

An aerial map of Swindon, showing a dense network of streets and building footprints in shades of grey and black.

SWINDON

RESIDENTIAL
DESIGN GUIDE

SUPPLEMENTARY PLANNING DOCUMENT
JUNE 2016



FOREWORD

Securing design quality is a core planning principle of the National Planning Policy Framework and essential to the delivery of sustainable development. It is also a strategic objective of the Swindon Borough Local Plan (2026).

New development needs to positively contribute to Swindon's natural and built environment and support its communities over the long term. As recognised in the NPPF good design has social, environmental and economic value and is the collective responsibility of all those involved from planning through implementation and for the life of the development.

Investing [14/b] in high quality development can deliver benefits for health, community inclusion and identity, economic prosperity and improvements to biodiversity and place value. It can positively contribute towards Swindon's [25] proud historical legacy and the rich landscape across the Borough and build on this for future generations to inherit, enjoy and be proud of.



Our standards of design can be so much higher. We are a nation renowned worldwide for creative excellence, yet, at home, confidence in development itself has been eroded by the too frequent experience of mediocrity.

NPPF Ministerial Foreword





Montage of residential areas across Swindon. Fig 1

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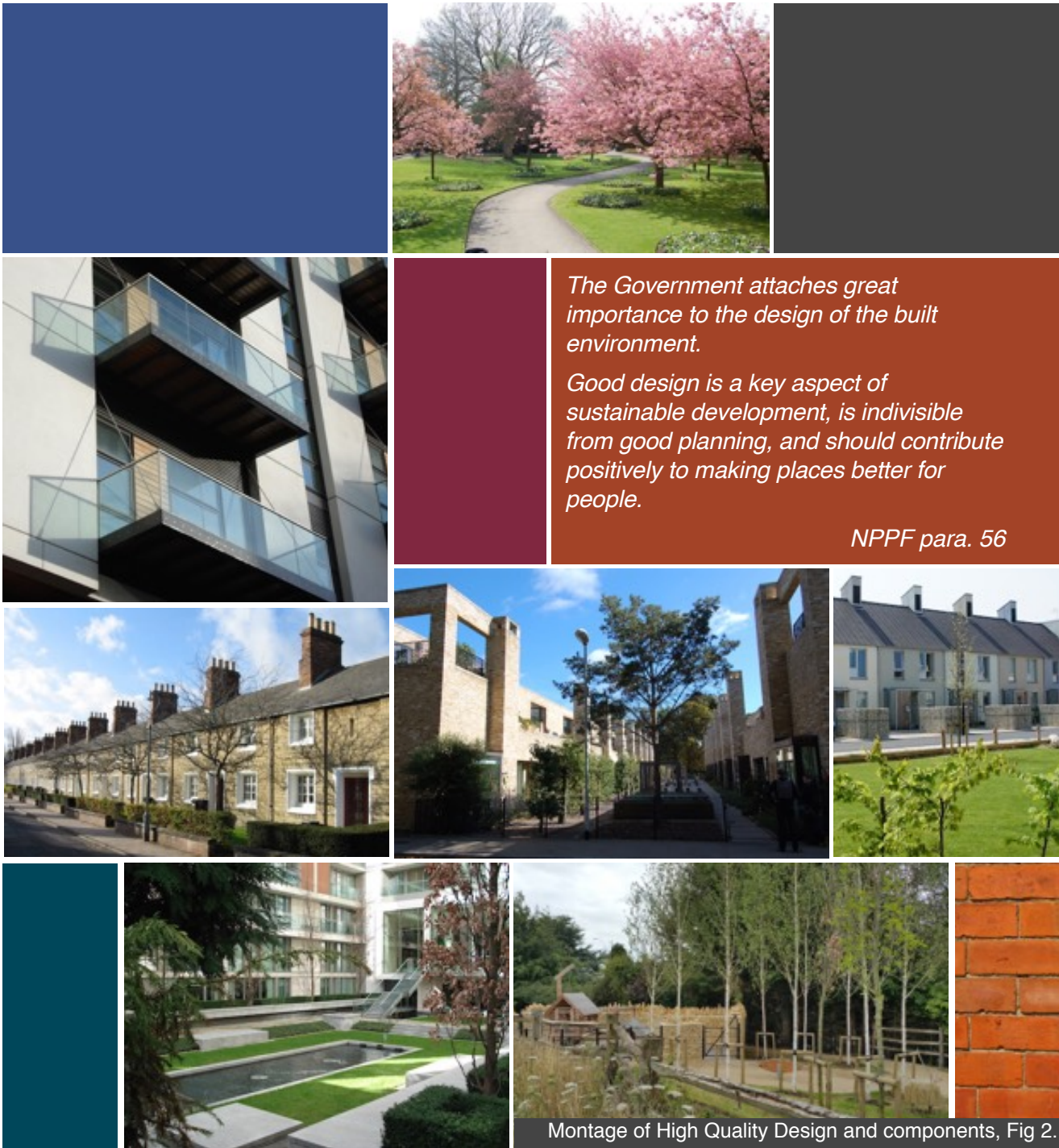
Introduction

- 1.1. This document aims to assist all those involved in the development of existing and new residential areas of Swindon Borough, to ensure the ambitions of achieving high quality development are understood and realised.
- 1.2. As a supplementary planning document (SPD) it sits below the adopted Swindon Borough Local Plan (SBLP 2026) and further amplifies policy DE1. It provides a clear set of principles and guidelines to enable high quality design and shape new development in line with the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF, 2012).
- 1.3. New development projects are essential to economic growth, and the quality and sustainability of these future developments is a priority of this guidance. Good design is a key consideration for all future developments and

this guidance directly supports the local plan policies with this objective.

- 1.4. The purpose 02a of this document is therefore:
 - To achieve sustainable development through high standards of design
 - To enable 25e successful applications and expedite those that satisfy policy DE1
 - To provide timely and objective design advice
- 1.5. This (SPD) was adopted on 14th June 2016 by Planning Committee and is a material planning consideration. This document aims to assist all those involved in the development of existing and new residential areas of Swindon Borough, to ensure the ambitions of achieving high quality development are understood and realised.

- *Policy Context*
- *Design Process*
- *Design Review*

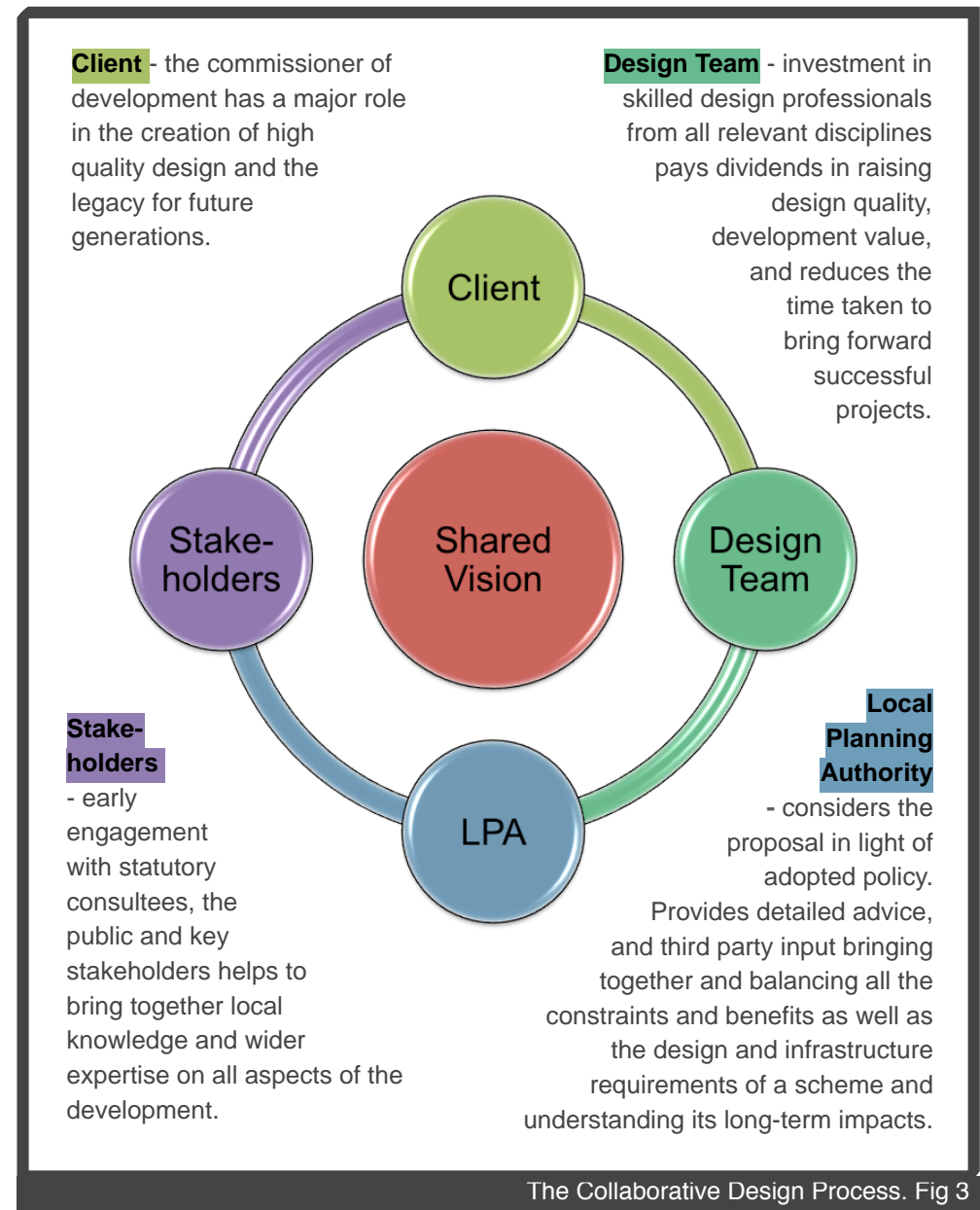


Policy Context

- 1.6. The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) reinforces the importance of good design, recognising it as a key aspect of sustainable development (para 56) and a Core Planning Principle.
- 1.7. This document expands on policy DE1 of the SBLP 2026 and is structured through chapters that address each principle of the policy in turn using definitions, criteria and illustrations.
- 1.8. Throughout the document cross references are provided to relevant paragraphs of the NPPF as quotes (shown opposite) and also in this way: **NPPF ##**
- 1.9. In addition key requirements are summarised within coloured text boxes at the end of each section **in this way: 05c**
- 1.10. Designing new residential developments should be an integrated process and other policies within SBLP 2026 should also be considered when preparing and assessing proposals. **09e**
- 1.11. A Diversity Impact Assessment (DIA) has been undertaken for this SPD. Copies can be viewed at the Council Offices or on the website: www.swindon.gov.uk

Design Process

- 1.12. The process of design is fundamental to the creation of high quality development. A well-considered and collaborative approach is required involving early integration of a range of disciplines and stakeholders to avoid delays in the project later on. The success or failure of schemes in design terms comes down to the aspirations, cooperation and skills of all these roles:
- 1.13. **Shared Vision** - agreeing a shared vision at the concept stage for each project helps deliver coordinated development proposals and a more certain outcome in the planning process.
- 1.14. The choices made early on to appoint a professional team, and develop a vision has a marked impact on design quality. Good designers are custodians of their schemes and lead projects in a collaborative and integrated way. Retention of such professionals through the technical and construction stages is highly preferable to realise the vision in full. **05d 25g**
- 1.15. Applicants will be expected to work closely with those directly impacted by their proposals to ensure designs evolve to take account of the views of the community. Proposals that demonstrate this through their design may be looked on more favourably by such consultees in the formal application process. **NPPF 66**
- 1.16. The quality of submissions is also a key factor in ensuring a scheme is fully understood. The use of tools such as 3D software and the inclusion of quality elevations, street scenes and 3D massing can assist in interpretation and in understanding the likely impact of a development. **7b**
- 1.17. Swindon Borough Council offers a pre-application service to give more detailed and tailored advice prior to a formal planning application submission. For further information contact the Local Planning Authority or visit: www.swindon.gov.uk.



Design Review

- 1.18. Design Review is an impartial evaluation process in which the design of a proposal is assessed. The process is designed to improve the quality of buildings and places for the public.
- 1.19. A Design Review Panel is an independent panel of built environment experts recognised for their talents and wide range of experience. The Panel is organised under an appointed chair and sits independently to the Local Planning Authority **14/d**. The NPPF encourages the use of Design Review Panels recognising them **09d** as a proven way of driving up standards of design. **NPPF 62**
- 1.20. In recent years, Swindon Borough Council in partnership with developers have used both national and regional design review with great success on a number of schemes.
- 1.21. The LPA will encourage most major **21a** development proposals over the next plan period to undertake design review at pre-application, outline or reserved matters stage(s) as appropriate **23/4**. **Not all schemes will be referred to the Design Review Panel but scale alone is not the defining reason for a referral; any scheme could be referred - the absence of a design code, brief or overarching master plan or framework plan may also necessitate the need for Design Review as well as those schemes that potentially impact upon Historic assets. 23b**
- 1.22. Design review provides a succinct, swift and focussed service to advise applicants and the LPA on aspects that need improving to the overall design of a scheme and through this process can add significant value to each project.



Design Review Fig 4

Local planning authorities should have local design review arrangements in place to provide assessment and support to ensure high standards of design. ... In assessing applications, local planning authorities should have regard to the recommendations from the design review panel.

NPPF para. 62

- 1.23. There are different types of review relative to the site, local significance, size and complexity of each proposal. The Council's Urban Design Officer will remain the key consultee for all aspects of urban design within Swindon Borough but the LPA will have regard to the resulting advice from the Panel as required by the NPPF and that advice will be afforded significant weight.

Context & Character

2

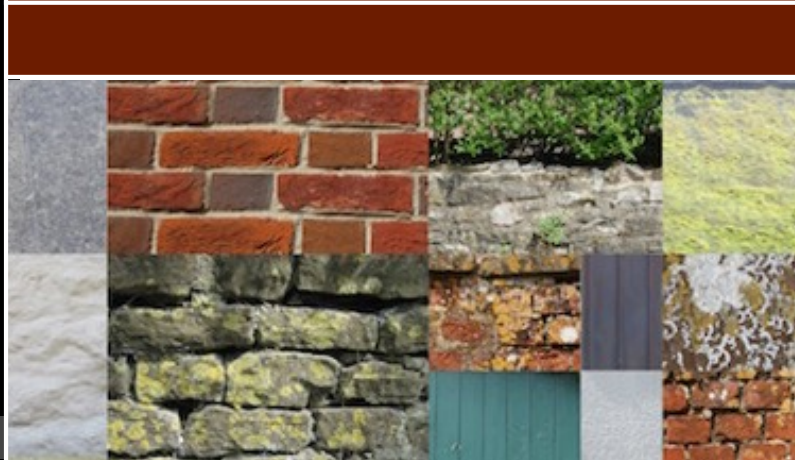
the range of elements and features that make up the natural and built environment and the resulting 'sense of place'.

- 2.1. Context refers to the range of elements and features that make up the natural and built environment of a place; while Character generally refers to the overall feel or atmosphere of that place - also known as 'sense of place'.
- 2.2. Policy DE1 requires development to be in context with the existing natural, built and historic environment, and to respond positively to enhance or create distinctive character and identity. The first part of the justification text relates to understanding the site, and the second is about creating new or enhancing existing character.
- 2.3. Whilst it is possible to define each term, Context and Character are not mutually exclusive concepts and the elements within the context work to support the overall character of a place. These together are the essence of place-making.
- 2.4. This chapter seeks to ensure a deeper understanding of those existing aspects which make up a site's inherent character:

- *Natural and Historic Features,*
- *Built Characteristics,*
- *Site Conditions*
- *Social Context* 15f, 25

Context Appraisal

- 2.5. Identifying all the constraints and opportunities for a site is essential to inform the design process. It ensures a collaborative approach to understanding the site, what makes it special, what opportunities exist and the constraints to be considered.
- 2.6. The constraints should be appraised beyond the red line of the application boundary as the impact of development on the site may reach beyond the developable area. Where features of natural and historic significance exist, they should be fully considered **14e** and opportunities realised to achieve net biodiversity gains. **03a**
- Understanding and embracing the issues and factors set out on the following page will help to provide an immediate sense of place and secure opportunities for community integration, mitigation and proper resilience for historic assets and ecosystems. **03a,03f 15f 25**

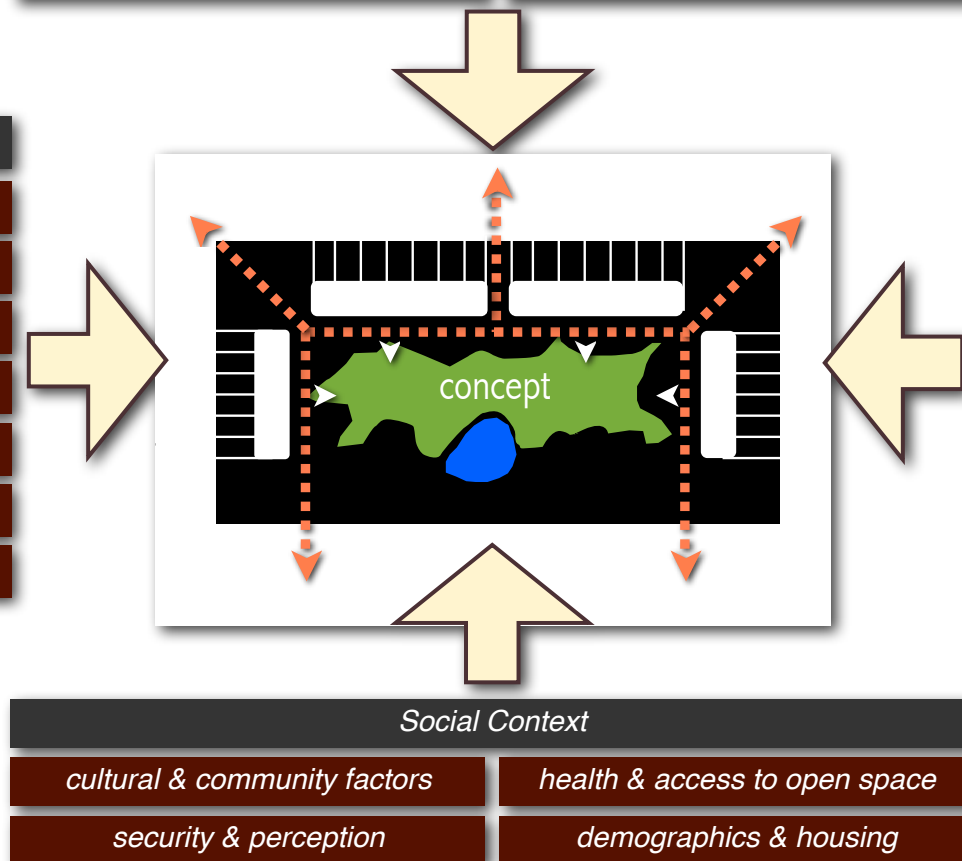


Context: figure grounds, materials, landscape and historic context. Fig 5

Acknowledged Features - Natural & Historic	
landscape character	archaeology
trees, hedgerows	historic landscape character
protected species & habitats	conservation areas
designated sites	listed buildings
river corridors	registered parks & gardens
water courses	buildings of local significance

Existing Built Characteristics
neighbouring buildings & structures
service easements
density, scale, form
street pattern
points of access
rights of way
views & vistas

Existing Site Conditions
soils, topography
ground levels, contours, landforms
prevailing winds & sun path
contamination
nuisance: noise, vibration, smell
water courses and flood zones
existing surface water drainage



A wide range of considerations are taken into account at the outset of the design process.

