

Design

Supplementary Planning

Document

2018

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1. Introduction

- 1.1 The purpose of this Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) is to set out the design principles and guidelines that Stafford Borough Council requires for all new development, including new build (both commercial and residential), and those seeking to alter or extend their houses. It also provides guidance to those proposing to make alterations and extensions to properties, both commercial and residential, in Conservation Areas.
- 1.2 SPDs expand on policies set out in the adopted Plan for Stafford Borough 2011-2031. However SPDs are not part of the statutory development plan system and are not subject to independent examination. Nonetheless the SPD carries significant weight in the decision making process, containing important information for anyone considering development in the Borough and is a material consideration when proposals for new developments are determined by the Council.
- 1.3 Stafford Borough encompasses a variety of settlements, whose scale and character varies between large urbanised towns and small rural hamlets. To the South of the Borough is Cannock Chase Area of Outstanding Beauty and to the north of the Borough is the North Staffordshire Green Belt. Many of these settlements have a distinctive character and contain important heritage assets, recreational space, and/or townscapes that are of high quality, and these characteristics contribute to the overall quality of life within these places. Stafford Borough Council therefore consider that achieving a high standard of design is essential to both preserve and enhance the character of the Borough's built and natural environments, and to improve the quality of life for its people.
- 1.4 This document is split into the following sections:
- **Section 2: Planning policy overview** – sets out the design and heritage policies at a national and local level that will be used by Development Management when assessing development proposals.
 - **Section 3: Urban Design Principles** - sets out the principles and objectives that new development should respond to and reflect in its design.
 - **Section 4: Architectural Design Principles** - sets out principles and objectives that should guide architectural design.
 - **Section 5: Guidance for Large Scale Residential Applications** - sets out additional design principles and objectives for large scale residential developments.

- **Section 6: Residential Design Guidelines** - this chapter sets out the residential amenity design guidelines for all residential developments in the Borough, including new build and extensions to existing properties.
- **Section 7: Development in Conservation Areas** – provides guidance to those owners (both commercial and residential) who have properties in conservation areas.
- **Section 8: Extensions and Alterations to Residential Dwellings** – applies to all those residents who seek to alter or extend their homes.

Furthermore attached at Appendix 1 is the Objectives of Urban Design and Aspects of Development form from 'By Design'; and attached at Appendix 2 and Appendix 3, is the 45 degree rule and the 25 degree rule, which will be used by officers to assess whether there is any unreasonable loss of daylight or overshadowing to any habitable rooms in neighbouring properties or gardens created by a proposed development.

2 Planning Policy Overview

National Planning Policy Framework (2012)

- 2.1 The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF), Section 7 (Requiring Good Design) sets out that ***“the Government attaches great importance to the design of the built environment. Good design is a key aspect of sustainable development, is indivisible from good planning, and should contribute positively to making places better for people”***.
- 2.2 The NPPF states in Paragraph 58 that ***“Local and neighbourhood plans should develop robust and comprehensive policies that set out the quality of development that will be expected for the area”***.
- 2.3 The status and importance of good design in achieving sustainable development is therefore clearly recognised, but is further reinforced in Paragraph 64 of the NPPF which sets out that ***“permission should be refused for development of poor design that fails to take the opportunities available for improving the character and quality of an area and the way it functions”***.

Technical Housing Standards- nationally described space standard (2015)

- 2.4 This national standard deals with internal space within new dwellings and is suitable for application across all tenures. It sets out requirements for the Gross Internal (floor) Area of new dwellings at a defined level of occupancy as well as floor areas and dimensions for key parts of the home, notably bedrooms, storage and floor to ceiling height. It is not a building regulation, and the requirements of this standard for bedrooms, storage and internal areas are relevant only in determining compliance with this standard in new dwellings and have no other statutory status.
- 2.5 The standards should be applied to all new residential developments and can be found using this link
<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/technical-housing-standards-nationally-described-space-standard>

The Plan for Stafford Borough 2011-2031 (Adopted 2014)

This document contains a vision, spatial principles and specific policies which will guide development across Stafford Borough. Relevant policies contained within the Plan for this SPD are described below:

“Policy N1 Design

To secure enhancements in design quality, development must, at a minimum, meet the following principles:

Use

- a. Ensure that, where relevant the scale, nature and surroundings, major applications are comprehensively masterplanned or, where appropriate, are accompanied by a development brief;
- b. Be designed, sited and grouped in order to provide access for all;
- c. New development of ten dwellings or more should demonstrate compliance with the Building for Life 12 assessment and any successor documents, unless it makes the development unviable or it has been sufficiently demonstrated, through a Design and Access Statement, that each of the twelve Building for Life questions has been optimally addressed, or conversely why it is not practical or appropriate to do so;

Form

- d. Incorporate sustainable construction and energy conservation techniques into the design in accordance with Policy N2;
- e. Require the design and layout to take account of noise and light implications, together with the amenity of adjacent residential areas or operations of existing activities;
- f. Retention of significant biodiversity, landscaping features, and creation of new biodiversity areas that take into account relevant local information and evidence;
- g. Include high design standards that make efficient use of land, promote activity and takes into account the local character, context, density and landscape, as well as complementing the biodiversity of the surrounding area;
- h. Designs must have regard to the local context, including heritage assets, historic views and sight lines, and should preserve and enhance the character of the area including the use of locally distinctive materials;

Space

- i. Strengthen the continuity of street frontages and enclosure of space;
- j. Development should clearly distinguish between public and private space, and provide space for storage, including for recycling materials;
- k. Streets and public open spaces are designed to be usable, easy to maintain and productive for the amenity of residents by being overlooked to create a safe environment;
- l. Require the design and layout of new development to be safe, secure and crime resistant, by the inclusion of measures to address crime and disorder through environmental design and meet “Secured by Design” Standards;
- m. Development should be well-connected to public transport and community facilities and services, and be well laid out so that all the space is used efficiently, is safe, accessible and user-friendly;
- n. Where appropriate, development should ensure that there is space for water within the development layout to facilitate the implementation of Sustainable Drainage Systems (SuDs)¹.

Movement

- o. Ensure that places inter-connect using important routes and linkages, including Rights of Way, which are pedestrian, vehicle and cycle friendly, whilst allowing for ease of movement, legibility and permeability through a clearly defined and well structured public realm;
- p. Ensure car parking is well integrated and discreetly located.”

“Policy N9 Historic Environment

Proposals that would affect the significance of a heritage asset will not be accepted for consideration unless they provide sufficient information for that impact to be assessed.

Development and advertisement proposals will be expected to sustain and, where appropriate enhance the significance of heritage assets and their setting by understanding the heritage interest, encouraging sustainable re-use and promoting high design quality. All potential loss of or harm to the significance of a heritage asset, including its setting, will require clear justification, taking into account:

- i. Settlement pattern including street patterns, orientation of buildings and sites, boundaries and density of development;
- ii. The scale, form and massing of buildings and structures;

¹ Please also refer to Staffordshire County Council Sustainable Urban Drainage Systems (SuDS) Handbook February 2017 <https://www.staffordshire.gov.uk/environment/Flood-Risk-Management/SuDS-Handbook.pdf>

- iii. Materials, including colours and textures;
- iv. Significant landscape features including open spaces, trees and planted boundaries;
- v. Significant views and vistas;
- vi. Locally distinctive architectural or historical detail;
- vii. The setting of heritage assets;
- viii. Archaeological remains and potential;
- ix. Traditional permeable building construction.

Development proposals must conserve and protect the significance of heritage assets by avoiding unnecessary loss of historic fabric and detail of significance. For listed buildings this includes internal features, floor plans and spaces.

Where harm to significance is unavoidable, appropriate mitigation measures will be put into place, including archaeological investigation (including a written report) or recording. This information should be deposited at the County Record Office and be available to the general public.

Heritage assets will be conserved and enhanced by:

1. Identifying heritage assets that are considered to be at risk of irreversible harm or loss;
2. Encouraging owners to maintain their heritage assets;
3. Where necessary the Council will use its statutory powers to serve Urgent Works or Repairs Notices to arrest the decay of its listed buildings;
4. Enabling development proposals will only be supported where it is shown that alternative solutions have failed and where it has been demonstrated that the proposed development is the minimum necessary to protect the significance of the heritage asset in accordance with national advice;
5. The use of Article 4 directions where the exercise of permitted development rights would undermine the aims for the historic environment.”

Flood Risk

Wherever proposals are affected by flood risk or if a river or stream is nearby, the Environment Agency may hold flood level information which should be used as part of a Flood Risk Assessment, Data requests should be made to enquiries_westmids@environment-agency.gov.uk. The Environment Agency also offer a planning advice service, which we recommend applicants take advantage of prior to formally submitting development proposals in the floodplain. For development advice contact swwmplanning@environment-agency.gov.uk

Urban Design Principles

- 3.1 Attached at Appendix 1 are the Council's Objectives of Urban Design and Aspects of Development form, based on those in the former guidance 'By Design'. These are the underlining principles of urban design and need to be utilised in development proposals for major applications.²
- 3.2 In addition to reflecting the spirit of guidance within the many nationally recognised best practice documents such as; The Importance of Good Design Planning Practice Guidance, Manual for Streets I and II, and Building for Life 12, proposals for new development must also be able to demonstrate their positive response to the following principles and objectives in their design; as appropriate to their location, scale and function.

