

Seabrook Orchards

Phase 2
Seabrook Square



Design Code Compliance

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grainge architects

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1.0 Introduction

This document seeks to demonstrate how the proposals for Seabrook Square have been informed by and are in adherence to the 'Site Wide Design Statement (March 2015)', which was approved after outline planning permission was granted, and the subsequent 'Phase 2 - Higher Orchards' Design Code, which details the Design objectives for the area of Seabrook Orchards in which the Square is located.

The latter document included broad principles for the Square itself, which are to be expanded upon in greater detail within this document, in order to demonstrate how the Square will form a coherently integrated but still distinct focal part of this development.

2.0 Context

The Seabrook Square site sits at the heart of the Phase 2 parcel, adjacent to the recently completed Trinity Primary School.

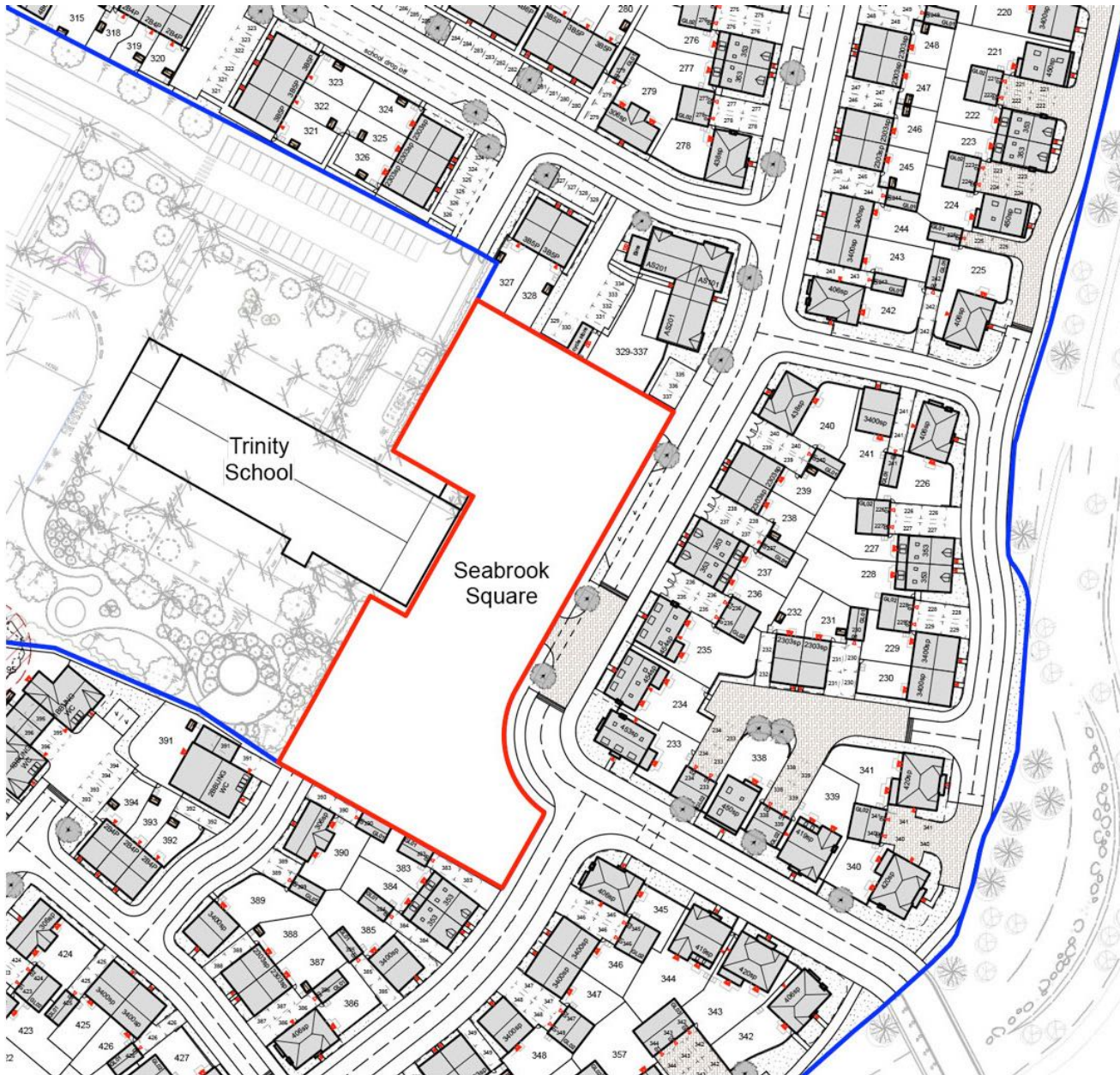
The Square was envisaged as a Community Hub, at the heart of the Seabrook Orchards development, within the Outline Masterplan.

