Good design for North West Leicestershire

Supplementary Planning Document for new developments

New homes at Hemlock Road, Ravenstone
Since we adopted our award-winning design initiative, we’ve seen a dramatic transformation in the design quality of new developments across the District. We are pleased that many developers have responded positively and enthusiastically to our design expectations. Many of these developments are referenced within this document and demonstrate that good design can be achieved, even during challenging economic conditions.

The guidance contained within this document is therefore based on what we have achieved here over the last ten years. The document explains how we measure good design locally and provides applicants with the clarity and certainty they have asked us for. It also suggests how local communities and other stakeholders might be better involved in shaping new places; it promotes good, ordinary places – places that people and businesses are proud to call home.

Councillor Richard Blunt
Leader of the Council

Councillor Trevor Pendleton
Portfolio Holder for Regeneration and Planning

Foreword

We believe each generation is judged by the quality of the built environment that they leave behind. This Supplementary Planning Document gives us the ability to make sure we can be proud of our built environment and the developments we approve to be built.

New development offers us the opportunity to use good design to create socially and economically vibrant places that work well for everyone. Well-designed buildings and spaces create meaningful places – places that people are proud of, well loved for generations and help to make people’s lives happier and more fulfilling.

Since 2007 the Council has been continually improving the design quality of new development without compromising the number of planning consents for new homes. During this time we have repositioned the Council’s reputation for design quality from being one of the worst performing authorities nationally to one of the best.*

Prior to this, the Council had seen commendable developments being built. However, many more were failing to successfully apply the basic principles of good design. The work of these projects has created social, environmental and financial liabilities, creating problems for the people that live there, the Council and our partners such as the Police.

Poorly designed developments often create daily frustrations for those that live there. There might not be enough car parking, with streets littered with cars causing tension between neighbours. Elsewhere, residents have nowhere to store their wheelie bins and garages are far too small. The quality of landscaping in places is poor, causing tension between neighbours. Elsewhere, residents have nowhere to store their wheelie bins and garages are far too small. The quality of landscaping in places is poor, causing tension between neighbours.

These developments are a continual reminder that we can and must do better – and that the emphasis we place on good design is the right thing to do.

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* Evidenced by four Built for Life Commendations, Urban Design Group Public Sector Award 2011, recognition by the Commission for Architecture and the Built Environment.

Contents

1. Local and national policy context 4
2. The design process 6
3. Creating well-designed buildings and spaces 10
4. A National Forest or locally-inspired identity 12
5. Streets and spaces shaped by buildings 16
6. A greener footprint 22
7. Vibrant and mixed-use communities 26
8. Responsive to context 30
9. Connected places 34
10. Easy to get around 38
11. Well-designed and well-managed public spaces 42
12. Architectural quality 58
13. Additional Guidance 62
14. Appendices 68
15. References 70
Section 01

Local and national policy context

Policy context

1.4 This SPD was adopted by the Council on 29 April 2017 following public consultation.

1.5 The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) is based on the concept of sustainable development, to which there are three dimensions: economic, social and environmental. Good design complements the social and environmental dimension, with the social associated with “creating a high quality built environment” (paragraph 7) and the environment with “contributing to protecting and enhancing our natural, built and historic environment” (paragraph 15). This requires design to be robust and comprehensive policies that set out positively to making places better for people” (paragraph 58).

The government requires good design to be robust and comprehensive policies that set out positively to making places better for people” (paragraph 58).

1.6 The NPPF emphasises the importance of good design in the creation of “well-designed buildings and places [that] adds to the lives of people and communities” (paragraph 8). Furthermore, the NPPF emphasises the importance of sustainable development, existing public improvements in the sustainable, natural and historic environment, as well as in improving people’s quality of life” (paragraph 5).

To achieve this requires, but is not limited to:
• replacing poor design with better design;
• improving conditions in which people live, work, travel and take leisure; and
• widening the choice of high quality homes (paragraph 9).

As such, the government is clearly emphasising the need to provide more homes to meet the demand created by an ever-increasing population.

The NPPF identifies twelve core planning principles. Of these, law is an allegiance to the SPD. The NPPF states that planning should:
• not simply be about scrutiny, but instead be a creative exercise in finding ways to enhance and improve the places in which people live their lives;
• always seek to secure high quality design (paragraph 17).

1.7 The NPPF identifies twelve core planning principles. Of these, law is an allegiance to the SPD. The NPPF states that planning should:
• not simply be about scrutiny, but instead be a creative exercise in finding ways to enhance and improve the places in which people live their lives;
• always seek to secure high quality design (paragraph 17).

1.8 The government requires good design on the basis that:
• “The Government attaches great importance to the built environment. Good design is a key dimension of sustainable development, to the quality of development that will be expected of the area” (paragraph 57).

1.9 Local authorities are encouraged to, “develop robust and comprehensive policies that set out the quality of development that will be expected for the area” (paragraph 57).

1.10 The Council’s policies for good design are based on a sound set of planning principles. The principles emphasise the importance of sustainable development, existing public improvements in the sustainable, natural and historic environment, as well as in improving people’s quality of life” (paragraph 5).

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1.12 Manual for Streets encourages a collaborative design approach, bringing together a range of professionals and organisations (principally the developer, local planning authority and Highway authority) at the early stages of the design process.

Manual for Streets

1.13 Manual for Streets (2010) represents a significant step change in the design of residential development, moving away from concerns about space planning for vehicles rather than as places dominated by vehicles. This requires placing pedestrians and cycling at the top of the user hierarchy, as opposed to motorists - and controlling traffic flow by, for example, reducing speed by encouraging cycling and low vehicular speeds (20mph or less and seeking to reduce speed by reducing (rather than increasing) forward visibility.

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1.15 Building for Life 12 (BfL12) is the industry standard, endorsed by government for well designed, affordable homes and developed by the Council for the design and adoption of new streets.

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Applicant Guidelines

2.1 The Council encourages and expects applicants to ensure that all development proposals are based upon a thorough appreciation of the opportunities and constraints of both the site and its context.

2.2 Opportunities include responding to local community aspirations for the site and their community (for example, a need for additional accommodation to enable young and older residents to stay within their community), local and national planning policy and best practice, physical qualities of a site and its context and economic considerations.

1 Applicants are advised that the Council’s ‘Community Focus’ Team can offer advice as to what community interest groups exist within an area.

2 At the time of publication, major development defined as: Residential 10 to 49 dwellings, Commercial 1,000 to 9,999 sq/m floorspace. Strategic development defined as: Residential 50+ dwellings, Commercial 10,000 sq/m + floorspace. For up to date guidance on fees and other matters related to submitting a planning application please visit nwleics.gov.uk

2.3 The Council also requires applicants to engage with the local community, Town or Parish Councils, other stakeholders (such as Civic Amenity Groups1), Leicestershire County Council (Highways) and the Council at the early stages of the development of proposals to ensure that the aspirations of the local and wider community are captured, understood and reflected in proposals as appropriate.

2.4 The Council strongly recommends that applicants utilise the pre-application service it offers (fee apply).

2.5 The Council strongly encourages and expects applicants of major and strategic2 applications to follow a four stage design process3 as detailed on the next few pages.

2.6 The Council will not support applicants who wish to initiate pre-application discussions with indicative proposals, such as elevations and/or layout plans and will instead seek assurance that the opportunities and constraints of the site and its context have been identified and understood, i.e. Stage 1.

The four stage design process

The Design Process

1 Based on best practice guidance, CABE (2008) Design and access statements: how to write, read and use them, London.
Whilst the Council strongly encourages all applicants to consider options for developing a site in order to identify the best way of responding to the agreed development principles, the Council recognises that applicants may not wish to explore more than one option if a preferred option has already been identified.

However, applicants are advised that if they do not wish to develop and test a series of (concept) options against the agreed development principles and a scheme is not deemed as responding positively to these principles, they will be expected to develop an alternative scheme.

Depending on the nature of the development, its size, location and local interest in the proposals, applicants may be advised by the Council to conduct a public consultation to ensure that local aspirations have been fully captured and understood.

For residential led development BfL12 should be used as a framework against which site specific development principles can be established.

Subject to support from the Council and stakeholders (i.e. there is agreement that a scheme has been developed that responds positively to the development principles), the applicant should progress to Stage 4.

Depending on the nature of the development, its size, location and local interest in the proposals, it may be necessary to go to the time and expense of developing and testing further options.

02. The Design Process

Stage 1
Understanding the place

This stage involves assessing the site and its wider context, including involving the local community and other stakeholders to capture and understand opportunities, constraints and aspirations for a site.

