

The Design of Residential Development

Supplementary Planning Document

Adopted December 2007



STOCKPORT
METROPOLITAN BOROUGH COUNCIL

مدارک ضمیمہ طرح توسعه ی نقشہ مناطق مسکونی
تصمیم وثیقة التخطيط التكميلية للتوسع (للتطوير) السكنی
رہائشی منصوبے کے ڈیزائن سے متعلقہ ضمیمہ منصوبے کی دستاویز

居住发展设计图样附加计划文件

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1 Introduction

Purpose

1.1 The overall purpose of producing the Design of Residential Development SPD is to:

- Provide applicants for planning permission with a clear indication of the Council's expectations; and
- Help Development Control make consistent decisions on planning applications in relation to residential developments.

1.2 High quality inclusive design and the part it plays in creating successful communities features high on the government's agenda, which is articulated through planning policy (e.g. PPS1: Delivering Sustainable Development and PPS3: Housing) and design guidance (e.g. By Design: Better Places to Live). This SPD will supplement the national and regional framework of planning policy and guidance; support the saved policies of the adopted Stockport Unitary Development Plan (UDP) Review (available at www.stockport.gov.uk/udp), particularly Policy CDH1.1: New Residential Development in Predominantly Residential Areas and Policy DCD1.1: Design Principles; and update and formalise current Council guidance on the Design of Residential Development [see Planning Context for further information].

1.3 Stockport Council is committed to securing high quality inclusive development, and designs that fail to take such opportunities will be refused planning permission.

Status

1.4 This guide has been adopted by the Council as a Supplementary Planning Document. This means that it both supports and reinforces the saved policies of the adopted Unitary Development Plan (UDP) Review (available at www.stockport.gov.uk/udp).

1.5 The SPD is an important material consideration in the determination of a planning application and the defence of the Council's decision when an applicant makes an appeal against this decision.

1.6 The SPD has been the subject of a month long statutory period of public consultation and is in conformity with the government's guidelines regarding consultation on SPDs.

2 Key Objectives of the SPD

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2.1 The aim of the SPD is to achieve high quality design in residential developments. From this aim three key objectives have been established:

- To promote high quality inclusive design by raising awareness of good design principles and practice to help and inspire applicants to submit quality schemes;
- To ensure efficient use of resources by encouraging developers to make the best use of land and buildings; be environmentally responsible; and use good design principles; and
- To endorse development that makes a positive contribution to the townscape and landscape character of the local area and to provide guidance on assessing the context and balancing the various issues and requirements without detriment to local character.

3 Planning Context

Local Policy and Guidance

3.1 The Unitary Development Plan (UDP) Review adopted in May 2006 (available at www.stockport.gov.uk/udp) sets out the Council's policy in relation to residential development, against which schemes will be assessed. The key policies that the SPD supports and builds upon are:

DCD1.1: Design Principles

New development should demonstrate that they are based on good design principles and take account of the following criteria:

- Accord with general criteria for sustainable development and seek to minimise its impact on the environment;
- Use materials and detailing appropriate to the location;
- Provide for good accessibility on foot, by cycle, by public transport and by those with disabilities;
- Take account of site characteristics including landform, landscape, ecology and microclimate;
- Take account of the context of the site and relate well to surrounding buildings and spaces;
- Provide safety and security for users in a way that is acceptable in environmental, design and accessibility terms;
- Provide satisfactorily levels of privacy and amenity for future, existing and neighbouring users;
- Take account of any potential for a mixture of compatible uses to attract people to live, work and play in the same area;
- Be designed to encourage low traffic speed in any provision for traffic circulation and not include excessive or unnecessary car parking provision;
- Recognise the importance of existing and potential views and vistas and any scope for the creation of landmarks and gateways;
- Recognise the potential for enhancement of the public realm;
- Where relevant, take account of Government or local guidance on density and height;
- Where relevant, take account of policies and guidance relating to special policy designations; and
- Incorporate appropriate landscaping and features of nature conservation value.

The Council will not permit development which is poorly designed or where the design has paid insufficient regard to these criteria.

3 Planning Context

CDH1.1: New Residential Development in Predominantly Residential Areas

The design of new residential development will be permitted provided it complies with other policies and the design and layout:

- Respects the character of the particular area, as reflected in the layout, massing, scale, height, style and materials of buildings and spaces;
- Makes efficient use of land, avoiding developments of less than 30 dwellings per hectare, achieving developments of at least 30-50 per hectare net and greater intensity where public transport accessibility is good;
- Contributes to the achievement of an appropriate mix of dwelling types and sizes;
- Provides for the safe and convenient movement of pedestrians and cyclists to and through the development, and for safe traffic movement and parking which does not detract from the appearance of the scheme;
- Does not constitute unsatisfactory tandem development, or piecemeal development which would sterilise the development of adjoining land with development potential;
- Provides good standards of amenity, safety and privacy for future occupiers and neighbouring occupiers in existing developments;
- Secures appropriate standards of landscaping and open space provision; and
- Secures high standards of energy conservation and efficient usage.

3.2 For each section a list of the main UDP Review policies which the particular section supports is provided. These may include the following UDP Review policies:

Policy Number	Policy Name
DCD1.4	Landscaping of New Development
DCD1.6	Public Health, Safety & Security in Development
DCD1.2	Design Appraisals
DCD1.8	Energy Efficient Design
DCD1.3	Access for People with Access Difficulties
HC1.1	Demolition & Tree Felling in Conservation Areas
HC1.3	Special Control of Development in Conservation Areas
HC2.1	Development Affecting Listed Buildings
HC2.5	Development Affecting Buildings of Local Interest
HC3	Protection of Archaeological Sites
L1.3	Provision of Recreation & Amenity Open Space in New Development
TD1.4	Parking in Developments

Policy Number	Policy Name
TD1.6	Accessibility & the Design of Development
HP1	Housing Provision
HP1.2	Phasing of Housing Development
HP2.1	Provision of Affordable Housing
HP2.2	Sheltered Housing
HP2.3	Hostel Accommodation
HP2.5	Dwelling Mix
GBA1.5	Residential Development in the Green Belt
TD2	Urban Design & Streetscape
TD2.1	Homezones
EP1.3	Control of Pollution
EP1.7	Development & Flood Risk
EP1.10	Aircraft Noise
LCR1.1	Landscape Character Areas
NE1.3	Development & the Natural Environment
NE1.5	Habitat Creation, Enhancement and Access
NE1.6	Species Protection
MW1.5	Control of Waste from Development

Table 1 Other UDP Review Policies

Please note that throughout the document reference is made to 'policies'. Unless otherwise stated this means the policies of the UDP Review adopted in 2006.

3.3 Reference is also made throughout the document to local planning guidance documents which should be adhered to in conjunction with the requirements of this SPD, including:

- Affordable Housing SPG [adopted January 2003]
- Recreational Open Space Provision & Commuted Payments SPG [updated July 2006]
- Town Centre Housing SPD [updated October 2006]
- Transport and Highways in Residential Areas SPD [adopted September 2006]
- Sustainable Design and Construction SPD [adopted May 2006]
- Extensions and Alterations to Dwellings [adopted July 2001]
- Sustainable Transport SPD [adopted December 2007]

3 Planning Context

3.4 All the above documents/ policies can be viewed at: www.stockport.gov.uk/planningpolicy

Regional Policy and Guidance

3.5 This document should also be read in conjunction with the following regional planning policy and guidance (that can be viewed at www.nwra.gov.uk), which both support and necessitate the production of this SPD:

The North West Plan: Submitted Draft Regional Spatial Strategy for the North West of England [NWRA: January 2006]

Policy DP1: Regional Development Principles establishes the four key principles that should be applied to all plans and strategies developed in the region to: make more sustainable transport decisions; make better use of land, buildings and infrastructure; ensure quality in development; and tackle climate change. The principle 'ensuring quality in development' is of particular significance as it states that proposals and schemes must demonstrate excellent design quality, sustainable construction, efficiency in resource use and respect for their physical and natural setting.

Regional Spatial Strategy for the North West (formerly Regional Planning Guidance for the North West: RPG13)[GONW: March 2003]

RSS Core Development Principle 'DP3: Quality in New Development', necessitates new development to demonstrate good design quality and respect for its setting, and Local Authorities to prepare guidance to ensure new development is integrated with surrounding land uses, taking into account the landscape character, setting, the quality, distinctiveness and heritage of the environment and the use of sympathetic materials.

North West Best Practice Design Guide [NWRA: 2006]

The guide was devised as an introduction to the types of design that should be considered and to the issues that should be addressed in building successful, sustainable communities. It views that design is about much more than appearance and functionality, and good design should take into account other objectives that affect our quality of life by: helping to conserve nature; improving energy efficiency and reducing greenhouse gas emissions; reducing opportunities for criminal activity; helping to prevent or reduce the impact of flooding; and using sustainable local materials that add character and blend well with surroundings.

National Policy and Guidance

3.6 This document should also be read in conjunction with the following national planning policy and guidance, which both support and necessitate the production of this SPD:

Planning Policy Statement 1 (PPS1) Delivering Sustainable Development [ODPM: 2005]

PPS1 summarises the approaches to be taken in delivering sustainable development, the core principle underpinning planning. High quality inclusive design is acknowledged as one of the six key principles that contribute to the delivery of sustainable development and should be an aim of all those involved in the development process. PPS1 cites designs failing to improve the character and quality of an area as a valid reason for the refusal of planning permission.

Planning Policy Statement 3 (PPS3) Housing [DCLG: November 2006]

PPS3 sets out the Government's objectives in relation to housing policy and states that the delivery of high quality housing which is well-designed and built to a high standard should be a specific outcome of the planning system. Good design is noted as both fundamental to the development of high quality new housing, and to the efficient use of land. PPS3 emphasises that using land efficiently is one of the key considerations in planning for housing, but that LPAs should develop housing density policies, having regard to a number of local factors including the character of the locality and the accessibility of the site.