A Context, Character and Sense of Place

- I. New development should demonstrate a distinctive character and identity to contribute to a strong sense of place. Creating high quality places that support the social cohesion of the Borough's communities and which enhance the quality of people's lives is a key aim of Stafford Borough Council.



² 10 houses or more, floorspace 1,000m² or site area of 1 hectare or more, for both outline and full planning permission.

- II. Development should be designed in a contextually sensitive manner to enhance and reinforce the character of the natural and built environment.
- III. Development should identify and respond positively to reinforce locally distinctive patterns of development, landscape and culture, including urban structure and grain, density, scale, mass, form etc..., unless there are circumstances where a divergent, but equally high quality design solution would provide an outstanding or innovative design which raises the standard and quality of design more generally in the area.



- IV. Where appropriate, new development should reinforce the existing spatial characteristics of the streets to which it relates, or create new streets and spaces that reflect both locally distinctive development characteristics and accordance with nationally and locally prescribed standards and guidance in respect to street design.
- V. New development should deliver good levels of natural surveillance and activation of the public realm via its principal frontage.
- VI. Where appropriate, new development should utilise a hierarchical approach to street design and building design to reflect the function and status of streets and buildings within their wider context.

B Integration, Connectivity and Movement



- I. Development proposals should be designed to be well connected and integrated with their wider context and movement network. Proposals should demonstrate a good level of permeability to enable legible and easy movement both between constituent parts of the new development (if applicable), and beyond the development itself.
- II. The layout of new development should be designed to promote accessibility to and within an area by foot, bicycle and public transport, and for people with limited mobility, hearing or sight. The Ten Principles of Active Design³ that offer individuals and communities the greatest potential to lead active and healthy lifestyles should also be applied
- III. Cul-de-sac type developments will be resisted where there are clear opportunities to extend existing movement networks into and through the

³ Active Design Planning for health and wellbeing through sport and physical activity (Sports England October 2015) <https://www.sportengland.org/media/3964/spe003-active-design-published-october-2015-high-quality-for-web-2.pdf>

development to create a more open, permeable and integrated urban structure. It is recognised that cul-du-sacs serving a small number of dwellings have a place within the hierarchy of layouts , but the entire site should not be a cul-sac.

C Legibility and Identity

- I. New development should create clear and logical layouts that create and contribute to a strong and distinctive identity and which are easy to understand and navigate through. This should be achieved through a well structured and defined public realm, with a clear and complimentary relationship between uses, buildings, routes and spaces, and through the appropriate preservation and/or creation of vistas, landmarks, skylines, landscape features and other focal points.



- II. New development should utilise a hierarchical approach to street design and building design to reflect the function and status of streets and buildings within their wider context to reinforce the proposal's inherent qualities of legibility.
- III. New development should provide recognisable and memorable features, especially at key locations such as threshold or gateway locations, important nodal points, and at the termination of important vistas.

D Landscape and Public Realm

- I. The design of landscaped areas, open space and public realm must be of high quality and should constitute a defining and cohesive element of the overall design of new development.
- II. Landscape and public realm designs should positively reinforce and enhance locally distinctive patterns of development unless there are circumstances where a divergent but equally high quality design would provide an outstanding or innovative design which raises the quality of design more generally in the area.
- III. Public realm designs, at all scales, should contribute to the facilitation of sustainable transport modes and the wider urban design objectives within 'Manual for Streets'.
- IV. Where appropriate, existing or new areas of public realm should be well overlooked and defined by the principal active frontages of new development.



- V. New development should enrich the public realm with well-designed and co-ordinated details (e.g. paving, public art, lighting, signs, seating, railings, cycle parking, bus shelters and other street furniture). However, the design of new public realm, or works to existing areas should avoid creating unnecessary visual clutter, especially from signage, advertisements etc... and should take up opportunity to rationalise existing public realm environments that demonstrate too much visual clutter.

- VI. The design of new public realm and landscape areas should provide for an ease of maintenance, particularly in regard to litter collection, mechanical sweeping and the maintenance of planted areas.
- VII. The application of contextually sensitive, good quality materials and an appropriate level of refinement in the detailing must be a key consideration in the design of public realm and other open space to demonstrate that questions of maintenance, durability, sustainability and the way in which the materials/details can be expected to age are appropriate.

E Amenity and Space Standards

- I. New development should enhance comfort, convenience and enjoyment through assessment of the opportunities for light, privacy and external space, and the avoidance or acceptable mitigation of potential disturbances including visual intrusion, noise, smell and pollution.
- II. The location and siting of new development should not compromise the development's potential to provide its end-users with a living or working environment that compromises its capacity to provide a high quality environment.
- III. New development must demonstrate its accordance with section 6 of this document.



F Inclusiveness, Adaptability and Diversity

- I. New development should provide access for all potential users, including people with disabilities, to buildings, public realm, open spaces and the transport network.
- II. The Lifetime Home standards should be utilised as benchmark guidelines in the design of new residential development to ensure that new buildings can adapt easily to future changes in need and use.
- III. Where appropriate, new development should provide a mix of compatible uses and tenures appropriate to create viable places that respond to local need.

G Safety and Security

- I. New development should be designed to be safe, secure and attractive, and to minimise opportunities for criminal activity and reduce the fear of crime. Aspects that should be considered as appropriate include mix of uses, active frontages, passive surveillance, integrated movement networks, lighting etc...
- II. New development should contribute to safe communities including **minimising** the risk of conflict between traffic and cyclists and/or pedestrians.
- III. 'Designing Out Crime: A Designer's Guide' should be utilised as a benchmark in designing new development.



4 Architectural Design Principles

- 4.1 While there is no intention to prescribe the architectural design of new buildings, achieving good quality architectural design is an expectation rather than an aspiration, and therefore new development and the alteration of existing buildings must demonstrate a creative and sensitive response to the site specific qualities of its locality to achieve place specific design solutions. It is recommended that particular attention is paid to:



4.2 Context and Ambition

Proposals should demonstrate a clear understanding of the site and its context, and provide a compelling rationale that justifies the manner in which they are responding to it. The relationship between context and design needs to be well considered and articulated via an expression of appropriate architectural ambition.



4.3 **Order and Balance**
Architectural design should demonstrate good qualities of composition, form and proportion that bring a natural sense of order and balance to the overall expression. Generally the design should be pleasing to the mind and the eye.

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4.4 Clarity of organisation

The functionality of the building and site should be expressed in its layout, its form and its external appearance. Generally the planning of the site and the internal layout of buildings should demonstrate a clarity of thinking that exerts a coherence across the plans, sections and elevations of a design.

4.5 Language and Expression

The appearance of new buildings should demonstrate a sensitivity to its context and ensure that the relationship between the design concept of the proposals and their context results in an architectural expression that appears compelling and inevitable.

4.6 **Scale and Massing**

The scale and massing qualities of proposed building(s), should enhance, and reinforce locally prevalent patterns of development and/or be complimentary to their setting. If they do not, there needs to be appropriate and compelling justification for why they do not follow these patterns.



4.7 **Detailing and Materials**

The choice and application of materials should demonstrably relate to an understanding of context as well as questions of maintenance, durability, sustainability and the way in which materials can be expected to age. The quality and refinement of the buildings detailing should also be commensurate with the architectural qualities demonstrated across the plans, sections and elevations.

4.8 **Design Against Crime**

New developments should create safe and accessible environments where fear of crime does not impact on the quality of life. Applicants must ensure that new development contributes to crime reduction by providing adequate natural surveillance, unobstructed views, safe and convenient movement that won't compromise security, clear definition of private and public space, well lit spaces and activity, as appropriate.

5 Guidance for Large Scale Residential Development

- 5.1 All applications for major residential development i.e. 10 dwellings or more, are required to demonstrate the following and adhere to the principles set out in Section 6: Residential Design Guide.

Understanding of the Place

- 5.2 New development is expected to demonstrate that its design is based upon a sufficiently robust contextual and urban design assessment and analysis of the site, its context and setting, its constraints, its history and its geography and that the overall layout is placing sufficient emphasis on recognizing and responding to the qualities of a place.



- 5.3 The site should be examined in terms of the physical, social and economic context. The mapping and analysis of the physical site and its context, should include an examination of at least the following topic areas;
- Land use, existing site conditions and constraints; use, flooding, archaeology etc..
 - Landscape and arboricultural; visual impact, trees, hedges etc...
 - The transport and movement network; vehicular, pedestrian, cycle, public etc...
 - Townscape analysis character, scale, form, massing, materiality etc...
 - Settlement pattern; Structure, Morphology, Density, etc...
 - Environmental impacts; biodiversity, drainage, noise and light pollution etc...