Typical opportunities include: views into, through and out of a site; existing landscape features such as mature and healthy trees and hedgerows; topography; well used paths which may or may not be formal rights of way.

The aim of this stage is to identify what a development needs to do to respond positively to local policy requirements (such as the Council’s place making principles and Affordable Housing Requirements), local aspirations and best practice.

Following Stage 1, a series of development principles should be established for the development site.

These development principles can be defined as qualities that a scheme will need to have (such as a certain percentage and type of affordable housing, for example bungalows and two storey houses as opposed to flats) or issues that a scheme will need to positively respond to.

These development principles should be circulated to and agreed by the Council and other involved stakeholders before work progresses on development proposals.

Once agreed, these development principles should inform the detailed proposals for the site.

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Stage 2
Development principles

Stage 3
Creating a vision and concept

Stage 4
Design development

At this final stage, the applicant prepares the planning application submission material.

The Council expects all developments to respond positively to agreed development principles. If a scheme is developed that responds positively to these principles is identified and supported by the Council and the stakeholders involved in the process, it may be unnecessary to go to the time and expense of developing and testing further options.

The Development Process

1. Understanding the place
2. Development principles
3. Creating a vision and concept
4. Design development

For residential led development BfL12 should be used as a framework against which site specific development principles can be established.
Creating well-designed buildings and spaces

3.1 The Council expects all development to contribute positively to the creation of well designed buildings and spaces. Through good design, practical and meaningful places can be created and sustained. Well designed developments will be more diverse and more likely to stand the test of time than less well considered developments.

3.2 Good design in the built environment involves designed buildings and spaces. Through good design, practical and meaningful places can be created and sustained. Well designed developments will make a positive contribution to our communities.

3.3 The Council has considered the qualities and deficiencies of both good and poor developments within the District to produce a series of locally inspired principles which are strongly encouraged to employ in these situations. Well designed places perform positively against these principles; it therefore follows that by using these principles through the design process, good quality developments will be more likely to be accepted.

3.4 These principles are closely related to and are affiliated to Cabe at the Design Council. The vertical stacks (sun tubes) reference the traditional materials and the extensive use of soft landscaping. From the National Forest through the use of natural daylight.

3.5 Nine principles have been established. These principles reflect qualities that the Council considers consistent with the Council’s Design Charter, OPUN’s own ‘Place Making Checklist’ and BfL12. These principles are closely related to and are affiliated to Cabe at the Design Council.

3.6 The principles will be used by the Council to structure pre-application discussions relating to design and the Council encourages applicants to use these principles through the design process and as a basis for engaging the local community and other stakeholders in the design process.

3.7 These principles will also be used to determine the design quality of all proposed developments within North West Leicestershire. Well designed schemes will be based upon a robust set of guidelines and constraints assessment that will consider both the site and its wider context.

3.8 Bespoke design is often the most successful way to respond positively to the characteristics of a place. However, the Council recognises that bespoke solutions can be both impractical and inefficient for national developers that are dependent on high levels of standardisation. Bespoke design itself will not necessarily secure a good design outcome if proposals are not supported by a robust response to the site and its context and do not respond to the Council’s place making principles. Particular sensitivity will be required in Conservation Areas and standardised solutions will not be acceptable in these situations.

3.9 Standardised formats often fail to achieve positive design outcomes.

3.10 All residential developments of ten units or more will be required to meet BfL12 standard. The Council expects developers to use either BfL12 (for residential development) or the Council’s place making principles (for all other types of development) as a community engagement tool, involving local people in the start of, and through the duration, of the design process. In addition to meeting the requirements of BfL12, residential schemes of ten or more units will be required to positively respond to Principle 9: Architectural Quality.

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4.1 All development will be required to contribute towards creating or reinforcing local distinctiveness and identity.

4.2 New development will be required to reinforce positive aspects of local distinctiveness wherever it exists. All development proposals must be based upon a clear assessment of the site and local context opportunities and constraints. Such an assessment will be required to identify whether or not there is a positive sense of local distinctiveness and, if so, what elements afford this sense of local distinctiveness.

4.3 Those features that afford a place a positive sense of local distinctiveness are often more subtle than more obvious features, such as architectural detailing and materials. Local distinctiveness will instead exhibit itself in ways other than just architectural detailing or materials, and is instead characterised by features such as:

- the mass and form of buildings (their height, width and depth).
- urban structure and urban grain, e.g. density, building lines, boundary treatments and landscaping. As such, the relationship between buildings and the spaces around them (the street).
- typical vernacular characteristics include architectural style, these will be required to reflect an honest and authentic reflection of the architectural style that it seeks to emulate. Typical traditional vernacular characteristics include architectural style such as functioning (chimneys, wet bedded verges and exposed eaves, rather than dry), enclosed (or boxed) verges and eaves (i.e. barge boards). Therefore, architectural references must not be limited to [c] The selection and use of materials such as timber. The Council will encourage the use of local or similar materials, such as traditional absorbency and imaginative ways as opposed to only utilising timber for cladding. As such, it is intended to encourage the use of traditional timber in construction – in both a structural and non-structural manner.

4.4 Where there is a lack of local distinctiveness in the immediate locality (for example, on the edge of established settlements where new development is proposed), development proposals should seek to reinforce the historic and distinctive local identity that is surrounded by modern developments that have failed to reinforce local identity. New development should seek to reinforce the positive (historic) identity in either a traditional or modern architectural style. For example, this could be achieved by combining a locally appropriate form, locally inspired material palette with a contemporary architectural style.

4.5 Where developments are to be of a traditional architectural style, these will be required to draw an honest and authentic reflection of the architectural style it seeks to emulate. Typical traditional vernacular characteristics include architectural style such as functioning (chimneys, wet bedded verges and exposed eaves, rather than dry, enclosed (or boxed) verges and eaves (i.e. barge boards). Therefore, architectural references must not be limited to architectural detailing.

4.6 Developments located within the National Forest will be strongly encouraged to reflect the principles and ethos of the Forest through:

a) Green infrastructure,

b) Building performance (i.e. more environmentally responsible buildings and,

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4.7 Where new settlements are created or development is proposed in settlements or areas where there is a lack of an identifiable or vernacular distinctive identity (for example, East Midlands Airport/Pegasus Business Park), the Council will seek development that draws inspiration from more imaginative sources and, or The National Forest.

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4.9 All developments will be expected to draw on and mirror the traditional vernacular characteristics of the area. Development should seek to reinforce the positive aspects of local distinctiveness where they have failed to reinforce local identity (for example, a Georgian townhouse without necessarily attempting to replicate original detailing and craftsmanship). The overall aim should be to create local distinctive, historic core is fully or partially surrounded by modern developments that have failed to reinforce local identity. New development should seek to reinforce the positive (historic) identity in either a traditional or modern architectural style. For example, this could be achieved by combining a locally appropriate form, locally inspired material palette with a contemporary architectural style.

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4.9 All development will be expected to use green infrastructure (National Forest planting, sustainable urban drainage, open space and habitat creation) to improve the environmental performance of new development in addition to reinforcing a sense of identity.

Where development is located outside of The National Forest, green infrastructure should still be used to improve the environmental performance of new development.

4.10 Green infrastructure must be considered in a holistic manner, from the micro (streets and back gardens designed for recreation and home cultivation) to the mid (village greens, allotments, playing fields, parks and greenway connections) to the macro scale (country parks, greenways and National Forest managed land where provided).

4.11 National Forest planting is a requirement of all new developments within the Forest boundary. The Council will expect Forest planting to be provided on site.

4.12 Forest planting must be used to structure, frame and define a network of streets and spaces rather than being placed in, for example, a corner of a development site (please refer to Figure 6). As such, National Forest planting requirements must be used creatively to create and define a network of streets and spaces, for example the creation of tree lined avenues. For larger developments, the creation of a formal tree lined avenue could also contribute towards making a place easier for people to find their way around.

4.13 Where tree lined streets or avenues are planned, careful consideration must be afforded to species, species mix and space for growth.

Additional policies relating to residential led developments

4.15 The Council will strongly resist the use of standardised house types that have not been tailored to suit the positive and distinctive characteristics of an area.

4.16 The Council will not permit glass reinforced plastic porches, door canopies or surrounds as a replacement for those of timber construction.

4.14 Developments will be required to respond positively to the characteristics of a site, such as:

• Views from the site that in turn can be framed by the considered arrangement and placement of streets, buildings and spaces.

• Existing landscape features such as mature trees and hedgerows or watercourses that can be used to create a framework for a new development and features such as focal point spaces.

