

Cambridge North Landscape

Appeal Reference: APP/W0530/W/23/3315611

Appellant - Proof of Evidence

9th May 2023

Robert Myers
MA (Cantab), PGDipLA, CMLI, MSGD



Robert Myers Associates
LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTURE

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Appendix - Table of policy requirements

1.0 Introduction

1.1 My name is Robert William Myers, MA (Cantab), PGDipLA, CMLI, MSGD. I am a chartered landscape architect with over 30 years' experience working as a practising landscape architect in the private sector. I hold an MA degree in Geography from Cambridge University and a postgraduate Diploma in Landscape Architecture from Birmingham Polytechnic (now Birmingham City University). I am a chartered member of the Landscape Institute and a member of the Society of Garden Designers.

My background

1.2 I am the creative lead and director of Robert Myers Associates, a practice registered by the Landscape Institute based in Worcestershire. Alongside my studio team, I have built a body of work across the UK and internationally, providing landscape architecture services for institutional, public realm, commercial and residential projects. These include sites of cultural significance and sensitivity. I led the team that created the new public space on the former MoD site at the Duke of York's Square, Kings Road, Chelsea for Cadogan Estates which was followed by further work at Cavalry Square and The Saatchi Gallery. I also designed a new children's garden, The Magic Garden, at Hampton Court Palace, which won a Landscape Institute Award and two awards from the Society of Garden Designers (SGD), including the Grand Award in 2017. I have won 6 Gold medals and The People's Choice Award for my show gardens at The RHS Chelsea Flower Show. I was a member of the Cambridge City Council Design and Conservation Panel from 2017 to 2022. I serve as an RHS Chelsea Flower Show garden judge and teach as a visiting lecturer at the English Gardening School and for the Cambridge Inter-Collegiate Gardens apprenticeship scheme.



Fig.1 Robert Myers

1.3 Significant projects I have been involved with in and around Cambridge include:

- Institutional:
 - New developments for a number of the colleges, including Clare, Girton, King's, Queens', Ridley Hall, Gonville & Caius, St John's, Magdalene and St Edmunds;
 - The Backs 50-year Landscape Strategy;
 - Projects for the University of Cambridge including The Judge Institute and the Department of Materials Science and Metallurgy;
 - Wandlebury Country Park for Cambridge Past, Present and Future; and
 - The Wellcome Trust Genome Campus over a number of phases at Hinxton Hall.
- Local Authority:
 - Landscape masterplans for Cambridge City Council including at Jesus Green, Histon Road Cemetery and Cherry Hinton Hall Park.

- Residential/Mixed Use:
 - Northwest Cambridge (Athena, Eddington);
 - Clay Farm (Virido);
 - Ninewells development, Babraham Road; and
 - Marleigh/Wing on Newmarket Road, Cambridge.
- Commercial:
 - The CB1 development including the residential park, Station Square, various streets and pocket parks and the linear park including 10, 20, 30, and 50/60 Station Road;
 - The Cambridge North development phase 1 including One and Two Cambridge Square;
 - Hyatt Locke Hotel at Eddington;
 - Botanic Place, a BREEAM 'outstanding' office development on Hills Road; and
 - The Cambridge Waste Water Treatment Plant relocation project for Anglian Water.

1.4 These projects have all involved engagement with officers and councillors at Cambridge City Council and South Cambridgeshire District Council, as well as the Design Council and stakeholder groups such as Cambridge Past, Present and Future, The National Trust, Wildlife Trusts, and Camcycle.

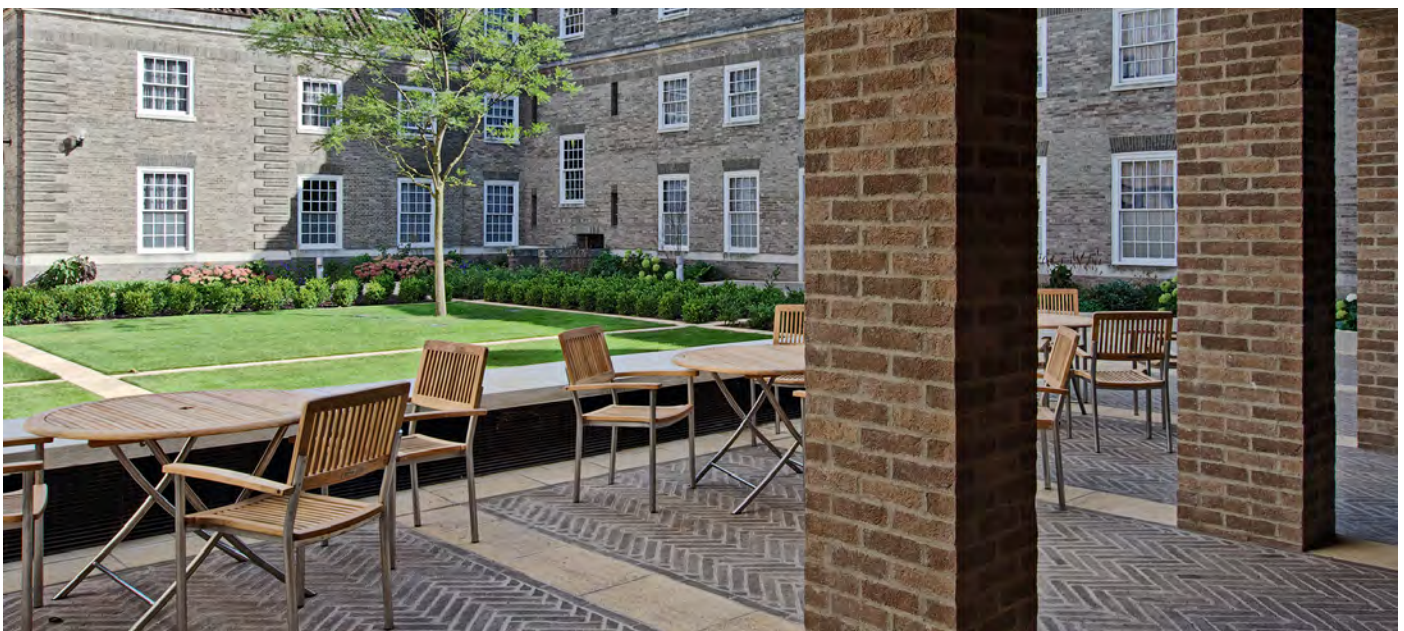


Fig.2 RMA's Lerner Court at Clare College, Cambridge



Fig.3 Cambridge Waste Water Treatment Plant



Fig.4 The Backs, Cambridge



Fig.5 Marleigh development, Cambridge



Fig.6 Calvary Square, Chelsea



Fig.7 Magic Garden, Hampton Court Palace



Fig.8 Saatchi Gallery, Duke of York Square, Chelsea

Background to my evidence

1.5 I have prepared this Proof of Evidence (PoE) on behalf of Brookgate Ltd (the ‘Appellant’) to present evidence relevant to landscape design, in respect of appeal no. APP/W0530/W/32/3315611, for the hybrid residential and commercial application at Cambridge North, which was submitted to South Cambridge District Council and subsequently appealed. The description of development is set out in the Statement of Common Ground between the Appellant and the LPA.

Appointment

1.6 Robert Myers Associates (RMA) was appointed by the Appellant in April 2017 to provide landscape architectural design services. The appointment included an overall landscape strategy for the site, illustrating landscape typologies, visualisations, precedent images and hard and soft material palettes. All landscape design was included as a detailed matter in the planning application, and RMA prepared the details for the hard and soft landscape of the public realm and private garden spaces, including cycle parking, materials selection, planting and street furniture. This included layout plans, typical sections and tree and other planting layouts. RMA had previously been appointed by Brookgate to provide landscape architectural services for the planning applications and construction of the office building at One Cambridge Square (currently under final construction at the time of writing) and the hotel at Two Cambridge Square (now completed).