- Historic landscape characterisation
- Existing land use designations including Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty and the Green Belt

The social and economic context should be examined in terms of the following:

- Housing mixture and tenure
- Community infrastructure (services and facilities)
- Market need and demand

Vision

5.4 New development is expected to demonstrate how achieving a distinctive identity and strong sense of place that is derived from an understanding of the characteristics of the site, its history and its geography is central to the overall vision of the proposals.



Image and Identity

- 5.5 Urban, Landscape and Architectural Design play crucial and interlinked roles in creating a distinctive image and identity for developments. The illustrative and written material accompanying applications must adequately set out the required quality standards for these key strands of design to impart an appropriate sense of what the proposed spaces and buildings will look like. This should be achieved via appropriate narrative, images, drawings, vignette views etc...

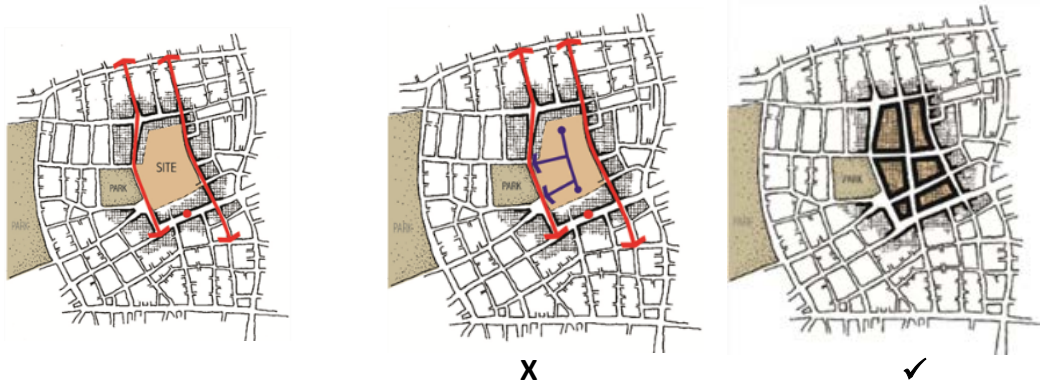


Coherence, Variety and Conformity

- 5.6 Too much variety can be chaotic, but too much uniformity can result in monotonous and dull places. Therefore any scheme design and its accompanying material must be explicit in respect to the extent to which it is attempting to impose uniformity and how an appropriate balance between these two qualities will be struck and delivered.

Integration and Connectivity

- 5.7 New development should demonstrate a high level of integration and connectivity both between its constituent parts and its wider setting. Local desire lines and connections should be identified and utilised within new development to maximise levels of connectivity to adjacent areas. Generally, the perceived site boundary of new development should effectively disappear upon completion.



Landscape, Open Space and Public Realm



5.8 New development should respond positively to mitigate any impacts of development on both the character and visual impression of the proposals wider landscape setting. The following should be key drivers for the design of large residential developments in respect to their relationship with their wider landscape setting:

- The creation of development edges that are predominantly outward facing to ensure the enlivenment of, and engagement with adjacent spaces.
- Where new development bounds open landscape, it should seek to create development edges that are “fragmented” to avoid the creation of strong linear features that exacerbate the harshness of the visual transition between built form and landscape.
- The creation of development edges that are penetrated by substantial “green fingers”, or “green corridors” to create a meaningful visual and spatial link/relationship between new development and its wider landscape setting, and to contribute to place-making.
- Edge of development planting should generally be utilised to filter views rather than blocking them.
- **Where there are existing watercourses such as rivers and streams developments should look at integrating them within the layout.**

- 5.9 The treatment of landscape, open space and public realm should form a fully integrated element of the development, and should be utilised as a structuring and ordering device to the spatial configuration of the overall masterplan. The spaces created should positively contribute to the overall spatial hierarchy of the development and strike a good balance between the form of buildings and the form of open space. Open space should have distinctive functionality and this should be supported by their location and size within the wider development.
- 5.10 Street trees and shrub planting should be key components of the street scenes and public realm to provide a positive contribution to the character, identity and legibility of the scheme.



6 Residential Design Guidelines

6.1 This section applies to all proposals for new build residential developments.

6.2 The Council recognises that each site has its own individual character and that the guidance should not be interpreted so inflexibly that it inhibits the creation of interesting, attractive and innovative layouts and design, nor undermines the objectives of the NPPF. In addition there may be other 'material' planning considerations that need to be taken into account.



6.3 This section provides guidance on the following:

- The creation of new roads
- Achieving visual privacy
- Landscaping
- Provision of private garden space
- Car parking and bicycle parking
- Refuse and recycling storage space
- Exceptions to the guidelines



The Creation of Roads in New Developments

- 6.4 Most neighbourhoods include a range of street character areas, and the width between buildings is a key feature in defining such areas, and dictates how pedestrians and traffic use the roads.



- 6.5 Within new residential areas, streets need to accommodate various types of movement in a convenient and safe manner. The needs of motorised traffic must be balanced with those of pedestrians of all ages, cyclists and users of public transport. The design of the street needs to be appropriate for the function of that part of the street, as the function may vary along its length. Streets should also be designed so that they form an attractive environment, responding to their context. To achieve this it is essential that new residential streets form a natural hierarchy that is clear and legible to all users who share the same space.
- 6.6 The rigid application of highways standards is often cited for the reason why the interaction between the design and layout of homes and streets is broken down. Most neighbourhoods include a range of street character types, each with differing characteristics including type of use, width and building heights. These characteristics are an essential element in dictating how pedestrians and traffic use the street, and how the street contributes to the place-making qualities of new development.

- 6.7 The creation of a natural hierarchy to the urban structure of our towns and villages is a key contributing factor in creating places that exhibit good levels of legibility and distinctive character, and the width between buildings is a key dimension that needs to be considered in relation to function and aesthetic.
- 6.8 Guideline 1 sets out the typical widths for different streets. There are no fixed rules but account should be taken of the variety of activities taking place in the street and of the scale of the buildings either side. This guideline reflects nationally recognised best practice for street design as set out in Manual for Streets 1 & 2.

Guideline 1: New Street and Spaces

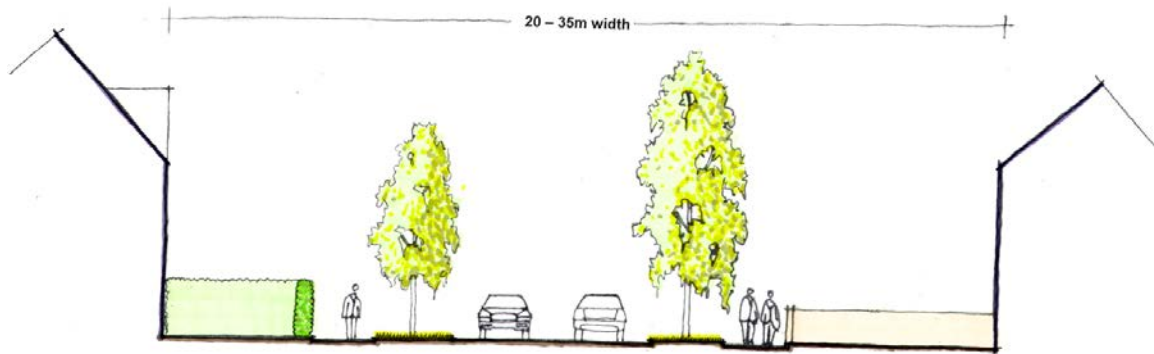
In the case of new streets and spaces, the overall widths and height to width proportion of new streets should be within the range of:

- 1a Principal or Primary Routes – 20m up to 35m frontage to frontage width, and 1:3 to 1:4 height/width ratio.
- 1b Secondary Residential Street – 16m up to 22m frontage to frontage width, and 1:2 to 1:3 height/width ratio.
- 1c Tertiary Residential Street – 12m up to 18m frontage to frontage width, and 1:2 to 1:3 height/width ratio.
- 1d Outward Facing Edge Condition – 12m up to 15m frontage to edge of open space.

New streets should incorporate trees which should form part of a landscape maintenance plan.

Each proposal is judged on its own merits. It is recognised that good design in new housing layouts will not be achieved solely by adherence to these guidelines. Indeed the Borough Council wishes to encourage a marked improvement in mundane, standardised housing layouts which the application of regimented standards can exacerbate.