Context & character considerations. Fig 6 .

Character Response








2.7. Residential schemes proposed within existing areas, should be designed to harmonise with the character of their surroundings. Developments that fail to complement the characteristics of the local area or compromise its quality and the way it works, will be resisted.

NPPF 64

2.8. In order to make a positive contribution to the local area, an understanding of the area's character is essential.

2.9. Swindon's urban expansion from Brunel's time through most of the 20th century follows a principle of the creation of distinctive streets and grouping of strong housing typologies. While the places vary quite significantly in both character and quality, there is a consistency in plot configurations, block layout structure and grouping of typologies in order to create identity and sense of place.

2.10. In rural areas a different approach should be considered to ensure the design relates to context and character as required by DE1. To accord with policy DE1 and the NPPF development must respond to and respect existing context and character without proposing a poor copy of an existing architectural style.

				
Type	Compact Mixed Use Core	Urban	Sub- Urban	Urban Fringe
Density (du/ha)*	50 +	45 - 55	30 - 45	25 - 40
Typology	Mixed Uses, high-density typologies, Apartments, Terraces, Mews.	Apartments, Terraces, Mews, Semi-detached	Detached, Semi-detached, Terraces, Mews	Varied
Separation Distance**	BRE Rule**	21m back-to-back	21m back-to-back	21m back to back
Height	3+ storey	2-4 storey	2-3 storey	2 - 2.5 storey
Street Types	Boulevards, Avenues, Urban Streets, Shared Surfaces	Avenues, Urban Streets, Shared Surfaces	Avenues, Suburban Streets, Shared Surfaces, Lanes	Suburban Streets, Shared Surfaces, Lanes
Form & Structure	Compact & varied built form, rectilinear street grid pattern	Compact & regular built form, rectilinear street grid pattern	Less compact & regular built form, looser gridded street structure	Loose & irregular built form, soft landscaped edges
Continuity of form	Strong continuous form	Continuous form, few breaks	Regular breaks	Large breaks
Frontage (Building Line)	None to small	none to small	frontage setback	large setback
Parking	Public car parks & on street	On street, some on-plot	Mostly On-Plot parking	Mostly on-plot parking
Urban Grain Figure Ground				

* du/ha denotes: dwelling units per hectare.

** BRE rule: to be read in conjunction with Chap 6 Amenity (6.12 - 6.16)

Village/Small Town Core	Village Envelope	Village Fringe	Scattered Dwellings	Type
30 - 45	25 - 40	20 - 35	not applicable	Density
Apartments, Mixed uses, Terraces, Semi-detached, Mews.	Terraces, Semi-detached & Detached	Semi-detached and Detached	Mostly detached	Typology
18-21m back-to-back	21m back-to-back	21m back-to-back	21m back-to-back	Separation Distance**
2-4 storey	2-2.5 storey	2-2.5 storey	1-2 storeys	Height
Avenues, Urban Streets, Shared Surfaces	Urban & Suburban Streets, Mews	Suburban Streets, Mews, Lanes	Lanes	Street Types
Compact & irregular built form, tight-knit street pattern	Less compact & regular built form, looser street pattern	Less compact & irregular built form, loose street pattern	Isolated rural forms in landscape	Form & Structure
Strong continuous form	Continuous form, regular breaks	Irregular form, large breaks	Not applicable	Continuity of Form
None to small	Frontage set back	Large set back	Large set back	Frontage (Building Line)
Public car parks, on-street and courtyard	On-street, on-plot & courtyard	On-street and on-plot	On-plot	Parking
				Village Grain Figure Ground

Swindon's Urban and Rural Form Matrix - Illustrating the range of predominant characteristics for each area category.

Fig 7

General Character Checklist

- Establish the existing natural, built and historic features and demonstrate how they have informed the design.
- Development in existing areas must respond and respect the inherent scale, density, massing, height, landscape, layout, materials and access. NPPF 59

2.11. New developments in rural areas may also be required to consider specific issues such as advanced native tree planting to address existing landscape character and the impact of lighting on dark skies. **03g**

2.12. In new development areas trees should be of a species capable of growth to exceed building height to address landscape impact and succession planting should be considered. **3f**

"...securing high quality and inclusive design goes beyond aesthetic considerations. Therefore, planning policies and decisions should address the connections between people and places and the integration of new development into the natural, built and historic environment."

NPPF para. 61

Infill Development

- new building(s) in a gap between existing buildings or within an existing area.

2.13. This section provides guidance particular to infill development. All the guidance in this document also applies.

2.14. Not every perceived gap is appropriate for development. Some gaps allow for an attractive view or vista that should be retained; while other gaps may comprise a visual separation between dwellings as an inherent characteristic of the area.

2.15. Within the Borough's Conservation Areas, important spaces such as these have been identified within the Conservation Area Appraisals and should be protected as such.

NPPF 17

2.16. Spaces across the Borough, may form part of local identity and also require protection. There is no presumption that such development is sustainable or acceptable.

NPPF 58

2.17. Where infill development is acceptable in principle, it must respect the existing character of the surroundings and the amenity of neighbours. Where a rhythm of visual separation is an existing characteristic, the LPA will expect this to be maintained and repeated within a new proposal.

NPPF 17

2.18. Infill development should enhance its surroundings by positively responding to the **scale, density, massing, landscape, layout, materials** and **access** of its

neighbouring properties. This is important to reinforce local context and ensure the character of the street is not adversely affected. Where development is proposed within the setting of a heritage asset, the impact of the proposal on the significance of the heritage asset must be positive.

NPPF 59

2.19. Proposed infill plot subdivisions should be of similar scale and configuration to that prevailing in the street frontage. The relationship between proposed plot subdivisions and resulting built form must be designed in order to respect and enhance the character of the street through the proposal's **siting, orientation, scale** and **massing** as required by policy DE1.



Successful infill responding to existing character. Fig 8

2.20. It may be appropriate for larger scale plots to function as several separate units. Such a scheme should be designed to appear as a single building to reflect the existing built form. This will ensure the physical development responds to the inherent character, in terms of scale, and massing regardless of the internal arrangement. **NPPF 60**

2.21. Proposals should also respect established features: building line(s), roofscape, scale, massing, height, elevational characteristics, materials, visual separation and enclosures.

2.22. Innovation is encouraged by the LPA but this must not be to the detriment of the local character, identity, or history of an area. Outstanding, innovative and contemporary design proposals that challenge the established character may be acceptable particularly where they seek to raise the overall standard of design within an area. In such cases the LPA will refer them for consideration **14k** by the Design Review Panel. **NPPF 62**

2.23. **Parking** - where new access arrangements are proposed, the design should not detract from the established layout and character of the street. The inherent parking arrangements in an area

should be observed in new infill proposals. Achieving the Borough's parking requirements must not be to the detriment of the character or quality of the street and unacceptable arrangements will be resisted.

2.24. **Materials** - infill proposals should also make a positive contribution to the character of the area and local distinctiveness **05i** through the choice of high quality **05i** materials. In most cases it is best practice to use durable and complementary materials where colours and textures match those prevalent in the immediate area.



Sympathetic infill, Blunsdon St Andrew. Fig 9

Infill Checklist

- New development must retain existing views, and visual separation if they are components of the character.
- There is no presumption that all gaps are appropriate for infill.
- New development must reflect inherent plot size, building lines, boundary treatments, roofscape, built form, scale, massing, landscaping and details.
- Outstanding, innovative and contemporary designs that challenge the established character will be referred **14k** to the Design Review Panel.
- Parking provision must support and contribute to the quality and character of the street.

Backland Development

- *land behind an existing built area.*

2.25. Backland development is development of gardens or open spaces. By its nature, backland development may be hidden from immediate public view but this does not excuse poor quality design. Only schemes designed to accord with all the principles of Policy DE1 will be acceptable. **09g**

2.26. Some comprehensive backland development may be acceptable, but proposals of individual backland sites can conflict with the established surrounding character and context. Blocking the access between adjoining land can constitute piecemeal development and inhibit a more comprehensive development of a larger backland site.

2.27. Sites that are poorly assembled or have complex arrangements that prejudice the potential for larger, more inclusive and sustainable developments, will be resisted. Similarly, incremental or piecemeal development that fails to provide connectivity and leaves an isolated piece of land at the boundary is not acceptable. These ransom strips potentially stifle more comprehensive development and will be resisted in accord with Policy SD3.

2.28. Particular attention should be paid to the impact of the proposed development on the living conditions of neighbouring residents, such as privacy, outlook **9h** vehicle noise, car parking and over-shadowing - Chapter 6 Amenity addresses such considerations. **NPPF 17**

2.29. The LPA considers gardens as an essential part of the amenities of residents and garden size may be an important part of the character of an area. All dwellings suitable for family accommodation need to provide a sunlit area of private garden, of a size and shape capable to support household recreational use. **9h**



Comprehensive backland scheme Swindon. Fig 10

2.30. Backland schemes, when acceptable, must take opportunities to improve the safety and security of the area by creating a well-connected, well lit and overlooked public realm. Owing to the nature of backland sites, it is highly advisable that the views of the Crime Prevention Design Adviser (CPDA) are taken into account at the earliest opportunity through the LPA's pre-application service.

2.31. As with all development proposals context and character is a key consideration and all those matters covered earlier in this Chapter (ecology, landscape, historic environment, etc.) may preclude backland proposals.



Strong frontage to backland development. Fig 11

2.32. Tandem developments - where a new dwelling is placed immediately behind an existing dwelling, are rarely able to satisfy the principles of DE1 and are often resisted. Proposed developments on small plots or on sites that share the same access will normally be rejected. Such schemes often incur problems of overlooking, loss of amenity, overdevelopment and impact adversely on the character of the area.

2.33. As a general guide, to be successful, tandem development proposals should be on sites of at least 0.4ha (1 acre) and demonstrate that there is no opportunity at this time for a more comprehensive scheme. Such proposals must ensure that the amenity and separation distances of existing residents with the host dwelling can be safeguarded. In addition such schemes must provide a positive response to existing context & character.

Backland Checklist

- Developments must protect amenity and ensure separation distances are safeguarded. Poor or compromised design to address loss of amenity will not be acceptable.
- Developments must feel safe and secure and create high quality places regardless of visibility from public view.
- Piecemeal schemes and sites assembled in a manner that compromises or prejudices the potential for larger, inclusive and comprehensive development, will not be acceptable.
- Small infill sites are not generally acceptable and should not share the same access as the existing dwelling(s)



Tandem development compromising amenity. Fig 12

New Character

2.34. In new major development, it is important that the streets and public realm are laid out to constitute a place with identity. Such local character is not limited to the architectural treatment or materials, more fundamentally it relates to the structure of local streets, how the landscaping along a them is arranged; the choice and design of house types and elements such as enclosures.

NPPF 58

2.35. When a development layout is conceived primarily as a numbers game, the result can be a failure to provide a place with quality and meaning. Poor differentiation between streets within a layout with house typologies randomly scattered across a site with no purposeful composition, all results in a lack of quality design contrary to DE1.

2.36. Distinctive character results from a holistic approach to designing streets and the public realm as attractive, safe places people want to be in. This approach requires consistent and collaborative working to achieve a strong shared vision for the site.

NPPF 69

2.37. Different housing typologies have particular spatial and configurational requirements that set them apart from each other.

2.38. These varying spatial relationships impact the environment of the street differently. In large-scale development it is often both more efficient and desirable to group similar housing typologies together in order to establish a sense of order and identity in creating a positive sense of place.

2.39. The composition of houses across a street is important from both the considerations of layout and the resulting visual form. The design of each house and its overall spatial quality must relate to the street public realm.

2.40. It is therefore very important that the sum of all the individual parts that make up a street work in harmony together to create a positive sense of place of which residents can be proud.



Tadpole Garden Village, North Swindon. Fig 13

New Character Checklist

- Developments must use street and house typologies to create a clear hierarchy and contribute to the character of the area.
- Street landscaping and enclosures must support the intended character



The Approach, Tadpole Garden Village. Fig 14

Layout

the structuring of development; the way buildings, routes and open spaces interrelate.

3

- 3.1. The nine principles of layout covered in this Chapter 05j are taken directly from policy DE1. Each principle is interrelated, equally important and relevant to good urban design in any context, so each should be clearly addressed in all new residential development.
- 3.2. Each principle should be individually discussed in a Design and Access Statement and they should be self evident from the resulting layout which should be a synthesis of the site constraints and the principles set out here. 05j The LPA will consider applications against these nine principles using the following sections which explore each one - providing a definition, an explanation and examples to aid clarity and interpretation of policy DE1.

- *Accessibility*
- *Connectivity*
- *Permeability*
- *Legibility*
- *Inclusivity*
- *Safety & Security*
- *Layout Efficiency*
- *Energy Efficiency*
- *Adaptability*

Accessibility

the ability to enter and exit with ease and reach essential facilities.

3.3. Sustainable communities are enabled through layouts that integrate the location of housing and community facilities within walkable distances. **NPPF 70**

3.4. High accessibility and comfortable walking distances for residents are important sustainable development considerations to

- encourage healthier communities¹ (in line with SBCLP policy CM2);
- ensure proximity to essential facilities; reduce the need to travel by car (SBCLP policy TR1); and
- promote social cohesion. **15k**

3.5. The accessibility criteria² set out (right) provide a useful guide for maximum recommended distances between new housing and public facilities. **Development proposals should aim to achieve these guidelines.** **NPPF 69**



Access to play areas, Angle Ridge, Swindon. Fig 15

3.6. At the points of greatest accessibility in **major development areas and settlements**, it is reasonable to expect most facilities to be located within walkable distances. The concentration of development (density) and clustering of facilities can provide the patronage required for different modes of transport. **NPPF 35**

3.7. **Achieving the accessibility criteria in both new and existing areas can be challenging owing to physical constraints and legal ownership issues. Every effort should be made to ensure good levels of accessibility are achieved, and that legal issues are resolved from the outset through a collaborative planning approach.**

3.8. Accessibility is also about clear, logical, recognisable points of access. The entrance to a development should be design-led and the location of the access must not adversely impact on the layout and block structure of the scheme.

3.9. The development form of schemes must positively address and respond to the entrance. This will ensure the principles of legibility, safety and security are also enhanced and enable the site's character to be established. Poorly conceived points of access that result in compromised layouts and blocks will not be acceptable.

Accessibility Checklist

- Developments should promote walkable neighbourhoods. Proposals that perform poorly against the accessibility criteria to facilities **23c** will be resisted.
- Facilities should be located at Nodes - the points of greatest accessibility.
- Developments must provide design-led, and recognisable entrances with the public realm that do not compromise the block structure.

Accessibility Criteria

- ≤ 250m to a LEAP and LLAP **14/l**
- ≤ 500m to a NEAP
- ≤ **600m** to a bus stop
- ≤ **800m** to a primary school, open space, **15n** local centre or supermarket
- ≤ 1000m to a health centre
- ≤ 1500m to a secondary school
- ≤ 2000m to a district centre

- a social role...by creating a high quality built environment, with accessible local services that reflect the community's needs and supports its health, social and cultural well-being. NPPF 7 para

Connectivity

planning policies and decision should address the connections between people and places and the integration of new development into the natural, built and historic environment. NPPF para 61

- 3.1. Strong linkages and integration between the site and the surroundings are key structuring elements for residential layouts. Development that fails to establish positive connections with the adjoining area, facilities, open space and GI corridors **03a** leads to insular development and an over dependence on vehicular movement. Layouts that do not directly integrate with the neighbouring environment or include blocked, indirect or closed routes will not be acceptable.
- 3.2. **The use of movement and space analysis tools are encouraged to test scenarios and model connectivity with the existing network.**



Space analysis tools to measure connectivity. Fig 16

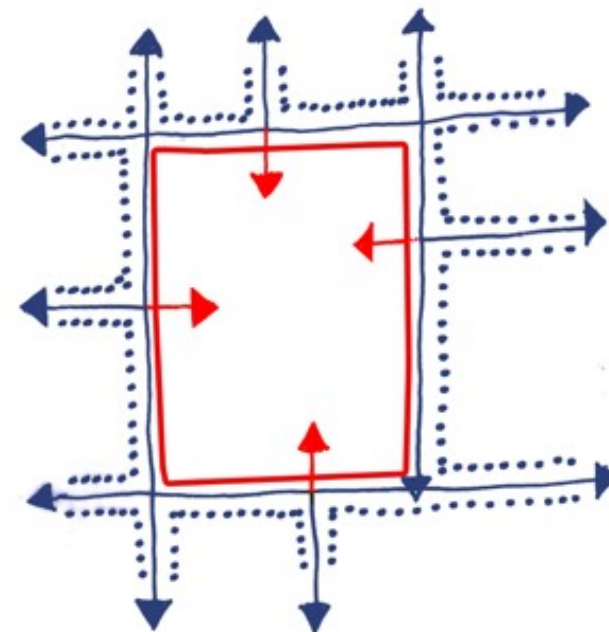
- 3.3. Good connectivity can build on and enrich existing communities and improve sustainability in the long term. Such linkages must be designed to be **direct, safe and attractive** to ensure their use is optimised **15l**. Strong connections also ensures a robust urban structure and positively promotes healthy lifestyles by encouraging people to walk, run and cycle within, through and beyond the site. Development layouts must provide clear, safe and direct connections to adjoining areas.
- 3.4. Connectivity should build on the information sourced in the Site Context and Character Appraisal such as Rights of Way, routes, linkages and desire lines.



Direct, safe and attractive connection. Fig 17

Connectivity Checklist

- Developments **should 23d** integrate with adjacent environments via safe **15l** clear, direct and attractive routes.
- Closed development and blocked, inconvenient or poorly surveyed routes will not be acceptable.
- All existing ROW must be connected within a new development.