It was conceived as a 'town square', comprising mixed use development (including a community building and cafe, as well as residential) enclosing a flexible and active space that could be used for community events such as Farmer's Markets. It also creates the nodal entrance space to the School.

The 'Site Wide Design Statement' defines the design principles of the Square as '*individual key buildings and*



Approved masterplan with its current phasing and elements identified



Extract from Submitted Phase 2 Proposed Layout

terraces, mixed use, 3 possibly up to four storeys', while also including for 'casual parking by users of the facilities'.

The Square also forms a key Nodal element of the wider Phase 2 development, and needs to be appropriately integrated into the urban fabric of the development. Seabrook Square is located midway along the 'Village Street' - the principles spine road that serves the development, and was conceived as one of three 'Nodal Squares' along its route within the Phase 2 Design Code.

The proposals for the Phase 2 residential development were submitted to the Authority in December 2019 on behalf of Bloor Homes, with an expectation that the merits of the two applications will be determined in parallel, as they are so intrinsically linked to each other.

The detailed proposals for the Square will need to respond to the aesthetic, massing, materiality and design levels of the adjacent development. As Grainge Architects have been design consultants for both elements the design development of both have been considered as one exercise, ensuring coordination throughout.

The Design Code document for Phase 2 'Higher Orchards' also includes explicit reference to the design of the Square, in order to demonstrate that coherence between the two elements will be achieved.

The adjacent extract plan illustrates the proposed residential development currently under consideration by the Authority in the area immediately surrounding the Square site.

The relationship with the massing, building line and building styles have all informed the sense of space and enclosure within the Square, which will be explored subsequently in this document.

3.0 Constraints and Opportunities

3.1 Site Area

The site of the Seabrook Square was identified in the original Outline Consent; its size and location dictated by the Illustrative Masterplan that accompanied it. The current site extent has been agreed such that it best reconciles the needs and aspirations of the Community Hub, with those of the surrounding residential development.

The site comprises approximately 0.37Ha to the South East of the recently completed School.

3.2 Access

The site is bounded to the east by the 'Village Street' - the principal access route through the Phase 2 development as defined in the Masterplan. The spatial extent of the Square will extend across this highway, with direct access to the Square itself from this point. There are further opportunities for vehicular access to the site from the village street to the north and form the secondary network to the south, which would offer opportunities for private courtyard parking behind any development.