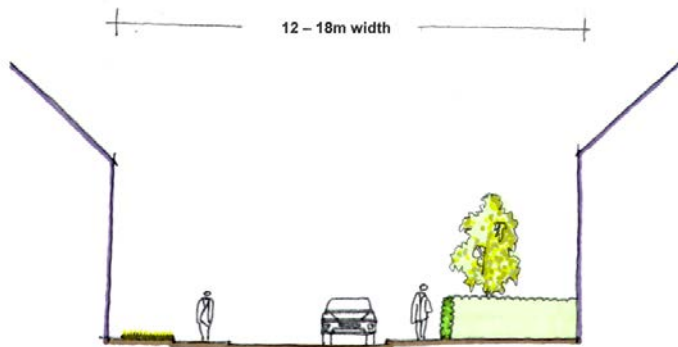
1a Principal or Primary Route



1b Secondary Residential Street



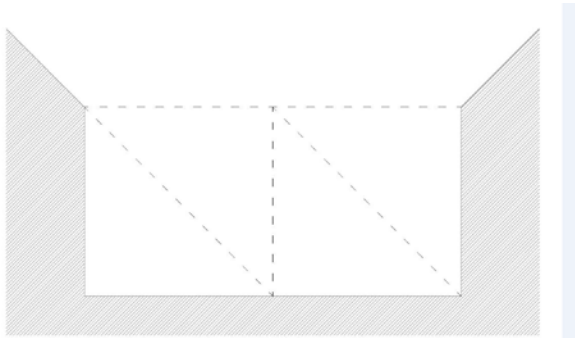
1c Tertiary Residential Street



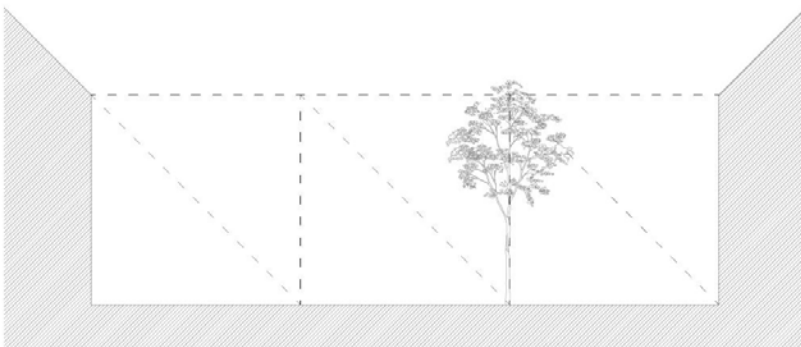
Ratio of Height to Width

6.9 Guideline 1 also sets out the ratio of height to width. It is recommended that the height of buildings (or mature trees where present in wider streets) is in proportion to the width of the intervening public open space to achieve enclosure. The actual ratio depends on the type of street or open space being designed. The height-to-width ratio enclosure illustrated below serves as a guide.

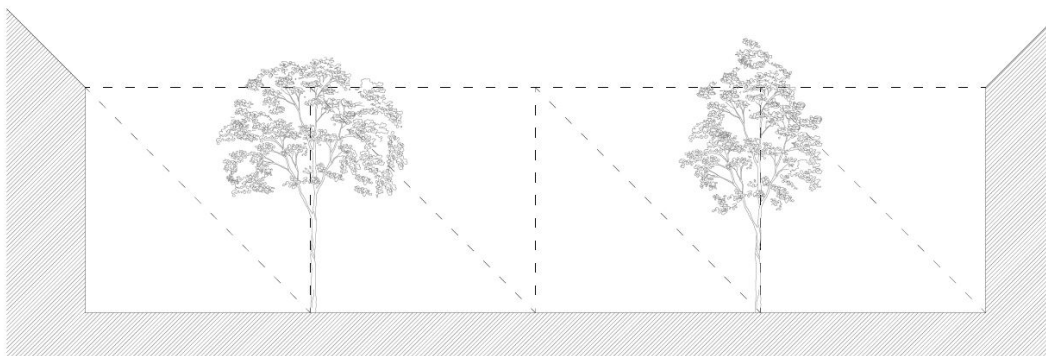
Tertiary Streets – 1:2 to 1:3 height/width ratio



Secondary Streets – 1:2 to 1:3 height/width ratio



Primary Streets – 1:3 to 1:4 height/width ratio



Achieving Visual Privacy



6.10 In the past, planning guidance for privacy has been concerned with achieving visual separation between dwellings by setting a minimum distance of 21m between facing homes (between principal windows). However adhering rigidly to this distance can limit the variety of urban spaces and housing types in the Borough and sometimes unnecessarily restrict density.

6.11 A flexible approach should be taken over privacy in new developments. Introducing screening such as trees, foliage, fences and walls, as well as high sills to provide privacy to bedrooms can all be methods that can be used when designing new developments.

Guideline 2: Achieving Privacy in New Developments

- 2a A distance of 21 metres is considered to be the minimum separation between the rear elevations of dwellings, to achieve an appropriate degree of privacy within conventional residential developments.
- 2b Where the principal frontage of new dwellings faces the principal frontages of existing dwellings, a minimum separation of 21m should be achieved. However in respect of infill development, where there is a strongly defined building line, the development should follow this.

Each proposal is judged on its own merits. It is recognised that good design in new housing layouts will not be achieved solely by adherence to these guidelines. Indeed the Borough Council wishes to encourage a marked improvement in mundane, standardised housing layouts which the application of regimented standards can exacerbate. In addition, where privacy is less of an issue relaxation of the guidelines will be considered.



Provision of Private Garden Space

6.12 Individual requirements for a private garden area vary significantly between residents. It is recognised that a standard garden area may not be appropriate in catering for certain needs; for example warden controlled housing.

6.13 Screen fencing, hedges, or walling (generally 1.8m to 2m high) should be provided along rear boundaries to ensure privacy. Screening of an excessive height will not be permitted.

Guideline 3: Private amenity space

- 3 bed houses or more - 65 square metres
- 2 bed houses - 50 square metres
- For flats/maisonettes - a balcony or private space, adequately screened

Landscaping

6.14 Detailed landscape schemes will be required for all new developments. If an outline application is submitted with landscaping as a reserved matter, the Design and Access Statement must include an explanation and justification of the principles and objectives that will inform any future landscaping scheme.



Car parking to front of properties broken up with soft landscaping



No soft landscaping to front of the properties making car parking the dominating feature to the frontage

Boundary Treatment

6.15 Boundary treatments are an important aspect in successfully integrating new development with its surroundings. Proposed boundary treatments should be compatible with neighbouring properties, and front boundary treatments in particular should reinforce the prevailing character of streetscape. Defensible space (a visible separation of the public and private land) with an element of soft landscaping is encouraged to the frontages of all new developments, with hedges encouraged over boundary fencing to soften the street scene and support biodiversity. Hedge planting in rear gardens will be supported where appropriate.



Management plans and aftercare

- 6.16 On major developments, applicants are required to demonstrate that adequate arrangements have been made for future maintenance in the form of a management plan.
- 6.17 Maintenance proposals should usually form part of a written landscape specification, together with the supporting plan, and include details of the work to be carried out, the standards required, the frequency of maintenance visits and the quantity of the landscape to be maintained.
- 6.18 The Council may attach conditions to the planning application or enter into a Section 106 legal agreement with the developer/ landowner to ensure the long-term management and maintenance of the landscaping on the site.

Car and Bicycle Parking

- 6.19 The Council's car parking standards can be found in Appendix B of the Plan for Stafford Borough 2011-2031.

On Street parking



- 6.20 Many traditional streets within the Borough have the facility to accommodate cars. Visual quality and traffic flow, along with pedestrian safety, are only compromised when car parking dominates the streetscene. On street parking is convenient, well

overlooked from surrounding houses and is extremely efficient, both in terms of the amount of space required for parking and in providing for variations in car ownership between households.

6.21 On-street parking can also have a traffic-calming effect, helping to separate pedestrians from other traffic and providing the opportunity to include boundary treatment landscaping for dwellings.

6.22 In new developments on-street parking bays can be incorporated into the overall width of the street. Breaking up the visual impact of on street parking can be achieved by limiting spaces to groups of five or less. These groups can then be separated by built-out kerbs with associated street planting or street furniture at intervals.

Courtyard parking

6.23 Parking courts must be overlooked by the principal habitable rooms of adjoining properties and should be broken up at regular intervals through the introduction of a planting scheme.



Undercroft Parking



An example of undercroft parking which adds very little to character of the street scene

- 6.24 The use of undercroft car parking is considered the least satisfactory arrangement for high density urban developments as it often results in dead frontages / backs which can significantly diminish the vibrancy and vitality of the streetscapes they face.

Driveways

- 6.25 Paving should be kept to a minimum and permeable surfaces should be used such as gravel, brick, cellular paving and grass reinforcement.

Garages

- 6.26 In accordance with Manual for Streets single garage depths should be a minimum of 6 x 3 metres. Garages should be designed to ensure they do not dominate the property or street scene, and they should be sympathetic with the scale, form, materials and architectural style of the existing dwelling. In addition, garages should be sited so as to minimise disturbance and overshadowing to a neighbouring property.



Garages should not unduly dominate the front façade of dwellings.

- 6.27 A detached garage will only be permitted forward of a principal elevation in exceptional circumstances, where the building's frontage is either sufficiently deep, or sufficiently wide, so as not to impact on the setting of the dwelling, the character and appearance of the street scene or impinge on the amenity of neighbours. Where garages are sited in front of a property, particularly those of double width, it is always preferable that the entrance doors are positioned at 90° to the dwelling so that they do not dominate the front elevation.

Bicycle parking

6.28 New developments should be designed to encourage greater cycle ownership and use. To achieve greater use of cycling new developments should ensure, where possible, that the provision of cycle parking is:

- Convenient - cycle parking should be well located to amenities.
- Secure - the cycle parking should be overlooked by the principal frontage of adjoining properties or situated to well used areas such as shopping streets.
- Covered - Where overnight or long term bicycle parking is being developed it should be covered to prevent damage by adverse weather conditions.