3.7 Other Planning Policy Statements/ Planning Policy Guidance notes that may be of relevance include:

- PPS06: Planning for Town Centres
- PPS25: Development and Flood Risk
- PPG13: Transport
- PPG15: Planning and the Historic Environment
- PPG24: Planning and Noise
- PPS23: Planning and Pollution Control
- PPS9: Biodiversity & Geological Conservation
- PPS25: Development and Flood Risk

Natural Environment and Rural Communities (NERC) Act 2006

The NERC Act implements the key aspects of the Government's Rural Strategy July 2004 and sets out the Council's duty to conserve biodiversity.

By Design: Urban design in the planning system: towards better practice [DETR/ CABE: 2000]

'By Design' provides practical advice to help implement the Government's commitment to good design. It demonstrates the fundamental principles that are common to good design and how these might be applied to help raise standards of urban design.

Better Places to Live by Design: a companion guide to PPG3 [DETR/ CABE: 2001]

'Better Places' goes a stage further than 'By Design' and focuses on the attributes that underlie well-designed, successful residential environments. 'Better Places' challenges Local Authorities and developers to think more imaginatively about design and layout.

The above documents can all be viewed at: www.communities.gov.uk/index.asp?id=1143104

Urban Design Compendium 1 & 2 [English Partnerships/ The Housing Corporation: 2007] [available at www.englishpartnerships.co.uk/publications.htm]

The 'Urban Design Compendium' is an accompaniment to national planning policy and 'By Design'. It outlines good practice and acts as a guide to delivering better urban design through the planning system.

3 Planning Context

Manual for Streets [Department for Transport: 2007] [available at www.dft.gov.uk/pgr/sustainable/manforstreets]

The Manual for Streets focuses on the place function of residential streets and assigns high priority to pedestrians and cyclists, giving clear guidance on how to achieve well designed streets and spaces. It aims to assist in the creation of streets that:

- Help to build and strengthen the communities they serve;
- Meet the needs of all users, by employing the principles of inclusive design;
- Form part of a well-connected network;
- Are attractive and have their own distinctive identity;
- Are cost effective to construct and maintain; and
- Are safe.

4 Making a Planning Application

4.1 Planning permission is required for the construction of new dwellings and residential institutions, the conversion of dwellings into flats, the subdivision of existing multi-occupied dwellings and conversion into hostels or residential institutions such as nursing homes. Some types of development do not need permission and these are set out in the Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development Order) 1995 [available at www.opsi.gov.uk/si/si1995/Uksi_19950418_en_1.htm]

4.2 The 'Statement of Community Involvement' details how the Council will consult all stakeholders when determining planning applications. You can find the document at: www.stockport.gov.uk/ldf or contact your Planning Officer [see Contacts].

4.3 The Council welcomes the submission of on-line applications through the Planning Portal at: www.planningportal.gov.uk or contact your Planning Officer for further information [see Contacts].

Help and Advice Before Submitting an Application

4.4 Stockport welcomes pre-application discussions. It is recommended that you should write to the Planning Officer who deals with the area where the site is located [see Contacts], providing sufficient and accurate details of your proposal so that a proper assessment can be made. This should include a sketch plan of the new development to scale and a location plan identifying the site. You will then be provided with contact details for future correspondence.

4.5 For the more complex proposals a 'Pre-application Discussion Form' is available at: www.stockport.gov.uk/developmentcontrol. Where necessary your Planning Officer can arrange meetings with other Council Officers to deal with the various aspects of your proposal (highway engineers, conservation officer, planning policy staff etc). Where their interests may be affected by a particular proposal it may also be necessary for the Council to refer you to the relevant statutory bodies or organisations such as the Environment Agency and British Waterways.

4.6 The advice provided will constitute an officer view of your proposal. The advice will be without prejudice to the final decision taken by the Council once a formal application has been submitted.

When and How to Involve the Community

4.7 Carrying out a community involvement exercise is not a mandatory requirement but the Council believes that engagement with the surrounding community before the submission of a formal application can be beneficial for all those involved.

4.8 The Council has produced a guide titled 'Community Involvement in the Planning Process: a step by step guide for developers and agents' which is available on the Council's website at: www.stockport.gov.uk/developmentcontrol You can also speak to your Planning Officer for further guidance [see Contacts]

4 Making a Planning Application

Checklists

4.9 You are required to provide certain information to help the Council to fully consider your planning application. Stockport currently has a general 'Application Checklist' setting out the information you will need to provide for different types of application and those that raise specific issues [for example, applications that involve the loss of trees or the demolition of listed buildings], which is available at: www.stockport.gov.uk/developmentcontrol or by contacting your Planning Officer [see Contacts].

4.10 The Council is also currently trialling a new Sustainability Checklist to help evaluate the sustainability of projects at the design stage. If you are submitting a planning application you are invited to use the Sustainability Checklist which complements the Sustainable Design & Construction SPD. Both of these documents can be found at:
www.stockport.gov.uk/sustainabledesignandconstruction

4.11 The following is a specific design checklist to help ensure that your design covers the main points contained in this document. The checklist is loosely based on the Building for Life/ CABI guide 'Delivering Great Places to Live: 20 questions you need to answer', which can be found at www.cabi.org.uk/publications:

- Does the proposal have a Design & Access Statement incorporating an analysis of the context, setting out the design principles and explaining how these have been incorporated into the scheme?
- Is the design specific to the scheme and will it feel like a distinctive place?
- Does the scheme exploit existing buildings, landscape and topography?
- Is the layout easy to understand and get around?
- Is the scheme well integrated with existing roads, surrounding developments and public transport?
- Is the public realm pedestrian, cycle and vehicle friendly, and well overlooked?
- Is open space well located and overlooked?
- Is car parking inconspicuous and designed as part of the public realm/ landscaping scheme?
- Does the scale, massing & built form respond to the context appraisal findings?
- Have the materials & detailing been carefully considered to help create a distinct character?
- Does the proposal have any features that reduce its environmental impact?
- Do the layout and dwellings allow for adaptation and extension?

Design and Access Statements

4.12 Design & Access Statements (DAS) are a requirement of all outline and full applications for planning permission (including Listed Building Consent) except:

- Changes of use not involving building works or other operational development;
- Engineering or mining operations, e.g. the formation of a new track across a field; and
- Householder development (unless the house is within a conservation area or other designated area such as an SSSI).

4.13 A DAS must include a written description and justification of the proposal, with photographs, maps and drawings of the site, proposal and context to illustrate points made in the statement.

4.14 Further information on preparing a DAS is available through the following web-links:

- Stockport's Guidance on Design & Access Statements:
www.stockport.gov.uk/developmentcontrol
- CABE's Design & Access Statements: how to write, read and use them:
www.cabe.org.uk/AssetLibrary/8073.pdf
- Circular 1/2006: Guidance on Changes to the Development Control System:
www.communities.gov.uk/index.asp?id=1500620
- The Town and Country Planning (General Development Procedure) (Amendment) (England) Order 2006: www.opsi.gov.uk/si/si2006/ukSI_20061062_en.pdf

Supporting Visual Information

4.15 You are required to provide a number of drawings to identify the development site and illustrate your proposals including location plans, floor plans and elevations. Additional material should also be provided to support the application and ensure that the full range of issues have been explored and resolved. Some of this material may form part of the Design & Access Statement [see Design and Access Statements]. Suitable illustrative detail will be dependent on the nature and scale of your proposal. However, as a minimum you will be required to show the proposed development in context with the surrounding area, as well as providing sections and existing/ proposed context appraisal maps [see 5 Context Appraisal], where relevant.

4.16 Suitable illustrative formats include:

- Sketches/ perspectives;
- Photomontages;
- Models; and
- 3-D Visualisations.

4.17 Please note that a virtual model has been produced of Stockport town centre. Proposals located within this area may be required to produce material of a suitable format for inclusion in the town centre model. For further information contact your Planning Officer [see Contacts].

5 Context Appraisal

5 Context Appraisal

5.1 You should demonstrate the steps taken to appraise the physical, social, economic and planning policy context and the site's constraints and opportunities, and explain how they have influenced the proposed development in your Design & Access Statement [see Design and Access Statements], as recommended in the CABE guidance, 'Design & Access Statements: how to write, read and use them'.

5.2 The Context Appraisal should include:

5.3 Physical (what the place looks like). For all schemes a site and area appraisal is required, the extent of which is dependent on the scale of the proposal. An appraisal is a factual account, backed up by photos and drawings [see Supporting Visual Information for information on suitable formats] and should generally include:

- A brief history of the site and its uses
- The size, shape, orientation and topography of the site, including levels
- The location, condition and importance of any existing buildings or other structures on the site
- Existing landscape features and vegetation
- Access to the site including the adjacent road and footpath layout
- North point
- Location of any habitable rooms (bedroom, living, dining) of dwellings facing the site
- Location of existing services e.g. drainage and gas, if known
- The history of the site in terms of crime and disorder
- Important views from, through and into the site
- The character of the surrounding area - any distinctive features such as waterways, building types, heights, roof forms, materials, window shapes, layout of streets and spaces; block size and shape; relationship of buildings to streets; relationship of buildings and streets to typography; scale and massing of buildings; nodes; edges; important frontages; corner features etc.

5.4 Social: how people in the locality will be affected. For some smaller schemes such as a single dwelling where the social impact is negligible, a statement indicating that this is the case will suffice.

5.5 Economic: contribution to the local economy such as jobs created or existing jobs lost. For some smaller schemes such as a single dwelling where the economic impact is negligible, a statement indicating that this is the case will suffice.

