East Staffordshire Design Guide
Supplementary Planning Document

June 2008

East Staffordshire Borough Council

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Introduction

i) The Importance of Design Quality

High quality design should be the aim of all those involved in the development process. East Staffordshire Borough Council is committed to raising design standards in all new development. This is in part to take forward national government's sustainable communities agenda, but also to improve the quality of the environment across the Borough. There are a number of reasons why design quality matters:

The Quality of Life Imperative

- Everyone deserves to live, work and relax in a healthy and safe environment;
- Well designed places can support more healthy lifestyles;
- Good design in new development can help to improve educational attainment;
- Well designed development can improve recovery rates from illness;
- Good design creates places which are well-liked, well-used and enjoyable; and
- Inclusive and accessible design is now required by law.

The Economic Imperative

- Good quality design in development will provide good returns on investment;
- People choose to work and businesses choose to invest in good quality places;
- Where there is choice, people will prefer to live in good quality environments;
- People will choose to spend their time and their money in good quality places;
- Places are in economic competition and quality is vital to economic success; and
- Poor quality design can generate significant additional ongoing costs.

The Sustainable Imperative

- Climate change is a key issue for homeowners, businesses and developers;
- Development efficiency and energy use are important planning issues;
- Renewable energy and on-site energy generation are emerging design issues;
- Environmentally responsible buildings are required by the building regulations; and
- Good design is key to creating sustainable places that stand the test of time.

ii) Status and Purpose of the Design Guide

The purpose of this document is to promote high quality design in new development across East Staffordshire. This Guide explains the Council's approach to urban design in line with national government planning policy. It sets out the correct approach to design, establishing important ground rules and encouraging better practice.

The Design Guide (is / will be) adopted by East Staffordshire Borough Council as a Supplementary Planning Document. As such, it (is / will be) an important material consideration when determining planning applications and assessing design quality in new development. The Guide supplements local planning policies on design, providing more detailed and practical advice for all those involved in the development process.

The challenge to developers and designers is to achieve high standards of architecture and urban design in new development to create places which will be popular now and in the future.

The Urban Grain of Uttoxeter

The Guide aims to achieve the following objectives:

- Improve the quality of design in all new development across the Borough;
- Raise awareness of the importance and value of good urban design;
- Encourage respect for the traditional character of the borough
- Help developers to understand and meet the Council's design expectations;
- Provide a basis for positive and efficient planning and decision making;
- Help developers avoid poor design and resulting planning delay or refusals; and
- Inform and influence regeneration initiatives across the Borough.

Built form is an important aspect in the borough's character

iii) The Value of Good Design

Through careful and considered design, value can be added to a development. Research by the Commission for Architecture and the Built Environment (CABE) and others, establishes a range of potential benefits and values that can be generated from good design. In short good design can:

- Add economic value as a percentage increase in saleable / rentable values;
- Help developments to sell or let more quickly;
- Enable more efficient use of land to generate development outputs;
- Create a value added development by maximising latent site opportunities;
- Create a legacy of environmental improvement and regeneration;
- Support and deliver transformational change to create new commercial markets;
- Generate health, education and community benefits;
- Create safer places, which are attractive to people and well used;
- Support an improved quality of life; and
- Incorporate nature and include green infrastructure provision to improve local bio-diversity.

Good design does not have to be expensive or cost more than bad design. Higher specification, through materials for example, will cost more, but higher specification may bring a better return on the investment.

Nevertheless, good design is not simply about better specifications. It also covers the whole design of a development, including the response to context, the layout, location and form of development. In these terms good design can often cost no more than bad design.

Aspects of good design that will generally not cost more to get right than wrong include:

- **Proper and appropriate response to context** – where new development is designed for the site, for example through appropriate materials and detailing;
- **Effective use of the assets of the site** – where latent design opportunities of the site such as views or waterfronts inform the design of the development;
- **A good urban structure** – where the layout of development is permeable and well related to the wider setting;
- **Effective parking & servicing solutions** - which create more efficient layouts and better urban design, based on creative and innovative approaches;
- **Effective landscape design** – where open spaces are designed as integral parts of a development and designed and located to be enjoyed by people;
- **Designing in flexibility and variety** – to create places that are diverse and robust and can accommodate future change; and
- **User needs considered early in the development process** – to ensure the development is fit for purpose and meets existing and future needs.

These basic design considerations are expanded upon through this Guide.

↑ Distinctive Villages such as Abbotts Bromley

↑ Promoting the high standard in design for the built environment

Iv) Using the Guide

The Council wants to make using this Guide as easy as possible. The messages are therefore straightforward and clearly set out.

It is not necessary to read the Guide cover to cover. It can, instead, be 'dipped into' for guidance appropriate for particular forms of development, for specific design issues and for development in particular locations.

The Guide should be a starting point for developers and designers, who will need to apply the main messages to the site they are involved with.

The list of contents provides an indication as to where information pertinent to different design issues and situations can be found. In addition, an index and glossary of terms is provided at the back of the document.

1.0 Chapter 1: Fundamentals of Good Urban Design

1.1 Purpose of Chapter

1.2 Understanding Context

This section provides guidance which is important for all development and helps to set out how the context should be analysed and understood.

1.3 The Response to Context

Building on 1.2, this section sets out how new development should respond to the context and setting to create a responsive and appropriate scheme. It includes specific guidance for how to respond to context in respect of larger scale and smaller scale development. The actual amount of development may vary, but a consistent theme will be the creation of new high quality streets and places.

1.4 Design for More Sustainable Development

This section provides design guidance for more sustainable and environmentally friendly developments.

1.5 Design for More Adaptable and Flexible Development

This section briefly explains the importance of designing development which will be adaptable to change over time.

1.6 Design for Safe, Accessible and Welcoming Development

This section provides basic principles for how to design inclusive, safer and more welcoming development to ensure successful places are created.

1.7 Summary of the Fundamentals of Urban Design

This section brings together the key messages from Chapter 1 and can be used as a quick guide to the fundamental urban design principles that the Council will expect to be followed. However, the main text should be referred to for more detailed consideration of these principles.

2.0 **Chapter 2**: Design Quality in Residential Development

This chapter provides specific guidance for residential development. It is applicable to all new residential development, large and small sites, and builds on the guidance set out in Chapter 1.

3.0 **Chapter 3**: Design Quality in Commercial Development

This chapter provides specific guidance for employment development. It is applicable to all new employment development, but particularly larger scale developments, and builds on the guidance set out in Chapter 1.

4.0 **Chapter 4**: The Character of East Staffordshire

This chapter provides an overview of the character of the Borough. It is relevant to all development and should be used as a guide when considering the character and context for specific sites.

5.0 **Chapter 5** : Demonstrating and Reviewing Design Quality

This chapter sets out how design quality will be reviewed and how discussion on design should be approached between developers and the Council.

The following Appendices are provided in support of the Design Guide:

Appendix 1 – Overlooking / Over-shadowing in new development

Chapter 1 - Considers how to make people friendly places

Chapter 1 - Considers how new development should relate to context

Chapter 2 - Looks at Residential Developments

Chapter 3 - Looks at Larger Commerical Development

Chapter 4 - Looks at the Character of the Borough

Chapter 5 - Includes Guidance on Design Review

1 Fundamentals of Good Urban Design

1.1 Purpose of this Chapter

1.1.1 This chapter sets out the fundamentals of good urban design. It provides an overview of key design issues and summarises the design approach the Council will expect developers to follow.

1.1.2 The first two sections of this chapter deal with the issues of context. This involves firstly how to understand the context, and secondly how to respond to the context through the design of new development.

1.1.3 Building on these foundations, guidance is then provided for both larger and smaller scale developments.

1.1.4 The impact of larger scale development in the Borough can be profound, and larger developments have the potential to significantly enhance and improve the quality and character of an area. Typically, large-scale development will involve creating new places and not just adding to an existing street scene or context.

1.1.5 At the same time, the cumulative effect of many smaller scale developments must be recognised. This includes back-land development, infill development, conversions and extensions. Achieving high quality design in smaller scale developments will help conserve and enhance the character of the Borough's existing streets and places.

1.1.6 Chapter 1 concludes with general guidance in relation to designing for more sustainable, safe and inclusive development.

1.2 Understanding Context

The Importance of the Context

1.2.1 The context is the setting of the site and the character of the wider surroundings. It includes all the aspects that make places special and in some cases unique. The context for development will vary considerably across the Borough, from rural villages to tightly enclosed heritage townscape and suburban residential areas. The basic components of the context are:

- The landscape and natural setting;
- The built character and qualities of existing buildings;
- Settlement patterns and streetscape; and
- Functions and activities.

1.2.2 In every situation contextual analysis is vital to identify how new development can be designed to be appropriate and responsive to its setting. Appreciating the essential character of a place at an early stage in the design process can add value to the development by creating a more appropriate and successful design response.

1.2.3 Appreciating the latent design opportunities of a site is vital. A good example of this is where building frontages are orientated and designed to overlook attractive natural features such as brooks, rivers, canals or open spaces.

1.2.4 An appropriate and effective response to context does not normally require a specific architectural style. The Council will generally encourage a sensitive and carefully considered response to context, and this can provide scope for different architectural approaches.

1.2.5 In some places the context will be less strongly defined. In these cases it is still important to understand the wider precedents for development in that area.

1.2.6 In locations which have suffered from poor quality development in the past, new development should enhance and repair the environment. Existing poor quality development will not be accepted as a precedent for future poor quality design.

Site and Context Audit

1.2.7 A site design audit should be undertaken to clearly establish the key contextual factors affecting the site. Urban design auditing will require site visits and appropriate resourcing. The Council will expect to see this analysis as part of the Design and Access Statement accompanying planning applications. The Council will also expect to see how the analysis has informed the design of development.

1.2.8 The form and detail of analysis may vary, but should be relevant and appropriate to the scale and nature of the development. More detailed information will be required for larger developments and more sensitive sites. Plans, photographs and written summaries all provide satisfactory methods of capturing site information.

1.2.9 A site and context audit should include the following:

- Landscape Context Audit;
- Built Context Audit; and
- Linkages and Legibility Context Audit.

The above factors are explained in more detail in the following paragraphs.

↑ Buildings should relate to their landscape setting

↑ Built context is about group value (Abbots Bromley)

↑ Linkages for pedestrians are vital (Trent Washlands)

1.2.10 Landscape and Natural Environment Context Audit

A landscape Context audit should include consideration of the following:

- **Landscape setting and vegetation** – the quality and character of the landscape setting including trees, hedgerows, green spaces and other natural features which could influence the landscape and biodiversity of the scheme.
- **Water and hydrology** – the presence of rivers, brooks, lakes and canals and other natural drainage or wetland areas that can contribute to the character and biodiversity of the development.
- **Topography and terrain** – the existing site levels, which can influence the visibility of development, how development fits within the l\andscape, the layout of streets and spaces and the relationship between buildings and the terrain.
- **Habitats, ecology and wildlife** – which may or may not be subject to formal protection, but which could contribute to the character and biodiversity of the development.
- **Climate and exposure** – relating to how the site interacts with the landscape and climate of an area. Is the site exposed in an upland area, or is it sheltered within a valley? These factors can influence the design of the development.
- **Orientation** – recognising how the site relates to the path of the sun, with early consideration of how buildings might benefit from southerly orientation to derive benefit from the sun's energy.
- **Geology and soils** – the local stone and bedrock, particularly that which has been used in the construction of walling, as this creates a visual link between buildings and the landscape.
- Conservation Areas - Conservation Areas are designated to protect areas of particular local character, which landscape contributes towards

↑ Rolling agricultural land near Mayfield

↑ The rural urban fringe at Tutbury

↑ Greenspace and open space at Trent Washlands

1.2.11 Built Context Audit

A built context audit should include consideration of the following:

- **Townscape character** – the prevailing built character of a site and its context, recognising the relationships between buildings and the cues which should inform new development such as established building lines, the way buildings turn corners and any distinctive local features or views.

- **Settlement pattern** – on-site, adjacent and nearby street patterns can inform the approach to laying out new streets to ensure new development reflects the character of the setting. This is about the streets in plan form and in three dimensions and how buildings relate to each other.

- **Historical development** – historic buildings and development can provide clues as to how places have evolved and how they could change in the future. Old maps and photographs can often be useful. Important historic buildings, listed or otherwise, may need to be integrated into development.

- **Building height, massing, form and scale** – the precedent set by existing buildings on or near the site in terms of their height, scale, form and massing, including skyline and roofscape, will often need to inform new development. Variety and harmony in height, rhythm and composition are often key characteristics in established contexts.

- **Building materials** – the type, colours, texture, and finish for walling and roofing materials evident on site and within the local context. Traditional materials are particularly important as these can help identify indigenous, locally relevant materials.

- **Facade Treatment** – the proportions of buildings, their fenestration and detailing are important to the character of the context. Cottages for example are often low and wide with small windows and modest decoration. Town houses by contrast are often tall and striking, with strong vertical fenestration and elegant proportions. The proportions of existing buildings can help inform appropriate new development.

- Conservation Areas - where the character of the existing townscape is particularly important and sensitive to change.

↑ Striking corner, varied not consistent scale, and changes in direction and terrain in Tutbury

↑ Striking period dwelling with leaded windows and stone casements in Stanton

1

↑ Edges of the site and views in and out are important to recognise

2

↑ The location and quality of existing vegetation needs to be considered

3

↑ Existing structures should be assessed and landscape/hardstanding noted.

4

↑ Access into and through the site should be assessed including any rights of way and pedestrian desire lines

5

↑ The built character on and around the site should be assessed

6

↑ Existing scale, form and building lines should be assessed as well as materials and details

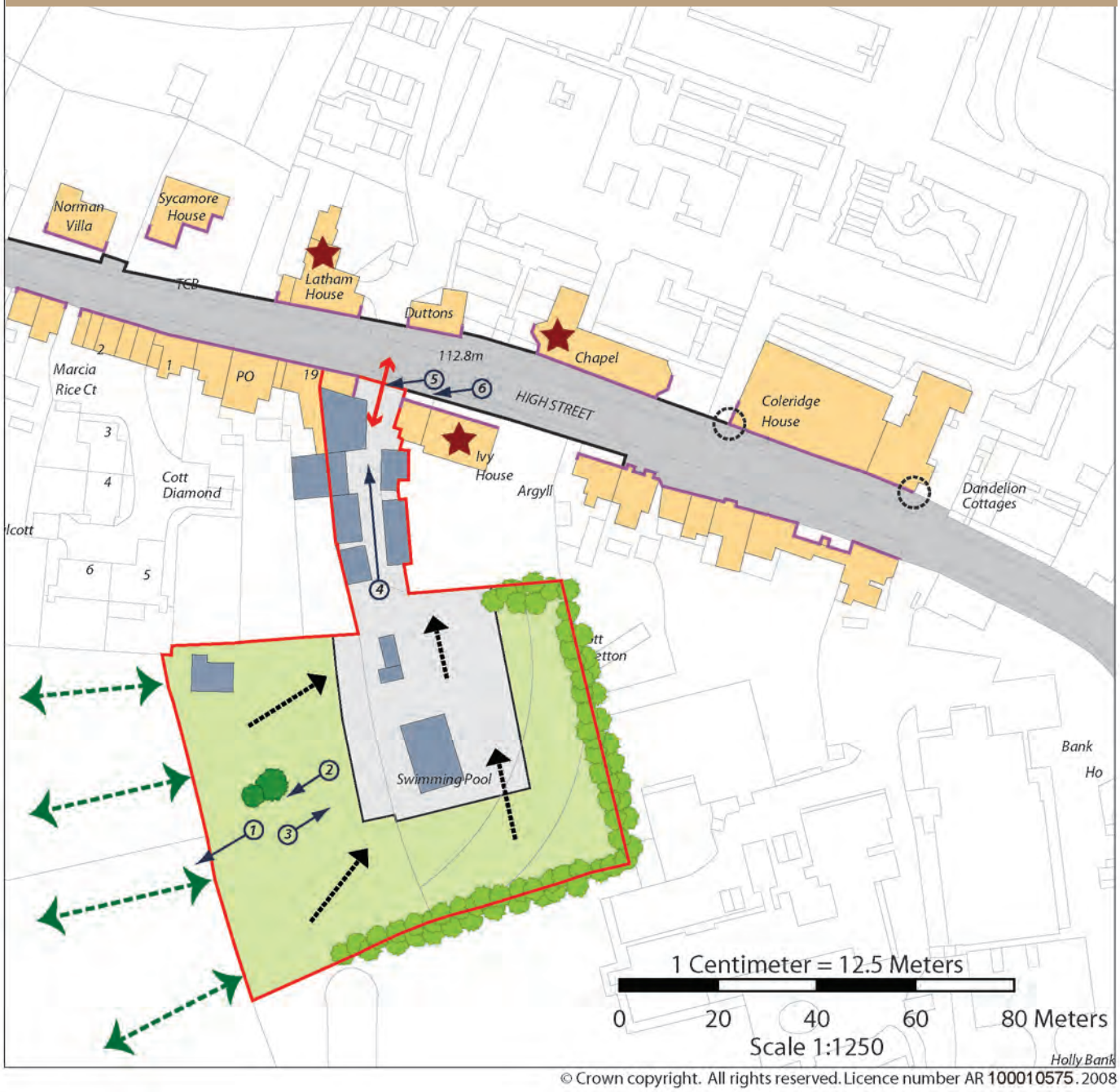
7

↑ Site and context analysis should recognise the wider built character of the site surroundings

8

↑ Analysis should focus on the proportions and scale of existing buildings individually and together

Example of a Site Analysis Plan



KEY

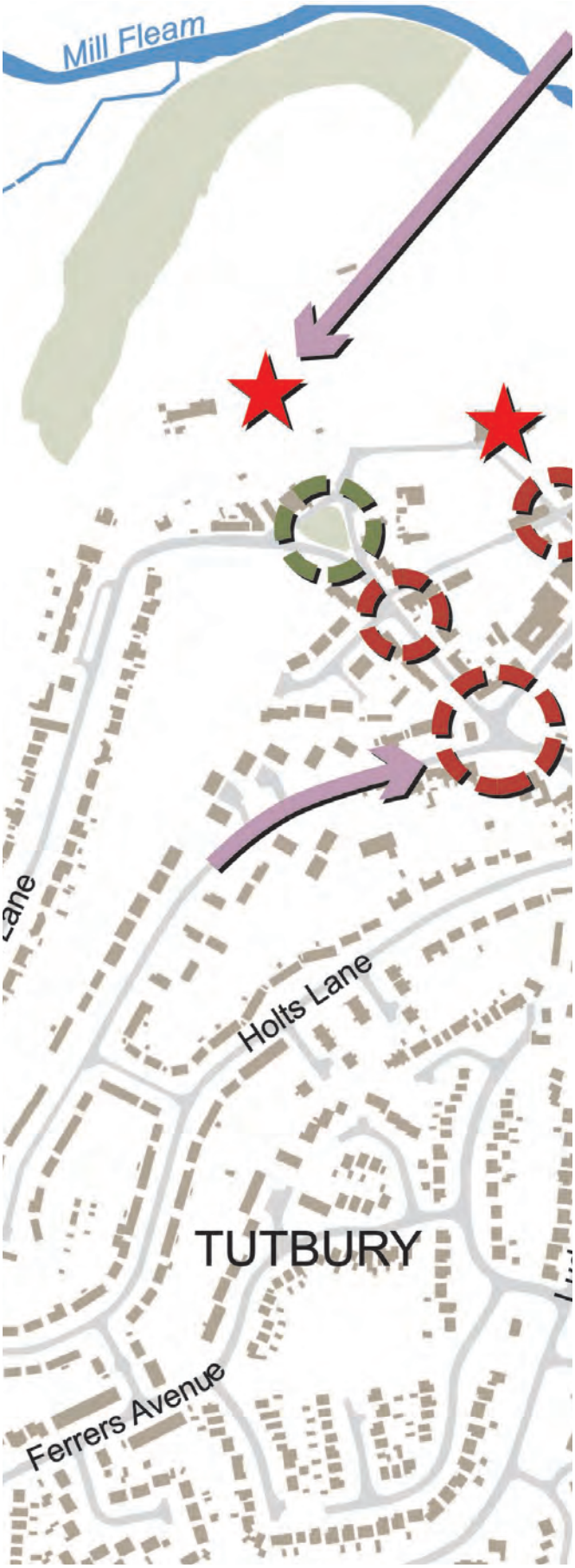
- Street / Public realm road and frontages
- Photograph - location and direction
- Falling land - with the arrow facing down slope
- Boundary of note
- Existing trees of note
- Landscape / Tree edge
- Grassed areas
- Hardstanding areas
- Poor quality buildings / structures
- Good quality buildings / structures
- Consitent building line
- Distinctive corner building
- local landmark building
- Site edge / boundary
- Views to open countryside
- Site access / views in / out

This plan shows an example of a site analysis plan. Other sites will require different and (or) more detailed plans to convey the analysis of the site.

1.2.12 Linkages and Legibility Context Audit

A linkages and legibility context audit should include consideration of the following:

- Vistas and views – existing important views or potential views should be noted. There may be important view corridors across a site, or potential to align streets to focus on nearby landmarks, prominent buildings or natural features.
- Routes and street structure – existing streets and linkages should be identified and scope for integration between new and existing routes considered. Existing rights of way across or alongside sites should be identified as these can influence the design.
- Pedestrian desire lines or meeting places – linked to the routes and street structures; it is helpful to consider how people use or might use a site. Are there any strong pedestrian desire lines across the site? Do routes meet near or on the site presenting opportunities for open spaces?
- Boundaries and edges – the edges of the site and its public face(s) are very important as these create the first impression and have an important contribution to make to the character of the site.
- Green Corridors - including waterside walkways, long distance footpaths, green fringes connecting urban areas with the courtyside, and other green arteries, such as back gardens.



Legibility Audit of Tutbury

Key

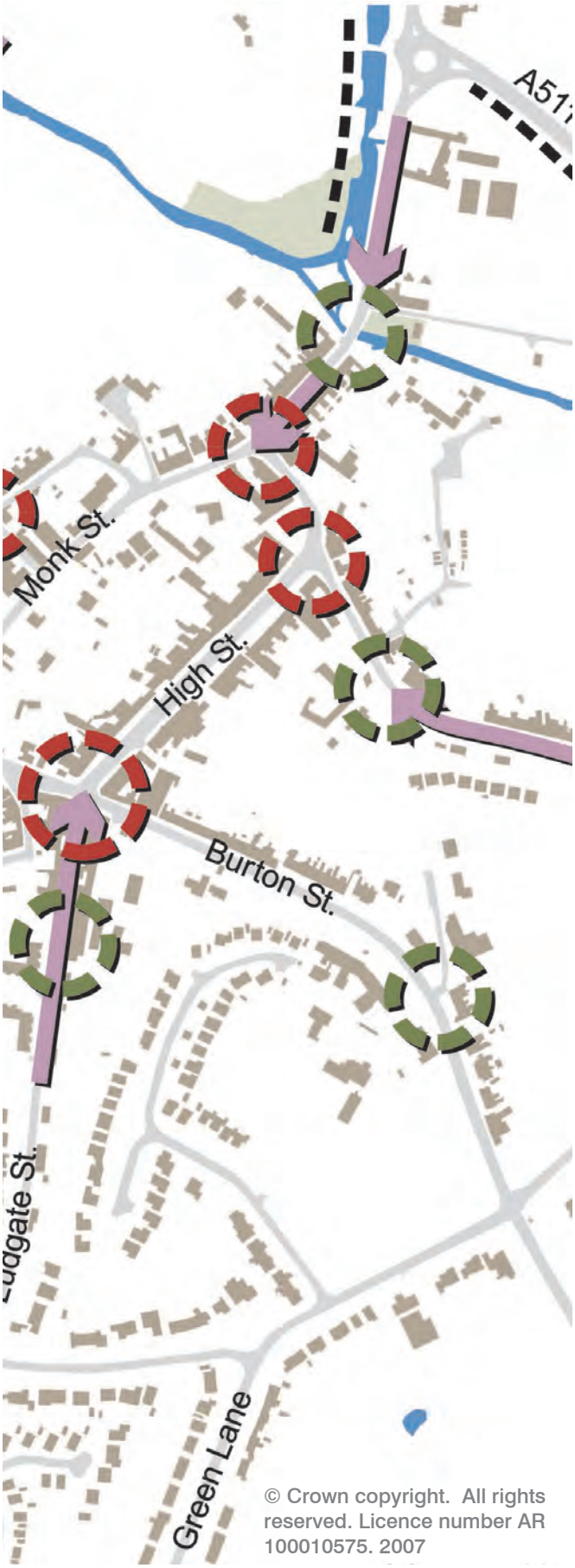
Vista and Views

Barrier / Edges

Landmark

Gateway

Meeting Place / Focal Point



1.2.13 As well as urban design analysis, more technical assessments may be needed to inform development proposals. An early understanding of the possible constraints to development should be established. This will enable a positive design response. Technical issues might include (but are not limited to):

- Access to the site which may be fixed or pre-determined;
- Site levels / terrain where slopes affect the development;
- Ecology and particular environmental designations as well as important environmental interest outside of formal designations;
- Archaeology which may require preservation recording and retention of monuments in-situ;
- Existing trees and landscape on site;
- Ground contamination / contamination from previous uses;
- Underground services and / or pipelines and easements;
- Drainage and flooding;
- Existing buildings or structures to be retained on site;
- Conservation and heritage;
- Noise from nearby developments or other off-site issues; and
- Public rights of way.

1.3 The Response to Context in Quality Development

A Positive Response to Context

1.3.1 The Council does not seek to impose any particular style of development within the Borough. Rather it requires the design of development to demonstrate a strong, considered and sensitive response to its context. This approach will enable a traditional or a contemporary design language to be developed.

1.3.2 Design which is relevant to the site and wider context will be important, as this can support local distinctiveness. In some cases the immediate context of the site will be poor and so inspiration will need to be drawn from the best buildings or places locally.

1.3.3 The context analysis (described in 1.2) should provide cues which can inform the following basic elements of the design of the development.

- Routes, urban structure and street patterns;
- Siting and orientation of new buildings;
- Building lines, set backs, and street cross sections;
- Street design, including the definition of the street edge;
- Scale, massing and heights of buildings;
- Roof designs of new buildings;
- Materials, colours, details and finishes of buildings;
- Facade treatments in terms of proportion and rhythm;
- Detailed design in terms of fenestration, eaves, guttering etc;
- Boundary and edge treatments; and
- Landscape character and treatment.

1.3.4 Understanding how any proposed development relates to its context in relation to these basic elements is very important in terms of achieving an appropriate and sensitive design response. The architectural brief can develop from a clear contextual response to these basic design elements.

1.3.5 New buildings should develop a positive relationship with existing buildings. In some cases new buildings may simply need to replicate existing building forms. In other cases buildings may need to 'turn corners', 'frame views' or 'fill gaps' in the street edge. Only through proper analysis will the relationship between buildings be fully appreciated.

1.3.6 The Council will expect form and function of buildings to be well-resolved. The form of a building relates to its shape, its mass, its height and its scale. Creating good form involves combining these elements together in such as way as to create architecture which meets the functional requirements of the building as well as the contextual challenges of the site. In meeting functional requirements, the form and organisation of the building should be fit for purpose and coherent. The design should bring together and balance the form and function in a sensitive manner that is appropriate and responsive to context.

1.3.7 The best places within the Borough have a strong character and sense of place. The Council will expect new development to make a positive contribution to the character of an area. This might include harmonising with the prevailing character of an area, or a sensitive and well-judged architectural contrast, or the development of a new character and identity in locations where there is little sense of place at present.

1.3.8 Standardised designs which could be designed for 'anywhere' will not be acceptable in the Borough and developers must demonstrate how they have responded to the challenges and opportunities of the site and context.

↑ Accurate Traditional Detailing in new development

↑ Group value along the street in Abbotts Bromley

↑ This Development in Cumbria Responds well to Site Levels

↑ A sensitive in-fill development in Kinver which responds well to context

↑ Consistent height and width to building plots unites varied traditional architecture

↑ Consistent height and width to building plots unites varied contemporary architecture

Responding to Context in Respect of Larger Scale Developments

1.3.9 In larger developments within the Borough the opportunity should be taken to create high quality new places to live, work and relax. On these larger sites, the emphasis should be on creating places and not just a random collection of buildings or development. This section outlines how developers should approach the design of larger sites.