An example of contemporary design for cycle parking

6.29 In flats the storage of bicycles is particularly problematic, leading to cycles being stored haphazardly in hallways or on balconies. For new apartment developments, cycle storage should be an important consideration from the outset and should be accommodated in a convenient, safe and secure location that is well overlooked by habitable rooms or within the building itself.

Refuse and Recycling Storage Space

6.30 All proposed developments must have adequate storage space to contain waste, including separate storage for recyclable material and where possible should have an off-street collection point.



6.31 When a planning application is submitted, the Council would expect details of the proposed storage accommodation for waste and recyclable material to be specified.

6.32 All developments must take into account the needs of the collection vehicles. Applicants must ensure that the road structure to a development is suitable to take the weight of the collection vehicle (up to 26 tonnes) and with sufficient width to allow for ease of manoeuvring. Where shared roads are proposed a shared refuse collection area may be appropriate so as not to

cause obstruction to road users and pedestrians. Any such enclosure should be designed to be complimentary to the host building and the wider context.

Refuse storage to residential properties

- 6.33 Currently houses have a three-wheeled bin system to accommodate general waste (green); recycling (blue) and garden waste (brown).

Guideline 4: Footprint Area Required for the storage of wheeled bins for houses

Waste type	Capacity of bin ltrs	Width mm	Depth mm	Height unopened mm	Height open mm
General	180	480	740	1070	1810
Recycling	240	585	740	1070	1810
Garden	240	585	740	1070	1810

The minimum dimensions for wheeled bin storage should be approximately 2sq.m.

- 6.34 Bins should have designated storage areas that are sensitively located and designed. Where the storage area is to be visible from the boundary of the property, any enclosure for the containers should be designed to be complimentary to the host building and context.

Flats, apartments and multi – occupied dwellings

- 6.35 The largest bin supplied by Stafford Borough Council is a euro bin, which has capacity of 1100 litres. This bin is used for general waste only. Due to the vehicles used to collect recyclables, only 240 litre bins are supplied.

Guideline 5: Footprint Area Required for the storage of wheeled bins for flats

Waste type	Capacity of bin ltrs	Width mm	Depth mm	Height unopened mm	Height open mm
General	1100	1220	1070	1360	2430
General	240	585	740	1070	1810
Recycling	240	585	740	1070	1810
Garden	240	585	740	1070	1810

The following calculation is use to determine the capacity required for multi occupied buildings based on 2 bedroom properties

10 flats = 5 Recycling Bins
2x 1100 Euro Bin (equivalent to 8 flats per bin)

Euro bins are only supplied to shared bin stores which serve 10 or more dwellings.

If there are less than 10 flats/apartments within a shared building this service would be supplied standard 24 litre general waste bins (allow 1 per flat) and 1 recycling bin per 2 flats/apartments.

If there are three or more bedrooms within the majority of the apartment then the ratio of bins to flat will have to be increased. This should be discussed with the Council's Waste Operations Officer.

Communal Refuse Areas

- 6.36 The floor and walls of bin stores must be constructed and finished in materials that are impervious and easy to clean. Darker and non-porous paving with a smooth texture are easier to clean and will help conceal stains. Where appropriate, a trapped gully and water supply should be provided to make cleaning easier. Where the area is to be enclosed in a roofed building, adequate ventilation must be provided. Internal stores must include lighting.
- 6.37 Poor location and poor design can lead to communal refuse/recycling storage areas attracting anti-social behaviour or being perceived as unsafe. To avoid anti-social behaviour and fly tipping, communal waste and recycling sites should be in overlooked positions close to areas of activity. Consideration should be given to combining sites with other communal facilities such as bike shelters, although this must be balanced with the need to avoid undermining overall quality of place.

Exceptions to the Guidelines

- 6.38 Proposals that do not meet the guidelines outlined in this section will be acceptable where the developer/applicant can clearly demonstrate that:
- The relaxation of standards would enable a higher quality of design to be achieved in respect to;
 - external materials
 - surface treatment
 - landscaping
 - lighting
 - architectural design

- character and functionality of surrounding area
- Adequate levels of privacy and amenity are provided for residents by means of:
 - careful design of the buildings
 - relationship between buildings
 - relationship between buildings and landscape features such as screen walls, fences, trees, hedges, shrubs, footpaths and public spaces

7 Conservation Areas and Article 4 Directions

- 7.1 This section expands upon Policy N9 of the adopted Plan for Stafford Borough, with respect to alterations and extensions to properties in conservation areas.
- 7.2 Living in or operating from premises in a Conservation Area does not mean that you cannot make alterations to these properties, but it does mean that the changes that you may wish to make must preserve or enhance the character and appearance of the area.
- 7.3 This guidance will be useful to anyone proposing to carry out development within a Conservation Area and it will help to ensure a high quality of proposals and applications.

What is a Conservation Area?

- 7.4 Conservation Areas are places of special architectural and historic character with a collective quality worth preserving and enhancing. The strength of their character is dependent on the way the individual buildings, gardens and open spaces complement each other. The Local Planning Authority is responsible for designating Conservation Areas with the law set down in the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 (as amended). Within Conservation Areas, permitted development rights are restricted. This means that applications for planning permission are required for certain types of work that would not normally need consent. For further information please see the [Planning Portal](#).
- 7.5 Listed below are examples of types of development that require applications for planning permission or conservation area consent. Please bear in mind that the list is not exhaustive.
- Demolition of all, and in some cases part, of any building or structure
 - An extension that extends beyond the side wall of the building
 - Any two storey extension
 - Cladding any part of the outside of a building with materials such as stone, artificial stone, timber, plastic or tile
 - Any enlargement or extension to a roof, such as the addition of a dormer window
 - An extension or alteration to any structure within the grounds of a building, if it is to the side of the house
 - The installation of a flue, chimney or soil and vent pipe if it would face a road and is on the side or front of the building
 - Positioning a satellite dish on a wall, roof or chimney that faces a road or public space
 - Solar panels on a wall that faces the road
 - Tighter controls over advertisements

- Trees within conservation areas with stem diameters of 75mm or greater, measured at 1.5m above ground are protected. Anyone wishing to work on these trees must normally give six weeks written notice to the Local Authority. Replacement planting duties may apply.

7.6 There are 30 Conservation Areas in Stafford Borough. The designated boundaries and Conservation Area Appraisals for each can be viewed via the following: <http://www.staffordbc.gov.uk/conservation-areas-list>

What is an Article 4 Direction?

7.7 There are three Conservation Areas in the Borough that have additional level of control under an Article 4 Direction. This gives the Council special control by further removing some of the property's Permitted Development rights. This enables the Council to prevent insensitive development but does not mean that an owner cannot make any alterations to their property. However it does give the Council more control over the design and specification of proposed alterations. This helps ensure the character of the area is preserved or enhanced and that the quality of the environment is sustained.

7.8 The three Article 4 Directions designated within Stafford Borough are listed below:

- [Stone Article 4](#)
- [Eccleshall Article 4](#)
- [Burton Manor Village Article 4](#)

Guidance for Alterations in a Conservation Area

Front Doors, Porches and Canopies

7.9 The original front door, porch or canopy in their original form should be retained where possible. The replacement of canopies with enclosed porches or infilling of recessed entrances or porches with extra door sets will normally be resisted.

7.10 Replacement of original features should be detailed to match or complement the originals using traditional materials. Where a new porch is proposed, it will need to be designed to be in keeping with the style of the house. Where possible choose traditional materials to match the house.

Examples of doors in the Borough's Conservation Areas, which should be retained.



Window Repair and Replacement

7.11 Although UPVC/Aluminium windows have improved over the years they still do not give the 3D effect on glazing bars that timber windows have. Poor window replacement can have a significant negative impact on the character of the Conservation Area. Removal of original windows and replacement with UPVC, will eventually damage the whole street scene.



7.12 Original windows and doors should be repaired wherever possible. If windows do need to be replaced then, ideally, these should copy the original in style and material.

Poor replacement of original window with UPVC

Repainting and Other Wall Coverings

- 7.13 Original brickwork should not be painted or covered with artificial finishes such as stone cladding. In the past the original brickwork on some buildings has been covered over with paint and other coverings. If architectural details are covered over, this can spoil the appearance of a property and may trap moisture and cause serious damage to walls. It is often possible to remove paint.
- 7.14 Painting windows, doors and other woodwork can help preserve these original features. Colours should be traditional and in keeping with the character of the area.

Roofs

- 7.15 If repairs are required, the original tiles should be re-used where possible. However, if replacement is necessary, care must be taken to match the colour, texture, size and materials of the original, as roof materials come in many shapes and sizes.
- 7.16 Planning permission is required for replacing roof tiles for houses covered by an Article 4 Direction.

An example of a roof and chimney in one of the Borough's Conservation Areas. Original chimney pots should be retained and tiles replaced to match existing.



Gutters and Drainpipes

- 7.17 The original gutters and drainpipes in the majority of the Borough's Conservation Areas were cast iron. If gutters and drainpipes need replacing, these should as close to the original as possible. Decorative cast iron hopper heads must be retained.