• Retention of existing buildings or the reuse of materials on site from existing structures (where appropriate) in the form of building plinths or to create boundary walls.

• Topography, for example by reflecting the topography in the layout and form of buildings and utilising the topography to frame local and longer distance views where appropriate.

• Site orientation. Providing that this will not compromise other design considerations, the roofs of buildings should be orientated within 30 degrees of south to provide opportunities for the incorporation of solar panels or tiles. Careful consideration should also be afforded to the potential visual impact of solar panel particularly in more sensitive locations, such as Conservation Areas.

Landform. Developments will be expected to manage surface water close to source, with every home contributing to managing surface water as part of a comprehensive site wide strategy. The Council will not support large surface water attenuation basins, particularly those where the profile creates steep sided basins that require fencing and prevent basins from becoming a useable part of the public open space network when basins are semi- or completely dry. Careful attention will be afforded to the softer design of headwalls to attenuation basins.
5.1 Buildings must create or reinforce a well defined network of streets and spaces with a well defined building line. The degree of spatial enclosure will be related to the type of street (i.e. minor or typical) or squares to be created.

5.2 In some instances, existing streets will be wider than the guideline dimensions in Figure 6 or it will be appropriate to create streets that are wider. In such cases, the resultant loss of spatial enclosure would usually be expected to be reinforced by the planting of semi-mature trees and where appropriate and required the planting of hedgerows or the erection of other boundary treatments.

Streets and spaces shaped by buildings

The most successful streets and spaces are those where buildings frame and create clearly defined streets and spaces through the careful placement of buildings and the careful consideration of how buildings relate to the street and to each other.

5.3 Development must be based upon the perimeter block principle where development focuses towards internal gardens and back areas. In the case of residential led developments, the formation of perimeter blocks creates an inner core of interlocking back gardens.

5.4 Developments must reinforce or create a logical street hierarchy by virtue of the following street characteristics:

a) Building height.

b) Building set back.

c) Street enclosure.

d) Breaks (or gaps) in the building line.

e) Hard and soft landscaping.

5.5 Where a proposed development adjoins existing development, the new development will be required to reinforce or complete the existing perimeter block structure, for example by interverting the street layout so that the garden of a new home backs onto the gardens of existing homes.

5.6 Where a proposed development adjoins existing development but there is a green separator between proposed and existing development in the form of public open space (e.g. parkland, greenways, National Forest planting or flood water attenuation) new development will be expected to front onto the green separator to afford good levels of surveillance opportunity. Where existing development backs onto a green separator due care and attention must be afforded to safeguarding existing residential amenity.
5. Streets and spaces shaped by buildings

5.7 Where the urban structure and grain is broken or absent, new development will be required to begin to shape a network of streets and spaces which in turn can be reinforced by future development.

5.8 Where buildings are located on corners they must be designed to fit the shape or angle of the corner. Whilst a right angled (90 degree) building is appropriate for a corner that turns at 90 degrees, some corners may turn at a greater or lesser angle or in the form of a curve in which case a 90 degree corner will not be appropriate for the circumstances.

5.9 Where buildings turn a corner, they must offer two strong frontages (i.e. dual aspect). Buildings must therefore be designed to offer a positive relationship with the street with windows serving to break what would otherwise be a blank wall and offer the opportunity for ‘natural surveillance’ whereby those within the building can see out onto the street.

5.10 Where it is appropriate to set buildings back from the street the design of the space in front of the building will be critical in ensuring that there is a positive relationship with the street. Street enclosure should be reinforced where appropriate by structural landscaping and vertical boundary treatments (for example, hedges and low walls).

5.11 Car parking to the front of the building line can have a detrimental effect on the quality of the street environment, particularly where parking is located in front of a large number of narrow width properties such as terraced and semi-detached homes. The Council has a preference for on plot, non-tandem parking arrangements. In front of building car parking can be mitigated by using soft landscaping in the form of trees and hedges to soften the visual impact of parked cars and hard standing. The Council will expect at least 50% of the frontage width to be allocated to soft landscaping where in front of building line car parking is proposed.
5.12 Where there are breaks in the building line and a boundary treatment is required, 2.0m high brick walls must be erected where these face onto either the public or semi-public realm. Close boarded or ‘hit and miss’ fencing will not be permitted.

5.13 Where buildings are positioned on a corner they will be required to function as dual aspect dwellings. Dual aspect dwellings must be afforded windows to both elevations that are required to address the street to maximise natural surveillance opportunities and eliminate buildings that offer a blank or weak elevation to the street. Windows must serve habitable rooms, such as living rooms, kitchens and bedrooms to afford surveillance opportunities.

5.14 The most successful buildings that turn corners are generally those that are ‘L’ shaped. Where rectangular or square buildings are placed on corners, these will only turn corners successfully if the internal room arrangement has been designed to suit a building that has a dual aspect facing. The retrospective addition of windows to such buildings, such as those found on a gable ended property, do not usually work successfully either internally or externally in terms of their architectural appearance.

The retrospective addition of windows to a side elevation to a house type that is not designed to function as a dual aspect dwelling will often result in unsatisfactory architectural proportions and/or window arrangements and will compromise internal living spaces.

5.15 Habitable buildings must be used to turn corners. The Council will not permit developments where private gardens, garages and/or driveways are used to turn corners.

5.16 Larger residential developments (for example, developments of 100 units or more) will be expected to offer a clear two or three tier street hierarchy comprising of principal, secondary and, where required, tertiary routes. A principal route should be defined as such by visual cues such as taller buildings (which need not require the inclusion of an additional floor) than those on secondary and tertiary routes, with no or limited building set backs, and few breaks in the building line. The importance of the principal street can be reinforced by features such as structural and landscaping (for example, tree planting to create an avenue or boulevard). Conversely, a tertiary route may feel less enclosed, with lower buildings, more breaks in the building line and a greater building set back. For this reason, integral garage house types will not usually be supported on principal routes and will instead be preferred along tertiary routes.

Additional policies relating to residential led developments

5. Streets and spaces shaped by buildings

Where developments ignore perimeter block principles, back gardens face onto streets creating an unsatisfactory building to street relationship, whilst also compromising the visual and social qualities of the street. The edge of the street also becomes defined by tall boundary walls or fences.

A strong dual aspect dwelling turns the street corner well. Courtesy and © Nicola Handa

Where this building has a side bay window, the rest of the rear elevation is dominated by a blank gable ended wall.

Building and architectural diagram
new development should be designed and located in such a way to reduce its environmental impact and offer people opportunities to live lower carbon lifestyles. The development should be designed to be 'recycled' for future uses including occupier (retailer) thereby enabling buildings to change beyond occupation of the original building forms and layouts that lend themselves to future proofing connections to adjacent land and the location of new facilities and services. Where possible, facilities and services should be located with an 800m walk of people’s homes. Walking and cycle distances can be reduced by connecting street alignments and how streets can be designed to connect to one another for pedestrians and cyclists if there is a reason to prevent vehicle permeability.

6.4 The Council will strongly encourage and expect schemes to be conceived from the outset as part of an accessible and integral part of the overarching design concept for a place. The routes particularly on larger developments, such as tree planting, new wildlife habitats and creation of large balancing lagoons. The routes should be designed in from the outset as part of the overarching design concept for a place, and footpath networks, avoiding the tendency to focus purely on the main vehicle route(s) into and out of a development. Consideration must also be afforded to future proving connections and drainage systems that are integrated into the development as a whole, for example through the use of swales and rills, rather than just the use of permeable paving surfaces and urban drainage systems that are integrated into the development as a whole, for example through tree planting, new wildlife habitats and creation of large balancing lagoons.

6.5 Public spaces should enhance the natural environment by incorporating features such as tree planting, new wildlife habitats and creation of large balancing lagoons. The routes should be designed in from the outset as part of the overarching design concept for a place, and footpath networks, avoiding the tendency to focus purely on the main vehicle route(s) into and out of a development. Consideration must also be afforded to future proving connections and drainage systems that are integrated into the development as a whole, for example through the use of swales and rills, rather than just the use of permeable paving surfaces and urban drainage systems that are integrated into the development as a whole, for example through tree planting, new wildlife habitats and creation of large balancing lagoons.

6.6 Schemes that create a strong network of car free cycle and walking routes that provide direct, safe and attractive routes between where people live and local facilities and services will be strongly encouraged, particularly on larger developments, such as sustainable urban extensions. The routes should be designed in from the outset as part of the overarching design concept for a place, and footpath networks, avoiding the tendency to focus purely on the main vehicle route(s) into and out of a development. Consideration must also be afforded to future proving connections and drainage systems that are integrated into the development as a whole, for example through the use of swales and rills, rather than just the use of permeable paving surfaces and urban drainage systems that are integrated into the development as a whole, for example through tree planting, new wildlife habitats and creation of large balancing lagoons.