3.5 Topography

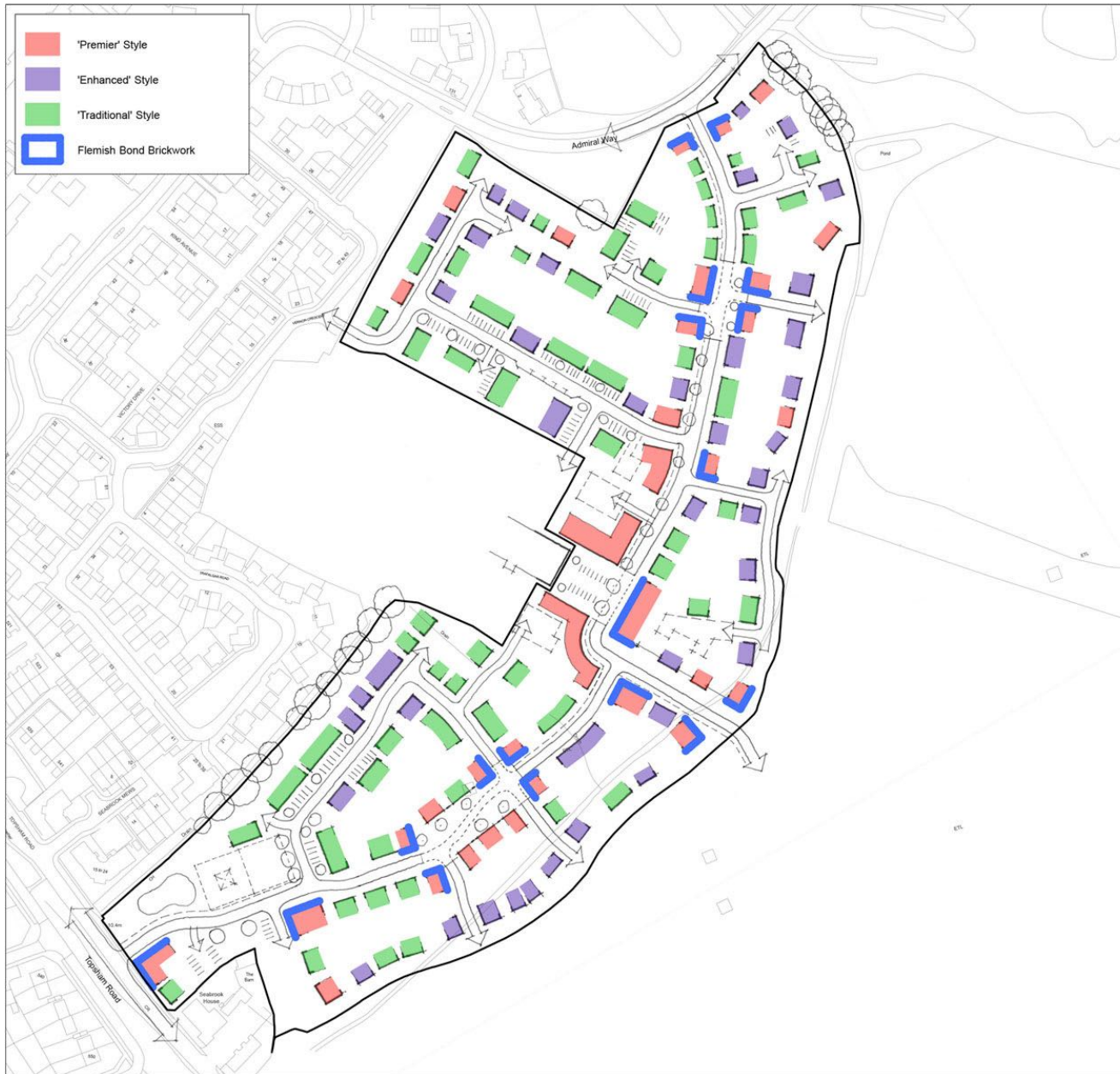
Generally the existing site slopes gently down to the east, with the school occupying an elevated position atop an approx. 2m high plateau to the west.

The design levels for the Village Street are close to the existing condition, and as such create a level difference of approx 2m across the site.

The nature of the use of the site, which will require it to be reasonable flat, suggests that this level difference will need to be overcome locally, with steps/ramps. This is an opportunity to celebrate the school with a raised terrace overlooking the square.



Phase 2 Constraints and Opportunities Diagram



Architectural Hierarchy Diagram

There is also an opportunity for undercroft parking within the southern building, if it is approached from the south, making positive use of the level differential.

3.6 Vegetation

There are no existing constraints in relation to vegetation that will affect the Square site.

3.7 Services

There are no existing constraints in relation to services that will affect the Square site.

3.8 Urban Context

As outlined previously, residential proposals for the surrounding Phase 2 site are currently being determined by the Authority. These proposals have been developed in parallel with those for the Square, with due consideration being given to the relationship between the adjacent proposed housing and the development around the Square

The dwellings opposite the Square are proposed as wide fronted 2.5 storey units. These are intended to respond to the Strategic Design guidance, which suggests the Square be defined by 3 storey structures with terraced frontage. These are also located to create a symmetry to complete the formal nature of the Square.

A proposed building in the southern area of the site would naturally terminate vistas into Phase 2 on approach from the east, and from the north along the Village Street, and so will have an inherent landmark significance. It would also need to appropriately address the curve of the road as it sweeps north.

Any development fronting the Village Street will also need to reflect the established design principles for this character area.

4.0 Design, Details and Materials

4.1 Use

The proposals for the Square comprise 2 significant buildings which enclose the area in front of the school to form the new Community Square.

The northern building (TS1) comprises a 350m² Community Rooms (including a community cafe) on the ground floor, with residential apartments over, with further apartments over 3 floors to the north (12no apartments in total)

The southern building (TS2) includes 11no residential apartments.

The centrally located Square includes a hard landscaped area that can be used for Community events, such as Farmer's Markets, stepped and accessible ramped access to the school and an outdoor seating terrace associated with the Cafe/community rooms.

