

Background: Outline permission / current status

Description of scheme

Taylor Wimpey & Bovis are developing Cambourne West as an extension to the new settlement of Cambourne. Outline planning permission has been granted for: 'up to 2,350 residential units including affordable housing; retail, use; offices/light industry; community and leisure facilities; two primary schools and one secondary school; three vehicular access points including the extension and modification of Sheepfold Lane, a four arm roundabout provided on the A1198/ Caxton Bypass and an access point off the A1198, south of the Caxton Gibbet to serve the proposed employment uses; a network of segregated pedestrian and cycle routes; sustainable drainage system and other associated infrastructure; together with associated earthworks, parking, open space, including equipped play, playing fields and landscaping'.



Development proposals

The first Reserved Matters Planning Application is for a total of 969 homes with associated highways, drainage and landscaping. The housing areas are split 1:2 between Taylor Wimpey and Bovis Homes. The size of this application is determined by legal constraints and has been agreed with SCDC.

The schemes have gone through five pre-application meetings and are now at a stage where both SCDC and the applicants feel they are ready to be reviewed by the QRP prior to a submission in the next few months.

Planning Policy Context

The outline application for Cambourne West was approved by committee on 11th January 2017.

Condition 8 requires submission of a Design Code Prior to, or concurrently with, the submission of the first of the reserved matters application(s). The Design Code has completed an extensive consultation process. It is scheduled to go to Committee on 12th June with Officer recommendation for approval.

An emphasis has been placed on the importance of landscape spaces being unifying places binding the development together. Neighbourhoods derive their character from landscape spaces within the site and the surrounding context.

Three distinct neighbourhoods will be formed with a string of landscape spaces running through the central space. The first RMA will contain proposals for Swansley Park and Sheepfold.



Community



Connectivity



Cambridgeshire Quality Charter for Growth

Community

- Community involvement**
- Community & key stakeholders involved with the design process.
 - Detailed discussions with town council who are in support of the proposals
 - Public consultation event held in January which had generally positive feedback

Change in needs and lifestyles

- Variety of housing tenure and employment spaces
- Homes that can be adapted for change
- Differences in tenure not obvious

Community management

- Community management of all open space facilities

Social infrastructure

- Education and leisure provided. Opportunities for retail provided. Open recreational spaces at the wetlands, Swansley Park Entrance area and Swansley Park Meadows and boundary woodlands.
- Play facilities provided consisting of 2 LEAPs and 4 SIPS and 13 LAPs.

Character

Existing landform

- Existing landform and features used to enhance character.

An overriding masterplan

- This RMA follows the principles of the masterplan and the guidance within the approved Design Code.

Maintain the vision

- The masterplan consultant involved since 1989 is retained for the duration of the project ensuring the overall vision is maintained.
- Character of Sheepfold and Swansley neighbourhoods follow the requirements of the Design Code.

Full range of house types

- Densities and massing vary to provide a range of house types.
- Higher densities concentrated in Sheepfold surrounding local retail and transport nodes to suit character of the neighbourhood.

Simple designs

- Reserved matters proposals employs creative thinking and simple designs.
- A high quality public realm using shared surfaces.

Open space requirements

- Integrated with buildings throughout the scheme.
- Mix of private gardens, balconies / terraces, semi-private & public space.

Good landscapes

- Different landscape spaces give character to the neighbourhoods & improve biodiversity.
- Extensive woodlands, lakes / ponds, wetlands, village greens, greenways, meadows as well as more intimate squares and crescents.
- Communal spaces including play and POS looked after by Town council.

Flexible and adaptable

- Commercial, residential, and public buildings to be flexible and adaptable.

Car and cycle parking

- Storage and waste recycling integrated within the design of the new homes.
- Car parking located in ways that ensure parked cars do not dominate the street.

Connectivity

Public transport in place

- Existing public transport links to Cambourne and beyond

Integrated public transport

- Integrated existing transport systems
- Enhanced existing public transport network

Employment linkages

- Links to existing Cambourne Business Park has been integrated into the design, along with links to proposed employment areas.