An example of a decorative cast iron hopper these must be retained as they contribute to the character and appearance of the Conservation Area

Garages



- 7.18 Older garages can sometimes make a positive contribution to the character of Conservation Areas where they are purposely designed, and their retention will be encouraged. However, where it can be demonstrated that an original garage is too small to accommodate a modern car then the Council may consider proposals for a replacement.

An example of a 'sensitive garage' in the Stone Conservation Area

Front Gardens, Walls and Boundaries



- 7.19 The original front gardens and boundary walls are often distinctive features of the Borough's conservation areas. Front gardens that have been planted with soft landscaping features enhance the appearance of a Conservation Area.

- 7.20 The removal of garden walls and hedges and the formation of hard surfaces will generally be resisted. The Council may grant permission for off-street parking space where at least 50% of the total front garden area will be retained and suitably landscaped with soft planting. Any new hard surfaces should be formed using traditional materials such as blue brick paviours, pavers or loose gravel. The removal of garden walls and hedges across the whole width of the front plot will be resisted. Planning Permission for off-street parking spaces will also be subject to assessment by the Highway Authority.



- 7.21 Where there has been a loss of a front boundary, the Council will encourage them to be replaced. Walls should be built to match the street scene, including materials.
- 7.22 Hedges play an important role by adding to the character and setting of the dwellings and often serve to define boundaries and identify access points. The removal of hedges would drastically alter the natural/ urban balance of a Conservation Area and should therefore be avoided.



Tiled footpath leading up to a property, these should be retained and restored where appropriate.

7.23 There are a number of different approaches to the design of paths in the 30 Conservation Areas across the Borough, including stone pavers, small quarry tiles (laid to decorative tessellated patterns) and terrazzo (with contrasting border patterns). These are important elements of a Conservation Area as they help to define the character and therefore it is important to preserve them. It is possible to repair these paving systems, and

salvaged or new materials can be sourced. Where they have been lost, the Council will encourage traditional paths to be replaced.

Solar Panels and Environmental Installations

7.24 The Council encourages energy and efficiency improvements, but also recognises that many installations are not appropriate for Conservation Areas.

7.25 Solar panels should not protrude more than 200mm beyond the plane of the roof. To achieve this, many manufactures provide an in roof system where the panels are recessed flush with the roof tiles. Furthermore, panels should not be sited on the front or side elevation or roof slope, or be visible from the highway.

8. Extensions and Alterations to Dwellings

Introduction

- 8.1 Many alterations and small extensions to single family dwelling houses can be built as 'permitted development' without needing to apply for planning permission. Purpose built flats and houses that have been converted into flats have no permitted development rights, so planning permission will always be required for extensions and other alterations. Guidance on permitted development can be found in the Government's Permitted Development Rights for Householders: Technical Guidance <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/permitted-development-rights-for-householders-technical-guidance> and <https://interactive.planningportal.co.uk/>
- 8.2 Although permitted development can be carried out as of right, you are advised to discuss the matter with the Planning Department as you may wish to apply for a 'Certificate of Existing or Proposed Lawful Development'. The Certificate confirms that planning permission is not needed for the development, which can be helpful when you come to sell your property. New development will also need to satisfy the requirements of the Building Regulations. These regulations ensure the proper construction of your extension. The Council's Building Control team <http://www.staffordbc.gov.uk/building-control> should be contacted for further information.
- 8.3 If the property is a Listed Building, additional controls apply and a special approval known as Listed Building Consent may be needed. If you are in doubt as to whether this applies to you, please contact the Conservation Officer at the Council or alternatively you can check the status of your property and whether it is in a conservation area by going on the Stafford Borough Council website <http://www.staffordbc.gov.uk/conservation> or if it is listed go on the National Heritage List for England <https://www.historicengland.org.uk/listing/the-list>. If your property does fall within one of the Borough's Conservation Areas or a designated Article 4 area, please refer to section 7 of this Guidance.
- 8.4 Careful consideration will need to be given to extensions in homes at risk of flooding, to reduce the frequency and consequences of flood events. The Environment Agency has developed flood risk standing advice for minor household extensions that would be applicable for people extending their homes, even when the proposed works are classified permitted development. Often homeowners are unaware that new extensions and alterations to their garden and fencing may require an environmental permit from the Environment Agency. Please go to the

following for further advice <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/flood-risk-assessment-standing-advice>

- 8.5 The following advice illustrates some of the features that should be considered when designing an extension. Whilst useful, it cannot cover every eventuality and it is recommended that the services of a competent person such as an architect or qualified designer are employed at an early stage. Employing a professional will help to ensure you get the best quality result and will frequently expedite the process.
- 8.6 Pre-application advice can be sought from the Council's planning department, as to whether a development is suitable – and this will generally help the application process. Crucially, involvement of an architect or surveyor can ensure proper supervision on site and control of costs.

General Design Principles

- 8.7 This guidance seeks a balance between the applicant's desire to extend their properties, and the interests of neighbouring properties and the general appearance and character of the area.
- 8.8 An important feature to consider is that not all properties are suitable for extension. In certain instances there will not be enough space or the design of the extension may damage the amenity of others or the streetscene. Additionally, the cumulative effect of extensions must be considered when deciding whether or not to approve housing extensions.

Front Extensions



An example of a front extension that is sympathetic to the original dwelling

- 8.9 Proposed extensions should be designed in relation to the whole street or particular groups of buildings. When extending a property it will be necessary to consider whether the alterations will harmonise with surrounding development. Well-designed extensions can enhance the overall street scene and urban environment whilst poorly designed extensions can damage the character of an area and may reduce the desirability and value of the property.
- 8.10 Significant extensions projecting forward of the front elevation will not normally be permitted due to their effect on the streetscene, particularly where there is a well-established building line or where the works might reduce the provision for off street parking or vehicle turning.
- 8.11 Where there is scope to extend, the roof should harmonise with that of the original dwelling in terms of pitch, tile type and colour. Care should also be taken to ensure that the architectural style of the extension fully integrates with the architectural form of the main dwelling and results in a balanced symmetry.
- 8.12 In areas where there is a well-defined building line, extensions or garages should not project beyond this, as it would damage the street scene.

Side Extensions

8.13 Side extensions can result in unacceptably prominent features on the streetscene. This is particularly the case with two storey extensions, which leave little or no space between adjacent buildings. Such extensions will not be permitted if they result in creating a harmful terracing effect. To avoid a “terracing” effect between neighbouring dwellings in areas of mainly detached or semi-detached housing, two storey extensions should be subordinate to the main building.

8.14 Where possible the existing side access to the rear garden should be retained. This ensures an adequate visual separation between the buildings, provides sufficient space for access and maintenance of the dwelling, as well as retaining the character of the street frontage.



8.15 Side extensions on corner sites should respect the building line of the adjoining road to support the streetscene.

A poor example of a side extension with a flat roof and no relationship with the original property

Rear Extensions

- 8.16 Single storey rear extensions can often be added without difficulty, generally having little impact on the street scene. Depending upon the size, planning permission may not be required. However consideration should still be given to how it will relate to the original building in terms of scale, external materials, and long term maintenance. Two storey extensions at the rear need to be carefully designed so that they minimise the impact on neighbouring properties and are appropriate to the existing dwelling please refer to Appendix 2 and 3.



An example of piecemeal rear extensions to a bungalow which detract the property

Roof Extensions and Dormer Windows

- 8.17 Some roof extensions are allowed under the permitted development rights of a dwelling and do not require planning permission. Where planning permission is required for roof extensions, they will be expected to be well proportioned, and designed to be sympathetic to the roof of the original dwelling. Roof dormers should be sympathetic in scale to the existing roof plan, and should not over dominate the host roof or appear overly box-like, or result in the dwelling appearing top-heavy.

Design and Appearance

- 8.18 All extensions and alterations, particularly those incorporating modern design approaches, should be considered holistically with the original/main building to avoid an awkward jarring of materials and forms. Modern designs using contemporary and sustainable materials will be generally welcomed, and the Council would not wish to restrict creative designs where they can be integrated successfully into their context.

- 8.19 The Council will seek to ensure that the visual symmetry of semi-detached pairs and the continuity of terraced buildings is retained and where possible enhanced, especially at roof level and on elevations visible from the street.

Materials and Detailing

- 8.20 Care should be taken when specifying contemporary and contrasting materials on older properties to ensure that the extension or alteration will not appear incongruous to the original building. The use of contrasting materials such as zinc and timber etc., will only be approved where the design complements the existing building in proportion and scale, and it does not detract from the prevailing character of the surrounding area.



An example of a subservient side extension with contrasting materials

- 8.21 Down pipes should be positioned carefully. Rainwater and waste pipes can cover unsightly junctions between the original house and the extension.

Amenity of Neighbours

- 8.22 The impact of residential extensions on the amenity of neighbouring properties is also something to be considered before proceeding with a planning application. Speaking to your neighbours about your proposals will help you to understand any concerns there may be about the future development, and enable you to modify the proposals before getting involved in the planning stage of the process.
- 8.23 In urban/built up areas a degree of overlooking may be inevitable and should be expected. However every effort should be made to avoid overlooking of rear facing living room windows and garden 'sitting out' areas such as patios and decked areas. This can be achieved through distance and design.