5.6 Planning Policy: how the development will meet the relevant requirements of the Stockport Review UDP and other planning policies.

5.7 The Context Appraisal will go on to inform the non-stylistic design principles of your proposal, for example the:

- Scale, height & mass;
- Form;

- Footprint/ spacing/ building line;
- Proportions & rhythms; and
- Materials etc.

6 Efficient Use of Resources

6 Efficient Use of Resources

Making the Best Use of Land and Buildings

HP1 Housing Provision

DCD1.1 Design Principles

CDH1.1 New Residential Development in Predominantly Residential Areas

Brownfield Land & Buildings & Sustainable Locations

6.1 The RSS requires at least 80% of new dwellings to be constructed on previously developed land or through the sensitive conversion of empty or underused buildings to housing. The Council's own target for the period 2007 to 2010 is 97% and the policy HP1 states that applications for housing on Greenfield sites will be refused. The Council's target of 97% is not a development plan target, but has been set to reflect existing permissions and is in line with recent performance.

Brownfield sites, although previously developed may have biodiversity value. The potential to conserve or enhancement a site's biodiversity value will need to be considered as part of any proposal.

6.2 Stockport promotes appropriate mixes of uses within a site or its wider neighbourhood, that contribute towards reducing the need to travel and assist people to meet their needs locally, in accordance with policy DCD1.1. All new development should be genuinely accessible by public transport, walking and cycling; and priority will be given to previously developed land within settlements (in line with policies DCD1.6 and HP1.2).

Density

6.3 Density is a measure of the number of dwellings that can be accommodated on a site or in a particular area. The key criteria for determining appropriate densities for new residential development within Stockport should be:

- Making the most efficient use of previously developed land; whilst
- Considering the context and townscape/ landscape character of surrounding area (including a site's accessibility);
- The capacity of existing and potential infrastructure to absorb further development; and
- The physical and environmental constraints on development including flood risk, topography, access, impact on the Green Belt
- and AONB and other land use designations.

This approach is consistent with PPS3 and policy DCD1.1.

6.4 Consequently higher density development is not appropriate in every setting. It should also be borne in mind that density can be varied within a scheme to help add to the variety in streetscape

and choice in housing, and that imaginative design and layout can lead to the more efficient use of land without compromising the quality of the local environment.

Environmental Responsibility

DCD1.8 Energy Efficient Design

MW1.5 Control of Waste from Development

NE1.5 Habitat Creation, Enhancement & Access

NE1.6 Species Protection

EP1.3 Control of Pollution

EP1.7 Development & Flood Risk

EP1.10 Aircraft Noise

6.5 A Sustainable Design and Construction SPD has been prepared that looks at the issues you should consider to help deliver sustainable developments, many of which are listed below. The Council recommends you reference the Guide alongside this document. The Guide can be viewed at: www.stockport.gov.uk/spd.

6.6 Good practice in initiatives based on environmental performance is welcome, and Stockport would like to see you achieve at least a Code for Sustainable Homes level 3, which approximately equates to a BRE EcoHomes 'very good' score which the Code replaces. The Code contains mandatory performance levels in 6 key areas: energy efficiency/ CO₂, water efficiency, surface water management, site waste management, household waste management, and use of materials. Further information can be found at: www.communities.gov.uk/planningandbuilding/buildingregulations/legislation/englandwales

6.7 You should also consider the following issues when designing residential developments:

- Orientating dwellings to maximise solar gain, with principal rooms faced within 30 degrees of due south;
- Orientating dwellings to maximise natural light, with larger south facing windows;
- Maximising natural ventilation;
- Allowing sufficient space on sites for trees and planting, which reduce the effects of CO₂ emissions;
- Designing in communal waste, recycling and composting facilities [see Storage];
- Using/ providing: high grade insulation and water conservation and recycling measures;
- The provision of green roofs that support biodiversity, improve insulation and reduce/ slow down run-off;
- Noise pollution, particularly in town centres, near external noise sources such as industry, main roads, nightclubs and railways, and in areas affected by planes using Manchester Airport;
- Air quality in Air Quality Management Areas [see www.airquality.co.uk/archive/laqm/laqm.php];

6 Efficient Use of Resources

- Protection and mitigation measures in risk areas identified on the Environment Agency's maps showing areas at risk from flood events [see www.environment.gov.uk/subjects/flood/]. Where a site may be at risk of flooding a flood risk assessment should be submitted early on in the planning process and the Environment Agency will need to be consulted;
- Incorporating Sustainable Urban Drainage Systems (SuDS) in developments likely to have an impact on drainage patterns;
- Development adjacent to Stockport's waterways such as the Macclesfield or Peak Forest Canals should: be sited and orientated to maximise views and generate natural surveillance of the waterspace which will encourage access to and along it, and the waterway and its environs should form an integral part of the public realm;
- Ensure the layout takes account of underground and overhead utility services;
- The potential implications for protected species such as bats and badgers etc; and
- Building Regulation requirements.

7 Design Considerations

7.1 The layout and design of your proposal should take the following issues into account:

Layout Principles

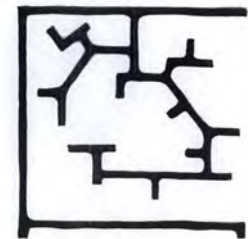
TD1.6 Accessibility and the Design of Development

DCD1.1 Design Principles

CDH1.1 New Residential Development in Predominantly Residential Areas

7.2 The local area provides examples of different residential layouts. Traditional terraced streets, for example, are well connected with direct routes and dwellings fronting onto them, and it is usually easy to tell which are the most and least important routes by the width of the carriageway and scale of buildings, making them easy to understand and move around. Such layouts do however have issues such as inadequate parking provision and alleys providing access to the rear garden/yard, which compromises security.

7.3 More recent layouts, such as those with a prevalence of cul-de-sacs can be attractive places to live, but have issues including limited permeability meaning pedestrians have to take a convoluted route to move from place to place, which encourages car use. These disconnected layouts force cars to travel on a limited number of routes which are very dominated by traffic. These routes are often wide with dwellings well set back from the road, so they are not very pedestrian friendly.



Picture 1 Bad example:
An unconnected layout

7.4 Other layouts such as blocks of flats set within large areas of open space or Radburn style layouts often separate cars and pedestrians and turn their backs on the street, which leads to problems associated with safety and security including pedestrian routes and open spaces not being overlooked, and the rear of properties being exposed.

7.5 In designing a new residential layout should create a clear layout structure that:

- Provides attractive and useful connections between places designed to follow natural desire lines, to encourage pedestrians rather than car use;
- Has dwellings fronting the public realm and private back gardens;
- Has a clear hierarchy of street types with different characters that reflect their importance, to help people find their way around;
- Includes new focal points such as squares and green spaces that are overlooked, and views of new and existing landmarks;
- Makes sure open spaces have a clear function and are not purely 'left over' space; and
- Ensures the location of underground and overhead utility services has been taken into account.



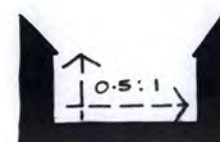
Picture 2 Good example:
A well connected layout

7 Design Considerations

This approach is compliant with policies DCD1.1, CDH1.1 and TD1.6.

Street Enclosure

7.6 In creating a successful layout with a clear hierarchy of streets and spaces with different characters, the height of new development needs to be considered in relation to the size of the space it defines or encloses. Streets with a ratio of between 0.5 to 1:1 (height to width ratio) normally provide a well proportioned street frontage with a good sense of enclosure. Anything less than 0.3 to 1 (height to width ratio) can result in streets which suffer from too little enclosure where buildings appear divorced from the street. Where buildings face onto public spaces they should provide sufficient sense of enclosure and a suitable backdrop to the space without overpowering it.



Picture 3 An appropriate building height to street width ratio of 0.5:1

7.7 Further information on layout considerations is included in the Transport and Highways in Residential Areas SPD (available at: www.stockport.gov.uk/spd).

Minimising Opportunities for Crime

DCD1.6 Public Health, Safety and Security in Developments

DCD1.1 Design Principles

CDH1.1 New Residential Development in Predominantly Residential Areas

7.8 The design and layout of residential developments has a major role to play in reducing crime, the fear of crime and anti-social behaviour. For major schemes of 10 or more dwellings you should discuss your proposals with the Greater Manchester Police Architectural Liaison Unit, [see Contacts] prior to making a planning application. In addition, a Crime Impact Statement may be required to be included in your Design & Access Statement. For up-to-date information please contact your Planning Officer [see Contacts].

7.9 Achievement of the 'Secure by Design' [SBD] standard is encouraged [see www.securedbydesign.com]. SBD is the UK Police initiative to encourage the building industry to adopt crime prevention measures in the design of developments to assist in reducing the opportunity for crime and the fear of crime, creating a safer and more secure environment. The SBD initiative has established a set of principles for 'designing out crime' and effective crime prevention and security standards for a range of building products.

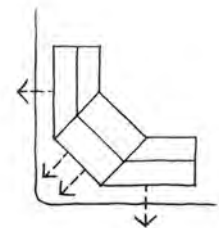
7.10 There is however a need to avoid fortress type appearances by balancing security with aesthetics, principally by ensuring measures are designed in from the outset, not added as an afterthought. Attempts to 'add' measures for crime reduction can be detrimental to the use and appearance of buildings and spaces, for example excessive use of security grilles advertises the impression of danger and heighten the sense of vulnerability; and entrance gateways into a development give the impression that there is something behind the gate worthy of stealing, and are solutions biased toward the individuals interest to the detriment of communal security.