Connections between a site and existing routes Fig 18

Permeability

the measure of how easy (or difficult) it is to move through all parts of a development.

- 3.5. As connectivity is concerned with external linkages, so permeability considers internal movement and connection within the site. Good permeability allows for ease of movement between all parts of the layout in the most direct way possible.
- 3.6. Like the previous two principles, good permeability directly supports community cohesion and the aims of SBLP policy CM2 to improve health, by encouraging greater potential for access, pedestrian movement and social interaction.
- 3.7. Poor permeability can result from lengthy, winding, unbroken, complex and closed road patterns that create a disconnect within an area. This often results in isolated, underused areas with dead ends. Conversely, **simple, direct** and **inter-connected** road and route patterns generate high levels of permeability and greater potential use for all user groups.
- 3.8. Permeability is highly influenced by block structure. The use of oversized, unbroken blocks particularly in terms of street length, should be avoided as these can create a high degree of impermeability and reduce pedestrian movement across a development.

- 3.9. Smaller blocks with adequate back to back distances, can create more frontage opportunities and are generally easier to move through and between. **Smaller blocks also provide better environments for people with mental illnesses (such as dementia) to navigate and use**³.



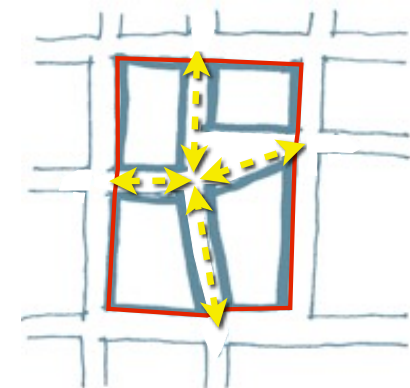
Closed block structure. Fig 19



Closed, indirect permeability. Fig 20

Permeability Checklist

- Developments should achieve good permeability of movement between all parts of the site in the most direct way possible.
- Uninterrupted, protracted block lengths that compromise permeability will be resisted.



Permeable block structure. Fig 21



Clear, direct, safe, attractive. Fig 22

[³Housing Learning & Improvement Network Principle 1.]

Legibility

the extent to which a place is recognisable and coherently organised.

3.10. Legibility in a layout contributes to identity improves distinctiveness, and enables clear, memorable images of a place. This in turn promotes use, aids navigation and helps vitality, choice and activity. **NPPF 69**

3.11. The nine principles in this Chapter are not mutually exclusive. A permeable, legible scheme with connectivity, and a clear entrance makes it easy for people to know where they are; to see where they want to get to and how to get there.

3.12. Movement **routes** through a development connect and integrate places, and the way routes are laid out across a site defines the structure of that place. A clear and logical structure is fundamental to legibility. This should be achieved through well-ordered, defined streets and strong relationships between uses, buildings, routes and spaces.

3.13. **Vista terminations, views, key buildings** and **landmark features** can all help secure legibility. **Routes** must have purpose and enable people to permeate, remember and experience a place. They must be clear, direct and well defined by the built form, and include framed **views** and **vistas** in and out of the development.

3.14. The way views are terminated is key to legibility. Layouts that include views ending in blank walls, parking courtyards, or ill-conceived elevations, indicate a negative 'dead-end', confuse navigation and are generally hotspots for crime.

These will be resisted. **14m** Strong public realm, coherent street patterns and **key buildings** all provide indicators to aid legibility.

3.15. To signal and celebrate a development entrance it is often important to include a "**gateway**". Gateways should involve bespoke design, distinct built form, and feature landscaping.

3.16. **Public art** plays a key role in securing and enhancing legibility and placemaking. This is considered further in Chapter 7.



Public Art is a powerful tool in legibility. Fig 23

Legibility Checklist

- Layouts must have a clear identity, logical structure and navigable street hierarchy.
- Vista terminations should include aligned and articulated frontages.
- Views out from a development should be framed.
- Gateways should combine distinctive built form with landscaping to celebrate the entrance to a development.
- Principal frontages should face the public realm and be orientated to support the street hierarchy. Frontages must be articulated and entrances clearly defined.



1.Key Building, 2.Vista 3.Building Line Fig 24

Inclusivity

It is important to plan positively for the achievement of high quality and inclusive design for all development, including individual buildings, public and private spaces and wider area development schemes. NPPF para 57

3.17. Inclusive design should be an integral part of residential layouts. Designing places that provide choice and are fit for purpose for everybody helps reduce vulnerability, achieving social equality and improving opportunities for healthier lifestyles.

3.18. The Inclusive Design Access for All SPD provides guidance on principles for achieving inclusive design and relevant requirements are reflected in this SPD.

3.19. Social inclusion is important in designing for sustainable mixed communities as advocated by the Government and the needs of an ageing population are becoming widely recognised.



Opportunity to pause and rest. Fig 25

3.20. The location of all housing in relation to facilities and open spaces must ensure good access for all user groups (see Accessibility). The inclusion of benches and **provision of** shade are considerations that can make a difference to people's enjoyment and use of place.

3.21. The provision of affordable housing should be designed to be indistinguishable from market housing, whatever the tenure. Clustering non-market housing into large groups, or segregating it into isolated pockets, will not be acceptable.

3.22. **The LPA prefers groups of less than 10-15 affordable units in a row or clustered across both sides of a street. 21d** Further guidance on affordable housing and the type and tenure of housing required is provided in Swindon Borough Council's Housing Strategy.



Mixed housing indistinguishable & integrated. Fig 26

Inclusivity Checklist

- Levels across the layout must ensure accessibility for all users.
- Buildings must include level threshold entrances and accessible approaches.
- Access arrangements must provide functionality and safety for all users without compromising the quality of the public realm.
- Affordable housing must be indistinguishable from market housing and not segregated.



Gentle ramped level threshold. Fig 27

Adaptability

the ability to adjust to changing circumstances and uses over time.

- 3.23. The shift to home working for many sectors puts an additional requirement for space and or adaptability on the family home. In addition an increase in life expectancy means we are likely to be living in our homes for longer and the desire to remain independent means adaptability of the home using standards such as Lifetime Homes is essential to achieve this.
- 3.24. Extensions and alterations to houses are the most common applications dealt with by the LPA. By their nature, and where appropriate, extensions to houses in the form of rear and side additions and the conversion of roof space into habitable accommodation can enable people to stay in their properties for longer and to accommodate changing circumstances over time. This in turn helps build community cohesion by reducing transient neighbourhoods.
- 3.25. **Inclusive design considerations** such as level access and wider openings enable buildings to be fit for purpose for all residents during all phases of their lives. This in turn reduces the need for institutional care models.

- 3.26. Consideration must be paid to future property owners who may wish to alter or extend their properties. Garden sizes that are less than the footprint of the proposed house, have limited or no potential for adaptation and extension. These will be identified during the planning process and permitted development rights removed as necessary to reflect this.

~~3.27. Increasing ground floor heights- incorporating an extra 1m in the ground floor height of buildings along main routes and key nodes makes the future potential for conversion of these properties to other uses such as office, retail or leisure possible over time.~~ **5r 20f**

- 3.28. Successful urban developments consist of robust plot and block configurations that provide flexible solutions over the longer term. To be truly sustainable, residential layout design should enable change and adaptation to take place. Simple, rectilinear plot configurations arranged in an ordered structure are usually the most efficient and adaptable urban form that allows for change of use over time. Conversely sinuous, meandering sub-urban streets and culs-de-sac are not easily adaptable to changes in future needs.

Adaptability Checklist

- Layout structure should generally consist of simple robust plot and block configurations.
- Proposed housing plots and/or house design should accommodate the necessary space for a dwelling to be adaptable.
- Permitted development rights for house extensions may be removed where proposals cannot demonstrate that the proposed house would be extendable.
- Incorporate inclusive design considerations and the most accessible standards to benefit a wider range of user requirements.



Adaptable for home working and future needs. Fig 28

Safety & Security

create safe and accessible environments where crime and disorder, and the fear of crime, do not undermine quality of life or community cohesion NPPF para. 58

3.29. Through the Crime & Disorder Act (1998) Swindon Borough Council has a duty to ensure consideration, prevention and minimisation of the potential for crime. This may be best achieved through the application of **3I 6a** Secured by Design principles see www.securedbydesign.com. Those applicable to planning have been incorporated throughout this document.

3.30. **Active frontages** and **natural surveillance** are essential for the perception of security and the success of the public realm. Described as 'eyes on the street' the use of carefully-located windows and doors, can create a naturally surveyed, well-lit area, which provides greater security.



Bay window provides good street surveillance. Fig 29

3.31. Natural surveillance is a subtle but effective tool that creates a sense of safety. Conversely, hidden and concealed entrances and recesses in the built form including parking courts, can result in dark areas and a sense of threat. The built form and elevation should work together to animate and activate the street.

3.32. Fronts and backs of buildings perform different roles and it is important that the formal, more animated front should always face the public realm and contribute to it. Blank or inactive side and rear elevations, walls and other means of enclosure are prone to graffiti and contribute little to the public realm. They should therefore not form the main public frontage or be in direct public view.



Unsecured, unattractive rear access pathway. Fig 30

3.33. The rear of properties are the most vulnerable to crime. The use of private, poorly surveyed and **unsecured 21e** rear pathways will not be acceptable. Ginnel access arrangements can offer a very safe and attractive solution to this problem, where adjoining properties share a common accessway between each other.

3.34. **Unsecured, 20e 21e** narrow, rear shared pathways to back gardens (Fig 30) create a host of problems over time. Research⁴ has shown that up to 85% of break-in entries to terraced homes occurred at the back of the houses with open rear access footpaths. The LPA will not accept such arrangements. **Rear pathways** to back gardens should be as simple and directly-related to the front of the plot as possible and in terraces ginnels shared between two dwellings (below) is encouraged. **20d**



Ginnels provide secure & attractive access. Fig 31

- 3.35. A clear and positive relationship between public and private space is important for ease of maintenance, sense of ownership, and local identity and pride.
- 3.36. Layouts should plan properly for the successful design of public open space by creating **attractive, overlooked and usable environments** that are easy to maintain (Fig 32)
- 3.37. The design of **car parking** and the overall street configuration is a major contributor to placemaking. Inefficiently and poorly planned car parking can weaken the quality of the whole area or street and lead to inefficient layouts.

- 3.38. One such example is the use of rear courtyard parking which is rarely successful, for the reasons above. Courtyard parking can also result in a lack of surveillance and poor use (Fig 33). **NPPF 69**
- 3.39. Paradoxically, efficient, well planned and laid out parking that is designed for the most part 'on-plot' requires less land for manoeuvres and for private pedestrian pathways. It is also the favoured layout of residents and contributes to independent living. Character and context should help inform the most appropriate car parking arrangements particularly in established and historic areas. Further detail on parking can be found in Chapter 5 Function.

Safety & Security Checklist

- Routes, public realm and shared private space must be well lit with active, animated elevations to provide surveillance.
- Entrances and recesses must not be hidden or concealed from view.
- Blank, inactive elevations and means of enclosure, must not form the main public frontage.
- Poorly surveyed, protracted and **unsecured 20e 21e** side and rear pathways will not be acceptable.
- Over-reliance on rear courtyard parking, or parking that is inconvenient and poorly associated with the host dwelling in most cases will be resisted. **23j**



Safety secured through a line of frontages. Fig 32



Inhospitable, unattractive, courtyard. Fig 33



Courtyard with emphasised overlooking. Fig 34

Layout Efficiency

the best use of land through the optimum organisation of a development.

3.40. Land is a scarce resource and should be treated as such. Good design is efficient in the social, environmental and economic aspects of sustainable development. Wasteful, poorly designed proposals that take a short-term view can result in visually lacking, functionally weak and often maintenance-hungry developments. Such ill-conceived layouts are often less land efficient and result in lower end value.

NPPF 7

3.41. The arrangement of house types along a street should achieve efficiency of land and avoid left over spaces. The grouping of similar typologies together can provide for greater land efficiency as the 'kit of parts' for each dwelling (front boundary treatments, front gardens, cars, bins, recycling boxes, landscaping etc.) can be more simply arranged. In residential layout terms, these smaller elements when poorly considered in relation to the overall design of a streetscene can be the most damaging to the quality of a place.

3.42. This approach to setting out new housing is not new and is engrained in most historical housing patterns such as the Victorian and Georgian periods.

3.43. In Chapter 8, design-led, quality-driven layouts are contrasted against poor quality, uninspiring layouts and additional Case Studies analyse these in light of the principles of policy DE1, including the efficiency of layout design as measured by site coverage.

3.44. These examples illustrate that good design achieves better quality places without losing efficiency in layout terms. The Case Studies demonstrate that a reconsidered design on the same site in light of the principles of policy DE1 can have a marked improvement in the overall social, environmental and economic quality and value of place.

3.45. Leftover space that is awkward to maintain, small and compromised (such as in between differently-aligned parking bays) must be designed-out.



Open space overlooked by housing on all sides. Fig 35

Layout Efficiency Checklist

- Developments should ensure land efficiency through strong ordered street hierarchy and the arrangement of house types.
 - Layouts that are highway dominated and deficient in quality public realm will be resisted.
 - Unusable or poorly accessed leftover areas of land must be avoided and will not be counted toward public open space.
- 3.46. Housing that fronts attractive open space (including water bodies) is often the most desirable. The more attractive that open space is, the greater the potential place value. Put simply, layout efficiency *is* good urban design.



Attractive public realm and quality housing. Fig 36

Energy Efficiency

In determining planning applications, local planning authorities should expect new development to take account of landform, layout, building orientation, massing and landscaping to minimise energy consumption. NPPF para 96

- 3.47. Adopting passive solar design principles can make a considerable improvement to a dwelling's energy efficiency. The LPA expects all development to demonstrate passive solar benefits to increase energy efficiency of development. **NPPF 95**
- 3.48. Technical guidance on energy efficiency is provided by BREEAM but for the purposes of this SPD energy efficiency through passive solar design is considered in terms of Orientation. **Chapter 6 Amenity also discusses issues relating to sunlight, daylight and overshadowing.**

Orientation of streets

- 3.49. East-west street alignments ensure houses have a natural southerly aspect to the front or rear of the dwelling. This concept should be considered in the design of layouts to take advantage of passive solar gain balanced against other constraints and design-led placemaking objectives.

Orientation of dwellings

- 3.50. Ideally the main glazed elevation of a property should face within 30° of south. Dwellings with the main glazed elevation towards south east will benefit more from morning sun, while those facing south west will catch the late afternoon sun, delaying the need for artificial heating.

Orientation of rooms

- 3.51. The most frequently-used rooms of a home (living rooms, bedrooms and kitchens) should face towards the southern sky. Only the least-used rooms (halls, bathrooms, utility, etc.) should face north, as light and heat is less important to their use. Maximising use of the warmer and lighter southern sky is particularly important for more vulnerable residents that may be unable or restricted in their ability to venture outside often. The LPA will **resist** scenarios where buildings or structures are proposed that would create a complete shadow over southern elevations of other dwellings nearby. As well as impacting on energy efficiency overshadowing affects amenity. Further discussion on this and separation distances are provided in Chapter 6 - Amenity.

Energy Efficiency Checklist

- Development should demonstrate passive solar design.
- Main glazed elevations and habitable rooms should be placed towards the south of buildings.
- Complete overshadowing of southern elevations will not be acceptable and separation distances must be secured (see Amenity).



Glazing to maximise light and solar gain. Fig 37

Form

4

the detailed aspects that make up the three-dimensional configuration of the built environment.

- 4.1. The Form of development proposals must provide a strong contextual response to each site, and create distinctive identity.
- 4.2. In line with Policy DE1, the form of development proposals will be assessed in terms of: siting, orientation, scale, massing, materials and detailing, and these must be addressed within all new development proposals [Para 4.15, SBLP 2026]
- 4.3. This section provides considerations, guidance and expectations for each of these elements of the policy.
- 4.4. Each plot consists of a set of different elements that should come together to form a built response to the context. Combined with the street, these are the kit of parts [05 s] that make up the form of the development. This is explored further throughout this section to help articulate the expectations of Policy DE1, and in more detail in Chapter 8 of this document.

design policies should avoid unnecessary prescription or detail and should concentrate on guiding the overall scale, density, massing, height, landscape, layout, materials and access of new development
NPPF 59

- *Siting*
- *Orientation*
- *Scale*
- *Massing*
- *Materials*
- *Detailing*

Siting

the configuration and relationship of a building's footprint to the existing context, character and the vision for the development.

- 4.5. The siting of a building should address and respond to the **local distinctiveness** by considering character, context, routes, trees, buildings, landscape, topography, street patterns and neighbouring buildings (also discussed in Section 1). Proposals will be assessed in this regard.

NPPF 60

NPPF 58



Clear building lines contribute to local identity. Fig 38

- 4.6. **Topography & Levels** - development along a slope should not include rising plinths visible within the public realm. Rising plinths can have a detrimental impact on a streetscene particularly if the result is an inactive frontage, regardless of the elevational design proposed above. In a streetscene of buildings on a slope, it is usually better to create a level-change at the party wall between dwellings, and not within the area of the dwelling itself. This helps to avoid split-level roofs and split ground floor levels within each property. This approach may not be appropriate for pairs of semi-detached dwellings.



Rising plinth with changes in level at party wall. Fig 39

- 4.7. Poorly considered development on sloping sites results in the over-use of retaining walls. Rising plinth - access issues can themselves create awkward relationships between private amenity and public realm areas. In all circumstances, a 3-dimensional understanding and articulation of proposals is required to ensure private gardens, elevations and public realm are not compromised.



Local housing with changes in level at party wall. Fig 40

- 4.8. **Key buildings / landmark buildings** - should be orientated and sited to give maximum prominence and to ensure the scheme benefits from views of the building from the public realm. Wherever possible these buildings should align with the central axis of the street in order to give them prominence and meaning within their local setting.
- 4.9. Layouts that include buildings that are off alignment, or where a vista ends in a parking space or garage have lost the opportunity to create positive identity and meaning. In such cases changes to a layout will be expected to address this.



- 4.10. **Building lines** - proposals must ensure that established building lines that form part of an area's identity and character are maintained through the siting of new development. **NPPF 58**
- 4.11. The consistency of building lines is a common aspect of many successful streets in urban environments. Avenues, Boulevards, Mews, urban streetscenes and edges to green space are strong character cues. Development within these structured urban forms, must adhere and reinforce that characteristic. **In some cases a strong consistent building line will be necessary to reflect the existing built form or intended character of the street. In other situations such as rural areas or fringes of development a more fragmented or loose arrangement may be appropriate.**



Siting Checklist

- The siting of new developments must respect established building lines and reinforce existing street character.
- Site level differences should be addressed by cut and fill to avoid rising plinths, large raised platforms and retaining structures
- Changes in levels along a terraced streetscene should be accommodated at the party wall, and not within the ridgeline.
- Built form must wherever possible align with and frame views and vistas. Buildings that are off alignment or that negatively impact on a view will not be acceptable.