6.7 Whilst a development site may have, for example, one point of vehicular access, there may be opportunities to provide additional cycle and pedestrian links to the wider area. Where these opportunities exist those links should be provided to reduce issues that arise from single entry or exit points. Where these opportunities exist those links should be provided to reduce issues that arise from single entry or exit points.

6.8 A greener footprint

The creation of buildings and spaces with a reduced environmental impact and that offer people opportunities to live lower carbon lifestyles, are of a place and one that advances, converges and expand, and as such designed to stand the last of time will be encouraged.

6.9 Where developments provide local facilities and services, sufficient, safe and attractive cycle storage will be expected to be provided and located in a position whereby cyclists can park closer to the entrance of facilities than those arriving by car.
6.11 The environmental performance of new buildings is covered by Building Regulations. However the Council strongly encourages the use of new technologies and features that further improve environmental performance, such as rainwater harvesting and high capacity underground rainwater storage tanks. The Council is particularly keen to encourage the functional use of chimneys, for the purposes of ventilation, sun tubes or as flues for internal wood burners where appropriate.

6.12 Layouts and buildings that maximise solar orientation and potential for natural ventilation are encouraged where these do not compromise the existing or required urban framework. The use of rainwater harvesting techniques and high capacity rainwater storage will be encouraged for all developments, including residential developments.

6.13 Consideration must be afforded to the capacity and potential of buildings to accommodate change. The Council will encourage the design of new homes to accommodate changes in household size and the requirements of occupants. Commercial developments must be designed in such a way to allow the greatest flexibility in the type of occupants the building can accommodate. Where an occupier has vacated the site a greener footprint requires a commitment to creating buildings that have a reduced environmental impact and also the ability to stand the test of time, thus reducing the likelihood of the need to demolish a building and remodel a site to accommodate change.

6.14 Public consultation by the Council has identified a potential growth market, with 88% of residents expressing an interest in homes that utilise new technologies that are environmentally sensitive and help to make new build homes cheaper to run.

Additional policies for residential led developments

The Council encourages developers to consider the integration of environmental ‘optional extras’ for residential led developments, such as features that would enable a development to exceed the environmental performance of new homes required by Building Regulations where a purchaser of a new home is willing to pay the additional costs associated with such improvements to the developer (i.e. a chargeable option extra, such as a ‘Solar Panel Package’). The Council is exploring the potential of facilitating this through a proposed Local Development Order that would provide developers with enhanced permitted development rights.
7.1 Places need to be more than just functional; they should encourage more sustainable modes of transport and offer richness on a visual, cultural and social level. Complementary uses should be mixed to create places that are vibrant and encourage a greater sense of identity and community.

As such, the Council will discourage the use of retail ‘zoned’ areas within new developments. Instead, a vertical and horizontal mix of uses will be encouraged, with the greatest mix of uses located within the centre of new urban extensions or new settlements.

7.2 Careful attention should be afforded to the proposed use of buildings, their location and the way they relate to the spaces around them. Those uses that offer the least in terms of a vibrant street scene should be located away from the street.

Please cross refer to Figure 19.

7.3 The design of commercial buildings should be carefully considered to ensure that there is a positive relationship between activity inside the building and street activity. As such, the Council will resist commercial developments that fail to offer an active frontage to the street (i.e. entrances and windows). For larger scale developments such as supermarkets, this can be achieved by providing windows to elevations or ‘wrapping’ the larger retail unit (the supermarket) with smaller commercial units such as smaller retailers, offices and cafés.
Additional policies relating to residential led developments

7.4 Vibrant streets are those that are well used by people. Therefore in addition to encouraging people to walk between places particularly for shorter journeys by providing a choice of connected, safe, direct and attractive routes, the urban environment should also be interesting.

Interesting places are those that enrich the senses, with a variety of visually features and spaces where people can meet, relax and socialise. Therefore the Council will seek to ensure that developments help to create interesting and vibrant places that are designed to allow people to use them.

7.5 Developments should seek to provide a range of housing in response to local housing needs and also enable people to stay within the community as their needs change.

7.6 Developers will be encouraged to consider how homes can be designed to create safer, more vibrant streets and encourage residents to use their front gardens (where provided) more.

For example:

Placing kitchens to the front of homes will maximise surveillance opportunities, particularly during the winter months where curtains to living rooms are drawn early. Where properties have front gardens, placing the kitchen at the front can offer the opportunity to maximise glazing and/or install French doors that can open out onto a front garden or terrace. As such, this will encourage residents to use front gardens more, particularly in the morning or evening sun (depending on plot orientation) and, in turn, create more interesting and lively streets.

7. Vibrant and mixed-use communities

Streets and spaces provide the stage for public. We Co-operative Centre Park, 2003.

Buildings must relate to the street with a good visual connection provided between activity that is taking place inside and on the street. Careful attention must be afforded to creating active edges at ground floor level and avoiding blocking windows with solid panels.

A new bowling green provides opportunities for social interaction.
Responsive to context

Section 08

New development should respond positively to its context, respecting existing development and by using site assets, such as landscape features and views.

8.1 All development proposals must be understood by a thorough understanding and appreciation of the place – such as the site and its immediate and wider context. This will be achieved by undertaking a site and local context opportunities and constraints assessment.

8.2 As part of this process, applicants will be expected to work with local community representatives (such as Parish Councils), the planning authority and other stakeholders to identify and discuss opportunities and constraints early in the design process. Applicants are encouraged to complete this critical stage in the design process before determining the land value of a site.

8.3 Typical opportunities include, but are not limited to:
- New connections between the site and its surroundings, including pedestrian- and cycle only connections.
- Retention and inclusion of existing landscape features, such as trees, hedgerows and water gardens.
- Utilising the landform to create a sustainable urban drainage network throughout the development, e.g. via rills leading to swales through to larger balancing ponds.
- Framing views of existing buildings using landscape features either on or off the site.
- Creating new features that help people to orientate themselves, such as marker buildings and spaces.
- Reinforcing distinctive local architectural characteristics.
- Creating new and distinctive character where there is no discernable local identity.
- Views into, out of and through the site.
- Integrators – places of amenity benefit to both existing and new residents, such as parkland, health and play spaces and playing fields, and allotments/community gardens.

8.4 The relationship between existing and proposed development is a critical factor in the future success and integration of communities. Therefore, applicants are strongly encouraged to explore options with local community representatives and other stakeholders. Development should contribute towards completing perimeter blocks, for example where the gardens of existing development back onto a development site. For larger developments, it may be appropriate to explore alternative edge relationships, such as:
- Separators – such as woodland creation and fields.
- Integrators – places of amenity benefit to both existing and new residents, such as parkland, health and play spaces and playing fields, and allotments/community gardens.

Retained trees can become focal points within developments whilst also helping to frame an identity for a place.

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8. Responsive to context

The illustrations on the following pages demonstrate options for successfully integrating proposed new developments with existing settlements.

8.5 Where proposed development is intended to back onto existing residential development (e.g. adulting back gardens), the distance between properties should normally be no less than 20m.

8.6 New residential development must respect the height of existing residential buildings around the immediate boundaries site, though taller structures will be permitted within the development. Where development is proposed to abut an existing low density area, it will be appropriate to respect this density on the edges of the development site.

8.7 If a decision is made in consultation with the Council, local community and other stakeholders to separate existing and new buildings by way of parks, heathland or playing fields, careful attention must be afforded to safeguarding pedestrian and cycle links between both the existing and new community.

8.8 Where development abuts open land, built form should soften or ‘feather’ by way of more dispersed building form, greater gaps between buildings, increased landscaping, lower buildings (i.e. no higher than two storey) and a softer, more informal building line. Part of this will involve considering whether the adjacent open land is to be permanently open or whether the adjacent land is proposed for future growth needs. In the case of the latter, careful consideration should be afforded to how the temporary edge will be eventually integrated with future development.

Figure 7: Park/heathland as an integrator between new and existing development. However this approach undermines the formation of strong perimeter blocks and expose the rear back gardens of existing properties and will generally not be supported by the Council.

Figure 8: Allotments as integrators between new and existing developments contribute towards forming strong perimeter blocks.

Figure 9: Parks, heath lands, playing fields and greenways as integrators and physical separators.
9.2 New developments must carefully consider the position of access points into a development to ensure that pedestrian and cycle only connections to offer people short and direct routes between the places where they live or work and those places they wish to visit, such as shops and restaurants.