1.3.10 The Council will expect larger developments to be organised around a strong urban design framework. This framework can set the overall vision and approach for the development and form a basis for more detailed design. Such frameworks should address the following key design themes:

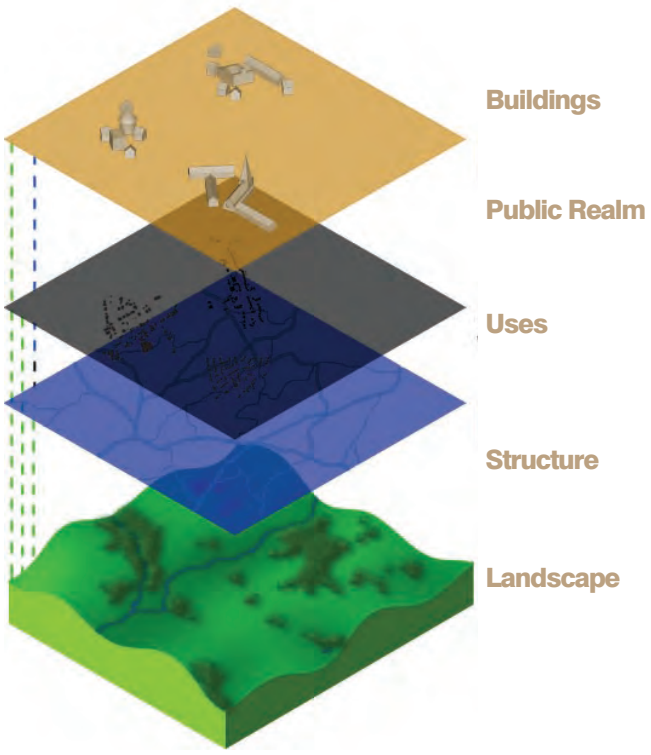
1.3.11 **Structure and movement** - the framework should establish the general arrangements of streets and public routes through and around the development, identifying access (and egress) points. It should define a clear street hierarchy and movement network, which create a connected, permeable and legible structure. Setting out the streets will, by implication, start to define development plots. The street network should provide choice for all users and integrate with existing street patterns;

1.3.12 **Public realm, landscape and open space** - the framework should identify the locations, nature and relationships of areas of open space and landscaping within the development, including for example squares, play space and village greens. Consideration should also be given to improving biodiversity through landscape design and also to include sustainable urban drainage measures;

1.3.13 **Urban form and built character** - the framework should set the basis for accommodating the buildings. It establishes how development blocks will be set out and how development will create the street edges. Consideration should be given to the relationship between buildings, and their scale and character;

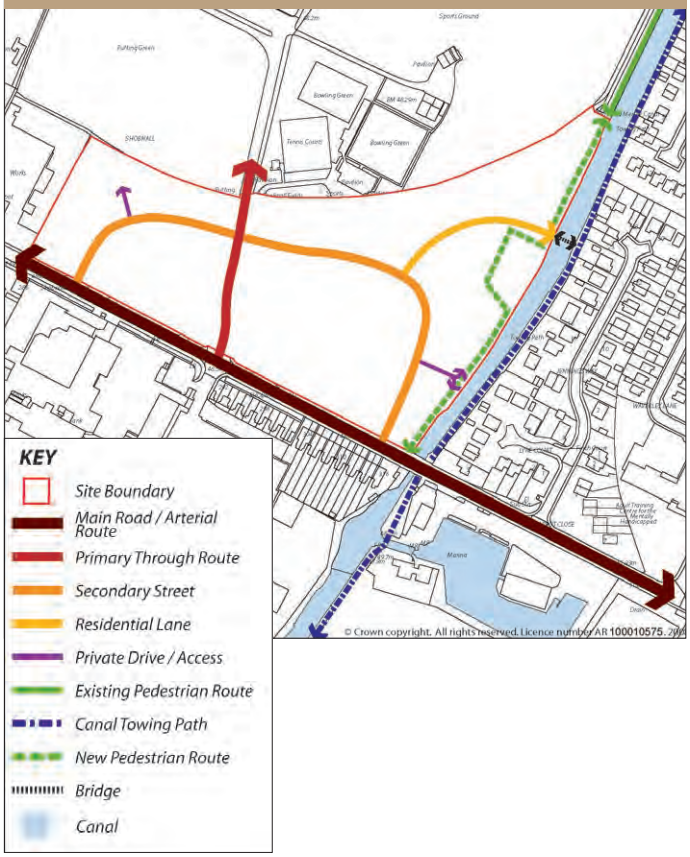
1.3.14 **Uses, functions and activities** - the type and, where appropriate, mix of uses, tenures and densities within the scheme should be set out in the framework, including where active street edges are proposed and how uses will interact with areas of open space. It will also be important to set out how uses will relate to one another on plan and in three dimensions in mixed-use schemes.

1.3.15 The urban design framework should be based on a key plan or layers of plans, along with supporting text and imagery. The main purpose of this is to provide a comprehensive and coordinated design.

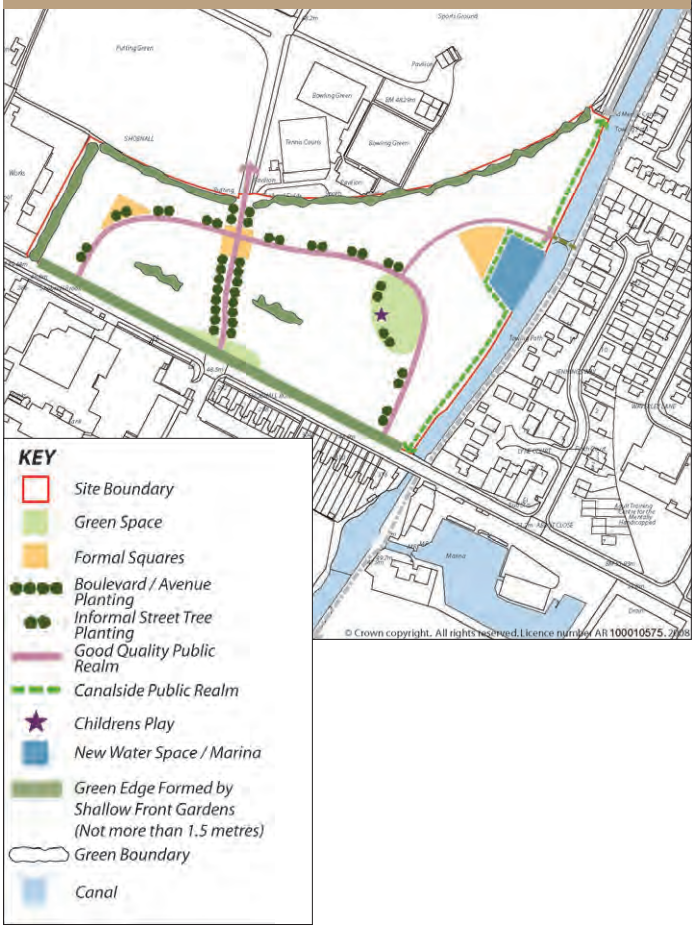


Hypothetical Urban Design Framework for a site at Shobnall Road on the Trent and Mersey Canal.

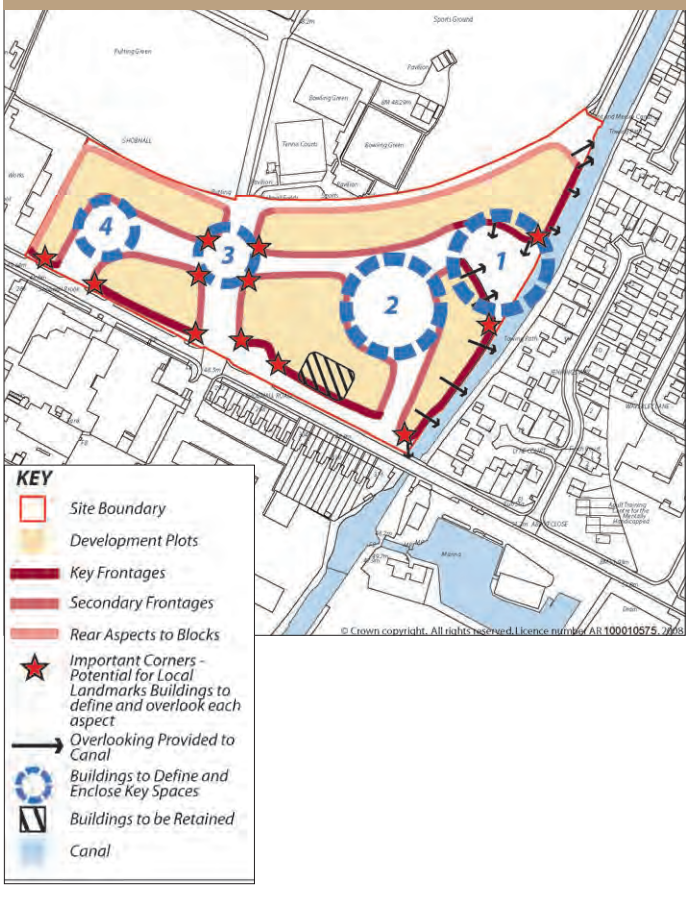
Structure and Movement Framework



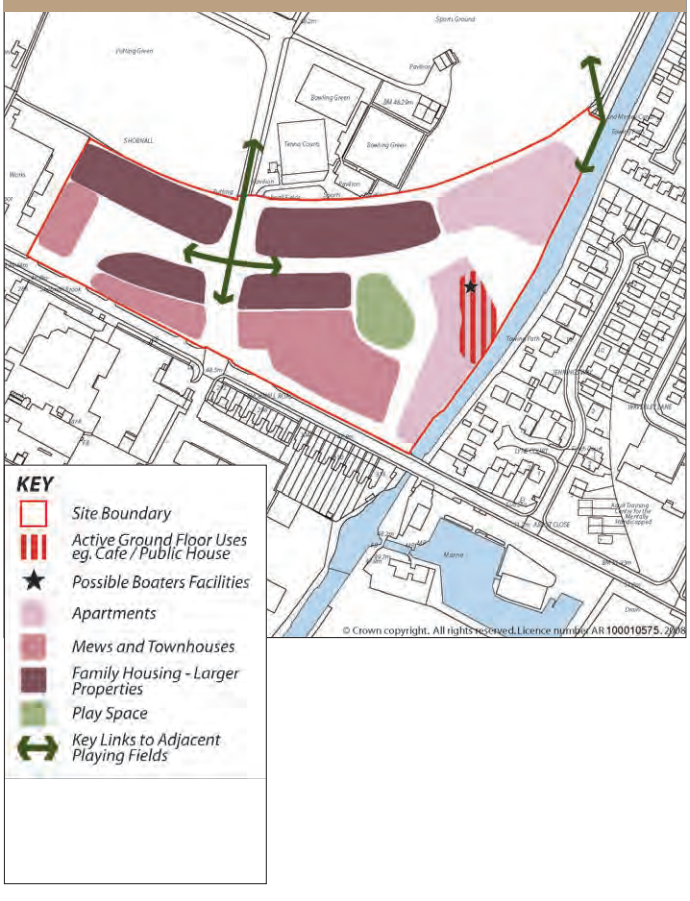
Public Realm, Landscape and Open space Framework



Urban Form and Built Character Framework



Uses, Functions and Objectives Framework



1.3.16 As well as setting out the urban design framework, the following key design principles should be followed:

- Create a strong structure, based on connected streets;
- Design for ease of movement, particularly for walking and cycling;
- Establish spatial coherence, based on well defined streets and spaces;
- Create a legible place, with a strong character and sense of place;
- Design for diversity, variety and choice;
- Create a high quality, attractive landscape and useable public realm;
- Integrate road space carefully, so as not to dominate the layout; and
- Integrate car parking & servicing efficiently and discreetly.

1.3.17 How to apply each of the above principles in the design of larger scale developments is explained in the following paragraphs.

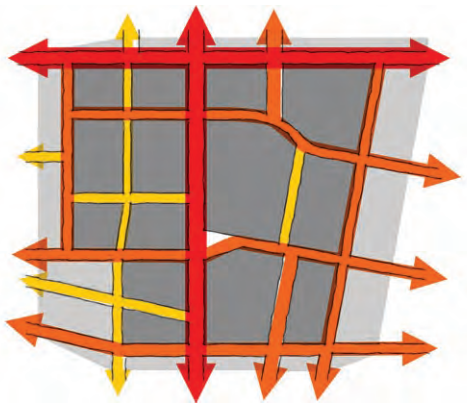
Create a Strong Structure for the Development

1.3.18 The structure of a development refers to the way in which the blocks (or plots) of development are arranged and how the routes are established through a development. The routes and blocks should be considered together when laying out a site.

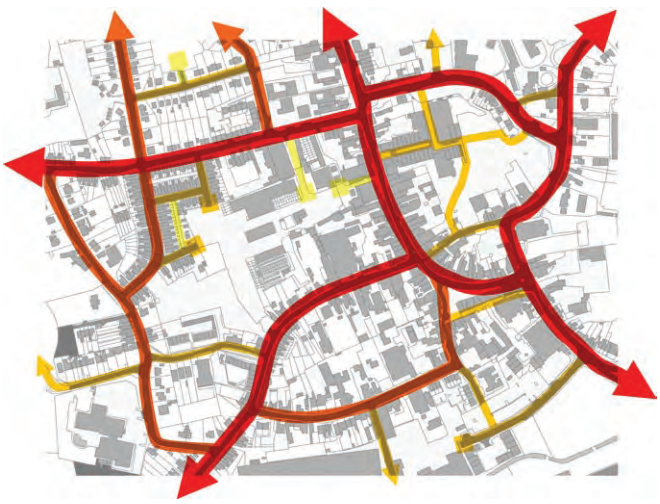
1.3.19 Sites should be structured so that routes are well-related to the surrounding area, with new streets positioned to connect with existing streets to ensure good integration and connectivity. Internally, developments should provide a permeable network of streets, which make walking and cycling easy and direct.

1.3.20 It will be important to establish an appropriate street hierarchy for a development. This should identify the role and function of the streets within the movement framework for the site. The hierarchy can then inform the detailed design of the development in terms of the street itself and the building frontages that define the streets.

1.3.21 When considering the street hierarchy of a scheme, the busier streets should be regarded as the 'primary' streets, with progressively more pedestrian-oriented (and less heavily trafficked) streets descending through a hierarchy of 'secondary' and, 'tertiary' streets and so on. The urban design framework should set out the structure and movement arrangements for the site and define the street hierarchy.



A generic street hierarchy



The street hierarchy in Uttoxeter Town Centre

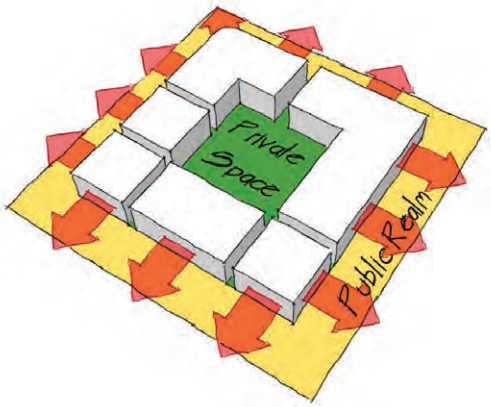
1.3.22 Development blocks should normally form the basic 'unit' of new development through the layout. Designers should consider the arrangement of blocks at an overall scheme level, before thinking about how individual buildings are positioned. The basic principles of the development block are that frontages of buildings face outwards, and overlook the public areas, with more private rear elevations, gardens and servicing areas located together within the interior of the block.

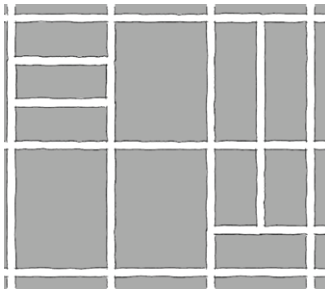
1.3.23 Development blocks can take a wide variety of shapes, sizes and patterns. This might include regular square or rectilinear blocks, or informal irregular or concentric blocks. The consistent feature of all blocks should be the ability of buildings to define the block, enabling building frontages to overlook the streets, with rear elevations and private spaces located together towards the interior of the block.

1.3.24 Following this general approach, the development block principle provides flexibility in the layout of sites. The scale and form of development blocks need to be appropriate to the location and type of development proposed. However, in general, smaller blocks are encouraged to support a more permeable urban grain and greater flexibility in terms of urban form.

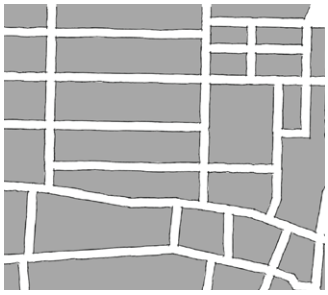
1.3.25 Open spaces should form an integral part of the development structure. Their location should help to create focal points within the public realm of a development. Whatever the scale and nature of the open spaces created, they should be overlooked by building frontages and positioned at prominent locations within the street network.

Basic Perimeter Block Structure / format

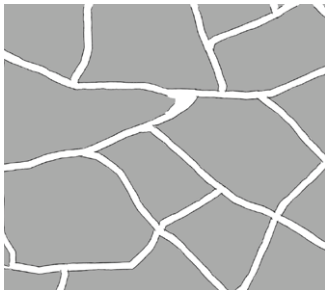




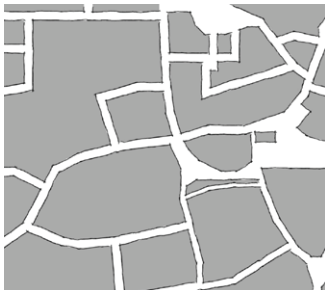
Regular Blocks



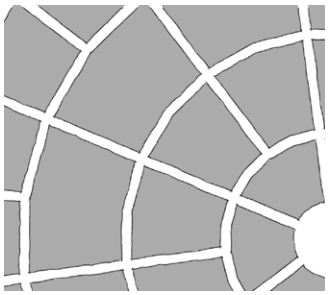
Burton Town Centre for example



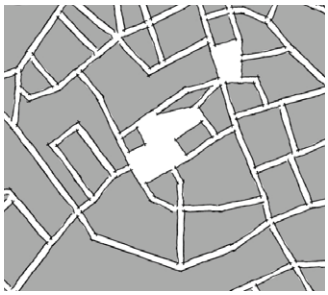
Organic Blocks



Uttoxeter Town Centre for example



Concentric Blocks



Stafford Town Centre for example

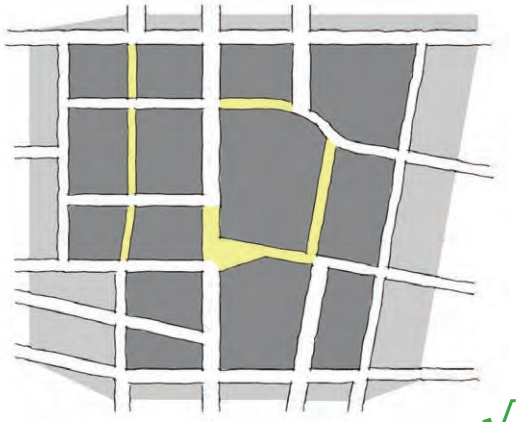
Design for Ease of Movement

1.3.26 Places that are easy to move around on foot, and easy to understand, are more successful places because they are more people-friendly. Carefully designed and oriented streets, which provide direct routes through developments, encourage walking and cycling and provide an alternative to the car for some journeys.

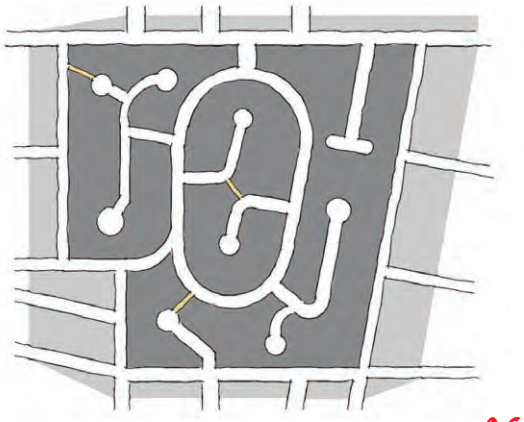
1.3.27 Pedestrian permeability is important in new development to create a choice of routes through an area. This involves creating an appropriate urban structure and network of streets, and in addition an accessible and welcoming public realm. Choice and a variety of different and connected routes will normally be preferred, as this creates a more user-friendly layout.

1.3.28 Vehicular traffic needs to be accommodated in an efficient and safe manner with priority given to pedestrian movement as appropriate. Balancing vehicular traffic with pedestrian accessibility is important to create safe streets and good accessibility for pedestrians and cyclists.

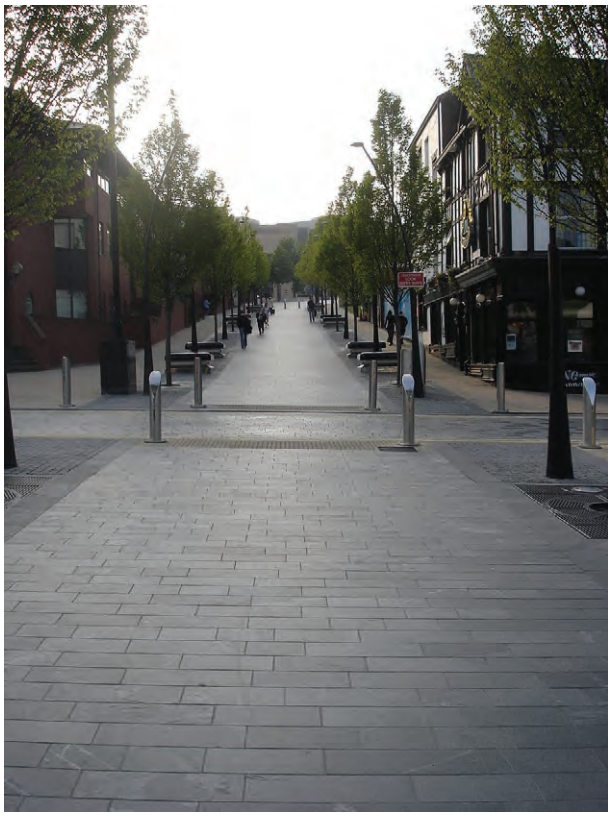
1.3.29 Pedestrian links from a site to existing public transport infrastructure, including bus routes and train stations, needs to be considered and where possible, enhanced. In some cases it may be desirable to include bus routes and stops through larger sites.



A well-connected structure √



A poorly-connected structure X



Strong linkages in a high quality public realm

Establish Spatial Coherence

1.3.30 The urban structure and street network should be defined and enclosed by buildings which create spatial coherence through continuity and enclosure of a development. This involves defining streets and spaces by built frontages. As a general rule, streets and open spaces should be edged by building frontages. However, it is not necessary for all buildings to be at the back of the footway, or that a solid 'wall' of buildings is required to enclose streets. Continuity can be achieved in many different ways and the manner in which buildings edge the street is important in establishing the character of an area.

1.3.31 The traditional streets of the Borough illustrate the varied ways in which streets can be well defined and enclosed successfully.

1.3.32 In some cases buildings create strong and consistent building lines with well-defined often unbroken building frontages. These include terraces of buildings of both consistent and also very different architectural styles. In other cases free-standing buildings define and enclose the street edge in a looser but nonetheless effective manner. Buildings which are more widely spaced can often be united by good quality and well-defined front boundaries.

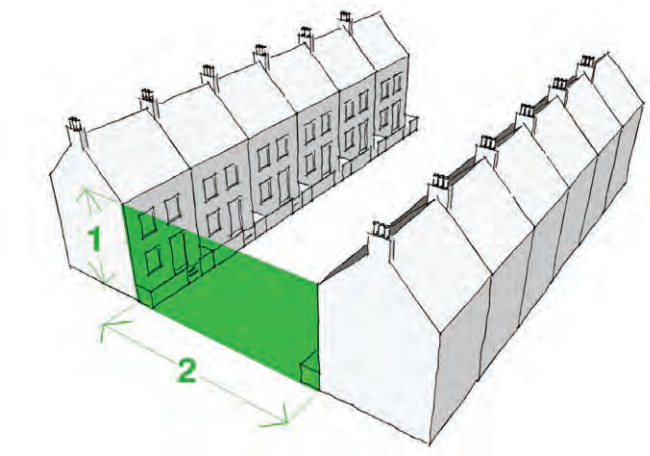
1.3.33 The context will often define appropriate building lines and levels of enclosure along new streets. Where there are few contextual cues the urban form and built character framework should establish a clear and deliberate approach to continuity and enclosure based on building lines, building heights and the definition of the built frontages (the buildings and the voids).

1.3.34 The relationship of buildings to the street is important and building lines and building heights should articulate the street hierarchy and the relative importance of the street. In general the main streets which are busier should be wider, with building lines set back slightly and with taller buildings edging the street to provide effective enclosure. Streets serving a more local function can be narrower, with building lines closer to the street edge and with more modestly scaled buildings able to develop enclosure as a result.

1.3.35 Similarly, taller buildings will be required at the edges of open spaces to help frame and enclose the space. In general, the larger the open space the taller the buildings may need to be to properly enclose and define the space.

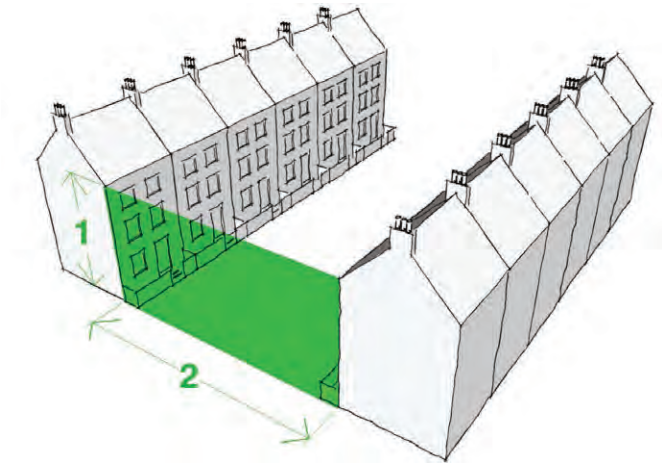
1.3.36 Many new developments often fail to create good quality streets. Even where buildings in themselves are well-designed, the streets are often poorly considered. The Council underlines the importance of creating good quality streets and addressing streets as key design elements alongside the design of individual buildings.

Street Cross Sections



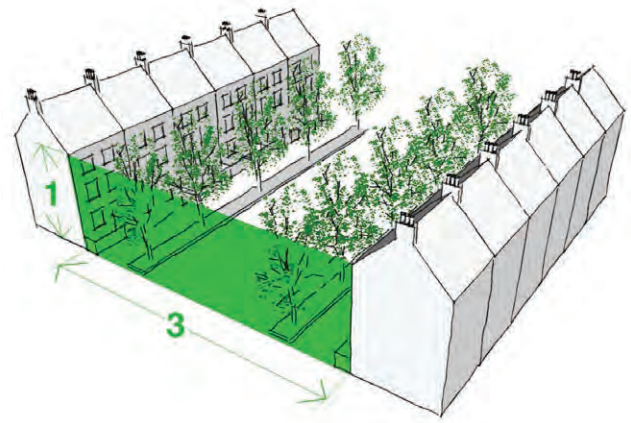
The street is approximately two times as wide as the elevations are tall.

Intimate scaled street in Rocester



Similar enclosure created by taller buildings and a wider street

Taller buildings and a wider street in Uttoxeter



Here the street width is three times wider than the elevation with trees providing enclosure

Wider street with avenue planting at Didsbury Point in Manchester

Create a Legible Place

1.3.37 Legibility is the ease with which an area can be understood both for local people and for visitors. Legible places are recognisable and distinctive and 'way finding' is more straightforward. This is a result of street patterns and building forms, including the street design and the public spaces between the buildings.

The gable is aligned to terminate the view/vista along the street

This building turns the corner effectively creating a local landmark

1.3.38 Historical areas tend to offer greater legibility because they have evolved over time and present a unique combination of street patterns, building designs and public realm. Collectively, the streetscape and townscape are recognisable, distinctive and legible as a result of these features and the way they relate to one another. Large developments need to design-in legibility by creating buildings which are distinctive, streets which are interesting and public realm which is attractive.

