director of Mikhail Riches, said:

“This is an extraordinary site that presents an opportunity to complete an important piece of Tiverton’s historic town centre right on the banks of the River Exe. Our scheme is informed by the historic pattern of development in Tiverton, responding positively to the townscape, topography and neighbouring listed buildings to create new housing that feels like it belongs to the existing town.

“We’ve worked to ensure that we can deliver an economically viable scheme that will unlock this undeveloped parcel of land, encouraging a mixed community within predominantly pedestrianised lanes that lead to a riverside garden.”

Stephen Walford, Chief Executive of Mid Devon District Council, said:

“Our ambition for this site reflected its prominence within the town and its visual impact alongside the river. The design competition attracted submissions from across the country and I am confident that Mikhail Riches’ vision pursues the quality that we aspire to, as well as grounding its principles in the historical architectural context of Tiverton. I look forward to working with them as we move forward to realise this ambitious development together.”

MIKHAIL RICHES

Mikhail Riches' competition-winning design for Tiverton will unlock a riverside site in the heart of the historic town centre. This part of Tiverton has a picturesque mix of buildings, particularly when viewed from across the River Exe, with a variety of scales, materials, and roof heights. Mikhail Riches' proposal echoes this character with sensitively-designed contemporary buildings set in a series of pedestrian lanes that run down to a riverside garden.

The 40 home development will deliver seventeen one-bedroom flats and eleven two-bedroom flats in two four-storey apartment buildings to the east of the site, along with five two-bedroom houses and seven three-bedroom houses in terraces that lead down to the river at the west of the site. All the homes will be made available for private sale.

The proposal has been inspired by the historic pattern of development in Tiverton and the steep topography of the site, which rises 8 metres from the level of the River Exe. The new buildings will step-up from two storeys at the riverbank, to four storeys bordering the slope up to the town, to gracefully negotiate the level change and create a roofline that integrates with the existing.

Three publicly-accessible pedestrian "lanes" will run east-west across the site, linking the river to the road with intimate cobbled footpaths - a style adopted from the historic town. The lanes will run through the two apartment buildings at ground level, giving them the appearance of four buildings, and the gaps created between these buildings will maintain views from the River Exe up to the listed St George's Church and Town Hall at the top of the slope.

The buildings will make use of a mix of brick, lime render, stone and slate in a subtle mixture of tones, picking up on the varied backdrop of building materials used along St Andrew Street. Roof lines have been set at different heights, and double-pitched "valley roofs" used to help to break down the scale of the buildings to make them sympathetic to the existing character of Tiverton.

Mid Devon District Council decided to develop the project through its own SPV following a series of stalled attempts at development in the private sector over the past 30 years. Mikhail Riches' solution is focussed on economic viability, with little or no expensive cutting or filling required to remediate the site, and with simple, repeated buildings that derive character from their materials and thoughtful arrangement.

Mikhail Riches has designed the homes to comply with the space standards set out in the Mayor of London's Housing Design Guide, as these are more generous than those specified in national standards. The majority of homes will meet the Lifetime Homes Standard, exceeding the 20% required for new developments. Car parking is provided underground in the shared basements of the two apartment buildings at a ratio of one parking space per dwelling.

MIKHAIL RICHES

ENDS

Project Credits

Location:	Tiverton, Devon, UK
Type of project:	Residential
Client:	Mid Devon District Council
Architect:	Mikhail Riches

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Notes to Editors

About Mikhail Riches

Led by David Mikhail and Annalie Riches, Mikhail Riches is one of the UK's leading architecture practices.

Mikhail Riches' architecture is guided by in-depth investigation of the conditions of a site and the lives of the people that will use it. Understanding 'the story of the project' plays an important role in the practice's design process, and is the foundation for all of its key architectural decisions.

Current projects include: Goldsmith Street, a development of around 100 PassivHaus homes for Norwich City Council; Nine sites in the London Borough of Croydon for Brick-by-Brick, an SPV set up by the local authority; Around 200 homes delivered as phase 2 of the regeneration of the Grade II* listed Park Hill flats in Sheffield for Urban Splash and St Margaret the Queen, the re-ordering of a Grade II listed church and monastic house for a community in Streatham, South London.

Mikhail Riches has a considerable track record for designing housing for Private Developers, Housing Associations and Local Authorities. Many of its projects have won prestigious design awards, including 5 Housing Design Awards, numerous RIBA awards and the RIBA London Building of the Year 2013. The practice was named Housing Architect of the Year in the BD AYA awards in 2009.