7.11 In accordance with policy DCD1.6, you should consider the following principles when designing, which represent good practice:

- Maximise overlooking:
 - Dwellings should front onto the street
 - Blank facades should be avoided
 - Entrances to properties should be from communal spaces
 - Windows should be designed to maximise overlooking with aspect on corners
 - Living space should be located to front the street
 - Consider mixing uses (especially at ground floor level) and house types/tenures, to maximise activity throughout the day
 - Planting should not be too high or too dense, so as to avoid creating potential hiding places and block views
 - Roads and paths should be direct and overlooked routes with recognised points of entry and segregated footpaths and cycleways should be avoided
- Minimise features that could be used to provide access to upper floors of buildings
- Clearly define public and private space
- Ensure layouts form continuous front and backs, avoiding exposed rear gardens, fences and walls
- Separate rear gardens with high fences
- Provide dwellings fronting communal and amenity open space. Rear boundaries fronting it should be avoided as they are vulnerable to criminals and provide an unattractive edge to the space
- Ensure open space has a clear function, ownership and maintenance responsibility, avoiding left-over spaces at sides and ends of buildings
- Avoid pathways behind dwellings unless they are overlooked, well lit and secure
- Provide sensitive lighting that must be sensitive to ensure residents are not unduly affected but provide security for pedestrians and property, and avoid pools of darkness
- Ensure parking is in clear view of buildings, paths and roads, and ideally the dwelling that it serves



Picture 4 Bad example: The blank ground floor level does not allow for natural surveillance



Picture 5 Good example: Aspect on the corner



Picture 6 Bad example: The balconies provide easy access to upper floors

7 Design Considerations

Mixing Dwelling Types and Sizes

HP2.5 Dwelling Mix

HP2.1 Provision of Affordable Housing

HP1.2 Phasing of Housing Development

7.12 Policy HP2.5 states that on development sites of 0.4 ha or more/ sites capable of accommodating 12 or more dwellings, the Council will negotiate to secure an appropriate mix of dwelling sizes and types, taking into account local circumstances and site characteristics, except where the proposal is for the development of sheltered or supported housing; affordable housing designed to meet the needs of a particular priority group; predominantly high density flat schemes (in the Town Centre and District Centres); and conversion schemes which may not lend themselves to a variety of dwelling types.

7.13 The Government's definition of affordable housing in PPS3 now excludes low cost market housing and therefore the Council will take account of the need to deliver this type of housing as part of the overall dwelling mix proposed on development sites.

7.14 Mixed neighbourhoods with a mix of housing types and tenures provide a better balance of demand for local facilities and services; help build communities where residents can move within the community as their housing needs change; and maximise activity throughout the day and night which benefits safety and security.

Affordable Housing

7.15 Policy HP2.1 and the Affordable Housing SPG set out Stockport's policy in relation to affordable housing: that the Council will negotiate to achieve 35% of total dwellings as affordable dwellings on suitable sites (17.5% in the Town Centre - see the Town Centre Housing SPD available at www.stockport.gov.uk/spd), having regard to a site being 0.5 hectares or more/ development being of 15+ dwellings; the proximity of local services and facilities and access to public transport; the site's suitability and the economics of its development, taking account of any demonstrable constraints; and the need to achieve a successful housing development, which would create mixed and inclusive communities, and would integrate well with neighbouring housing areas.

7.16 In situations where there is an oversupply (determined by the RSS housing requirement) such as at the present time, the requirement for affordable housing may be significantly higher. See policy HP1.2.

Contributing to Townscape and Landscape Character:

DCD1.1 Design Principles

CDH1.1 New Residential Development in Predominantly Residential Areas

7.17 Many recent housing developments have been designed for 'anywhere' as opposed to 'somewhere'. Mass produced standard designs have been built on sites around the country and have had a detrimental impact on their respective area's local distinctiveness or character.

7.18 A locality's 'character' or 'distinctiveness' is determined by many considerations, including the:

- Hard and soft landscape setting, topography and features such as water
- Street proportions/ enclosure - the ratio of building heights against the width of the street
- Grain/ plot, layout and grouping - the arrangement of the streets and the relationship between homes and the street
- Existing vertical and horizontal rhythms of the street
- Spaciousness - patterns of visual separation between buildings
- Boundary treatments
- Pattern of existing access points
- Arrangement of dwellings and the public realm
- Building set backs
- Building depths and plot widths
- Building lines - the line formed by the set back of the main frontages from the street
- Building footprints
- Building types
- Buildings proportions, scale, heights and massing
- Frontage composition - the arrangement of detailing and fenestration
- Fenestration rhythm and proportions
- Roof forms and lines - the design and arrangement of roofs
- Architectural styles
- Materials/ construction methods

7.19 New residential developments should discover and contribute to this character through the Context Appraisal and the subsequent development of site specific non-stylistic design principles.

7.20 Although not directly covered by this SPD, the same principles established through the following section can be applied in designing and assessing proposed house extensions (see the Alterations and Extensions to Dwellings SPG available at www.stockport.gov.uk/spd) for further information on Stockport's requirements in respect of house extensions).

Enhancing Character

7.21 Any development must reinforce the positive aspects of the locality in accordance with policies DCD1.1 and CDH1.1:

7 Design Considerations

- In areas with an existing distinct, valued character, new development must reflect and build upon the defined character.
- In areas of mixed character an opportunity may exist for a more original approach to design that follows the key positive components of the streetscene, but introduces new distinctive elements.
- Areas of poor or no character offer the greatest opportunity to create a new character based on the enduring characteristics of the site [but not the existing built form] such as topography or natural features. This may also apply to large sites.

Methods that can be employed to help create or improve character, include:

Plot width & Rhythm

7.22 The scale of a building is determined by its bulk and the manner in which the facade is articulated. Breaking down a long street frontage into a series of separate units helps buildings avoid appearing monolithic and creates a more human scale. Street frontages that run down a hill should normally follow the same principle and have a stepped roofline that echoes their topography and allows the front door/ ground floor to be level with the footway.



Picture 7 The design reflects & develops the area's character

7.23 In brief, you should:

- Ensure that irrespective of the overall scale of the building - it is broken down into human-scaled elements to which people can easily relate;
- Take cues from neighbouring buildings and the wider area, so that the new development relates to its context. These proportions may relate to the large scale (eg the vertical sub-division of terraced housing) to the small (eg the size and shape of windows on an adjacent building); and
- Introduce appropriate vertical and horizontal rhythms that provide for variety and interest.



Picture 8 The scale of the new build relates well to the former mill

Corner emphasis

7.24 Providing greater visual emphasis to corner buildings, particularly at important junctions or gateways to new development is one of the methods that can be employed to help create or enhance character, and make a development legible.

7.25 Emphasising the corner is usually best achieved by exaggerating the vertical proportions of a facade, for example: by curving the frontage, wrapping the fenestration around the corner, or terminating the roof differently. It is sometimes appropriate to provide further punctuation by raising the height of the corner marginally above the prevailing height to reinforce the importance of the junction.



Picture 9 Emphasising the corner

Contemporary Design

7.26 As reflected in the explanatory text for policy DCD1.1, the Council encourages development that respects local character, however, replicating past mediocre architectural styles is not appropriate. In most instances, design should reflect the locality, but be honest to the current time and techniques of building design and construction, and it should be noted that contemporary design does not necessarily mean taller buildings or higher density.

7.27 Contemporary designs may be used, where appropriate, in historically/architecturally sensitive areas. Nevertheless extra care needs to be taken: the scheme should be of an extremely high standard and designed from a strong understanding of the surrounding context [see Context Appraisal and Sensitive Locations].

7.28 In areas with little or no character, the Council particularly welcomes innovative contemporary designs that create or improve the character of the site and surrounding area.



Picture 10
Reflecting the
key
characteristics
of historic villas
in the area

Views

7.29 The Council through policy DCD1.1 seeks to protect and enhance views and vistas in the Borough. Any building which obscures or detracts from important or potentially important long or short range views or vistas will be resisted. To help ensure that this issue is adequately addressed your Context Appraisal [see Context Appraisal] must incorporate an analysis of views to, from and through the site.

7.30 In seeking to improve local distinctiveness and legibility, new development should take opportunities to optimise existing long or short range views and vistas, and so routes should be orientated to focus of landmark buildings and important views. Where appropriate the Council will support the creation of focal points or landmarks that announce a place or terminate a vista, and aid orientation. Buildings that act as a focal point and rise above their neighbours must be of an exceptionally high standard of design.

7 Design Considerations

Sensitive Locations

HC1.2 Development Affecting Listed Buildings

HC1.3 Special Control of Development in Conservation Areas

HC2.5 Development Affecting Buildings of Local Interest

HC3 Protection of Archaeological Sites

LCR1.1 Landscape Character Areas

GBA1.5 Residential Development in the Green Belt

7.31 In areas of historic, architectural and landscape value (including within the green belt and near listed buildings) it is particularly important that their character is not eroded through unsympathetic development. Your proposal must help preserve or enhance the character or appearance of the area and/ or building and be sympathetic in terms of its siting, scale, design, materials, and landscaping.

7.32 Although contemporary designs may be appropriate in such areas, this is determined by an in depth understanding of the area and any scheme will need to be of an extremely high standard. If you are considering developing in a site/ in an area of historic or architectural value (including both listed and locally listed buildings) you should consult the Conservation Officer at the earliest opportunity. This can be arranged through your Planning Officer [see Contacts]. You may also wish to refer to the 'Building in Context: new development in historic areas' guide produced by English Heritage, which is available at: www.cabe.org.uk/AssetLibrary/1799. Archaeological considerations may also arise in some locations within Stockport. These may influence the design of the development or require some form of mitigation. In these circumstances it is best to seek archaeological advice at the earliest stage.



Picture 11 The proportions reflect its neighbour

7.33 Information on Stockport's listed buildings, locally listed buildings and conservation areas is available on website at: www.stockport.gov.uk/regeneration.