Orientation

the direction in which the proposed building faces.

4.12. Buildings should be oriented so that their public frontage faces the dominant street. Buildings that turn corners or form several frontages - should positively address both streets and two public facades may be necessary.

4.13. Buildings that **terminate vistas** - should be aligned carefully to take advantage of framed views of the building's frontage **and to maximise passive surveillance of the adjacent public realm.**

4.14. The direction a building faces should ensure **corners and vista terminations** are addressed, the public realm is overlooked and solar gain is maximised. **NPPF 96**

4.15. Where side elevations of a corner building also face the public realm, they should be punctuated by carefully articulated window openings and designed as attractive elevations which relate positively to the public realm.

Orientation Checklist

- Buildings should be orientated to ensure their public frontage faces the dominant street.
- Side elevations onto the public realm should be designed to be attractive and provide positive surveillance over the public realm.
- Buildings that are framed within a view of a terminating vista should face this terminating view.
- Buildings should be arranged to avoid unusable, leftover space.



Building orientated to address special corner. Fig 44



Building orientated to address street corner. Fig 45



Building orientated to address both corner. Fig 46

Scale

the size of built form as a relative concept; in proportion to context, character, public realm and human scale.

NPPF 59

4.17. Developments generally must be in **scale with their surroundings** and **with the public realm** that serves them.

NPPF 60

Proposals that are out of scale in relation to their context may be referred to as “incongruent,” “inharmonious,” or “over dominant” and as such will be resisted. Where existing or proposed buildings have been identified as ‘key’ buildings, such as at a ‘gateway’ or at the termination of an important line of site, then they may be more prominent in terms of scale. In all instances the scale of buildings needs to be very carefully considered in terms of amenity of neighbours and overall context.



Public realm in scale with built form. Fig 47

4.18. **Tall buildings** (defined as considerably higher than the existing built environment¹) need to satisfy the above principle of scale in relation to the impact on the existing / proposed context. Tall buildings especially those above 5-storeys have a marked effect on the skyline and such proposals will be expected to undergo the design review process in order to agree a high quality architectural design. Generally buildings over 5-storeys should be reserved for the town centre - see Policy CAAP1 of the adopted Swindon Central Area Action Plan.

4.19. The scale of individual parts of a development should also be in proportion. Houses along a street should relate in scale to each other; new street trees planted to make up an avenue should be of sufficient initial and potential size to create impact; and large key buildings should have complimentary architectural articulation and frontage space.

4.20. In existing and established areas where new development is proposed, particularly brownfield, backland or infill sites, scale is often a deciding factor in the success or failure of a scheme and the impact on

Scale Checklist

- Development must be in scale with its context, character, public realm and use (human or civic scale).
- The use of “tall”, dominant or iconic buildings must be fully justified by high quality design.
- Elements of a development must be complimentary to the dwelling and street character.
- The scale of development, individual buildings or their components must not compromise amenity.



A tall “prominent” building at a key location. Fig 48

Massing

the 3 dimensional development envelope and the rhythms and patterns of it.

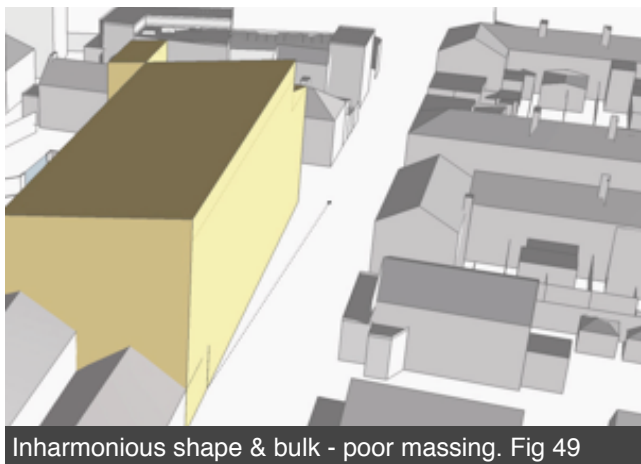
4.21. Massing may be considered at two scales:

- ◆ the **urban grain**
- ◆ the **detailed composition**

4.22. The first scale of massing involves the **shape, height and bulk** of the built form together and comprises the whole building or group of buildings. The detailed composition however is concerned with how elements of each building are organised in terms of **proportion** and **rhythm**.

NPPF 59

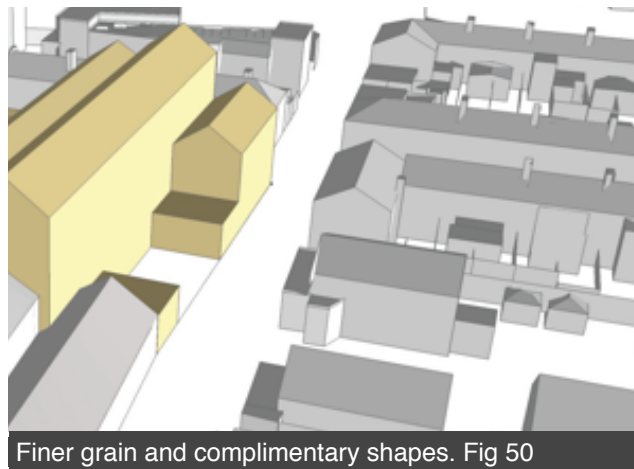
4.23. The massing of development must compliment and reinforce the existing urban grain, the character and the street hierarchy. It should help to shape and enclose public spaces and contribute to a coherent and harmonious townscape.



4.24. This may be at a building scale in terms of the overall shape or silhouette of the building form(s) or conveyed in more detailed ways such as patterns of openings, porches, projecting bays, chimneys, boundary treatments and other rhythmic features.

Urban Grain

4.25. In the first example (Fig 49) the massing of the proposed building fails to respond to the fine grain of the surrounding built form. The roof shape clashes with the inherent character and the bulk dominates the townscape and overwhelms the traditional surroundings. This scheme fails at a urban grain level (shape and bulk) - no elevational treatment can satisfactorily address the massing issue.



4.26. The second example (Fig 50) uses the same quantum of built form, but is moulded to a more sensitive, less dominant massing comprising a collection of smaller built forms responsive to the surrounding context. A traditional roof form compliments the existing character and shapes. The finer grain of the design adds to the complexity and richness of the proposal within the wider townscape.

4.27. The insertion of a wide, horizontally emphasised building adjoining traditional vertically dominant frontages (Fig 51) results in conflict within the street. The floor levels for each storey fail to correspond and the elevational compositions are polarised.



Detailed composition

- 4.28. The perceived mass of buildings can be strongly influenced by the architectural features and built elements of the façade such as chimneys, fenestration, balconies and porches.
- 4.29. Where there is a clear massing characteristic or feature, new development should compliment, harmonise and reflect it. Examples of this include strong vertical (Fig 54) or horizontal emphasis (Fig 53), dominant roof forms, patterns of openings, or classical proportions. **5v**
- 4.30. Buildings that appear as 'monolithic', 'mundane', bland or even blank in expression usually result from badly proportioned window openings or poorly arranged facades with conflicting horizontal and vertical emphasis in their composition (Fig 52).



Bland frontage and confused proportions. Fig 52

- 4.31. **Inactive ground floors that do not contribute to the street should also be avoided.**
- 4.32. Proportion is an inherent part of massing and the relationship between the parts of a building should come together to support the overall emphasis. Proportion also plays a strong role in the character of an area and this can be seen in the wider frontages and curved bays of the 1930s semi-detached developments (Fig 53) contrasted with the vertical emphasis of the Victorian and Edwardian terraces.
- 4.33. **Therefore within massing the more detailed elements should also be considered such as the form of the elevation and the shape of openings but these alone cannot compensate for a poor overall build massing as in Fig 49.**



Strong horizontal massing and elements. Fig 53

Massing Checklist

- Development massing (height, width, shape) must positively contribute to surrounding streets, public realm and townscape.
- Over-dominant buildings or built elements out of proportion with the host dwelling, neighbouring buildings, the street or their setting will not be acceptable.
- New development should respect established rhythms and proportional emphasis or reflect the intended character of the vision on larger sites.
- Clashing emphasis (vertical vs horizontal) is rarely considered acceptable.



Strong vertical emphasis and patterns. Fig 54

Materials

The outer skin of the development.

NPPF 59

4.34. Materials are often the part of a development most noticed and experienced by people as they are visual, tactile and dynamic. Good quality materials pay dividends in terms of uplift value, resilience, and can support many of the design principles of Policy DE1 such as legibility and character. A high quality **complimentary** palette of materials is expected for all development proposals.

4.35. Materials should be chosen to reflect the local identity and the intended approach to each character area on large development proposals. Different material finishes may also be appropriate to define key buildings, spaces, streets or pathways through the development as well as ownership and transitions.

NPPF 58

4.36. The quality of materials is a design consideration and the colour, texture and scale of materials should respond to the context and character of the setting. The durability, weathering impact and other material attributes are all legitimate considerations. **In some cases sourcing local or natural materials will be necessary to secure or maintain local distinctiveness, historic integrity and overall quality.** 5y

4.37. **Materials extend beyond the buildings themselves and** the public realm must be treated with durable high quality materials. This extends to the interfaces with private land and the means of enclosure. The use of timber panel fencing will not be acceptable along boundaries with the public realm instead these should generally be formed from brick or stone walling to compliment the adjacent buildings. Generally railings should be mounted on low walls or plinths to avoid plant and soil overspill **into the public realm**. Similarly, the use of loose surface treatments (such as gravel or chippings) should be avoided on public frontages to minimise overspill particularly immediately adjacent to the public highway.

4.38. The treatment of individual buildings and their associated enclosures, surfaces, roofs and component parts, must be co-ordinated to reflect the wider street and site character. As touched upon in the previous sections on Scale and Massing, the use of oversized elements such as full size roof tiles on porches or heavy fascia boards as well as undersized elements such as weak entrance treatments, will not be acceptable.

4.39. The cost of quality materials especially in the public realm, should be measured in terms of the overall benefits - value uplift, lower maintenance costs, longer life-span and not considered solely in terms of the initial outlay. Cheap, poor quality materials can reduce a schemes appeal, value, lifespan, and local identity.

NPPF 17

4.40. Creating a simple palette and reflecting the colours on-site is the best way to address the appropriateness of both the materials and their colours. The LPA may require a sample palette of materials to be erected on site for assessment in the local context.

NPPF 58



4.41. Colour plays an important part in the choice of materials. Swindon's local brick is a red/orange stock and in Old Town and within the railway housing, this can be seen combined with the local grey Portland Limestone. Across the rural areas of the Borough and within the smaller settlements, different characters prevail. Proposals there will be expected to reflect the naturally occurring materials and the general colour palette found within those more rural and natural landscape contexts.

4.42. The use of complementary colours and the textures of proposed materials is important in order to establish a sense of unity and identity across the development, and so too is the use of contrasting colours to highlight key features, architectural elements or on key / landmark buildings. A colour wheel is a very helpful technical tool in establishing a complementary and contrasting colour palette.

Materials Checklist

- Materials must be of good quality in terms of aesthetic value and long-term durability and maintenance.
- Proposals should reflect local character and setting through the choice of materials, colour, texture and scale.
- Timber panel fencing is not acceptable adjacent to the public realm and generally railings should be mounted.
- Loose surface treatments that are not adequately contained will not generally be acceptable.



Materials and textures across Swindon. Fig 55

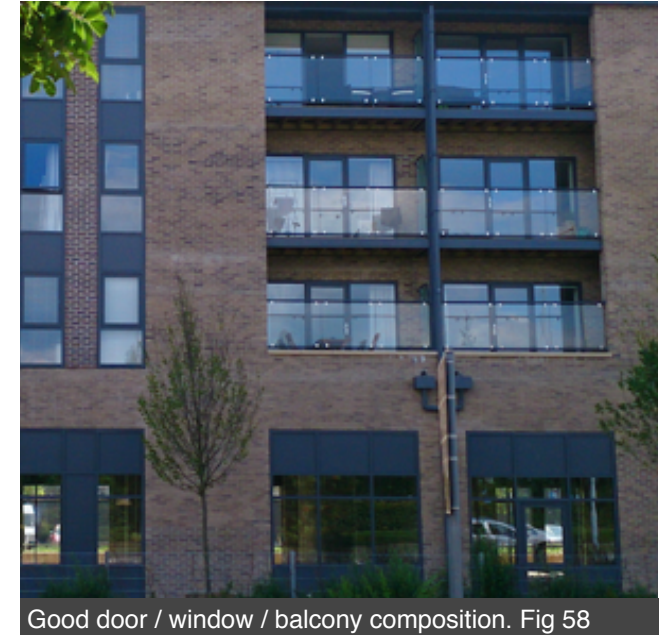
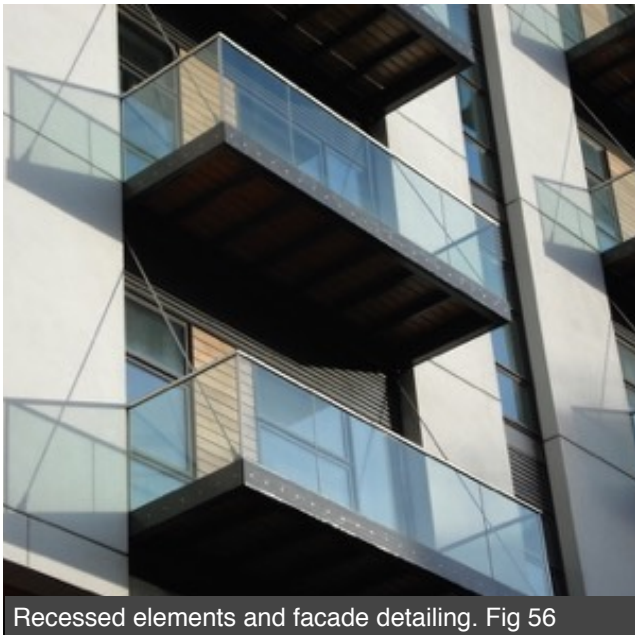
Detailing

the detailed elements of both buildings and the public realm and the interface between these two.

- 4.43. Carefully thought out detailing should ensure the various elements of a building relate well to the composition of a facade, the choice of boundary treatment and **interface** between public/private space. These can make or break the success of a place its identity and response to the existing character.
- 4.44. Successful developments comprise architecture with **harmonising scale, proportion** and **rhythm as well as** components, such as openings, bays, projections, roof forms, chimneys, etc.

4.45. By taking cues from existing buildings and features in the area it is possible to create an addition to the built environment that complements without slavishly copying the existing. Respecting cues like scale and massing but using an innovative approach to materials and detailing makes it possible to reinforce the identity of an area and contribute to its special character in a creative manner. There is no reason why character and innovation should not go together. New and old buildings can coexist happily without disguising one as the other, if well designed.

- 4.46. **Doors and windows** - the composition of doors and window openings in elevations should be designed to create harmony through the careful articulation of aspects such as scale, proportion and rhythm. It is generally not appropriate to mix horizontal with vertical emphasis.
- 4.47. Doors and windows should in most cases be recessed into the outer wall of the building to provide sufficient relief/shadow within the elevation. Window and door frames flush with the outer skin will only be acceptable where this is justified in terms of a high quality architectural expression.



4.48. **Entrance features** - porches, canopies, porticoes and door surrounds, should all be designed as robust, architectural elements inherently-related to the host dwelling, and not as ill-conceived add-ons.

4.49. **Rainwater goods** must be sympathetically accommodated on facades of buildings and duplicate runs of down pipes avoided by grouping collections. On terraced buildings single down pipes should be located at the boundary line.

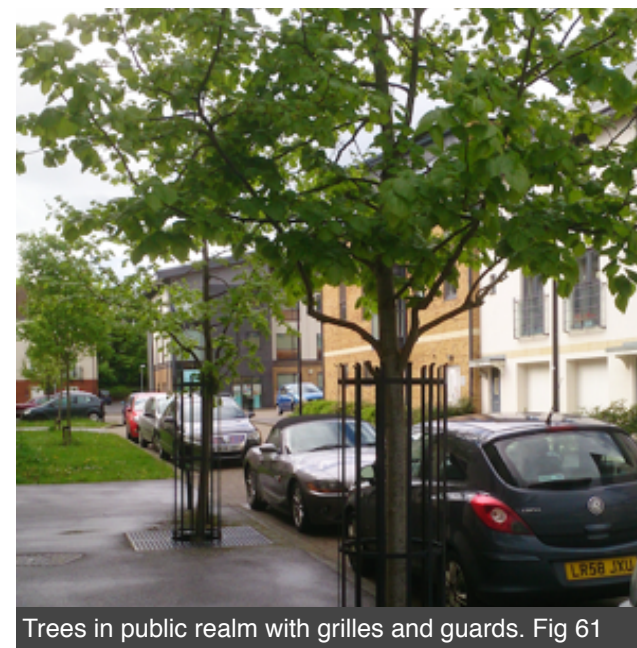
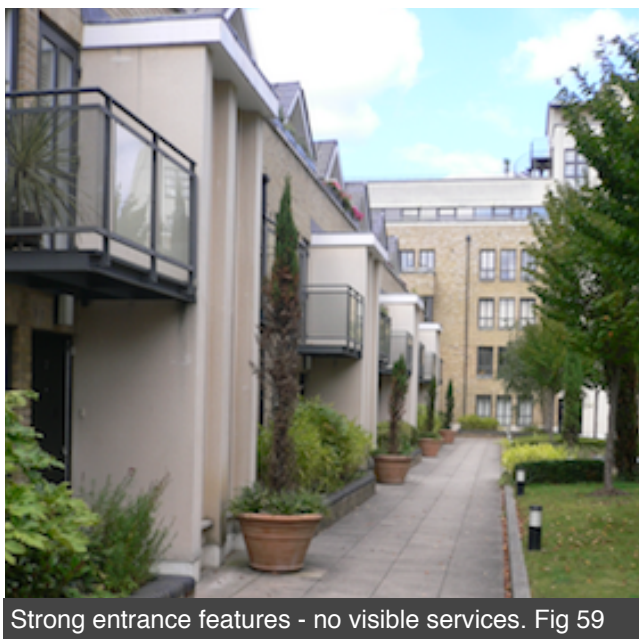
4.50. **Chimneys** - chimneys have been a distinctive architectural feature for most 19th and 20th century housing. They add interest to a roof line and introduce a simple but effective rhythm across the street.

4.51. Where chimneys are proposed, they should be used as integral parts of a building, they can be used as heat-stack ventilation (a very effective way of extracting stale air out of a building and allowing fresh air in), or as an active flue.