9.3 The Council will strongly resist developments that offer opportunities to provide connections but are not included in development proposals unless the applicant can demonstrate through the provision of evidence that this is due to circumstances beyond their control, i.e. a third party land owner not willing to sell land or requesting a non-viable land value.

Where future proofed links are provided to adjacent land, the land up to the edge of the site boundary must be offered for adoption.

9.4 Routes (streets, squares, greenways, alleys, bridleways, waterways, railway lines, parks and open spaces) should be located to provide pedestrians and cyclists with a choice of direct, convenient, safe and attractive routes to and from facilities, services and employment locations.

Successful connections are those that will also offer a distinct advantage to using the private car (particularly for shorter journeys).

Section 09

Connected places

Places should offer as many connections as possible to areas around them whether these are existing adjoining developments or open space to encourage higher levels of walking and cycling, particularly for shorter local journeys.

9.1 The creation of well connected places makes walking and cycling a more practical and attractive choice for people, particularly where routes are convenient, direct, safe and attractive where people are planning shorter journeys (for example, to the local shop or post office). The creation of well connected places also offers social, environmental and health benefits to both individuals and the wider community and are therefore strongly encouraged.

Car-free cycle and walking routes are popular at weekends when people have more free time. In addition to helping encourage healthier lifestyles, these attractive and safe routes help to reduce car usage for shorter journeys and if strategically integrated can offer people a travel choice that is quicker and more convenient than using the car.
9.6 Consideration should be afforded to whether all connections need to be accessible by vehicles, or restricted to pedestrians and cyclists only. By restricting access to pedestrians and cyclists only the number of routes can be increased where it is not possible and/or desirable to allow vehicular access, in turn creating better connections across the whole community.

9.7 Greenways that are wide, overlooked and run across sites should seek to benefit the local community in addition to residents of a scheme by ensuring potential connections are utilised. The Council will not permit routes, which whilst direct are isolated, offer poor accessibility (e.g. narrow) and lack adequate surveillance.

9.8 For the reasons outlined in 9.1 to 9.7, the Council will strongly discourage a disconnected street pattern compromised of cul de sacs that do not connect to one another. Unless there is a strong justification for using cul de sacs (for example, valid concerns relating to crime and/or anti-social behaviour). It is recognised that cul de sacs are popular living environment, particularly for those with young children. An acceptable solution in this instance is to provide adopted vehicular cul de sacs, that are connected and visually continuous streets.

Disconnected street patterns frustrate people’s ability to move within their communities particularly by foot and by bicycle; and can contribute towards increased car usage particularly for shorter journeys. Here two adjacent developments fail to provide the ability for people to move easily between sides of the development to the other.

By ignoring opportunities to connect at the design and planning stage local residents living adjacent to this site must walk fifteen-minutes to reach the supermarket that is located beyond these railings. If a pedestrian and cycle connection was provided residents would have been able to reach the store’s entrance in a couple of minutes.

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Connected Cul-de-sacs

Pedestrian and cycle connectivity

Figure 10: Connected streets are a fundamental feature of good settlement design.
Effective pedestrian and cycle routes should be predominantly located so that they pass in front of buildings, rather than behind them. All routes must be well overlooked and lit, with opportunities for natural surveillance provided from adjacent buildings.

Where pedestrian and/or cycle routes pass between buildings, these must be designed so that sight lines are clear (i.e. straight routes rather than curved routes where people may be hidden from view), opportunities are provided for good levels of natural surveillance from neighbouring buildings and are well lit.

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Where pedestrian and/or cycle routes pass between buildings, these must be designed so that sight lines are clear (i.e. straight routes rather than curved routes where people may be hidden from view), opportunities are provided for good levels of natural surveillance from neighbouring buildings and are well lit.
10.6 Legible places comprise of a variety of orientating features and careful consideration must be afforded to their frequency and distribution. Generally the larger the development, the more legible features it will require.

- Memorable spaces - are places where routes converge or are centres for activity, such as market places, high streets, parks, town gardens, urban squares, village greens, bowling greens, cricket or football pitches and pocket parks. The size and number of these spaces will vary according to the type and number and type of focal points that will need to be created. These may range from a large village green through to smaller places where streets and paths converge.

- Memorable streets - a clear hierarchy of streets, ranging from principal or main streets through to smaller, more intimate lanes (secondary) and mews (tertiary). The hierarchy of streets should be reinforced by building heights, building lines, building set backs and the use of landscaping. For example, a principal route should be defined by taller buildings than secondary and tertiary routes, with no or limited building set backs, and few breaks in the building line. Conversely, a tertiary route may feel less enclosed, with lower buildings, more breaks in the building line and a greater building set back.

- Paths - the network of routes through a space should have a clear hierarchy with principal routes, defined by stronger built forms. Secondary and tertiary routes will have a different character to principal routes, for example, they may take the form of minor streets or home zones, with a smaller, more intimate scale of development.

- Town or village landmarks - these are buildings that act as visual anchors within the townscape, either by virtue of their height, physical size or use. Examples of town and village landmarks are buildings that can be seen for some distance by virtue of their height, such as a church or school bell tower. Such landmarks are most effective when their physical attributes (or presence) are complemented by a social or cultural use.

- Local landmarks - complement town or village landmarks and provide a network of smaller scale features within the streetscapes. Such features include: marker buildings, public art, feature or ‘champion’ trees.

- Edges - edges are often formed by existing landscape feature such as canals, rivers, streams or field boundaries, such as hedgerows.

- Character areas - these serve to break down larger settlements into more distinct sections or pieces. Character areas may be identified by the density of use, uses within it, its form and/or physical appearance (such as a distinctive architectural style or by the particular materials used).

10.7 Where squares are used and intended to reinforce the legibility of a new development, squares must be discernable and clearly defined as such. Whilst true squares may be either regular or irregular in shape, a common feature relates to their ‘spatial enclosure’.

Spatial enclosure is afforded by the placement of buildings in such a way that they define a clear space. Typically, the size and shape of a square can be defined by the size of the central building or the placement of major streets and paths. For example, if a square is flanked by tall buildings, people may feel less enclosed while walking along the perimeter, creating a more public and open feel. Conversely, if the buildings are shorter, people may feel more enclosed, creating a more private and intimate feel.

A square feature on the mixed-use commercial building at the heart of this development is visible from various vantage points and helps people to find their way around.

10.8 Pedestrian and cycle connections is provided in the form of shared space. The importance of the street network cannot be understated. It is vital that these connections are attractive and safe to use. How safe and attractive will this connection be after dark with no lighting and the soft landscape edge providing opportunities for criminals to hide and ambush people.

A direct connection is provided for pedestrians along the road, however the quality of connection is far from welcoming. The boundary treatment is particularly harsh, there is no lighting and there are no surveillance opportunities provided from within the store.

40 41
Well-designed and well-managed public spaces

Public spaces need to be well managed, physically and psychologically accessible, with uses designed to support the creation of vibrant and safe places. National Forest planting requirements should be used creatively to provide a range of natural spaces and green infrastructure with useful functions and meanings.

11.1 Public spaces must be clearly defined and serve a clear public function. Where larger developments will require their own open space networks, for smaller developments it may be more desirable to invest in improving existing open spaces within the area. In such instances, developers should engage with the local authority, where applicable, the local parish or town council.

11.2 Public spaces should be designed to be inviting, safe and attractive to use, offering opportunities for informal social interaction. The potential for streets to function as social spaces must not be forgotten.

11.3 Public spaces should be well overlooked and, where desirable, with buildings fronting onto them offering opportunities for natural surveillance. The placement of full sized window graphics and/or advertisements in the windows and/or glazed entrances of commercial buildings restrict opportunities for natural surveillance of the public realm and will be strongly resisted.

11.4 The design speed of streets must be 20mph or less. The Council will seek to achieve this within new developments primarily through 20mph speed designations, Home Zones and Quiet Lanes. Lower speeds can be reinforced through the use of features, such as street narrowing and vertical calming (with or without in-built pedestrian crossings).

11.5 Streets should be designed as social and play spaces, where the pedestrians and cyclists come first, rather than simply as routes for cars and vehicles to pass through.

11.6 Although all spaces should have a principal purpose, public spaces should be flexible and allow a range of activities to take place within them. Spaces ‘left over after planning’ rarely offer places that lend themselves to any meaningful public or private function. Careful attention must be afforded to anticipating anti-social behaviour and how such behaviour can be designed out through good design.

11.7 Public spaces proposed for adoption by the local authority (county, district or parish) or a community body must offer public value, as otherwise the cost of maintaining them at public expense cannot be justified. Equally, private space proposed for transfer to owner occupiers or private/social landlords must offer private value.