External Appearance:

Articulating the Façade

DCD1.1 Design Principles

CDH1.1 New Residential Development in Predominantly Residential Areas

7.34 The architects of previous eras took care to ensure the external form of the building created a suitable backdrop to the public realm. Modern building regulations and a desire to create comfortable living accommodation have focused greater attention upon internal space standards and layout. It is important that this is not at the expense of quality of the elevations, and the internal and external requirements will always need to be reconciled. The street frontage must work in terms of its relationship to its neighbours and in terms of its own architectural integrity.

7.35 Buildings must be carefully designed and detailed. They should:

- Be designed specifically for the site;
- Ensure that building elements such as arches, porches, dormers and extensions are an integral part of the design and are not perceived as being 'stuck on' to the building;
- Ensure that building frontages are free of clutter; and
- Allow for future adaptations, extensions and conversions.

Recess & Projection

7.36 The plan form and building depth influence the overall building mass and can be broken down by employing recesses and projections that can animate the facade.

7.37 Structural depth can be created by employing deep window reveals and varying the depth of facing materials. Older buildings are often characterised by deep reveals as well as decorative detailing that helps enliven their facade. New buildings can often feel flat and lifeless in comparison where insufficient attention has been given to creating a three dimensional facade. Unless flush windows are an intrinsic part of the building's language, window reveals will often be sought which provide the facade with some depth.



Picture 12 Recess & projection adds interest to this facade

7.38 The scale of a frontage can also be broken down by articulating the base, middle and top differently. This can work well on high frontages. Care needs to be taken when employing this on lower buildings, as it might have the opposite effect and result in horizontal banding which undermines the vertical proportions. The scale of a frontage can be further reduced by articulating the top floor as a recessive element and employing materials of lightweight appearance. This method can also be used to express the various uses of a building.

Window Shape, Position & Sizes

7.39 Care needs to be taken to ensure that the windows are of an appropriate scale to the facade and that windows in a facade have some relationship with each other. Key to this is identifying the appropriate shape, position and size of the windows.

7.40 Elevations can be unduly monotonous because of the number of repeated windows. The risk of this is greatest in large facades, particularly when small windows are used, as they can appear lost within the elevation.

7 Design Considerations

Entrances

7.41 Entrances should be obvious and accessible from the public realm, which gives the opportunity for strong expression.

Balconies

7.42 As well as providing useful outside space and contributing towards the requirements for private amenity spaces for flats above ground floor level, balconies can help articulate a facade.

7.43 They tend to work best within larger developments, where they can contribute to creating a rhythm when grouped vertically across floors or horizontally spaced at regular intervals. Balconies can provide additional sense of structural depth when they are recessed within the facade.

7.44 The following points should be considered in the design of balconies:

- Ensure that balconies do not overlook private gardens or habitable room windows, and that the Council's space standards are maintained [see Space About Dwellings];
- Balance the need for privacy and outward views from the balcony. Careful selection of balustrade can assist in providing appropriate levels of enclosure and privacy;
- Provide sufficient space for two people to sit comfortably;
- Provide partially covered balconies where appropriate;
- Incorporate planting boxes where appropriate;
- Avoid structures which could facilitate access to upper level windows thereby reducing security; and
- Where it is not possible to provide balconies because of overlooking adjacent properties, consider the provision of 'Juliet' balconies.



Picture 13 Recessing balconies adds relief

Materials

DCD1.1 Design Principles

CDH1.1 New Residential Development in Predominantly Residential Areas

7.45 The choice of materials in either the construction or cladding of buildings should be a direct response to the need to either complement or contrast with the surroundings, in line with policies DCD1.1 and CDH1.1. This will primarily be informed by the context appraisal [see Context Appraisal].

7.46 Contemporary materials may be introduced even in historic environments where these offer an elegant contrast to the more solid appearance of traditional materials. However there must be harmony with the new and existing materials based on colour, texture and scale of use.

7.47 Good quality materials and fixings should always be used. This is especially the case with contemporary buildings, which have less decoration and rely more on the finish of the materials. Consideration should be taken of the weathering properties of materials at the beginning of the design process. Care must be taken with finishes that require more maintenance such as some timbers.

7.48 Care also needs to be taken not to overload a facade; if too many materials are used then it can appear untidy or cluttered. To retain the coherence of an elevation it is often a good idea to restrict the number of materials and to consider other means of articulating the facade [see Articulating the Façade].

Detailing:

Storage

MW1.5 Control of Waste from Development

TD1.4 Parking in Developments

TD1.6 Accessibility & the Design of Development

7.49 Housing designers have often underestimated the space required for storage. The problem of storage is not merely the space required but the accessibility of that space in relation to how often it is used. For example, if the space reserved for cycle storage is inconvenient for quick and easy access to and from the street, the bicycle may be stored in the hallway or if the bin store is difficult to use or inconveniently located the bin may be left on the street. You should therefore consider the location of ancillary uses such as garaging, cycle parking and bin stores as an integral part of the overall layout.

7.50 Inadequate provision for refuse, recycling and cycling storage can result in unsightly retrofit solution. Provision for the adequate storage and collection of domestic waste and recyclables/ composting and cycle stores (in compliance with policies MW1.5, TD1.4 and TD1.6) should be included in the layout of all new developments, and extensions to existing properties must not remove such facilities.

7.51 You are expected to submit the detailed design of bin and recycling storage facilities as part of the planning application. The storage area should not be visible from the highway and should be located to the rear or side of the building. Where the store is located in a publicly accessible area it must be screened by landscaping, railings, gates or walls to minimise its visual impact. Screening must be provided to a height of at least 450mm above the top of the bins. If the storage area is free standing, a properly constructed enclosure in a convenient but inconspicuous position is required. For flat developments of over 7 units the installation of Eurobins is encouraged and these should be sited in such an enclosure.

7 Design Considerations

7.52 In planning for waste/ recycling storage you should also consider how residents and collection workers will conveniently and safely access and manoeuvre the containers to the collection point.

7.53 To ensure adequate facilities are provided you should contact and discuss your scheme with the Waste Management Team at the design stage. This can be organised through your Planning Officer [see Contacts].



Picture 14 Although the bin stores are located at the front of the dwellings, they are well integrated and discreet

Other Considerations

7.54 You should also consider the following:

- Service pipes should be grouped and incorporated in chimney features or located on rear slopes. All soil and waste plumbing should run internally and be kept off elevations. Rainwater goods should be dark coloured and not visible from the public realm.
- Meter cupboards and service intakes should be accessible from the public domain. Appropriate locations are discreet but accessible such as units located on the side elevations or purpose built units designed into the elevation treatment.
- Satellite dishes, television aerials etc, should not be visible from the public realm and ideally an appropriate location should be identified at the design stage.

Accessible Dwellings

DCD1.3 Access for People with Access Difficulties

DCD1.1 Design Principles

7.55 Although at planning application stage you are only required to consider access up to the front door of a dwelling (with internal access forming a component of Part M of the Building Regulations), it is good practice to consider how the whole of your scheme will work from the outset to help avoid any issues or potential redesign when you get to Building Regulations stage. If you would like further information on designing accessible dwellings Greater Manchester building surveyors have a guidance document called 'Accessibility By Design in Greater Manchester' which can be found at: www.stockport.gov.uk/developmentcontrol or provided by your Planning Officer [see Contacts].

7.56 As well as promoting accessibility, the Council supports the creation of adaptable dwellings in accordance with PPS1, that have the ability to be modified to meet the changing needs of their occupiers, such as those designed to the Lifetime Homes standards.

Lifetime Homes

7.57 Lifetime Homes standards developed by the Joseph Rowntree Foundation are ordinary homes designed so that they can be easily modified to accommodate the changing needs of occupants throughout their lives. The Council encourages you to design to these standards.

7.58 There are 16 Lifetimes Homes standards in total, and factors such as topography may influence which standards are applicable to individual developments. Conversions should also aim to achieve as many standards as practicable.

7.59 The standards are:

Car Parking	Where car parking is adjacent to the home, it should be capable of enlargement to attain 3.3m width
Access from Car Parking	The distance from the car parking space to the home should be kept to a minimum and should be level or gently sloping
Approach	The approach to all entrances should be level or gently sloping
External Entrances	All entrances should be illuminated, have level access over the threshold and have a covered main entrance
Communal Stairs	Communal stairs should provide easy access and, where homes are reached by a lift, it should be fully accessible
Doorways & Hallways	The width of internal doorways and hallways should conform to Part M, except that when the approach is not head on and the hallway width is 900mm, the clear opening width should be 900mm rather than 800mm. There should be 300mm nib or wall
Wheelchair Accessibility	There should be space for turning a wheelchair in dining areas and living rooms and adequate circulation space for wheelchairs elsewhere
Living Room	The living room should be at entrance level
Two or more storey requirements	In houses of two or more storeys, there should be space on the entrance level that could be used as a convenient bed space
WC	In houses with three bedrooms or more there should be a wheelchair accessible toilet at entrance level with drainage provision enabling a shower to be fitted in the future. In houses with two bedrooms the downstairs toilet should conform at least to Part M
Bathroom & WC Walls	Walls in the bathroom and WC should be capable of taking adaptations such as handrails
Lift Capability	The design should incorporate provision for a future stair lift and a suitably identified space for a through the floor lift from the ground floor to the first floor, for example to a bedroom next to the bathroom
Main Bedroom	The design and specification should provide a reasonable route for a potential hoist from a main bedroom to the bathroom
Bathroom Layout	The bathroom should be designed for ease of access to the bath, WC & wash basin

7 Design Considerations

Window Specification	Living room window glazing should begin no higher than 800 from the floor level and windows should be easy to open/operate
Fixtures & Fittings	Switches, sockets, ventilation and service controls should be at a height usable by all (i.e. between 450 and 1200mm from the floor)

Table 2 Lifetime Homes standards

Further details on Lifetime Homes can be found at: www.jrf.org.uk/housingandcare/lifetimehomes/

Space About Dwellings

CDH1.1 New Residential Development in Predominantly Residential Areas

7.60 The desire to maximise saleable building land can result in minimal space standards where the bulk of built development is excessive and where breaks in the built form are absent. The Council therefore encourages development that promotes variety and interest, and which seeks to create an appropriate balance between built form and plot size.