Scope of Evidence

1.7 This PoE addresses the landscape strategy, including the design and detailing of public and private external spaces. Evidence is set out demonstrating how the landscape proposals will deliver well-designed, high quality public spaces

with a distinctive sense of place that complement the landscape character of the site and its context. Through this, the evidence addresses issues raised by the local authority as reasons for refusal. As an appendix, the evidence also includes how the proposals satisfy national and local planning policy.

1.8 This PoE should be read alongside associated proofs of evidence prepared on behalf of the Appellant, in particular those associated with masterplanning, transport, ecology and drainage. Note that landscape matters relating to massing and visual amenity are addressed by others.

1.9 This PoE should also be read in conjunction with the design Statement of Common Ground (SoCG) agreed with the local authority.

2.0 The site & its context

- 2.1 The appeal site and its surroundings are described in the SoCG. To avoid unnecessary duplication, this evidence discusses only those elements relevant to landscape.
- 2.2 Cambridge North sits within a varied urban context between the railway line to the east and the Bramblefields Local Nature Reserve, Nuffield Road Allotments, and Chesterton area residential neighbourhoods to the west. Offices and business uses sit adjacent to the site to the north; to the south are the recently constructed office, Novotel hotel and the new urban square at Cambridge Square in front of the station. The site is a transitional, edge of city space, positioned between the residential neighbourhoods and semi-natural open spaces to the west and the low-lying grasslands, river corridor and wider fens to the east.

- 2.3 Existing green infrastructure in the immediate context includes a green 'finger' of planting associated with the First Public Drain along Cowley Road, and a linear tree belt along the Guided Busway to the west, separating the site visually from the allotments. In the northern part of the site, colonising scrubby trees and derelict elements of former railway infrastructure are set within an 'open mosaic habitat' of wildflowers (OMH). Other publicly accessible open spaces nearby include Milton Country Park, approximately 0.74 km to the north and Ditton Meadows, approximately 0.58 km to the south.