1.3.39 Larger developments should be designed as a family or group of buildings and spaces, rather than simply an arrangement of many individual buildings located together on the same site. Character areas should be created which develop a sense of place and identity. A larger development may create one new character area or several related character areas. Careful consideration will be required to ensure character areas are appropriate to the context and well related to one another.

1.3.40 The quality of new development is often undermined by either its bland uniformity or its contrived variety. Uniformity from standard house types, arrangements of buildings and materials will create bland developments. Simply mixing together a number of different standard buildings and materials will only serve to create a confused and incoherent development. Achieving an authentic balance of interest, harmony and variety is a key challenge for major developments if they are to create a positive sense of place.

1.3.41 Prominent locations, such as the entrance points to a development, corner sites and highly visible parts of a site, are important as they present opportunities to improve legibility. At such locations the design of buildings should help to create distinctive features and local landmarks. These can be reference points within the development through the design, scale and form of buildings.

Diversity, Variety and Choice

1.3.42 The mix of uses within an area and a development, whether within a neighbourhood, along a street or vertically within a building, will give life and vitality to an area. Providing a mix of uses close together can also create a more sustainable urban form and provide variety and greater choice for potential users.

1.3.43 Planning policies will inform the appropriateness of uses on a particular site. Notwithstanding this, there is a general aim to create more mixed and diverse developments. These can provide greater vitality, viability and economic activity for an area. This has commercial as well as urban design benefits for a development. Mixed and intensive developments will be more appropriate at highly accessible locations.

1.3.44 Large areas of the same uniform development should be avoided. Where areas are predominantly single use, the type, size and tenure of developments should introduce variety and flexibility through development. This can create more robust developments capable of accommodating changing needs more easily. Tenure in residential development is described in more detail in Chapter 2

1.3.45 Mixed uses will be most appropriate within rural and urban centres, or at other highly accessible locations. Here, greater levels of vitality and viability can be achieved through a mixed approach to enliven the public realm and create safer developments. Uses should create places which are lively and safe by day and in the evening. Mixed uses have a specific role to play in the evening economy.

1.3.46 Good design is integral in implementing successful mixed-use development. Careful design can ensure that different uses complement one another and that potential conflicts such as noise and access are 'designed-out'. Equally good design is important in ensuring appropriate open space and / or servicing and parking solutions.

1.3.47 Creative design can also help to provide more efficient, intensive and higher density developments at appropriate locations in the Borough where innovation and / or a bespoke design approach responds to the challenges of the site and unlocks development potential.

A mixed use development in Rocester

Burton-Upon-Trent town centre includes a mix of different land uses

Create a High Quality Landscape and Public Realm

1.3.48 The public realm is another name for the streets, spaces and places to which people have physical and visual access. The quality of the public realm plays an important role in shaping people's experience and enjoyment of places.

1.3.49 Green spaces and places should be an intergral part of development. Green spaces should be acessible and designed alongside the rest of the development and not be left as an afterthought. development should contribute to local bio-dervisty.

1.3.50 The topography and existing landscape character of a site and its context are important starting points for the design of development. Retaining good quality mature landscaping on site is encouraged to bring a stature and permanence to the development that might otherwise take many years to establish. More generally, development should contribute to the landscape character of a site.

1.3.51 The design of the public realm, including surfaces and furnishings, should be simple, attractive, accessible and robust. Good quality landscape design and planting should be designed into developments in line with planning policies to create amenity space and biodiversity. Landscape proposals should include locally appropriate species.

1.3.52 The Council will seek investment in, and improvement of, public realm and open space through new development. This may include the creation of new public realm and open spaces where appropriate. Developers will be required to invest in public art in larger developments, and this should be achieved in a coordinated manner where the art forms part of a comprehensive approach to design.

Staffordshire Landscape Assessment and East Staffordshire Landscape Character Analysis are avaiable from the council.

1.3.53 Management of open spaces is an important design issue. Developers will need to discuss with the Council, the Highway Authority and other necessary stakeholders (such as the Environment Agency) responsibilities for ongoing management of streets, squares and green spaces. The Council will expect developers to clarify in their planning application how the public or communal open areas of a scheme are to be maintained in their planning application.

↑ Well managed park within a residential development

↑ Hard landscaping and spaces designed for use

↑ Water can add in interest and form to public space

Integrate Road Space Carefully

1.3.54 The design of streets for people rather than roads for traffic is encouraged throughout the Borough. Streets should be people-friendly and where necessary traffic-calmed to create pedestrian priority wherever possible. Streets should be places of quality in themselves and not just a means of getting from one place to another. Vehicular traffic should not dominate a scheme or area.

1.3.55 New streets should be designed to respond to the levels of traffic expected as a result of the proposed development. However, highway design should not undermine the quality of streets as spaces in their own right and as places for people. The needs of pedestrians and cyclists in particular should be considered at an early stage. A balance will be needed between all users of the street to create a safe environment for all.

1.3.56 The urban structure should set the framework for the arrangement of streets, and the street hierarchy should inform the design of the street space itself. The design of the street should reflect the anticipated use and demands of pedestrians, cyclists and vehicular traffic. Access to public transport within or close to a development should also be considered.

1.3.57 In designing streets, it is important to consider the character of the space as well as the technical design for the highway. Buildings should be located and positioned to define spaces and create enclosure, rather than simply to edge the highway. Ideally the character of the street should be considered first and then the road space designed within the street. Testing layouts will be important to demonstrate that the arrangement of the buildings and street design will work.

1.3.58 New streets, where they are to be adopted by the Highway Authority, will need to be designed to meet the standards set out by the Highway Authority. This need not compromise quality, and early consultation with the Highway Authority through the Council is encouraged.

↑ Traffic table helps slow traffic

↑ Change in material highlights different street condition

↑ A pedestrian friendly lane

Integrate Car Parking and Servicing Efficiently

1.3.59 The design and format of car parking and the servicing arrangements for a development should be efficient and respond specifically to the challenges of the site. The design quality of streets and spaces should not be undermined by car parking, nor should the enclosure and continuity of streets be compromised.

1.3.60 Parking areas should not visually dominate a development. Car parking may be visible from the street, but large areas of parked cars or monotonous lines of parked cars along the frontage of a development should not be created. A variety of parking solutions is encouraged within a development. Parking areas should be carefully designed and where appropriate broken up by landscape.

1.3.61 Parking to the front of buildings can be detrimental to continuity and enclosure. Parking to the side of a building can often work better. Rear courtyard parking can be used discreetly to position parking away from public view. However, this must be safe and overlooked from nearby development. Some on-street parking may be acceptable where this is an integral part of the street design within defined bays.

1.3.62 Basement, sub-basement, under-croft or multi-storey parking solutions can all make more efficient use of land and enable more intensive and appropriate development. Such car parking can also help to reduce the visual dominance of parked cars. Where parking is not readily overlooked by development it will be very important that these spaces and buildings are designed to be safe and secure.

1.3.63 Servicing areas should be located away from public view within development blocks to avoid creating unattractive edges. The associated noise and light from servicing areas should be carefully considered with regard to the impact on existing neighbours or other proposed development.

Some on street car parking

Parking here is designed into the square in Poundbury

Underground parking takes advantage of change in levels to hide parking and maximise of use of a site

Responding to Context in Respect of Smaller Scale Development.

1.3.64 At any scale of development good quality architecture, urban design and a strong response to context will be important. Whilst in their own right smaller scale developments will have a local impact, the cumulative impact of lots of small- scale developments across the Borough can be profound.

1.3.65 This section develops the guidance set out in Section 1.2 and describes how to approach the design of smaller scale development. The guidance within this section is important to various types of smaller scale developments:

- Smaller 'infill' developments and individual buildings;
- Conversion of existing buildings;
- Extension to existing buildings; and
- Shop fronts.

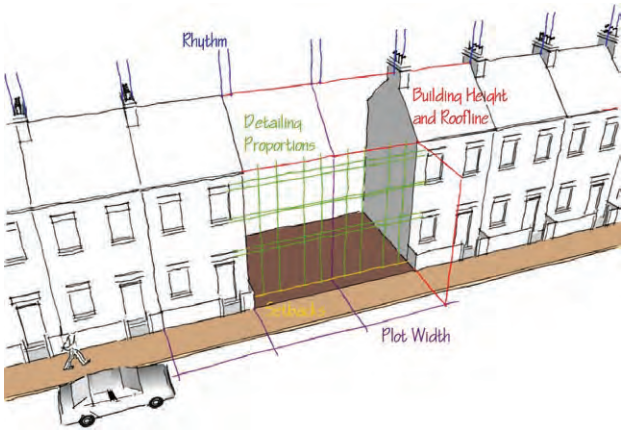
The response to context in respect of each of these categories of development is explained in more detail in the following paragraphs.

Smaller Sites and 'Infill' Development

1.3.66 On an 'infill' site the development must be appropriate not just to the prevailing character of the area, but also to the buildings and spaces immediately adjacent to the plot. In line with guidance in Section 1.2 a positive response to the context will be required. This could involve an appropriate creative design response but could also involve an accurate and faithful reproduction of existing buildings.

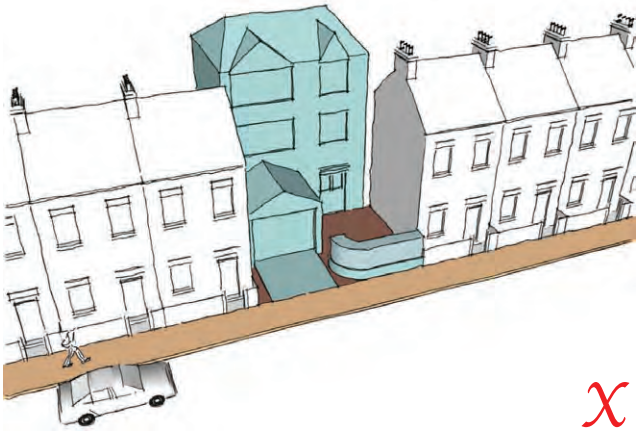
1.3.67 Where an 'infill' site is located within an area of consistent form or character (for example a gap site within a row of terraced houses or row of villas), its design should reflect the existing pattern and form of development along the street. Development should reflect the prevailing height, building line, roofline, setback and boundary treatment, and these elements should set the basic design parameters for the new development, irrespective of the architectural style of the building.

1.3.68 Where the 'infill' site is located on a corner, it will be important that the development responds positively to existing development along each of the streets that meet at that corner. The design of 'infill' developments may need to reconcile differing scales and forms of development along a street or around a corner, where adjacent buildings are of a differing scale, form and appearance. In general the infill development should either reflect the nature of one or other of the existing buildings, or alternatively relate to both of them in different ways to create a visual link and balance through the new development. There may also be opportunities to create local landmarks on prominent corner 'infill' sites, where buildings help to 'turn' the corner through their location and form, to create local landmarks.



↑ A possible gap-site

Abbots Bromley

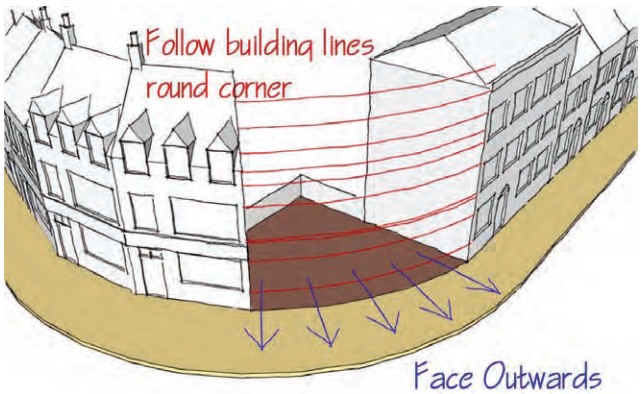


↑ Poor Quality in-fill unrelated to the context

Glossop High Peak

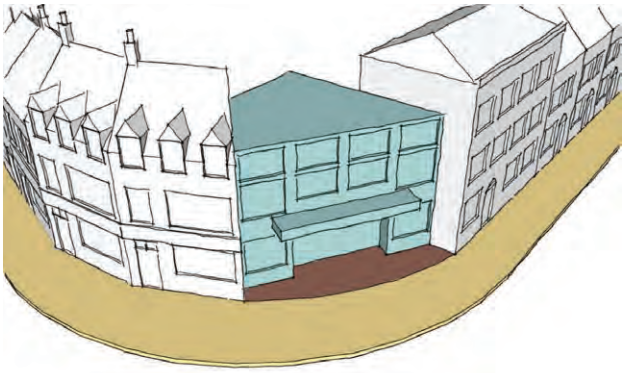
↑ More Appropriate In-fill Development within Established Terrace

Kinver Staffordshire



A possible gap site

Burton-Upon-Trent



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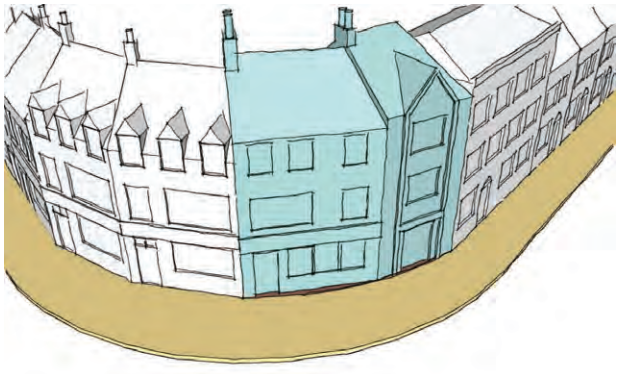
Poor quality infill development to the context poorly related

Crosby, Merseyside



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More appropriate In-fill Development on Corner Site

Newcastle-Under-Lyme

1.3.69 On some plots the context may be less instructive about where to locate the building and how to design its basic elements. Such open sites and free-standing situations require development which is well located in terms of site constraints and opportunities, where form and function are well-resolved and where the appearance of the building is appropriate within the landscape or townscape setting. Key design issues will include scale, and how the development relates to the site, such as terrain and landscape features and its wider setting, including nearby streets, access points and other nearby buildings.

1.3.70 A traditional or contemporary design approach may be appropriate and the quality of development proposals in response to the context will be the key issue. In these smaller developments it is not envisaged that a new character area can be created, rather the small number of new buildings should respond carefully to the context. It may be appropriate for all the new buildings to follow the same or similar design. Equally in some situations it may be more appropriate for the small number of new buildings to be varied in appearance and form. In either case the layout and arrangement of the new buildings should be appropriate for the context.

1.3.71 The design of new developments, both small 'infill' developments and individual buildings, will need to safeguard the privacy and protect the amenity of nearby existing buildings. Overlooking and overshadowing are important design issues and the Council encourages a design-led approach to overcome potential problems where siting, form and design details resolve any privacy and amenity issues. Design approaches to addressing issues of overlooking are detailed in Appendix 1.

Conversion of Existing buildings

1.3.72 Every conversion is unique and presents specific design challenges. Different building works may be required in order to convert buildings for new uses; both internal works and / or external works, need to be carefully considered at the outset of a development.

1.3.73 Where the external appearance of such buildings is sensitive to change care will need to be taken to respect the original quality of the building. In general, conversions should not fundamentally change or detract from the character and appearance of historic buildings of recognised architectural quality. The integrity of the original building will need to be maintained through any external works. It should be possible to read the history of the building and identify any more recent additions. This could involve adding forms which are subservient in sympathetic traditional materials and designs. It could, where appropriate, involve a more contemporary addition, which contrasts with and is subservient to the original building. Designs should always work with the character of the original historic buildings in terms of scale, form, openings and layout.

1.3.74 Where buildings are listed, more stringent conservation controls are in place to protect the character of buildings. In such cases scope for any external works is likely to be more limited. The re-use of rural buildings is a key planning issue and separate guidance is available from the Council for this type of development.

1.3.75 Conversion or upgrading of existing buildings may help to improve developments of more modest or limited design quality. In such cases, it may be possible to make more substantial alterations to the appearance and character of the building. In general the Council will support proposals which improve the quality and visual appearance of buildings, either through their conversion or their upgrading, in line with adopted planning policies. This can help to renew and enhance the built fabric of the Borough and improve its image and identity. Where this approach is to be taken, early assessment of the design issues affecting the building should be undertaken. This should include any intrinsic qualities of the building and how improvements could respect and enhance these. More generally, works to such buildings should create more visually appropriate frontages, a stronger response to context and high quality architecture.

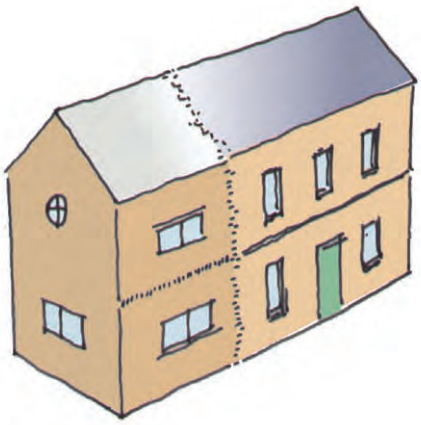
Historic buildings sensitively converted and integrated in a new development

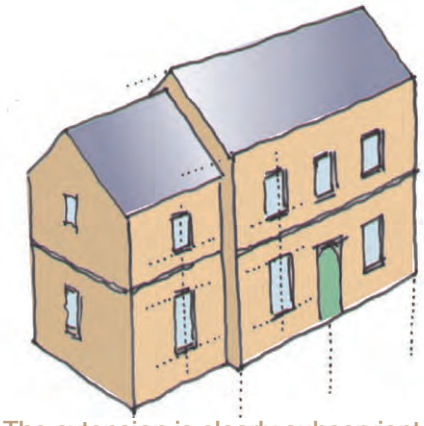
Original fenestration and arching give articulation to the building

Extension of Existing Buildings

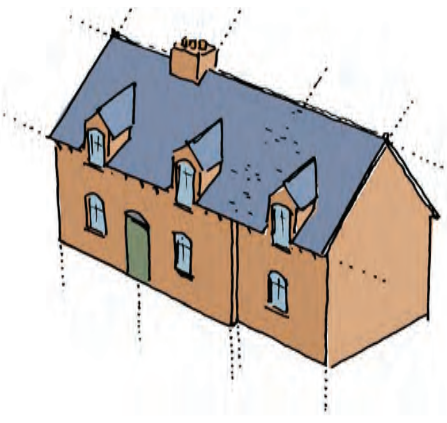
1.3.76 An extension can significantly alter the character and appearance of a building. The aim should be to create an extension which is sensitive to and harmonious with the original building. Extensions should not detract from the character of a building. The extension should be subservient to the original building in terms of its scale and its form. The visual integrity of the original building should not be compromised by the extension.

1.3.77 Generally the materials and details should be informed by those used for the original building. This will require the selection of materials which are identical to or as close a match as possible to those already used. In some cases, where high quality historic buildings require extension, it may be more appropriate to design the extension deliberately in a sensitive and simple contemporary design language, with contrasting materials, such that the extension is clearly identifiable from the original building. In such cases, the design and materials used should still be of the highest quality and demonstrate a strong response to the original building. The approach taken must be based on an accurate assessment of context.





↑ The extension is clearly subservient to the original building



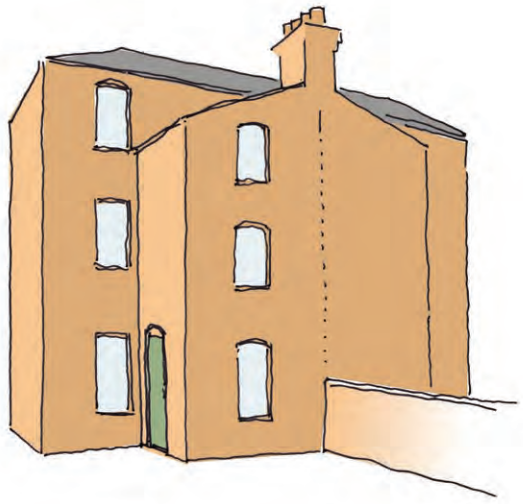
↑ The extension echoes the original building

1.3.78 Significant new built forms should not generally step forward of the established building line of an existing street, within domestic contexts. Such extensions can undermine the character of the streetscape. In commercial and retail development it may be possible for new built forms to step forward of existing building lines where this achieves an improved relationship between the original building and the public realm. A good example of this is a new entrance lobby to an office building.

1.3.79 The walls of a new extension should not meet the walls of the existing building flush, as this can create awkward jointing that will highlight any slight differences in materials. It is generally preferred that extensions step back (or in) from the prevailing building lines of original buildings on principal elevations. This can create a clearer delineation between the form of the original building and the extension.

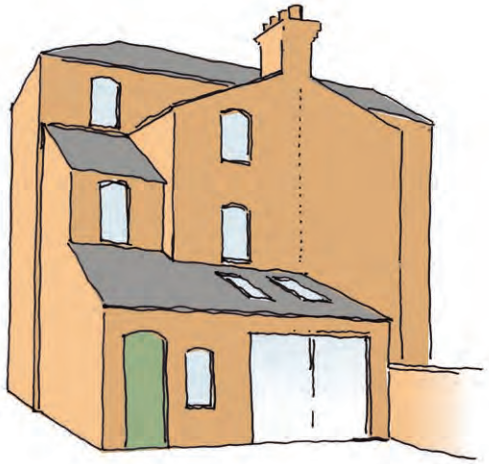
1.3.80 The pattern of fenestration for the extension should generally be informed by the existing building in terms of vertical and lateral proportions. Where modern extensions to traditional buildings are proposed, it is preferred that traditional floor to ceiling heights be respected and that new windows reflect traditional proportions. In some cases more lightweight structures may be appropriate which create a different pattern of walling, voids and glazing.

1.3.81 The manner in which the roof of the original building meets the extension is very important, and this should be subservient to rather than be continuous with the original roof. Extensions should generally step below the existing ridge and eaves height. In some cases it may be appropriate for eaves and ridge heights to be consistent with the original building, for example in a terraced row. It will not normally be acceptable for extensions to be taller than the original building, where the original building is of historic merit or part of an existing established streetscape.



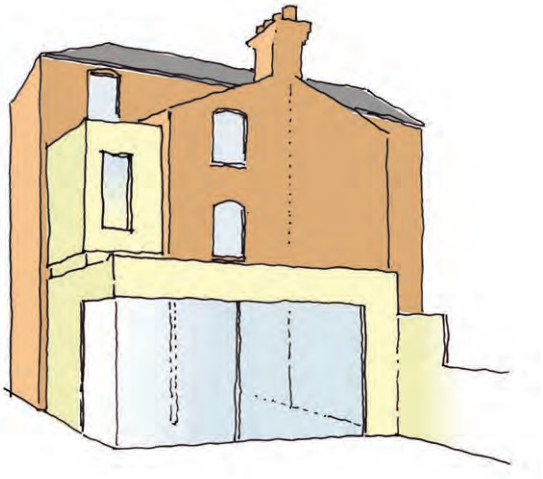
A traditional house to be extended

An extension to a restaurant in Cheshire (The Red House)



A traditionally inspired rear extension respects the original building

A sensitive but striking contemporary extension adds to the quality of the original building



An equally successful contemporary approach to extending the building

The extension opens up views of the nearby River Dee

Shop Front Design

1.3.82 Good quality shop fronts can create an interesting, varied and vibrant edge to the street. Conversely, poor shop fronts can deaden streets and undermine the quality of the built fabric and public realm. The Council encourages shop fronts which are sympathetic to and appropriate for the buildings within which they are located. In order to achieve this shop fronts should:

1. Reflect the scale and proportion of the buildings within which they are located, particularly their vertical and lateral rhythms and fenestration;

2. Ensure consistent use of materials, colours and finishes, which should be sensitive and appropriate to the building and context;

3. Ensure fascia boards, stall rises, pilasters and other elements of the shop front are sympathetic to the building and well-coordinated, creating an aesthetically coherent and pleasing effect;

4. Ensure fascia signage, branding, hanging signage and other forms of branding are carefully designed and sympathetic to the existing building and context;

5. Ensure colours for shop fronts and for signage are well coordinated and sensitive to the building and the context. Bold colours may be appropriate but garish and vivid colours should be avoided. Heritage colours will be preferred for historic buildings;

6. Ensure lighting is externally mounted and carefully designed. Internally illuminated fascia signage boxes should be avoided.

7. Standardised, crude, shop fronts which are unsympathetic to the architecture and proportions of buildings will be discouraged

8. Contemporary designs may be acceptable even in traditional buildings where the design language creates a simple and elegant feel utilising high quality materials; and

9. Security features should not dominate and security shutters should be avoided. Where there is an identifiable requirement for security shutters these will normally only be acceptable where they are internally mounted of, perforated or latticed design and finished in an appropriate colour. The precise design solution will depend on a proper analysis of the context.

Where poorer quality shop fronts already exist the Council will encourage improvements to be made. In new development the Council will require good quality and appropriate shop front design, integral to the design of buildings and retail units.

Attractive shop front in Tutbury

1.4 Design for more Sustainable Development

1.4.1 Climate change is an important issue and the Council is committed to securing more sustainable development in East Staffordshire. Consideration of environmental performance from an early stage in all development is encouraged.

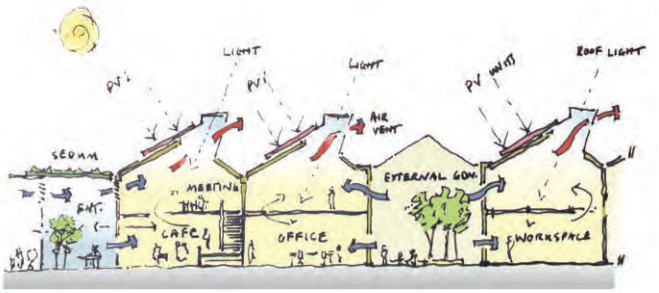
1.4.2 The key performance standard will be meeting (current) Part L (Conservation of Fuel and Power) of the Building Regulations. The Council encourages developments which exceed standards of sustainable design set out through the Building Regulations.

1.4.3 Sustainable design is important in all development and requires a focus on both the overall scheme design, the design of individual buildings and detailed specification of built development and the landscape proposals of a scheme. The following guidance is provided in relation to sustainable design:

- Where contextually appropriate, orientate buildings to maximise opportunities for utilising the energy of the sun. This may include solar harvesting or solar gain;
- Larger buildings will need water collection facilities, for example rain-water harvesting from roofs via water-butts;
- Ensure the form and mass of buildings permits natural lighting, ventilation, heating and cooling, reducing the need for mechanical conditioning of buildings;
- Consider on-site generation of renewable energy from the sun, from the wind, or from the earth. Developers should respond to the latest guidelines from the council for the percentage of energy need to be met by on-site renewable sources.
- Incorporate sustainable drainage measures through building and landscape design to reduce surface water run off into the sewer network;
- Promote recycling through the design of buildings and developments, and effective waste management;
- Consider the sustainability of materials, including their performance and from where they been sourced. Local materials will save energy in transit;
- Ensure development is designed to address potential flooding issues where development on site is agreed in principle through planning policy;
- Provide green space and landscape in all new developments which contributes to and is connected with the wider existing green infrastructure of the area to create and enhance habitats and biodiversity;
- Specify energy efficient fixtures, fittings and appliances where these are to be provided as part of a development; and
- Larger scale developments in particular should look to greater green infrastructure linkages to existing habitat networks.

↑ Sustainable Drainage at Upton Northants

1.4.4 The Council encourages developers to demonstrate environmental performance through recognised environmental rating systems. For residential development the Council encourages the use of 'Code for Sustainable Homes' and for other development the use of the Building Research Establishments Environmental Assessment Method (BREEAM). As high a rating as can be achieved practically on site through development is encouraged.



1.4.5 Modern methods of construction (MMC) can work towards creating more sustainable development and more efficient construction. MMC is the term used to cover a wide range of building technologies and types of pre-fabrication and off-site manufacture.

1.4.6 MMC is a way of improving the speed of construction, minimising waste, improving the quality of construction, improving air-tightness of development, improving site safety and addressing the shortage of traditional construction skills in the UK. Architectural flair and innovation need not be compromised by MMC, indeed the pre-fabricated modular approach to design can encourage high architectural standards, not least in terms of accuracy and rigour in detailing.

1.4.7 The Council will support schemes which utilise MMC providing the design is of a high quality. Traditional methods of construction, detailing and finish will also remain important across the Borough, and the two approaches to development can deliver very different but nonetheless successful housing developments.

1.4.8 The Council will expect developers to set out the environmental credentials of their schemes as part of the design information to support their planning application. This might be based on a summary of the benefits of the design within the Design and Access Statement.