7.61 A feeling of privacy, both within the dwelling and the associated garden, is a widely held desire that the Council has a duty to secure for the occupants of new and existing housing, as articulated in policy CDH1.1. In general terms, the design and layout of the development should minimise the degree of overlooking between new houses and should not impose any unacceptable loss of privacy on the residents of existing dwellings.

7.62 The following minimum space standards are normally applied by the Council:

DWELLING HEIGHT	STANDARD
For 1-2 storey dwellings:	
Between habitable room windows on the public or street side of dwellings	21 metres
Between habitable room windows on the private or rear side of dwellings	25 metres
Between habitable room windows and a blank elevation, elevation with non-habitable rooms or with high level windows	12 metres
Between habitable room windows and site boundary (with special design, ground floor kitchen windows may be considered more flexibly)	6 metres
For 3 + storeys:	Add 3 metres per storey to the above distances

DWELLING HEIGHT	STANDARD
NOTE:	<i>These distances may be increased to accommodate changes in level.</i> <i>Habitable rooms include lounges, living rooms, morning rooms, dining rooms, bedrooms, kitchens, play rooms, studies, conservatories, and any other rooms where occupants spend significant amounts of time.</i>

Table 3 Minimum Space Standards

7.63 In providing adequate space between dwellings you need to take account of local character. In traditionally lower density areas the spaces between buildings and the landscape structure often creates a very strong character, and the design of new residential development in these areas should seek to retain this spaciousness, so distances above the minimum will be required.

7.64 However, rigid adherence to the standards can stifle creativity and result in uniformity of development. The Council therefore encourages imaginative design solutions and in doing so may accept the need for a flexible approach between new dwellings, within terraced streets or the town centre, for example. Relaxation of standards will be judged on a case-by-case basis and you must explain and justify your non-conventional design solution in the Design & Access Statement. In this instance pre-application discussions are highly recommended and can be organised by your Planning Officer [see Contacts]. The Council does however reserve the right to apply numerical space standards if it is not possible or considered appropriate to tackle privacy and other concerns through such a design solution. This will often be where it is considered necessary to protect the amenity of existing residents from the effects of new development or where a strong existing character dictates that it should be respected.

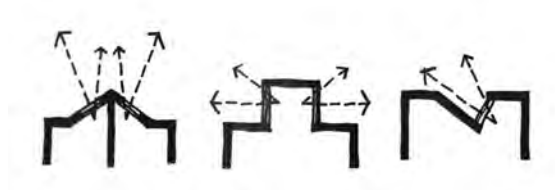
7.65 Non-conventional design considerations for helping you to create adequate privacy and amenity may include:

- Careful room arrangement - placing rooms requiring less privacy facing the street, with bedrooms located towards the private parts of the site;
- Designing window sizes to relate to their use;
- Orientating dwellings to create oblique views across the street;
- Exploiting the natural contours of the site;
- Maximising screening within rear gardens to limit overlooking;
- Careful positioning and orientation of windows and amenity areas such as balconies;
- Including a small front garden or set back;
- Use of different floor levels; and
- Raising the ground floor level.



Picture 15 Providing a small setback & raised floor level allows adequate privacy

7 Design Considerations



Picture 16 Window placement creates oblique views

Providing Private Amenity Space

CDH1.1 New Residential Development in Predominantly Residential Areas

7.66 Whatever the size or location of a dwelling there will always be a requirement for some form of private amenity space ranging from balconies, roof gardens and communal private space associated with flats to back and front garden space associated with conventional family housing, in order to comply with policy CDH1.1.

7.67 Private amenity space should be usable, accessible, reasonably free from overlooking, allow for adequate daylight and sunlight, and have regard to the size of the dwelling and the character of the area. Unusable spaces such as narrow strips of ground adjacent to roads and parking, steeply sloping areas or those in excessive shade should be avoided.

7.68 Incorporating balconies and roof gardens is encouraged where they can be provided without compromising the privacy and amenity of neighbours, or harming the character of the area. They may be required where the private or communal space provision is insufficient. They contribute to the amenity of dwellings but are not always well-designed. When designing the layout you should consider the orientation of the balcony or roof garden, ensuring it is positioning away from sources of noise and poor quality air, and is of sufficient size as to be usable outside living space i.e. 5sqm.

7.69 Except in exceptional circumstances the following standards will apply:

DWELLING SIZE	STANDARD
1 bed flat	Balcony area of 5sqm and/ or adequately screened communal amenity space with minimum provision of 18sqm per unit
2+ bed flat:	35 sqm communal amenity space per unit
Small family housing - 2/3 beds	75 sqm (50 for terraced) preferably to the rear of the property
4/5 beds	100sqm

Table 4 Private Amenity Space Standards

7.70 These standards are intended as the minimum required, allowing for sufficient space to accommodate anticipated future extensions without having a prejudicial effect on the amenity of existing and future residents. In areas of spacious character where more generous standards apply, larger garden space may be required and this is likely to be determined through the Context Appraisal [see Context Appraisal].

7.71 Private garden space should normally be situated to the rear of the dwelling. If a dwelling has a particularly large side garden the size of the rear garden may be reduced. As with the privacy standards there may be some exceptional circumstances where it can be justified that careful innovative design rather than a blanket application of numerical space standards addresses the requirement for private amenity space. Cases may include, for example, where a flat development overlooks a park. Any 'exceptional circumstances' will need to be adequately explained and justified in the Design & Access Statement [see Design and Access Statements]. The Council does however reserve the right to apply the above standards.

Boundary Treatment

DCD1.4 Landscaping of New Development

CDH1.1 New Residential Development in Predominantly Residential Areas

7.72 Good boundary design can help to integrate new development into an existing environment. Boundaries to houses especially those fronting the streets, can contribute to the character of a development as much as the buildings themselves, as they help define the space and create a sense of enclosure. You should specify boundary treatment in the landscape plan required under policy DCD1.4, and the choice of boundaries should be determined by the Context Appraisal [see Context Appraisal] and the need to balance privacy and security issues.

7.73 Boundary treatments have a number of purposes and are particularly beneficial in providing security by articulating the divide between public and private space. There are many different treatments that can be divided into the following categories:

- See through boundaries - for example railings, aid views through and over so are good in terms of security but not privacy, and are therefore more suitable along the street frontage;
- Solid boundaries - for example walls and fences, do not allow views through or necessarily over (dependent on their height), so they are most suitable for use to the rear of dwellings as they maximise privacy;
- Combinations - a combination of solid and void can enrich boundaries, provide semi-permeable screening, facilitate daylight and restrict views, which can be a suitable compromise between privacy and security;
- Natural boundaries - such as hedges, can form a dense natural screen that both softens a development and has value for wildlife, helping enhance green chains and habitats. Native species should be used;
- Water - rivers and canals can be used to define a boundary edge.

7 Design Considerations

7.74 The visual appearance of boundaries that front onto the public realm is particularly important. In such locations fencing will not be supported by the Council. Existing hedgerow or tree boundaries are also very important and the presumption shall be that these are retained and reinforced by new planting.

8 Developing Infill Sites

CDH1.1 New Residential Development in Predominantly Residential Areas

DCD1.1 Design Principles

HC1.1 Demolition and Tree Felling in Conservation Areas

8.1 Despite their small scale, 'infill' developments can have a significant effect upon the appearance of an established street, although much depends upon the character of the area and the sensitivity of the design. As with house extensions, the potential impact upon neighbours also needs to be addressed. Consequently it is vital to consider how an infill scheme will relate to its surroundings.

8.2 The layout and form of infill developments should harmonise with their surroundings, even though this may limit the density of development that can be achieved so as not to affect the character of the area. In all cases and in support of policy CDH1.1, the requirement to make the best use of land will be balanced against the need to protect residential amenity and character.

8.3 A thorough analysis of the existing site and context [see Context Appraisal] will provide a framework for appropriate new development and help inform a set of non-stylistic design principles. Illustrations should be used to explain the design process and justify the proposals clearly in the Design & Access Statement. The analysis must include checks for the presense of underground services that may sterise development.

8.4 When designing for infill the analysis is likely to investigate the following component of 'character':

Street Proportion

- The width of the street
- The height of buildings (number of storeys and floor to ceiling heights)
- The existence and height of front boundaries

Plot, Layout and Grouping

- The form of the street (organic, regular)
- Housing layouts (terraced, semi-detached, detached)
- The rhythm of solids and voids (width of plots and spaces between buildings)

Building Line

- The set back of buildings from the street
- The line created by the main frontages of houses
- The rhythm of set backs or protrusions

8 Developing Infill Sites

Frontage Composition

- The height, width, proportions and detailing of doorways and fenestration
- The rhythm of detailing

Roofline

- The design and pitch of roofs
- Ridge, eaves or parapet heights
- The rhythm of chimneys

Materials

- The dominant construction or facing material (colour and texture and extent)
- Any complementary detailing materials or features

Landscape

- The nature and character of front gardens (hard and soft landscape)
- Dominant species of plants including street trees
- Views between and beyond buildings

Backland Development

8.5 Backland development refers to the development of land to the rear of properties or the redevelopment of long back gardens. Extensive back gardens are often seen as a development opportunities, and a single or group of dwellings in a considered layout can form an attractive development when sufficient land is available. However, this is not always the case and backland development can be problematic with typical problems being:

- tandem development - where one house is erected directly behind another, both sharing the same access road; and
- piecemeal development - where a development although served by a private access prevents the future development of other backland.