4.52. Chimneys should not generally be located in line with or above doors or windows.

NPPF 60

4.53. **Trees** can contribute significantly to the distinctiveness and attractiveness of an area and the use of different species can aid legibility and character. Trees provided within hard landscaped areas such as courtyards or the public highway should usually be protected by grilles and guards **unless they are sighted in grass verges or planting**. In many cases heavy standard tree species will be expected to provide impact in the street and create an established landscape setting **and avoid the need for further protection measures**. Details of maintenance and watering regimes will also be required to **ensure long term survival and growth**.



4.54. **Balconies & balustrades** - (either inset or add-on) can add great emphasis to a building and assist in the composition of an elevation, they can improve the perceived massing of a building, enliven its frontage and provide amenity space.

4.55. Inset balconies (integral to the structure of the building, Fig 62) or projecting balconies need to be designed to be functional **and not just decorative**, 15s(Fig 63) in order to be used and appreciated by their occupiers. Under-sized and therefore unusable balconies are rarely appropriate and will be resisted in most cases.

4.56. Care must be taken to ensure that balconies are designed to correspond with the scale, rhythm and proportion of the facade of the building. In addition consideration should be paid to how balustrades are fixed into the structure of a building. Poorly positioned balustrades fixed so that they straddle over two different materials, or over window lintels or other features of the facade are not acceptable (fig 63).

4.57. **Ginnels** - punctuated between terraced properties these provide good accessibility with a short run between rear gardens and the public highway (Fig 64). This also avoids the need for long and often protracted rear access paths that are mostly unsafe*, inefficient and that tend to become cluttered or underused by residents. Where wheelie bins and recycling boxes are left in these pathways they become unattractive and their use further declines.



Carefully-detailed inset-balconies. Fig 62



Unusable balcony and poor fixing over header. Fig 63



Ginnels provide rear access and storage. Fig 64

4.58. **Boundary treatments** - are important to form a clear definition between the public and private realm. They have an important role to play in establishing character for a house and a street, for providing a sense of defensible space at the front, and a secure enclosure at the rear of a property.

4.59. Where railings are proposed, they should generally be positioned onto a low wall (Fig 65) to avoid overspilling of ground cover (Fig 68). Enclosures adjoining the public realm should not be formed by close boarded fencing or include loose paving materials such as gravel without low wall structures to contain them.



Defensible frontage with railings on a low wall. Fig 65

4.60. Boundary walls should be formed from materials that match or correspond with the development. Where bricks are used a proper header or row lock course or coping stones should top the wall ideally with a lower tile crease (Fig 66)

4.61. **Eaves details** - poorly considered eaves detailing resulting from the need to accommodate sufficient levels of insulation within certain roof types can result in oversized eaves with very large soffit boards and box gutters. These architectural details should be designed to achieve quality and elegance in their construction without dominating owing to their scale.



Tile-crease & header course on boundary wall. Fig 66

4.62. **Levels** - site levels across a proposed development are key to understanding how roads, buildings and the public realm will work. Assessment is needed of the public realm quality throughout the development; how level thresholds are achievable for each house; the functionality of the elements of a sustainable drainage scheme, of play areas and private garden space, etc.

4.63. Detailed existing and proposed site and slab levels must be provided to the LPA early in the design stage for all major development proposals to avoid problems such as those below (Fig 67).



Lack of consideration of levels and poor access. Fig 67

Details Checklist

- **Components** of a building and its facade should all be complimentary and in scale with the building.

- **Doors and windows** should generally be of the same vertical or horizontal emphasis and recessed into the outer wall of the building

- **Rainwater goods** should be located to compliment the facade and in terraced properties grouped at the boundary line.

Details Checklist

- **Chimneys** should be designed to accord with the facade of a building and not located above entrances

- **Balconies** should provide usable external amenity space. Their siting must consider other features on the facade. Undersized, unusable and poorly sited balconies will be resisted.

Details Checklist

- **Boundaries** with the public realm should not be formed by fencing and railings should be mounted on plinths or walls.

- **Ginnels** should be considered to provide a solution for rear access and storage for terraced properties to avoid rear alleyways and poorly surveyed paths.



Details of schemes have significant impact Fig 68

Function

5

the utility or need required to satisfy the intended uses generated by each development proposal over the longer-term;

- 5.1. Function is a key aspect determining the quality of an overall design. Poorly designed development that fails to take the opportunities available for improving the way an area functions should be refused. It is essential that a place functions effectively to ensure its use is optimised and its character can fully emerge. Predicting the function of a scheme requires an understanding of how the parts of a neighbourhood, a street and an individual plot should come together to form a complete composition visually and operationally.
- 5.2. In this section the topics of **sustainable drainage systems**; **parking arrangements**; **refuse & recycling provision** and **utilities** are each discussed in turn.

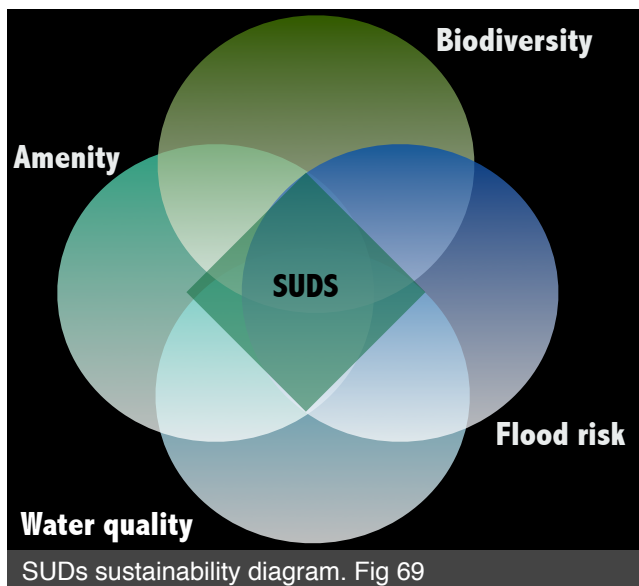
NPPF 64

- *Sustainable Drainage*
- *Parking*
- *Refuse and Recycling*
- *Utilities*

Sustainable Drainage

When determining planning applications, local planning authorities should ensure flood risk is not increased elsewhere NPPF para 103

- 5.3. Sustainable urban drainage systems (SUDs) are designed to reduce the impact of developments with respect to **NPPF 17** surface water discharges to reduce the risk of flooding. There are many merits of SUDs: **Reduced flood risk, Biodiversity gains, Water quality, and Amenity** (Fig 69). **NPPF 99**
- 5.4. No one component should distort or imbalance another and schemes must demonstrate how each benefit is to be achieved and incorporated in each planning proposal (SBLP policy EN6).



- 5.5. SUDs should compliment and support the overall character and placemaking vision, contributing to the quality and functioning aspects of the public realm. As such SUDs must provide a good level of **multi-functionality**. Stand-alone balancing ponds at the end of underground piped-systems do not constitute an acceptable sustainable drainage solution. Poorly designed drainage ponds are an eyesore, usually a maintenance liability, add little biodiversity value and provide no real amenity to residents (Fig 70).

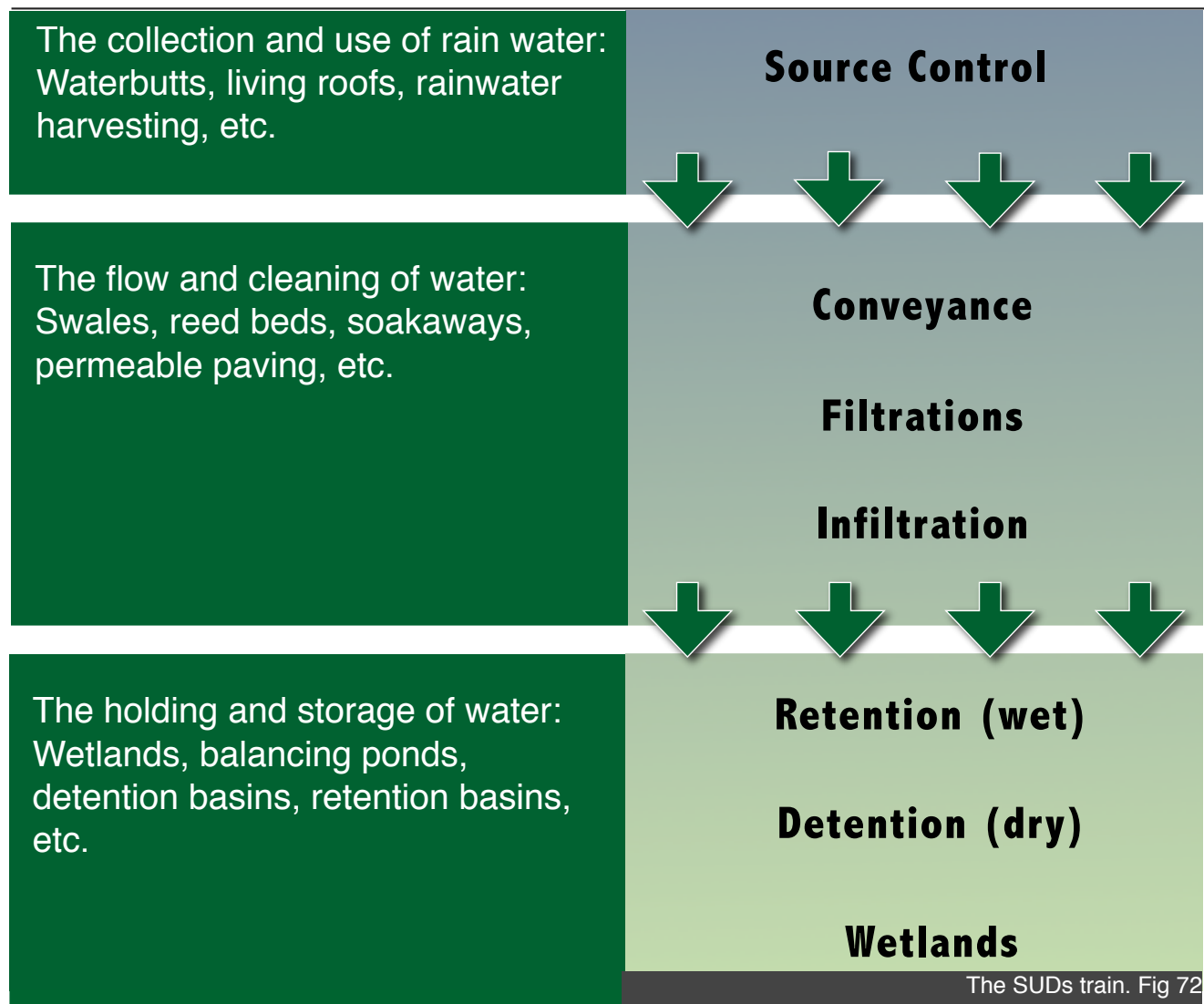


Drainage pond offering no multi-functionality. Fig 70

- 5.6. SUDs need to be considered early in the design process. The integrated design of SUDs within streets and open spaces is crucial to reinforce the placemaking and secure high quality design DE1 (Fig 71). As pieces of essential infrastructure, SUDs need to be considered as 'entire management trains' so that all stages of the process can positively integrate into site layout design considerations.
- 5.7. Drainage feature **gradients** are critical to assess the usability of the space. SUDs that do not demonstrate real public use and/or have steep gradients will not be counted towards usable public open space unless significant amenity value can be demonstrated and secured.



Swale as an integral part of the 'place'. Fig 71



SUDs Checklist

- All four components of SUDs must be addressed and in balance
- Tanked and piped solutions should only be used if it is demonstrated all SUDs methods are not possible
- SUDs should provide amenity, be well designed, coordinated with the layout and fully overlooked
- Overground features such as basins and swales must demonstrate public use and amenity value in order to count towards POS
- All schemes should include source control features. Justification will be necessary if these components do not form part of the proposal

5.8. When designing SUDs features within open space, opportunities should be taken to create new wetland habitat areas that increase biodiversity and provide amenity value for residents (Fig 73)

5.9. **Source control features** such as green roofs, permeable paving and water butts should be included in all schemes (Fig 72) and justification will be required if these do not form part of an overall system.



Parking

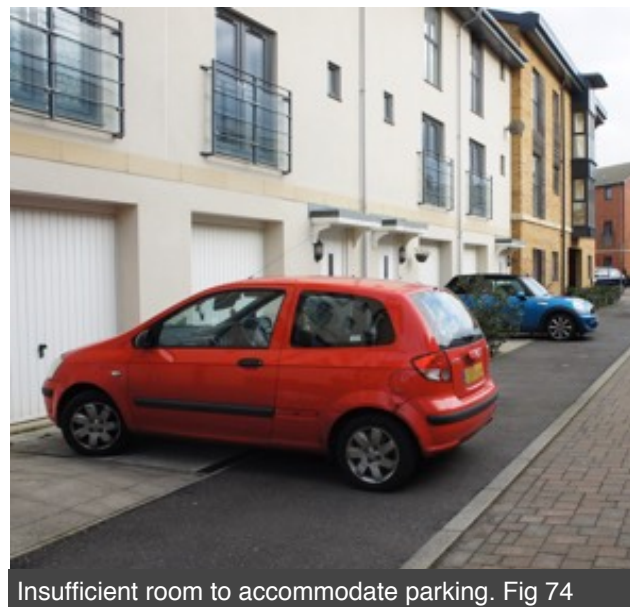
5.10. This section sets out general principles relating to the provision of parking for new housing. Other solutions **may be more appropriate in historic parts of the Borough or where a defining local characteristic requires it.** In all cases developments will be expected to meet the Council's current parking standards. **NPPF 39**

5.11. The Council supports sustainable transport measures such as car clubs and the promotion of walking and cycling, but any departure from the adopted standards will need to be justified to the LHA and supported with robust empirical evidence in an accompanying Transport Assessment, or Travel Plan. Developers are also encouraged to incorporate facilities for charging cars including plug-in services. **NPPF 35**

5.12. The requirement to accommodate **car parking** can have a significant affect on the quality of residential layout design. Successful layouts work by integrating parking into a development early in the design process, and not as an afterthought or as an issue addressed incrementally.

5.13. Car parking should be designed to compliment the housing typology and existing or intended street character. Streets should be designed as 'places' and car parking must be balanced to ensure the organisation of the various elements that create the street such as boundary treatments and street landscaping are considered together.

5.14. Car parking should not dominate the street or area. The over-use of grouped parking scenarios **such as** parking courts and **lines of linear bays**, **11b** will not be acceptable. Disorganised and different mis-matched parking arrangements along a street can lead to confused and disrupted rhythms.



Insufficient room to accommodate parking. Fig 74

5.15. Poorly planned arrangements and overbearing provision that compromises front gardens, and limits boundary treatments will be refused (Fig 74).

5.16. Insufficient space within a frontage to accommodate parking provision with a clear pedestrian route to the front door fails in function terms and is therefore poor design. **14r** (Fig 74) Car parking that dominates the frontage or street and results in no other private, defensible space or public realm, also fails.

5.17. **Visitor bays** should be accommodated to best serve the development with special consideration to their provision close to apartments, terraces and play areas.



Integrated on-plot parking with landscaping. Fig 75

5.18. For most house typologies car parking should be accommodated within the true curtilage of the dwelling it serves referred to as “**on-plot**”. The use of private pathways along sides and rear boundaries of properties to connect gardens or frontages to parking spaces is not considered “on-plot” parking and in most cases will not be acceptable.

5.19. The use of **rear parking courtyards** can often lead to poorly surveyed, underused and inhospitable environments. As such the use of them should be **limited**. **Where courtyards are proposed they should be adequately surveyed with dwellings and landscaping located within them** (76-77).



Successful overlooked courtyard parking. Fig 76

5.20. The design of parking should prevent conflict between quality and functionality and well planned, integrated parking can lessen the burden of maintenance and reduce potential for future problems between users and residents.

5.21. Communal parking areas (5+ cars), **should** include space for soft landscaping. In small isolated pockets planting usually fails and becomes a maintenance liability, so breaks of at least 1m are expected. **Tree planting** is the best landscaping to limit land take, increase impact, reduce maintenance and provide shade, shelter and seasonal variation within what may otherwise be a hard environment.



Successful overlooked courtyard parking. Fig 77

Parking Checklist

- Parking arrangements must be coordinated and support the street character. Mismatched parking arrangements and those that dominate the street scene or **frontage** will not be acceptable
- All parking spaces and the pedestrian routes to them must be safe, conveniently located and secure natural surveillance
- Visitor parking must be located to best serve the entire development
- All detached & semi-detached houses **should** have on-plot parking, not to the detriment of the frontage
- Rear courtyard parking should be limited to where no alternative is available
- Grouped parking should include 1m (min) breaks for trees & pedestrian access, approx' every 5 bays
- Cycle storage must be secure well designed and convenient to access

5.22. **Cycle storage** must adhere to the LHA standards. It should be in a well-lit place close to the entrance point/s of the building, be secure and convenient to use.

Refuse, Recycling

- 5.23. The storage of refuse and recycling wheelie bins and boxes **must be fully accommodated** within new developments. Lack of consideration of these aspects can negatively impact the functionality and attractiveness of a place over time.
- 5.24. Different solutions **may apply depending on local characteristics** and house type. Apartment blocks will require communal areas for waste and recycling collection and storage (Fig 78) whereas individual houses require this provision on-plot.
- 5.25. Within an **apartment block** design the refuse, recycling and cycle storage must be accessible is for all residents and designed to harmonise with the scheme.



- 5.26. Refuse, recycling and cycle storage may be housed in bespoke enclosures to the front of **dwelling**s formed as part of each dwelling's frontage/defensible space. The example below (Fig 79) illustrates how this can be designed to support the quality of the street and provide a good threshold between public and private space, **even for smaller units** **2d**. The second example (Fig 80) illustrates what happens when this fails to be considered at a design stage with the streets littered with bins four days after collection day.
- 5.27. The location of refuse and recycling storage should also consider collection requirements.