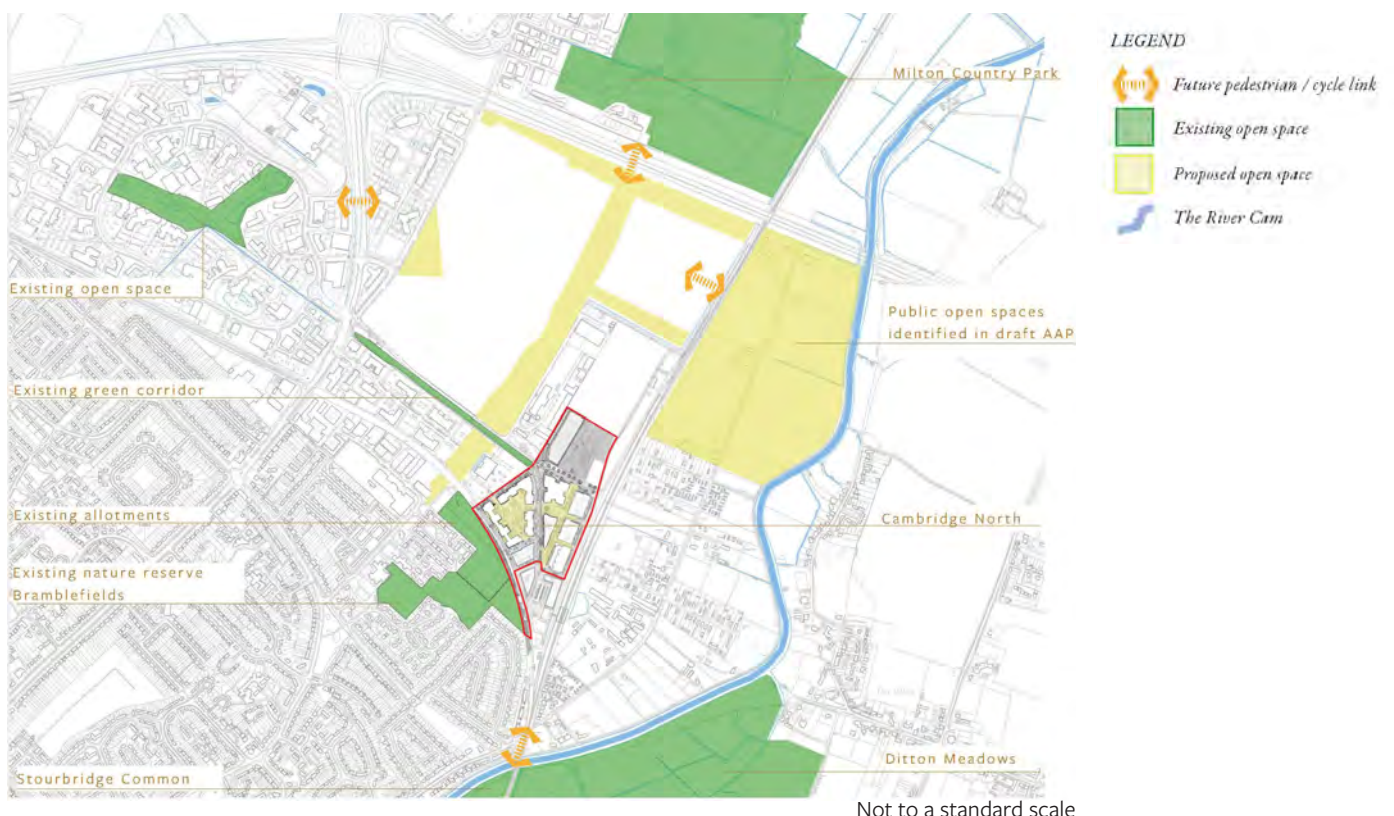


Fig.9 Landscape Context

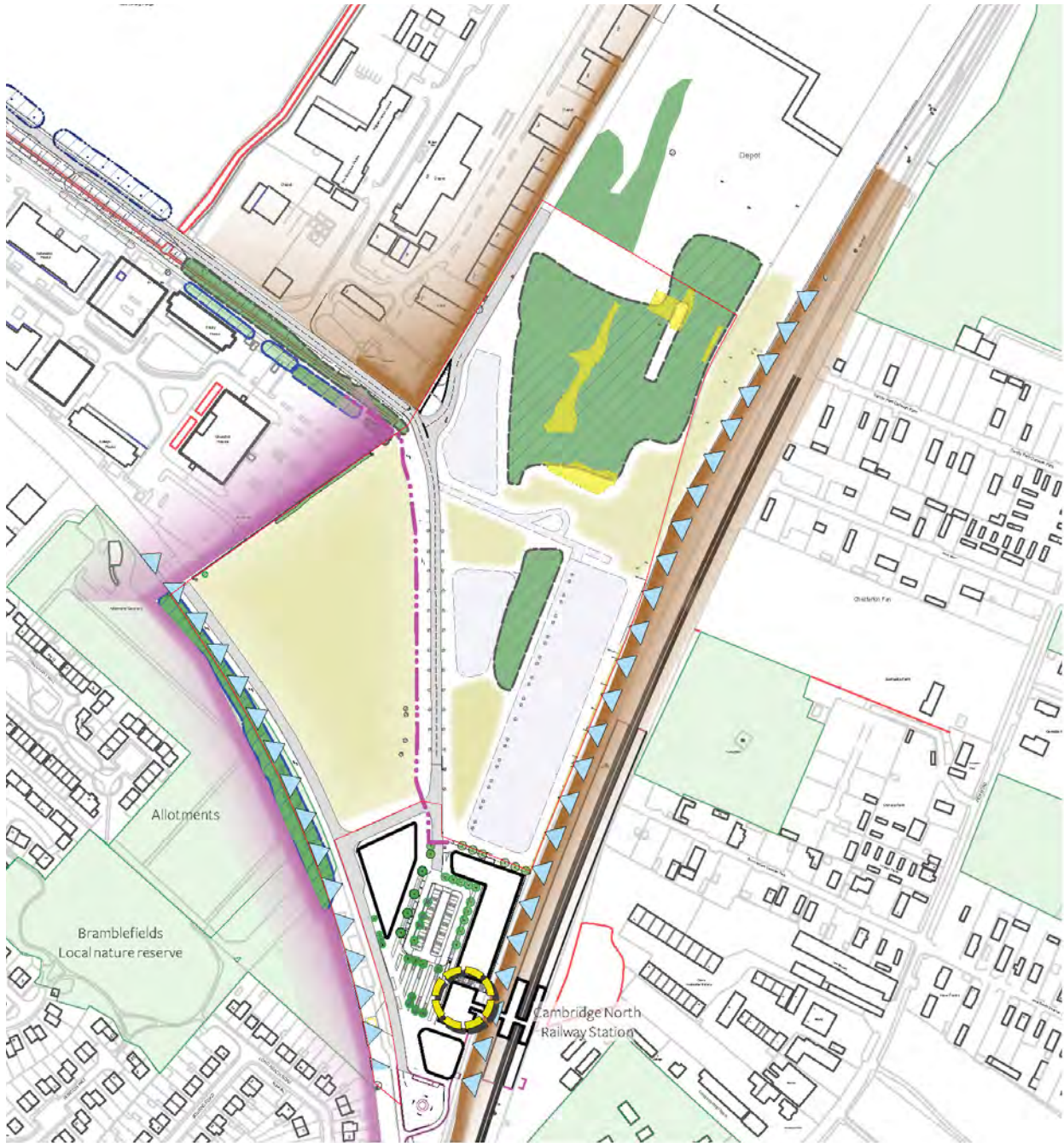


Fig.10 Constraints and opportunities

Not to a standard scale

KEY

- | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
|  | Site boundary |  | Existing Tree vegetation limiting or filtering view |
|  | Edge impermeable to movement |  | Existing scrub and grassland |
|  | Character: Infrastructure/Industrial edge |  | Existing Open Mosaic Habitat |
|  | Character: residential and office park edge | Tree survey | |
|  | Route of Multi-utility trench |  | Existing Category B trees |
|  | Transportation hub |  | Existing Category C trees |
|  | Existing temporary car parking | | |
|  | Existing open spaces | | |

2.4 The appeal site has always had an urban and industrial character, created historically by the railway infrastructure and today by the presence of the existing roads, surrounding industrial and office uses, and the recently-constructed station square and large 428-space surface station car park.

2.5 Key constraints on the development of the site are related to its layout as former railway sidings and its surrounding road infrastructure which create an awkward tapered shape that constrains opportunities for laying out public space. The site's boundaries to the east and west, funnelling space and routes southwards towards the station, are generally impermeable, and therefore the development cannot easily connect into the surrounding neighbourhoods. However, the strong east-west division of the site by Milton Avenue presents an opportunity to define the separate commercial and residential districts.



Fig.11 Site photo: Open Mosaic Habitat on eastern boundary



Fig.12 Site photo: Derelict railway infrastructure



Fig.13 Novotel at Station Square

3.0 Planning process & design evolution

Background

- 3.1 The landscape design vision and strategy were initially developed by RMA in 2017 and 2018 in conjunction with Formation Architects as the masterplanners. At this time the scheme was almost entirely residential and with the surface car park retained parallel to the railway tracks. By November 2019 the site had extended to include office development on the site of the surface car park and a maths school and temporary car park to the north of Cowley Road. The overall masterplan strategy evolved in 2020 with the appointment of Acme Architects as masterplanners. Residential dwellings and public realm were retained around a courtyard to the west of Milton Avenue, closest to the existing Chesterton neighbourhood, but with vehicles removed and a larger central garden space. Commercial buildings and laboratories, and a large public square, were positioned to the east of Milton Avenue, closest to the existing railway line. The temporary car park was replaced by a multi-storey 'mobility hub' to the south of the proposed labs along the railway line.
- 3.2 Whilst the constraint of Milton Avenue as a dividing element remained, the focus on car movements and parking was reduced and the key public open spaces were prioritised as places for residents and users to enjoy and move through on foot or cycle. On the western side the residential buildings were given a more immediate and direct connection to the central open space (now known as Chesterton Gardens); and on the eastern side the key 'urban square' (now known as Chesterton Square) was defined as a place for all users. Attenuation requirements inspired a north-south aligned swale, around which a linear piece of public realm
- was designed (now known as Station Row). The transitional building between One Cambridge Square and the residential quarter (1, Milton Avenue) was stepped down with planted terraces added to the upper floors.
- 3.3 The northern area of the site (now known as the 'Wild Park') was brought in as an important additional area of the masterplan with a different character, which will serve as a public open space, a setting for play for older children and an opportunity for additional biodiversity enhancements arranged around an important natural SUDs pond feature. This park is earmarked as public open space in the long-term masterplan for the area north of Cowley Road, so its future as a public space is secure.
- 3.4 The overall landscape design intent was set out by Acme Architects in their masterplanning strategy, following historical landscape analysis and precedent studies. They proposed a network of high-quality spaces in the public realm, with character and design detailing influenced by references to the site's former railway use. As the site and its ecology became more familiar to the team, the design was tailored to further reference its existing character. These design guidelines steered decision making from the outset and the proposed materiality and character of the site and have remained consistent through the various design iterations.

Engagement on Landscape Matters

- 3.5 Design development has progressed through an iterative process, advanced over 5 years from an initial pre-app in June 2017, through 16 pre-application meetings and 24 design workshops with Greater Cambridge Planning Service (GCPS) officers, and these were well documented through a red/amber/green light feedback form. Following each pre-application meeting, the design team amended the design and responded with due diligence, under the practical constraints presented by the site. The majority of responses relevant to landscape were focussed on building layout and massing during these meetings, though there was also helpful feedback on the tree strategy and optimising tree growing and rooting space. The landscape officer was engaged in all discussions, with much discussion around the design of Station Row (known at the time as Swale Street) and the successful co-mingling of pedestrians, cyclists and SUDs.
- 3.6 Feedback from both GCPS and Cambridge Past Present and Future resulted in landscape design changes to the eastern boundary of the site, including a widening of the street section to create a more walkable 'place', and the addition of a generous tree belt with large-growing tree species to soften the built form when viewed from the east and define the boundary of the site along the railway line.
- 3.7 Camcycle was engaged extensively through online meetings, with multiple changes to the landscape layout and detail regarding access, parking and movement. The design changed positively as a result of these exchanges.
- 3.8 Feedback from the GCPS Disability Consultative Panel resulted in positive changes to street furniture and layout to create an uncluttered and legible street scene, with more sitting opportunities where the less able can rest.
- 3.9 Comments received from two public consultations through 2021 and 2022 also provided input to the later stages of the design process. These included positive reactions to the Wild Park, Chesterton Gardens and the water feature in Chesterton Square.