8.6 Associated problems include the enclosure of public utility services, inadequate access, and the loss of privacy and spaciousness caused by an over-reduction in garden size, which in turn affects the character as development has a 'cramming' effect on the locality. Consequently as indicated in policy CDH1.1, preference will be given to comprehensive schemes that can be served by suitable access and do not prejudice future developments or existing dwellings amenity.

8.7 The design of backland development must be based on a clear understanding of character [see Developing Infill Sites], and the intensifying effects of such development should be limited so as to maintain any positive character. The main areas of focus are the maintenance of a reasonable garden sizes, appropriate spacing between dwellings, and appropriate scale and massing. If the height of buildings is a particular concern, building heights of a lower scale may be appropriate and less conspicuous.

Redeveloping the Sites of Existing Dwellings

8.8 In common with many other areas, Stockport has experienced pressure to redevelop existing properties by replacing the original houses with larger ones, dividing large plots into two or more smaller ones and redeveloping single/ multiple dwelling plots for flats. In cases where the demolition of an existing building is proposed, the Council will consider the acceptability of the loss of the property before evaluating the design of the proposed infill development. The Council will resist proposals for the demolition of buildings which make a positive contribution to the character of an area, particularly in conservation areas. This approach complements policy HC1.1.

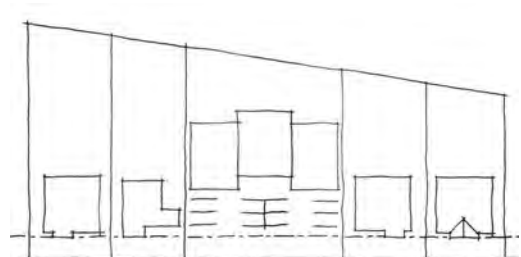
8.9 The result of such redevelopments can have a 'cramming' effect on the immediate environment, eroding its character. Houses become larger than their gardens and previously detached or semi-detached buildings effectively become terraces. It is therefore essential to limit the 'cramming' effect and strike a balance between maintaining positive character and the need for additional housing.

8.10 In support of policies CDH1.1 and DCD1.1, the main areas of focus are the maintenance of a reasonable garden size, the maintenance of established spacing between dwellings and the maintenance of appropriate scale and massing. When designing you need to consider:

- The plot size in relation to the adjacent plots
- The frontage building line - it must be respected
- The rear garden of the new building in relation to the footprint of the dwelling - they must be of a similar size ratio to those in the locality
- The space between the proposed house and its neighbours to each side - the spacing must reflect the established character of the street
- The scale and mass - must be respected



Picture 17 Bad example: Inappropriate in terms of its scale, building line & the loss of the front garden to parking



Picture 18 Bad example: The block of flats replaces 2 dwellings, it doesn't follow the front or rear building lines, car parking replaces the front garden & it is clearly out of character

9 Public Realm

9 Public Realm

DCD1.1 Design Principles

CDH1.1 New Residential Development in Predominantly Residential Areas

TD1.6 Accessibility & Design of Development

TD2 Urban Design & Streetscape

DCD1.3 Access for People with Access Difficulties

9.1 As well as the aesthetic and ecological benefits of a well considered public realm, it can have potentially positive impacts on the health of all members of the community by encouraging walking, cycling and outdoor play.

9.2 The following basic principles should be considered in designing the public realm:

- Keep it simple - avoid cluttered street furniture and signs and keep reinstatement, replacement and maintenance in mind.
- Keep it appropriate - the public realm in towns and villages is different and should be informed by the character of the locality.
- Keep it accessible - consider all changes of level, gradients and possible hazard points with regard to all people.

9.3 Further guidance on issues associated with the public realm including lighting, street furniture, hard and soft landscaping, road layout and speed management is located in the Transport and Highways in Residential Areas SPD and the Sustainable Transport SPD (available at www.stockport.gov.uk/spd).

9.4 In the Town Centre the Council has adopted a Town Centre Public Realm and Lighting Guide which should be taken into account in the design of any public realm works. For further information speak to your Planning Officer [see Contacts].

Safe and Convenient Movement for Pedestrians, Cyclists and Cars

9.5 In recent years roads have been designed following technical guidance that placed emphasis on the geometries, and once the layout for motorists was set, houses were fitted in around the streets. The result has been bland 'anywhere' developments rather than distinct places for people.

9.6 The Manual For Streets (see www.dft.gov.uk/pgr/sustainable/manforstreets/pdfmanforstreets.pdf), the replacement of Design Bulletin 32 [see National Policy and Guidance], seeks to redress the balance between pedestrians, cyclists and motorists in the design of residential streets, and focuses on their place function. You should reference this guide when designing your layout. Stockport specific guidance on provision for non-car users, highway design standards and speed management can be found in the Transport and Highways in Residential Areas SPD (see www.stockport.gov.uk/spd).

9.7 Good practice principles, consistent with the provisions of CDH1.1 and DCD1.1, include:

- **Pedestrian routes:** locate alongside roads to provide natural surveillance; and afford direct links addressing natural desire lines to local facilities, for example a bus route, school, shops and open space.
- **Cycle routes:** provide clear, direct routes to local facilities; ensure traffic calming measures do not hinder cyclists; and give priority at junctions through the use of advanced stop lines or cycle gaps.

9.8 Early consultation with Highway Officers during the design process is strongly recommended and can be arranged through your Planning Officer [see Contacts].

Public Transport Accessibility

9.9 In accordance with policy HP1.2 (Phasing of Housing Development), to ensure housing sites are in sustainable and accessible locations in times where there is an oversupply, new residential development should be located within reasonable walking distance of a bus stop, railway station or significant shopping centre. Dwellings should be within a 400m walk from a bus stop on a high frequency route (at least 3 buses per hour in each direction Monday to Saturday and one per hour in each direction in the evening and on a Sunday), a 1000m walk from a railway station with high frequency services (2 trains per hour in each direction weekdays and 1 in each direction in the evenings and at weekends), or a 800m walk of an existing significant shopping centre. In hilly areas maximum walking distances will be reduced by 10 metres for every 1 metre rise. Walking distances can also be reduced for less frequent services as people may only be prepared to walk a short distance due to the potential wait time.

9.10 Further information on the requirements for/ making improvements to the public transport infrastructure can be found in Stockport's Transport and Highways in Residential Areas SPD and the Sustainable Transport SPD (available at www.stockport.gov.uk/spd). You can also contact your Planning Officer [see Contacts] at pre-application stage for advice on public transport access issues.

Inclusive Access

9.11 In compliance with policies TD1.6 and DCD1.3, all developments should be designed to be accessible by, and responsive to, the needs of all people including wheelchair users, pushchair/ pram users and the visually impaired, in accordance with current standards. The aim should be to create, as far as possible, a barrier-free environment rather than one which installs secondary 'special provisions' as an afterthought.

9.12 You will need to consider the following issues from the outset of the design process in making a development accessible for all:

- Potential hazards such as street furniture and trees should be placed so as to leave a straight unobstructed pedestrian route;
- Pavements/ pathways should be of sufficient width to ensure ease of access;
- Steep gradients and gratings likely to trap wheels should be avoided;

9 Public Realm

- Changes in level. Any gradients steeper than 1 in 20 should have suitable handrails and kerbs at the side. Maximum gradients should be 1 in 12;
- Railings, where provided, should have a low rail for detection by visually impaired people using canes. Handrails should also extend beyond the changes of level;
- Paths and roadways should be even, non-slip and as level as possible;
- Edges should be clearly defined. Dropped kerbs and tactile paving of the right material and colour should be used as crossovers;
- Pedestrian and vehicle routes should be clearly distinguished using texture and colour;
- Path edges should be defined and surfaces should be durable, avoiding materials such as cobbles, loose gravel and shingle; and
- Level access to dwellings.

9.13 If you would like further information Greater Manchester building surveyors have a guidance document called 'Accessibility By Design in Greater Manchester' which can be found at: www.stockport.gov.uk/developmentcontrol or provided by your Planning Officer [see Contacts].

Servicing

9.14 Public realm design must be compatible with efficient and effective service provision, in accordance with policy TD1.6. Streets need to be designed for easily accessible street cleansing, emergency vehicle access and refuse collection; with access routes between refuse storage and collection not being more than a 1:12 gradient or stepped.

Recreation and Amenity Open Space Provision

L1.3 Provision of Recreation and Amenity Open Space in New Developments

DCD1.4 Landscaping in New Development

NE1.5 Habitat Creation, Enhancement & Access

CDH1.1 New Residential Development in Predominantly Residential Areas

Open Space Provision

9.15 Open space has ecological and health benefits as it can help create habitats and enhance green chains, and provides opportunities for outdoor play and exercise.

9.16 You are expected to make adequate provision for open space (and its maintenance) which is necessary and reasonably related to your proposed residential development. Policy L1.3 sets out the Council's policy and the Recreational Open Space Provision and Commuted Payments SPG (available at www.stockport.gov.uk/spd) gives further information on the implementation of this policy.

9.17 Variety in the type of open spaces provided is welcomed. Any open space provided must be overlooked by adjoining dwellings and footpaths or roads, and it must



Picture 19 Good example: Open space is overlooked

also be usable. Small areas of left over, awkwardly shaped land are not appropriate provision given their maintenance implications.

9.18 You should discuss the open space requirements with your Planning Officer early in the design process [see Contacts] and proposals should be incorporated into your landscaping scheme .

Landscaping

9.19 Landscape design proposals should form an integral part of any residential development from the outset of the design process so that they are a part of the structure which establishes the character of a scheme, in line with policy DCD1.4.