Wider environmental goals

- Walking and cycling routes providing connectivity across Cambourne West to existing PROW network and wider Cambourne.
- 4m wide route to provide off road route to key destinations
- Opportunities to work close to/at home

User hierarchy

- Hierarchy of routes with primacy to walking, cycling and public transport

Easy mobility for all

- Site levels ensures degree of easy mobility for all.
- Proposals provide for easy mobility for all

Bus stops

- Within easy walking distance of homes
- Well designed waiting areas, safe and overlooked

Parking management

- Range of appropriate parking options

Road design

- Use of permeable surfaces.
- Services located in appropriate locations to avoid roads being dug up by services.

Climate

Sustainable lifestyles

- Minimise the use of energy and other resources, by reducing the need for car use through a plethora of sustainable transport routes

Environmental targets

- Show homes to market new forms of technology/ construction

Avoid environmental risk

- Not located in an area of unacceptable environmental risk

Sustainable waste management

- Sustainable waste management encouraged
- BRING site located in community centre, ensuring that recycling is easy and unobtrusive.
- Encourage people to waste less
- Ensure that construction teams minimise and manage construction and demolition waste

Energy and water conservation

- Homes designed to reduce water and energy demand

Anticipate climate change

- Public buildings & housing has been designed to anticipate climate change so they are capable of being upgraded and adapted easily and economically to minimise resources used.

SuDS

- Integral part of masterplan. SuDS have been incorporated into Phase 1 RMA for each development parcel and POS.

Sustainable energy partnerships

- Extend the existing strategy with CTC to provide sustainable energy generation on/within community buildings
- Provide resources for residents to implement their own sustainable energy initiatives

Trees and planting

- Landscape features provide potential for cooling in summer and soak up rain
- A landscape that encourages people to walk and cycle

Climate



Character





Character

Story

Located in the north east corner of the site, the Sheepfold neighbourhood area welcomes those arriving from the A428 and north Cambourne.

Sheepfold has an orthogonal and grid-like structure, taking its cue from the existing business park and secondary school. The layout enables long vistas down streets into open space of Sheepfold Green playing fields to the west and the woodlands to the east.

Sheepfold will provide a range of facilities including the secondary school, access to business park/employment areas, community centre, Sheepfold Green playing fields and retail uses. High levels of pedestrian movement and social activity associated with these destinations creates a series of lively spaces interlinked by the central spine

Traveling north from Swansley Park views are terminated by the community centre building and focal tree planting sitting within one of the four public squares in Sheepfold.

The primary east-west movement is provided by the spine road - Sheepfold Avenue (with squares and spaces marking each change in direction) which travels through this neighbourhood.

Sheepfold Avenue is the main focus of activity, anchored to the west by the community centre and sports fields and to the east by the hub of School Square with its urban contemporary play / meeting space and retail opportunities around this main hub.

The residential development and retail areas have been sub-divided into smaller orthogonal blocks and squares by tertiary roads.

Contemporary building styles and materials feature heavily in the architecture which defines the streets and public squares, creating a formal urban neighbourhood character influenced by the existing business park.

Common features include orthogonal buildings, larger windows, formal architectural repetition, balconies and parapets. Vernacular/traditional designs do not feature in this area, making it distinct from the rest of Cambourne West.

Formal landscape treatments such as tree lined avenues and structural planting dominate the public realm in Sheepfold.

Key frontages

Frontages are designed to respond to the primary spine road in a number of different ways:

Key frontages A

These define the squares along the primary spine road. The design principle creates strong enclosure and built unity. This is achieved through, predominantly continuous built frontages, linked at first floor level (with some linked by garages).

Gaps are only provided for access to streets stemming from the spine road. Buildings within linked rows share common characteristics (such as architectural form, massing, materials, detailing, and roofline).

Active frontages (fenestration to habitable rooms and entrances) are provided on all public realm faces. Architectural features such as bay windows, gables and balconies are used to add further interest.

Key frontages B

These overlook the majority of the primary road and secondary routes and other key landscape spaces.

