



Span Developments and Building Cedar Chase

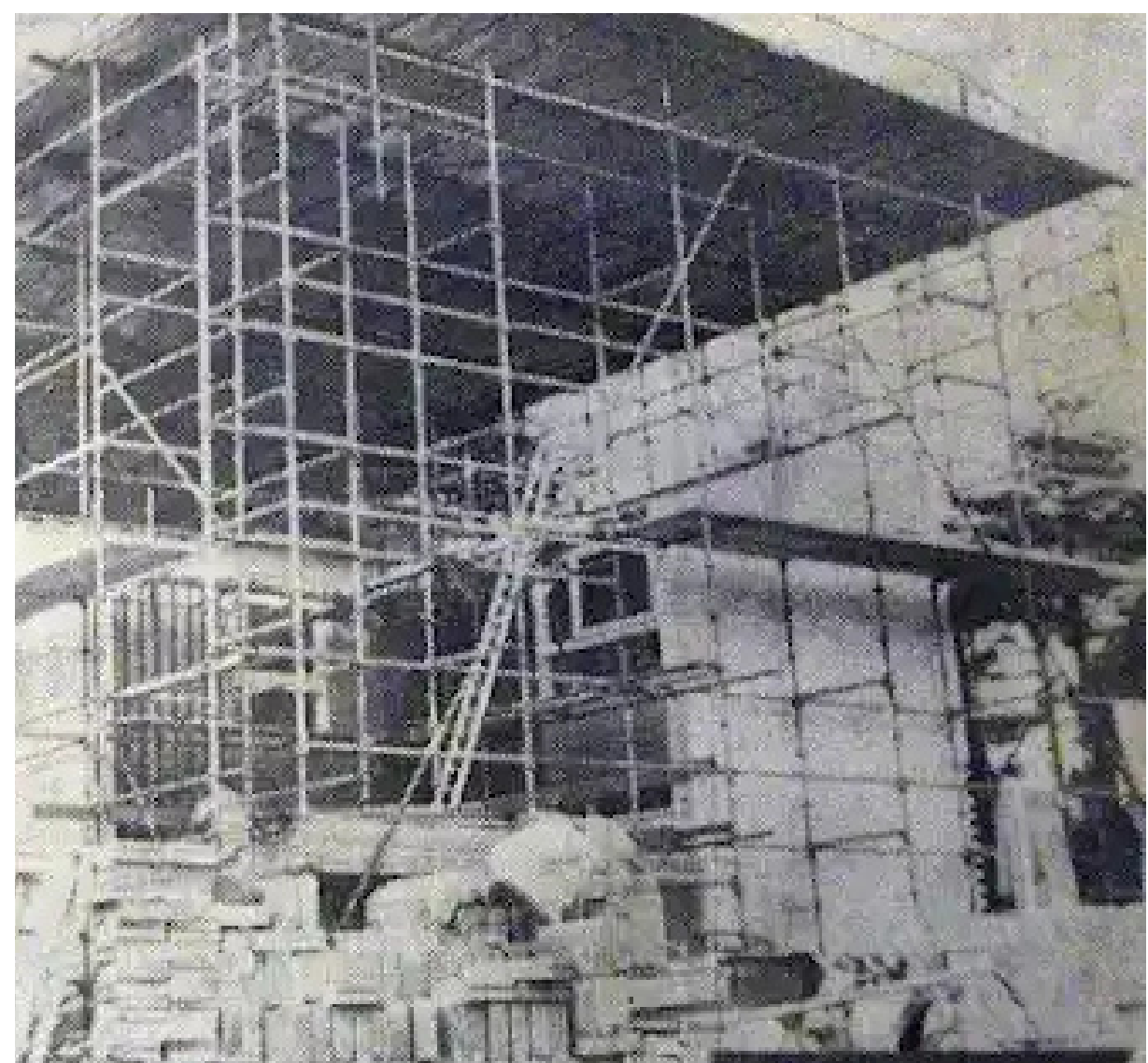
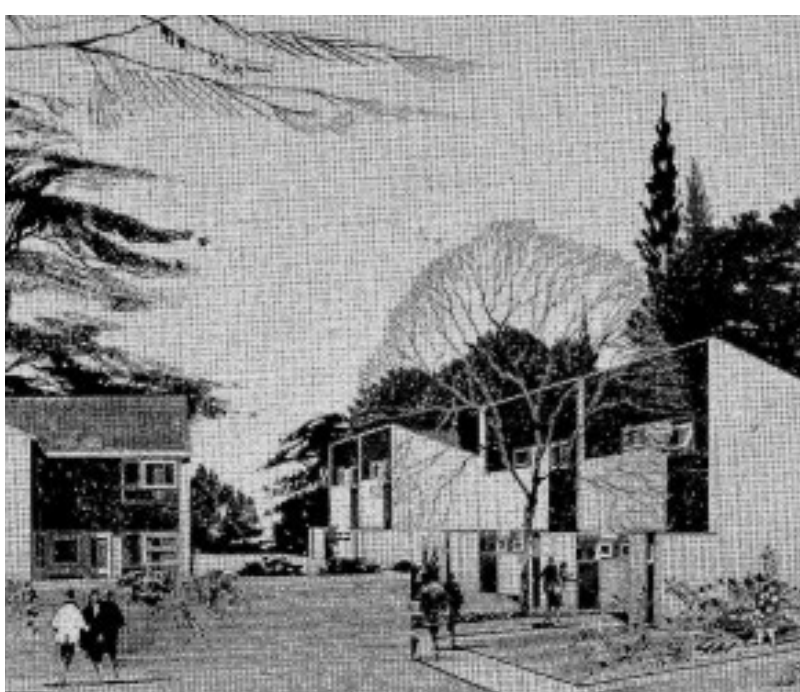
‘Nothing pseudo - no fake-rustic. Paths, slopes, stretches of grass, a sense of spaciousness and peace’

Span - Living with New Ideas

Span was a partnership formed by British designer and architect Eric Lyons (1912-1980) and architect-turned-developer Geoffrey Townsend, who recognised in the growing design-conscious middle-classes of the late 1950s a market for innovative, well-designed housing.

The partnership built over 2000 homes in London and the South East. They were mainly 2 and 3 bedroom single family homes and apartment buildings.

The intention was that their developments would literally ‘span’ the gap between mass public housing projects and individual, bespoke architectural commissions.



Created with substantial garden areas, glass and light, façade angles used for privacy and decoration and a separate garage.

The buildings and landscapes were at the leading edge of architectural design, and Cedar Chase and the other 30-odd Span estates are now widely recognised as exemplary far beyond the realm of Span aficionados and widely described as ‘successful, experimental modernism’



Cedar Chase, built in 1966, is one of the best-preserved Span estates. It shares the C3/C30 house design with Marsham Lodge in Gerrards Cross - the only other Span site in South Bucks



Span developments combine modernist design with attention to detail and harmony with the suburban environment. Span houses typically have modernist features such as flat roofs, open-plan interiors and large windows. However, this is combined with traditional features including hung tiles and stock brickwork.

In September 1967 Cedar Chase was among 14 winners from 358 entrants in the annual competition for 'Good Design In Housing' by the Ministry of Housing and RIBA

The Span ethos was to build 'homes within a garden' so most developments include large landscape communal gardens to the front of the properties.

The exterior space is a recognised feature and many Span developments are car-free - a radical difference from other post war developments.

