



Cedar Chase Architecture

‘Every Span exterior is a lively contribution to modern architectural thinking’

Span - Living with New Ideas

The architectural face that Cedar Chase presents to the pretty village of Taplow is bold and uncompromising, yet also quite introverted: a continuous, stepped terrace along Rectory Road of pale yellow brick housing, with dark-stained vertical timber cladding and distinctive horizontal white and green windows.

The contrast to the established old vernacular of the village could hardly be more pronounced and the initial reaction of many residents to the shocking new development can be imagined. We have heard that at one time Cedar Chase was aka ‘The Taplow Toilets’.



Yet this shady north-facing elevation serves as a screen, concealing a unique and brilliantly conceived estate of family homes that has become an exemplar of modern, low-density housing.

The Cedar Chase design is simultaneously open yet private. Each house is an L-shape in plan, with ground-floor living and first-floor bedroom accommodation enclosing a small courtyard.



Although the private garden of each house varies in size, this layout of house and immediate outdoor space is one of the keys to the design– the courtyard becoming an extra "room" for much of the year and providing shelter from autumn winds and winter frosts.

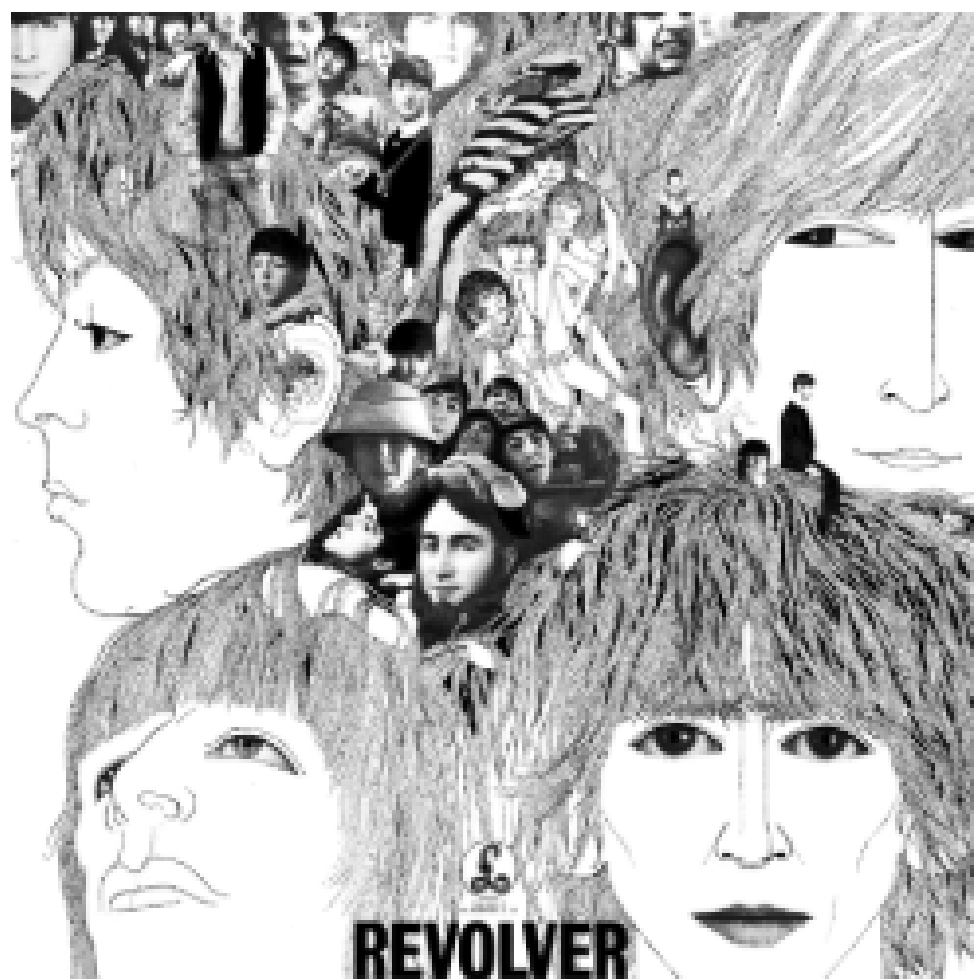
Wrapped around the courtyard, the modest living spaces are open-plan and full of light, with large areas of south-facing glass, and reflecting the Scandinavian living model that Eric Lyons admired.



Also vital to the longevity and success of the development is the overall planning of the estate and in particular, its sympathetic positioning within a large existing garden. The retained trees and shrubs were complemented by a new landscape and planting design that is now beautifully mature and well-maintained and which continues to provide year-round variety and interest as well as a great place for families and children to relax and play.



The uniquely continuing freshness and modernity of the 60-year-old design are perhaps best illustrated by looking at contemporary pop music- The Beatles' double A-side, Yellow Submarine/Eleanor Rigby, was at Number One in August 1966- and cars- the Jaguar E-Type was the epitome of cutting-edge sports car design, while the Austin 1100 was typical of family motoring.



Or consider this: Cedar Chase was designed and built three years before the Apollo Moon landing, in the year that England won the World Cup – now doesn't that seem like a different age?

Martin Knight, Cedar Chase Resident, Fellow of the RIBA, IABSE and the Institution of Civil Engineers and an Honorary Fellow of IStructE