1.5 Designing for more Adaptable and Flexible Development

1.5.1 A quality that many successful places exhibit, but which often goes unnoticed, is the ease with which an area can adapt to change over time. At the broadest level, good streets and a sound urban structure can provide a durable urban fabric within which buildings can be appropriately adapted.

1.5.2 In terms of built development, it is noticeable how many older buildings have been successfully adapted to new uses and purposes. Conversion and re-use of older buildings has required careful design and investment, but in many cases, it is the flexibility and quality of internal spaces and the structural integrity of these buildings that have lent themselves to successful re-use and adaptation.

1.5.3 Designing in scope for future changes can help new development to withstand economic, social and technological change to the benefit of the development, the wider area, owners, occupiers and users. Key issues are the spaces within the building and, related to this, the construction of buildings, which can together create more liveable and flexible internal spaces and scope for future amendment and alteration.

1.5.4 Development should create more diverse, adaptable and flexible places by:

- Ensuring that development plots are well-scaled and robust, creating efficient parcels of development which are flexible and which can accommodate expansion in the future;
- Creating flexible spaces within buildings, including generous 'floor to ceiling' heights and broader internal structural spans, to enable 'freer' use of internal space;
- Creating adaptable ground floor units at prominent locations, for example on prominent corners or along busy streets, with building depths and formats flexible enough to provide scope for changing use over time;
- Considering future expansion possibilities for buildings at an early stage to ensure that there is a logical basis for possible future extension within the development plot, ideally to the rear of the development; and
- Ensuring easy access and flexibility in servicing so as to accommodate different uses over time.

1.6 Safe, Accessible and Welcoming Development

1.6.1 Inclusive and safer design is essential in all development, to create welcoming and successful places. Whilst design cannot guarantee that places will be completely safe, it should create environments which are inherently safer and where the opportunities to commit crime are reduced.

1.6.2 One of the key factors in designing for safer places is to create places where natural surveillance is optimised and where streets and spaces are well used and well overlooked. Security to buildings should be robust, but should not dominate the development visually,

as this can create and reinforce negative perceptions of an area and give rise to 'fear of crime'.

1.6.3 Good design should create places which are accessible to all, particularly to people with impaired mobility. In designing the buildings and public realm attention should focus on how the place will be used and how well it meets the needs of all potential users from an access point of view. The Building Regulations (Part M) set out minimum standards for access to buildings and the approaches to buildings and the Council will expect developments to meet and where possible exceed these basic accessibility standards.

1.6.4 Development should create safer, more accessible and welcoming places by:

- Ensuring good levels of natural surveillance and overlooking are provided to public areas from nearby buildings and avoiding the creation of places which are unobserved and isolated;
- Ensuring that the design of buildings avoids creating blank windowless frontages to the public realm in favour of buildings which overlook streets and the approaches to buildings;
- Ensuring that the layout and design of the development avoids creating potential hiding places and enable clear views along streets and routes and towards buildings;
- Designing active and connected streets, where good linkages and good integration ensure that streets are relatively busy and that there is a choice of routes;
- Designing in robust and appropriate security to buildings and developments avoiding 'target hardening' approaches or 'retro-fitting security measures' (such as externally mounted roller shutters), whereby security measures dominate and actually reinforce fear of crime;
- Ensuring a clear delineation of public and private areas ensuring that rear boundaries are 'locked together' within development blocks (and plots) and away from public view and not readily accessible from the street;
- Creating an accessible and inclusive public realm with streets and spaces that are free from barriers and clutter and where people can move around freely, making provision for people with impaired mobility;
- Ensuring effective management and maintenance of public and private areas to discourage crime and social incivilities now and in the future. The Council will expect developers to confirm the management arrangements for open spaces within their schemes;
- Ensuring the night-time environment is safe and welcoming with public routes and spaces well-lit after dark and well overlooked from nearby building frontages to maximise scope for informal surveillance. Approaches to buildings should be direct, visible and illuminated from the street to the building entrance; and
- Creating shop fronts and commercial buildings where security features are sensitively and attractively designed. Security shutters should be avoided for shop fronts. Where there is an identifiable requirements for security shutters these will normally only be acceptable where they are internally mounted, of perforated or latticed design and finished in an appropriate colour.

1.6.5 The Council will expect developers to set out how their developments have been designed to take into account the need for safer and more accessible design as part of a planning application. This should form part of the Design and Access Statement which will need to accompany most planning applications.

1.7 Summary of the Fundamentals of Good Urban Design

1.7.1 Understanding the context of the development site is critical to the creation of good design. Before beginning to design the development the context of the site should be analysed by carrying out a site and context audit. This should include:

- A landscape and natural environment context audit;
- A built context audit; and
- A linkages and legibility context audit.

1.7.2 The results of the site and context audit should provide cues to inform the following basic elements of the development's design. The Council will expect the response to context for new development to be explained in the Design and Access Statement.

- Routes, urban structure and street patterns;
- Siting and orientation of new buildings;
- Building lines, set backs, and street cross sections;
- Street design, including the definition of the street edge;
- Scale, massing and heights of buildings;
- Roof designs of new buildings;
- Materials, colours, details and finishes of buildings;
- Facade treatments in terms of proportion and rhythm;
- Detailed design in terms of fenestration, eaves, guttering etc;
- Boundary and edge treatments; and
- Landscape character and treatment.

1.7.3 Large-scale developments should be based on a strong urban design framework which takes account of:

- Structure and movement;
- Public realm, landscape and open space;
- Urban form and built character,
- Uses, functions and activities; and
- Biodiversity.

1.7.4 Large-scale developments should also:

- ***Create a strong development structure by adhering to the following design principles:***

1 The urban structure should connect with the surrounding area, with the new streets well-integrated with existing routes;

2 Development blocks should be created which reflect the pattern and urban grain of the surrounding area and of an appropriate size and shape to accommodate new development;

3 Internal connectivity within the development should be created which promotes walking and cycling through the heart of the scheme and accommodates pedestrian desire lines;

4 A hierarchy of streets should be identified for the development in order to guide the detailed design of the streets to create a safe, welcoming and legible development;

5 Development frontages should overlook the public realm, providing natural surveillance for streets, with rear elevations and private areas located away from public view in the interior of the block; and

6 Open spaces should be designed, as appropriate, into the scheme. These should form an integral part of the layout and be well-overlooked from development fronta

- ***Design for ease of movement by adhering to the following design principles:***

1 Development should contribute to a framework of direct and safe routes through a scheme, with good provision for pedestrian and cyclist movement to and around the development;

2 An appropriate street hierarchy should be defined and implemented through public realm design. This should take account of the wider role and function of streets beyond the development site;

3 Indirect and convoluted routes should be avoided, as should dead ends, which can undermine the movement structure of a development. Some limited use of culs-de-sac may be acceptable if the site dictates, and if linked routes are not possible;

4 Traffic movement should not dominate a development and roads should be pedestrian-friendly. The segregation of pedestrian and vehicular traffic should be avoided in favour of traffic calming; and

5 Parking should not dominate a development and should be discreetly and efficiently located. Large areas of surface car parking are discouraged.

- ***Establish spatial coherence by adhering to the following key design principles:***

1 The streets and spaces of a development should be well defined by contextually appropriate and legible building frontages that create a sense of enclosure and continuity through the scheme;

2 Building lines, heights and the definition of built frontages should be related to the street hierarchy to create legible and distinctive streets, which are appropriate to the scale and importance of the streets through the scheme; and

3 Positive relationships should be developed between buildings. This involves how buildings relate to one another side by side along a street as well as how buildings relate to one another across a street or space.

- ***Create legible places by adhering to the following key design principles:***

1 A clear sense of character should be created within a development, based on a family of building forms, which create distinctive streets. Contrasting as well as harmonising forms can sometimes add interest to the streetscape;

2 A narrow palette of good quality materials should be selected, which is locally relevant and which can unite the development and create a clear identity, based on consistent and well-related colours, textures and finishes;

3 New development should respond to existing character areas and / or create new character areas, where appropriate, to establish a positive identity for the scheme. In larger developments a series of well-related character areas may be appropriate; and

4 New focal points and landmarks should be created within a development through the design of streets and buildings, giving particular attention to prominent locations, such as corners and entrance points to a development.

- ***Design for diversity, variety and choice by adhering to the following key design principles:***

1 Mixed, varied and diverse developments should be created where appropriate to provide a basis for greater choice, interest and vitality, with large monotonous expanses of the same use or type of development discouraged;

2 Mixed uses are promoted within buildings and within streets at urban and rural centres and at other accessible locations to support greater levels of economic activity and vitality within the built environment; and

3 Creative and innovative design can help to enable more efficient and intensive formats of development, where careful design can unlock the full potential of sites and areas.

- ***Create high quality landscape and public realm by adhering to the following key design principles:***

1 Large developments should directly enhance existing public realm and / or create high quality new streets and open spaces;

2 The design of the public realm should create accessible, attractive and robust spaces and places that can stand the test of time;

3 Green areas including public spaces, private gardens and other planting areas should enhance the setting of a development and improve biodiversity; maintaining and enhancing ecological linkages;

4 The public realm should be clearly delineated from private spaces within a development, providing clarity in relation to the function of public open space; and

5 Clarity over the ongoing management and maintenance responsibilities of the public realm should be provided and consultation with the Council and Highway Authority will be required.

- ***Integrate road space to avoid dominating developments by adhering to the following key design principles:***

1 Street space should be based on forming relationships between buildings and positive street spaces as opposed to simply placing buildings alongside roads;

2 Street design should create places that are safe for people, convenient and pedestrian friendly, avoiding traffic-dominated layouts; and

3 Traffic-calming and pedestrian routes should be designed as an integral part of the street, with carriageway widths kept to operational minimum levels.

- ***Integrate car parking and servicing areas efficiently and discreetly by adhering to the following key design principles:***

1 Car parking solutions should be of an efficient format and design, responding to the challenges of the site and the nature of the development, to enable an appropriate mix, intensity and density of development. Innovative solutions may facilitate more intensive developments;

2 Varied parking solutions should be designed into the development to reduce the visual impact of parked cars along streets and from the public realm. Large areas of parked cars within spaces and along street edges should be avoided or broken up through landscape design; and

3 Servicing areas should be located away from public view ensuring that noise and light do not cause problems for neighbouring uses. Parking and servicing areas should be delineated.

1.7.5 The key issues in respect of small-scale developments are:

- Development on ‘infill’ sites must be appropriate not just to the prevailing character of the area, but also to the buildings and spaces immediately adjacent to the plot;

- Where an ‘infill’ site is located within an area of consistent form or character (for example a gap site within a row of terraced houses or row of villas), its design should reflect the existing pattern and form of development along the street;

- Where an ‘infill’ site is located on a corner, it will be important that the development responds positively to existing development along each of the streets that meet at that corner. There may also be opportunities to create local landmarks on prominent corner ‘infill’ sites, where buildings help to ‘turn’ the corner through their location and form, to create local landmarks;

- In smaller developments it is not envisaged that a new character area can be created, rather the small number of new buildings should respond carefully to the context;

- Conversions should not fundamentally change or detract from the character and appearance of historic buildings of recognised architectural quality. The integrity of the original building will need to be maintained through any external works;

- In converting or upgrading poorer quality existing buildings it may be possible to make more substantial alterations to the appearance and character of the building where this would contribute to improving the visual appearance of the area;

- Extensions should be sensitive to, and harmonious with, the original building. Extensions should not detract from the character of a building. An extension should be subservient to the original building in terms of its scale and form. Materials, fenestration and any other relevant detailing should generally be an exact match of the existing building unless there are justifiable reasons to diverge from this principle, for example where existing fenestration is unsympathetic to the character of the original building and the new building work seeks to restore a more traditional window style. Overall, the visual integrity of the original building should not be compromised by an extension;

- In some cases, where high quality historic buildings require extension, it may be more appropriate to design an extension deliberately in a sensitive and simple contemporary design language, with contrasting materials, such that the extension is clearly identifiable from the original building. In such cases, the design and materials used should still be of the highest quality and demonstrate a strong response to the original building;

- It is generally preferred that extensions step back (or in) from the prevailing building lines of original buildings on principal elevations to create a clearer delineation between the form of the original building and the extension;

- Extensions should generally step below the existing ridge and eaves height, except in cases where it may be more appropriate for eaves and ridge heights to be consistent with the original building, for example in a terraced row;

- Shop fronts should be sympathetic to, and appropriate for, the buildings within which they are located. Where poorer quality shop fronts already exist the Council will encourage improvements to be made. Paragraph 1.3.23 provides key design guidance for shop fronts.

1.7.6 Developers should also be aware of the following general points:

- ***The Council will support new developments that are built in a traditional style where –***

1 they are designed to high standards;

2 they respect and reflect the prevailing character of existing traditional buildings so that new development looks like an established part of the built fabric;

3 the design and appearance of buildings is based on an authentic and accurate application of the local built vernacular. Careful attention to accuracy in layout, form, materials and details will be required so that the development is both coherent and authentic. Crude and poor quality ‘copies’ of traditional buildings will not be acceptable as this will undermine the integrity of existing historic buildings and places. Inappropriate form and massing, inaccurate materials and detailing and cosmetic use of vernacular styles imported from outside the Borough should all be avoided.

2 Design Quality in Residential Development

2.1 Introduction

2.1.1 Chapter 2 provides specific guidance for new residential development. It builds upon the guidance from Chapter 1 and is applicable to all new residential development, on large and small sites across the Borough.

2.1.2 The challenge to developers is to achieve high standards of architecture and urban design in new residential development and create buildings, streets and neighbourhoods which provide sustainable and successful places to live.

2.2 Designing Streets for People

2.2.1 In residential development the quality of streets is as important as the quality of the individual dwellings. A well-designed house will be undermined by a poorly designed street. Conversely a carefully designed street can provide an attractive, safe and pleasant setting to a dwelling improving its attractiveness and its value as a result.

2.2.2 However, many modern developments focus almost exclusively on the individual dwellings, giving little consideration to the character and quality of the street as a whole. Whether residential development is creating new streets or simply adding to existing, it will be important that it contributes to an improved environment. This will require a focus on the design of the dwellings, individually and together, and the design of the public spaces between the buildings.

2.2.3 The character of new streets will need to be carefully considered. This will include the height of buildings along the street and the street width. The relationship between height and width is very important to the sense of enclosure the street provides.

2.2.4 The character should be informed by the street hierarchy (see Chapter 1) as well as the context. The street hierarchy will identify the relative importance and role of the streets through a development and is particularly important when considering the character of new streets in larger residential developments.

↑ Design should create welcoming places to live

↑ New Development in Rolleston

The Bars Development , Chester

2.2.5 Whilst no hard and fast character types are defined, the general approach to street character based on the street hierarchy might be expected to include the following types of street:

- **Primary Streets** – These are the most important and highest order streets in the residential street hierarchy of a scheme. They will tend to be the busier streets which are likely to be wider with more traffic, perhaps even buses. To enclose these wider streets, taller buildings will be needed. Small front gardens may be required to provide a private buffer space between properties and the street, and footways alongside a defined carriageway are likely to be necessary and desirable. On-street parking might not be possible, but direct access to properties from the street will usually be practical.

- **Secondary Streets** – These are the middle order within the street hierarchy. They will be quieter and based on narrower carriageways, with buildings more likely to be closer together. A combination of tall and more modest buildings can work together to provide enclosure. Greater pedestrian provision will be possible, but footways alongside each side of the carriageway may still be necessary. The street space can become more pedestrian oriented but will still need to balance the requirements of through traffic movements. Some on-street parking will usually be possible.

- **Tertiary Streets** – These are the most local streets in the street hierarchy. They will be the least busy and whilst linked to other streets, they will provide mostly local access. Their character will be more intimate, perhaps taking the form of a mews style street or lane. Carriageways will be narrower than secondary streets and may present opportunities for shared surfaces. Buildings could be close to or at the back of the footway. Designated on-street parking bays will be appropriate and can contribute to traffic calming. These more intimate streets may enable sharper changes in direction in terms of traffic movements, but should still offer effective accessibility to emergency vehicles and removal vehicles.

Example of Primary Street in Barton-under-Needwood

Example of Secondary Street in new development at Didsbury Point Manchester

Example of Tertiary Street in Rolleston-on-Dove

2.2.6 In practice developers should devise their own street hierarchy typologies and establish the characteristics of the scheme accordingly. Public realm and building design should be influenced by the street hierarchy in residential developments, as well as careful consideration of the context. The explanation of the street hierarchy should be provided through the Design and Access Statement which will need to accompany planning applications for such residential schemes.

2.2.7 It will not be acceptable for residential roads to be the organising element in the streetscape. Houses (or apartment buildings) placed uniformly alongside distributor roads will create a bland and monotonous estate feel and will not be acceptable. The location and design of dwellings should create interesting streetscapes and strong relationships within a development, including consciously arranged views and vistas.

2.2.8 In residential developments a street should be a place for people and not simply a traffic route. East Staffordshire Borough Council and Staffordshire County Council as Highway Authority share an aspiration for high quality, safe and people-friendly streets, where traffic is calmed and pedestrian movement is promoted.

2.2.9 The design of residential streets should respond to user needs in a balanced and effective way and recognise user needs in the following order:

- Pedestrians;
- Cyclists;
- Public transport users;
- Specialist service vehicles (e.g. emergency vehicles); and then
- Other vehicular / motor traffic

↑ Sketch Proposal of Secondary Type Street

↑ Sketch Proposal of Tertiary Type Street

↑ Sketch Proposal of Residential Square

2.2.10 Traffic should be calmed and vehicular speeds limited by the form and layout of the development and the street design, not just by the design of the carriageway. Care should be taken to design residential layouts and streets which inherently calm and slow traffic where appropriate, within a connected structure.

2.2.11 Layouts can support more pedestrian friendly streets where the buildings and the carriageway are designed together to force motorists to drive more slowly, with more care and greater attention. The means by which traffic can be calmed in residential layouts might include:

- Avoid designing long straight and sweeping streets, which enable vehicles to generate higher speeds;
- Design shorter street lengths with sharper and more frequent changes in direction to limit opportunities for vehicles to generate speed;
- Position buildings carefully within or stepping into the street to reduce forward visibility and close off views;
- Tighten corners and junctions, with building lines stepping closer at corners to limit forward visibility;
- Narrow the street by stepping the building line and carriageway closer together through sections of a street or at defined pinch-points;
- Design junctions as small spaces where vehicles might be expected to give way. This might include cross-roads and multi-arm junctions, not just 'T' junctions;
- Design on-street car parking as an integral part of the street within defined and carefully integrated parking bays.
- Avoid creating traffic engineered 'hammerhead' style turning areas in favour of forming small squares and courts;
- Consider opportunities for designing landscape within the street, within courts and squares;
- Vary surface materials and finishes within the carriageway, and define gateways, pedestrian routes and desire lines;
- Consider opportunities for traffic calming by managing junction priority or removing defined priority in quieter streets; and
- The provision of frontage car access to properties from the street where this is technically feasible. This should not, however, create large areas of hard surfacing for parking vehicles at the front of dwellings.

↑ The curved street design slows traffic

↑ Parking in the street can slow traffic

2.2.12 It will be expected that the level of traffic calming and pedestrian provision will be related to the function of the street and its position in the street hierarchy, reflecting the volume of vehicular traffic expected through the design. In streets which are expected to accommodate more traffic, formal pedestrian crossing provision will be more important. Quieter streets can be more pedestrian-orientated and created with less formal traffic management measures.

2.2.13 Such traffic calming measures will need to work technically and it will be expected that swept path analysis or vehicle tracking will be used to demonstrate the practicality of the layout. Designing for traffic calming should not be seen as an afterthought, and crude solutions such as a plethora of speed tables will not be acceptable where streets are designed from scratch. It will remain very important to create a connected and permeable street network.

2.2.14 Layouts should avoid creating indirect and convoluted routes and, worse still, lots of dead-end roads. The cul-de-sac often features heavily in many 'estate-style' layouts to the detriment of permeability and legibility. Large-scale developments composed of culs-de-sac located off feeder roads should be avoided in favour of an integrated block structure. On a smaller scale, some 'mews style' developments may be successful where the site does not offer opportunities to integrate with other streets.

2.2.15 Where appropriate, streets should incorporate street trees. This may not be appropriate where narrow tight streets are typical but is well suited to suburban settings. Trees should be ?

2.2.16 The maintenance of streets will be the responsibility of the County Council. Where street design goes over and above functional needs there may be a committed payment for it's maintenance.

Tight corner radii will help reduce traffic speeds

Narrow street and on street parking

The surface of this lane will slow traffic

2.3 The Form and Type of Buildings

2.3.1 Like any new building, the Council will expect new houses and apartment developments to be well-designed and well-related to their context.

2.3.2 Developers should avoid the repetitive and often inappropriate use of standard building (house) 'types' which lack local relevance and could be designed for 'anywhere'. The arbitrary use of a 'range' of often unrelated housing types can create bland and uninteresting layouts and streets, which are out of context with their setting.

2.3.3 The Council understands that house builders may have their own house types with which they are familiar and which offer them economies in design and construction. However, it will be important to ensure that development is appropriate to its context. It will be expected that, where appropriate, existing house types will be modified to suit the specific site context. For some sites, or parts of sites, standard house types may not be suitable at all and new types of architecturally designed buildings will be needed.

2.3.4 Chapter 1 sets out how development should assess and respond to the context. This will be very important for all scales of residential development. A proper analysis of the context will be vital where developers are seeking to attune their house types to a site, in terms of their form, materials and details.

2.3.5 Modern development often lack effective and interesting proportions. Typically new houses tend to be of 'square box-like' proportions in terms of their form and fenestration, which do not correspond with the best traditional buildings in the Borough. Traditional buildings benefit from more refined proportions. Simple domestic proportions are in evidence in vernacular cottages and farmsteads. Other traditional buildings have grander and more elegant proportions, for example period buildings in the Georgian and Victorian styles. Developers should take inspiration from the proportions of traditional development and move away from the bland housing 'box' approach. Changing the proportions of fenestration for example, to create taller and narrower windows as opposed to standard modern square window openings, can help reinforce vertical proportions, as can varying window height within the different storeys of a development.

2.3.6 Proper attention to the pitch and form of roofs will also be required to ensure an appropriate and contextually responsive design. Generally more steeply pitched roofs are characteristic of traditional dwellings within the Borough.

2.3.7 Many suburban housing developments seek to maximise detached houses on site and do so by locating lots of small freestanding housing 'boxes' very close together, side by side. This form of development, and the relationship between buildings it creates, has little urban design merit and has no basis in the domestic design language of traditional housing areas in the Borough. As a result it should be avoided in preference for more interesting and authentic building forms and relationships.

2.3.8 The form of apartment blocks as well as houses needs to be properly considered. Modern developments sometimes fail because they apply cosmetic and superficial domestic detailing to what are essentially oversized terraces of residential buildings. The form of apartment blocks should be related to context and be well articulated. They should not simply be 'scaled-up' versions of domestic buildings. For apartment blocks it will be important that if a traditional design language is used then precedents for that scale of development such as villas, or

industrial buildings are referenced in the design. Apartments more often present opportunities for contemporary designed buildings where the form of the building follows its function more closely.

An appropriate balance should be found between traditionally influenced and innovative contemporary design. In areas isolated from traditional forms a contemporary approach may be especially appropriate.

Robust apartment blocks

Vernacular cottages

Detached house

Proud and striking period dwellings

Terraced forms

2.4 Materials in Residential Development

2.4.1 Appropriate and locally relevant materials will be required for new residential development. Chapter 1 states that building materials should be as high in quality as possible and underlines the preference for traditional and natural materials (see Chapter 4 for appropriate materials). In residential buildings traditional materials and colours can help to convey a domestic scale and character, even where a contemporary design language is used.

2.4.2 Many residential developments fail as a result of inappropriate use of materials and colours. Today there is unrivalled scope in selecting materials. With this wide scope comes a responsibility to select materials carefully. This Guide does not seek to inhibit innovation and creativity, but does require that materials respond positively to the site and its context.

2.4.3 Robust materials which age well and stand the test of time will be required. Such high quality materials may cost more in the short-term, but will perform better in the longer-term. Care should be taken to coordinate materials, finishes and detailing. Ongoing maintenance should be considered when specifying both products and finishes to ensure long-term performance and highlight long-term maintenance requirements. Some lighter coloured renders for instance can be susceptible to staining from surface water run-off around window sills and roofs.

2.4.4 In many new developments the general approach is for traditional-looking buildings. However, the use of inaccurate or inappropriate vernacular styles and details often creates buildings with little or no integrity or local relevance. Mass standardisation of housing across the country has resulted in crude faux-traditional designs applied to standard house types. Such a cosmetic pastiche approach will not be acceptable in new development in East Staffordshire.

2.4.5 Reflecting guidance in Chapter 1, the Council will support new development designed in a traditional style where the design creates an authentic and accurate interpretation of local built vernacular. This can reflect existing domestic buildings close to the site or, where there is little to draw upon locally, designs can pick up the prevailing materials and detailing evident within the wider context.

2.4.6 The Council will also support well-mannered contemporary architecture in new development. It will be important to achieve human scale in residential design and the articulation of the architecture, the choice of materials and the detailing all play a role in achieveing this. Human scale is characterised by the use of good quality, tactile materials which are of a generally smaller unit size and which create visual interest. It is also characterised by effective articulation of form and mass through the design of frontages, the interplay of materials, the fenestration treatment and the detailing.

↑ Copper and steel give different effect

↑ Brick walls and stone detailing

↑ Innovative shapes and form may be acceptable

↑ Colour needs to be carefully considered

↑ Traditional materials, render and brick

↑ Timber for detailing and facades

2.5 Detailing and Finishes in Residential Development

2.5.1 Traditionally inspired residential development can be let down by poor detailing and finishes. This will undermine the quality and integrity of buildings and schemes. Good quality and appropriate detailing and finishes will help to ensure high quality design and successful developments.

2.5.2 The quality of construction details for walling is very important. The choice of brick and the brickwork bonding and finish can help create a strong sense of character and local belonging. Developers are required to use locally relevant materials and are encouraged to incorporate some authentic brickwork features, such as Flemish bonding, for principal buildings (or frontages), dentil coursing beneath eaves and string coursing between storeys as contextually appropriate.

2.5.3 The use of local stone for domestic properties, where contextually appropriate, should reflect traditional buildings. There is a precedent for finely dressed ashlar stonework in which the quality of jointing is very important. Stone quoins, sills and lintels can add to the quality and authenticity where they are used in a contextually appropriate manner.

2.5.4 Render finishes should be carefully applied and create an even application. The finish should include a 'bull nose' detail above the damp proof course and fenestration to drain water. Painted brickwork in appropriate colours can also be acceptable with the appropriate masonry paint finishes.

2.5.5 Detailing of windows can have a profound effect on the appearance and quality of the buildings. If traditional designs are to be used these should be accurately designed in response to the context of the development. Within the Borough the predominant traditional window styles are flush fitting side-hung casement windows and vertically sliding sash windows. Other traditional window styles which are less common include inward opening hopper style windows (usually found on traditional agricultural buildings), stone mullioned windows and horizontally sliding sash windows. Depending on the context of the development, and the architectural style of buildings proposed, accurate forms of these windows should be used and include some or all of the following attributes:

- Side-hung casement windows should have opening casements fitted flush with the frame;
- Appropriate detailing should be used for lintels, including segmental brick arches, stone or timber lintels. Where windows are positioned directly beneath the eaves an expressed lintel detail is unnecessary;
- Windows should have a traditional brick, stone or tile cill, as appropriate for the context, and integral timber cills should be avoided;
- Traditional window frames should be constructed in timber and set back by a minimum of 50mm from the wall surround in the case of side-hung casement or hopper-style windows, and 100mm in the case of sash windows;
- Where glazing bars are proposed they should have a maximum overall width of approximately 18mm and a maximum outer nosing width of approximately 6mm.

2.5.6 In contemporary schemes where traditional window details are not proposed, it is still important to ensure the proportions, positioning and details of windows are appropriate to the context (or improve on the context where necessary). In relation to the above list, the use of appropriate lintel and cill details can provide definition to the windows, and setting windows back from the front face of the building by at least 50mm helps to provide depth and character to the façade.