11.8 The integration of parking within public space (i.e. the public realm) must be carefully considered in order to avoid car dominated environments.

Section 11
Parking

Displaced parking is a significant issue of concern to our communities and in more recent developments has compromised the ability of the Council in fulfilling its statutory duties in respect of waste collections. Displaced parking also affects the visual amenity of the streetscape and can significantly compromise the use of streets as social spaces. The causes of displaced parking can be attributed to the lack of sufficient parking provision allocated per plot and the use of isolated or unsecure rear parking courts.

11.9 A minimum of two spaces must be provided per property regardless of tenure. A minimum of three spaces must be provided regardless of tenure for homes of four bedrooms or more. For single occupancy dwellings where single occupancy can be enforced (for example, homes managed by a Registered Social Landlord) the Council will permit a single space per property.

11.10 The preference is to provide parking on the plot of individual dwellings and where residents can see their cars from within their home. The Council discourages over reliance on tandem car parking arrangements and car parking within garages. To achieve this without creating a street environment dominated by parked cars, the Council will encourage a mix of on plot parking solutions including:

- Parking behind the building line (i.e. between individual dwellings and/or by using drive through house types).
- In front of building line parking where an equal amount of space to the surface parking area is provided for soft landscaping.

For example:
A pair of 3 bedroom semi-detached homes (total of four spaces required) could meet this requirement by:
- Providing two spaces in tandem arrangement to one side;
- Providing two spaces side by side to the front of the other;
- Providing a landscaped space, with a small tree and demarcated by a hedge in the remaining space.

11.11 Individual households must be able to see their parking spaces from within their home.

11.12 Where parking is located between plots, surveillance opportunities should be provided by the inclusion of windows to habitable rooms (i.e. excluding bedrooms and WCs but potentially including a window to a hallway space), at least one window per floor of the property. Therefore a two storey property should have at least one window on this ground floor, e.g. serving a living room, kitchen, dining room, hallway or study, and a second window at the first floor, e.g. serving a bedroom, study or hallway. Bay or oriel windows afford stronger surveillance opportunities and will therefore be encouraged.

11.13 Careful attention must be afforded to prevent overlooking between the side elevations of neighbouring properties whilst still ensuring good levels of surveillance opportunity.

11.14 Developers will be strongly encouraged to provide additional unallocated parking for visitors and overflow, in the form of parallel or herringbone parking bays in consultation with the Highway Authority. The clearance space varies according to the type of garage door used—2.4m long wide and 4.8m long.
11.15 Where the parking for two adjacent homes is provided next to each other, a 0.7m separation gap should be provided between their driveways. This separation gap should be demarcated by way of a flush material that is different in appearance to the material used for the driveway, whilst also allowing residents to easily drag wheelie bins between parked cars.

The use of tandem, triple width parking bays (i.e. 6 car parking spaces) in one location will not be permitted unless each of the tandem spaces is separated by a 1m landscape band.

The minimum size of a parking space is 2.4m wide and 4.8m long.

11.16 The 6Cs Design Guide provides detailed guidance on the dimensions of car parking spaces. The Council will normally seek car parking spaces to be a minimum of 5.5m long and 2.4m wide for residential development unless there are other sound design-based reasons to indicate otherwise. This excludes circulation space which is required if a parking space is bounded on one or both sides by a vertical obstruction such as a wall or fence. In such instances, an additional 0.5m must be provided on each side of the vehicle where there is an obstruction.

The size of spaces increases where, for example, herringbone spaces are proposed. Applicants are advised to refer to the 6Cs Design Guide (leics.gov.uk) for further details. Please note that there must be space to allow residents to open their garage door whilst their car(s) are parked on their drive, therefore clearance space must be provided.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Garage door type</th>
<th>Clearance required</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Roller-shutter, sliding or inward opening</td>
<td>0.7m</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Up and over</td>
<td>1.3m</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hinged, outward opening</td>
<td>1.7m</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Figure 11: The ‘50/50’ rule

Figure 11: Parking spaces

Figure 12: Parking spaces
Driveway gates can reinforce street enclosure and character. Applicants should note that the requirement to recess driveway gates 5m from the back of the highway boundary only applies to heavily trafficked routes.

In front of plot parking without integral garaging

11.20 Policies 11.19.3, 11.19.4 and 11.19.5 will apply to plots without integral garages but where in front of plot parking is proposed.

Integral garages

11.19 Integral garage house types can have a detrimental impact on the quality of the street scene, creating streets dominated by garage doors and parked cars.

Integral garage house types will be limited in their use, with no more than three in a row.

Integral garage house types must not be located in visually prominent locations, such as end points when looking down a street.

In addition the following five criteria must be adhered to where integral garage house types are proposed:

11.19.1 The garage element of the home must not sit forward of the habitable part of the home and is therefore not the dominant feature of the home. Garage doors should not be painted white.

11.19.2 The garage door should be recessed from the face of the building (approximately 0.9 – 1.0m). This will help to reduce further the visual dominance of the garage on the elevation (this feature also allows for utility meter boxes to be located in a more discreet position).

11.19.3 The surface area of the driveway space must be at least equal in width to the front garden (unless integral mews type housing is proposed with no in front of plot parking).

11.19.4 To reduce the visual dominance of parked cars and the hard surfacing of driveways within the street scene, the front garden must be enclosed and defined by a hedgerow planted to at least 0.6m high. Acceptable species include privet, hornbeam, box and beech.

11.19.5 A clear and direct path must lead from the pavement to the front door. This path must not be able to be blocked by a parked car and therefore must be physically separate from the space allocated for parking.

If an applicant intends that a garage to be counted as a parking space, the following three criteria must be adhered to:

11.17.1 Clear internal dimensions of 3m x 6m per single garage space (including integral garages where provided).

11.17.2 The developer will be required to demonstrate that there is suitable storage provision for items that are usually stored within a garage, i.e. bicycles, DIY and garden maintenance equipment. The developer could do this by providing a garage that is longer in length, i.e. in excess of 6m or providing an additional storage building such as an outhouse.

11.17.3 The applicant accepts planning conditions or other restrictions that control the use of the garage and prevent it from being converted into a room that can be lived in.

If these criteria are not met, the Council will not count the garage as a parking space.

Parking courtyards are often unpopular and unattractive spaces. Reducing car parking does not reduce car ownership. Instead, it results in high levels of displaced and at times, anti-social parking that can frustrate the needs of other street users.

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If these criteria are not met, the Council will not count the garage as a parking space.

Thinking differently. Visually permeable garage doors can be effective in ensuring garages are used for parking rather than for storage purposes as residents will be less inclined to store items within the garage space when they can be seen from the street.

The visual effect is also visually softer than a solid garage door. However this design approach will only be effective where homes have sufficient alternative storage space available to meet the needs of the household. Integral integral garage doors are often unpopular and unattractive spaces. For displaced and at times, anti-social parking that can frustrate the needs of other street users.

Parking courtyards are often unpopular and unattractive spaces.
Parking courtyards

Where parking courtyards are not designed to a good standard, they become places that appear neglected and unsafe environments) and the widespread result in poor quality, unattractive and unsafe environments and the widespread result in poor quality, unattractive and unsafe environments.

The Council strongly discourages the discharge of condition process. The discharge of condition process.

- All forms of a house or bungalow. These courtyards must therefore be designed as good quality public spaces, with attractive and safe places are created.

- Better-designed parking courtyards features good levels of surveillance and natural surveillance.

- Where hidden corners or recessed parking bays are provided into and within the courtyard. Hidden corners or recessed parking bays are provided into and within the courtyard. Hidden corners or recessed parking bays are provided into and within the courtyard. Hidden corners or recessed parking bays are provided into and within the courtyard.

- Parking courtyards and compromises the creation of successful streets. Courtyards must be limited to a maximum of 5150

- Both surfaced with parking bays in either: the same block, contrasting block or tarmac. Individual parking bays must be discretely delineated with blocks and individual blocks discretely numbered with a metal plate affixed to either the kerb face, wall or bay face. Thermoplastic markings (white tarmac) will not be permitted to either number or delineate individual bays.

- All boundaries facing the courtyard to be 1.8m high brick walls with coping stone detailing (downstairs) bedroom will not be acceptable.

- Low level bollard or street lighting must be provided (movement sensor lighting attached to individual dwellings may complement but must not be used to substitute low level bollard or street lighting). Developers may opt to connect lighting to appropriate plots but will be required to demonstrate to the Council that covenants place a responsibility on appropriate plots to ensure lighting is in good working order and in use after dark, in perpetuity.

