

POLICY H4: DESIGN QUALITY - Development proposals must be in line with the NWL Good Design SPD (2017) and demonstrate a high quality of design, layout and materials in order to make a positive contribution to the special character of Swannington Parish.

- a. New development should enhance and reinforce the local distinctiveness and character of the area in which it is situated, and proposals should clearly show how the general character, scale, mass, density and layout of the site and the building or extension fits in with the aspect of the surrounding area. Care should be taken to ensure that the development minimises disruption of the visual amenity of the street scene nor impact negatively on any significant wider landscape views.
- b. New buildings should follow a consistent design approach in the use of materials, fenestration and the roofline to the building. Materials should be chosen to complement the design of the development and add to the quality or character of the surrounding environment.
- c. Contemporary and innovative materials and design will be supported where positive improvement can be robustly demonstrated without detracting from the historic context.
- d. Proposals should minimise the impact on general amenity and careful consideration given to noise, odour and light. Light pollution should be minimised wherever possible and security lighting should be appropriate, unobtrusive and energy efficient.
- e. Development should enhance biodiversity and relate well to the topography of the area, with existing trees and hedges preserved whenever possible.
- f. Where possible, enclosure of plots should be of native hedging, wooden fencing, or stone/brick wall.
- g. Development is encouraged to incorporate sustainable design and construction techniques to meet high standards for energy and water efficiency, including the use of renewable and low carbon energy technology, as appropriate; and minimise surface run-off and risk of flooding.
- h. Energy and communications connections should be sited below ground.
- i. New development should be designed to enable charging of plug in and other ultralow emission vehicles in safe, accessible and convenient locations.
- j. Development should incorporate sustainable drainage systems with maintenance regimes to minimise vulnerability to flooding and climate change.
- k. Design should ensure appropriate provision for the storage of waste and recyclable material in locations convenient and accessible for collection and emptying.
- l. Adequate off-road parking should be provided, with a minimum of two car parking spaces for dwellings of up to three bedrooms and three spaces for dwellings of four bedrooms or more, in line with Highways Authority requirements. Garages should be adjacent to each house and large enough to accommodate modern cars and SUVs. Blocks of garages remote from dwellings will not be supported.
- m. Innovative designs with varied house types, building widths, styles, details, facing and roofing materials reflecting a varied street scene will be supported. On developments of ten or more dwellings, housing development should be predominantly two-storey. Three-storey dwellings would be unsuitable for the site.
- n. Roof and wall construction should incorporate integral bird nest boxes and bat breeding and roosting sites.
- o. Hedges (or fences with ground-level gaps) should be used for property boundaries to maintain connectivity of habitat for hedgehogs and other terrestrial animals.
- p. Avoidance of all unnecessary artificial lighting.
- q. Lighting design, location, type, lux levels and times of use should follow current best-practice, e.g. by applying the guidelines in *Guidance note 08/18 Bats and artificial lighting in the UK*: Bat Conservation Trust / Institution of Lighting Professionals, 2018.

Affordable housing

92. The NPPF (2021) defines affordable housing as 'housing for sale or rent, for those whose needs are not met by the market (including housing that provides a subsidised route to home ownership and/or is for essential local workers)'. The definition goes on to list different types including affordable housing for rent

(including social rent); starter homes, discounted market sale housing and other affordable housing routes to home ownership.

93. NWLDC Local Plan policy H4 on affordable housing states that 30% affordable housing should be provided in Swannington Parish on all developments on greenfield sites of 11 or more dwellings or 1,000 sqm (gross) floor space. This becomes 5% on previously developed land where there are 30 dwellings or more or on sites of 1Ha or more.

94. House prices are high locally. There is an above average proportion of properties with high value council tax bands with 14% of dwellings having a Council Tax Band F or above against 6% for the district, 5% for the region and 9% for England as a whole.