- 8.24 The Council will consider the effect an extension may have on the outlook from a principal window in a neighbouring property. The emphasis here is not on preventing a change in outlook, but in avoiding undue intrusion to windows that make an important contribution to the amenities of occupiers of affected properties.
- 8.25 Extensions should not be designed with windows near the boundaries that directly overlook neighbouring properties or gardens.
- 8.26 Large extensions to a dwelling can result in excessive overshadowing on the principal windows of neighbouring properties', particularly if there are no opportunities to gain daylight from an alternative elevation, such as with terraced and semi-detached houses. This is particularly important where rear extensions are proposed on or close to the boundary of an adjoining house.
- 8.27 The size and location of the extension should ensure that an adequate amount of amenity space is retained that is commensurate with the size of the principal dwelling. Furthermore extensions that are close to, or abut the boundary of a neighbouring property must be limited in height so as not to impinge on the neighbours' outlook.
- 8.28 The use of a flat roof extension to form the base of a balcony will rarely be permitted, if it affects the privacy of a neighbouring property.

The 45 degree rule

- 8.29 The 45-degree rule can be used to establish the maximum permissible height, depth and width of an extension. It provides a general guide to what is normally considered acceptable. However, it is only a general rule of thumb and the Council may, on occasion, consider an extension to be unacceptable even if it appear acceptable on paper. The 45-degree rule can be used to check if your extension may result in a loss of light to adjoining windows. Further details on the application of the 45 degree rule are set out in Appendix 2.

The 25 degree test

- 8.30 The 25 degree test is used where the development is opposite the window as shown in Appendix 3. The centre of the lowest habitable window should be used as the reference point for the test. If the whole of the proposed development falls beneath a line drawn 25 degrees from the horizontal, then there is unlikely to be a substantial effect of sunlight and daylight. If the proposed development goes above the 25 degree line, it does not automatically follow that daylight, and sunlight levels will be below standard. However, it does mean that further checks on daylight and sunlight are required. For further information please go to the Building Research Establishment (BRE) document 'Site Layout and planning for daylight and sunlight: a guide to good practice' <https://www.bre.co.uk/daylight-and-sunlight> .

8.31 However, this is a general rule and careful consideration of site factors, aspect and orientation will need to be given to all extensions even where they meet these standards. Further details on the application of the 45 degree rule are set out in Appendix 2 and Appendix 3 for the 25 degree rule.

The Positioning of Windows

8.32 The size and positioning of windows of a dwelling in relation to site boundaries and to public areas is an important factor in determining the degree of privacy enjoyed by its occupants.

8.33 In those cases where a principal window faces the flank wall of a dwelling with no principal windows (i.e. either a blank wall, obscure glazed windows or high level windows), a shorter distance between dwellings is acceptable provided that the standards for private garden space are met. This distance is further reduced where the flank wall forms part of a single storey structure (e.g. a bungalow).

8.34 A principal window is defined as the main window of more than 1 metre in width to a habitable room.

Guideline 6: Distances between windows

This guideline is in relation to extensions and alterations to existing dwellings.

- 6a) A distance of 21 metres is considered to be the minimum separation between facing/backing dwellings required to achieve a degree of privacy within conventional two storey accommodation, i.e. with main living room and kitchen windows on the ground floor and bedrooms at first floor.
- 6b) There is a minimum distance of 12 metres from a principal window when it faces the wall of another dwelling with more than one storey with no principal window.
- 6c) There is a minimum distance of 8 metres from a principal window when the facing wall forms part of a single storey structure.

Each proposal is judged on its own merits. It is recognised that good design in new housing layouts will not be achieved solely by adherence to these guidelines. Indeed the Borough Council wishes to encourage a marked improvement in mundane, standardised housing layouts which the application of regimented standards can exacerbate. In addition, where privacy is less of an issue relaxation of the guidelines will be considered.

Appendix 1

Objectives of Urban Design

Character – A place with its own identity.	To promote character in townscape and landscape by responding to and reinforcing locally distinctive patterns of development, landscape and culture.
Continuity and Enclosure – A place where public and private spaces are clearly distinguished.	To promote the continuity of street frontages and the enclosure of space by development which clearly defines public and private areas.
Quality of the Public Realm – A place with attractive and successful outdoor space.	To promote public spaces and routes that are attractive, safe, uncluttered and work effectively for all in society, including disabled and elderly people.
Ease of Movement – A place that is easy to get to and more through.	To promote accessibility and local permeability by making places that connect with each other and are easy to move through, putting people before traffic and integrating land uses and transport.
Legibility – A place that has a clear image and is easy to understand.	To promote legibility through development that provides recognisable routes, intersections, vistas and landmarks to help people find their way around.
Adaptability – A place that can change easily.	To promote adaptability through development that can respond to changing social, technological and economic conditions.
Diversity – A place with variety and choice.	To promote diversity and choice through a mix of compatible developments and uses that work together to create viable places that respond to local needs.

Aspects of Development Form

Layout: Urban Structure – The framework of routes and spaces that connect locally and more widely, and the way developments, routes and open spaces relate to one another	The layout provides the basic plan on which all other aspects of the form and uses of a development depend.
Layout: Urban Grain – The pattern of the arrangement of street blocks, plots and their buildings in a settlement	The degree to which an area’s pattern of blocks and plot sub-divisions is respectively small and frequent (fine grain), or large and infrequent (course grain).
Landscape: The character and appearance of land, including its shape, form, ecology, natural features, colours and elements and the way these components combine	This includes all open space, including its planting, boundaries and treatment.

<p>Density and Mix: The amount of development on a given piece of land and the range of uses. Density influences the intensity of development and in combination with the mix of uses can affect a place's vitality and viability</p>	<p>The density of development can be expressed in a number of ways. This could be in terms of plot ratio, number of dwellings, or the number of habitable rooms.</p>
<p>Scale: Height - Scale is the size of a building in relation to its surroundings, or the size of parts of a building or its details, particularly in relation to the size of a person. Height determines the impact of development on views, vistas and skylines</p>	<p>Height can be expressed in terms of the number of floors, height of parapet or ridge, or overall height; any of these combinations, a ratio of building height to street or space width, height relative to particular landmarks or background buildings or strategic views</p>
<p>Scale: Massing – The combined effect of the arrangement, volume and shape of a building or group of buildings in relation to other buildings and spaces</p>	<p>Massing is the three dimensional expression of the amount of development on a given piece of land.</p>
<p>Appearance: Details – The craftsmanship, building techniques, decoration, styles and lighting of a building or structure</p>	<p>This includes all building elements such as openings and bays, entrances and colonnades, balconies and roofscape and the rhythm, of the facade</p>
<p>Appearance: Materials – The texture, patterns and durability of materials and how they are used.</p>	<p>The richness of a building lies in its use of materials which contribute to the attractiveness of its appearance and the character of an area.</p>

Appendix 2

The 45 Degree Rule and its Application

Extensions or new dwellings should not cause an unreasonable loss of daylight or an unreasonable degree of overshadowing to any habitable rooms in neighbouring properties or gardens.

An established practice is to implement the 45 degree Code in order to minimise the loss of light or outlook to principal windows on adjoining properties.

A principal window is defined as the main or secondary window of more than 1 metre in width or two smaller windows of less than 1 metre but within a metre of each other to the same room, being a

- living room
- dining room
- kitchen
- bedrooms

The 45 degree Code referred to in these standards is intended to:

- maintain a reasonable relationship between existing building, extensions and new buildings;
- avoid an overbearing visual impact in terms of bulk and proximity to boundaries both from inside adjoining properties and from adjoining gardens;
- reduce potential loss of light and overshadowing.

The following guidance, as illustrated below, will provide the basis for assessing householder extensions. However the 45 degree code should not simply be applied on a mechanical basis; reference should also be made to the following site considerations:

- design and character of the existing property and neighbouring properties;
- distance of existing buildings to site boundaries;
- siting of adjoining buildings within the site or on neighbouring premises;
- existing boundary features: outbuildings, fences, walls, trees;
- orientation of application property in relation to neighbouring properties
- significant changes in level between properties/gardens;
- garden/plot size.