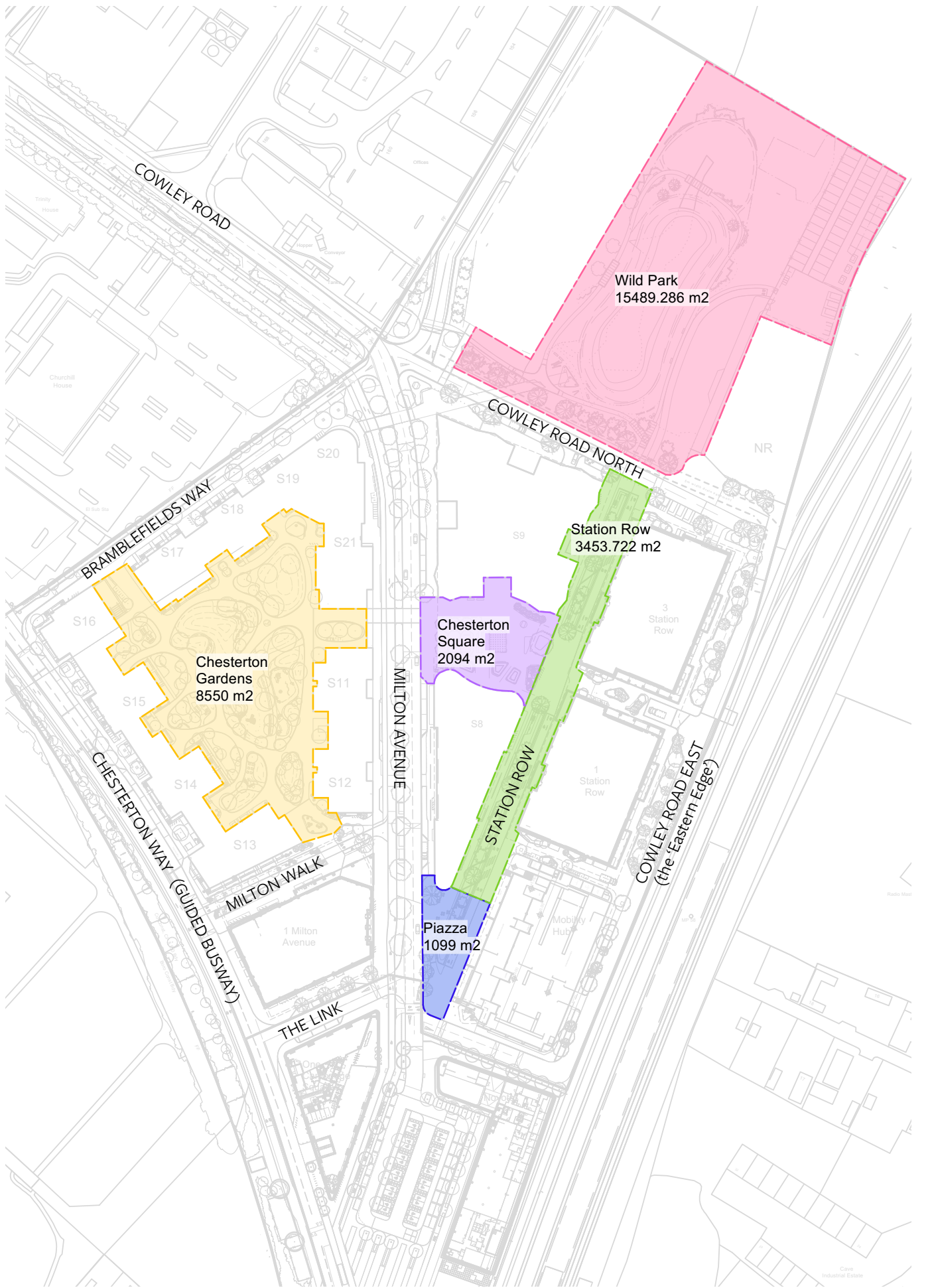


Fig.14 Street and Open Space map

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Not to a standard scale

4.0 The proposals

Policy

- 4.1 The landscape design was developed in line with the relevant local plan policy and SPD documents. Evidence of this compliance is set out in tabular form in the Appendix.

Design Quality

- 4.2 The landscape proposals at Cambridge North present a high-quality design which will result in a well-designed, coherent sense of place that contributes to distinctiveness. Designed with high-quality and robust materials, they provide a flexible framework of green spaces that serve both as vibrant, active, social spaces and as verdant, restful places for relaxation and exploration. The spaces are visually and physically linked, inviting residents, office/lab workers and commuting passers-by to take advantage of the amenities and open spaces across the site. The proposals will create a distinct sense of place by drawing inspiration from the existing site and its environs, including: the position of the site adjacent to Cambridge North Station; the history of Chesterton Sidings; the existing mosaic of biodiverse vegetation and its ecological benefits; and the wider context in terms of character and visual amenity.

- 4.3 The successful design of the landscape and open space has been guided by the following overarching principles:

- To create a well-considered arrangement of buildings set within a network of external spaces of different scales and characters;

- To put green space at the heart of the development, that creates a unified amenity for residents and office workers alike;
- Create legible links to foster intuitive wayfinding through the masterplan for vehicles, cycles and pedestrians;
- To maximise the use of roof spaces to create integrated, biodiverse rooftop gardens for residential amenity, and with allotments and outdoor working spaces;
- Create a low-speed road environment with legible surfaces and a high-quality pedestrian realm; and
- Create vistas using built form and planting to assist in place-making and orientation.

- 4.4 A robust green and blue infrastructure strategy has been adopted, based on the following design principles:

- Large-growing species selected wherever space allows, including avenue trees such as London Plane;
- Tree arrangement and species choices to reflect the size and character of each space;
- In the primary square, trees used as structural elements;
- In the residential garden, trees combine with low planting and earth mounds to provide some areas of semi-enclosure and shade;
- Hedging used to create 'defensible' ground floor private external space;
- Planting selections that consider climate change, water use and plant health;
- An Open Mosaic 'mimic' approach, through the use of grasses and naturalistic matrix planting, set amongst a network of trees and elegant shrubs;
- SUDs strategies integrated with the planting scheme and made explicit through elements such as the visible swale; and

Distinctive Character

- All tree pits designed with sufficient rooting volume to ensure sustainable long-term growth, in line with the Green Blue Urban 'Soil Volume Guide' using underground structural root cells where necessary beneath paving.

4.5 A distinctive character for the development has been drawn from the former railway use of the site, the remaining railway infrastructure and the rich OMH that has arisen on the derelict site, as well as the distinct landscape of Cambridge and the Fens, including drainage ditches and brooks. This will respect the 'memory' of the site's past and set up a strong character of buildings set in an informal, slightly wild and biodiverse landscape. There will be a strong character derived from the creative tension between the architectural urban built forms and the wilder, 'open mosaic mimic' planting that will surround it, which is very particular to this place and its history.

4.6 This character manifests itself in the design as follows:

- A simple palette of robust materials reflecting the colours and textures of the city of Cambridge;
- SUDs elements such as the swale in Station Row reminiscent of the ditches and drains in the City and Fens;
- Distinctiveness and sense of place, through material references to historic use as railway sidings, including characterful, 'industrial' textures, such as timber and corten steel;
- In places, a 'mosaic' of soft paving colour variation, evoking the mosaic seedbed of the site's biodiversity;
- Paving choices, pattern and colour used to aid legibility;
- Furniture to compliment the language of the hard landscape materiality: corten and timber, stone and textured or polished concrete;
- Simple forms, often linear and horizontal, reminiscent of lines of train wagons or sidings; and
- Overall, a high quality and welcoming public realm.

COMMERCIAL CHARACTER



Fig.17 Industrial character: textural corten steel raised planters



Fig.19 Paving bands referencing railway lines, creating a journey around the square

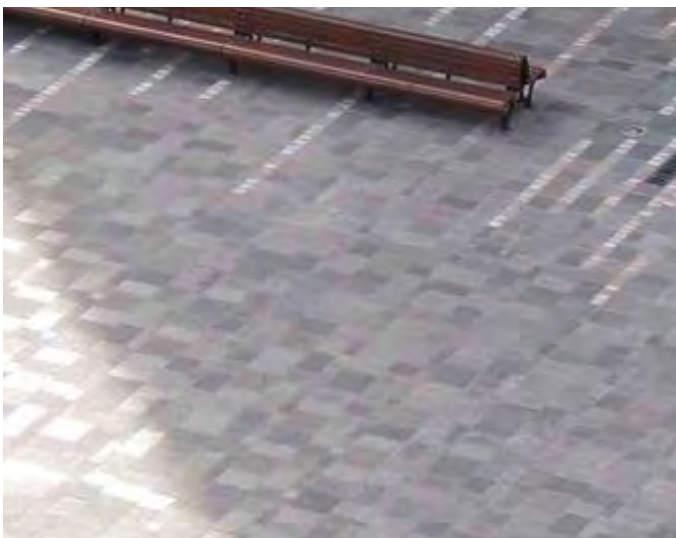


Fig.15 Paving character: a mosaic references the OMH seed bank



Fig.18 Industrial character: horizontal, timber seating platforms mimic railway sleepers