2.5.7 External doors also have a very important contribution to make to character and quality. External doors should be appropriate to the character of the building, and, in historic environments, take account of traditional door styles in the immediate vicinity or wider locality as relevant. This may include the use of vertically boarded timber doors on cottage-style properties, or more decorative panelled doors with fanlights on Georgian-style buildings. As with windows, doors should be set back from the face of the wall by a minimum of 50mm and have lintel details appropriate for the context and style of building.

2.5.8 Rooflights should alter the profile of the existing roof as little as possible. Ideally they should have a black finish and be installed so that their outer faces are flush with the plane of the roof. Rooflights should also be kept to a minimum to avoid dominating the appearance of the development.

2.5.9 Guttering and downpipes should be appropriate to the style of building and the context of the area. On existing historic buildings or where a traditional design response is proposed, rainwater goods should ideally be cast metal with a black finish, and guttering should be fixed direct to the brickwork on rise and fall metal brackets unless they are of high quality or contextual analysis determines other more appropriate detailing. Bargeboards and soffits should be avoided unless contextual analysis informs use of such details.

↑ Window within an arch in new development

↑ An original sash window with sill and lintel

↑ LEFT: Inappropriate alterations RIGHT: sash detailing

2.6 Hard and Soft Landscaping Including Boundary Treatment

2.6.1 Materials and details for the public realm and surfaces, landscape and boundaries are also important in creating an accurate and high quality effect for the development. The specification and detailing of landscape and boundaries should reflect the context, and create a high quality feel for the residential environment.

2.6.2 Examples of good quality design and finishes include demarcating parking bays on street by changes in materials, such as stone blockwork rather than cheap paint finishes. Additionally effective planting and robust boundary treatments help the scheme to mature well with age.

2.6.3 The Council will expect to agree design details either as part of a detailed planning application or as reserved matters to outline planning permissions, or by condition. In general the Council will welcome as much detail as possible as relevant to any application in order to agree design quality as early as is appropriate to the planning process for the development.

2.6.4 The location of essential plant or infrastructure, for example sub-stations, bin stores, cycle stores and junction boxes, flues and ventilation and other plant can also have a detrimental impact on the quality of the scheme. Simple robust design and discreet location of infrastructure can help ensure the quality of the design is not undermined.

2.6.5 Boundary treatment is an aspect of modern residential development which is often poorly resolved. Boundaries should be treated as an integral part of the design of the development and contribute to the character of the street.

2.6.6 Front boundaries are very important as they demarcate public and private areas and clarify ownership responsibilities. Front boundaries might include low walls, railings or hedges, or combinations of these, and should create a robust edge to the curtilage of the development. In some streets, where the buildings are at the back of the footway, boundaries will not be necessary.

2.6.7 Where front gardens are provided, it will usually be expected to provide front boundaries as well. Usually the context will inform the design. Missing front boundaries can reduce clarity between the public realm of the street and the private realm of the garden. Traditional residential development is typified by good quality, low front boundaries that are well-related to the building in terms of materials.

2.6.8 Visible side and rear boundaries are important and are often another cause for concern in residential layouts where timber fencing is used as a cheaper edge to the street. This undermines the quality of the street edge and will not be acceptable where it is visible from the public realm. For side and / or rear boundaries visible from the public realm, robust garden walling will be required to reflect the built development.

2.6.9 Public open space should be designed to encourage higher levels of physical activity. Homes should have access to an area of green space sustainable designed for informal recreation.

2.6.10 The principles of Active Design promoted by sport england encourage recreational space to be accessible, of high environmental quality and well integrated with the residential layout to increase awareness.

↑ Residential Square

↑ Good Quality Boundary

↑ Simple Robust Street Design

↑ Play Area Beyond Water Attenuation Feature

↑ Buildings Frame View to Landscape

↑ Attractive Garden Space

2.7 Well-Integrated Car Parking

2.7.1 It will be very important that an effective approach to car parking is designed as an integral part of any residential development. Parked cars can have a visually detrimental effect on the character of residential areas.

2.7.2 There is no single best solution for the design of car parking within a development. Variety is often the key to success and the design quality of the street is an important consideration indicating whether or not the approach to car parking is successful.
A combination of private in-curtilage car parking, semi-private courtyard parking and on- street parking can often work together well.

2.7.3 In-curtilage parking will include parking to the front and side of dwellings. Design issues for this form of parking include:

- The form and location of car parking should not undermine the enclosure and character of streets;
- High proportions of driveway car parking directly to the front of properties will not be acceptable as this dominate the streetscene;
- A variety of approaches will be preferred which minimise the visual impact of parked cars along the street;
- High quality front boundaries should be used where necessary to screen frontage driveway car parking and car parking to the side of dwellings;
- Integral garages within town houses are often underused for car parking and can result in additional requirements for car parking within a scheme. These should generally be avoided;
- Carefully designed car ports do generally remain in use as places to park cars and so will usually be preferred to integral garages; and
- Freestanding garages for larger detached dwellings can be acceptable providing these are carefully designed and appropriate to the context. Where larger garage doors are proposed, two single garage doors will be preferred to a single double-width garage door.
- Car parking should be designed with the larger public realm and landscaping frameworks and not added as an afterthought.

2.7.4 Rear courtyard parking provides an opportunity to create greater enclosure and a more intimate scale along the street. Design issues for this form of parking include:

- Rear / internal courtyard parking should generally form part of a suite of other forms of car parking to the front and side of properties in large schemes;
- In smaller developments it may be possible to serve the whole scheme from a rear courtyard car park, providing the design meets the guidance set out below;
- Rear courtyard parking will be acceptable in a residential scheme where this is integral to the character, intimacy and enclosure of the streets created by that development;
- Front access to residential buildings served by rear / internal car parking areas will be required as well as access from the car park itself;
- Wherever rear courtyards are provided they should be designed as good quality spaces within which cars are parked, rather than simply areas of hard standing;
- Courtyards should be safe and well overlooked from properties, with good direct links into buildings and secure approaches to buildings for residents; and
- Courtyards should be of modest scale, ideally providing not more than 10 car parking spaces.

2.7.5 More efficient parking solutions including multi-storey, basement and sub-basement

parking options are encouraged. In designing this form of parking the following design issues are important:

- Access / egress to parking areas should be controlled to be safe and secure;
- Access into dwellings / communal circulation areas should be direct and well-lit;
- Parking areas beneath a building along the street edge should be avoided; and
- Parking decks should avoid compromising the privacy of the rear aspect of dwellings, for example first floor bedroom windows.

2.7.6 On-street car parking can work for visitor and peak time parking, but needs to be carefully designed into the street and usually associated with dedicated off-street parking provision for residents. Design issues will include:

- Defined parking bays should be designed into the street space to provide clearly identifiable parking areas. These may be dedicated to the development;
- The design of the street should avoid potentially dangerous ad hoc car parking along the footway, which might result from insufficient parking levels or poorly designed streets; and
- On-street car parking should not visually dominate the street scene and the scale and location of parking bays therefore needs to be controlled and kept in balance with the whole street design.

Small rear courtyards

Parking to the rear of properties

On street parking

Car port

2.8 Appropriate Residential Densities

2.8.1 A design-led approach to density is encouraged, where the location and nature of the site should inform the decision over the appropriate residential density. The scale and height of nearby contextual development is an important consideration in establishing the appropriate scale for new development. Generally development should be in keeping with the context in terms of height and scale. This can prompt higher density development at some locations, but also control density in other areas. Higher densities will also be important in locations which are highly accessible, particularly by public transport. Developers are encouraged to consider the relative accessibility of their sites and how accessibility might be improved through a development as a basis for supporting new development.

2.8.2 Development quality will involve much more than any simple calculation of dwellings to the hectare, so whilst density is an important factor, it should be balanced with other design issues. Developers should consult the Council over the densities they are proposing for the site within the context of national and local planning policy guidance.

2.8.3 Whatever the form and type of dwelling, space is one of the most important qualities in a new home. Maximising a sense of space can help to create more usable and enjoyable homes. To achieve this, a number of important design factors should be considered:

- Effective daylight penetration into a dwelling;
- Taller floor to ceiling heights within principal living spaces;
- Efficiency with which circulation and movement is accommodated; and
- Strong relationship from the inside of the house to outdoor spaces.

2.8.4 With a sense of space, it will be possible to design at different densities and create homes which are comfortable and user friendly, as well as creating more sustainable and higher density developments at appropriate locations.

↑ Effective proportions can break down larger buildings

↑ Small courtyards add value in tight density housing

↑ Green space is needed in higher density housing

2.9 Space Standards and Separation Distances

2.9.1 The Council prioritises a design-led approach to the location and interaction of dwellings. No set standards are specified in terms of separation distances between buildings. The performance of development will be considered in terms of its acceptability in design terms with regard to overlooking. Appendix 1 describes how good design can overcome potential problems of overlooking and overshadowing.

2.9.2 In considering new dwellings in existing residential areas, the overall aim should be to preserve reasonable levels of privacy and amenity. Where new building frontages are to be positioned to face onto existing building frontages (or side elevations), the general aim should be to define an appropriate street width first and then detail the elevation of the new building to avoid direct overlooking.

2.9.3 Greater privacy should be afforded to rear elevations and to private garden spaces of existing dwellings. The interface between new buildings and sensitive rear private areas needs to be carefully handled. This may require the 'setting back' of new buildings to avoid overlooking and overshadowing. The design should avoid any direct overlooking of private garden areas and the detailed design of elevations and fenestration will need to achieve this.

2.9.4 In new development, where relationships between buildings are being established for the first time, the aim should be to create reasonable levels of privacy from which future residents can benefit. Where buildings turn corner the rear elevations create potential issues of overlooking. Here the layout and form of the development and the internal arrangement of rooms and window design need to achieve a satisfactory design solution.

2.9.5 In all development the Council will expect the fronts and backs of buildings to be well-resolved and follow the basic block principle of built frontages over looking other frontages (or sides), with the rear elevations of buildings (and more private areas) located together to the backs of the building.

2.9.6 The Council will expect detailed design information to establish how the design of the scheme mitigates any possible negative impacts. This should be included in the Design and Access Statement.

↑ Side view into bays are avoided by design

↑ Balconies are designed to promote privacy

2.10 Design for More Sustainable Homes

2.10.1 House builders are encouraged to invest in the design and sustainability of new homes. Chapter 1 describes how all new development can be designed to create more sustainable development. Developers should apply this guidance as relevant to new residential development across the Borough.

2.10.2 Residential developments will need to be designed to be environmentally sustainable as buildings and places, but also to support more sustainable lifestyles. Simple issues like designing appropriate storage space, particularly for cycles, integrating recycling facilities and providing water buts for all houses, can all help to encourage more environmentally responsible lifestyles. At the same time, the application of building technologies can help to deliver more sustainable developments. The Council will expect developers to set out the environmental credentials of their schemes, referring to Section 1.5 of this guide.

2.10.3 The Council also encourages house builders to demonstrate the use of 'Code for Sustainable Homes', which is the national environmental rating system for new homes. The code allows developers to be recognised for going beyond current building regulations in terms of environmental performance. The Council encourages as high a rating as can be achieved practically on site through development. The Council will expect developers to set out the environmental credentials of their schemes as part of the design information to support their planning application.

2.10.4 To be sustainable, residential development should create mixed, diverse communities - where affordable housing is provided this should be well integrated within any scheme.

2.11 Design for More Adaptable and Flexible Homes

2.11.1 The best homes offer a reasonable amount of flexibility and scope for some adaptability to meet changing needs of residents over time. Whilst the internal design of dwellings is not often considered a planning issue, the design of flexible and adaptable spaces within buildings is an important design objective.

2.11.2 The manner in which space within a dwelling can be used is very important. The design of a building should present opportunities to reconfigure the principal habitable rooms. This may stop short of full open plan formats, but should enable spaces to be sub-divided and avoid rigid cellular forms. Simple design approaches which can enable greater flexibility include:

- Structural design which enables 'freer' subdivision of internal habitable spaces;
- Compact vertical circulation and vertical stacking of kitchens / bathrooms;
- Space standards which enable adaptation for people with impaired mobility;
- Adequate floor to ceiling heights within a building to enable changing use of space;
- Minimise creation of dead spaces from circulation and utilise these for storage;
- Effective acoustic design / specification for party walls and floors / ceilings; and
- Internal and external layouts which provide viable opportunities for future extension to the rear.

2.11.3 Many new homes are very small and compact offering poor space standards in and around the home in an attempt to cram in as many habitable rooms as possible. The Council will encourage developers to create homes which are fit for purpose, well planned and laid out, and which provide appropriate space in and around the home for residents.

Sustainable Live Work Building, Richmond Upon Thames, London

2.12 Summary of Design Quality in Residential Development.

2.12.1 When designing streets for people new residential development should:

- Focus attention on the design of the streets as a whole and not just the individual buildings;
- Recognise the importance of designing the spaces between the buildings as well as the buildings themselves;
- Ensure the height of the buildings is appropriate for the width of the street to achieve the necessary sense of enclosure, for example –
- Primary streets are usually wider and therefore need taller buildings to enclose them
- Secondary streets are narrower and therefore a combination of tall and more modest buildings can be used to provide enclosure
- Tertiary streets are more intimate, perhaps taking the form of a mews style street or lane, and therefore smaller buildings at the back of the footway may provide appropriate enclosure. Such streets may also incorporate shared surfaces to emphasise pedestrian priority, and sharper changes in direction in terms of traffic movement as a means of traffic-calming;
- Ensure the location of buildings in relation to the streets creates interesting streetscapes including consciously arranged views and vistas within and out of the development;
- Ensure streets are designed with the pedestrian as a priority user followed by cyclists, public transport, service vehicles and finally other motor traffic;
- Ensure carriageways and buildings are laid out in such a way that traffic-calming is inherent in the design of the development itself, for example –
- Avoid designing long straight and sweeping streets, which enable vehicles to generate higher speeds;
- Position buildings carefully within or stepping into the street to reduce forward visibility and close off views;
- Narrow the street by stepping the building line and carriageway closer together through sections of a street or at defined pinch-points;
- Design on-street car parking as an integral part of the street within defined and carefully integrated parking bays.
- Vary surface materials and finishes within the carriageway, and define gateways, pedestrian routes and desire lines;

2.12.2 In designing the form and type of buildings, new residential development should:

- Avoid repetitive and inappropriate standard housing types in favour of housing forms which are locally relevant and create a quality streetscape;
- Ensure that the form of dwellings is appropriate for the site, where necessary modifying or creating housing types to respond positively to the context;
- Create buildings which are well-proportioned and well-related to the traditional buildings within the Borough, avoiding standard housing ‘box’ designs;
- Ensure that windows and the proportions of the façades create a more contextually appropriate and authentic design, and a more pleasing appearance;
- Ensure that roof pitches are appropriate to the context and respond to existing buildings where a traditional design language is used for new development;
- Create either genuine free-standing buildings, or terraces, and avoid the cramming together

of large numbers of detached properties; and

- Avoid creating 'oversized', 'slab-like' apartment blocks in favour of contextually responsive building forms which are appropriate to their location.

2.12.3 In choosing materials for new residential development the following issues should be addressed:

- Identify a narrow and locally relevant palette of materials and colours for the development based on site and context analysis;
- Wherever possible utilise traditional and natural materials for walls and roofs to help the development to blend in with the context;
- Consider the robustness, environmental performance and maintenance issues when specifying materials for residential development;
- Avoid imposing developer 'house styles' through the design and treatment of elevations, or crude copies of existing buildings;
- Ensure traditional designs are accurate and authentic in their appearance and respond well to the traditional residential buildings of the context; and
- Ensure contemporary designs have a strong domestic scale based on high quality designs, materials and detailing, with effective articulation of the building form.

2.12.4 When choosing the detailing and finishes for buildings the following issues should be addressed:

- Ensure the detailed design and finishes are appropriate to the overall building design and its context;
- In architecturally sensitive areas such as conservation areas, and where a traditional design response is proposed, ensure the detailing and finishes are historically accurate and authentic in order to maintain the quality and integrity of the development;
- Where contemporary design solutions are proposed in historic environments it is still important to ensure the rhythm and proportions of the surrounding traditional architecture are respected in order to achieve continuity in the streetscene and to avoid new buildings appearing incongruous.

2.12.5 No set space standards are specified in terms of separation distances between buildings, but the overall aim when designing residential development should be to preserve reasonable levels of privacy and amenity. Greater privacy should be afforded to rear elevations and to private garden spaces of existing dwellings. The design should avoid any direct overlooking of private garden areas and the detailed design of elevations and fenestration will need to achieve this. All development will be considered in terms of its acceptability in relation to overlooking. Appendix 1 describes how good design can overcome potential problems of overlooking and overshadowing.

2.12.6 When designing landscaping and boundary treatment the following issues should be addressed:

- The specification and detailing of landscape and boundaries should reflect the context, and create a high quality feel for the residential environment;
- Use as high quality design and finishing as possible, for example demarcating parking bays on street by changes in materials, such as stone blockwork rather than cheap paint finishes;
- Ensure essential plant and infrastructure, for example sub-stations, bin stores, cycle stores and junction boxes, flues and ventilation are simply designed and discreetly located to ensure the quality of the design is not undermined;
- Treat boundaries as an integral part of the design of the development and ensure they contribute to the character of the street, for example front boundaries might include low walls, railings or hedges, or combinations of these, and should create a robust edge to the curtilage of the development;
- Ensure visible side and rear boundaries do not undermine the development as a whole by using cheaper fencing. For side and / or rear boundaries visible from the public realm, robust garden walling will be required to reflect the built development.

2.12.7 Density of development should be informed by the location and nature of the site. Generally development should be in keeping with the context in terms of height and scale. This can prompt higher density development at some locations, but also control density in other areas.

2.12.8 When choosing parking solutions for a development the following issues should be addressed:

- A combination of private in-curtilage car parking, semi-private courtyard parking and on- street parking should be used instead of a single form of parking, particularly in larger schemes;
- The form and location of car parking should not undermine the enclosure and character of streets;
- High proportions of driveway car parking directly to the front of properties will not be acceptable as this dominate the streetscene;
- High quality front boundaries should be used where necessary to screen frontage driveway car parking and car parking to the side of dwellings;
- Integral garages within town houses are often underused for car parking and can result in additional requirements for car parking within a scheme. These should generally be avoided;
- Carefully designed car ports do generally remain in use as places to park cars and so will usually be preferred to integral garages;
- In smaller developments it may be possible to serve the whole scheme from a rear courtyard car park providing –
- it is integral to the character, intimacy and enclosure of the streets created by that development;
- it is designed as a good quality space within which cars are parked, rather than simply an area of hard standing;
- it is safe and well-overlooked from properties, with good direct links into buildings and secure approaches to buildings for residents; and

- it is of modest scale, ideally providing not more than 10 car parking spaces.
- In designing multi-storey, basement or sub-basement parking the following design issues are important:
- Access / egress to parking areas should be controlled to be safe and secure;
- Access into dwellings / communal circulation areas should be direct and well-lit;
- Parking areas beneath a building along the street edge should be avoided; and
- Parking decks should avoid compromising the privacy of the rear aspect of dwellings, for example first floor bedroom windows.
- On-street car parking must be carefully designed into the street and usually associated with dedicated off-street parking provision for residents. Design issues will include:
- Defined parking bays should be designed into the street space to provide clearly identifiable parking areas. These may be dedicated to the development;
- The design of the street should avoid potentially dangerous ad hoc car parking along the footway, which might result from insufficient parking levels or poorly designed streets; and
- On-street car parking should not visually dominate the street scene and the scale and location of parking bays therefore needs to be controlled and kept in balance with the whole street design.

3 Design Quality in Commercial Development

3.1 Introduction

3.1.1 Chapter 3 provides specific guidance for new commercial development. It builds upon messages from Chapter 1. It is applicable to all new commercial development across the Borough. In particular, guidance within this chapter will be used to improve the design of larger scale commercial developments.

3.1.2 Whatever the nature and scale of commercial development it will be important that it is designed to high standards and in line with guidance in this document. Good quality buildings and developments will provide a very clear statement as to the quality and nature of the businesses located within them. A high quality working environment will benefit staff, existing and potential clients and customers. People spend a large part of their lives at work so improving the design of workplace buildings is very important.

3.2 Design Challenges set by Commercial Development

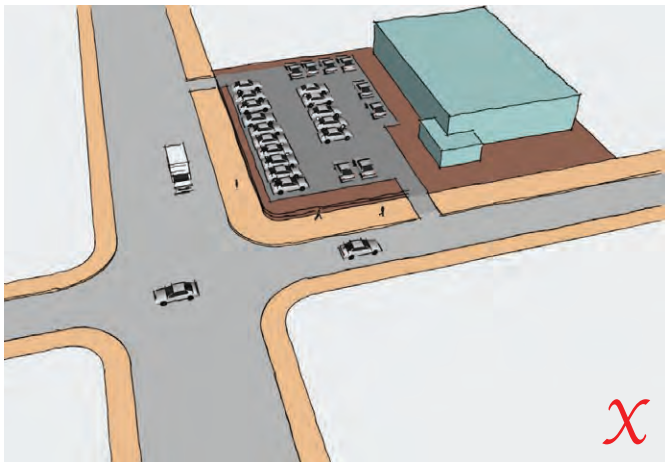
3.2.1 Commercial buildings are required to meet a multitude of functions including office space and workshops, storage and distribution, manufacturing and retailing. Despite the variety of different uses, there are a number of common design challenges that drive the design of these developments. These challenges include:

- the need to create large open plan spaces, which can be used flexibly;
- the requirement for large flat sites or plinths to carry large buildings;
- the resultant scale of these buildings and their elevations, which can be vast;
- the resultant building forms which can be very basic and often box like in form;
- the need to be cost-effective through design, materials and specification;
- the limited opportunities for activity generating edges of these buildings;
- the freestanding nature of many such buildings, located within individual sites and plots and surrounded by car parking and servicing areas which makes creating townscape and group value between buildings difficult to achieve;
- a requirement for substantial servicing and / or car parking areas;
- a need to accommodate substantial plant associated with the use; and
- a requirement for corporate branding of the building and/or signage.

3.2.2 Not all commercial developments will have to meet all of these different design challenges. However, individually and together these challenges can, if care is not taken in the design, generate forms of development which undermine the quality of the built environment. The Council will require that care is taken in design to ensure new commercial development respects and responds positively to its context. The need to provide large format buildings or to meet specific functional requirements will not be seen as an excuse for poor or inappropriate design.

Matchworks Development, Merseyside

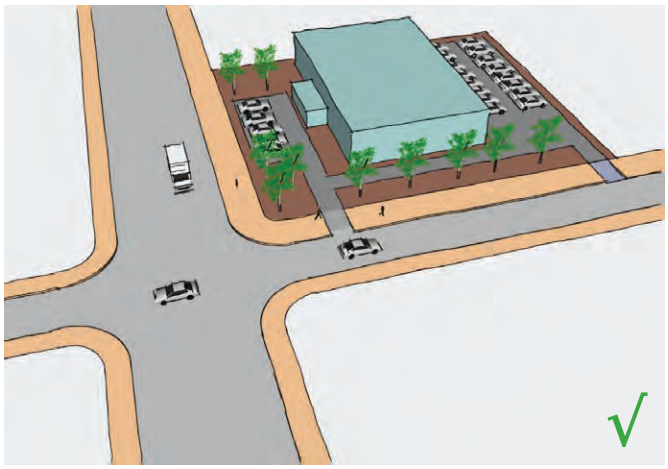
3.2.3 As well as creating buildings to accommodate economic processes and activities, commercial developments provide places to work and to visit for business or for retailing. Good design can support improved business performance by creating developments which offer comfortable working environments for staff and pleasant and attractive surroundings for customers and clients. There is a strong business case for better designed commercial developments as well as a strong planning policy requirement.



↑ Car parking to front not acceptable

3.3 The Response to Context

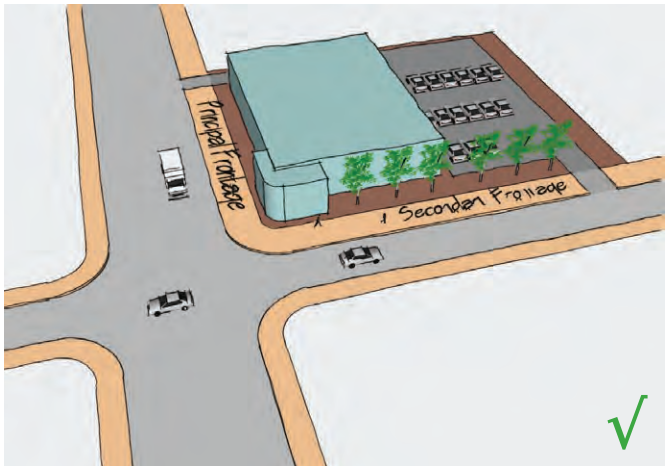
3.3.1 The layout of the development should create a positive response to the site and context. The layout should be based on a full design assessment of the site. Developers should refer to Chapter 1 to confirm the design-related issues which they should address when undertaking site analysis.



↑ Limited parking to front maybe acceptable

3.4 Location of Buildings and Contribution to the Urban Structure

3.4.1 In general, it will be expected that buildings be positioned towards the front of a site, overlooking the principal streets adjacent to the site. This does not require buildings to be positioned at the back of the footway as the use, scale and nature of the development may require a functional or visual set back from the street edge. In the case of large industrial buildings for example, the Council recognises that buildings too close to an existing street may not be desirable. However, in terms of retail, office and appropriate light industrial developments the Council would expect development frontages to develop strong relationships to nearby streets.



↑ Strong frontages with parking to rear preferred

3.5 Relationships between Buildings

3.5.1 New development should respond to any important desirable precedents on or close to the site in terms of the existing built context. For example, established building lines, heights of buildings, their form and their massing and their materials might set an important contextual precedent. New development does not need to copy existing buildings, but should respond to them positively. In some cases, the Council may seek improvements in the character and quality of commercial areas.

3.5.2 Where more than one building is proposed, it will be important that the design of the buildings creates effective relationships between them, and develops effective relationships through layout, scale and materials with its context. On larger scale sites the creation of collective character will be encouraged through the adoption of a palette of materials and common design forms, perhaps coordinated by a formal design guide, brief or code.

3.6 Plan, Form and Massing

3.6.1 Space requirements for commercial developments can often create low and wide buildings. Traditionally streets have a vertical emphasis with a variety of buildings and architectural styles side by side. Vertical emphasis to facades can help to break down wide building frontages into more visually comfortable and familiar elements. Breaking up the long and wide elevations into sections can help to sub-divide the building and create a more human scale.

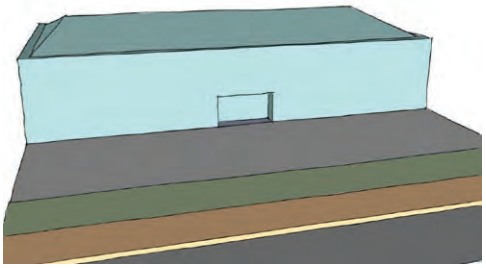
3.6.2 This treatment need only be applied to the principal frontage(s) as visible from the public realm. It should replace the long and low box-like proportions with greater variety in both form and plan. This can involve changes to the shape of the building, for example drawing out key uses into discreet new buildings along the building frontage. It may also be possible to create this effect by varying the materials or colours. There is an opportunity to introduce new shapes and forms of building along this edge effectively to disguise and break up the more basic building behind.

3.6.3 The shallow roofs with monotonous, even and unbroken skyline should be replaced with a building form which varies the height. This can be based on introducing elements which step lower or higher than the main body of the building to the main frontage(s). For example, an office block element located to the front edge of the main building may create a different building element higher or lower than the main building. Stepping skyline features can have a practical use for accommodating plant rooms etc. The entrance and corners of buildings present opportunities to anchor skyline features. It may be appropriate to reduce or increase the height and scale of the building along the main frontage of the development in response to the context.

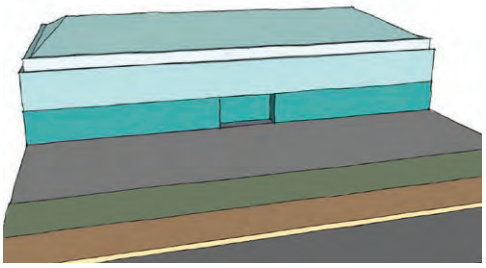
3.6.4 The form and functions of the building should be considered to identify how functional requirements might inform its form and massing. It is preferred that the building is composed of a number of related buildings added together as opposed to one large box sub-divided internally.