Buildings form generally continuous built frontages, providing enclosure to frame streets and key vistas, with some gaps between buildings to create streets that are less formal in character.

Frontages have common characteristics to provide a unified street scene, and are designed to be distinctive and characterful to reflect the character of the street or area they front on to. Active frontages are provided on all public realm faces.

Open space frontage

Buildings form generally broken built frontages, with a higher proportion of gaps between buildings to reflect the more informal character at the periphery of blocks.

Buildings predominantly front onto the open spaces to provide casual surveillance and encourage people to use them. Some rear gardens with high quality boundary walls fronting the open space are included to give the appearance of low density.

Marker Buildings

Individual buildings provide accents within Sheepfold to help navigation and wayfinding.

Marker Buildings articulate corners or terminate key vistas and views.

The buildings aid orientation and navigability and are noticeably distinct from other buildings either side by change in height, style and/or materials.

Key design principles



- Residential development areas
- Employment use
- Community use
- Frontage type A
- Open space frontage
- Frontage type A with potential for retail use on ground floor
- Frontage type B
- Marker buildings
- Public squares
- Non residential frontages
- Sports pitches
- School and grounds
- Local greens
- Woodland
- Spine road
- Secondary street
- Pedestrian/cycle shared use path
- Pedestrian routes
- Strategic areas
- Outward views (indicative location only)

Scale 1:1250

Cambourne West Design Code: Sheepfold Square

Story

The northern entrance to Cambourne West is through Sheepfold Gate. The central spine enters the site through a break in the established woodland belt along the eastern site boundary which forms an entrance threshold before entering two formal squares.

The northern, smaller square is enclosed by residential units and consists of hard landscaped features along with focal trees and structural planting.

The southern square is a larger more dynamic space which is surrounded with residential blocks with opportunities for ground floor retail/commercial on both sides. The southern side is formed by a formal boundary treatment and the main pedestrian gateway/ entrance to the secondary school.