Fig.16 Hard surfaces and industrial textures all overlaid with exuberant 'OMH-mimic' planting



Fig.20 Linear SUDs feature with steps for up-close encounters

RESIDENTIAL CHARACTER



Fig.21 Verdant planting and lawn in curvilinear beds



Fig.24 Informal character: socialising encouraged



Fig.22 Timber planks crossing rain gardens



Fig.25 Seating, paths and trees soften the residential gardens

WILD PARK CHARACTER



Fig.23 Informal gravel paths and biodiverse OMH



Fig.26 Timber adjacent to OMH; re-use rail features if possible

Play

4.7 The inclusion of play is a key part of the design; this is most evident in the residential Chesterton Gardens, but accompanied children are also engaged through play across the wider site, such as in the Wild Park, and the swale and jet fountains of the commercial side of the development. The play design principles are as follows:

- Integrate play with social spaces, so that there is an informal play 'as you go' strategy. Equipped play areas contain plenty of seating for carers and parents;
- Natural play – landform, stones, logs and 'found' pieces - is part of the residential garden 'scene' and is easily assimilated as seating for young people and adults; and
- Combine play, learning and exploration through ecologically rich and 'wild' landscapes, such as the open space at the Wild Park.

4.8 Provision of open space quantities, including play, is addressed in later sections of this PoE.



Fig.27 Play equipment in segregated space



Fig.28 Jet fountain play



Fig.29 Natural Play elements

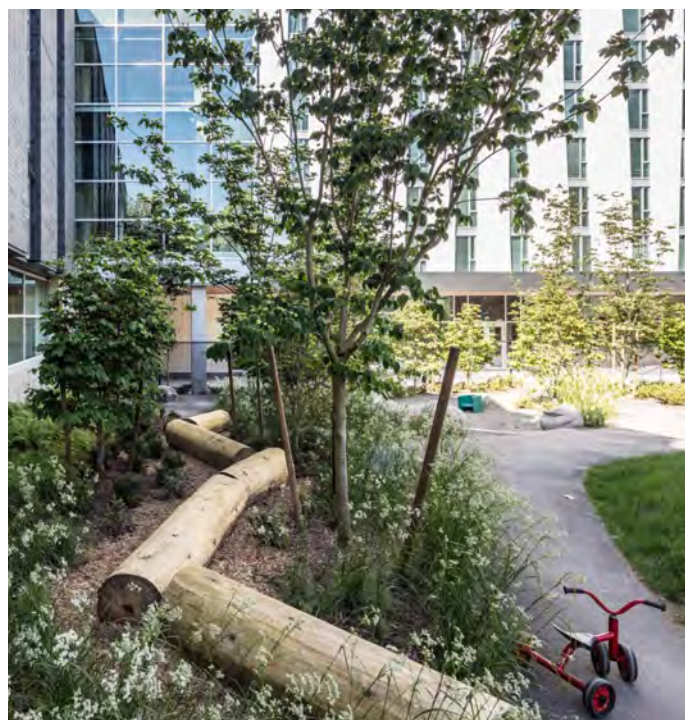


Fig.30 'Play as you go' integrated/doorstep play



Not to a standard scale

Fig.31 Landscape Masterplan

National Standards for design

- 4.9 The government’s National Design Guide ¹ sets out the characteristics of well-designed places and demonstrates what good design means in practice. These characteristics are based on Chapter 12 of the National Planning Policy Framework. (NPPF) Those items relevant to landscape design are set out in tabular form below, together with evidence showing how these standards are being achieved in the Cambridge North landscape design:

| Section N. Nature | How appeal scheme has met the standard |
|---|---|
| Well-designed places: | <i>Refer to landscape masterplan CD231 630_01(MP)001 Landscape Masterplan</i> |
| <p>- Integrate existing, and incorporate new natural features into a multifunctional network that supports quality of place, biodiversity and water management, and addresses climate change mitigation and resilience;</p> | <p>Existing features: The Open Mosaic Habitat (OMH) is a rich ecological resource on site and a key feature that the proposals retain and celebrate. Where the seedbed is being removed, it is translocated onto buildings’ biodiverse roofs. Where the seedbed is retained in the Wild Park, it is enhanced with similar seeded species, to create a small ecological park with rich diversity for invertebrates and habitat creation. Integrating paths through this is beneficial to both users and wildlife as this ecology thrives on some disturbance.</p> <p>New natural feature: The new swale feature that is centred on Station Row is designed for rainwater attenuation, and also creates new wet planting habitat as well as an attractive and floriferous space shared with users.</p> <p>New natural feature: Similarly, rain gardens within Chesterton Gardens will function as water attenuation features but also an important wildlife habitat.</p> <p>New natural feature: a pond with permanent water in the Wild Park, which is surrounded by a walking route.</p> <p>New natural feature: Chesterton Gardens forms a large and verdant green public space with extensive planting integrated with paths and seating areas.</p> <p>New natural feature: Significant new tree planting across the site will incorporate a diverse range of robust species selected for climate resilience, as well as providing habitat and food sources for wildlife.</p> |
| <p>- Prioritise nature so that diverse ecosystems can flourish to ensure a healthy natural environment that supports and enhances biodiversity;</p> | <p>As discussed above, the biodiverse OMH is retained or mimicked, both in seeding for the wild park and in the nectar rich and floriferous planting throughout the public spaces.</p> <p>The landscape scheme results in a large biodiversity net gain and works with the grain of the green infrastructure strategy, providing green corridors to the west and to the north.</p> |

¹ National Design Guide, Ministry of Housing Communities and Local Government, 2021

| | |
|---|--|
| <p>- Provide attractive open spaces in locations that are easy to access, with activities for all to enjoy, such as play, food production, recreation and sport, so as to encourage physical activity and promote health, well-being and social inclusion</p> | <p>Activities and physical activity include walking around the Wild Park pond for office workers (paths and log trails), cooling off in the jet fountains, a small informal stage in the Chesterton Gardens, children's play in both formal play areas and informal play areas (sloping lawns, natural play on logs, boulders etc).</p> <p>Food growing is provided in allotments in the Wild Park, small areas of community growing on the ground floor, and a larger hub of community growing on the corner of the residential rooftop.</p> |
| <p>Section P. Public Spaces</p> <p>Well designed places:</p> | <p>How appeal scheme has met the standard</p> <p><i>Refer to landscape masterplan CD2.31 630_01(MP)001 Landscape Masterplan</i></p> |
| <p>-Include well-located public spaces that support a wide variety of activities and encourage social interaction, to promote health, well-being, social and civic inclusion</p> | <p>Chesterton Gardens, The Wild Park, Chesterton Square and Station Row are well-located close to relevant buildings, but separated from vehicular traffic and easily reached from entrances and exits.</p> <p>Social interaction is encouraged through numerous seating opportunities in different places. These occur in both sunny and shady places, along bridges and movement routes, in niches and in more open spaces, near play areas, on sloping lawns and raised kerbs, and also in stepped seating along the swale in Station Row. There are also external working spaces on commercial/lab rooftops and social spaces with seating on the residential rooftops.</p> <p>Chesterton Square incorporates flexible space for events and kiosks/ food trucks.</p> <p>The Wild Park offers a close-up experience of semi-natural spaces, as well as opportunities for exercise and enhancing wellbeing, with log trails and a circular walk around the pond.</p> |

-Have a hierarchy of spaces that range from large and strategic to small and local spaces, including parks, squares, greens and pocket parks;

A wide hierarchy is offered across the site:

Small:

- Private terraces on the ground floor;
- West facing courtyards on the west entrances of the residential buildings;
- Pocket parks between labs, near cycle stores with seating and raised beds;

Medium:

- The Piazza – a sunny area at the southern end of the widened swale, with bench seating and space for moveable furniture
- Station Row – a linear park centred on a swale with stepped seating, a cycle lane and multiple places for seating along the swale and bridges;

Large:

- Chesterton Gardens – verdant residential gardens with lawns, varied tree planting, seating and play spaces;
- Chesterton Square – flexible urban plaza with a tree grove, jet fountains, and limited planting in raised beds with seating. The LPA comments that the space lacks a clear hierarchy and has a poor relationship with the buildings. On the contrary: there is a strong organising principal, a central east-west axis comprising a substantial tree ‘bosque’ and buffer to the road, playful and cooling water jets as a focus for the space, and a large growing specimen shade tree in the sunny part of the space. The space and its shapes and elements respond to movement and access, the rhythms of the proposed buildings, and the connection with the residential quarter (which the LPA states that they support) and labs. In regards to cohesion with the proposed buildings, it is assumed that we can confirm the fine detail of the layout and materiality through conditions or other planning mechanisms once the full details of S8 and S9 are further developed.
- Wild Park – a pond and ‘rough grass’/wildflower area showcasing the rich diversity of Open Mosaic species, with tree planting, paths and timber ‘bridges’ over the OM species; and
- Milton Avenue – the avenue itself has extensive Open Mosaic ‘mimic’ species, seating, large tree planting, and will be a pleasant place for pedestrian and cycle movement, along with retail shopping.

| | |
|---|--|
| <p>-Have public spaces that feel safe, secure and attractive for all to use; and</p> | <p>All social spaces are separated from vehicular traffic. Crossings are generally wide and legible (details of raised tables, controlled crossings and materials can be coordinated through conditions).</p> <p>Chesterton Gardens (residential) are quite enclosed, traffic free and fully overlooked.</p> <p>Active frontages are present along all building facades that are facing public spaces, refer to Masterplanning drawings for uses.</p> <p>Commercial public realm areas have potential for weekend and evening uses by different user groups.</p> <p>The Wild Park, whilst only overlooked on Cowley Road and from the Allotments, is likely to be busy during the week with office staff out for walks, residential dog walkers, and attended children using the paths and logs trails.</p> <p>Cyclist safety has been reviewed extensively with Camcycle , with multiple minor design iterations to improve legibility and safety. Pedestrian safety has been raised by the LPA in particular in relation to crossings and the materials used to define function; these can be coordinated with transport/highways and addressed through conditions.</p> <p>In regards to accessibility and inclusiveness, the site is relatively level and this facilitates movement for those with accessibility issues.</p> <p>All public realm and furniture has been reviewed by the accessibility consultant as well as the GCPS Disability Consultative Panel. Comfortable choices include timber seating, frequently sited, with arm-rests and backs, and a variety of materials provided for a range of users. Paving colours and materials have also been reviewed.</p> |
| <p>- Have trees and other planting within public spaces for people to enjoy, whilst also providing shading and air quality and climate change mitigation.</p> | <p>Tree planting is extensive across the site, with the following proposed:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● 85 Large species trees ● 143 Medium species trees ● 147 small species trees <p>Trees are both arranged in broad avenues, in natural clusters and as specimen single trees and therefore there is a wide variety and degree of shady and sunny spaces.</p> <p>The wide variety of tree species is part of climate-proofing to reduce risk due to disease and drought.</p> |

4.10 Overall, all standards for the relevant characteristics for ‘well designed spaces’ as set out by the National Design Guide have been met in full in the landscape proposals for Cambridge North.



Fig.32 Chesterton Gardens



Not to a standard scale



Fig.33 Chesterton Square

0 20 M

Not to a standard scale



Fig.34 Chesterton Square - paving references railway tracks



Fig.35 'Bosque' of trees to western side of space.

Residential environment

4.11 The Sunlight and Daylight Assessment ², produced by Arup as part of the EIA, demonstrates that Chesterton Gardens will significantly exceed the BRE guidelines which require that at least 50% of the space should receive more than 2 hours of sunlight per day on 21st March (94.9% of the space will meet the requirement here). It is therefore deemed to be a suitable space for a residential garden in terms of light, and the enclosed nature of the space also creates a sheltered, safe and quiet environment for recreation and play.

The Eastern edge

4.12 A significant amount of time has been spent on the development of the landscape design of the eastern edge of the site, between the laboratory buildings, mobility hub and the railway tracks. Here, encouraged by the local authority, the buildings have been pushed back to create a wide space for tree planting that will create a green edge to the development when viewed from the east and a more broken view of the buildings. The trees are planted as two overlapping rows, with large plane trees (an excellent pollution-absorbing species for urban planting) in scale with the buildings and potentially reaching approximately 12m after 15 years if planted as 6m tall specimens (and possibly 30-40m in 100 years, the lifespan of the development). The planting also includes native alders in the rain garden section at the front and Amelanchier as an underplanted small tree at the lower level. Tree pit rooting volumes have been designed in line with the Green Blue Urban 'Soil Volume Guide' using underground root cells where necessary beneath paving.

² Lighting Assessment, Appendix 13.1 of the Environmental Impact Assessment; Arup, May 2022



Fig.36 Eastern edge

Not to a standard scale

Proposed tree cluster, to include London Plane and Alder, planted at semi-mature size, and multi-stem Amelanchier