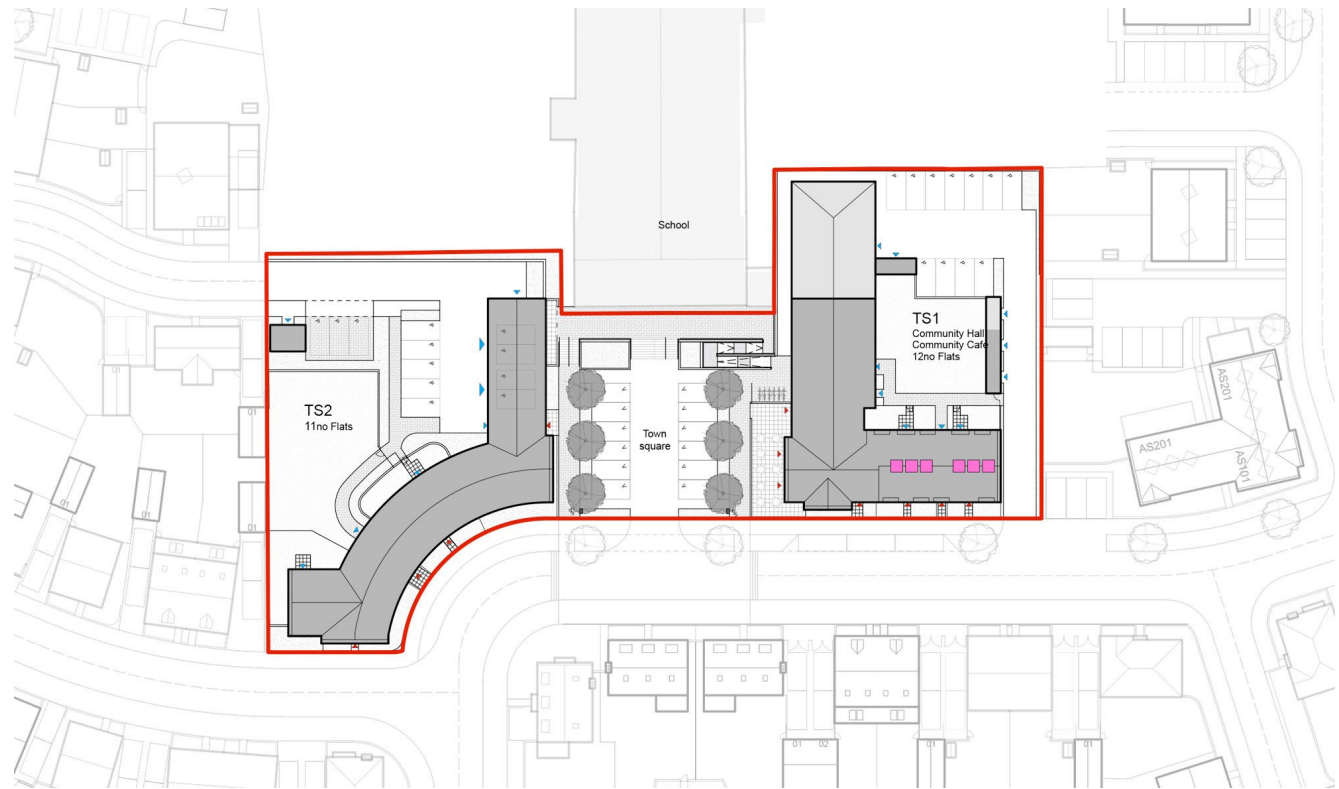
The community elements have been located on the northern side of the square to allow them to benefit from the southerly aspect, with the external seating located on the sunny side of the Square.

The Square also offers a number of casual parking spaces for users of the community facilities.

Parking courts and communal amenity spaces are located to the rear of each of the residential buildings.

4.2 Architecture

The buildings which define the Square are both 3 storey, in accordance with the strategic guidance for this area. This creates the strong sense of enclosure associated with a Town Square. The enhance height and volume helps to articulate the Square as a key nodal point within the development.



Proposed Seabrook Square Layout Plan





Examples of proposed architecture from completed elements of Phase 1

The SWDS also makes reference to terraced built form, which the continuous faced form of these buildings offer, reinforced by the rhythm of the windows and doors in the elevations.

The southern block (TS2) building line follows the radius of the curve of the road. This creates a distinctive crescent building which also terminates the vistas into Phase 2 from Phase 1 and along the Village Street from the north.

The northern block (TS1) features a step in the roof line which is intended to break up the mass of the building so that it responds better to the Village Street streetscene, in which the buildings step down in mass away from the Square, whilst also adding visual interest.

4.3 Design and Materials

The Phase 2 Design Code identifies the Seabrook Square buildings as 'Premier Style', in recognition of their prominence in the urban landscape. In response to this, both buildings have been designed to incorporate features prescribed with this style, including raised brick quoins, parapet gable details and exposed rafter eaves.