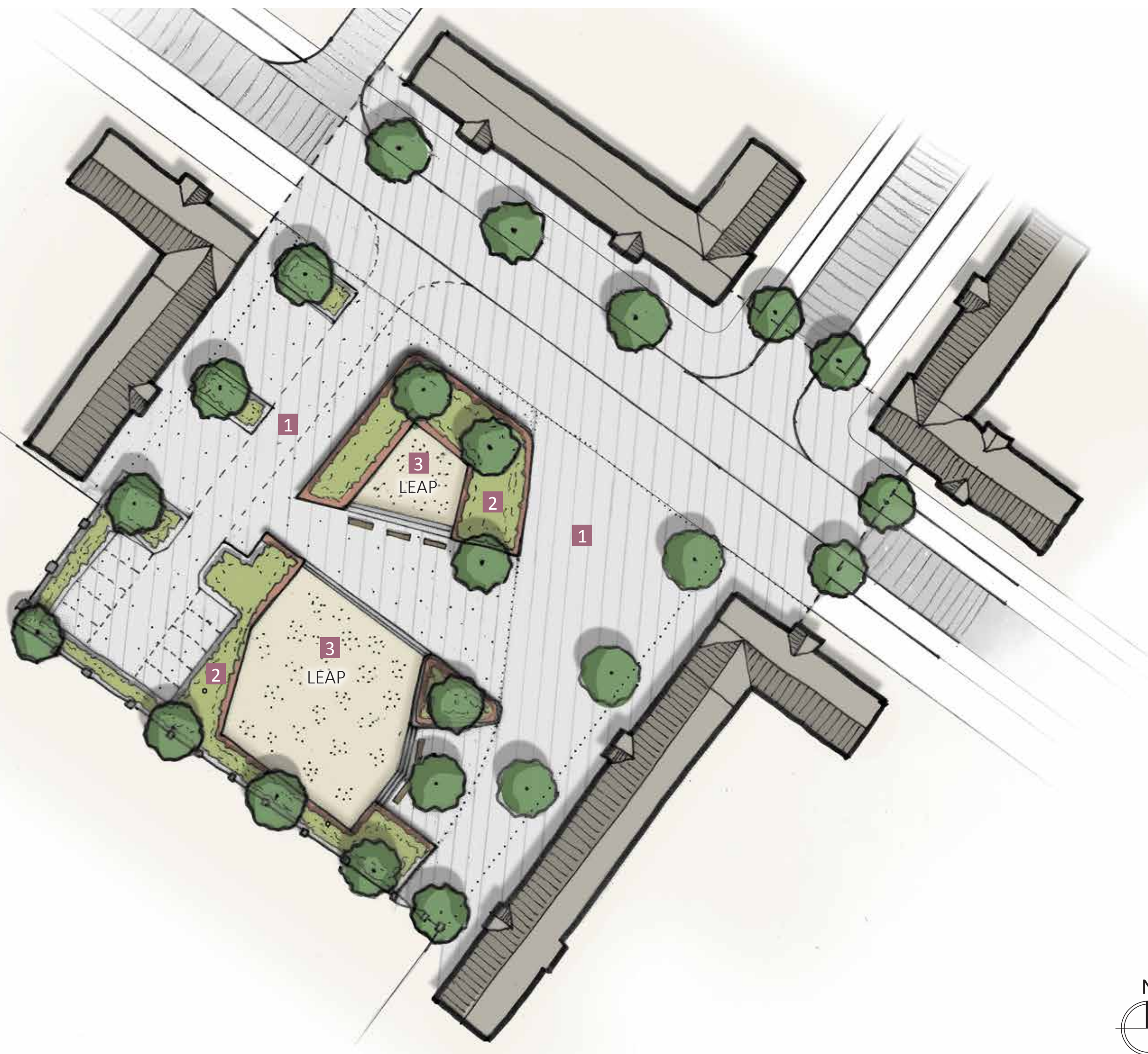
General layout

Built form around the square has a regular rhythm that provides strong enclosure.

The school site is directly accessible by foot and cycle from the square and creates a civic entrance/gateway. A LEAP will be provided centrally to the square which is within the school land transfer.

Areas of parking for the retail units are provided within the square. This is located in the south western corner of the square, with raised planting areas screening the cars from the active area of the square and from Sheepfold Avenue.

The primary vehicular access for the school is to the east of Sheepfold, away from the Square and the main pedestrian access ensuring that the Square is a people dominated lively space.



Landscape features

Formal landscape treatments dominate the public realm. The squares will be finished with high quality contemporary materials.

Formal tree planting is proposed surrounding the square to enhance views along streets and frame the square. A variety of semi-mature trees (30cm girth +) are proposed to define the squares and guide users through the spaces.

The LEAP reflect the urban and civic character of the space. Movement through the square has been considered and the play space has been sensitively integrated into the square. A change in levels incorporating steps and ramp access define the play spaces which are enclosed by raised planters filled with formal structural planting and focal trees. A focal piece of play equipment will sit within the southern play space which will act a focal point within the square. The northern play space contains a variety of equipment suitable for younger age ranges.



Frontage

Continuous frontages are provided around the squares and streets. Building frontages follow the alignment of the Avenue.

Parking and access solutions

Secure residential parking is provided in private parking areas to the rear of the building fronting the square to ensure cars do not dominate the view of this key strategic area.

Marker buildings

Have been arranged so that they terminate key views across the squares. Larger buildings have been located at street corners to emphasise key junctures and to announce arrival at the public squares.