3.7 Proportions, Scale and Articulation

3.7.1 The elevations of the building should be broken down to provide a human scale for the development. It will be important to articulate the form of the building through the design of the elevations and the different elements of the building to create a more interesting and less monotonous façade. Variety and depth can help generate more interesting and successful façades where there is a positive interplay between different elements of the elevations, for example different materials and/or recesses or projections.

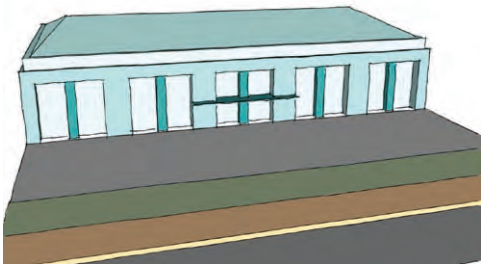


↑ Standard box design unacceptable



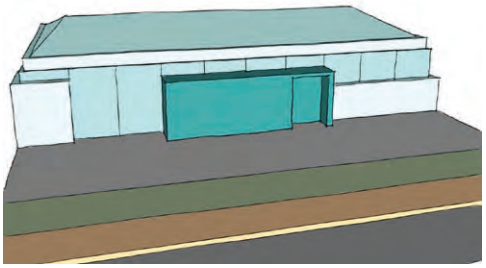
↑ Horizontal designs should be avoided

3.7.2 Good proportions for elevations will be required to help sub-divide large expanses of frontage in larger buildings. The nature of the proportion system used on a building can vary and may be related to the structure of the building, or based on geometric patterns to create an ordered facade. Historical brewery buildings, for example, employ blind arcading to give proportion and articulation to otherwise large blank brick walls.

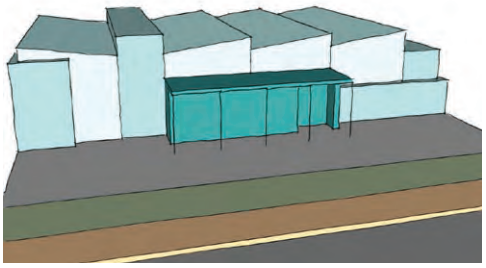


↑ Vertical emphasis preferred

3.7.3 Elevations should articulate the form of the building through different colours and finishes. Whilst it is preferred to achieve articulation through a combination of both form and materials, it may sometimes be acceptable to achieve greater vertical emphasis through the specification and relationship of materials.



↑ Different elements break up mass



↑ Varied roof line adds further interest

↑ Good articulation of employment buildings

↑ Design emphasis focused on entrances

↑ The red detailing breaks down the frontages and marks the entrances

3.8 Materials and Colours

3.8.1 Materials and colours should be used to enliven the building elevations, breaking down scale and mass of the building. Materials should develop vertical rather than horizontal proportions. A narrow and carefully selected palette of coordinated materials should be identified to achieve this.

3.8.2 Materials can include different combinations of walling materials and treatments, for example; cladding above brick panelling, and steel and glass. It will be important to target good quality materials to best effect. Materials can be used more functionally on less visible elevations and better quality materials and details should be priorities for the principal elevations which will be the most visible.

3.8.3 The large scale of these buildings often results in the use of materials with large unit sizes such as screen cladding. A more human scale in terms of the design, detailing and unit size of materials on principal elevations, where people will come into closer proximity to the building, will be required, for example at the entrances to the building. This can convey a sense of scale and quality at more intensively used locations.

3.8.4 The colour of materials should help to create an appropriate appearance for the building. Standardised light greys should not be the default solution for large buildings as this can create a bland effect. Careful consideration of colours evident in the natural and built landscape should help inform the choice of colours and finishes for materials.

↑ Good articulation of built form ↓

3.8.5 Developers should consider how their development will be seen within the landscape or townscape, including long views to the development. This can highlight whether the building will be seen against the skyline or against a landscape backdrop or against other existing buildings. This can provide important pointers towards appropriate colours and materials. In particular, light colours for walls and roofs should be avoided where a building is seen against a landscape or townscape backdrop, as these will jar with the context.

3.8.6 Given the scale of these buildings, softer tones for large areas will be more appropriate and bolder colours used to accent key features such as entrances. The use of standard corporate colour schemes for elevations and detailing, which bears no relationship to the context, will be resisted if this undermines the architecture of the building or the character of the area.

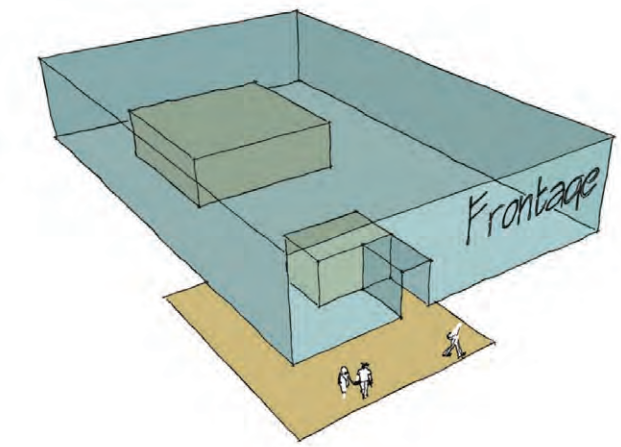
3.8.7 The long-term performance of materials and colour finishes will need to be assured, for example their durability and quality over time. Colours in particular should not diminish in the longer term. Concrete based products may weather poorly and colour can be lost.

↑ Scale broken down in traditional building but not in over scaled modern building

3.9 Active Uses within Buildings

3.9.1 Activity-generating functions within a building, such as entrances, reception areas, cafeterias and offices, should be located to enliven the principal elevation, overlooking, where possible, the street and the approach to the building. This can provide natural surveillance to the street and communal areas of a development, and bring interest and variety to the building frontage. If possible cafeterias / restaurants / cafes should spill out onto the frontage providing interaction and vibrancy to the street.

3.9.2 Bringing such uses to the edge of the building can provide natural light, fresh air and a spacious feel for employees and / or visitors in communal areas. These are areas where staff may take their break, or where visitors arrive or relax, and as such should be pleasant and comfortable spaces. Views out of the building should be provided. This type of high quality space can greatly improve well-being and perceptions. Good quality and useable external landscaped areas, linked to internal communal areas are encouraged to provide further amenity for workers and visitors.



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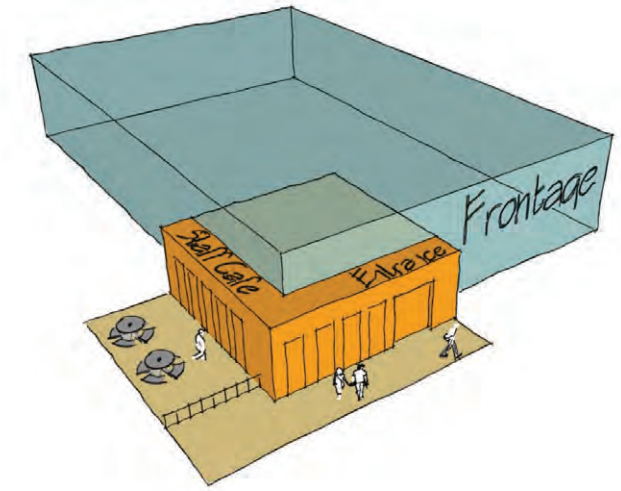

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↑ Bring activity to the front of the building

↑ High quality entrances and approaches to buildings

→

3.10 Plant, Machinery and Signage

3.10.1 The sensitive location and design of plant ducting and machinery will be required. Plant ductingand machinery should not generally be visually prominent within the design of the building from public view. Plant and infrastructure which is crudely fixed to the external structure of the building will not be acceptable. Any noise or fumes generated by the building should be considered in terms of neighbouring uses.

3.10.3 In some cases the design of plant ducting and machinery may be used as a feature as part of the architectural design of a building. This may include a design where the servicing of the building is located externally to the building's skin, to create visual interest. Adopting such an approach will need to be appropriate to the context and the Council will need to be assured of the quality and finish of the building.

3.10.4 Signage is very important to the brand identity of the development. Signage and branding should be designed as an integral part of the development and not crudely added onto the façade as an afterthought. Designs for signage should be well-related to the architecture of the building as well as the corporate identity of the business. Proposals for signage (or the location of signage) should be submitted with the elevations of the buildings at the planning stage

3.11 Entrances to Buildings and the Principal face of Buildings

3.11.1 Often commercial buildings have their entrances oriented towards their car parking areas. Where car parking areas are to the back of a building, and out of site of the street, it will remain important for the building to create a strong frontage to the street. It will not be acceptable to orientate the building towards the car park at the expense of the street-side elevation. In such cases it will be important to create good quality frontages towards the street and the car park. Safe and direct links to the entrances of buildings from the nearby streets and parking areas will be required.

3.12 Pedestrian, Public Transport and Cycle Provision

3.12.1 Commercial development should create good accessibility for pedestrians and cyclists. Walking and cycle links to the development from nearby streets should be direct and visible. They should either be associated with new access roads into the development, or as dedicated walking and cycling routes, but in either case should be safe by day and after dark. Cycle storage facilities should be provided. These should be located in a well-overlooked location, but not create clutter or barriers within the landscape of the scheme. Other facilities such as private secure showers will be welcomed, as these can encourage people to cycle to work. Good access to public transport will be desirable. In larger development, public transport penetration into the site may be encouraged.

↓ → Design quality in buildings and landscape is important in all commercial development

↑ Strong landscape framework ↓

3.13 Landscape Quality

3.13.1 The landscape design for commercial development should help to tie buildings together and create a more coherent and unified structure for the site. The landscape structure of a development is particularly important where buildings will not be able to create strong enclosure along streets.

3.13.2 The choice and extent of landscape features should be a response to the surrounding character of the development. In urban areas the amount of soft landscape, for example, may be conservative, whilst in rural edge locations large scale naturalistic landscaping may be more appropriate. Boundary planting may be used to screen or break up the mass of large buildings and developments. However, planting of this nature should not be used as an excuse to hide poorly designed buildings.

3.13.3 An important aspect of any structural landscaping scheme will be the approach to water management within the development. Given the large areas of hard standing for parking and servicing, and roof space created in larger developments, sustainable drainage will be required to deal with surface water run-off on site. The creation of naturalistic wetlands has the knock-on benefit of increasing local biodiversity and improving the 'green' credentials of the development.

3.14 Parking and Servicing

3.14.1 Many commercial developments require significant areas of hard standing for surface car parking and service areas. Large areas of forecourt car parking will detract from the development and should be avoided. The front of the building should be welcoming and present a positive frontage and apron to the building. This area should not be cluttered or dominated by parked cars. The majority of car parking should be located away from main frontage(s). Modest areas of car parking at the front for visitors, including disabled parking, or for senior staff may be acceptable.

3.14.2 Servicing areas will often require a specific pre-determined relationship with the buildings design and internal fit out. As a result, it will be important to consider servicing areas as an integral part of the building design and ensure that they are discreetly located away from sensitive public views. It will be preferable to separate parking areas and servicing areas in order to create a safe and attractive environment and avoid conflicting use of space.

3.14.3 Areas of car parking should be broken up with landscape and tree planting. These areas should also provide formally designed and delineated pedestrian routes to link parking areas and arrival points at the site to building entrances.

3.14.4 Where appropriate the context may require more intensive and efficient car parking solutions in preference to surface car parking. Options could include deck or multi-storey scenarios which can also make more effective use of limited site space.

3.14.5 The location and design of vehicular entrances and exits should be an integral part of the design. They should not dominate the frontage, nor should they be hidden.

↑ Service area well screened by landscape

↑ Carefully designed car parking ↓

↑ Development at Lancaster Park

3.15 Boundary Treatment

3.15.1 Safe and secure boundaries are an important consideration in any commercial development. Good quality boundaries will generally be required within commercial developments, the design of which should be informed by the context. In areas where buildings may not deliver continuity along streets, and where building forms may be varied, good quality and consistent boundary treatments can help to tie an area together.

3.15.2 Front boundaries in particular will be very important as these create an interface with the street. The layout of the site should ensure that front boundaries are welcoming and allow views towards the main building elevation. More secure boundaries should be more discreetly located.

3.16 Security for the Site and Buildings

3.16.1 The Council recognises the need for businesses to provide security for their premises. It is not, however, acceptable to adopt a 'fortress' approach to safety. Security measures should be integral to the design and not 'added-onto' the building at the last moment. Building design should provide good overlooking and natural surveillance to principal frontages and communal areas to create a safer environment and more pleasant development. Blank, dead frontages should be minimised along principal frontages.

↑ Sensitivity Designed Fencing with Planting

3.16.2 The use of security shutters should be carefully considered in terms of the nature of the development and the relative visibility of these features from the public realm. Along the front of development, such as in retail or office developments, security shutters should be avoided or carefully designed reflecting guidance in Chapter 1. In industrial and warehouse developments when shutters are integral to loading bays, such features will be acceptable providing they are discreetly located and designed as an integral part of the building.

3.16.3 Effective lighting will be important on all approaches to buildings, service and parking areas and lighting should be well directed to avoid creating problems with neighbouring uses.

3.16.4 The use of CCTV cameras will be acceptable providing these are carefully located within the scheme. These features should be designed and managed to offer effective coverage and surveillance of key areas of the development.

3.16.5 Boundaries should provide an adequate level of security for the development, which does not undermine the character of the area. Highly fortified boundaries will not be acceptable along visible edges to the development.

3.17 Sustainability

3.17.1 All commercial developments should respond to the challenges of delivering more sustainable development, irrespective of the site and nature of development proposed as set out in Chapter 1. The Council encourages use of the BREEAM environmental rating system for commercial developments as a way of validating environmental performance. The Council will expect developers to explain the environmental credentials of their proposals as part of design and access statements which will accompany planning applications for commercial development.

Sustainable heating such as grass roofs and solar panels can also have an important Aesthetic quality and should be designed as features in situations where a contemporary design is appropriate.

3.18 Management within Commercial Development

3.18.1 In all development good management and maintenance of buildings and open spaces, both public and private, are very important to a successful scheme. In commercial development, effective management is especially important, owing to the scale of the buildings and grounds involved and the activities which go on within the developments.

3.18.2 Effective ongoing care arrangements are required for the buildings and the grounds to ensure quality is maintained after the building is developed. This is often simply about protecting the investment made at the development stage through the operation of the development and ensuring that the site is safe, comfortable and well kept.

3.18.3 The Council will encourage developers to set out the management arrangements for their development, focusing on the buildings (and any associated plant), the grounds (including open spaces and parking areas) and the operation of the development (including noise, storage and waste). This could form part of the Design and Access Statement.3.8.5

3.18.4 Many commercial developments create a significant amount of noise. Noise is an important environmental consideration and is even more important where residential areas are close by. Steps should be taken to reduce the amount of noise nuisance created by the development, though technical specifications and/or the layout of the site and landscape noise buffers.

Summary of Design Quality in Commercial Development

3.19.1 Proposals for new commercial development should demonstrate how they will address the following key design objectives:

- A positive response to the context based on a full design assessment of the site, recognising issues of scale, height, building lines and materials;
- Buildings positioned to contribute to a strong urban structure, with frontages overlooking and close to principal streets where possible;
- Strong relationships between buildings in terms of their location, scale, height, form, materials and details;
- Effective plan, form and massing, with design helping to break down the mass of buildings where necessary and to reinforce vertical rather than horizontal proportions;
- Careful attention to proportions, scale and articulation, where frontages are designed to a human scale, offering variety, depth and visual interest, using materials and colours to good effect;
- Careful use of materials and colours to enliven the building elevations, respond to context and help to break down their scale and mass. A narrow palette of materials should be selected;
- Greater attention to design focussed on principal frontages and on highly visible locations such as entrances where greatest impact can be achieved through design quality;
- The long term performance of materials should be assured, particularly their robustness, fitness for purpose and durability;
- Plant and machinery associated with the development should be carefully and discreetly located, and integral to the architecture of the building;
- Signage and branding should be considered as part of the overall design of the development and well-related to the main frontages of the building;
- Activity-generating uses within buildings should be designed and located to enliven the public areas, approaches and principal elevations of the development;
- Entrances to buildings, and the principal frontages of the development should address important nearby streets or access routes. Layouts should avoid being inward looking and should not 'turn their back' on the wider context;
- Commercial developments should be accessible to pedestrians and cyclists, with appropriate infrastructure and designs creating welcoming and people friendly places. Good links to public transport should also be provided;
- Landscape quality will be very important in commercial developments,

and the landscape structure should provide a coherent and unified structure for the site;

- Sustainable drainage will be required, to address surface water run off in new commercial developments;
- Parking should be carefully integrated to ensure that the fronts of developments are not dominated by large areas of surface car parking;
- Servicing should be separated from parking areas and discreetly located away from main frontages;
- High quality boundaries will be required particularly to the visible frontages of developments, where the quality of boundaries can help knit an area together;
- Security measures should be carefully designed into schemes to ensure a balance is struck between environmental quality and physical protection. Natural surveillance is very important in commercial developments;
- Commercial developments should explain how they are meeting the challenges of sustainability through scheme design; and
- The ongoing management and maintenance arrangements for public and private areas within commercial development should be clearly set out;

4 The Character of East Staffordshire

4.1 East Staffordshire is a Borough of great diversity and contrast. In the heart of England, it provides a rich built and landscape setting, which new development will need to recognise and respond to positively.

4.2 This chapter provides a summary of the prevailing character of the Borough and its towns and villages. Given the scale and variety of the Borough's existing built fabric, it is not possible to provide an exhaustive text on the character of East Staffordshire.

4.3 The Borough includes many varied and attractive villages and small towns. The principal settlements are the historic market town of Uttoxeter in the west, and the larger urban centre of Burton upon Trent to the east. The character of the Borough is summarised in the following themes:

4.4 Developers should use this chapter as a guide for assessing the context of their sites. In addition, there are several Village Design Statements and Conservation Area Character Appraisals, which provide more detailed character assessments for particular villages. The following Village Design Statements provide additional design guidance:

- Abbots Bromley Village Design Statement;
- Rolleston on Dove Village Design Statement;
- Barton-under-Needwood Village Design Statement;
- Tutbury Village Design Statement;
- Yoxall Village Design Statement.

Conservation Area Character Appraisals are available for all the Borough's Conservation Areas, with the exception of the King Edward's Place Conservation Area.(Add Conservation Area Documents – WM)

↑ Countryside near Birchwood Forest

↑ Uttoxeter Market Place

↑ Abbots Bromley

Town Hall, Burton Upon Trent

Patterns of Movement Across the Borough

4.5 The patterns of movement into and across the Borough play an important role in defining its character and shaping people's perception of East Staffordshire.

4.6 Historically, patterns of movement of people and goods across the land have helped to establish the framework of routes evident today. The Borough has been shaped by the creation of transport links, including early bridleways and lanes, the Trent and Mersey Canal, the railway links and more modern roads.

4.7 This route network creates important views into and across the Borough from national and regional transit corridors. These help inform many people's impression of East Staffordshire, both in terms of individual places, and the environmental and townscape qualities of the Borough overall. This outward appearance is important and the relationship between development quality and the identity of the Borough must be recognised. In particular, sites at prominent and highly visible locations on major transit routes and at gateways to the Borough are prioritised for high quality development.

4.8 Townscape features such as the spire of Uttoxeter's St. Mary's Church and the brewery buildings at Burton upon Trent all aid legibility within the Borough. The landscape, as well as the built fabric, is important in creating a sense of place. Blithfield Reservoir for example is a very striking gateway feature which marks a point of arrival into East Staffordshire. The link between transit corridors as movement infrastructure and places in their own right is evident along the Trent and Mersey Canal, where the water space is itself an important feature which can add value to new development.

4.9 Within the Borough, roads and transit corridors cut across the landscape and knit together different landscape character areas. Often the transition from one landscape character area to another is not sharply defined and areas merge gently into one another. The landscape itself influences the character of many of these routes, particularly in terms of terrain. The varied roads and lanes across the Borough add to the sense of place. In settlements, the manner in which built development addresses and defines routes as streets is important, with buildings, patterns of movement and the landscape working together to create distinctive urban forms. New development will need to respond to the character of routes and streets and add to the experience of the Borough's natural and built environment.

↑ Historic routes though the National Forest

↑ Trent and Mersey Canal

Patterns of Movement across East Staffordshire

Landscape Character and Villages in the Countryside

4.10 The landscape and terrain has a profound effect on the character of East Staffordshire. It creates feelings of enclosure or exposure and imposes its underlying contours upon the streetscapes and skylines of towns and villages.

4.11 The geology of this part of Staffordshire has influenced the character of its settlements, with locally available building materials worked by local crafts people, creating a consistent and harmonious language of traditional buildings.

4.12 The presence of natural features such as watercourses and forests adds to the character and quality of the landscape. The river valleys of the Trent and the Dove and the Trent and Mersey Canal are key features as is the Needwood forest, which comprises of scattered remnants of a much larger aincent forest.. Large areas of the Borough have been cultivated for agriculture and farmland and include rolling and low-lying fields, as well as more exposed upland areas towards the Peak District.

4.13 East Staffordshire is an urban as well as a rural Borough. Its character is based as much on its villages and its larger towns as on its landscape qualities. The relationship between the rural areas and the built areas is very important. In recognising the characteristics of the Borough it is essential first to understand the landscapes that form the backcloth to any building projects.

4.14 The landscape character and topography of East Staffordshire are illustrated in the Plans which accompany this chapter. A number of different landscape character areas are evident across the Borough and these include:

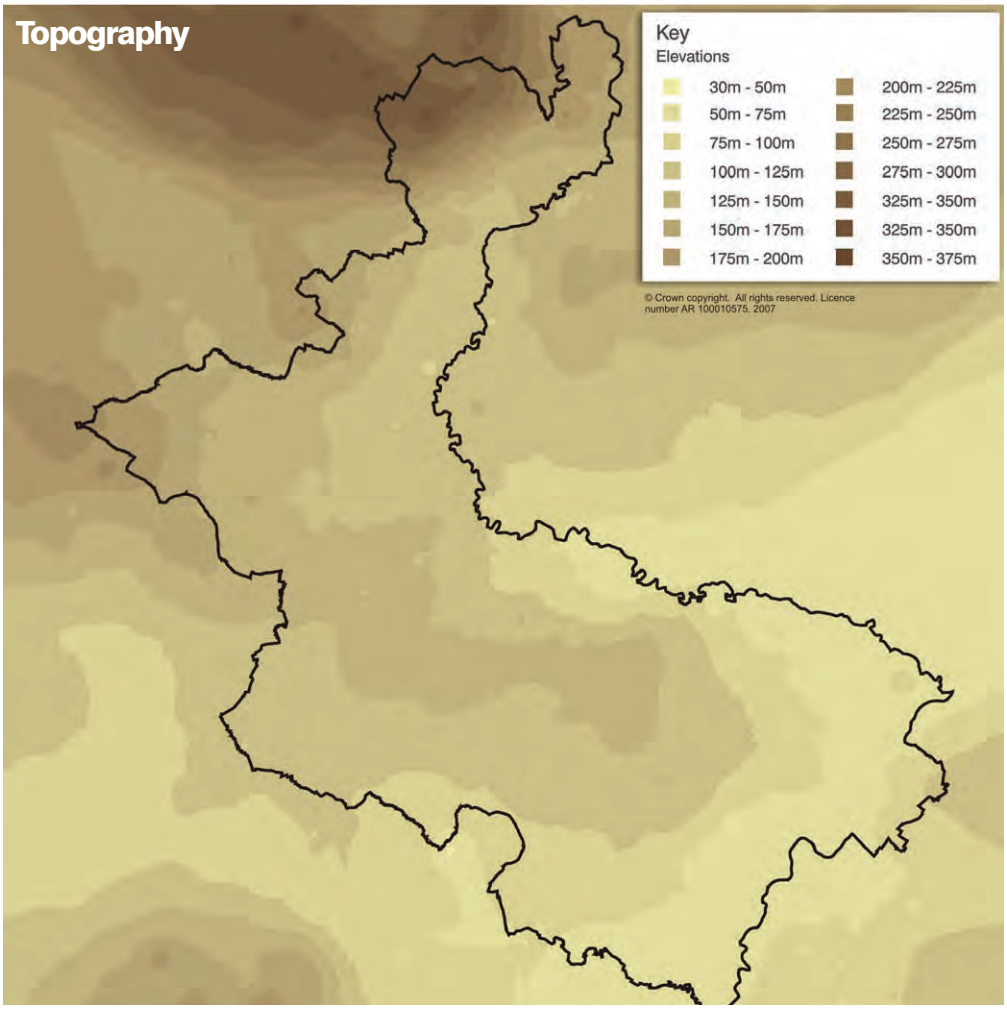
- The Upland Area – to the north of the Borough;
- The Hamlets – towards the western and central part of the Borough
- The Middle Valleys – towards the south of the Borough;
- The Plateau – which extends through the heart of the Borough; and
- The Trent and Dove Valleys – wrapping around the east of the Borough

4.15 The basic characteristics of these areas are described. As well as being landscape character areas in their own right, these areas have given rise to, and are now recognised for, quite distinct forms of village development.