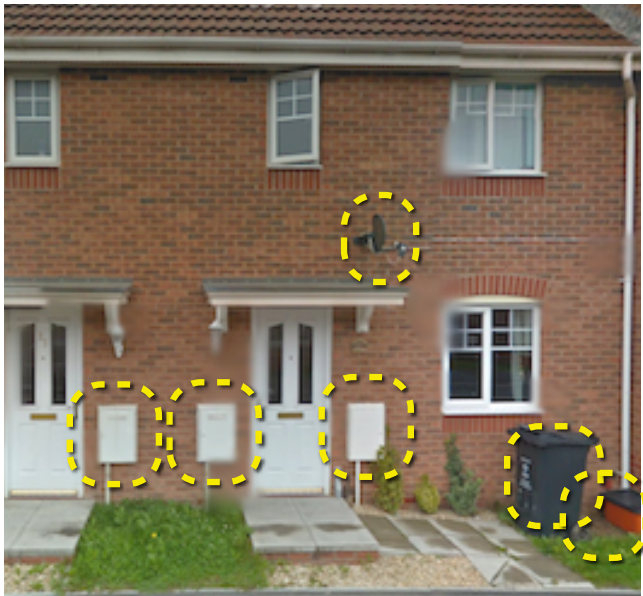
Refuse & Recycling Checklist

- Storage of refuse and recycling should be well designed and fully integrated into the scheme.
 - Storage of refuse and recycling should be convenient, secure, and accessible to all users
 - Communal storage should be housed in well designed enclosures that compliment the scheme.
- 5.28. The design should ensure the storage facility is easily accessible from the public highway and achieves the minimum carry-distances as required by the LHA standards.



Utilities

5.29. **Utility meter boxes, vents and flues** can be visually disruptive when installed on main external walls or private paved areas of individual dwellings (Fig 81). With early and careful planning of service connections such requirements can be discretely **20g** located on side or rear elevations to avoid creating interrupting elements within the street scene. They can also be screened within bespoke enclosures to the front of dwellings, within ginnels, or on the side of a recessed entranceway (for example). The location of all such services must be indicated on the elevational drawings.



Poor utility positioning and no bin storage. Fig 81

- 5.30. Ideally **satellite dishes** should not be visible from the public realm. Within large developments satellite transmissions can be provided via a main satellite receiving station to minimise visual clutter. Underground cable/and or shared satellite receiver stations should be considered in all major residential schemes (Fig 83)
- 5.31. **Substation facilities** must be located and designed to fit in with the surrounding development. It is often necessary to accommodate substations within enclosures (Fig 82) and these are more successfully disguised as single garages rather than large plastic utility housings.



Substation housed in complimentary structure. Fig 82

Servicing Checklist

- **Utilities and Services** (meter boxes etc.) should be located on side or rear elevations or hidden from view by landscaping.
- **Satellite** receiver stations should be considered on large schemes to avoid dishes on facades.
- **Sub station** housings should be accommodated within schemes and housed in complimentary materials



Services housed in complimentary structure. Fig 83

Amenity

6

Amenity is the desirability and usability of a facility or space which provides convenience, comfort and enjoyment to users of the built environment.

- 6.1. Development proposals must ensure adequate levels of **daylight**, **sunlight**, **privacy**, and **outlook**. In addition residents must be free from unreasonable **noise**, **disturbance**, **smell** and **pollution**. Developments must also deliver sufficient space to provide comfort and enjoyment, and promote good health and well-being.
- 6.2. It is important to ensure a consistent and fair approach to securing and maintaining amenity. A resident's ability to tolerate a lower level of amenity is not sufficient reason to permit an otherwise unacceptable proposal - planning permission goes with the land, not an individual.
- 6.3. An individual's rights to levels of amenity should be ubiquitous and the LPA will pay careful attention to the effect of development on the living conditions and amenity of residents - new and existing, in the wider public interest.
- 6.4. The methods set out here in order to secure sufficient residential amenity are not mutually exclusive, instead they helpfully serve more than one purpose - separation distances for example can help address daylight, sunlight, privacy, outlook and help to secure private space.

NPPF 17

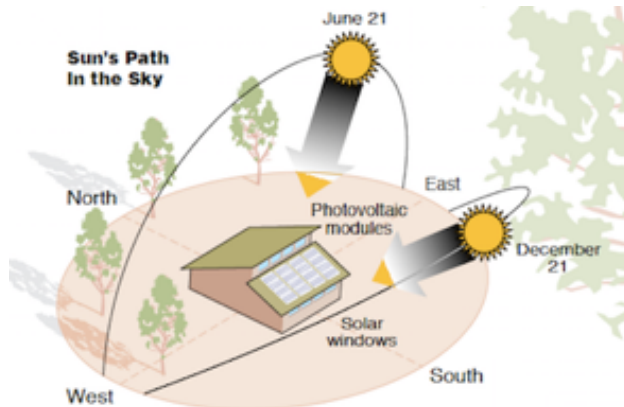
NPPF 171

Daylight, Sunlight & Overshadowing

- 6.5. **Daylight** is the natural light from the sky, available from all directions, (including north), even when clouds hide the sun.
- 6.6. **Sunlight** (direct) is available on our line of latitude (with clear skies), (Fig 84) from the eastern, southern and western skies extending from a winter low angle (17° max) to a high angle in summer (60° max).
- 6.7. **Overshadowing** is governed by the size, position and orientation of the development, and by relative land levels. The width of a building is often as important as its height in terms of the overshadowing it may cause, because this will affect the length of time during which overshadowing will occur.
- 6.8. Backland and infill development proposals have the potential to significantly impact

upon existing neighbouring properties simply by their proximity. All developments will be assessed in terms of the impact on **daylight** and **sunlight** for existing and future occupiers and the potential for **overshadowing**.

- 6.9. Within schemes certain layouts can create amenity issues such as garages overshadowing gardens. This is particularly the case with set-back garages aligned north-south. In some cases a different house typology should be used to avoid this problem.
- 6.10. The availability of sunlight in private spaces (gardens) and public spaces (Fig 85) (parks, squares, play areas) is important for amenity and function. Their design must ensure 50% (min) of each space receives at least 2 hours of sunlight on the spring equinox (21 March).⁵



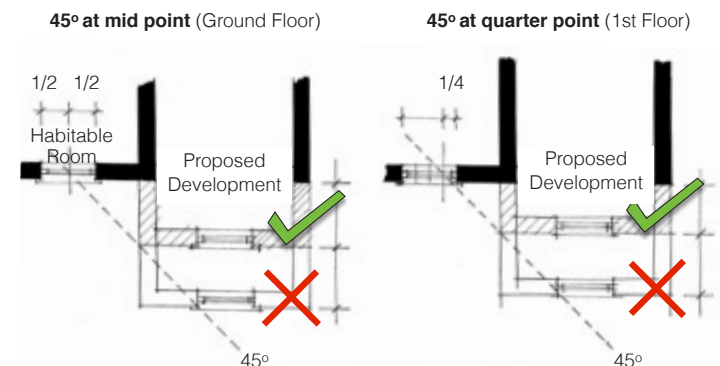
The path of the Sun on UK line of latitude. Fig 84



Private shared space enjoying sunlight. Fig 85

Overshadowing Checklist

- At least 50% of each private and public amenity space must receive a minimum of 2 hours sunlight on the Spring equinox.
 - Developments must comply with the BRE 45° rule for a minimum of 12m.
- 6.11. The LPA will assess the effect of a proposal on the daylight available to adjacent dwellings by using British Research Establishment's (BRE) Site Layout Planning for Daylight and Sunlight (2011)(BRE 209) **45° rule**. Proposals should not be positioned within a zone extending 12m out at an angle of 45° from an adjacent property's habitable room window. At ground floor level the 45° line is taken from the **mid-point** of the opening; at first floor it is the quarter-point.



BRE 45° Rule. Fig 86

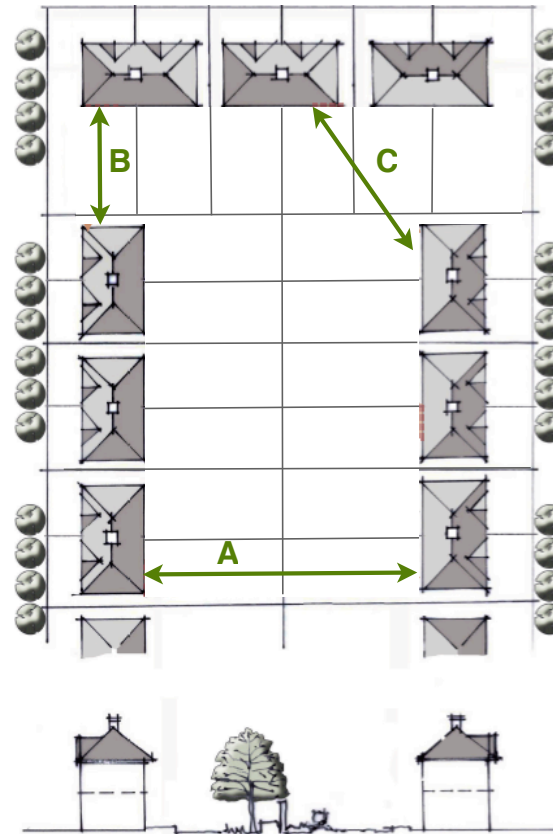
Separation Distances

6.12. **Separation distances** should be adhered to (in addition to the 45° rule), **for non-mixed-use developments outside the Urban Core.** 20j 2b These help to relieve the impact of development for existing residents and ensure good solar access to rooms and gardens all year round. Rear-to-rear separation distances of 21m between dwellings are required for 2-storey properties. This distance has been set by BRE by applying our latitude and ensures a minimum of 2 hours of solar access on the spring equinox. This also helps satisfy the privacy, outlook and amenity requirements of policy DE1.

6.13. **The separation distances will be applied between existing residential properties and new proposals to provide greater certainty and security for residents next to potential development sites.** The height of the highest of the relevant dwelling(s) must be used for the purposes of establishing separation distances.

6.14. If dwellings are set out at the minimum separation distance there will be limited opportunity for future extensions. In such cases it may be necessary to remove permitted development (PD) rights from those properties to protect amenity in the longer term.

6.15. **There may be exceptional circumstances where the character of an existing area requires a different separation response and this will need to be demonstrated.** 5bb A relaxation of these distances however will not be made solely because a dwelling is single aspect or because of high vegetation or a blocked view.



Separation distances provide privacy & amenity. Fig 87

Separation Distances Checklist

● Developments that are not mixed use and fall outside the Town Centre area must secure the separation distances as a minimum:

A Rear to Rear

2-storey = 21m

3-storey = 24m

(+3m for each additional storey)

B Rear to Side

2-storey = 12m

3-storey = 15m

(+3m for each additional storey)

C At an Angle

Rear to Side >45° apply B

Rear to Rear <45° apply A

D Sloping sites

Add 1m separation for each 0.5m of ground level difference.

● Where only minimum standards are secured PD rights may be removed.

6.16. **Design Codes** are a useful tool to set out the character of a new development and different separation distances as well as frontage space are just two design considerations that may be set by such site specific documents.

NPPF 59

Outlook

- 6.17. **Outlook** is the external scene experienced from looking out from a house or private garden. It is important to consider what view a resident should be able to enjoy from within their home and garden protected from overbearing or oppressive development, buildings or elevations (Fig 88).
- 6.18. Outlook is therefore about the **proximity** of development as well as the **external attributes**.
- 6.19. **Proximity** of buildings is generally discussed in the previous section. Individual circumstances however, may mean the impact upon outlook for a resident requires a greater separation and more careful consideration. Such circumstances may include single aspect dwellings where the sole outlook is all important, or in ground-floor residences where land uses at street level have greater impact. This scenario is relevant to such dwelling types whether proposed or adjacent to a new development.
- 6.20. **Attributes of a development** can also affect outlook. Overbearing bland or poorly articulated elevations and walls, (Fig 88) tall roof shapes and poor quality materials that quickly degrade can all impact on outlook for a resident.

- 6.21. An outlook across a parking area or toward a service yard for example is highly undesirable especially from habitable rooms. Where parking dominates the frontage of properties, located close to the front of windows with no space for landscaping, or enclosures, etc. outlook is severely affected. This is not just for the host dwelling, but also for neighbouring homes and the street scene. A 4x4 or transit van parked next to the window of a property can have the same impact as a 6ft high wall. In such cases buffering by distance and landscaping will be expected.
- 6.22. Developments must also be compatible with nearby land uses and not compromise amenity with regards to **noise, disturbance, smell or pollution**. (NPPF 123) Separate legislation exists that governs much of these technical matters, but development that compromises amenity in this way or seeks to employ arbitrary solutions to the detriment of high quality design, will not be acceptable (see also Local Plan policies EN5 and EN7).

Outlook Checklist

- Single aspect dwellings and ground floor residences will not be accepted where their only outlook is across car parking spaces or communal areas with no defensible space or landscaping to aid privacy.
- Overbearing, bland, poorly articulated elevations or walls and poorly sited parking bays will not be acceptable.
- Development that is incompatible with existing nearby land uses that results in loss of amenity or compromised design solutions to address constraints will not be acceptable.



Overbearing, bland elevation provides nothing Fig 88

Space

6.23. Internal and external space is an important amenity consideration. As a general rule of thumb the main external private garden space should be at least the same area as the footprint of the host dwelling⁶. For properties with more than 2-storeys this should be considerably larger and the separation distances required will assist to achieve this (Fig 89). For apartment blocks the external communal garden space should be at least the area of the ground floor unless context and character considerations dictate otherwise.



Amenity space can provide health & well being Fig 89

6.24. The nationally described space standards (Fig 90) provide a simple set of minimum areas relative to numbers of bedrooms and inhabitants and with reference to the storeys in the dwelling. The standards also provide for internal storage space required to accommodate recycling and refuse.

6.25. While the standards have **not yet been adopted for Swindon 20h 21h**, they have been repeated here for ease of reference as it is the LPA's intention to use them as a guide until such time as they are adopted and brought forward in line with the requirements as set out by the Government's Technical Housing Standards (March 2015).

Garden Amenity Checklist

- Main private gardens should be larger than the footprint of the host dwelling.
- The external garden space for properties greater than 2-storeys should be considerably larger.
- The private communal external space for apartment blocks should be at least the area of the ground floor, subject to context and character considerations.

Table 1 - Minimum gross internal floor areas and storage (m²)

Number of bedrooms(b)	Number of bed spaces (persons)	1 storey dwellings	2 storey dwellings	3 storey dwellings	Built-in storage
1b	1p	39 (37) ²			1.0
	2p	50	58		1.5
2b	3p	61	70		2.0
	4p	70	79		
3b	4p	74	84	90	2.5
	5p	86	93	99	
	6p	95	102	108	
4b	5p	90	97	103	3.0
	6p	99	106	112	
	7p	108	115	121	
	8p	117	124	130	
5b	6p	103	110	116	3.5
	7p	112	119	125	
	8p	121	128	134	
6b	7p	116	123	129	4.0
	8p	125	132	138	

DCLG - Technical housing standards review - Nationally described space standard (March 2015) Fig 90

Public Realm Quality

Public realm encompasses all public spaces and streets and the elements within them.

7

- 7.1. The quality of the public realm is at the heart of creating and maintaining a sense of place with identity and distinctiveness that functions well and can stand the test of time for future generations.
- 7.2. The creation of new public realm needs to generate places that are comfortable for people to enjoy and live in; places that are safe and attractive to walk through, and places that promote healthier lifestyles and community interaction
- 7.3. The public realm encompasses a wide range of places and elements. For the purposes of this document, it includes those elements that make up a street and/or public space such as shared surface areas, boundary treatments, street trees, public art, street furniture, and sustainable drainage systems where these are designed as multi-functional spaces.

NPPF 56

NPPF 58

15u

9i

Pursuing sustainable development involves seeking positive improvements in the quality of the built, natural and historic environment, as well as people's quality of life... NPPF paragraph 9

Establishing public realm

7.4. All proposals for development should establish a clear and logical concept for setting out the public realm structure. This must follow and support the scheme's context or "vision" for the creation of a new place. Adhering to a site's vision in this way defines the main elements of the scheme and ensures a strong and legible structure can begin to emerge.

7.5. The design process for a new housing development needs to be driven by a passion for the creation of good quality places. It requires imagination, ability, experience, tenacity, an eye for detail, sensitivity and most importantly a duty of care for our communities **quality of life, health and well being.**

NPPF 58

7.6. Although housing falls mostly in private ownership it has a major impact on the adjoining public realm. Dwellings along a street provide the main spatial enclosure. The choice and arrangement of house typologies should signal the density, hierarchy and character and help establish the quality and experience of the public realm.



High quality public realm, functional and durable Fig 91

Public realm value

7.1. Public realm; whether it be formal public open space, a street with trees or small informal areas, must provide real meaning and value to the development and wider area. The value of public realm ultimately depends on the attractiveness and functionality of it. Well designed public realm leads to greater use and custodianship by the local community as well as becoming a desirable place to live.

7.2. The use of quality street furniture, 5gg materials and public art installations all contribute to the value of a place and help secure local identity. When these come together at places of community interaction such as retail hubs, schools and play spaces they can combine to great effect.

7.3. If areas are meaningless, badly located or poorly executed they are less likely to encourage use. Unusable, strips of land or awkward spaces left over between dwellings do not contribute to the attractiveness or value of a place and are often costly to maintain leaving a lasting legacy of neglect and declining value. Such spaces will not be acceptable.

7.4. Multifunctional use of public realm can provide great benefits ranging from the economic and aesthetic value of attractive areas and streets, to the natural, ecological, physical and mental health benefits that such well-designed spaces and green infrastructure corridors can provide.

7.5. This does not have to be a complex arrangement –trees in a street for example provide shade, seasonal variety, opportunities for wildlife, enclosure, and legibility. SUDs are another example where the transference of water above ground in shallow undulations can contribute to public space, habitat, identity and amenity.



Play and amenity in the public realm. Fig 92



Unique and robust street furniture. Fig 93



Space to sit out. Public realm in mixed use area. Fig 94

Public realm maintenance

7.6. The shared common areas within new housing development such as the highway, footpaths, SUDs, services and public spaces must be designed to a high quality and where applicable to the adoption standards expected by the Council. Public places that are looked after can greatly enhance the perceived value of adjacent private areas. (Fig 95) The maintenance of such areas is as important as their installation.

7.7. In new areas of public realm not proposed for adoption, evidence will be required that suitable management companies are set up at an early date and **membership arrangements** **14v** and/or covenants are in place. Interim measures and contingency plans will also be required to ensure communal, and public areas are suitably managed in the interests of clarity and for future residents.



Art, and amenity combining in public realm. Fig 95

Public Realm Checklist

- The structuring of the Public Realm must be evident and designed to support the Street hierarchy
- The choice of house types and enclosures must work with the public realm and streets to create a sense of place with identity
- Small, ineffective, semi-private spaces left in between the planned layout component parts will not be acceptable
- There must be a clear distinction between public and private space and the functionality of the public realm should be apparent
- Clarity is required about the future maintenance of public realm and the interim and contingency measures

7.8. While the viability of a schemes may kick start the process, a development idea purely governed by floorspace will never achieve the true potential in quality and value. Consideration must be given to the quality of 'place'; how it will be experienced and how the public realm and spaces between buildings contribute positively to make places better for people..