Building height

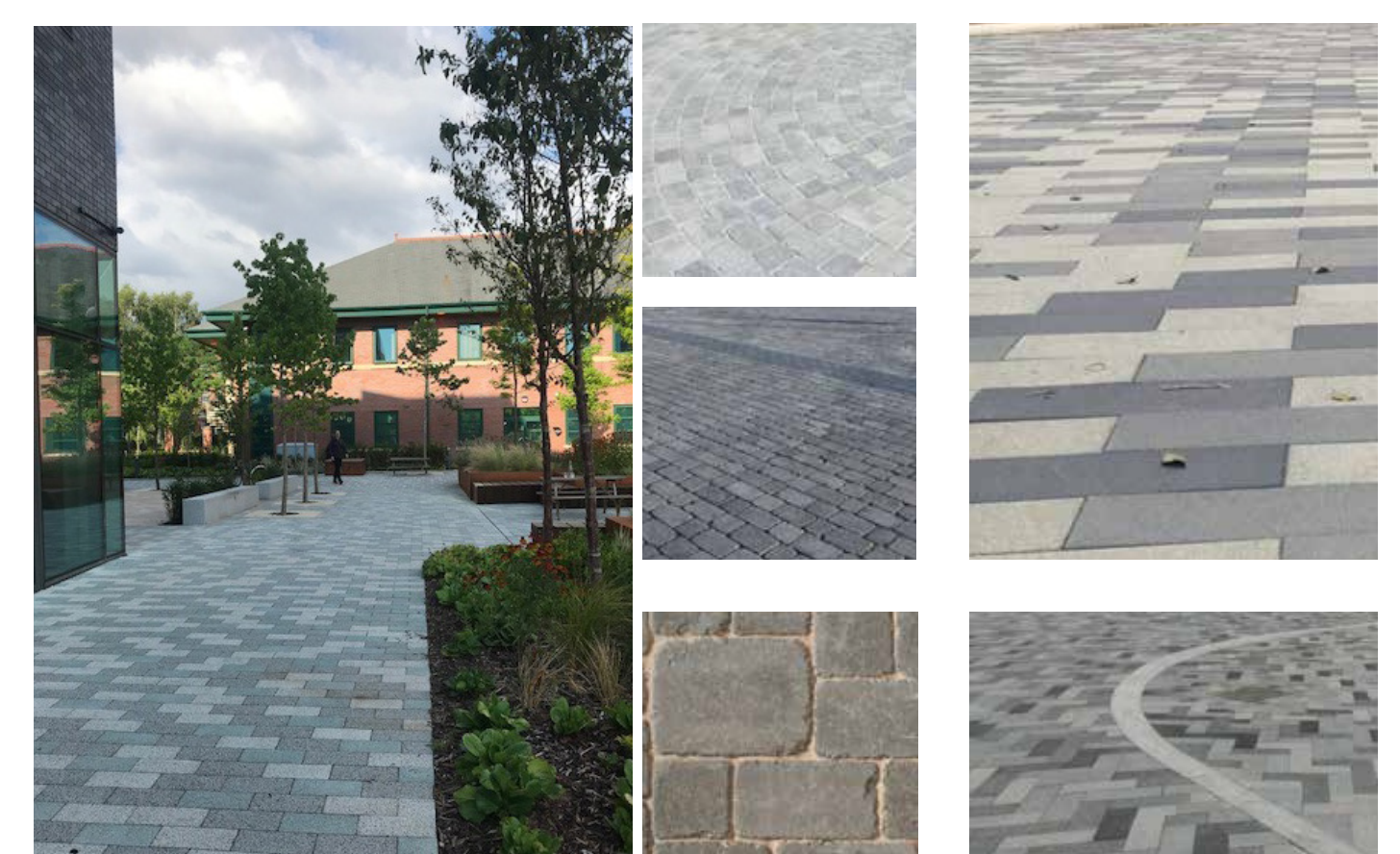
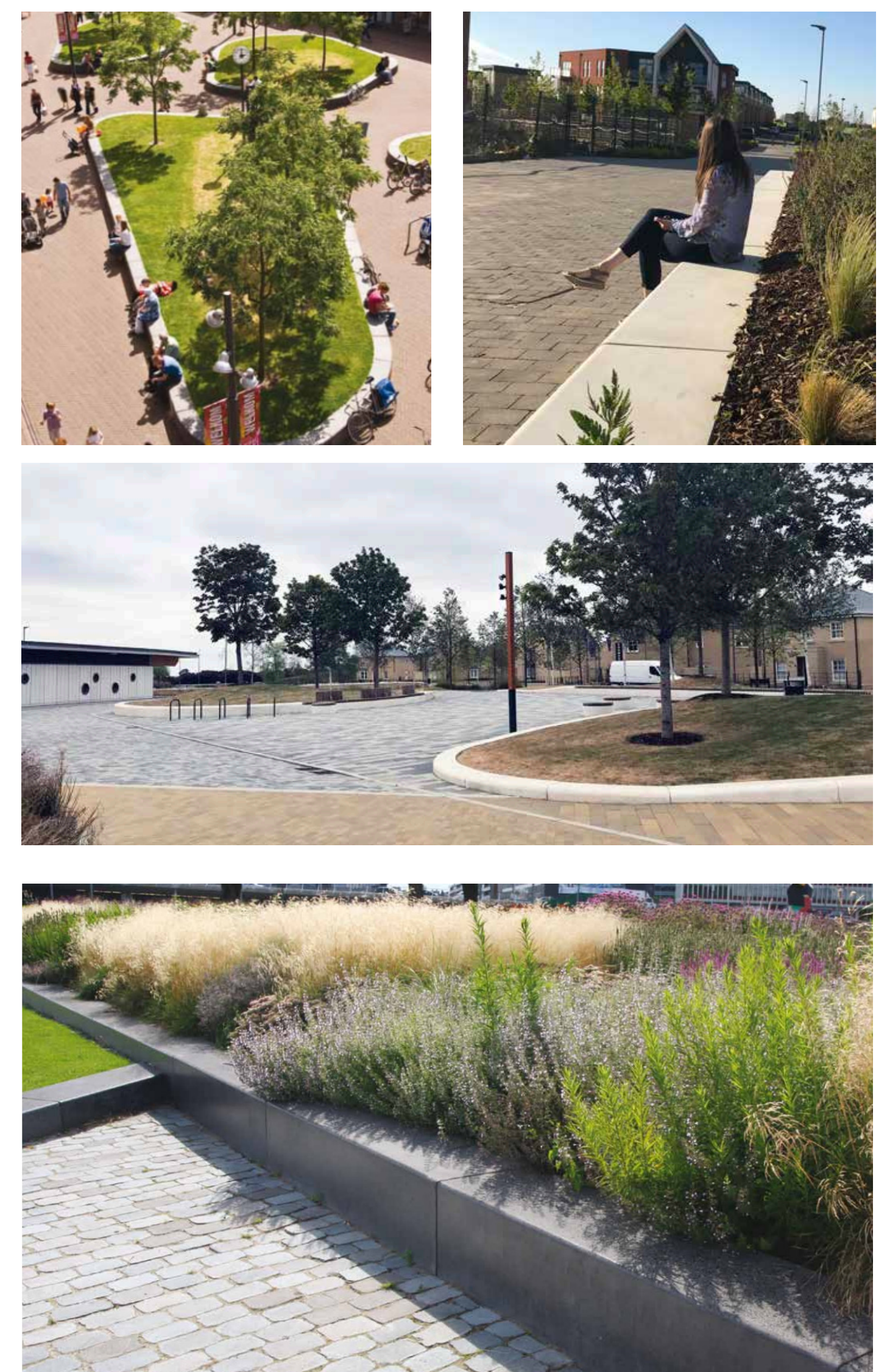
Buildings around the public squares and central spine road are predominantly 2.5 or 3 storeys. There are some 2 storey buildings along the central spine between the squares.