(A) SINGLE STOREY REAR EXTENSIONS

Permission will normally be granted for:

Single storey extensions projecting more than 3 metres which do not impinge upon a 45 degree sightline drawn horizontally on plan from the centre of the nearest ground floor principal window of an adjacent property

(B) TWO STOREY REAR EXTENSION

Permission will normally be granted for:

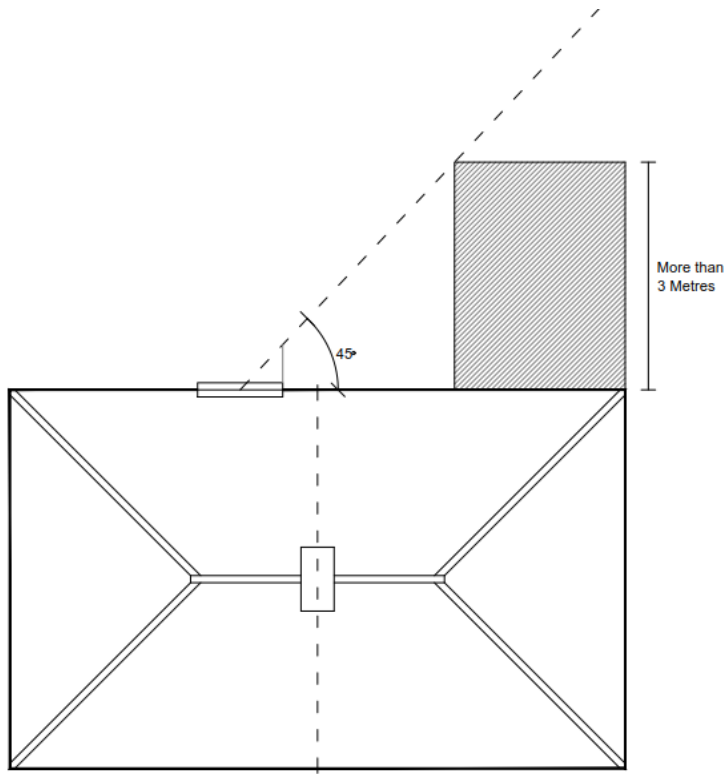
- (i)** Two storey extensions projecting 2 metres or less from the main wall of the original dwelling.
- (ii)** Two storey extensions projecting more than 2 metres which do not impinge upon a 45 degree sightline measured horizontally on plan and vertically on elevation from the centre of the nearest ground floor principal window of an adjacent property;

In the case of a full height window (e.g. patio door) a height of 2 metres above ground level on the centre line of the window will be used.

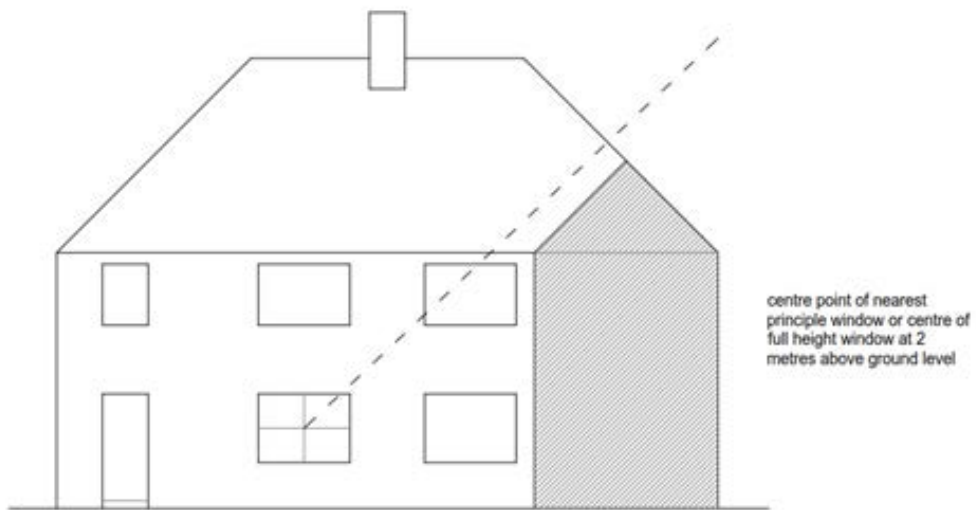
New buildings and infill development that are sited close to principal windows of existing neighbouring properties should be designed so as not to:

- (i)** impinge upon a 45 degree sightline drawn horizontally on plan from the centre of the nearest ground floor principal window of an adjacent property.
- (ii)** impinge upon a 45 degree sightline measured horizontally on plan and vertically on elevation from the centre of:

- the nearest ground floor principal window of an adjacent property;
- in the case of a full height window (e.g. patio door) a height of 2 metres above ground level on the centre line of the window will be used.



not to scale



not to scale

APPENDIX 3

25 DEGREE RULE and ITS APPLICATION

The 25 degree rule is used to ensure that adequate levels of daylight for habitable rooms is provided when extensions or new buildings directly face principal windows of existing properties.

A principal window is defined as:

the main or secondary window of more than 1 metre in width or two smaller windows of less than 1 metre but within a metre of each other to the same room, being a

- living room
- dining room
- kitchen
- bedrooms

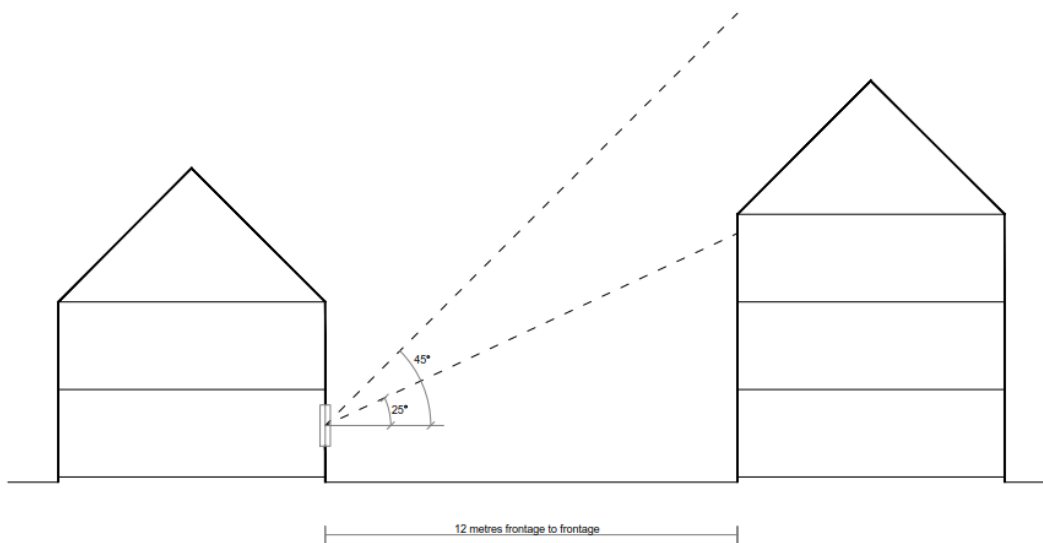
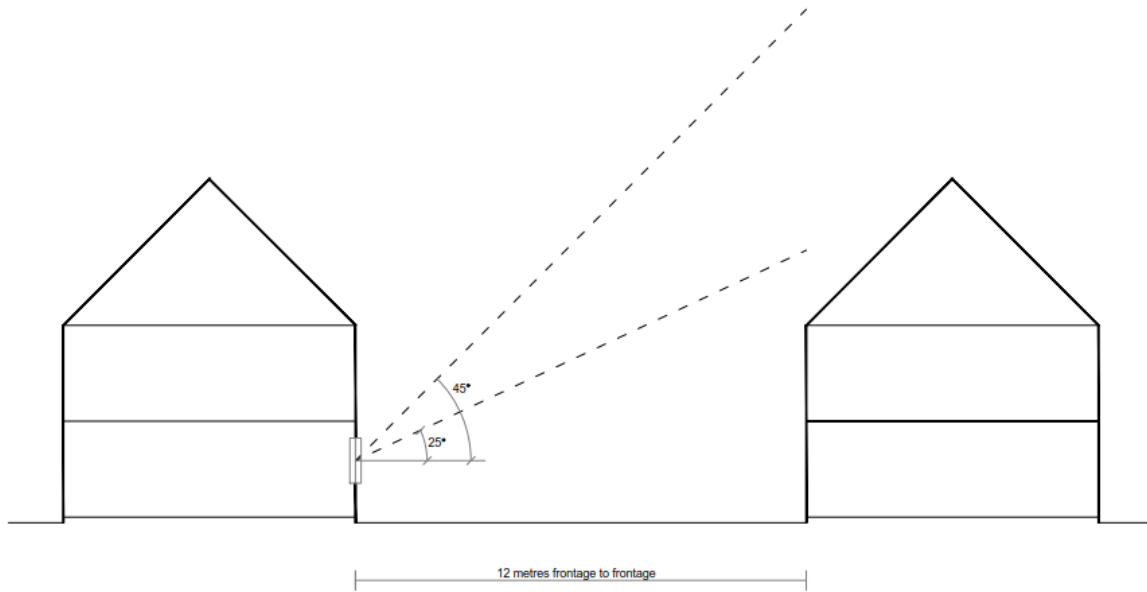
The following 25 degree, as illustrated above, will provide the basis for maintaining adequate daylight into habitable rooms for extensions and new buildings. However when assessing the 25 degree rule, reference should also be made to the:

- opposing properties ridge height;
- distance of existing buildings to site boundaries;
- changes in level between properties/gardens.

To ensure that the 25 degree rule is complied with, new development should ensure that:

- (i) no part of a 25 degree vertical angle, drawn from the centre of the lowest principal window in the horizontal plane, on end elevation view, on the existing property, is obstructed.

12 metre frontage to frontage



14 Metre Frontage to Frontage