The proposed materials are red brick walls and natural slate roofs to match those which are to be agreed on the adjacent Phase 2.

The windows to the residential properties are proposed to be of the same casement style as the adjacent development, to ensure coherence throughout the development.

The glazing to the community element includes full height glazing to the cafe space, in order to create a more open relationship with the Square, and to help articulate this space as distinct from the residential elements.

The design of canopies are also to match Phase 2 in order to ensure a coherent streetscene.



Proposed Seabrook Square Streetscene

5.0 Landscaping

5.1 Hard Landscaping

The Square itself is a predominantly hard landscaped area, due to its proposed use as a community space that also incorporates vehicular parking.

This environment comprises areas of different finishes including contrasting format areas of block paving to the footways and terraces, as well as textured/coloured tarmac to the parking area.

The character of the Square extends into the previously submitted Phase 2 area, which has been highlighted with a raised table of block paving within the highway to the area that corresponds to the Square extents within this submission.

5.2 Soft Landscaping

The hard landscaping within the Square is complimented by areas of planting, as illustrated on the adjacent extract from the Planting Plan.

Street trees are proposed within the Square to populate the space and to create a formal identity. These have been coordinated with those included within the Phase area that edges the Square.

Areas of shrub planting have been used to break up the space, and to define the different areas, for example segregating the parking area from the pedestrian circulation routes. Shrub planting has also been used to soften the hard appearance of the retaining walls that define the level change up to the school terrace area.

On plot planting to front defensible space compliments the proposed boundary treatment of railings and low brick walls.



Proposed Planting Plan Extract

Full details of Planting and Landscaping Design are provided as part of the proposals

5.3 Amenity Spaces

In accordance with the ECC Residential Design SPD private gardens have been incorporated where possible to the rear of the ground floor residential units (min 3m deep to the width of the unit).

Communal amenity spaces have also been provided for each block. These are accessible from the rear access to the apartments and are to include planting, landscaping and drying facilities.

5.4 Boundary Treatment

The Square itself features many level changes and terraces, all of which require edge treatment, whether to define boundary or to create enclosure.

In accordance with the general principles for boundary treatment these comprise combinations of low walls and railings.

The definition of the defensible spaces to the fronts of the residential units is made with low brick walls with horizontal railings above, to match Phase 1 and the proposed Phase 2.

In order to create a distinction between these areas and the more civic character of the square a different design of railing has been proposed, although still mounted atop low brick walls.

6.0 Services

Services are an essential part of any housing scheme but often these mundane details are forgotten. It is important that the position and finish of things such as an electricity meter box does not detract from the architecture of the scheme.

6.1 Refuse & Recycling

Secure communal bin storage facilities have been provided within the curtilage of each building

The ECC Residential Design SPD states a preference for such storage to be integrated into the fabric of the building. However, in order to protect the character of the Square it would be inappropriate to access these for collection from the Square or the Street, and the Travel distances along the rear access routes are too great to allow this (in excess of 25m).

Therefore, and in accordance with the Phase 2 Design Code, ancillary brick built buildings have been provided, in locations that are screened from public view.

6.2 Renewable Energy

All buildings will adopt a 'fabric first' approach to energy efficiency. High levels of insulation will keep the warmth inside in the winter and keep the heat out in the summer.

6.3 Meter Cupboards

The apartment blocks have internal meter cupboards, located in communal areas. Where meter boxes may be required for privately accessed ground floor units meter boxes will be concealed if the service provider allows.

6.4 Vents & Flues

Every effort has been made to locate vents and flues to the rear of the properties where possible, to ensure they are away from the 'public' face of the buildings. Where this has not been possible, any flue outlet or extract vent will be coloured to match or compliment the external wall finish.

6.5 TV Aerials & Satellite Dishes

The retrofitting of satellite dishes on buildings after sale can have a significant impact on the quality of the public realm. This can be controlled with a covenant stating...

'No satellite dish, notice or signboard may be erected on or forward of the front elevation nor on the side elevations of the building without the written consent of the Transferor nor without permission from the relevant Public Authority.'

6.6 Control Boxes

Telecommunications and traffic signal control boxes should be sited with particular care and, preferably, as an integral part of the public realm design. Control boxes should be sited in the following ways:

- Housed in boxes recessed into boundary walls at the back edge of the footway and accessible from the public realm
- Housed in boxes at the back edge of the footway in visually inconspicuous locations.
- Boxes shall be finished in black or other colour to be agreed with the Local Planning Authority.