↑ Agricultural land near Mayfield

↑ Agricultural land near Birchwood Forset

Newborough landscape


Topography
Key
Elevations
30m - 50m
50m - 75m
75m - 100m
100m - 125m
125m - 150m
150m - 175m
175m - 200m
200m - 225m
225m - 250m
250m - 275m
275m - 300m
325m - 350m
325m - 350m
350m - 375m
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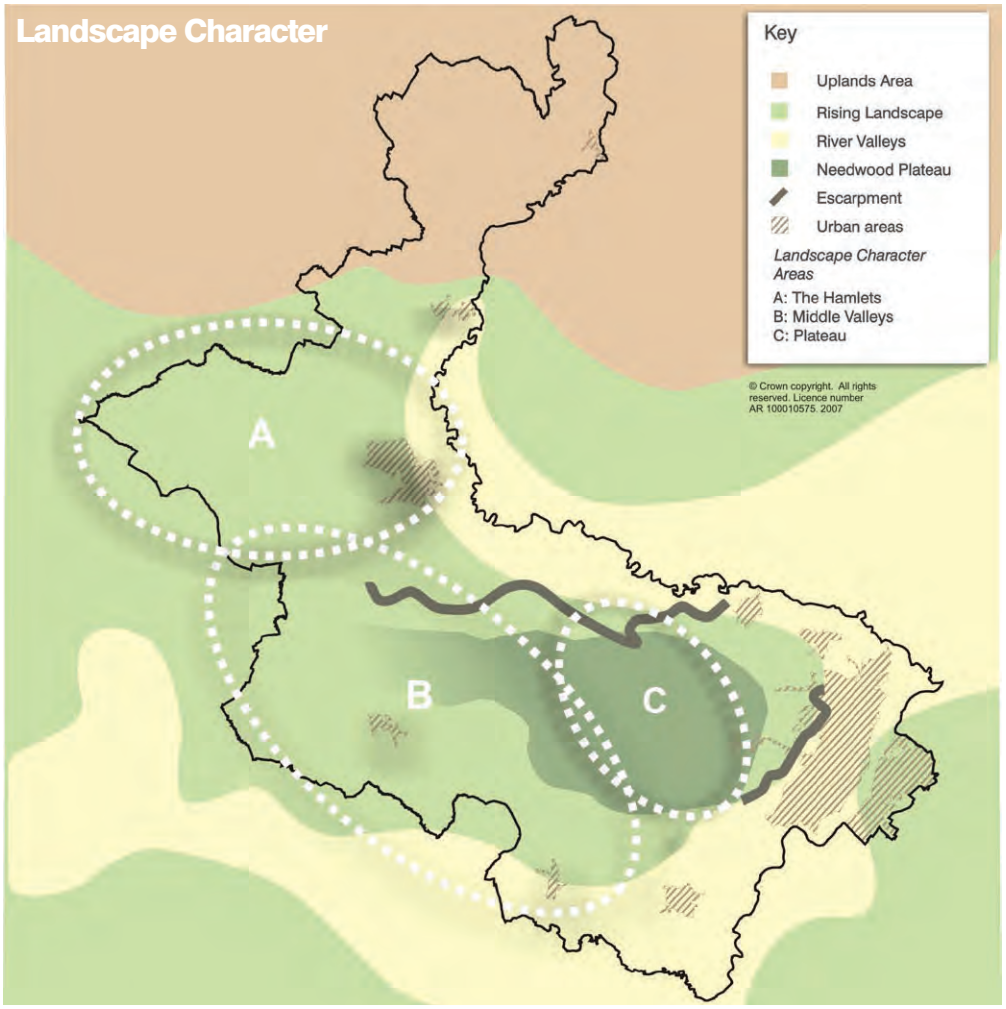
Landscape Character
Key
Uplands Area
Rising Landscape
River Valleys
Needwood Plateau
Escarpment
Urban areas
Landscape Character Areas
A: The Hamlets
B: Middle Valleys
C: Plateau
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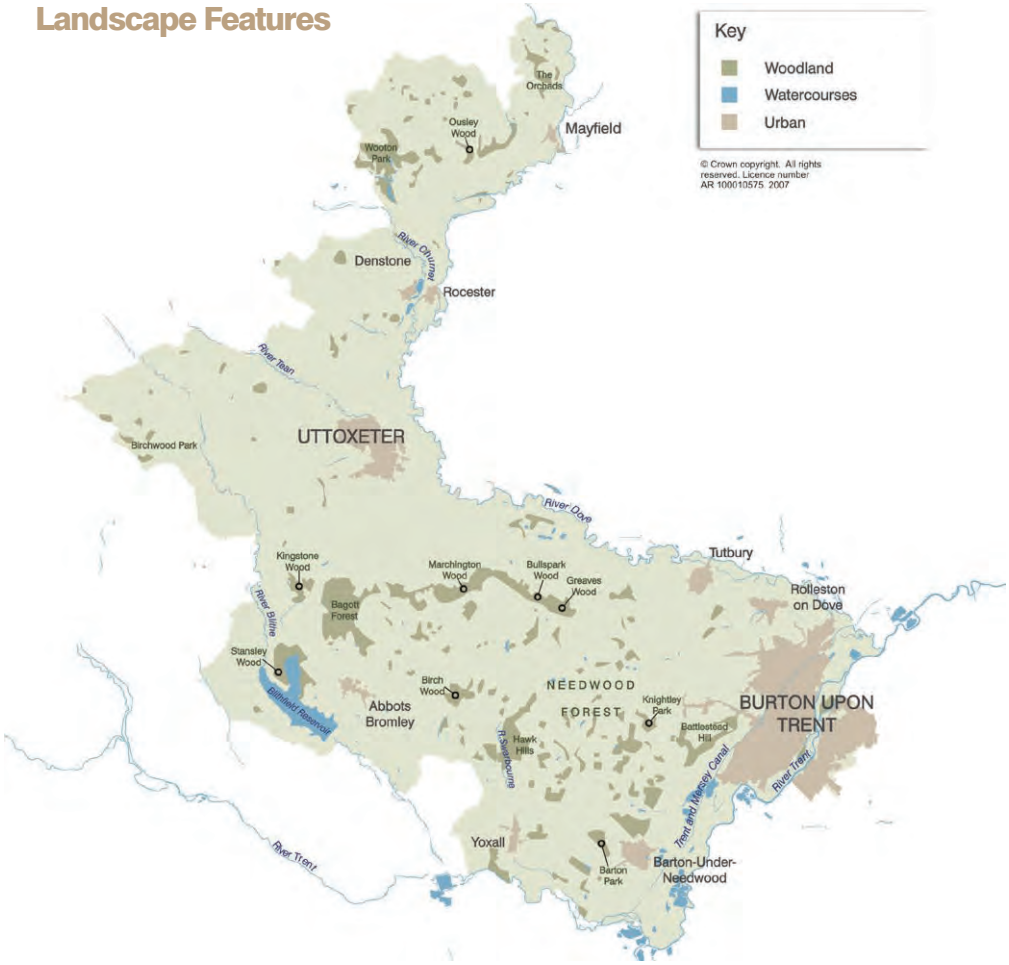
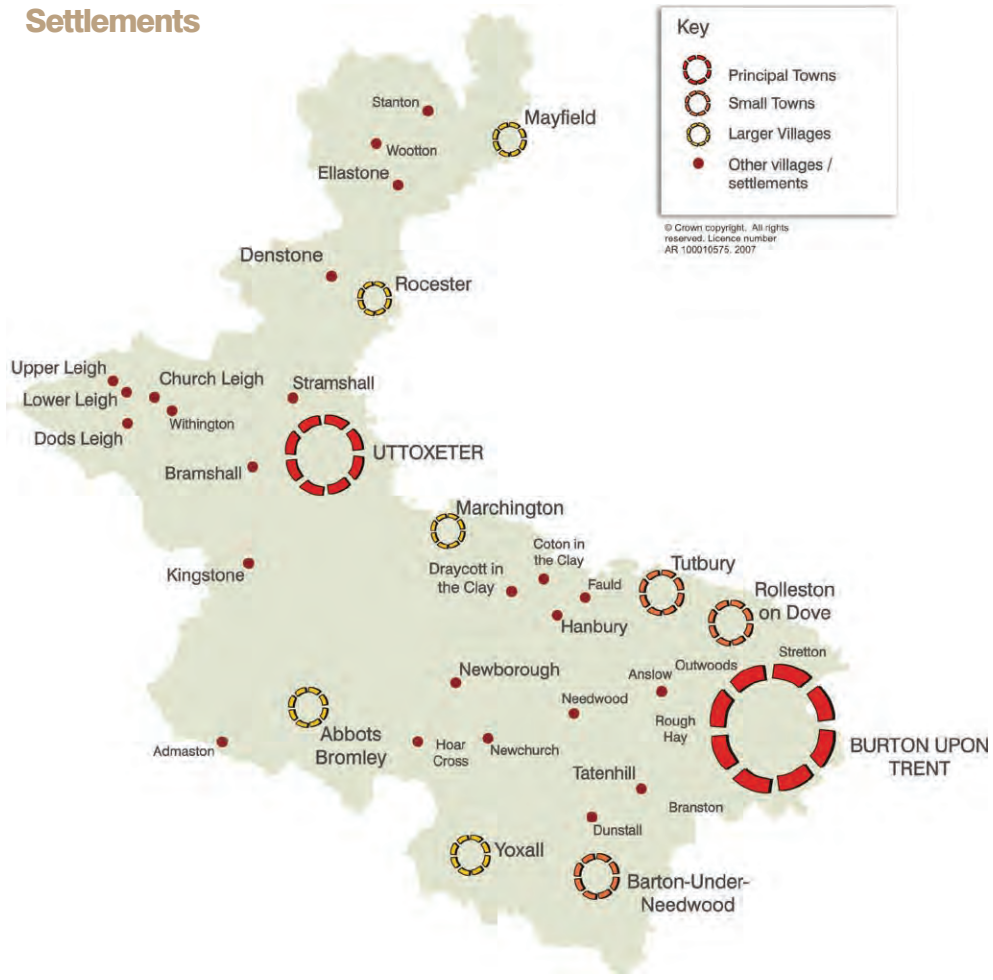
A
B
C

Landscape Features



Settlements



The Upland Area and its Villages

4.16 The uplands in the north of the Borough comprise the middle part of the Dove Valley as it becomes narrower and steeper. Hills to the west rise from the Churnet Valley, northwards toward the Weaver Hills. The hills are part of the southern Peak District and the character of the area is considerably different from the rest of the Borough. Small tight-knit settlements tucked into sheltered folds in the landscape are characteristic of this area, as is consistent use of local stone for boundary walling and for buildings.

4.17 The Dove Valley is relatively gently sloping and lined with trees, becoming narrower and steadily more open, rugged and bare of trees as the terrain rises into the hills to the north. The geology and the climate have created an area characterised by long open views from the high ground and rising views into the hills. The area has a more rugged character than elsewhere in the Borough and contrasts with the more rolling and picturesque countryside to the south.

4.18 The villages here are Ellastone, Mayfield, Denstone, Stanton and Wootton. They typically have some similarities with the traditional villages of the Peak District further north. The villages follow the lines of hillsides or cluster close to crossing points on the River Dove. There are a few hamlets in the area close to the larger villages including Prestwood close to Ellastone; and Middle, Upper and Church Mayfield. Mayfield itself has a distinct character owing to its industrial past.

4.19 Characteristics distinctive of 'The Uplands Area and its villages' which new development should seek to respond to include:

- Settlements sheltered in valleys with small clusters of buildings, farmsteads or settlements, gathered together and forming distinct groupings of buildings;
- Small scale and informal layout of buildings characterised by varied plans, forms and roof designs, but united by a consistent use of local materials and by sensitive relationships between buildings;
- Narrow lanes and verges through settlements, with few footways, and small yards and gardens which are bound by walling and buildings creating a tightly enclosed feel;
- Strongly enclosed and compact settlements, with narrow streets and lanes, that contrast with wider views of the landscape and exposure beyond settlements. Settlements themselves are highly visible in the landscape;
- The predominant use of local (pink-red) Hollington sandstone for boundary walling and buildings with more limited use of (buff-grey) Millstone Grit further towards the Peak District around Mayfield;
- The use of a combination of blue slates and Staffordshire Blue plain clay roof tiles for roofing often pierced by small dormers, and with gables often angled onto the street;
- Functional and robust building design in the rural tradition, typified by small window openings, sometimes mullioned, and by simple detailing and nominal decoration to doors, eaves and other elements of facades; and
- Buildings characterised by robust and in places ornate detailing, including stone drip (or label) moulding, brick string and dentil coursing and stone quoins at the corners of buildings.

Upland Area and its Villages

The Hamlets

4.20 The hamlets lie west of Uttoxeter, between the Blithe and Tean Valleys, and this part of the Borough is dominated by agriculture, with fields and farm buildings forming an important part of the landscape. Hamlets in this area are dispersed and served by a network of rural lanes. These hamletts include Bramshall, Spath and Stramshall close to Uttoxeter, and Withington, Church Leigh, Upper Leigh, Lower Leigh and Dodsleigh further west. The settlements around Uttoxeter line the roads out of the town while Withington and the Leighs are strung together along the ridge between the two valleys. They are united by a loose urban grain and exposed streetscape.

4.21 The overall impression of the hamlets is of a fragmented but rolling landscape with few wide or expansive views. The often winding lanes are enclosed by small fields and hedgerows, which provide a varied and, in places, fragmented landscape fabric to the area. The countryside is often picturesque and can frequently feel remote, intimate and secluded. There is a clear distinction between the rural area and the more developed Dove Valley and Uttoxeter. Elsewhere the dispersed character of settlements is the essential character of built development across this area.

4.22 The distinctive characteristics of 'The Hamlets which new development should seek to respond to include:

- Buildings which are often set within and seen against the rolling landscape and countryside. Buildings are often located at the field edges, forming and contributing to the character of rural lanes;
- Lanes and streets which are typified by frequent changes in direction and which overtop hills and run through valleys in an informal fashion creating an interesting and varied pattern of villages and built developments;
- Informal relationships between, and arrangement of, buildings which are often widely spaced and scattered along lanes. Buildings are frequently free-standing, sometimes associated with outbuildings, particularly in farmstead developments;
- A variety of building materials including local red-orange brick, near white painted brickwork and light coloured renders for walling, and Staffordshire Blue plain clay tiles and deep-red plain clay tiles for roofs;
- Modest and compact rural buildings including one-and-a-half and two storey cottages and agricultural buildings often with simple dormer windows storey buildings are common, sometimes with a garret (attic) space evident by virtue of windows in the gable;
- Buildings are commonly aligned both front onto or side (gable) onto the street / lane, creating a varied and interesting character to streets, particularly when combined with changing colours and materials in buildings;
- Plots tend to be large with significant space around buildings, principally to the side and back of the plot. Low boundary walls and / or hedges around gardens offer continuity and enclosure along lanes; and
- Trees, hedgerows, timber fences and stone walling edge lanes and streets and help to knit together buildings and settlements. These provide consistent treatments which help bring coherence to the settlements in this area.

↑ Newborough

↓ Nr Bramshall ↑

Hamlets ↑ Stramshall

The Middle Valleys and their Villages

4.23 This area is made up of a number of small tributaries and associated valleys which lead into the Trent. The principal tributaries are the Swarbourne and the Blithe, although there are many smaller brooks. The rivers generally run from north to south, from high land of the plateau and cutting shallow but well-enclosed, winding valleys as they flow into the wide Trent Valley.

4.24 The winding valleys divide the landscape and create well-enclosed, often tranquil areas of often picturesque countryside. Lanes run along the valleys, and views are generally enclosed by the prevailing landform and hedgerows. The meandering lanes and terrain restrict views across the valleys and towards settlements.

4.25 The area overlaps with the ancient forest of Needwood and there are significant remnants of forest on the higher ground either side of the Swarbourne Valley. The valley floors are characterised by grassland and farming, with mature trees and hedgerows adding an informal structural quality to the landscape. To the west of the Needwood Forest, Bagot Forest is another important forested area.

4.26 There are four main villages in the middle valleys: Abbots Bromley, Yoxall, Newborough and Kingstone. Each of these has the form of a linear collection of buildings sitting snugly in the valley floors. Abbots Bromley and Yoxall are the largest and most distinctive. Outside the main villages, are a small number of hamlets located at intersections of roads, including Hoar Cross, Hadley End and Newchurch. The villages are tucked away in the valleys and have a 'small-scale' and enclosed feel. The characteristics distinctive of 'The Middle Valleys and their Villages', which new development should seek to respond to include:

- Buildings which generally hug the terrain and valley bottoms, with buildings seen through trees or within valleys. Buildings rarely break the skyline and are usually viewed against a landscape backdrop when viewed from a distance;

- Villages and buildings generally grouped along streets and lanes with a distinct linear character based on a main street, with frontage development close to and at the back of the footway to create a strong sense of enclosure and continuity;

- Streets and lanes meandering gently to create short-run views, where buildings edge streets and close off views as the streets and lanes change direction. This creates interesting streetscapes, which slowly reveal themselves along what are generally long linear streets;

- Continuous frontages, including terraces, town houses and free-standing buildings which define strong street edges and continuity along streets. These create a strong sense of enclosure through villages;

- Linear frontages are broken down by narrow plot widths, varied built forms and roofs and taller 3 storey buildings, which together create a strong vertical emphasis along streets that balances the linear nature of continuous frontages;

- A combination of simple modest traditional vernacular buildings, along with more consciously styled and substantial polite, period buildings reflecting a variety of historical architectural styles. Period buildings enjoy a more refined architectural style and more considered and deliberate detailing;

- Consistent use of red-orange brick for buildings and walling, with dressed local (red-pink Hollington) stone for detailing. Some painted near white brickwork and light rendered finishes are also evident. There are original timber frame and half timbered buildings where timbers have been blackened and panelling is finished (near) white;

- Varied roof treatments typified generally by steeply pitched roofs of Staffordshire Blue plain clay tiles, both front and side (gable) onto the street. There is a small number of Georgian buildings where a shallower roof is hidden behind parapets which rise above and in front of the eaves to create a simple rectilinear elevation; and

- In the heart of villages there are often no front or side gardens, with buildings at the back of the footway cheek by jowl. Where front (and side) gardens are evident, often to the edges of settlements, they are generally small in scale with building lines close to back of footway. They are often well planted with low stone walls defining the edge of the street.

Middle Valleys and their Villages

The Plateau and its Villages

4.27 The Needwood Plateau is an elevated, generally flat area in the centre of the Borough, and surrounded on three sides by wide river valleys. It rises sharply from the north and east, where distinct scarp slopes are evident. From the south and west the Plateau rises more steadily and gently.

4.28 The plateau contains part of the remnant of the ancient forest of Needwood, Formaly common land which was enclosed very early in the periord of enclosures The landscape has a distinct character formed by mature woodland and hedgerows and long straight road patterns which were laid out after enclosure.

4.29 While much of the Plateau is generally flat, the upper valley of the River Swarbourne and smaller streams, such as Alder Brook, cut shallow valleys through it. This slight undulation, along with the scattered woodland restricts views.

4.30 The escarpment creates strong edges to the plateau to the north and east, and these edges are highly visible from key routes through the Borough, along the A50 and A38 and the railway line along the Dove Valley. The escarpment itself is a key landscape feature and creates a green backdrop to several settlements including, most notably, Burton upon Trent, Tutbury, Draycott-in-the-Clay and Marchington.

4.31 To the top of the escarpment at the edge of the plateau, wide panoramic views are possible northwards and eastwards, over open countryside, villages and towns. The skyline to the top of the Scarp is punctuated in places by landmarks, for example at Hanbury where the water tower and St. Werburgh's Church are features, and at Tutbury, where the ruined castle is evident.

4.32 The villages on and close to the plateau include Tatenhill, Anslow, (in the east) Hanbury and at greater distance Draycott in the Clay (in the north). These are all on or near to the edges of the Plateau, close to the escarpment. The centre of the plateau is characterised by small hamlets such as Rangemore, Needwood, Anslow Gate and Hanbury Woodend scattered among the ancient forest. The villages in this area have a strong association with topography and are varied in their layout, depending on the local terrain. The characteristics distinctive of 'The Plateau and its Villages' to which new development should seek to respond include:

- Villages on the edge of the plateau with long sinuous streets following the contours of the landscape, reflecting the organic development of the area.

- Short streets which are well-enclosed by terraces and cottages or longer agricultural buildings. Detached buildings separated by surrounding gardens and with varying set-backs and angles to the road are united by consistent front boundary treatment;

- Buildings generally facing onto the streets which reinforce the linear qualities of the settlements. In the settlements there is often little space between buildings along the street, with buildings positioned close together;

- Substantial often 3 storey tall and narrow buildings as well as more domestic two-storey and one-and-a-half-storey houses. Window design reinforces the verticality of traditional buildings through tall proportions;

- Buildings are predominantly constructed in local red-orange brick, with a very small number of timber-frame buildings, some brick panelling and small numbers of (near white) rendered buildings adding variety and interest. Decorative brickwork and masonry sills and lintels and quoins are also evident;
- Steeply pitched gables and interlocking gables, with dormers and half dormers and

prominent chimneys. Roofs include a mixture of deep-red clay and Staffordshire Blue plain clay tiles with simple eave treatments, including dentil coursing and simple bargeboards; and

- Farms are often approached through formal gateways and set back at the end of long drives. Here the clusters of buildings create a distinct composition within the landscape, which are often visible through trees from the lanes and main roads.

↑ Needwood Forest

Plateau and its Villages ↑ Nr Fauld

The River Valleys and their Villages

4.33 The broad and flat main river valleys are often more developed and contain a string of larger villages and smaller towns. In places, these have coalesced or extended through outward development at their edges. There is not a distinct unifying character to the buildings in these valleys, as there is in the character areas described earlier in this section. Rather the settlements in the river valleys create varied characteristics, drawing generally on the local materials of the Borough.

4.34 The Dove Valley and lower reaches of the river through the Borough contain the setgtlements of Coton in the Clay, Crakemarsh and Combridge. The Dove Valley contains the larger settlements of Rolleston on Dove, Tutbury, Marchington and Rocester and the market town of Uttoxeter. The relationship between these settlements, the river and its flood plain are important to the character of the area. The flat land in this location includes a number of smaller buildings within the countryside, mainly originating from agriculture.

4.35 The Trent Valley is broader and flatter that the Dove Valley; it is also crossed by meandering streams as the Trent becomes braided in the area known as the washlands, which stretches from Barton under Needwood to just north of Burton upon Trent. The washlands are not heavily developed, but streams are lined with thick vegetation and, especially in Burton, they are an important feature in the character of the area. In the Trent Valley, the space between historic villages is, in places, characterised by modern industrial development. Burton upon Trent is the main urban centre in the Borough and is located on the banks of the River Trent. The smaller settlement of Barton under Needwood is also located in the Trent Valley.

4.36 Overall, the river valleys are consistent in that they provide varied towns and villages, which are very different, but nonetheless characteristic to the Borough, based on their location, setting, built fabric and materials. The character of many of the towns and villages within the River valleys is described in the next part of this Chapter.

↑ Rolleston on Dove

Principal Towns & Villages

4.37 Within these general character areas a number of larger villages and towns, stand out owing to their greater scale and their strong sense of place. These towns and villages will be sensitive to new development. This section summarises some of the basic characteristics of these towns and villages and should be used as a guide in assessing the context of new development within these places. The section is organised as follows:

- The Principal Villages of the Borough;
- Uttoxeter – The Principal Market Town;
- Burton – The Principal Urban Centre; and
- Suburban Areas.

The Principal Villages of the Borough

4.38 Several large villages exist within the Borough of East Staffordshire and these are typically attractive and picturesque settlements, whilst varied in terms of their form and built fabric, each contributes strongly to the character of East Staffordshire. Their vernacular buildings, street patterns and open spaces create a strong sense of place which so many new developments often lack. Whilst there will be limited new development in these villages their character can help to inform new development across the borough as well as more locally within individual settlements. The principal large villages are described on the following pages.

Abbots Bromley

4.39 Abbots Bromley's name refers to its one time ownership by the abbey at Burton upon Trent. Today it is an attractive village with a strong character, the heart of which is focused on the Butter Cross. Today, Abbots Bromley contains a variety of building styles; of particular importance are the timber-frame buildings and the Georgian brick town houses. Abbots Bromley has a strong sense of place, with the main street well enclosed by continuous building frontages through the centre of the village. New development in Abbots Bromley should also reflect the more detailed guidance in the Abbots Bromley Village Design Statement.

Marchington

4.40 The village of Marchington is located close to the foot of Marchington Cliff on lightly undulating land close to the River Dove. Marchington Cliff is the steepest part of the scarp and is heavily wooded. It is dominant in many views out of the village. The predominant building material in Marchington is red-orange brick with Staffordshire Blue plain clay tiles and tall chimney stacks. There are several timber-frame buildings in and around Marchington, as well as several buildings finished in white and cream render. Two and one-and-a-half storey buildings with simple detailing make up most of the village, but there are also several grander, more ornate Victorian buildings around the village square. Mature trees associated with the village's gardens give the village an enclosed, secluded character.

Mayfield

4.41 Mayfield is of Saxon origin and the village was mentioned in the Domesday Book. It grew up around a crossing point on the River Dove known as the Hanging Bridge, of which the 500 year old arches are still visible. Mayfield sits in a natural half-bowl, open on the side facing the Dove valley, providing long views over the valley and beyond to the town of Ashbourne. The village is a strong example of the upland character area with both red-pink Hollington Stone and buff-grey Millstone Grit used widely for the robust buildings. Mayfield has a more industrial character than the other upland villages and has a broader mixture of architectural styles, including stone terraced housing as well as Victorian brick buildings alongside the more rustic stone and brick vernacular buildings.

Rocester

4.42 The village of Rocester is situated between bridges over the rivers Dove and Churnet, just north of their confluence, and dates back to Roman times, when it was the most important settlement in the area. The village contains two mill buildings by each of the river crossings as well as brick terraced housing on the roads leading to the crossings. Rocester is a compact village, centred on a village square at the meeting place of three roads. There are large areas of green space within the village associated with the school, church and ancient Roman fort. The village contains more brick built buildings than stone buildings, but to the north into the upland area stone becomes more prevalent.

Yoxall

4.43 Yoxall is an ancient village that grew as a staging post on the old turnpike (which is now the A515) at the point where there was a crossing of the River Swarbourne. The most striking feature upon entering the village is the predominance of red brick, along with black tarred timber frames, steeply pitched Staffordshire blue clay roofs and tall chimney stacks. Yoxall has a striking narrow winding main street which is well enclosed by buildings and which creates a distinctive built form. Yoxall was the first village in the country to produce a village design statement to protect this distinctive character. Development in Yoxall should also reflect the more detailed guidance in the Yoxall Village Design Statement.

Barton-under-Needwood

4.44 The farmsteads and cottages of the original settlement line the winding main street, rising in an east-westerly direction from the Trent Valley to higher ground to the west. St. James Church is a key focal point where streets converge and where public space is provided. The War memorial is also an important focal point for the town. The winding Main Street together with Station Road, create the backbone to the settlement pattern, with strong building frontages edging these streets.

4.45 The enclosure created by the many buildings at the back of the footpath is strong, though there are also a number of yards and lanes leading off the main street which contain a variety of uses and lend distinctiveness to Barton. The curved nature of the town's streets means that views are formed and enclosed through the heart of the settlement.

4.46 Buildings sit both front onto and side (gable) onto the street and add variety and interest to the street scene. There is a wide variety of building styles within the town which define these frontages, including domestic cottages and more substantial Georgian and Victorian brick buildings. There is a consistent scale throughout the town based on predominantly 2-storey buildings with some 1½ and 2½-storey buildings.

4.47 The predominant building materials are red-orange brick, with some limited use of Staffordshire Blue Brick for detailing. Stone has mainly been used for detailing with a few notable exceptions including the Tudor Church. Light coloured painted brickwork and Plain red clay tiles were used predominantly for roofs along with Staffordshire Blue clay tiles and Blue Welsh Slate. Roofs are generally steeply pitched and simply designed ending in gables, some of which turn onto the street. Dormers are used in both 1½ and 2½-storey buildings.

4.48 New development in Barton-under-Needwood should reflect the basic characteristics described in this chapter and the more detailed guidance in the Barton-under-Needwood Village Design Statement.


Slick
HAIRDRESSING


The Middle Bell

Rolleston on Dove

4.49 Rolleston on Dove is an historic village which was included in the Domesday Book and which had strong ties to the owners of Rolleston Hall. It encompasses a variety of vernacular buildings and more recent Victorian and Edwardian developments. Two of the most striking buildings are the Parish Church and Spread Eagle Pub. The urban form of Rolleston on Dove is fairly loose and somewhat scattered. There are a number of large grand houses which create an impressive and mature townscape setting.

4.50 The high quality and distinctive landscape is integral to the character of the town. Private gardens, large trees and both formal and informal green spaces create a pleasant and picturesque setting for development. The Alderbrook which runs through the town is an important part of Rolleston on Dove's character. A number of substantial houses are set in large, well tended gardens, concealed by hedges or trees at their front boundary. The large number of tall trees lend an enclosed feel to the village centre.

4.51 The town's main streets and thoroughfares are complemented by smaller scale yards and courts. Church Road is an attractive winding street with overhanging mature trees, and cottages and town houses close to the back of the footway. The relationship between the central streets, the attractive buildings and the waterside creates a special sense of place.

4.52 Short continuous frontages and well-spaced individual buildings maintain reasonable continuity and enclosure along principal streets. Houses front onto and turn gables onto the street. There is a unity of scale within the built fabric with domestic two storey buildings predominating. Building materials are predominantly red-orange brick. There are a number of (near) white rendered buildings and light painted buildings. Stone is not widely used except for the Church of St. Mary. Decorative corbelling and bargeboards are evident in the town, above which roofs are characterised by steeply pitched designs finished in both Staffordshire Blue and red-orange plain clay tiles.

4.53 New development in Rolleston should reflect the basic guidance in this section as well as the more detailed guidance in the Rolleston Village Design Statement.

Tutbury

4.54 Tutbury has a well-defined character with a distinct and coherent street pattern and urban form. The development of Tutbury centres on High Street below the castle, and St Mary's Priory church. The settlement pattern in the historic part of the village is organic in form in that it has evolved over time in response to the lie of the land, with the town stepping up and across sloping land rising above the flood plain of the River Dove. The streets are defined by some impressive period buildings, which reflect gradual change over many years.

4.55 Tutbury contains a large number of simple, elegant and well proportioned Georgian buildings. There are also more ornate older buildings of the Tudor / Stuart periods including some striking timber-framed buildings. The variety evident along the village streets is part of its special character. Many buildings reflect Georgian proportions with taller windows to the ground and first floors and tall and narrower proportions for fenestration.

4.56 The village is also characterised by several curved frontages at prominent corner locations. Building lines, roofs, windows and doors are designed and constructed to sweep around the corners, some of which are tightly curved and others more gently curving.

4.57 Most of the buildings in Tutbury are constructed in brick. These include local red-orange brick seen elsewhere in the Borough, but also some darker red-brown bricks, generally all of which are of a varied handmade feel and in Flemish Bond. There is some black and white timber frame development within the town which contrasts sharply with the prevailing brick streets. Staffordshire Blue plainclay tiles predominate, with steeply pitched roofs punctuated by tall chimney stacks. There is some ornate detailing but generally the architectural language is restrained and polite.

4.58 Development in Tutbury should respond to this basic guidance and also reflect the more detailed guidance in the Tutbury Village Design Statement.