NPPF 56

Design Analysis

8

The various parts of a development collectively build up the places we all live, work and travel within and it is necessary to ensure these individual parts come together as a coherent whole. collectively assembled to form a strong character and usable place.

- 8.1. The character and quality of place results from many sometimes intangible things. The key physical elements however play a substantial role in contributing or detracting from place value. The quality of the components, how they are assembled together and the relationships between them all contribute to the experience of a place. These 'parts' comprise the physical elements of a development from public space to boundary treatments, porches to parking courts. The first part of this chapter sets out and considers those parts that come together to form a development.
- 8.2. A holistic approach is required to create successful streets and this includes the plot level. The quality of design when grouping houses is reliant on appropriate scale, massing and detailing in the form and architecture proposed for each house. If a house type or the component parts are poorly designed this will impact negatively on the entire street and its character. The second part of this chapter considers housing typologies and the different requirements for each to ensure they work within the wider street and public realm.

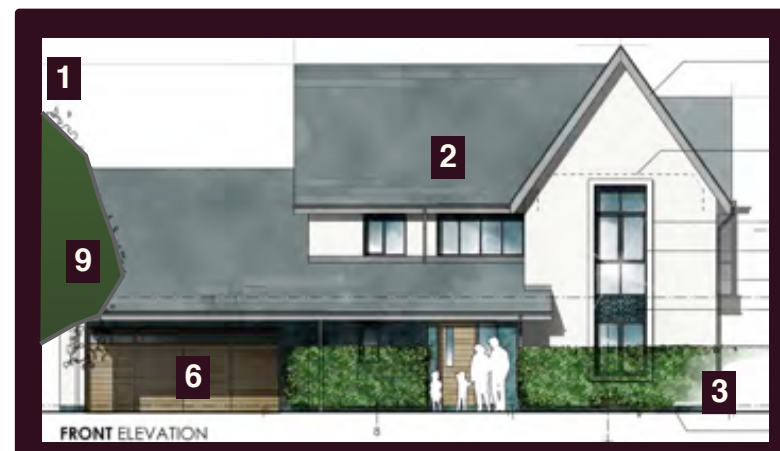
- *Kit of Parts*
- *Aspects of Form*
- *Housing Typologies*

Kit of Parts

- 8.3. Every place is formed from a number of component parts. These include the individual plot, the dwelling, its enclosure and boundary with the public realm, the frontage space, the private garden space, parking and vehicular access, street and its landscaping and areas of public space. These parts are illustrated in Fig 96.
- 8.4. The success of places and streets depends on the quality of **what forms them and how the component parts are arranged**. This concept of the Kit of Parts is the essence of street composition and placemaking. A missing element or lack of balance and coherence between component parts can lead to a place functioning poorly, its quality declines and over time the area degrades further.

1. Plot
2. Dwelling
3. Boundary Treatment
4. Frontage Space
5. Private Garden
6. Servicing & Parking
7. Street
8. Street Landscaping
9. Public space

- 8.5. Each part of a scheme relies on the others to uphold the quality, of the whole. The impact one failing element can have on the overall quality should not be underestimated and small details can make huge differences.



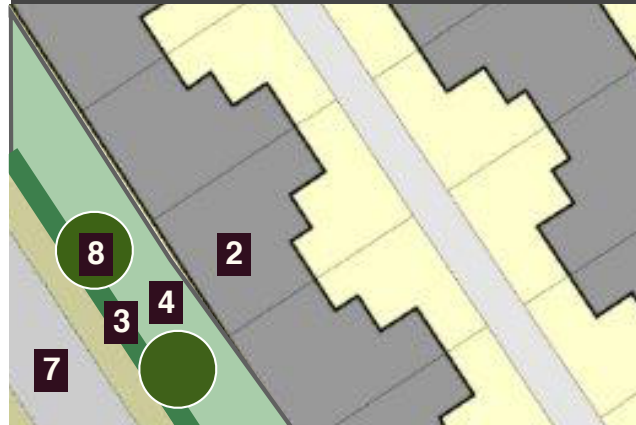
The parts of a layout in plan and elevation Fig 96

The Aspects of Form

- 8.6. This next section explores what can happen to the overall quality of a scheme when policy DE1 is not followed and important elements from the Kit of Parts are missing entirely or when they are of a poor quality.
- 8.7. This first example (Fig 96) shows **terraced housing within Swindon's Railway Village**. The housing provides a strong continuous frontage along a street behind low walls and clipped hedges. The second example (Fig 97) is another terrace in the same town but 160 years later. This row is formed by four modern units. The two are comparable as they both comprise relatively high density terraces with no frontage car parking. Despite these similarities, there are clear differences.
- 8.8. In the first example, the presence and quality of the component parts; **2 3 4 8**, all contribute to the overall composition resulting in a high quality street scene.
- 8.9. In the second example, the omission of some of the Kit of Parts - boundary treatments **3** and meaningful frontage space, **4** leads the modern example to seriously fail in terms of high quality design. As shown in the next example this is not just because the scheme is modern.



Terraced housing with strong frontage treatment Fig 97

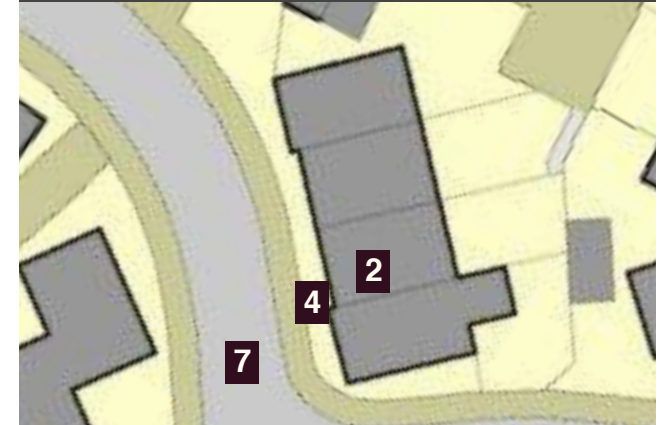


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- ☒ Clear front boundary treatment **3**
- ☒ Distinction of public/private realm **3**
- ☒ Boundary and planting reinforces continuity of the street **3 + 8**
- ☒ Secures area of defensible space **4**
- ☒ Level access to each dwelling
- ☒ Hidden storage of utilities and waste



Terraced housing with no boundary treatment Fig 98



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- ☐ No front boundary treatment
- ☐ No distinction of public/private realm
- ☐ No sense of defensible space
- ☐ Poor access - steps to each dwelling encroach in limited frontage area **4**
- ☐ No space for planting or street trees
- ☐ Utilities and waste storage on show

Strong Layout and Form

8.10. These next two examples (Figs 99 and 100) exhibit layout similarities. Both are within Swindon and comprise formal layout arrangements with crescents, squares and symmetry across the streets. At the detailed level however clear differences emerge owing to the contrast in the quality of the Kit of Parts.

8.11. In the first example (Fig 99) the key elements noted before are present - boundary treatments **A** define the public and private space and the scale of the buildings **B** enclose the space well with a key building **C** to terminate views. Window boxes **D** provide additional interest against the backdrop of consistent openings and materials and two areas of formal green space **E** add character.

8.12. The Kit of Parts are designed as a composition and form a successful place.

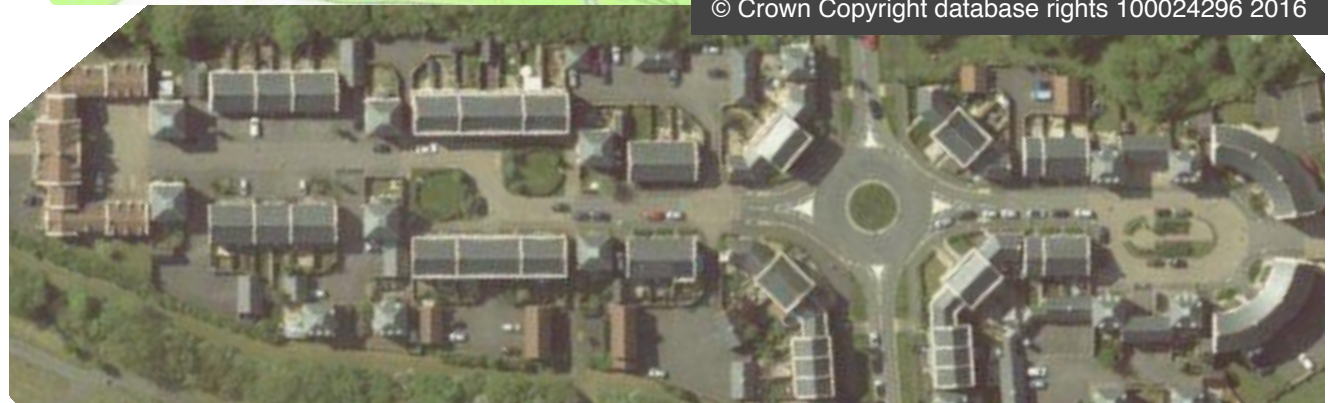
- Public space sizable & meaningful **E**
- Scale and proportion of dwellings **B** provides a strong street enclosure
- Railings define private frontages **A**
- Consistent form, materials openings & details **D**
- Street parking doesn't detract
- Refuse and recycling out of view



Formal layout supported by consistent detailing Fig 99



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Weak Form and Detailing

8.13. In this second example (Fig 100) many of the **key component parts** are lacking and in some cases missing entirely. Although the building height is also 3-storey the relationship with the street is weak owing to a lack of enclosure. There are no boundary treatments **F** to define the public - private space leaving planting vulnerable and the large areas of tarmac **G** spill out each side of the street. The long view is not terminated in any building or feature **H** encouraging higher car speeds. Although built form across this part of the street is symmetrical further along it is not **I** and materials are inconsistent. **J**

8.14. The planting shown between a blank wall and footway **K** does little to contribute to the public realm and will be difficult to maintain. Car parking dominates and utilities are visible.



- Lack of meaningful public realm **K**
- Built form broken **G** lacks street enclosure & boundary treatments **F**
- No vista termination **H**
- Car parking dominates street scene
- Irregular built form **I** & materials **J**
- Small left over areas with weak planting, difficult to maintain **K**

Typologies

8.15. Although housing falls mostly in private ownership it has a major impact on the adjoining public realm. Dwellings along a residential street provide the main spatial enclosure. The type and arrangement of house typologies in relation to each other and to the street, help establish the quality and experience of the public realm.

8.16. This section sets out some examples of different dwelling typologies on their plots and how the consideration of the Kit of Parts should ensure adequate and appropriate responses. Not all solutions will be applicable for all locations or for all house types and that is why it is important to look in detail at the typologies.

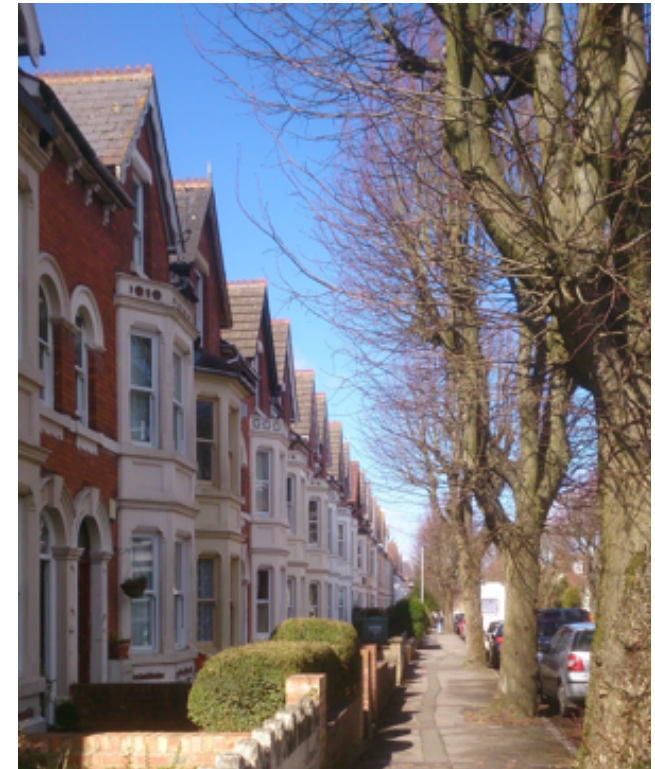
8.17. The typologies examined include: terraces, apartments, detached and semi-detached dwellings and mews and courtyard buildings. In the majority of cases, by grouping similar typologies or creating a rhythmic distribution of typologies along a street, a strong, definitive character can be established.

8.18. Context is also a key consideration as grouped typologies may not be the appropriate design response in some smaller schemes or rural locations. Figure 7 on pages 11-12 lists where different typologies are most appropriate.

8.19. The Railway workers housing in Swindon has resulted in ordered and regular rhythms of streets and housing, echoed through the 19th and 20th Centuries within Old Town (Fig 101) and across other historically established parts of the Town. The grouping of similar house typologies creates a strong sense of place along a street or space and this approach has featured strongly in many modern award winning schemes (Fig 102).

8.20. Such regularity and consistency in the grouping of the parts creates order, legibility, and a uniform interface with the public street. It also allows elements such as car parking and street trees to be arranged in a complimentary and efficient manner.

8.21. A holistic approach is required to create successful streets. While the layout principles may work when grouping a particular house type, if that house type is poorly designed then this will impact negatively on the entire streetscene and its character .



C19th ordered, regular rhythms and typologies Fig 101



Award winning modern ordered typologies Fig 102

Terraces

8.22. Terraces often work best as a continuous row of a repeated housetype (Fig 101/102) whether in straight, staggered or crescent layouts. The component parts of such terraces need to ensure the rhythmic qualities can be satisfactorily repeated. Terracing using varied housetypes may also work, provided the scale and materials of each dwelling relates well to the overall street.

8.23. Previous examples have shown the impact on the street when a terrace has no boundary treatment and inadequate frontage (Fig 98 page 61). Boundary treatments **3** to protect frontage space **4** are key to creating enclosure and are expected in terraces.

8.24. Terraced properties with on-street parking arrangements should have adequate frontage widths to ensure one car parked parallel or two cars parked perpendicular with pedestrian access, is accommodated. This ensures parking is convenient and does not dominate or disrupt the street.

8.25. To avoid visual clutter bespoke enclosures to the front of dwellings for bikes, refuse and recycling **6** are encouraged. If there is no integral front storage then safe and convenient rear access will be necessary using ginnels in central dwellings.



Varied terraces with consistent frontage space Fig 103



A repeated terrace and repeated kit of parts Fig 104

- Component parts of repeated terrace houses should be designed to be repeated rhythmically
- The scale and materials of varied terrace houses must relate well as an overall composition
- Each property must have frontage space [4] & boundary treatments [3] in keeping with the street character
- Terraces with on-street parking to the front should be wide enough to ensure one parallel space or two perpendicular spaces with pedestrian access can fit within each dwelling width
- Bespoke front enclosures for storage is encouraged. Where this is not possible rear/side access must be provided for each property incorporating ginnels

1. Plot
2. Dwelling
3. Boundary Treatment
4. Frontage Space
5. Private Garden
6. Servicing & Parking
7. Street
8. Street Landscaping
9. Public space

Apartment Buildings

- 8.26. Apartment buildings are often the largest dwelling type used in a layout. They are sometimes used as landmarks and vista terminations and as such their associated **Kit of Parts such as frontage and landscaping**, must be adequately sized in scale with their built form and **support their contribution to the street character**.
- 8.27. Apartments that follow or mark a corner position must be sufficiently articulated to front both aspects providing character and casual surveillance to the streets. Entrances should be direct, clearly visible from the street and ensure accessibility for all users (Fig 105).



Entrances should be direct visible & accessible Fig 105

- 8.28. **For** amenity, health and wellbeing, all apartments should be dual aspect and all habitable rooms including kitchens and bathrooms are expected to achieve natural ventilation through windows.
- 8.29. Separate rear entrances for servicing of refuse, recycling and bicycle storage, etc. must be convenient, highly accessible and adequately overlooked..
- 8.30. Adequate external private outdoor space is **expected** for each residence either through a rear garden, a larger communal landscaped area (Fig 106) or a useable balcony. **An area of 10m² is suggested per apartment. 26l, 23l,**



Shared external outdoor private space Fig 106

- The Kit of Parts must be in scale with the associated apartment and support the street character
- Apartments that follow or mark a corner must have articulated frontages on both public façades
- Entrances to apartments must be clearly marked, accessible and visible from the public realm
- Each apartment should be dual aspect with windows providing natural ventilation
- Each apartment should includes outdoor private or grouped amenity space, or a useable balcony
- Servicing should be grouped, easily accessible **and designed as part of the overall composition**
- This typology is usually only appropriate in urban, urban core and village core areas and occasionally in sub-urban areas (fig 7, pages 11-12)

Detached Dwellings

- 8.31. Generally detached properties should have sufficient frontage space to be in scale with the dwelling, the context and provide a landscaped setting (Fig 107). Front boundary treatments however are not always necessary in urban fringe and rural locations or as part of an intended character.
- 8.32. Car parking must be on-plot and is generally best placed to the side of the dwelling set back from the building line. Storage of bikes, refuse and recycling must be accommodated to the rear.



Semi-detached Dwellings

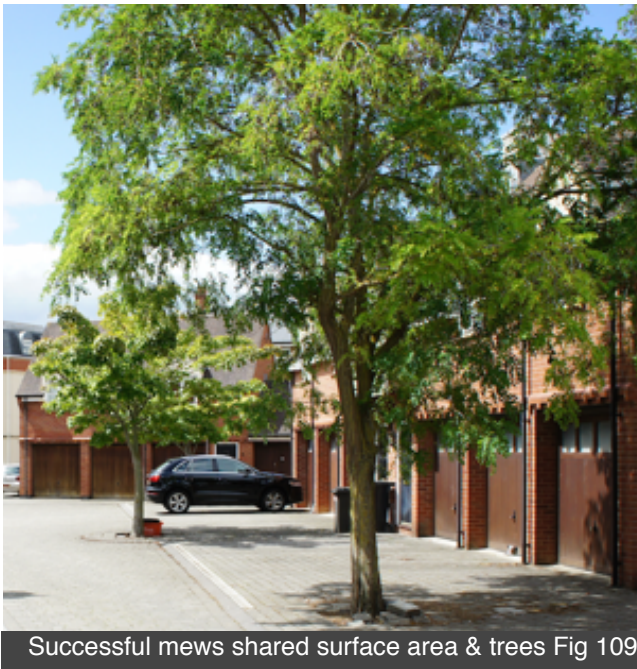
- 8.33. Pairs of houses or “semis” are often a successful typology. They are synonymous with a suburban character and suit articulated frontages (Fig 108) often including bays and projecting gables. Flat fronted semi-detached properties are rarely successful.
- 8.34. Boundary treatments are essential to enclose the private landscaped frontage space and parking is best served to the side, set back from the boundary. The storage of bikes, refuse and recycling should be accommodated to the rear.