Buildings surrounding the square intended for retail use have increased ground floor ceiling heights (3.6m min) to allow for retail uses.

Building materials

Materials around the public squares are of high quality and balanced in order that they have their own character. Matching colours, materials and detailing will be visible on opposing sides of the squares.

Predominant materials are selected from Primary Palette A, Accent Palette 1.





Character

Story
The Swansley Park neighbourhood area is surrounded on several edges by a range of water features including: the entrance lake, ponds, wetlands and swales. These features combine to create a water-side landscape character throughout the extensive open spaces at the northern, eastern and southern edges of the area.

Swansley Park is closely associated with Lower Cambourne to the east, and shares some of its village characteristics such as local greens within the development area.

This neighbourhood is situated to the north of a woodland belt along the southern boundary. The woodland tree planting, combined with the surrounding informal landscape areas; including the Central Green, the Wetlands, Swansley Lake, Swansley Hill and the greenways - provides a naturalistic design cue, which informs an organic block structure offering a feeling that the urban form has developed over time.

A formal character is applied to the arrival space at Swansley Park Green to provide a striking entrance space on the southern approach. The character of the neighbourhood becomes more informal as the Primary spine road and secondary spine road extend further into the site.

From the south, the spine road enters Cambourne West here and follows the lakeside lawn to form the southern gateway to the site, it then runs along the south of the Central Green before entering the built development. It exists the built area at the north eastern edge of the 'wetlands' before continuing east along the sports fields to Sheepfold Avenue.

The character of each strategic area on the design principles plan (opposite) is explained in more detail later in this section.

Key frontages
Frontages are designed to respond to the primary spine road in a number of different ways:

Key frontages A
These define key spaces and thresholds along the primary spine roads. The design principle is to create strong enclosure and built unity. This is achieved through, predominantly continuous built frontages, linked at first floor level (with some linked by garages).

Gaps are only provided for access to streets stemming from the spine roads. Buildings within linked rows share common characteristics (such as architectural form, massing, materials, detailing, and roofline).

Active frontages (fenestration to habitable rooms and entrances) are provided on all public realm faces. Architectural features such as bay windows, gables and balconies are used to add further interest.

Key frontages B
These overlook the majority of the primary road and secondary routes and other key landscape spaces.

Buildings form generally continuous built frontages, providing enclosure to frame streets and key vistas, with some gaps between buildings to create streets that are less formal in character. Frontages have common characteristics to provide a unified street scene, and are designed to be distinctive and characterful to reflect the character of the street or area they front on to.

Active frontages are provided on all public realm faces.

Open space frontage
Buildings form generally broken built frontages, with a higher proportion of gaps between buildings to reflect the more informal character at the periphery of blocks.

Buildings predominantly front onto the open spaces to provide casual surveillance and encourage people to use them. Some rear gardens with high quality boundary walls fronting the open space are included to give the appearance of low density.



Swansley Park Crescent



Suggested built form (page 85 of Design Code)



Illustration of proposals



Building Heights Plan

KEY

Green	2 storey
Pink	2.5 storey
Purple	3 storey

Story

The entrance area acts as an important terminus to views into the development on entry from the south along the central spine. The built form curving along the eastern edge of the area shows off the first homes that are viewed when arriving from the south.

The built form frames the formal yet simplistic Swansley Park Green arrival space, creating a grand setting influenced by formal parkland and estates.

General layout

Continuous enclosure is provided with a regular arrangement of house types. Built form to both sides of the secondary street is balanced in terms of massing and layout to ensure a level of symmetry on each side of the secondary road leading off the central spine. Buildings on both sides use shared architectural forms and motifs.

The entrance area creates a strong built form response to this large and unique open space.

Frontage

The building frontage is designed as a composition with a shared rhythm, style and form. The built form provides a continuous frontage that contains the arrival space. Car ports with upper floor links are used to connect individual houses to create greater enclosure.

Parking and access solutions

Parking is provided in garages set back behind the general building line beneath fly-overs. The formal wall further hides views of parked cars to ensure that parked cars do not dominate the view of this key building frontage.

Marker buildings

Identical, three storey apartment blocks stand either side of the secondary street entrance to act as a gateway into the housing area beyond. The buildings marking the outside ends of the built form act as bookends – bringing the whole composition together.

Building height

Buildings are mostly 2 - 2.5 storeys high. Gateway buildings are 3 storeys high. Buildings used as bookends are 2 storeys high. Taller 2.5 or 3 storey buildings are used as marker buildings.

Building materials

A similar palette of high quality materials is proposed either side of the secondary road in order to provide consistency.

Predominant materials are to be selected from Primary Palette A, Accent Palette 1

Boundary treatments

A unified boundary treatment of walls faced with flint blocks with saddleback coping with sections of vertical railings is used to delineate public and private space and visually link the whole composition.