DRAGON 龍城 CITY


DUKE STREET


TUTBURY INSTITUTE
EST. 1859
EST. 1859


ye olde
DOG & PARTRIDGE


TUTBURY
MUSEUM

Uttoxeter – The Principal Market Town

4.59 Uttoxeter is the Borough's principal market town and owes its existence to agriculture and trade. It is a compact town centred on its market place and High Street. In heart the town is relatively intact and there are some fine traditional buildings, a varied architectural language and varied and coherent streetscape. St. Mary's Church is a distinctive feature on the skyline and visible from around the town.

4.60 The town centre is located at the edge of a hill above the shallow valley carved out by Picknal Brook. The central streets of the town are relatively intact and the organic street pattern is evident. As well as the principal streets, a number of smaller yards and courts provide a richer mix of routes around the town.

4.61 Most of the buildings in Uttoxeter date from the Georgian and Victorian periods and characterised by proportion and the classical language of architecture. There are a variety of roof pitches and a mixture of Staffordshire blue clay tiles and slate on the roofs. Walls are built from red brick which is sometimes rendered in white or cream. There are also a few older timber-framed buildings with tan coloured wattle and daub, the Uttoxeter Heritage Centre on Carter Street being a notable example of this.

4.62 The key characteristics of Uttoxeter which development should respond to are:

- Strong building lines with an emphasis on vertical proportion and a sense of variety and interest along strongly defined core streets;
- Narrow plot frontages and development at the back of the footway in the town centre;
- A fine grained network of streets and lanes in the town centre, with good permeability and choice of pedestrian routes;
- An organic street pattern where long streets curve gently, often following contour lines;
- Irregular open spaces well-enclosed and with variations in the width and scale;
- A pallete of building materials which is predominantly based on red-orange brick, with contrasting individual one-off buildings in different materials and finishes;
- White and cream renders are evident, along with timber-frame, with restrained detailing and simple proportions.
- Several stone buildings are constructed in millstone grit, coursed and finely jointed. Stone has been used for focal point buildings in the town centre
- Traditional shop fronts are the most attractive with a range of sensitively designed frontages and careful use of colour. Some modern shop fronts are less attractive and less appropriate.
- Historic roads leading out of the town centre which are lined with short rows of townhouses and large, individual houses in a variety of traditional styles with a consistent sense of enclosure;
- A sense of completeness and value in terms of streetscapes, as much as any individual building, is very important to the character of the core town centre;
- An interesting and varied roofscape with different pitches and shapes of roofs and tall chimney stacks along with some more ornate detailing;
- A strong physical and visual link between town and country, including views over a mainly rural landscape from the town centre;
- Strong views towards landmarks such as key public buildings and churches which make use of both the topography and vistas and glimpses within the townscape; and
- St Mary's Church is prominent in most views into the town from the countryside.

4.63 Uttoxeter Town Centre Masterplan, which is available seperately from the Council, provides further guidance on design.


T. G. Sargeant & Sons.


KING A BAANDI
Waterloo House

Burton upon Trent – The Principal Urban Centre

4.64 Burton upon Trent grew up as a brewing town and this is evidenced through the town's architectural heritage and modern developments.

Burton upon Trent is a town on a river. The Trent meanders within a wide flood plain known as the washlands, which passes through the town. This wide undeveloped area adjacent to the town centre is a unique feature of Burton, an important natural asset and open space. The 'waterfront' of the town is not with the river at all, but with the grassy washlands and small rivulets. The relationship between buildings and the washlands is not particularly well developed. This is an aspect of the urban design of the town centre which needs to be strengthened

4.65 The town centre is polyfocul with most of the shopping close to the High Street but the railway station, town hall and St Paul's church are some distance across town, north-westwards of the riverside.

4.66 The town's street pattern is based on a loose grid network of streets. In places streets were widely spaced to accommodate the large breweries, and later development of former brewery sites has retained the looseness of this grid.

4.67 The town centre includes a great variety of buildings from different ages and a significant proportion of modern buildings. Several large retail parks and malls have been developed with associated areas of surface car parking, which in places undermine the urban fabric of the town.

4.68 Burton upon Trent is identified as a regional growth point, and so significant new development can be expected. It is important for the design of new developments to enhance and where necessary 'mend' the townscape. New development should recognise the importance of high quality contemporary design, but also recognise the traditional characteristics of the town.

4.69 The key characteristics of Burton upon Trent which development should respond to are:

- The unique urban environment created by the washlands, where a promenade follows the washlands edge creating a waterfront-style character,
- A town centre which makes only limited use of its striking waterside. New development should seek to address, define, animate and enhance the riverside.
- A formal layout, especially in the western end of town around St Paul's Church, with streets which create vistas terminated by prominent landmarks;
- The grid-iron layout in the town centre and inner suburbs is roughly aligned with the River Trent, with streets which run either parallel or perpendicular to the River;
- Substantial and robust buildings reflecting the industrial heritage and brewing traditions in the town, with large town centre blocks still accommodating this industry;
- Strong street frontages with buildings to the back of the footway, defining well-enclosed streets with a variety of building frontages side by side;
- Blind arcading used to add interest to inactive street frontage around breweries
- Strong views towards landmarks such as churches and breweries (both historic and modern);
- A variety of architectural styles throughout the town centre, with no overall defining character, other than the historic street patterns;
- A rich variety of detailing among the Victorian gothic buildings of the town centre, with other buildings tending to have more simple and robust detailing;
- Georgian townhouses reflecting the prosperity of the brewing industry around the

north of the town centre.

- Robust and uniform rows of terraced housing, often with arched entries between adjoining houses leading into the back yards;

- Detailing, fenestration, roof pitch and narrow street frontages which create a strong vertical emphasis; and

- Predominant use of red-orange brick in buildings, with some use of Staffordshire blue brick, millstone grit and Hollington Sandstone for detailing;

4.70 Burton upon Trent Town Centre Area Action Plan, which is available seperatley from the Council, provides further guidance on design.

Suburban Areas

4.71 The growth of the Borough has included significant new development from the early twentieth century onwards, which has altered and added to its character. Most strikingly, significant residential development has taken place around the traditional towns and villages. Whilst these vary in terms of their appearance they are often non-vernacular insofar as they are not well-related to the character of the original buildings and settlements, or do not draw on local materials and details.

4.72 Nonetheless many of the planned residential suburbs provide good housing areas which are recognisable by the provision of greener streets, lighter and brighter dwellings and gardens. At their best these places reflect some of the principles of the garden suburb movement.

4.73 In other places however, suburban development has less character and can create somewhat uniform estate developments which have little or no relevance to context and setting. Some suburban expansion has added to the edges of the larger settlements and in places some smaller villages have been absorbed into the built up area. This can be seen in Branston and Stretton, which now form part of the larger built up area of Burton upon Trent.

4.74 In accommodating future urban growth it will be very important to conserve and reinforce local distinctiveness and a sense of place, and avoid large tracts of estate housing which do not respond to the character of the Borough and the places within it. The design information in this guide and this chapter specifically can help developers to recognise and respond to local character more effectively.

Traditional Building Materials

4.75 This chapter has summarised the essential characteristics of some of the Borough's landscape, villages and towns. Looking across these different places it is possible to draw out characteristics which are applicable to the whole Borough. Inevitably this is a simplification of the immense variety that exists in the built fabric of the Borough, but nevertheless helps identify ways in which new development can be designed to be more appropriate to it.

4.76 The Borough boundary does not signal a distinct change in building traditions, styles or materials. The wider context and changing landscape and geology have informed the vernacular language of its buildings. From the potteries to the north-west, to the Peak District to the north, the influences of many years of local building traditions are felt within the Borough's built heritage; the local materials help to unite many buildings of differing construction, age and style.

4.77 New development will need to reflect these traditional characteristics as appropriate to particular sites. It will be essential that new buildings respond sensitively to local materials, colours and details.

4.78 Materials should be sourced from as close as possible to the development to reduce embodied energy within this construction the most visually appropriate material should be selected.

Burton upon Trent

Summary of Walling Construction and Materials

Timber-Frame

4.79 Most towns and large villages contain at least some timber-frame buildings. This early method of building construction drew on a ready supply of good local timber, with both agricultural buildings and domestic dwellings constructed of timber frame.

4.80 Box timber framing is most evident within the Borough, often with jettied upper storeys. The vertical and horizontal timber members are structural and often exposed along with bracing members and other decorative features. Timbers were weather-proofed by the application of black tar and the panels between the timbers in-filled with wattle and daub, which was usually finished in lime-wash for weather-proofing. This gives the characteristic black and white appearance. In later buildings the panels were in-filled with decorative brickwork, known as nogging. Many timber-frame buildings have been entirely brick clad, concealing the underlying timbers.

Brickwork

4.81 The Keuper Marl Clay in Staffordshire is well suited for brick making. The resulting brick is red-orange in colour, soft in construction and weathers to produce a rough texture. This is the most common building material throughout the Borough.

4.82 Despite the availability of Staffordshire Blue Brick from the Potteries, blue brick is not used for the construction of large areas of brickwork. It is mainly used for detailing on industrial buildings in Burton, and, due to its durable and impermeable qualities, it is preferred for brick courses close to the ground.

4.83 A high proportion of traditional brickwork in the Borough uses a Flemish Bond, where alternate stretcher and header bricks are constructed next to one another within the wall. The use of such bonding adds to the visual richness of the elevation as well as to its structural integrity. Decorative bonding patterns and string coursing are evident in some buildings where bricks of different colouration are used to offer contrast. More basic brick bonding includes English and Common bond.

Natural Stone

4.84 Stone is used widely in the north of the Borough. Part of the Bunter Sandstone, the most predominant stone in the Borough is the Hollington Sandstone, which is quarried locally. This varies in colour from a dull pink-red to a white or salmon. In the villages of Stanton and Wooton, Hollington stone is almost exclusively used, while in the Dove Valley between Mayfield and Ellastone, it appears alongside brick buildings in roughly equal measure. In and around Mayfield a second stone, Millstone Grit is used for buildings. This is a dull grey-buff coloured stone, associated more generally with the Peak District. South of Rocester, both Hollington Sandstone and Millstone Grit are used in the construction, detailing and decoration of buildings. This includes ashlar block-work, sills and lintels and quoins and other special masonry pieces. These two stones are also used for most of the churches in the Borough and for other key features, such as the monument in Uttoxeter Market Place.

Renders and Lime Renders

4.85 Some vernacular buildings were traditionally finished and weather-proofed in lime render to make them waterproof. In timber-frame buildings the wattle and daub panels between the exposed timbers were finished in lime render. In some cases full weather-proofing was sometimes used for timber-frame buildings, with lime plaster used on top of wooden laths. In brick buildings lime render was often used to provide a protective skin or as a decorative façade feature, sometimes worked to appear as stone. Bull nose detailing above damp proof courses and above windows are characteristic details which help to drain water from the building. Colours were generally plain and near white or stone coloured. The simple colour palette does extend to warmer greys and similar tones, but brighter and pastel colours have not been widely used. Other more basic finishes include paint or lime-wash to brick buildings, and these are also generally near white in colour.

Summary of Roofing Materials

Staffordshire Blue Clay Plain Tiles

4.86 The most common roofing material in the Borough is the Staffordshire Blue Plain Tile. The origin of these tiles is the Etruria Marl extracted from the Marl Holes in the Potteries which becomes dense when it is over-baked in the oven. These tiles are used for their durable, weather-resistant properties and are dark blue in colour. Tiles are typically small in size (10x6 inch / 265mmx165mm) and plain. Owing to their size and properties, they ideally need to be hung on roof pitches of between 40-50 degrees to provide maximum weather-proofing. The Council will expect developers to assess the prevailing character of an area in determining the appropriate roof pitch within this range. As a general rule roof pitches of 47.5 degrees or steeper look more aesthetically pleasing and appropriate for the Borough. The steep dark roofs of the Borough are largely a result of the use of clay tiles. Traditionally-made tiles offer a subtle variety in colour and finish, and age well with buildings. Colour in particular matures well in traditional materials, unlike comparable modern concrete-based products, which should be avoided.

Red / Plain Clay Tiles

4.87 Red clay tiles are also common in the Borough and are made from clays which are not as durable as Etruria Marl, such as the local Keuper Marl, also used to make bricks. These tiles are similarly small and plain, and require the same steeply pitched roofs as blue tiles. Colour can vary from deep terracotta to a near black, or from purples, to pale reds. Colouration, depending on the type of clay, the firing process involved and the weathering of this material adds variety and character to vernacular buildings. The subtle variation in colour and form in traditionally tiled roofs creates a richness often missing in modern developments. Examples of places with more locally distinctive tile colouring are Kingstone, which has an abundance of light red tiles, and Yoxall which has tiles which are near purple in colour.

Welsh Slate

4.88 Welsh slate is more durable and weatherproof than clay, and with the coming of the railways became popular across Staffordshire as in the rest of the country. Slates can vary in colour from dark blue/grey to purple/grey, though the colour differences are slight. It is common, however, to refer to Welsh blue slate or Welsh purple slate. Slate appears most commonly on period Georgian and Victorian buildings in the main settlements of the Borough. It is also more common in the north where they it is used alongside stone buildings. Slate roofs can often be less steeply pitched than clay tiled roofs owing to their impervious qualities and larger unit size.

Materials in Contemporary Development

4.89 Today, designers and architects have an unrivalled choice of materials. With this great choice comes a responsibility to use them sensitively and effectively.

4.90 The importance of materials which are locally relevant in appearance is underlined. In one sense this is about ensuring new buildings are constructed from materials that are visually appropriate to the location, landscape and context. In addition, there is an important sustainability dimension to the issue of sourcing materials, and the Council prefers use of local materials to reduce transport costs.

4.91 Historically, materials have been imported for some of the grander building projects to create contrast and impact through colour, texture and design. The classically inspired Magistrates' Court in Burton upon Trent is a good example of how imported materials have been used to striking effect, in this case being the bright white Portland Stone for the elevations and lead for the dome.

4.92 Caution is needed in terms of the use of cheaper, concrete or other man-made products in place of good quality locally appropriate materials. Invariably cheaper concrete (or similar reconstituted) products will be inferior to natural materials. In particular, their long term performance will not be as effective, colouration may be lost, and surfaces may become dirty with less opportunity to clean and renew surfaces effectively. The overall quality of a development initially and in the longer term will be undermined. For this reason the Council encourages developers not only to use locally appropriate materials, but also as high quality materials as possible.

4.93 Modern materials and construction techniques can create opportunities for new architectural approaches for buildings in the Borough. These will need to be of a high quality and appropriate to the context. The Council encourages high quality contemporary architecture, but this should still relate positively to the context.

4.94 The Council also supports the use of good quality local materials in all forms of development, which can create buildings which 'belong' to, and are appropriate for the Borough, owing to the inherent qualities. Whilst materials will often be agreed by condition, their central importance to the quality of a development is such that the Council will expect a clear vision and logical approach to the selection of appropriate materials. This will need to be set out as part of any planning application through the Design and Access Statement.

5 Demonstrating and Reviewing Design Quality

Pre-application Discussion

5.1 East Staffordshire Borough Council is very keen to be actively involved in the design and development process and not just at the time a planning application is submitted.

5.2 Positive ongoing pre-application discussions are encouraged. Working with Council planning officers from an early stage can help identify opportunities and constraints in relation to a site and development. Additionally, it can assist developers to understand what will be required for planning applications and how best to manage the planning process for a site.

5.3 East Staffordshire Borough Council operates a 'Development Team' approach and will undertake to ensure all relevant Council professionals attend meetings as appropriate to provide effective, accurate and definitive planning and development advice. This will include drawing in other consultees such as Staffordshire County Council Highway Authority and the Environment Agency.

5.4 The following guidance is provided to developers with regard to engaging in pre-application discussions with the Council:

- Have a clear idea of the project brief, but be prepared to recognise legitimate planning issues in finalising the brief for development after initial discussions with the Council;
- Make sure the key planning policy messages in respect of the site and proposal are understood as a basis for the discussion;
- Ensure that an initial site visit has taken place. More detailed urban design analysis will be needed to accompany any application, but a basic grasp of the site issues will be expected as the basis for any pre-application discussion;
- Be positive in responding to advice from the planning officers. Their role is to help ensure high quality and appropriate development in the context of the local planning framework; and
- Be prepared to share early sketch plans and ideas. These will be treated as work in progress and can help to evolve design thinking. It is not advisable to seek pre-application discussions when the 'finished scheme' has been designed, as this may result in abortive work for the applicant.

Design Review

5.5 Design review is integral to a successful design process and should be undertaken both formally and informally, through the evolution of the design of the development.

5.6 Design review allows developers, their designers and the Council to talk about and interrogate the design, individually and together, towards improving and refining the design. It can provide a format for trouble-shooting and conflict resolution.

5.7 Design review can range from informal discussions or take a more formal format such as a design workshop, involving the design team, the client and the Council. Formal pre-application discussion with the Council will form one part of design review. Planning Officers will undertake design review when a planning application is submitted for determination, based on this Guide, utilising the Design Review Framework provided at the end of this section.

5.8 Recording design review, particularly where this has involved the Council, and writing this up succinctly as part of the Design and Access Statement for a planning application is encouraged. This can help explain why certain aspects of a development have been designed in a particular manner.

5.9 For major schemes, CABE, as a statutory consultee, may become involved in design review. This will be undertaken through the Council, although CABE may become involved at the request of a developer. Guidance by CABE on 'How to do design review' is provided at www.cabe.org.uk.

5.10 More locally, Southern Staffordshire Design Initiative, a project of the Southern Staffordshire Partnership, champions good design across the south of the county and provides advice and a design review service. Developers may seek to engage with South Staffordshire Partnership and should do so in consultation with the Council.

Consultation and Public Engagement

5.11 Consultation is an important stage of the design process. It can help to test out ideas, communicate information and improve local knowledge. The type and nature of consultation will vary with the scale and significance of the development.

5.12 The Council's Statement of Community Involvement should inform the approach to public consultation on development projects in the Borough, whether this is led by the Council or developers.

5.13 It is recommended that developers undertake public consultation prior to submission of a planning application. This should be timetabled to ensure sufficient time to revise the design before the planning application is submitted.

5.14 The form which developer-led consultation might take will range from an informal discussion with neighbours about a house extension, to a formal public exhibition or event. Public meetings should generally be avoided as these are not the most effective means of communicating often complicated information about development projects.

5.15 Developer led consultation should be undertaken after discussion with and agreement of the Council. Developers should ensure that consultation is properly resourced in terms of explanatory materials and staff to explain and describe the proposal.

5.16 It will be important that any formal and informal consultation is recorded and 'written-up' to explain comments made, and how the design has evolved to reflect local people's concerns and ideas as relevant. This could be included as a stand-alone report and/or as part of the Design and Access Statement.

Making a Planning Application

5.17 When the development proposals are finalised the planning application can be made.

5.18 Before this, however, it will be expected that development proposals will have been shared with the Council, and pre-application and design issues discussed with the applicant. This should help to ensure that the design of development is of an appropriate quality when the application is submitted.

5.19 Pre-application discussions will also identify the design-related information that will need to accompany a planning application. Without the full range of supporting design information the Council may not be in a position to validate a planning application.

Design and Access Statements

5.20 A Design and Access Statement is required by Government to accompany planning applications for new development, except for householder applications outside conservation areas. The length and level of detail of such Statements should reflect the scale and complexity of the development proposed.

5.21 In general the Statement should cover a number of important aspects of the development, explaining to the Council the design and proposal in terms of the following:

- Design Process, including site analysis, consultation and evolution of the scheme;
- Uses and activities to be developed on site;
- Amount of development, how much development is proposed;
- Layout and the arrangement of buildings, routes and spaces;
- Scale relating to how large the buildings are (height, width, length) and the context;
- Landscaping, including how open spaces will be treated and managed; and
- Appearance, specifically the design, materials and details related to the context;

5.22 Design and Access Statements should provide the narrative for the whole design process and clearly explain the design rational for the development. These statements need to do much more than simply describe the development.

5.23 The Council will look closely at the content and quality of Design and Access Statements to ensure that they meet the statutory requirements. The recommended source of advice on producing design and access statements is 'Design and Access Statements – How to read, write and use them' produced by CABE and freely available from their web site (www.cabe.org.uk).

5.24 They should be started early and evolved as the design progresses, not rushed and completed at the end of the process as a tick box exercise. Designers and architects should contribute to the drafting of the Statement to help convey the ideas and principles behind the scheme. Sufficient resources should be directed to ensure the Design and Access Statement is fit for purpose.

Implementing Development

5.25 The design process does not end when a planning application is approved.

5.26 Implementing development to the approved plans and details is imperative, and quality management is needed through this important stage of design and construction.

5.27 Planning conditions may need to be discharged prior to the commencement of development on site, and applicants may wish to discuss conditions with the Council at pre-application discussions.

5.28 In design terms, conditions will be used to control the specification of materials and design of details. The Council will need to be satisfied of the quality and appropriateness of materials and details to discharge such conditions. It may be sufficient to provide sample units of the materials, but in some cases the Council may wish to see larger sections or samples on site.

5.29 Cheapening the design and reducing the quality of the specification after the planning approval and / or discharge of conditions will not be acceptable, and the Council may take enforcement action to ensure quality standards are maintained.

Recognising Good Design – Awards & Standards

5.30 The Council encourages developers to achieve high design standards and demonstrate this through design awards and standards. There are a number of ways that developers and clients procuring development might wish to demonstrate design quality. Three national awards and standards include:

- Building for Life -is the national benchmark for well-designed housing and neighbourhoods in England. It is awarded to new housing projects that demonstrate a commitment to high design standards. Building for Life is managed by CABE and the Home Builders Federation. More information can be found about Building for Life and how the apply for the award, online (at www.buildingforlife.org);

- BREEAM - The 'Building Research Establishment Environmental Assessment Method' validates the sustainability of different types of development. The Council encourages its use in all non-residential development. Development is rated on a scale from PASS, to EXCELLENT and a certificate awarded. More information is provided online (at www.breeam.org); and

- Code for Sustainable Homes - allows home builders to be recognised for going beyond current building regulations in terms of environmental performance. The Code is supported by the Department for Communities and Local Government and the Building Research Establishment. New homes are awarded a rating from 1 to 6 stars, based on performance against sustainability criteria, with six stars being the highest standard, equating to carbon neutral. More information on the code is provided online (at www.communities.gov.uk).

- Accessible Natural Green Space Standard (ANasst) promoted by Natural England is awarded to schemes which meetit's objectives on accessibility, and where 100% of dwellings are within 300m or 5 minutes walk from green space.

5.31 More locally, the Southern Staffordshire Partnership Design Awards are part of the Southern Staffordshire Design Initiative. The awards are run every two years and have categories for different classes of development and for sustainability. Also, various Civic societies across the Borough also run their own design awards to celebrate the best buildings in their areas.

East Staffordshire Design Guide
Design Review Tool

August 2008

East Staffordshire Borough Council

East Staffordshire Design Guide

Summary of Design Issues – Design Review Tool

Assessing performance and response to the Design Guide in development proposals

Consider the response of development proposals against the design guide and the key summary provided here as follows. In what way do development proposals respond to the design requirements?

Scale / Rating

1. Unacceptable response	= The design is unacceptable requiring fundamental re-working
2. Poor response	= The design is not good enough and needs targeted improvement
3. Satisfactory response	= The design is acceptable but improvements may be possible
4. Good response	= The design addresses the issue well and is\will be endorsed
5. Excellent / Exemplar response	= The design is first class and could be used as best practice
Not applicable (N/A)	= Design issue is not relevant to this development

Consider how proposals respond to design requirements through the life of a development; e.g at pre-application stage, at the planning application stage, at reserved matters or conditions stages and at implementation. Assessing proposals in this way can help highlight problems, but also record where improvements have been made.

Site and context analysis / assessment

Evidence of site analysis / area / context analysis will be required. Developers / designers should be providing evidence that they have completed an appropriately detailed site and context analysis.

- Firstly, has analysis been undertaken? _____
- Secondly, does this cover all of the relevant issues and make relevant conclusions?
  - Landscape and natural environment _____
  - Built Context _____
  - Linkages & Legibility _____
- Thirdly, is this to the required level of detail for the nature of the development? _____
- Fourthly, how overall would we **rate** the quality of the analysis on the **above scale**? ☐

In addition, there should be evidence that where appropriate the designers / developers have referenced and recognised Chapter 4 of the Design Guide, 'The Character of East Staffordshire'.

- Has relevant information on site character been drawn out of the design guide? _____

Response to Context / Site

There should be strong linkage between site analysis and development proposals. This should be integral to the layout and design of the buildings and landscape and should be explained through design review meetings and in design and access statements.

- Overall, how would you rate the response to the site / context of the design of the development proposal based on the 5 point scale? ☐
- Looking at the development proposal in greater detail how would you **rate** the response to context in the following key areas?
  - Structure, linkages and connections ☐
  - Siting and orientation of buildings ☐
  - Building lines and set backs ☐
  - Street design including continuity and enclosure ☐
  - Scale, massing and heights of buildings ☐
  - Proportion and articulation of the buildings ☐
  - Materials and colours for development ☐
  - Details and finishes to development ☐
  - Boundary treatment and edges to the site ☐
  - Landscape treatment and character ☐

Now, how would you **rate** the character of the proposal on the **above scale**? ☐

In smaller scale developments, it may also be important to focus on the following key issues:

- Quality of new development on smaller site / 'infill' plot – How well do proposals relate to the existing built (and/or) landscape context around the site? **(rate performance)** ☐
- Quality of conversion of existing buildings – How well do proposals relate to (and / or improve) the character and quality of the original building? **(rate performance)** ☐
- Quality of extension to existing buildings – How well do proposals the relate to the original building which is to be extended? **(rate performance)** ☐
- Quality of shop front design – How well does the design relate to the overall building and is it appropriate? **(rate performance)** ☐

Scheme / Attributes / Qualities

On larger sites and in larger developments is there a clear and appropriate urban design framework behind the proposals?

- Is an urban design framework evident or presented? _____
- Does this adequately cover the following key areas:
  - Structure / Movement / Connections **(rate performance)** ☐
  - Public Realm / Landscape / Open Space **(rate performance)** ☐
  - Urban Form / Built Character **(rate performance)** ☐
  - Uses / Functions / Activities **(rate performance)** ☐

Now consider the quality of development proposals in terms of the following key design criteria. These apply for all developments, albeit some may be more or less relevant.

- Strong structure for the development based on development blocks ☐
- Ease of movement, based on well-connected layouts and streets ☐
- Spatial coherence with continuity and enclosure of streets and spaces ☐
- Legibility and ease of understanding, through street patterns and building design ☐
- Diversity, variety and choice in terms of uses and activities ☐
- High quality landscape and public realm treatment ☐
- Integration of road space to create pedestrian friendly places ☐
- Integration of car parking and servicing in an efficient manner ☐
- Sustainable design / development attributes ☐
- Adaptable / flexible design attributes ☐

Further Specific Issues in Residential Development

- Quality of residential streets ☐
- Quality of residential buildings ☐
- Street hierarchy creating pedestrian priority wherever possible ☐
- Appropriate format and type of buildings which create character ☐
- Appropriate materials and details in residential development ☐
- Hard and soft landscape and boundaries ☐
- Well integrated car parking ☐
- Appropriate residential densities ☐
- Space in and around the home – amenity and privacy ☐
- Sustainable design attributes of residential development ☐
- Adaptability and flexibility in home design ☐

Further Specific Issues in Commercial Development

- Location of buildings ☐
- Relationship between buildings ☐
- Form, massing, proportions and articulation of buildings ☐
- Active uses well located within buildings ☐
- Plant / machinery / signage well designed into development ☐
- Entrances to building well located and visible ☐
- Landscape quality of proposals, including public realm, planting and boundaries ☐
- Parking and servicing proposals ☐
- Security for the site / buildings well integrated ☐
- Sustainable attributes of commercial development ☐
- Management of the development ☐

Demonstrating and Reviewing Quality

Reviewing Design Quality

Have pre-application discussions taken place on design issues?

Has any other design review taken place? (state)

Have suggestions been made regarding improving the design of the development? (note them)

Have suggestions been responded to positively by designers / developers / applicants?

Has consultation taken place? Has this informed design improvements?

Design and Access Statement

Does the Design and Access Statement contain all the relevant information?

How would you rate the quality of the Design and Access Statement supporting the application?

How would you rate the quality of implementation?

Design Awards

Is the development worthy of nomination?

Could any aspects of design be exemplars?