9.20 You must submit a full landscape scheme and details of future maintenance with your detailed planning application, and schemes providing native species where these are suitable will be looked on favourably. The landscaping scheme should include hard and soft landscaping and boundary treatment, and sensitive proposals will be particularly important adjacent to major roads, rail and canals.



Picture 20 Bad example: Open space without clear ownership or purpose

9.21 A landscape appraisal of the site and context [see Context Appraisal] will be required to identify important features to be retained and enhanced. Features such as trees and hedges should surveyed and where possible integrated into the scheme.

9.22 The Council will expect you to make every effort to retain all good quality trees in accordance with advice given in British Standard: BS5837 - 2005. In preparing your layout it should be ensured that dwellings are not placed so close to trees so as to endanger their health or lead to calls for their felling on grounds that they unduly overshadow the new dwellings or gardens, and allowances should also be made for the growth of the canopy of mature and young trees.

9.23 Where traditional soft landscape provision is limited such as in urban locations, habitats can be created on walls, balconies and roof terraces/ gardens, which will support biodiversity and enhance green chains whilst also softening the development.

10 Parking

10 Parking

TD1.4 Parking in Developments

DCD1.6 Public Health, Safety and Security in Developments

CDH1.1 New Residential Development in Predominantly Residential Areas

10.1 The design and layout of parking space (including garages) has a major effect on the appearance of a residential development. Stockport supports a design-led approach where parking space is well integrated with the design of the public realm.

Standards

10.2 Car, disabled and cycle parking requirements are set out in policy TD1.4 and Appendix 9 of the UDP Review (www.stockport.gov.uk/udp) with additional guidance being provided in the Transport and Highways in Residential Areas SPD (available at www.stockport.gov.uk/spd). The requirements are as follows:

TYPE OF DEVELOPMENT	HOUSING (INCLUDING FLATS)	SHELTERED HOUSING
Maximum general parking provision	2/ dwelling	1/3 dwellings plus 2 per wardens dwelling
Maximum Town Centre parking provision	1.25/ dwelling	1/3 dwellings plus 1 per wardens dwelling
Minimum disable parking provision	If parking reserved to individual dwellings 1/ dwelling to disabled standard If parking not reserved to individual dwellings minimum 1/10 dwellings	10% of spaces to be disabled standard
Minimum cycle parking provision	If no garage 1/ dwelling in lockable store	No requirement
Minimum motorcycle parking provision	No requirement	No requirement
Comments	<i>If parking is reserved to individual dwellings disabled provision included in maximum provision. If parking not reserved to individual dwellings disabled provision is in addition to maximum. Maximum excludes garages within individual dwelling curtilages but includes shared access enclosed car parks</i>	

Table 5 Parking Standards

Location

10.3 Inconspicuous and secure parking layouts are welcomed. Principally parking should be designed as part of the public realm and should incorporate landscaping features to minimise its impact on the street-scene. Large expanses of tarmac must be avoided.

10.4 For security reasons and in accordance with policy DCD1.6, landscaping should not prevent parking being easily overlooked, and these areas should be well lit and located either within the curtilage of the dwelling or in clear view of the property they serve. Remote parking or garage courts are discouraged except within the town centre, as they often suffer from crime/ vandalism. If such parking is deemed appropriate for a town centre development, remote parking must be secure.

10.5 In line with policy CDH1.1, parking provision should not dominate the front garden area if it is located within the curtilage; or the street and impede pedestrians if it is located on the highway. Trees, lamp-posts or bollards can help ensure cars do not encroach onto the footway as well as helping minimise their visual impact. Ideally if parking provision is within the curtilage it should be to the side of the dwelling or within a garage, so cars and hard surfacing do not to dominate and space is available for soft landscaping.

10.6 Grouped parking is increasingly popular and rear parking courtyards are discreet. Thinking of these areas as attractive places in their own right is critical in achieving good design. However they straddle the 'public-private' divide and need to be very carefully designed if they are to be safe. They should therefore be overlooked by adjoining houses, or by buildings within the parking area.

10.7 For further information on parking please refer to Stockport's Highways in Residential Areas SPD available at: www.stockport.gov.uk/spd



Picture 21 Bad example: A large expanse of hard surfacing



Picture 22 Bad example: Parking dominates the dwellings frontages



Picture 23 Good example: A discreet parking court

11 Contacts

11 Contacts

Contacts		Email	Telephone (area code: 0161)
Development Control - East	Marple planning case officer	east.dc@stockport.gov.uk	474 4657
	Stepping Hill planning case officer		474 3534
	Tame Valley planning case officer		474 3656
	Werneth planning case officer		474 3544
Development Control - West	Bramhall planning case officers	west.dc@stockport.gov.uk	474 3540/ 3557
	Cheadle planning case officer		474 3538
	Four Heatons planning case officer		474 3551
	Victoria planning case officer		474 3550
Development Control - Support	Highways officers	highways.dc@stockport.gov.uk	474 4907/ 4906/ 4905
	Design officer	support.dc@stockport.gov.uk	474 3531
Historic Areas Regeneration	Conservation officer		474 2620
Planning Policy team (affordable housing and open space provision etc.)		planning.policy@stockport.gov.uk	474 4395
Greater Manchester Architectural Liaison Unit		ArchitecturalLiaisonUnit@gmp.police.uk	853 5912

Table 6 Contact details

12 Glossary

Accessibility: used interchangeably with 'inclusive design' to describe the extent to which environment is usable by a wide range of people, including the elderly, wheelchair users and the visually impaired, people with young children and those encumbered with luggage or shopping.

Active frontage: the ground floor of a building with windows and doors, and generally a public/semi-public function behind, that fronts and interacts with the street.

Adaptability: the capacity of a building or space to be changed so as to respond to changing social, technological and economic conditions.

Articulation: variation in the massing, setback or height of a building, such as bay windows, balconies and entrances.

Building elements: doors, windows, cornices and other features which contribute to the overall design of a building.

Building line: the line formed by the front of buildings along a street.

Bulk: the combined effect of the arrangement, volume and shape of a building or group of buildings. Also called 'massing'.

Context: the characteristics of the built and landscape form as well as land uses etc. that surround a given site/ building - the setting. Context (or site and area) appraisal

Context Appraisal: A detailed analysis of the features of a site or area (including land uses, built and natural environment, and social and physical characteristics).

Density: measurement in dwellings per hectare that offers a means of assessing the intensity of development on a site.

Desire line: normally the most direct and convenient route for a pedestrian to use, linking facilities or places.

Dwelling: A self-contained building or part of a building used as a residential accommodation, and usually housing a single household. A dwelling may be a house, bungalow, flat, maisonette or converted farm building.

Elevation: A facade of a building or a drawing of the facade.

Enclosure: The use of buildings to create a sense of defined space.

Energy efficiency: the extent to which the use of energy is reduced through the way in which buildings are constructed and positioned on site.

Facade: exterior wall of a building.

Fenestration: the arrangement and design of windows and other openings on a building's facade.

12 Glossary

Form: the layout, density, scale, appearance and landscaping of development.

Gateway: point of entry to an area.

Habitable Rooms: the main living areas within a dwelling including bedrooms, living rooms and dining rooms. Kitchens and bathrooms are excluded.

Human scale: a development or elements of a development that relate well in size to a human, which are assembled in a way which makes people feel comfortable rather than overwhelmed.

Landmark: a building or structure that stands out from its background by virtue of its height, positioning, scale or other aspect of its design.

Landscape: the character and appearance of land, including its shape, form, ecology, natural features, colours and elements and the way these components combine. In towns 'townscape' describes the same concept.

Layout: the way buildings, routes and open spaces are placed in relation to each other.

Legibility: the ease with which a place can be easily understood and navigated around.

Lifetime Homes: 16 design features that ensure a dwelling is flexible enough to respond to the changing needs of its occupiers.

Local distinctiveness: the features of a place that contribute to its physical character and identity.

Massing: the combined effect of the height, bulk and form of a building or group of buildings.

Natural or Passive Surveillance: The discouragement to wrong-doing by the presence of passers-by or the ability of people to be seen from surrounding windows.

Node: a place where activity and routes are concentrated often used as a synonym for 'junction'.

Permeability: the degree to which an area has a variety of pleasant, convenient and safe routes through it.

Perspective: illustration showing the view from a particular point as it would be seen by the human eye.

Scale: the relationship between the height, width and depth of a building. The impression of a building when seen in relation to its surroundings, or the size of parts of a building or its details. Sometimes it is the total dimensions of a building which give it its sense of scale: at other times it is the size of the elements and the way they are combined.

Section: drawing showing a slice through a building or site.

Street furniture: structures in the public realm such as litter bins, seating, lighting and railings.

Streetscape: the visual character of a street as determined by the design, arrangement and relationship of buildings, other structures, views and open space/ greenery.

Sustainable development: defined by the Brundtland Commission as 'Development which meets present needs without compromising the ability of future generations to achieve their own needs and aspirations'. The UK's strategy for sustainable development "A better quality of life" was published in May 1999 and highlights the need for environmental improvement, social justice and economic success to go hand-in-hand.

Topography: the "lay of the land", or the shape of land in terms of its relief (local differences in elevation) and the positions of natural and man-made features.

Townscape: the visual appearance of a town or neighbourhood.

Urban grain: the pattern of the arrangement and size of buildings and their plots in a settlement; and the degree to which an area's pattern of street-blocks and street junctions is respectively small and frequent, or large and infrequent.

Vernacular: The way in which ordinary buildings were built in a particular place, making use of local styles, techniques and materials and responding to local economic and social conditions.

View: what is visible from a particular point. Compare 'Vista'.

Vista: a long narrow enclosed view, which is often terminated by a landmark.