Railway line

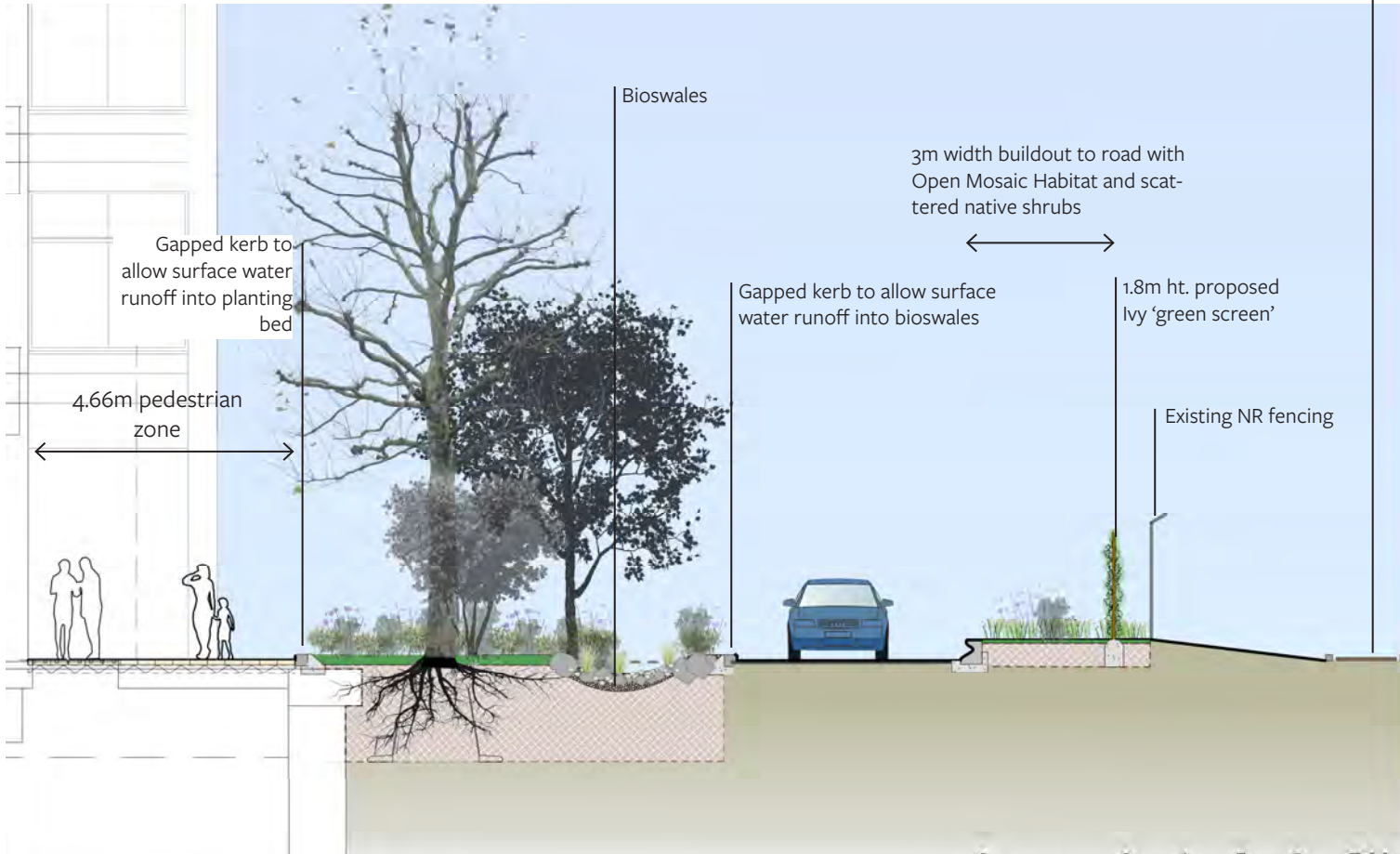


Fig.37 Eastern edge - section

0 1 2 3 4 5 M

Not to a standard scale

5.0 Open space provision

SCDC Standards

5.1 The standards for the calculation of Open Space are set by the South Cambridge District Council's Open Space SPD³. This document sets out the calculations required to determine the number of expected occupants for a new development and then sets parameters for the provision of open space based on that number, including informal open space, allotments and formal and informal play.

It was determined through these calculations that the open space should meet the following minimum standards:

- 0.270 ha Informal Open Space
- 0.170 ha Informal Children's Play
- 0.170 ha Formal Equipped Children's play; and
- 0.270 ha Allotments

Informal Open Space

5.2 The total offering of open space well exceeds the requirement, at 2.005 ha Open Space. Note that this figure does not include those high-quality public realm spaces included as part of the commercial development. The LPA has stated that it is satisfied that Chesterton Gardens alone (at 0.531 ha) satisfies the residential informal space requirement (which is 0.270 ha for approximately 678 occupants).

5.3 The addition of the Wild Park as informal open space was designed into the proposals when the attenuation pond, enlarged during the design process to meet updated climate requirements, became a compelling opportunity for informal recreation for residential and public users, and the enhancement of the rich ecological plant community (OMH) that currently exists there.

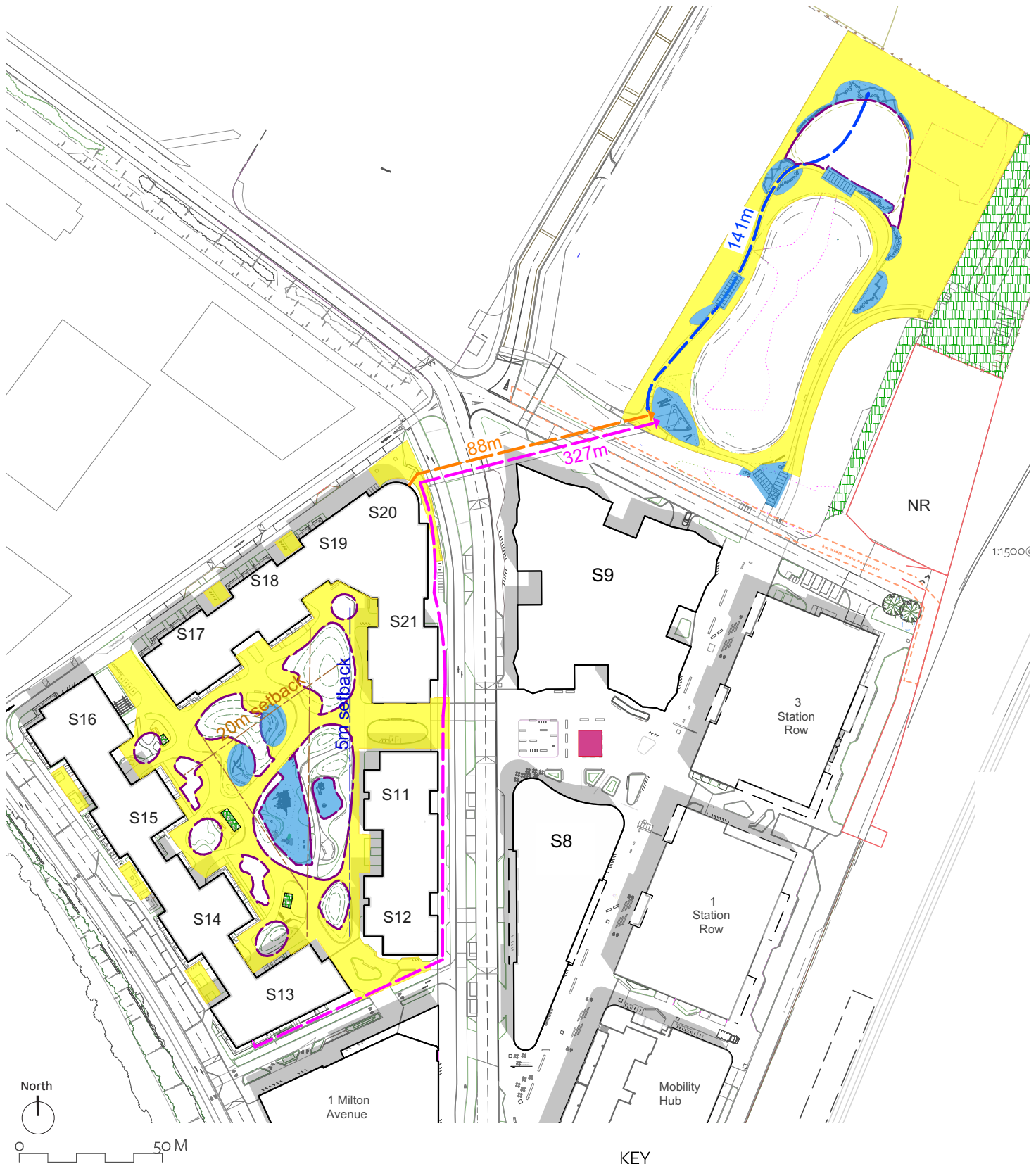
5.4 The Wild Park forms an ecological, recreational and educational opportunity, which celebrates the Open Mosaic Habitat (OMH). OMH, which is a short-lived plant community if not actively managed to mimic disturbance and prevent the development of a climax community of woody plants, is preserved under this proposal. The long-term retention of the pond sets up a focal feature in a future amenity-focused park if development should progress to the north. If further development occurs as envisaged by the AAP, then OMH seedbank would be physically moved to the brown roofs of the new development (and thus also preserved through disturbance). Ecologically-focused parks on brownfield sites can be an exemplary asset and Cambridge is an appropriate place to promote and celebrate this small but rich and 'fleeting' ecosystem on a former railyard site. (Any future relocation of the Wild Park OMH habitat would be carefully judged at the time and subject to a fresh application to be determined on its own merits.)

5.5 It should be noted that the total area of informal open space is 1.158 ha, when the Wild Park and amenity roof gardens are taken into account. This generous overprovision is a reflection of the development's commitment to open space provision and an understanding of the importance of green spaces in cities more generally.

Food Growing Opportunities

5.6 Local and accessible food growing has shown to be an activity with social, mental and ecological benefits. The proposed allotments alone comprise 0.270 ha, with additional community growing space of 0.059ha on both the residential roof and ground floor of Chesterton Gardens. These with 0.057ha meanwhile raised beds create a total of 0.386 ha food-growing provision, which exceeds the policy requirements.