- Detached properties should have landscaped frontage space in proportion with the dwelling
- Detached properties front boundary treatments are encouraged but not always necessary in some character areas
- Car parking must be on plot and generally set back behind the building line for detached properties and behind the boundary treatment for semi-detached houses
- Bike, refuse and recycling storage must be to the rear
- Semi-detached properties should have articulated frontages (porches, projecting gables, bays, etc.)
- Semi-detached properties must have boundary treatments and private frontage space
- These typologies are usually only appropriate in sub-urban, urban fringe and village/rural locations (fig 7, pages 11-12)

Mews Buildings 5n 21g 23j

- 8.35. Mews buildings within courtyards often comprise small scale dwellings and flats over garages (FOGs). Whilst parking courtyards should be limited in number and scale it is recognised in some instances, the block structure will necessitate them. In such cases they should include shared surface space, planting and dwellings to ensure place-making and provide activity and surveillance.
- 8.36. Dwellings with integrated parking at ground floor work well within Mews areas (Fig 109) providing parking and interest.



Successful mews shared surface area & trees Fig 109

- 8.37. Mews buildings do not always have private frontage or boundary treatments. Where this is the case space should be made for tree planting and there should be a single surface treatment such as setts or blocks (Fig 110).
- 8.38. The previous guidelines for the other housetypes apply within mews except in relation to frontages, boundary treatments and car parking. Each FOG unit must include its own garaging, as well as storage for bikes, refuse and recycling. Other parking arrangements should still adhere to the general guidelines on page 46-47.

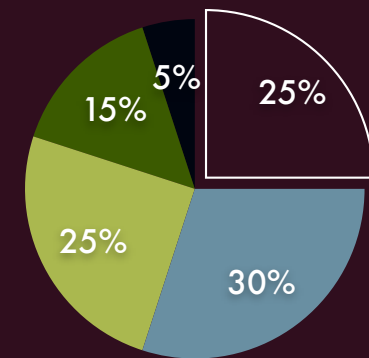


Integrated parking in paved mews area & tree Fig 110

- Courtyard areas should include shared surface space, planting and dwellings
- Courtyard areas that include Mews buildings with no private dwelling frontages should include space for street tree planting
- Courtyard areas should include different surface treatment to distinguish it from the main streets
- Each FOG unit must include its own garaging as well as storage space
- These typologies are usually only appropriate in urban courtyards and rural locations. (fig 7, pages 11-12)

Case Studies

- 8.1. This section uses case studies and simple summaries to exemplify how all the policy requirements of DE1 are to be applied in assessing schemes. This section will be updated from time to time.
- 8.2. The overall site coverage for each scheme is calculated and presented as a pie chart to aid comparison (shown opposite). As a general rule of thumb the area given over to private gardens should be at least equal to that of built footprint (with the exception of some urban schemes). It is usually best to have as little incidental space as possible as these spaces are often unusable and wasteful of land. Finally, the less highway and car parking taken up by a scheme, the more space is available for residential dwellings, gardens and public amenity space all of which help increase the quality and value of our built environment.
- 8.3. In some studies overall floor space per net developable site area may also be calculated. Clearly this takes account of additional storey height and not just ground floor coverage. It is an industry standard used by developers to assess the viability of schemes.



- Built footprint
- Highway & parking
- Private gardens
- Public Space
- Incidental open space

Case Study #1



This first scheme appears to have a formal structure. On more detailed assessment some of the street scenes (Figs A & B) are weak and lack key elements from the Kit of Parts. The pie chart (Fig C) shows that the highway and parking dominates and there are considerable amounts of left over space compared to the public space available.

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- No boundary treatment or private enclosure [1] (SPD pages 41, 66)
- Poor legibility - vista terminated by garages/rear elevations [2] (SPD page 22)
- Small meaningless landscaping potential maintenance liability [3] (SPD page 63)
- Blank side elevation facing the street [4] (SPD pages 25, 58)
- Dwelling materials not coordinated within street scene [5] (SPD page 45)
- Poor parking arrangements so street is highways dominated [6] (pages 51, 52)

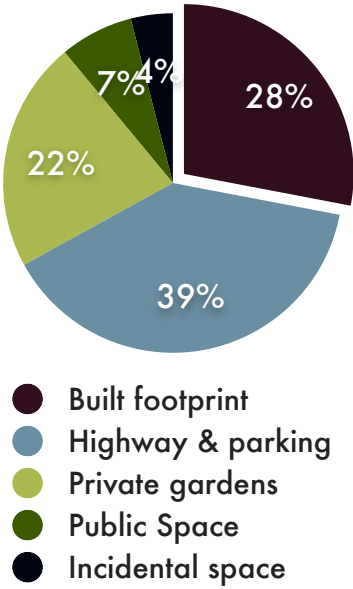
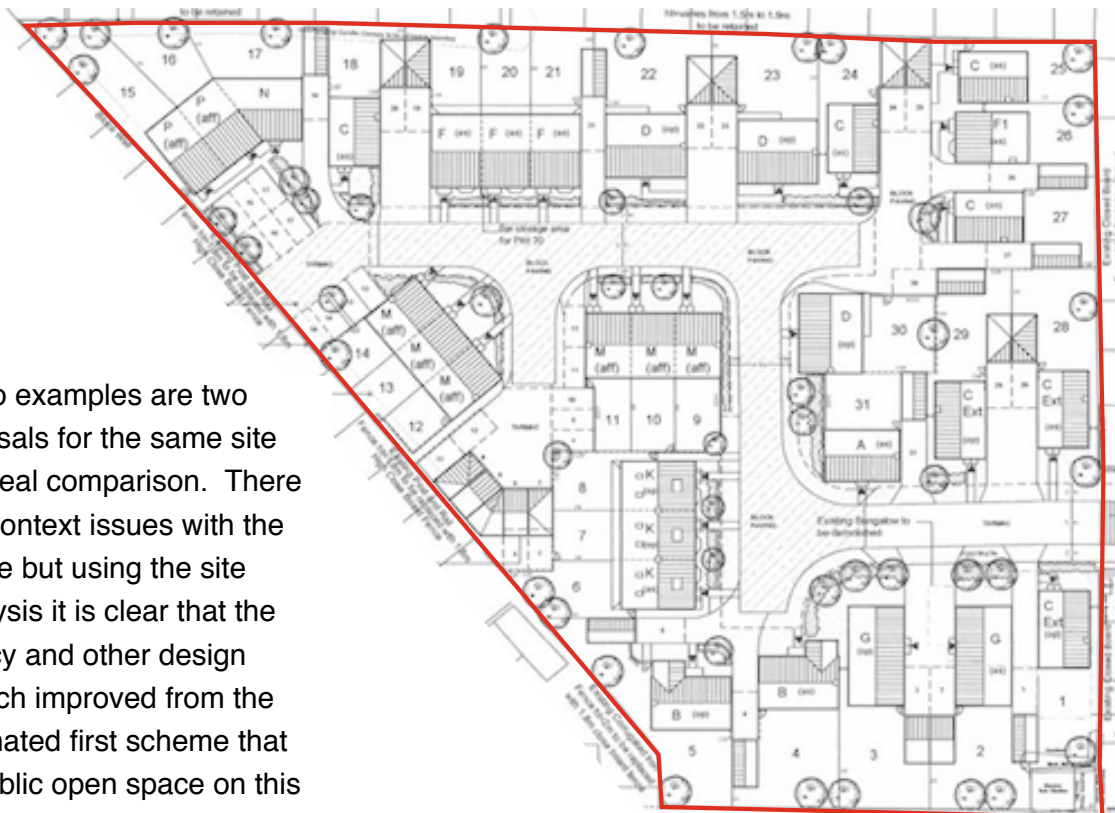


Fig C

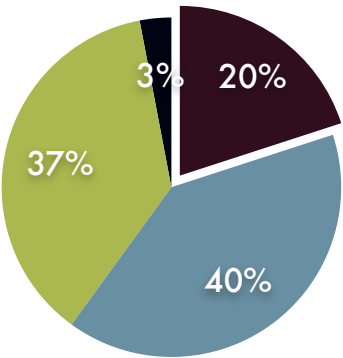
Case Study #2



- Typology - terraces, detached & flats
- Height - 2 storey
- Density - 44du/ha
- Form & Structure - irregular, highway-dominated structure
- Continuity of Form - no continuity of form, impacting negatively on street enclosure;
- Building Line - varied but mainly very minimal frontage to dwellings;
- Parking - garages, on plot , on street & courtyard



These next two examples are two different proposals for the same site providing an ideal comparison. There are accepted context issues with the second scheme but using the site coverage analysis it is clear that the layout efficiency and other design criteria are much improved from the highway dominated first scheme that included no public open space on this brownfield site.



- Built footprint
- Highway & parking
- Private gardens
- Public space
- Incidental space

Fig E



Bespoke house types and public space. Fig D

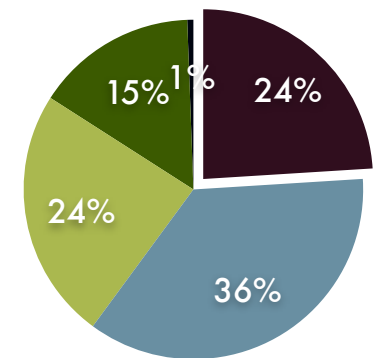
- Typology - terraces and apartments
- Height - 2 & 3 storey
- Density - 55du/ha
- Form & Structure - Compact, Regular form, rectilinear street grid pattern
- Continuity of Form - Continuous form, few breaks
- Building Line - strong and continuous with frontage setback
- Parking - on plot & courtyard

This later approved scheme included high quality public open space which has good surveillance. The car parking and servicing arrangements are convenient and do not dominate the street.

The principles of DE1 are upheld. The result is 11 additional dwellings, several areas of public open space and a strong local identity.



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- Built footprint
- Highway & parking
- Private gardens
- Public space
- Incidental space

Fig G

List of Abbreviations & Acronyms

AONB - Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty
BRE - British Research Establishment
CABE (Now part of Design Council CABE)
Commission for Architecture and the Built Environment
CWS - County Wildlife Site
EIA - Environmental Impact Assessment
GI - Green Infrastructure
LAP - Local Area of Play
LEAP - Local Equipped Area of Play
LPA - Local Planning Authority
NPPF - National Planning Policy Framework
POS - Public Open Space
RIBA - Royal Institute of British Architects
SBC - Swindon Borough Council
SBLP - Swindon Borough Local Plan
SPD - Supplementary Planning Document
SSSI - Site of Special Scientific Interest
SUDs - Sustainable Drainage Systems

Glossary

Accessibility

The ability to enter and exit with ease and reach essential facilities.

Active Frontages

Building faces that add interest, life and vitality to the streetscape.

Adaptability

The ability to adjust to changing circumstances and uses over time.

Amenity

The pleasant or normally satisfactory aspects of living conditions including daylight, sunlight, privacy, outlook and freedom from unreasonable noise and disturbance, that contribute to the enjoyment of residents and visitors.

Backland

Land behind an area which is built or otherwise developed.

Biodiversity

The variety of flora and fauna in the world or particular habitat.

Building Line

The line in front of which no buildings protrude. It is often established by extending a line along, using the principal elevation of a building or a group of buildings fronting a street. A clear

building line is not always possible to establish in all situations and staggered or varied frontages may result in a less clear or no single building line.

Connectivity

The strength, quantity and quality of links to the surrounding environment.

Conservation Areas

An area of notable environmental or historical interest or importance which is protected by law against undesirable changes.

County Wildlife Sites

Areas of land recognised as being at least county, sometimes national, importance for their nature conservation value; this is defined by the presence of important, distinctive and threatened habitats and species.

Desire Lines

Emerge from short cuts taken away from designated pathways.

Enclosures

The space between buildings. Building elevations and the cross sections of public spaces should be scaled to foster a sense of enclosure.

Energy Efficiency

The use of layout design to maximise the sun's heat and light energy for residential properties.

Fascia

Boarding material that covers the ends of rafters of a roof structure; also the signage board showing the name of the shop above a traditional shopfront.

Fenestration

The design, arrangement, size and proportion of windows and some other openings within a building.

Form

The detailed aspects that make up the three-dimensional configuration of the built environment.

Ginnel

A narrow passage shared between two dwellings (buildings).

Habitable room

Rooms in which people are likely to spend a considerable amount of time. This excludes landings, hallways, toilets, bathrooms, service rooms, utility rooms or similar non-living spaces.

Juliet Balcony

A railing or enclosure to provide a safety barrier in front of glazed doors above ground floor level.

Inclusive

A development that facilitates and responds positively to all user groups.

Infill

is new building in a gap between existing buildings or within an area.

Layout efficiency

The best use of land through the optimum organisation of a development.

Legibility

The extent to which a place is recognisable and coherently organised.

Local Development Framework

The name for the portfolio of Local Development Documents, consisting of Development Plan Documents, Supplementary Planning Documents, a Statement of Community Involvement, the Local Development Scheme and Annual Monitoring Reports, which collectively will replace the Local Plan and provide the framework for delivering the spatial strategy for the Borough.

Material Consideration

The statutory planning documents and Government statements of planning policy, which must be taken into account in reaching decisions on planning applications. Other matters, if they have regard to the objects of planning control, may also be material, including supplementary planning documents.

Massing

The three-dimensional development envelope and proportions, rhythms and patterns of it.

Means of Enclosure

The physical or sense of definition of space or area. This is often denoted as a wall, railings or hedge in residential development to define the edge of the public-private realms.

Natural Surveillance

A passive dialogue between people passing a building being aware if the overlooking created by those within the building.

Nodes

A point in a network at which lines or pathways intersect or branch.

Orientation

The direction in which the proposed building faces.

Outlook

The ability to look out from a property unencumbered by overbearing development. It is not a vista to a specific point or a protected view out over open land. Instead it acknowledges that residents are entitled to protection from the effect of buildings in close proximity to ensure they are not oppressive.

Overlooking

The ability to view something, especially from above. Excessive overlooking can lead to a lack of privacy and loss of amenity.

Passive Surveillance

(See Natural Surveillance)

Permeability

The measure of how easy or difficult it is to move through all parts of a development.

Proportion

A part considered in relation to the whole. When these relationships are agreeable - they form a harmonious or balanced relationship between forms.

Public Realm

Public realm refers to public spaces in the form of streets and spaces (both hard and soft landscaped). It includes (but not limited to) those elements that make up a street and / or a public space such as shared surface areas, boundary treatments, street trees, public art, street furniture, and can also include areas devoted to the creation of a sustainable drainage strategy where these are designed as multi-functional spaces.

Rectilinear Block Structure

Streets arranged primarily in straight lines and structured to create linear, rectangular-shaped development blocks.

Rhythm

A strong, regular repeated feature or pattern of design.

Rights of Way

The legal right to pass along a specific route through grounds or property belonging to another.

Roofscape

A scene or view of roofs appreciated as a composition usually within the wider landscape.

Scale

The size of built form as a relative concept, relative to context, character, public realm and human scale.

Setting

The setting of a heritage asset is the surroundings in which a heritage asset is experienced. Its extent is not fixed and may change as the asset and its surroundings evolve. Elements of a setting may make a positive or negative contribution to the significance of an asset, may affect the ability to appreciate that significance or may be neutral (NPPF glossary).

Siting

The configuration and relationship of a building's footprint to the existing context, character and the vision for the development.

Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI)

SSSI are legally protected under the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981. They represent the country's best wildlife and geological sites.

Social Cohesion

The degree of social integration and inclusion in communities

Statement of Community Involvement

Sets out the standards that the Council will achieve in involving local communities in the preparation of Local Development Documents and development control decisions.

Supplementary Planning Document

Guidance produced to accompany policy developed in the Council's Local Plan as part of the Local Development Framework.

Sustainable Drainage

A sustainable drainage system (SuDs, SuDS, SUDS) is designed to reduce the potential impact of new and existing developments with respect to surface water drainage discharges.

Tandem Development

Backland development where a new dwelling is placed immediately behind an existing dwelling.

Townscape

The visual appearance of a town or urban landscape.

Utility

The practicality or usefulness required of aspects of development in order to aid their functionality.

References

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- Available at: <http://www.swindon.gov.uk/ep/Environment%20Document%20Library/Information%20-%20Local%20Plan%20-%20Swindon%20Borough%20Local%20Plan%202026.pdf>
- Policy CAAP1 Swindon Central Area Action Plan
- [http://www.swindon.gov.uk/ep/ep-planning/planningpolicy/ep-planning-localdev/Documents/adopted_caap_-_text_only_version-4\[1\].pdf](http://www.swindon.gov.uk/ep/ep-planning/planningpolicy/ep-planning-localdev/Documents/adopted_caap_-_text_only_version-4[1].pdf)
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- National Planning Policy Framework 2012
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- Housing Network and Improvement Learning Principles

List of Figures & Photo Credits

FIG 1: (LEFT-RIGHT: WROUGHTON, OLD TOWN, RAILWAY VILLAGE, FORMER CHAIN TEST HOUSE SITE, WROUGHTON, TADPOLE GARDEN VILLAGE, HAYDON, ANGEL RIDGE).

FIG 2: (TOP-BOTTOM: SWINDON OLD TOWN GARDENS, BALCONY DETAIL, RAILWAY VILLAGE, ACCORDIA, CAMBRIDGE, TRIANGLE SITE, SWINDON, APARTMENT COURTYARD BLOCK, LONDON, ANGEL RIDGE PLAY AREA, SWINDON.

FIG 3: COLLABORATIVE DESIGN PROCESS

FIG 4: DESIGN REVIEW

FIG 5: (L-R: CONTEXT FIGURE GROUND PRE1700 - 1944, LYDDINGTON HILL, HIGHWORTH, PART FIGURE GROUND OF TOWN CENTRE, PALETTE OF MATERIALS,

FIG 6: CONTEXT AND CHARACTER CONSIDERATIONS

FIG 7: SWINDON URBAN - RURAL FORM MATRIX

FIG 8: INFILL DEVELOPMENT, OLD TOWN, SWINDON.

FIG 9: INFILL SITE, BLUNSDON ST ANDREW

FIG 10: BACKLAND SITE - TRIANGLE, SWINDON

FIG 11: WANBOROUGH DEVELOPMENT.

FIG 12: TANDEM DEVELOPMENT SKETCH.

FIG 13: TADPOLE GARDEN VILLAGE

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FIG 119:

The background features a series of nine vertical bars in various shades of grey, brown, and green. A thin white horizontal line runs across the middle of the image, passing behind the text.

SWINDON RESIDENTIAL DESIGN GUIDE