- Appropriate and robust landscaping to help achieve a good design that offers opportunities for natural surveillance.

- All boundaries facing the courtyard to be streets that connect courtyard parking spaces with the front door of people’s homes these must be afforded good, clear sightlines and be well lit. To achieve this, developers may be required to integrate ginnels between plots to provide this access. Where such ginnels are provided, attention must be afforded to securing ginnels to prevent crime and anti-social behaviour.

- It is not possible to provide all residents with direct access from their allocated parking spaces to the front door of their home. Rear access that provides access into either the kitchen, hallway or utility room. Rear access that requires residents to access their home from secure ginnels to prevent crime and anti-social behaviour.

- Applicants are strongly advised to factor affordable housing. The Council will strongly discourage the need for strong pedestrian connectivity. Where walls change direction, they should be either curved or angled. Where walls are angled, bricks must be cut and bonded.

- It appears that the courtyard is a permeable surface. Parking spaces are softly demarcated and the surface of the courtyard is permeable.

- A well-designed parking courtyard that features good levels of surveillance and natural surveillance.

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Streets as social spaces

All streets within residential developments must be designed as social spaces, rather than as simply places for vehicles to drive through and park within.

11.21 Streets must be designed to design speeds of 20mph or less to create safer streets for pedestrians and cyclists, whilst also offering the opportunity for people to utilise the street space for social activities.

11.22 Applicants are expected to take closely with the Highway Authority to produce schemes that achieve design speeds of 20mph or less and are designed to an adoptable standard. The Council will support the introduction of 20mph zones where appropriate and supported by the Highway Authority.

11.27 The Council will strongly encourage the development of adoptable standard schemes where features such as raised tables, alternative surface materials, reduced forward visibility and tighter corner radii serve to reduce intended design speeds to 20mph.

11.28 Applicants may be required to produce a Safety Audit where more innovative approaches to street design are proposed. Applicants are advised to check what committed sums will be payable to the Highways Authority for non-standard surface materials and features, including but not limited to street trees.

11.29 Public spaces must benefit from good levels of natural surveillance, afforded by the occupants of properties. Internal layouts should seek to place more active rooms at the front of the home and integrate features such as balconies, verandas or French doors that provide access onto front gardens to encourage residents to use spaces in front of their homes more. Applicants are encouraged to consider maximising the amount of glazing to ground floor street facing rooms to maximise surveillance opportunities and support a more vibrant, safer and interesting street scene.

11.30 Where apartment buildings create open spaces at ground floor level these should be designed as semi-private garden spaces assigned to individual ground floor apartments rather than left as communal spaces that serve no practical function.

Garden sizes and balconies

11.31 The rear private garden spaces must be at least equal to the footprint of the property. This is a minimum required standard. If bin storage is provided within the rear garden, this will not be counted as garden space (a deduction of 2.11sq/m will be made – see 11.36).

11.32 In instances where rear gardens back or side onto the street or other part of the public realm, they will be enclosed by a 1.8m high brick walls with coping stone or brick, double tile crease and detail courses as appropriate. Where walls change direction, they should be either curved or angled. Where walls are angled, bricks must be cut and bonded.

11.33 Where market sale apartments are proposed, individual units above ground floor will be expected to be afforded private balconies to offer residents some semi-private amenity space. The minimum useable size expected is 2.0m x 1.5m. Ground floor apartments should be designed in such a way to enable semi-private spaces to be created at the base of the building at street level.

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11.36 All external walls will be afforded an external finishes to the rear garden space to ensure their longevity. The allocation of this space for bin storage will not be counted as garden space (a deduction of 2.11sq/m will be made – see 11.36).
11.34 Homes must be provided with convenient, dedicated bin and recycling storage where bins and crates can be stored out of sight. The distance between storage areas and collection points must be kept to a minimum. Where terraced housing is proposed, consider providing integral stores to the front of the property (such as within an enclosed section of a recessed porch) or by providing secure gimmels between properties that provide direct access to the rear of properties.

11.35 Due to the negative impact of bins and recycling crates on the amenity of the street scene applicants must design bin and recycling storage into their schemes from the outset. The Council will therefore expect applications to demonstrate how storage meets these policies rather than seek to secure compliance through planning conditions.

11.36 Each home (unless communal bin storage is provided) must be provided with 2.11sq/m of bin and recycling storage. Where provided, enclosed stores should be designed to a minimum height of 1650mm allowing the lid of bins to be lifted.

11.37 Where bin and recycling stores are provided within rear garden spaces these will be appropriately screened from view so that bins and crates are not seen from within the home.

11.38 An area of hard standing must be provided of at least 2.11sq/m and a hard surfaced path must provide a clear 0.6m wide route from the storage area to the street. This route should not include any steps or require residents to drag bins or carry crates either through the home, car port or garage.

11.39 Applicants should ensure that a clear 0.6m corridor is provided to allow residents to drag bins or carry crates alongside cars parked on a driveway easily.

11.40 Where private drives are proposed (i.e. unadopted highways to which refuse vehicles will not access) these must be limited to no more than five dwellings. A dedicated bin and recycling collection point must be provided adjacent to the highway.

11.41 Each collection point must provide 1.25sq/m per unit served. The collection point must be clearly demarcated, for example by different surfacing. Collection points must be clearly marked by a metal plate affixed to the surface material or adjacent wall.

The metal plate will state:

BIN & RECYCLING COLLECTION POINT
Please remove bins and recycling containers the same day as collection

11.42 Where communal bin and recycling storage is provided these must be designed to accommodate the required number of containers (please contact Waste Management for further details).

11.43 Communal bin and recycling stores must be fully enclosed and sheltered from the elements. Timber enclosed, open roof structures will not be permitted. Lighting may be required.

11.44 Chimneys or more modern interpretations of chimneys can have a positive contribution to the quality and interest of the roofscape on both traditional and contemporary designed schemes.

11.45 Traditionally inspired developments will be expected to include chimneys that are at least authentic in terms of their position on the roof, their scale, construction and detail. The use of plastic or fibre glass chimney pots in lieu of clay or terracotta pots will not be supported.

11.46 Developers should consider the opportunity for chimneys to offer more than a mere aesthetic function. The Council will strongly encourage the construction of functioning chimneys, for use as flues for wood burners, sun tubes or for the purposes of ventilation as appropriate.
11. Boundaries

11.47 Where boundaries front onto the public realm (including courtyards) these must be formed by at least 1.8m high brick walls. Timber close boarded or hit and miss fencing will not be permitted. Where walls are constructed of stone, double the cream and detail courses are incorporated. Walls in white stone cladding, they should be either carole or angled. Where walls are angled, bricks must be cut and bonded.

11.48 Where a wall is set back from the edge of the pavement, the dividing space must be either grassed or soft landscaped. Where the area is soft landscaped, this must take the form of structural landscaping such as a hedge or a narrow grassed strip.

11.49 Where properties are set back from the footpath by no more than 1.0m, a change in hard surface material should demarcate the distinction between public and private space. Particular attention must be afforded to avoiding turfing small or steeply sloping areas that are both impractical and difficult to maintain.

11.50 Where properties are set back by more than 1.0m, a vertical boundary demarcation will be required to clearly demarcate between public and private space. The following boundary demarcations will be acceptable.

Figure 12: Front boundary types for properties set back by 1m or more.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>01</td>
<td>Formal railing with hedging behind.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>02</td>
<td>Formal railing mounted on low wall.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>03</td>
<td>Estate style railing with hedging behind.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>04</td>
<td>Vertical timber picket fence with/without hedging behind.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>05</td>
<td>Retaining wall only</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>06</td>
<td>Dwarf wall</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

11.51 Hedgerows will be required to be planted to at least 0.6m high and will be required to wrap around pedestrian visibility splays to driveways. Acceptable species include Portuguese Laurel, Privet, Hornbeam and Beech. Lavender and Box are not considered suitable hedge forming species for boundary demarcations.

11.52 The type of boundary treatment will be dependent on the context and the desired character of the scheme in addition to the street hierarchy. The use of certain boundary types may help to reinforce the street hierarchy, and in turn provide a distinction between different areas of a development thereby helping people to find their way around a development.

11.53 Boundary demarcation plans should be provided at a scale of 1:250. Simple colour coding should be used to help convey the nature of soft boundary treatments, i.e. informal shrub planting or more formal, hedgerow planting.

11.54 Non market sale housing will be required to be designed as tenure-blind, so that it is not easy to differentiate between homes that are owner occupied and those that are shared ownership or rented.