³ Open Space in New Developments SPD, South Cambridge District Council, Jan 2009.







KEY

| | |
|---|--|
| | Informal open space |
| | Formal (equipped) play |
| | Doorstep play |
| | Integrated community growing/ Allotments |
| | Informal children's play areas |
| | Jet fountains |

Fig.38 Play Provision

OPEN SPACE PROVISION: SCDC

REQUIRED FOR 678
OCCUPANTS
BY SCDC***

| KEY | TYPOLOGY | | | | | REQUIRED FOR 678 OCCUPANTS BY SCDC*** |
|---|--|---------------------------|-------------------|-----------------------|--------------------------------|---|
|  | PROPOSED INFORMAL OPEN SPACE | | | | | |
| | WILD PARK 0.513 ha | CHESTON GDNS 0.531 ha | ROOF 0.114 ha* | TOTAL 1.158 ha | | 0.270 ha |
|  | PROPOSED INFORMAL CHILDREN'S PLAY SPACE | | | | | |
| | WILD PARK 0.104 ha | CHESTON GDNS 0.187 ha | ROOF 0 | TOTAL 0.291 ha | | 0.170 ha** |
|  | PROPOSED PLAY: FORMAL EQUIPPED SPACE | | | | | |
| | WILD PARK 0.096 ha | CHESTON GDNS 0.074 ha | ROOF 0 | TOTAL 0.170 ha | | 0.170 ha** |
|  | PROPOSED COMMUNITY GARDEN | | | | | |
| | WILD PARK 0.270 ha | CHESTON GDNS 0.005 ha* | ROOF 0.054 ha* | MEANWHILE 0.057 ha | TOTAL 0.386 ha | 0.270 ha |
| | 0.983 | 0.797 | 0.168 | 0.057 | TOTAL POS: 2.005 ha | 0.880 ha |

* Not publicly accessible

** One bedroom and studio dwellings do not require play provision, therefore play requirements are based on 429 occupant

*** According to South Cambridge District Council standards. Total required excludes Outdoor Sport Provision

EXPECTED OCCUPANCY

| Proposed Occupancy | | | | |
|---|------------|-------------|--|--|
| Size of Dwelling | No. Units | Population* | | |
| Studio 7 | 12 | 12 | | |
| 1 Bedroom | 177 | 237 | | |
| 2 Bedrooms 60_83_77 | 213 | 373 | | |
| 3 Bedrooms 11_12 | 23 | 56 | | |
| Total (m2) | 413 | 678 | | |
| *Assumes an occupancy rate of 1 bedroom: 1.34 people; 2 bedroom: 1.75 people and 3 bedrooms: 2.42 people. | | | | |

Fig.39 Open Space Provision Table

Play

- 5.7 Play provision is divided between Chesterton Gardens and the Wild Park and totals 0.461 ha, significantly exceeding the 0.340 ha required by policy, and complying in each category of open space. The LPA has objected to the division of equipped play area into two spaces. (See Fig. 38 and also drawing 630_01 (MP)021 Play Provision.)
- 5.8 The scheme proposes two areas of equipped play: one within Chesterton Gardens, the residential open space which is largely enclosed by the three 'arms' of the residential buildings; and a second area of extensive natural elements which follow paths around the Wild Park.
- 5.9 Within Chesterton Gardens many varied types of play experience will be available, including a LEAP (Local Equipped Area of Play) of 400m², and a LAP (Local Area of Play, for younger children) of 100m², with an additional area of interactive equipment integrated into the grassy mounds. The mounds and path network will also provide opportunities for informal, imaginative play. These three areas in Chesterton Gardens total 0.074ha. Informal areas of play, comprising open lawns, also spread across Chesterton Gardens and total 0.187ha. Together the informal and formal play areas in Chesterton Gardens equal 0.261 ha. It should be noted that play (informal and formal) overall occupies 28% of the total of Chesterton Gardens, though the informal areas are also likely to be used by adults as well.
- 5.10 The potential for additional play space within Chesterton Gardens is partly limited by the constraints of the triangular shape of the site, due to the existing Guided Busway and Cowley Road. Due to this, and the articulated footprint of the outline building design, the required 20m setback from a habitable room confines the formal play areas to the centre of the garden. An additional 0.035 ha could potentially be added, but this would not comply with the setback guidance, and play equipment would then occupy most of Chesterton Gardens, dominating the space,

reducing opportunities for routes and connections and replacing much of the 'Open Mosaic Mimic' planting that contributes so much to the unique character of the space. Given the likely demographic of this location and the proportion of build-to-rent, it was decided that a key public garden should not be consumed and dominated by play equipment. Therefore, additional natural play areas have been integrated into the Wild Park for older children, and 'doorstep play' is also envisaged for smaller children (but not counted in the figures).



Fig.40 Natural play



Fig.41 Play structures in a LEAP (Local Equipped Area of Play)



Fig.42 Older children on log trails in a semi-wild space



Fig.43 Play in a wild park- Ladywell Fields, Lewisham



Fig.45 Play in a wild park- Postpark, Hanau Germany



Fig.44 Adults share recreation in a semi-wild space

5.11 The Wild Park natural play areas are close to but separated from the residential area and must be reached by crossing a road. The first Wild Park play structures are 88m from the closest residential dwellings, and 327m from the furthest (see Fig. 38 Play Provision.) A controlled road crossing could be agreed by condition to provide more confidence to residents using to the Wild Park. Whilst play in this area must be supervised by carers/parents, it will be an enriching opportunity for older children that creates a greater sense of adventure and opportunities for imaginative play, and should be counted as part of a high-quality play experience. Research suggests the importance of natural and imaginative play, which can be at least as valuable as formal and equipped play, and this type of expansive play is well suited to the Wild Park. Children’s play expert Tim Gill puts it well: “The great thing about many natural places is that they are ideal environments for children to explore, giving them the chance to expand their horizons and build their confidence while learning about and managing the risks for themselves. These places are unpredictable, ever changing, and prone to the randomness of nature and the vagaries of the weather. But far from being a problem, the uncertainty and variation inherent in natural settings is part of what attracts us to them in the first place.”⁴

5.12 An area of amenity lawn has also been included to allow passive recreation so that children are not fully confined to paths. This area is overlooked by office buildings and active business frontages on its south side, and will be surveyed by dog walkers and allotment users on a regular basis. Log trails and bridges shaped like railway carriages could offer fun and site-specific play that appeals to both children and adults. These are all compatible with the character of the Wild Park and could be easily be worked into a new public open space as the AAP comes forward with the development of the Cambridge Waste Water Treatment Plant site.

5.13 Outside of the counted play areas, it should be noted that the water jets and open spaces of Chesterton Square and other areas of public realm will also be extremely popular with children of a range of ages. On a hot day the water jets, along with its surrounding seating and shady tree grove, will certainly be occupied by children and carers and can be enjoyed by people of all ages.



Fig.46 Imaginative play in a wild space



Fig.47 Biodiverse planting creates a setting for imaginative, natural play.

4 From ‘Let Our Children Roam Free’: Tim Gill, in *The Ecologist*, 23rd September 2005

6.0 Conclusions

- 6.1 This proof of evidence describes how the landscape design for the Cambridge North development will achieve a high-quality public realm that will contribute to the site's sense of place and distinctiveness. The areas meet the policy standards for open space provision and the other relevant local plan policies, and the design also complies with the 10 characteristics of 'well designed spaces' set out in the government's National Design Guide.

7.0 Statement of Truth

- 7.1 The evidence which I have prepared and provide for this appeal reference APP/W0530/W/32/3315611 in this proof of evidence is true and I confirm that the opinions expressed are my true and professional opinions.

Signed:

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'R. Myers', with a large, stylized flourish at the end.

Robert Myers, Director, Robert Myers Associates

09.05.2023