11.55 Where apartment accommodation is provided, to avoid the costs associated with maintenance of internal communal areas, individual apartments must be designed to have their own front door to the street.

Threshold design quality

11.55 Careful attention must be afforded to the quality of threshold design, i.e. the spaces between the building and the street or those spaces around the dwelling visible from the street. In many instances, such spaces are left to chance and often areas unsuitable for cultivation or lawns are unsuccessfully landscaped. Through the production of plans to a suitable scale, applicants will be expected to demonstrate that the quality of thresholds will be of a good standard and robust.
Architectural quality

Buildings must be designed to be functional, attractive and long lasting.

Internal architectural quality

12.1 Buildings must be designed in a way that ensures that they are functional, attractive and durable. Consideration must be afforded to aesthetic considerations such as building proportions, building hierarchy, the appropriateness of materials and detailing and solid to void ratios.

12.2 Buildings should be designed internally to ensure that spaces are fit for their intended purpose with adequate internal space for their intended purpose.

12.3 The Council will encourage applicants to provide furnished internal floor plans to demonstrate that homes and the rooms within them are fit for purpose. Rooms should be furnished with those items of furniture that would be reasonably expected to be found within a particular room to enable it to fulfil its intended purpose.

For example, a single bedroom would be expected as a minimum to accommodate:
- A single bed
- A bedside table
- A wardrobe
- Space to dress and move around the aforementioned items of furniture (often called an ‘activity zone’).
12. Homes should be designed to suit the needs of the maximum number of occupants that could live within a home. For example, a home with two double bedrooms and one single bedroom would be deemed as having a maximum of five occupants.

12.4.1 (The maximum number of) occupants to sit together in the living room.
12.4.2 (The maximum number of) occupants to sit around a table together.

12.4.3 A space to allow work at a desk to be undertaken without disturbance, i.e. located away from the kitchen or living room. This may be provided by removing space to a nook and chair on a first floor landing or providing space within a bedroom or separate dining room (if provided).

12.5 Applicants must demonstrate that homes offer sufficient internal storage space to enable residents to store items conveniently and out of sight when not in use, for example and as a minimum, one vacuum cleaner, one bucket and mop, shoes and coats.

12.6 For family homes it is considered appropriate to consider where a pushchair or pram could be stored.

12.7 The Council will encourage homes that can be remodelled internally to suit the changing needs of house holds and will encourage developers to provide a percentage of homes to meet the Lifetime Homes Standard.

12.8 The Council will encourage major developments to include a proportion of self or group build plots.

Internal layout plans should demonstrate that there is sufficient space within the home for the following activities:

- Poor resolution of levels can detract from an otherwise well designed scheme.

For family homes it is considered appropriate to consider where a pushchair or pram could be stored.
Section 13

The purpose of this guidance is to provide clear and practical design advice to supplement the Council’s Local Plan and for use in the determination of planning applications.

13.2 Whilst this document provides guidance on the relationship between new and existing development and on the design of extensions, the strict application of this guidance will not be appropriate in all circumstances.

13.3 The following list are some matters which would also have to be taken into account and which may allow for development which is not strictly in accordance with this guidance:

• Topography;
• Building heights and roof form;
• Plot character;
• Orientation;
• Existing and proposed boundary treatments;
• Existing and proposed landscaping;
• Garden size;
• Permitted development rights;
• Existing relationship between built development in the surrounding area;
• Type of room affected and number of windows serving each room.

13.4 In all cases, the Council will take into account the relevant planning considerations and assess each application on its own merits.

Additional Guidance:

• The relationship between new and existing development
• Extensions

13.1 The purpose of this guidance is to provide clear and practical design advice to supplement the Council’s Local Plan and for use in the determination of planning applications.

Application of this guidance

A poor relationship between new and existing homes is achieved through the use of tall, terraced houses located on higher ground adjacent to single storey detached dwellings.

The relationship between existing and proposed development requires careful consideration.
The relationship between new and existing development

Principal Windows

13.5 Where a principal window of a habitable room faces the blank wall of an adjacent dwelling, the distance between the dwellings should be at least 12.0 metres. This is to allow sufficient outlook and prevent unreasonable over dominance. Where one or both dwellings have fewer or more storeys than reduced or additional distances may be permissible.

Back to Back Distances

13.6 With regard to two storey development, proposals should ensure that a minimum back to back distance of 20m is provided in order to preserve residential amenity.

The Forty Five Degree Rule

13.7 New development next to an existing residential property should not normally project beyond a 45 degree line taken from the centre line of the nearest habitable window of any adjacent house.
13. Additional Guidance

General Design Principles

13.8 The size, position and form of extensions should maintain or improve the character and quality of the original house and the wider area.

13.9 Extensions should be subservient to the main dwelling house and consideration should be given to street character.

13.10 The proposed materials should be similar to the existing materials. In Conservation Areas it will be necessary to select materials which preserve or enhance the character or appearance of that area.

13.11 Extensions should normally be subservient whereby the original house should be dominant and all other extensions should appear as sympathetic additions.

13.12 Normally extensions should be narrower in width, shorter in depth and lower in height than the existing property. A well designed subservient extension will help to maintain the original appearance of a house and the wider area.

Extensions to Dwellings

13.13 Large ‘box’ like dormer windows which cover the majority of the roof will not normally be acceptable on frontages.

13.14 Dormers should be kept small and unobtrusive and should reflect the style and materials of the building in question.

13.15 Dormers should not exceed the height of the ridge line and should either be located centrally/symmetrically on the roof or be aligned with the windows below.
What contributes to eroding local distinctiveness?

- Inappropriate layout, scale and form.
- Inappropriate boundary treatments and landscaping,
- Failing to capitalise on opportunities to frame views and vista to, from and within a development;
- Failing to consider the principles of inclusive design from the outset and including these as integral design features, resulting in ‘after thought’ retro-fit measures;
- Demolition of buildings (including those non-listed) suitable for re-use/conversion;
- Designing for the car, placing this ahead of pedestrians and quality street environments;
- Standardised and poorly located street furniture;
- Failing to respect established and positive plot sizes;
- Failing to respect established and locally distinctive plot sizes;
- Utilising non-local vernacular materials;
- Using poor design in the locality as an excuse for further poor design - instead of using development as an opportunity to introduce developments with positive urban design and character qualities.

Please note that this list is not exhaustive.

References

NHBC (2015) NF60: Avoiding rubbish design: providing for bin storage on new housing developments.

Acknowledgements:
The District Council is grateful to those who contributed their time and knowledge as part of the consultation process on this SPD:
Steven Clarke (Taylor Wimpey), Gerald Dalby, Wayne Evans (East Midlands Housing Group), Simon Henderson (Pelah Architects), Leicestershire County Council (Highways), Paul Smith (Pegasus Group), Trent and Dove Housing.
Commended schemes:

Ashby de la Zouch

Ash Tree Road

Contributed towards a sense of a more connected town, with homes opening up to streets, public open space and green spaces.

Dunbar Way (extension of)

A generous avenue helps people to find their way around the development and guide people towards the town centre.

Permanently landscaped shared surface with surface materials and shared surface with surface materials and shared surface with surface materials.

Nottingham Road/Pottery Lane

A well integrated affordable homes.

Ravenstone

A landscaped inspired scheme with more contemporary (or retro) styled homes.

Ravenstone Road

A landscaped inspired scheme with more contemporary (or retro) styled homes.

New affordable homes, Donington le Heath

A landscaped inspired scheme with more contemporary (or retro) styled homes.

Ravensome

A landscaped inspired scheme with more contemporary (or retro) styled homes.

St Mary's Avenue

A landscaped inspired scheme with more contemporary (or retro) styled homes.

Whiteholmes Grove (private road)

A landscaped inspired scheme with more contemporary (or retro) styled homes.

Ravensome

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A landscaped inspired scheme with more contemporary (or retro) styled homes.

Ravensome

A landscaped inspired scheme with more contemporary (or retro) styled homes.

St Mary's Avenue

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St Mary's Avenue
Figure 19: Uses supportive of an active street
(adapted from MacCormac, 1983, p.59-60).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Uses least supportive of an interesting and vibrant public realm</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Roads/Bypasses</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Roundabouts</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Car parks/car parking/garaging</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Petrol stations</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Warehouses</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Uses most supportive of an interesting and vibrant public realm</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Streets</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Crossroads</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Supermarkets wrapped with smaller scale units and uses</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Small scale offices (including health centres)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Apartments*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Small scale shops</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Dependent on location. For ground floor apartments to successfully contribute to the street, they need to be afforded their own front door rather than relying on communal entrances.